

**We said: Vote SLP—against New Labour and Socialist Alliance**

## Labour's victory means racist rampage, war on unions

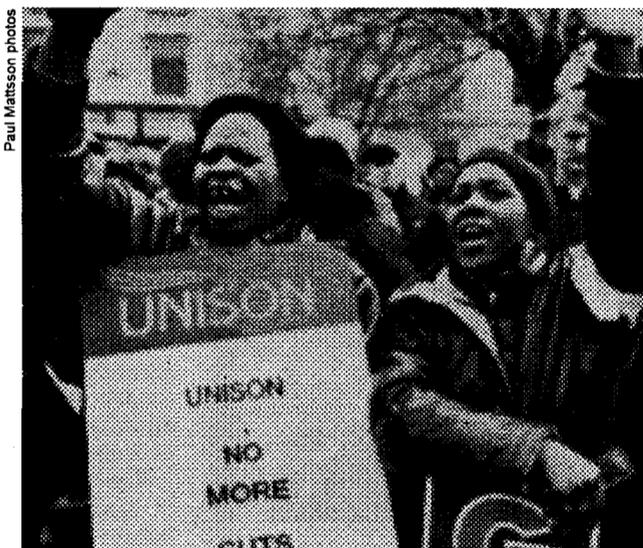
The 7 June general election returned Blair's New Labour to office with their huge parliamentary majority intact. But they are hated by millions of workers, youth and minorities. For most of the population the election was mind-numbingly boring—the outcome was a foregone conclusion and both Labour and Tories promised the same thing. Not surprisingly, the turnout was the lowest since 1918. We gave critical support to Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour Party (SLP) who ran against Blair's anti-working class New Labour and we used the opportunity to engage SLP members and others with our Marxist programme for international workers revolution. Our campaign found a resonance among workers and youth who were often horrified to learn that Socialist Alliance's "anti-Labour" campaign was subordinate to getting Labour elected.

For four years Labour has been waging unremitting attacks on the poor and the oppressed. Their record includes: privatisations, hundreds of thousands of job losses; a bigoted witch hunt against "sex offenders" and a huge assault on civil liberties. They eagerly participated in the bombing of Serbia in 1999; now they plan to send additional troops to the Balkans and to Northern Ireland. We say: British troops out now!

The bourgeois political establishment and media were near unanimous in support of Blair's re-election, saluting the job he has done so far. The deeply-divided Tories ran almost exclusively on xenophobia and were trounced at the polls. Labour matched the Tories, both in racist policies and demagoguery. This culminated in a huge escalation of racist terror and an ominously high level of electoral support for the fascist British National Party (BNP). In Oldham they polled 11,643 votes—almost 16 per cent—and got significant support in nearby Burnley. Asian areas in both towns have suffered fascist provocations and police occupation. We issued a leaflet (reprinted on page 3) calling for mobilising the social power of the working class to defend the Asian community in Oldham. We call for trade union/minority mobilisations to stop fascist provocations and fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants as part of the fight for workers revolution.

Unemployment levels in these and other former industrial towns in northern England are phenomenal, which makes them a breeding ground for fascism. Britain is increasingly divided along ethnic lines as well as geographically. The north/south divide—the bloated City of London and south east versus Scotland, Wales and the north of England—has been exacerbated by economic destruction and anti-working class attacks begun by Thatcher and

**Local government and health workers oppose Blair's privatisation plans, but union bureaucrats are tied to Labour.**



Paul Mattsson photos

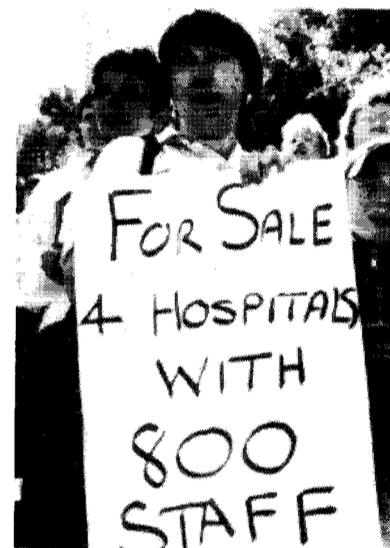


Photo: Paul Mattsson

pursued by Blair.

