

Down with imperialist occupation of Kosovo!

All British/UN/NATO forces out of the Balkans now!



Peter Macdiarmid

With their customary vindictiveness, capitalist rulers are gloating that the world's mightiest imperialist powers succeeded in bringing Serbia — a small, dependent country — to its knees through ruthless, relentless terror. Under the US/British/NATO "peace" diktat Kosovo is now being turned into a NATO protectorate with 50,000 occupation troops for an indefinite period. This was NATO's goal from the beginning, not its cynical talk of protecting the Kosovo Albanians. As proletarian internationalists who called forthrightly for the defeat of our "own" bourgeoisie, the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League (ICL), denounces this predatory "peace" dictated by the world's bloodiest mass murderers. *Down with British and all imperialisms! For workers revolution!*

This imperialist conquest is a blow not only to the people of Serbia and throughout the Balkans but to working people and the oppressed the world over. It will place the Kosovars — Serbs, Gypsies and Albanians alike — under the direct thumb of the imperialists, exacerbating national hatreds in the region. It will fuel the rapacity of the imperialist powers at home and abroad. It will sharpen the conflicting appetites of the major capitalist powers, accelerating the drive to an even bloodier war in the future.

After 73 days and a staggering 33,000 bombing sorties, the Democratic Clinton administration and Blair's Labour government — crucially assisted by the "soft cop" role played by Boris Yeltsin's capitalist Russia — got what they wanted by showing just how ruthless they could be in killing defenceless civilians. The Labour government was the most bellicose for



S. Pitkula

British occupation force in Macedonia before invasion of Kosovo. Imperialists forced Serbia into submission through terror bombing: Belgrade hospital devastated by NATO 20 May.

**Down with British imperialism!
For workers revolution!**

bombing and ground troops, the most hostile to refugees. In just two days in early June, NATO bombers killed more than 40 civilians and wounded dozens more as bombs and missiles destroyed a sanatorium, a retirement home and a crowded bridge in the middle of market day. The "democratic" NATO imperialists have wreaked more devastation in Serbia than did German imperialism under Hitler's Nazis in World War II. A half century of economic progress made possible by the post-World War II overturn of

capitalism in Yugoslavia — which was reversed through imperialist-instigated counterrevolution in the early 1990s — has been wiped away. This is the true face of "humanitarian" imperialism.

A war of imperialist domination

The several hundred thousand Serbian inhabitants of Kosovo now see their fears coming true as they are driven from their homes, just as some 300,000 Serbs were forced out of Krajina in 1995 by an imperialist-backed Croatian military of-

fensive. The future of the sizable Gypsy (Roma) population is no more secure: "In the western Kosovo city of Pec, fires levelled Serb homes and much of the Gypsy quarter" (*Guardian*, 26 June). Nor can the Albanians expect much of a future under the NATO occupation which is supposedly being carried out on their behalf. The NATO powers intend to disarm the separatist Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK), their pawns in the war against Serbia, and explicitly reject the Albanians' right to independence.

As we declared in a 21 April ICL statement (*Workers Hammer* no 168, May/June):

"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."

Behind the war on Serbia was the drive by US imperialism to assert its "right" to ride roughshod over small, dependent countries and to demonstrate to its imperialist rivals that the enormous American arsenal of mass destruction continues to make it top dog. To drive home this point, the US rulers refused to even countenance the figleaf of a United Nations "authorisation", instead running the war solely under the banner of the US-dominated NATO alliance.

Current British involvement in ex-Yugoslavia dates back at least to the early 1990s when then prime minister John Major, in a calculated move, connived at

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Balkans...

(Continued from page 1)

German imperialist designs against Serbia and Serb-minority rights by backing the German-instigated counterrevolutions in Slovenia and Croatia. By 1993, another representative of British imperialism, David Owen, was helping plan the dismemberment of Bosnia-Herzegovina (the "Vance-Owen Plan"), in his capacity as chair of an umbrella imperialist cabal, the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia.

On 13 June, the *Independent on Sunday* reported: "Technically, the British forces who entered Kosovo yesterday were not the first ones in. SAS units were already in place, calling in the massive B-52 bombing raids". Today there are 13,000 British forces in Kosovo. *British and all other imperialist troops out of the Balkans now!*

The man heading up the imperialist Kfor ground troops in Kosovo is the British Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Jackson. Jackson, variously known as "Macho Jacko" and "Michael the Bloody", was adjutant to the British Army's 1st Para-

chute Regiment in Derry on 30 January 1972—the infamous Bloody Sunday—when his troops fired on an unarmed demonstration, killing 14 Catholics. The choice of Jackson to head up the occupation force is a promise of more "Bloody Sundays" to come. *Liberazione* (10 June) reported that Jackson described the massacre as "a brilliant military operation". As Italian photojournalist Fulvio Grimaldi, one of two foreign reporters to capture the cold-blooded murders on camera, recently observed, "In this world of murderers with bombs, guns, uranium, the exterminators of innocents are humanitarian interventionists" (*Liberazione*, 6 June).

Blair's success in the one-sided slaughter against tiny Serbia will only make him more vicious in Northern Ireland. The myths of "humanitarian" imperialist intervention in the Balkans and of an imperialist "peace" deal in Northern Ireland foreshadow the deadly enforcement of "ethnic cleansing". Under capitalism, the door is open to a "Bosnia solution" in Northern Ireland predicated on undoubtedly bloody forced population transfers. The *Guardian* had an ominous list: "Catholics in Protestant towns like Larne, Carrickfergus and Antrim are being intimidated out of their

Demonstrations rocked Greece and Cyprus (right) and mass worker protests swept Italy in response to NATO war of domination.



Reuters

homes... it is the loyalists' decision to use the pipe bomb which is wreaking particular havoc. They have mounted 45 attacks this year" (15 June). We fight 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 a Catholic minority is currently oppressed within the sectarian Orange statelet, we recognise that there is no equitable solution to national oppression short of the mobilisation of the proletariat, throughout the British Isles, for the revolutionary overthrow of British imperialism, smashing the Orange statelet in the North as well as the Catholic clericalist state in the South.