Today's Asian youth are the descendants of immigrants recruited during labour shortages but when the capitalists shut the factories and can no longer make profit from these workers they are dumped on the scrapheap and subjected to racist

"No vote to Labour: imperialist butchers!" and "No vote to Socialist Alliance, lackeys of Labour!" Ditto for their partners in the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP). The SA/SSP did *not* oppose the election of Labour. On the contrary, in the vast majority of constituencies there was no SA

Labour are so right-wing that bourgeois nationalist parties such as the Scottish National Party (SNP) and Plaid Cymru in Wales, as well as the Liberal Democrats, are able to pose as a "left" alternative—the latter just won the seat formerly held by Labour "left" Tony Benn. The SA and SSP go with the flow of national chauvinism on each terrain: the SA is a convergence of Labourite organisations based in England, dominated by the SWP and incorporating Workers Power, the Alliance for Workers Liberty and *Socialist Outlook*. The SSP is an equally reformist party created by Scottish Militant Labour who until the early 1990s were part of the English-chauvinist Labour Party but today tail the SNP. The Socialist Alliance demonstrated their fealty to British imperialism by consciously removing the call for British troops out of Northern Ireland from their election leaflets and from their website. Dave Nellist, SA chairman and leading light in Peter Taaffe's Socialist Party (SP), pointedly refused to call for it at the press conference which launched the SA's campaign. This is not new—the SP (like the SWP and AWL) never call for British troops out of Northern Ireland.

### We need socialist revolution!

terror. The multiethnic workers movement must take up the fight against racist terror, linked to a struggle for jobs for all through a shorter working week with no loss in pay, under a leadership that fights for what we need, not what capitalism can afford.

In Northern Ireland the election results showed a growing communalist polarisation. David Trimble's Ulster Unionists lost to Ian Paisley's more hardline DUP, while among Catholics Sinn Fein gained at the expense of the "moderate" Social Democratic and Labour Party. A wave of Loyalist attacks on Catholic school children in Belfast broke out in June. This prefigures the annual violent onslaught against Catholics during the Orange "marching season". From the outset, we have opposed the "peace" fraud and warned that any imperialist deal would necessarily be at the expense of the oppressed Catholic minority and contrary to the interests of working-class Protestants. We call for British troops out of Northern Ireland now and fight for workers revolution on both sides of the Irish border and both sides of the Irish Sea.

**For a revolutionary workers party!**

New Labour is despised by workers and minorities but many simply do not see an alternative. We said loud and clear:

candidate and in these areas the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) said vote Labour. Their line was: "vote Socialist where you can, vote Labour where you must" (*International Socialism*, Spring 2001).

We were pleased to give critical support to the SLP. Unlike the wretched Socialist Alliance, the SLP opposed voting for Labour and ran against Labour "lefts" such as Jeremy Corbyn and against Socialist Alliance. We seek to break the working class from Labourism and to win them to our revolutionary programme. As the Spartacist League/Britain statement of 14 May (reprinted page 4) said:

"The key question is what kind of party and programme does the working class need to represent its interests and those of all the oppressed—minorities, women, gays and youth—in the struggle against capitalism. We seek to build a party which is proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist, modelled on the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky which led the great October Revolution of 1917.

"The SLP, which raises many supportable demands, at bottom is nothing but a party of nostalgia: 'Clause IV socialists' looking to a Labourite past, not a socialist future."

Exemplifying our critical support to the SLP, on 19 May we issued a supplementary statement saying no vote to one SLP candidate—Gordon Potts—who is a probation officer and thus part of the capitalist state's apparatus of repression.

#### The fight against racist terror

Laying bare their parliamentary reformist framework, the Socialist Alliance responded to the racist terror in Oldham with the slogan: "Don't vote Nazi". They chose not to stand in Oldham, so this meant vote Labour. This is gross. Fascists are genocidal race-terrorists whose "policies" are the firebomb and the lynch rope. They cannot be stopped by electoralism; moreover Labour's racist administration has emboldened them. The urgent question in Oldham was how to defend the embattled Asian community but the slogan "Don't vote Nazi" was not directed at the victims of racist terror, it was an ap-

*continued on page 4*

# Lethal cop violence against leftist protesters in Sweden

We print below a 16 June statement of the ICL.

The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) vehemently protests the brutal attack by Swedish police — shooting into crowds and savaging demonstrators with attack dogs — during the European Union (EU) summit in Göteborg! *We demand the immediate release of all arrested protesters!*

This is the first time in memory that cops in any West European country have fired live ammunition at demonstrators. One young protester was critically wounded and may die. Those bullets that struck anarchist youth were aimed at the working class of Europe, which increasingly is combatting through strikes and

**Göteborg, 15 June: Protester critically wounded by riot police gun-fire.**



ITN photos

protests the all-sided effort to eliminate jobs and social services. The shootings in Göteborg were a deadly message by the

European Union to the workers of Europe.

To a man, the social-democratic heads of state gathered in Göteborg saluted the cop attack and denounced the young protesters. Taking hypocrisy to new heights, British Labour prime minister Tony Blair denounced the “thuggery” of the protesters. German Social Democratic chancellor Gerhard Schröder railed, “We have to pursue these rioters with all the might of the law.” Their law is to protect their capitalist order and their whole system of exploitation and injustice.

The mask is off — this is the real face of “social Europe.” After this, who can believe the lies pushed by the labor misleaders and reformist leftists who peddle illusions in this gang of murderers and thieves? The blood on the streets of Göteborg reveals what the masses of the semicolonial world and ethnic minorities in the imperialist metropolises experience all the time. Now it is increasingly becoming the norm for cop assaults on “anti-globalization” protesters. With international economic recession looming, what’s necessary is to mobilize the labor movement in defense of its own class interests and the interests of all of the oppressed against the rapacious capitalist rulers.

The bloody attack on anarchist youth came only a day after U.S. president George Bush visited Göteborg to push his crazed plans for nuclear first strike capability through a “national missile defense.” The Bush visit underlined the growing divisions between U.S. imperialism and its would-be EU imperialist rivals. Goran Persson, the Swedish prime

minister and current EU president, stated, “The EU is the only counterweight against the raw game of market forces and the world domination of the U.S.A.”

The ICL solidarizes with the protests against imperialist warmonger Bush. However, workers and youth must be won to the consciousness that the *main enemy is at home* — their own ruling class! The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet workers state has ushered in sharpened competition among these imperialist powers for markets and spheres of exploitation which is driving the world toward nuclear war. Already we have seen, in the NATO onslaught against Serbia (and the continuing occupation of the Balkans), the first war on European soil since 1945.

The youthful anarchist protesters who lashed out against the symbols of capitalist exploitation in Göteborg have their hearts in the right place. We understand all too clearly such acts of outrage and frustration against this brutal system. All our sympathies are with the self-sacrificing protesters, even though we do not share the same political perspective. A single isolated hero cannot replace the mass struggle.

We revolutionary Marxists seek to mobilize the power of the multiethnic proletariat in *class* struggle, not just to protest the capitalist system but to *eradicate it*. We fight to forge the *Leninist vanguard parties* needed to lead the *working class* to sweep away the *capitalist exploiters and their state* and to build a *workers state* and an *egalitarian socialist society*. ■



TROTSKY

## Lenin on bourgeois democracy

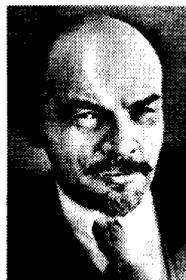
*While parliamentary election campaigns provide revolutionaries with heightened opportunities to intervene with our programme, we understand that bourgeois (parliamentary) democracy disguises the reality of the domination of the exploiters over the exploited and oppressed. Our goal, as stated in a document written by Bolshevik leader VI Lenin for the founding of the Communist International, is a proletarian revolution which expropriates*

*the capitalist class and establishes a government of democratically elected workers councils (soviets), a transition to a world communist society in which there will be no classes and no state.*

In explaining the class nature of bourgeois civilization, bourgeois democracy, and the bourgeois parliamentary system, all socialists have expressed the idea formulated with the greatest scientific precision by Marx and Engels, namely, that the most democratic bourgeois republic is no more than a machine for the suppression of the working class by the bourgeoisie.... There is not a single revolutionary, not a single Marxist among those now shouting against dictatorship and for democracy who has not sworn and vowed to the workers that he accepts this basic truth of socialism. But now, when the revolutionary proletariat is in a fighting mood and taking action to destroy this machine of oppression and to establish proletarian dictatorship, these traitors to socialism claim that the bourgeoisie have granted the working people “pure democracy,” have abandoned resistance, and are prepared to yield to the majority of the working people. They assert that in a democratic republic there is not and never has been any such thing as a state machine for the oppression of labor by capital....

Only the soviet organization of the state can really effect the immediate breakup and total destruction of the old, i.e., bourgeois, bureaucratic and judicial machinery, which has been, and has inevitably had to be, retained under capitalism even in the most democratic republics, and which is...the greatest obstacle to the practical implementation of democracy for the workers and the working people generally. The Paris Commune took the first epoch-making step along this path. The soviet system has taken the second.