War is always a decisive test for revolutionaries. The ICL proclaimed: "Defeat imperialism through workers revolution—Defend Serbia!" Our military defence of Serbia implied not an iota of political support to the capitalist Milosevic regime. We gave concrete expression to our proletarian-internationalist line by joining in a campaign to provide financial assistance to Yugoslav workers whose factories had been bombed by NATO. The campaign was initiated by the syndicalist-influenced Italian COBAS trade unions. We were welcomed by the heavily black and Asian workforce at Ford Dagenham who were typical of those eager to express their opposition to the Labour government. The bombing of the Zastava plant—leaving tens of workers dead, and scores more injured—epitomised the nature of NATO's war, which was clearly aimed at terrorising the civilian population. *Above all, we stressed the need to forge Leninist vanguard parties to lead the proletariat in overthrowing the imperialist bourgeoisies through socialist revolution.*

Like the British government, virtually every West European government that prosecuted this imperialist war is administered by social-democratic parties, sometimes in a bloc with ex-Stalinists and/or bourgeois parties. In this the social democrats carried out to the hilt the role played by those leaders and parties of the Second International who acted as henchmen for their own bourgeoisies in World War I. On the other hand the revolutionary social democrats, particularly centred in the Slavic countries and the Balkans—Lenin's Bolsheviks, the Bulgarian "Narrow" Socialists, the Serbian Social Democrats—as well as the Liebknecht/Luxemburg wing of the German Social Democracy and others, called for proletarian opposition to the imperialist slaughter. This polarisation laid the basis for the formation of the Third (Communist) International following the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. That is our tradition as we fight for proletarian revolution to sweep away the imperialist warmakers today.

In contrast, the reformist and centrist "socialists"—from Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party in Britain and the International Socialist Organization (ISO) in the US to the United Secretariat of Alain Krivine and the Workers Power

group—follow in the footsteps of the class traitors who voted for imperialist war credits in 1914. Now, under the impact of a major war in Europe involving the imperialist powers, we have been presented with the spectacle of erstwhile "revolutionaries" and "anti-imperialists" joining pro-imperialist war rallies. Virtually to a man, these groups promoted the war aims and war propaganda of the imperialist rulers while declaiming against the NATO bombing. Indeed, it was the liberals and fake socialists who most loudly and assiduously promoted the lie that what was at issue was the plight of the Kosovo Albanians.

This war laid bare the essence of imperialism. It is not a policy which can be changed under mass pressure, as the reformists would have it, but what Bolshevik leader VI Lenin described as "the highest stage of capitalism"—capitalism in its epoch of decay, in which competition among the major powers for markets and spheres of influence inexorably leads to ever more catastrophic wars. War is a continuation of the "normal" brutal workings of the capitalist profit system, which sucks the lifeblood out of the working people and daily condemns countless numbers to death from poverty.

Capitalism cannot be reformed. It must be overthrown by workers revolution. This is the only way to end war and establish genuine equality among nations. We fight to build a revolutionary workers party as a tribune of the people, 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.

A 27 March SL/B statement warned at the start of the bombing:

"If the imperialists get away with imposing their diktat in Kosovo, it will give them a freer hand to sow terror and destruction around the world and at home. For the British capitalists, it will strengthen their hand in breaking strikes and busting unions, and will lead to intensified racist terror by the cops and fascists. On the other hand, every blow against British 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 levelled by the City of London and their henchmen, the capitalist Labour government."

As the Labour government gloried in the destruction it was waging in Serbia, their racist assault on immigrants placed them at the forefront of Fortress Europe, denying welfare benefits to those very few refugees who were allowed in. We say: *Asylum for refugees—Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

Big Lies for imperialist terror

Despite the lies of the liberals and reformist and centrist leftists who lined up against Milosevic's Serbia with cries of "poor little Kosovo", it is abundantly clear that the mass exodus of refugees was a



TROTSKY

Lenin on war and revolution

When Lenin returned to Russia in April of 1917, he waged a fight for the ideological rearming of the party, denouncing any support to the bourgeois Provisional Government, no matter how "critical". Demanding a complete break with the bourgeois regime, Lenin's "April Theses" set the masses on the road to insurrection and Soviet power. The proletarian seizure of power in Russia was followed by the establishment of the Third (Communist) International.

The quote below comes from Trotsky's *Lessons of October*, the central lesson of which is the absolute necessity of a Leninist vanguard party to lead the proletariat to power.

On April 4, the day after his arrival at Petrograd, Lenin came out decisively against the position of *Pravda* on the question of war and peace. He wrote:

No support whatever to the Provisional Government! We must expose the utter deception of all its promises, especially with regard to the renunciation of annexations. There must be an exposure instead of this inadmissible 'demand'—which can only sow illusions—that this government, a capitalist government, should cease to be imperialistic. (*Works*, Vol. XIV, part 1, p. 18.)...

But here someone may at first glance raise an objection: Ought a revolutionary party to refuse to 'exercise pressure' on the bourgeoisie and its government? Certainly not. The exercise of pressure on a bourgeois government is the road of reform. A revolutionary Marxist party does not reject reforms. But the road of reform serves a useful purpose in subsidiary and not in fundamental questions. State power cannot be obtained by reforms. 'Pressure' can never induce the bourgeoisie to change its policy on a question which involves its whole fate. The war created a revolutionary situation precisely by reason of the fact that it left no room for any reformist 'pressure'. The only alternative was either to go the whole way with the bourgeoisie, or to rouse the masses against it so as to wrest the power from its hands. In the first case it might have been possible to secure from the bourgeoisie some kind of sop with regard to home policy, on the condition of unqualified support of their foreign imperialist policy. For this very reason social reformism transformed itself openly, at the outset of the war, into social imperialism. For the same reason the genuinely revolutionary elements were forced to initiate the creation of this new International.

—Leon Trotsky, *Lessons of October* (1924)



LENIN

WORKERS HAMMER



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

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EDITOR (this issue): Jo Watt
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Kathie Tennant
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mick Connor

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calculated and anticipated *outcome* of the NATO attack. The refugees' plight was in turn milked by the capitalist media to whip up support for imperialist intervention and to cover up the *real* reason behind the bombing: the fact that the Serbian regime would not accede to NATO occupation of Kosovo. Now that Serbia has acceded, the US has made it clear that the return of the Albanian refugees will not be allowed to stand in the way of consolidating the NATO occupation. Imperialist machinations over Kosovo come through in a report in the *New York Times* (22 May) which quoted Nick Dowling, a former White House aide for Balkan affairs: "In Kosovo, the bombing strategy was not intended to protect Kosovo Albanians or drive out Serbian forces, Mr. Dowling said" (emphasis added).

But after the Clinton administration, like its lying British counterpart, churned out repeated stories about mass rapes and the murder of 100,000 Albanians, the *New York Times* (29 May) reported that "the State Department now puts the death toll at 4,600" and admitted that "evidence on the incidence of rape is less complete". To be sure, Milosevic is a nationalist butcher. But who are the imperialist mass murderers to pass judgement on him, anyway? US imperialism's long history of war crimes extends from the slaughter of Filipino freedom fighters at the turn of the century to the firebombing of Tokyo and the A-bomb incineration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II to the millions killed in its counterrevolutionary wars to "roll back Communism" in Korea and Vietnam. And from Amritsar, India 1919 to the firebombing of Dresden in 1945, to Derry 1972 to countless massacres in Africa, China and the Middle East, the British imperialists are the oldest butchers of the world's peoples!

To describe as genocide the "ethnic cleansing" carried out by the Serbs and other nationalities in the Balkans is to trivialise the Holocaust and amnesty the deliberate, planned extermination of Jews, Roma and others the Nazis deemed "sub-human". Meanwhile, both Germany and the US arm Turkey, which has been waging a war of annihilation against the oppressed Kurdish minority for decades. Now PKK leader, Öcalan, has been sentenced to death in Turkey. Freedom for Öcalan! After using the oppression of Kurds in Iraq as a propaganda weapon in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, the imperialists have turned a blind eye to repeated Turkish incursions and slaughter in Iraqi Kurdistan. For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan!



Zastava car plant in Kragujevac after NATO bombing. ICL joined COBAS-initiated fund drive to aid Yugoslav workers.

The killing of Albanians carried out by the Serbs in Kosovo — as the earlier killings of minority ethnic groups in Bosnia and Croatia by Serbian, Croatian and Muslim communalist forces — was intended to terrorise the population into fleeing, not to kill every last person. Such brutal forced population transfers ("ethnic cleansing") were carried out by the Zionists against the Palestinians in 1948 and in numerous other cases of "nation-building" under capitalism — and British imperialism engineered and presided over most of them.

Depending on what suits their immediate interests, the imperialists have forced interpenetrated peoples to live together or to separate. In the case of Kosovo, they have talked about both possibilities. In Croatia, they supported the expulsion of Serbs. In Bosnia, they railed against "ethnic cleansing" of Muslims by Serb forces while heavily backing the Muslim government which was driving Serbs out. While most of the left supported the Bosnian Muslim forces, falling into line behind the "humanitarian" pretensions of their "own" capitalist rulers, we refused to take a side in the interethnic slaughter. And when NATO bombers launched murderous attacks against the Bosnian Serbs in 1995, we were virtually alone on the left in militarily defending the Serbs against imperialist attack. As we declared in the 27 March SL/B statement quoted above:

"The all-sided nationalist bloodbath in the Balkans was directly instigated by the imperialists in their drive to destroy the former Yugoslavia through capitalist

counterrevolution. Social counterrevolution has once again made the Balkans the flash point of ancient nationalist hatreds and interimperialist rivalries. 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 Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was formed as an outcome of World War II, when Tito's Communist Partisans successfully battled the occupying Nazi German Wehrmacht as well as the Croatian fascist Ustasha and Serbian royalist Chetniks. The victory of the multinational Partisan forces demonstrated that, despite centuries of ethnic conflict, unity of the South Slav peoples within the borders of Yugoslavia was possible — but only on the basis of proletarian state power. At the same time, only the extension of socialist revolution to the advanced capitalist countries of West Europe could provide the economic basis for genuine national equality in the relatively impoverished Balkans.

However, Yugoslavia under Tito was a deformed workers state ruled by a Stalinist bureaucracy wedded to the nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country". The regime's pursuit of "market socialism" — which escalated after Tito's death in 1980 — increased regional disparities, fuelling resurgent nationalism and ultimately paving the way for capitalist counterrevolution. The resulting massacres, forced population transfers and other atrocities are inherent in the drive to form bourgeois nation-states on the ruins of what had been an economically integrated multinational society made up of closely intermingled peoples.

Marxists call for full equality of all nationalities, including opposing a privileged position for any one language. In the case of peoples who share a common language and cultural tradition — like Austrians and Germans — the question of whether they have separate states is not all that significant. But the Albanians speak a different language than the Serbs and have a quite distinct national culture, reflected as well in the fact that the Albanians are Muslim and the Serbs Orthodox Christian.

Long before the imperialists and their leftist apologists cynically took up the cause of the Kosovo Albanians, we wrote: "Marxists should, of course, recognize the rights of the Albanian people of Kosovo and western Macedonia to fuse with Albania" ("The National Question in Yugoslavia: Part 2", *Workers Vanguard* no 110, 21 May 1976). We called for proletarian political revolutions to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies in Yugoslavia, Albania and



Young Spartacus

Bulgaria and for the formation of a socialist federation of the Balkans. Today, we fight for socialist revolution throughout this region. We continue to support the right of the Kosovo Albanians to secede — a democratic question which has been subordinated to the need to militarily defend Serbia against NATO attack.