— VI Lenin, “Theses on Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat” (March 1919)



LENIN

## WORKERS HAMMER



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

Published by the Central Committee of the Spartacist League, British section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

EDITOR: Jo Watt  
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Kate Kelsey  
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mick Connor

Spartacist Publications, PO Box 1041, London NW5 3EU  
E-mail: WorkersHammer@compuserve.com  
Subscriptions: £3 for 1 year; Europe outside Britain & Ireland £4; overseas airmail £7

Opinions expressed in signed articles do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.  
The closing date for news in this issue is 30 June.  
Printed by Cherwell Valley Lithographic Ltd (TU). ISSN 0267-8721

JUST OUT!

**Spartacist**  
(English Edition)

No 56  
Spring 2001  
64 pages, £1

Spartacist is sent to  
all Workers Hammer  
subscribers.

Make cheques payable/mail to:  
Spartacist Publications  
PO Box 1041  
London NW5-3EU



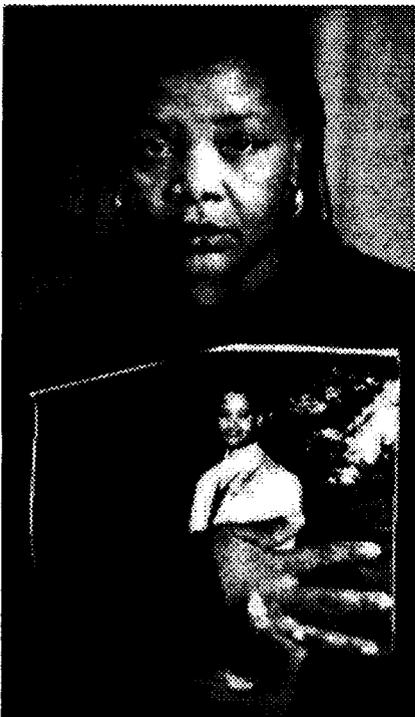
# Labour rules for racist imperialism: we need workers rule!

We reprint below a Spartacist League leaflet published in response to fascist and cop terror against the Asian community in Oldham. There has since been an escalation of deadly racist attacks across the country. In nearby Burnley, fascist provocations, including an attack on an Asian taxi-driver by hammer-wielding thugs, sparked a cop siege of the Asian community. Shahid Malik, a member of Labour's National Executive, was beaten unconscious by the racist police. Ominously, the British National Party polled more than 15,000 votes in Oldham and Burnley.

On 4 June, the inquest opened in Telford, Shropshire, into the death of Errol McGowan, a black man found hanged in July 1999. He was on a Combat 18 hit list and the family had been subjected to a series of racist attacks and death threats from thugs associated with this fascist terror group. Six months later, his nephew Jason McGowan was found hanged from railings near his home. Shortly before the inquest opened a prominent member of the McGowan Family Campaign, Johnny Elliot, was also found hanged in Telford. His wife has gone into hiding fearing for herself and their daughter.

The lynching of black people is the calling card of the Ku Klux Klan. Race terrorists are growing in the climate created by Labour ministers, particularly previous home secretary Jack Straw, in their relentless attacks on the rights of immigrants and asylum seekers: these murders are the direct result.

For five weeks the black and Asian population in Oldham have been subjected to repeated provocations by the National Front (NF) and British National Party (BNP) fascists. For Asians and blacks, Saturdays have become known as "no-go days" or "National Front days" in the town centre. On Saturday, 26 May, fascist gangs attacked Asian homes: a pregnant Asian woman had a brick thrown through her window; racist scum jumped on a parked car while an Asian woman and child were inside, smashing the windscreen. Asian



Andrew Fox

Doreen McGowan holding picture of her son Jason, found hanged in Telford after fighting to discover the truth about his uncle Errol's death.

youth organised to defend themselves and riot police moved in to quell the angry protests. Scenes of blazing police vans illuminated the reality of British capitalism and highlighted the despair of Asian youth in a racist dead-end town who have been pushed beyond the limit of their endurance. We say: *Drop the charges against all arrested Asian youth!*

Urgently needed is trade-union centred protest against the police occupation of the Asian community. This means drawing in the power of the urban working class of the Manchester area so that besieged minority youth in this enclave of Oldham, a run-down former mill town, are not left to go it alone against the organised violence of the state, its cops, courts and prisons.

Tony Blair said "we give 100% support to the police on the law and order issue



Odd Anderson/AFP

Oldham: Riot cops move in to suppress Asian youth defending themselves against fascist provocations.