"NATO socialists"

The separatist UCK was plenty unsavoury to begin with, engaging in indiscriminate terror against Serb civilians. But with the NATO intervention against Serbia earlier this year, the UCK became simply a pawn of the imperialists. The fake socialists who continued to clamour for "independence for Kosovo" and support to the UCK did so only as a cover for their support to the war aims of the imperialists. This was clear when Workers Power (WP) and a number of other Labourite "socialist" groups sponsored an 11 May meeting in London whose main speaker was a rabidly pro-NATO Albanian nationalist (see article page 5).

In classic centrist doubletalk, in a statement distributed at a 30 March public meeting in London, Workers Power claimed to "support the Serbian forces' self-defence against NATO attack" — although, it added, "not in Kosovo which they have no right to occupy" — and specifically called for "the right of the Kosovars to acquire arms and supplies from whoever is willing to give them". Thus, WP promoted the obscene lie that self-determination would be brought to the

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Public meeting on Northern Ireland

For immediate unconditional withdrawal of British troops!

Labour's imperialist "peace" fraud and "ethnic cleansing"

Not Orange against Green but class against class! Overthrow British imperialism through workers revolution! For a federation of workers republics in the British Isles!

Wednesday 21 July, 7.30pm

University of London Union, Room 2D, Malet St
nearest tube: Goodge St or Russell Square
For more information call: 0171 485 1396



Der Spiegel

Tito led the Communist Partisans in World War II and was head of the pan-Yugoslav deformed workers state.

CPGB: Jamie Shea "socialists"

As Tony Blair's Labour government outdid others in sheer bloodthirstiness against Serbia, the International Communist League (ICL) uniquely fought for defeat of imperialism through workers revolution and defence of Serbia. Labourite left groups lined up behind Blair, mainly by embracing "poor little Kosovo", which was used to justify the NATO bombing. One such group is the "Com-

unist Party of Great Britain" (CPGB) who stood foursquare behind Blair. However, they have also chosen to express their loyalty to Labour, and to British imperialism, by taking a leading role in anti-communist smears against the Trotskyist politics of the ICL.



Weekly Worker parrots Jamie Shea, asserting that NATO avoided targeting civilian casualties; earlier they asserted the British state is "anti-racist".

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The CPGB despise our communist politics. Having originated as faithful devotees of Stalinism, now that the former Soviet Union is no more, they have discovered it was not a communist "paradise" after all and are eager to expose and destroy the "god that failed". To expunge their own past they ended up acting as equally fervent anti-communists, in the service of the bourgeoisie's lie that "communism is dead". In early April they convened a "commission", supposedly to "investigate", but actually to alibi, a physical attack by one Ian Donovan, a nutter and Labour lackey, on a comrade of the Spartacist League, Eibhlin McDonald. Yet the facts of the attack were never in dispute, not even by the demented Donovan. He slammed his fist in her face during the London Bloody Sunday demonstration in January, when she denounced his support to the Socialist Party (SP), pointing to their support for the RUC. The SP are a thoroughly Labourite organisation, who also reject the call for British troops out of Northern Ireland and are notorious for sponsoring fascist Loyalist leader Billy Hutchinson.

Unable to politically defend the SP's pro-imperialist politics, on a demonstration against British oppression in Northern Ireland, Donovan resorted to violence. The CPGB appointed themselves lawyers for the unsavoury Donovan, and in so doing they are condoning physical violence against the Spartacist League. They are also appointing themselves guardians and protectors of the social-chauvinist, pro-imperialist politics of Donovan, of the SP and indeed the rest of the Labourite left.

On 12 March we submitted a letter to the "commission of enquiry" which noted

that the *Weekly Worker's* "Call for enquiry" (18 February) "began by alibiing Donovan's attack". We said that "the meat of the article, however, was devoted to something else altogether: a six-paragraph snarl over the fact that our polemics against the CPGB's position for a scab ballot during the heroic 1984-85 miners strike — the most important class battle to have taken place in decades — hurt them

instigated an "inquiry", into an open and shut case of a physical attack, which they began to describe as "the violent events [sic] on this year's Bloody Sunday demonstration" (*Weekly Worker*, 8 April). The real reason the Spartacist League and the ICL spell *nightmares* for the CPGB is because we destroy their posture as "communists" and expose their pro-imperialist, anti-working class, anti-com-

and intolerable". This is an incitement to attack, accompanied as it is by reams of anti-Spartacist filth on the Internet. The commission also recycled anti-Spartacist diatribes published by the "International Bolshevik Tendency" (IBT). Donovan is an ex-member and hanger-on of the latter, who have lusted after "regroupment" with the CPGB, with whom they have a lot in common politically. These political adversaries of ours are trying to make a case that Donovan was "driven" to assaulting McDonald by the "brutalising effects" of having been a member of the SL/B many years ago. According to *Weekly Worker* (6 May) he "left this nightmare organisation with some deep scars".

If you believe *Weekly Worker*, a communist organisation is necessarily a "nightmare organisation". Indeed, according to them, the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were nothing but "giant prison camps where workers are subject to a modern state slavery" (*Weekly Worker*, 25 June 1998). One might ask the CPGB whether, according to their anti-communist logic, the destruction of the degenerated and deformed workers states through counterrevolution in 1989-91 brought "liberation" to the "slaves", by restoring "democratic" capitalism! Their faith in "democratic" imperialism is of a piece with their view that the British capitalist state is "anti-racist", which they stridently asserted to counter the exposure of police racism regarding the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

The CPGB's "commission" merits about as much credibility as the imperialists' "war crimes tribunal" in the Hague, whose intent is to justify the imperialist attack on Serbia. The CPGB's "inquiry" intended to justify physical violence against the Spartacist League and the ICL. As a measure of the CPGB's integrity, or lack thereof, we offer the following quote. It shows their impeccable ability to lie, and to reproduce the imperialists' big lie, that NATO did not target civilians. *Weekly Worker* (10 June) says: "It is obvious to all but the wilfully stupid that Nato has attempted to minimise civilian casualties." This is to the right of many liberal bourgeois journalists who exposed deliberate attacks on civilians, the use of depleted uranium bombs as well as cluster bombs, intended to maximise civilian casualties. This alone is sufficient to identify the CPGB as "Jamie Shea 'socialists'".



"It is obvious to all but the wilfully stupid that Nato has attempted to minimise civilian casualties. It has spent billions on developing weapons to be as accurate as possible. If Nato wanted to conduct a deliberately brutal war, it could carpet-bomb Belgrade. It could turn it into another Dresden."

What unites Donovan's defenders, such as the CPGB and IBT, is loyalty to Labourism, as we have previously stated: "What the IBT and their friends deem 'provocative' is our opposition to Labourite *conciliationism*, our polemics sharply exposing class betrayal and centrist waffling; this is beyond the bounds of the implicit rules of chummy British Labourism. This chumminess and conciliationism, with which the British fake left is rife, ultimately stems from the particular history of the British workers movement and view of the Labour Party as the 'party of the whole class'. So whatever the claimed differences, at bottom everyone is everyone else's 'comrade'. The 'party of the whole class' means incorporating and accepting every kind of social backwardness, which is what characterises the politics of these outfits, whether the IBT, CPGB, or for that matter the SLP, in which they both operated."

— *WH* no 167, March/April 1999

We take pride in the fact we are *not* part of the Labourite swamp.

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Workers Hammer



Reuters



Workers Hammer

Kosovo Liberation Army, pawns of NATO, embraced by Alliance for Workers Liberty (left) and centrist Workers Power group (right) at 10 April London demonstration.

Balkans...

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Albanians on British/NATO bayonets! And in 1995, WP explicitly refused to defend the Serbs against NATO imperialist attack with the line that "each side's strategic goals are reactionary" (5 September 1995 statement).

Throughout the current war, WP stubbornly denied that the UCK had been subordinated to the NATO imperialists, even though WP marched in a demonstration with them in London on 10 April, where signs included "NATO Good Luck". In an Australian WP pamphlet titled *War in the Balkans*, these centrists insist that the UCK "is the only independent force resisting the massacres and ethnic cleansing of Kosova" and "is clearly not yet reduced to merely 'an instrument of NATO'". This is cynical eyewash.

From the start of the war, the UCK repeatedly called for a NATO ground invasion and *boasted* about how it was

spotting targets for NATO jets and otherwise aiding the imperialists. To give but one example, a UCK commander told the Parisian daily *Le Monde* (9 April): "The UCK gives NATO information about targets! On Tuesday, I sent information about a bridge and a road used by the Serbs. The bridge was bombed and destroyed Wednesday morning." The question of military defence of the Kosovo separatists against NATO forces might well be posed in the event of armed clashes if the imperialist occupation troops move to disarm the UCK. But in the NATO war against Serbia, the UCK was exactly what we said they were — a pawn of NATO.

In a polemic against the ICL in its pamphlet, the Australian WP declared: "Any group that will not support the Kosovars' right to self-determination is left with no solution to the crisis in the Balkans, because no mass force has independently taken up the slogan of a socialist federation." This is quintessential centrism, the opportunist search for a

"mass force" to tail as a substitute for the independent mobilisation of the proletariat on the basis of a revolutionary programme. In fact, WP found its "mass force" for "Albanian self-determination" — NATO missiles, warplanes and 50,000 British and other imperialist occupation troops!

Tailing behind Blair's Labour government, WP gloated with the imperialists when the Serbian army was forced to withdraw from Kosovo: "Everyone should welcome the withdrawal of the genocidal forces that have driven nearly a million Kosovars from their homeland and made another half million refugees in the woods and mountains. But they cannot welcome the conversion of Kosova into a nominally United Nations (but in reality a Nato) protectorate. The Kosovars themselves should be masters in their own country" (*Workers Power*, June 1999). It was the duty of all who want to see imperialism defeated, to defend Serbia against imperialist attack — Workers Power are here *welcoming* the defeat of the Serbian army

by British imperialism.

When they pontificate on the "real possibility for a mass, popular workers' revolution in Serbia", saying, "A vital component of such a revolution is to trample under foot every vestige of Greater Serbian chauvinism whether it comes from Seslij, Milosevic or Draskovic" (*WP*, June 1999), they are relying on their readers having short memories. Throughout the nationalist bloodletting that went along with counterrevolution in the former Yugoslavia, WP has backed each and every nationalist force. After pimping for the rights of the Ustasha-loving Croat nationalists, in 1992 in Vienna, they engaged in a "united front" action with Draskovic's Great Serbian monarchists and fascists against "imperialist aggression in the Balkans". They were chased off by Chetnik fascists (see "Vienna: Workers Power rallies with Serbian monarchists, Chetnik fascists", *Workers Hammer* no 132, November/December 1992). Then in 1994 they declared that since autumn 1992 the Bosnian Muslims "have been

CPGB...

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We reprint below a 12 March letter from the Spartacist League to the London Socialist Alliance under whose auspices the CPGB's "inquiry" was conducted.

To the London Socialist Alliance:

Re: The "commission of enquiry established by the LSA to look into events on this year's Bloody Sunday demonstration" (letter from Tina Becker/LSA, 4 March). There is no dispute over the fact that one Ian Donovan — then chairman of the London Socialist Alliance — physically assaulted comrade Eibhlin McDonald of the Spartacist League/Britain at the 30 January Bloody Sunday demonstration. This attack occurred in the presence of many witnesses, and all parties, including Donovan himself, agree that the attack by him against our comrade took place.

Thus, there is clearly nothing into which to "enquire". The straightforward duty of any organisation claiming to stand for workers democracy is to condemn this grotesque act of violence by Donovan against an Irish woman communist — an act more appropriate to the aims and methods of strikebreakers, cops and the British occupying forces in Northern Ireland than to avowed "socialists". As you are no doubt aware, a number of individuals and organisations on the left have condemned it.

For your part, however, you are engaged in a wilful cover-up for Donovan's cowardly act of thuggery. Your patently fraudulent "commission of enquiry", including the incredible suggestion that our party turn over internal materials dating back some thirteen years, is just that. But it is not only that.

It is also the reflexive defence by those

who share Donovan's present politics — if not his certifiably demented state of mind — of this manifestly indefensible outrage against the communist Spartacist League. As we wrote in our statement of 2 February: "Donovan is mentally unhinged and dangerous. Politically he is a Labourite toady and apologist for British imperialism, in the tradition of Arthur Henderson who led the cheering in parliament when James Connolly was shot by a British firing squad." Politically, Donovan is by no means alone, joined not least by the initiators of the sham "commission" who just happen to be fellow members of the London Socialist Alliance.

Among those LSA affiliates who have been most active in this are the CPGB/*Weekly Worker*. *Weekly Worker's* "Call for enquiry" (18 February) began by

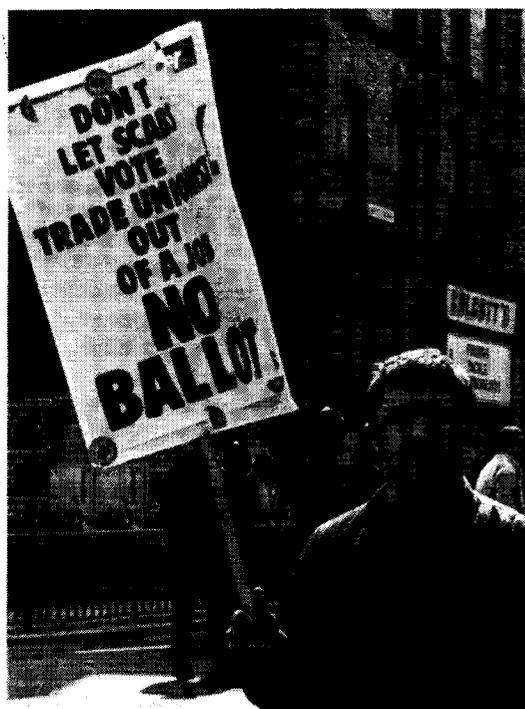
alibiing Donovan's attack through lurid "God that failed" lies of his being "chewed up" by the "nightmarish atmosphere" of the SL/B while a member in the mid-1980s. The meat of the article, however, was devoted to something else altogether: a six-paragraph snarl over the fact that our polemics against the CPGB's position for a scab ballot during the heroic 1984-85 miners strike — the most important class battle to have taken place in decades — hurt them "in the midst of our work around the Socialist Labour Party".

If the CPGB supporters of the scab ballot, and other elements, see fit to cohabit with a dangerous lunatic like Donovan within the London Socialist Alliance, such is life in the Labourite swamp. Your shared virulent hostility to the Leninist programme and practices of the Spartacist

League, including our polemical exposures of your respective political betrayals, is, in its own fashion, a recognition that we are not now, nor have we ever been, part of that swamp. However, putting yourselves at the service of Donovan's swinish physical assault on our comrade is a matter of another order.

Your "commission of enquiry" is itself a scandal. We naturally have nothing but contempt for this poisonous cover-up for violence within the workers movement. As is our duty, we will do our utmost to expose it for what it is to the left and working-class movement.

Andrew Gatsos
For the Spartacist League/Britain
British section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)



1984-85 heroic miners strike: CPGB denounced the miners union for not calling a ballot. Striking miners opposed ballot as invitation to scabs. Arthur Scargill, miners leader, under arrest during Battle of Orgreave 1984.

engaged in a just struggle against genocide" (*Workers Power*, May 1994).

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) see only imperialist "solutions", some more "effective" than others. They droned on through the war touting dim slogans such as "Bombs won't bring peace". During the bombing, the SWP promoted the European imperialist Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). This was an open call for imperialist intervention in Kosovo, an appeal to the SWP's "own" bourgeoisie to follow a different *tactical* approach. Needless to say, these supporters of the blood-drenched British troops in Northern Ireland since 1969 do not call for British imperialist troops out of the Balkans either. They reject the ABCs of Marxism: they did not oppose their "own" bourgeoisie and they did not defend Serbia.

Among the few exceptions to the "poor little Kosovo" and explicitly pro-Blair crowd was Scargill's Socialist Labour Party (SLP). The SLP rightly condemned Blair as a murderer, but then expressed gross illusions in the imperialist UN, complaining that the bombing was being carried out "without even the fig-leaf of a United Nations Security Resolution" (24 March press release). A more left-wing statement by the Normanton Constituency SLP titled "Defend Yugoslavia and Iraq — Fight Imperialism" nevertheless remained, like the press release, uncritical of Milosevic's virulent Serb chauvinism. In the April/May issue of its *Socialist News*, the SLP said nothing about defeating imperialism, hinted 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 called 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"! Then the May/June *Socialist News* carried an article explicitly urging support to Milosevic: "The anti-war movement here, and around the world, should support the Yugoslav people, including President Milosevic and the Serbs." In counterposition, our military defence of Serbia does not include a shred of support to the national chauvinist Milosevic, who must be overthrown through workers revolution.

Militants in the SLP who want to oppose British imperialism must understand that the Old Labour political tradition of the "parliamentary road to socialism", which the SLP and the Bennite "left" fondly hark back to, is anything but anti-imperialist. The "little England" nationalists of the pre-Blair Labour Party "left" stood four-square behind their "own" bourgeoisie as the British imperialists



End imperialist war through workers revolution! Revolutionary soldiers march through Moscow under the banner of Communism, 1917.

sliced up India, partitioned Ireland and subjected Asian women seeking admittance into Britain to "virginity testing". The ruling class will not hand over state power to the working class after a democratic election. The only way to end imperialist war is through workers revolution to smash the racist, capitalist system that breeds it.

The fake left's ideological prostration before their capitalist rulers over Kosovo reflects their many years of support to Western imperialism against the Soviet Union in the name of "democracy" and "human rights". During the anti-Soviet Cold War of the 1980s, WP et al avidly backed counterrevolutionary forces in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, from Polish Solidarność in the early 1980s to Boris Yeltsin's pro-imperialist "democrats" in 1991. Thus, in their own small way, they made a political contribution to the post-Soviet world of nationalist fratricide and increasing imperialist terror.

The pseudo-radical "anti-NATO" posture of the European left in fact reflects the heightened *nationalism* pushed by their respective bourgeoisies as the ideological accompaniment to increased economic competition. Having done their utmost to persuade the proletariat of their respective countries that capitalist "democracy" is superior to "Stalinist totalitarianism" (thus binding the workers to their class enemies) and having renounced any pretence to workers revolution, these "socialists" now look to imperialism as the guarantor of "democratic rights". Their common starting point is utter prostration before their "own" imperialisms in this regional aggression, portending a larger capitulation with the inevitable outbreak of a new inter-imperialist war — inevitable if the pro-

letariat does not seize power first. In acting *against* a proletarian revolutionary perspective, the centrists help to increase the possibility of wider wars.

Balkans cockpit for imperialist intrigues

Notably, the value of the Euro has fallen substantially since the start of the war. Far from sealing NATO unity, the war has only highlighted the divergent interests of the imperialist powers, and the end of the war will bring them further to the fore. While the US called the shots during the war, Britain's Tony Blair revelled in the attack. Tony Blair is not simply "Clinton's poodle", as the SWP would have it. Britain is an imperialist power in its own right. Today the British ruling class is conflicted as to whether its best interests lie with US imperialism or with German imperialism, hence its deep divisions over the European Union. While Germany and France jockeyed to undercut US dominance over the occupation force in Kosovo and Britain's SAS spearheaded the attack, Greece and Italy openly broke ranks and called for a pause in the bombing. And behind these differences lay conflicting economic interests. Commenting on a series of recent trade disputes, the *Economist* (8 May) warned: "Trade relations between America and Europe have rarely been so bad." The cost of the war was hard felt by the already sluggish European economies, raising fears that they could be plunged into recession. Now the toiling masses of Western Europe have been saddled by Blair and Clinton with the total bill for rebuilding areas devastated by the bombing. Meanwhile, historic tensions between Germany and France have also resurfaced. A flurry of books has been published recently in France with titles like *Germany Is Worrisome* and even *The Coming War with Germany*.

Tensions among the imperialist powers were compounded by deep differences on

their domestic political terrain. While Britain's Labour "lefts" and their "revolutionary" tails fell in behind the war aims of their "own" imperialist government, in Germany, social-democratic chancellor Gerhard Schröder's coalition partners, the Greens, almost split over the question of the bombing, posing a threat to the continued existence of the government. With Green leader Joschka Fischer serving as foreign minister in Schröder's government, these petty-bourgeois yuppie eco-radicals and erstwhile "pacifists" played a key role in the first war prosecuted by the German bourgeoisie since 1945. In fact, this was simply the logic of their earlier opposition to NATO from the standpoint of resurgent German nationalism. Fissures appeared even within Schröder's party, as key leader Oskar Lafontaine pulled out of the cabinet over Germany's subordination to the US-led NATO. In France, Socialist prime minister Lionel Jospin's coalition partners, the Communist Party and the bourgeois Movement of Citizens, openly opposed the bombing.

Reforge the Fourth International!

What is desperately needed is a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party which links the struggle against imperialist war to the proletarian struggle against capitalist exploitation and oppression and imbues the working class with the consciousness that it must seize state power and expropriate the bourgeoisie. In "War and the Fourth International" (1934), Trotsky wrote of the imperialist epoch:

"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: "The struggle against war means now the struggle for the Fourth International!"

In Britain, the working class is shackled by its pro-capitalist trade union misleaders to the Labour Party. Labourism is a strategic obstacle to mobilising the working class and oppressed in *class struggle* against British imperialism. But there is plenty of seething discontent at society's base, for example against the privatisation of hospitals and London Underground, and as shown in the protests against the war. While the trade union bureaucracy maintained a studied silence on Labour's devastation of Serbia, Blair's "victory" in the Balkans did not translate into electoral support in the European Parliament elections: Labour's traditional working-class base did not vote for them and the lowest electoral turnout since 1918 saw Labour defeated with only 28 per cent of the vote.

The bloodstained British imperialists whose Labour government led the war against Serbia in tandem with the US are the same racist rulers who carry out a relentless war at home against workers and all the oppressed. Competing with its imperialist rivals in a ruthless drive for profits, the strikebreaking ruling class has driven down the living standards of millions of working people and deprived them of decent, affordable housing, education and health care.

The victory of imperialism against tiny Serbia will only strengthen the ability of the ruling class to plunder the world. The rapacious British imperialists must be swept away through workers revolution. *Break with Labour!* The Spartacist League is committed to forging the revolutionary workers party needed to lead that struggle to victory in the oldest bastion of world imperialism.

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Make cheques payable/post to: Spartacist Publications, PO Box 1041, London NW6 3EU

Contact addresses

Spartacist League/Britain
PO Box 1041
London NW6 3EU
Tel: 0171-485 1396

Dublin Spartacist Group
PO Box 2944
Dublin 1
Tel: 01 855 8409

International Communist League
Box 7429 GPO
New York, New York 10116
United States

Balkans: SWP says NATO out... OSCE in!

In the eleven weeks that NATO pounded Serbia, wreaking devastation on a scale not seen in Europe since World War II, Blair's capitalist Labour government stood out as the most bloodthirsty of all the warring countries. The Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Group fought to win workers and youth to the understanding that only workers revolution can end imperialist war. The working class in each country must be mobilised for the over-

throw of its "own" bourgeoisie and the establishment of proletarian rule. It must be for the military defence of small countries against imperialist aggression. We said "Defeat imperialism through workers revolution — Defend Serbia!"

Young Spartacus

As opposed to groups like the Communist Party of Great Britain, the Alliance for Workers Liberty and Workers Power, who campaigned for NATO imperialism under the slogan of "Independence for Kosovo", the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) raised calls to "Stop this War" and for "Nato out of the Balkans", giving no support to the KLA, which has acted as a tool of imperialism. But the real position of the SWP is revealed in the absence of any call to defeat their "own" imperialism and to defend Serbia. Their call to "Stop this War" was an appeal to the imperialist powers to adopt a more "humane" policy, leaving the door open for the call for some other form of imperialist intervention. Hence they were not qualitatively different from the pro-NATO "left". The proof is in the fact that *the SWP called for imperialist troops in:* leading SWPer Alex Callinicos signed a letter along with bourgeois liberals like Noam Chomsky, blatantly appealing for an "alternative" imperialist intervention in the Balkans. This letter was published in the *New Statesman* (10 May) and in the June issue of the SWP's *Socialist Review*, and contains the following call:

"Nato is not the only or above all the best fulcrum for an agreement. One could find the elements of a multinational police force (embracing notably Serbs and Albanians) in the ranks of the OSCE to enforce a transitional agreement."

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is an imperialist agency dominated by the European bourgeoisies.

A Spartacist League speaker intervening from the floor at a 2 June meeting featuring Alex Callinicos declared of the SWP's support for OSCE troops: "For a group claiming to be Marxist this is scandalous and represents a gross capitulation

to Labourite social chauvinism. The SWP takes offence at a US-dominated force but are quite happy with a European one." Perhaps this is because they voted for each and every racist, imperialist social-democratic government that now rules Europe. Our comrade continued, "Their ideological prostration before imperialism reflects their many years support to Western imperialism against the Soviet Union in the name of 'democracy' and 'human rights'

of workers republics in the British Isles. Not Orange against Green, but class against class!

But the SWP supports the "peace" deal. After the signing of the Good Friday Agreement last year they wrote: "The only way to secure real peace in the future is if the British government stands up to Paisley and confronts the Orangemen during their anti-Catholic marching season" (*Socialist Worker*, 18 April 1998). In "Obsta-

cles on way to peace" (*Socialist Worker*, 3 July), they alibi the Labour government altogether, saying "Hardline Unionists, in cahoots with right wing papers like the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Times*, were doing their utmost to wreck the peace as the deadline for negotiations approached." They are peddling the illusion that "peace" can come about within the framework of capitalism, if only the Labour government will confront the "obstacles".

1991 imperialist-backed "countercoup" in the USSR signalled the final undoing of the Russian Revolution, that "Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing" (*Socialist Worker*, 31 August 1991).

We of the International Communist League (ICL) fought tooth and nail against counterrevolution in the USSR and Eastern Europe because we understood that — despite Stalinist bureaucratic deformation — the overthrow of capitalist rule and the establishment of collectivised property forms and centralised economic planning in those states represented gains for the international working class. That is why, like Trotsky, we fought for the unconditional military defence of those states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. We fought for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies, which sought accommodation with imperialism, selling out the gains of the proletarian property forms



Pro-UN Labour "left" Tony Benn at protest over bombing of Iraq, December 1998. SL protests bombing of Serbia, March 1999, denounces Labourite social chauvinism and fights for revolutionary overthrow of British imperialism.

and is consistent with the fact that they supported the deployment of troops, also under a Labour government, to Northern Ireland."

Indeed when the Labour government of Harold Wilson sent troops to Northern Ireland 30 years ago the SWP wrote, "The breathing space provided by the presence of British troops is short but vital" (*Socialist Worker*, 11 September 1969). What this support for their "own" bourgeoisie then, and now in the Balkans, have in common is a Labour government at the imperialist helm. We call for British and all other imperialist troops out of the Balkans now! *But the SWP neither calls for troops out of the Balkans nor do they call for British troops out of Northern Ireland now, proving their continuing support for the presence of the British Army.*

The Spartacist League has always called for *immediate, unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland*. We oppose the imperialist "peace" fraud, which is premised on the British troops remaining, and is nothing but a cover for continued terror against the oppressed Catholic minority by the RUC, the British Army and their Loyalist fascist auxiliaries. No just solution is possible short of workers revolution to smash British imperialism, the clericalist Irish capitalist state and the Orange statelet in the North. We fight for an Irish workers republic as part of a voluntary federation

Cheerleaders for counterrevolution

and leading to the restoration of capitalism. Today these fights remain urgently posed for the remaining deformed workers states — China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam.

The SWP's rationale for embracing counterrevolution was the lie that these states were not workers states, but "state capitalist". This "theory" originated from SWP founder Tony Cliff who abandoned Trotskyism in the late 1940s and whose group was subsequently kicked out of the Trotskyist Fourth International in 1950 for publicly opposing defence of the North Korean deformed workers state against US and British imperialism during the Korean War. Cliff's organisation was then nestled inside the ruling Labour Party, which swung in behind the US and sent troops to massacre the Koreans and later also the Chinese. *Over two million Koreans* were slaughtered in that war.

The untold misery for the working class and oppressed, fratricidal wars, and increased imperialist arrogance and rivalries ushered in by counterrevolution across Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union stand as bitter evidence of the treachery of the SWP's Labourite pro-imperialist record. But now, ten years after the fact, the SWP cynically denies the consequences of the counterrevolution they cheered for. A joint statement by the Cliffite groups in Britain, the US, Ger-

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