**Oldham: Down with police  
occupation of Asian areas!  
For union/minority mobilisations!**

on race relations" and sanctimoniously condemned the "white extremists" for racism (*Guardian*, 29 May). This is rich. Labour's relentless anti-immigrant, anti-asylum campaigns have fanned the flames of racism and given the green light to the fascist vermin. We demand full citizenship rights for all immigrants! For the right of asylum! Under Labour and Tories alike the capitalist system of production for profit has resulted in massive de-industrialisation in towns like Oldham, perpetuating the conditions which provide a fertile breeding ground for the NF and BNP.

No-one should have illusions that voting Labour will be any kind of barrier to the growth of fascism. The Spartacist League says: No vote to Labour — imperialist butchers! This is a necessary part of the political struggle to break the working class from Labourism and to forge a multi-ethnic revolutionary party. Labour rules for racist British imperialism; they are the bloody bombers of Serbia and Iraq and overseers of British army repression in Northern Ireland. We also say: no vote to the Socialist Alliance, servile lackeys of Blair & Co. The Socialist Alliance parliamentary cretins held an election rally in Brixton three nights after Oldham erupted without even solidarising with the embattled Asian youth in five presentations from the platform. *Socialist Worker* (2 June) harps on about the fact the "Cops let Nazi thugs rampage in Oldham", as if they might be expected to act differently. The cops — the armed fist of the bosses' state — are not "neutral", but defenders of the fascist scum and enforcers of the daily racism and deprivation meted out to minorities. *Socialist Worker* concludes: "Don't Vote Nazi". Such calls to repudiate the fascists (and the Tories) at the polls are typical of reformist schemes to push Labour as a "lesser evil" and a way to "fight the right".

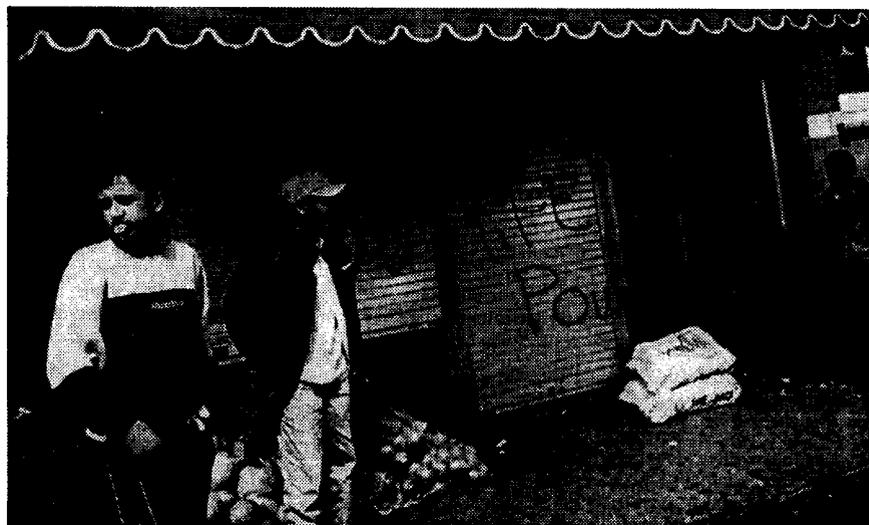
Fascists are race-terrorists whose ultimate target is the destruction of the entire workers movement. As the Nazis were in Germany, so too the British fascists are kept in reserve as the capitalists' "dogs of war" to be unleashed in times of extreme social crisis. They feed off the economic

devastation and de-industrialisation in places like Oldham. The provocations of these extra-parliamentary gangs can and must be met by the mobilisation of the social power of the workers movement acting at the head of all the oppressed. We call for mass union/minority mobilisations to crush the fascists! It is not only the duty of the workers movement but in its immediate and direct interest to take such action. The political obstacle to such mobilisations is the Labourite trade union

bloody partition of India, we look to the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky which led the 1917 Russian October Revolution.

The question of how to fight racist terror is a clear example of the difference between our programme and that of the SLP. For its part, the SLP is standing as its candidate in Newcastle one Gordon Potts — a probation officer and therefore a cop, part of the capitalist state. This is a crystallised expression of the SLP's parliamentary reformism. No amount of "socialist" MPs in parliament, no amount of tinkering with the worst excesses of the state or whitewash "inquiries" can get to the root of racial oppression: the capitalist system. We say: No vote to Gordon Potts! Cops and prison guards do not belong in the workers movement!

The situation facing racial minorities in



Super/New York Times

Shop-front in Oldham defaced with racist graffiti. Minority youth face future of no jobs and growing racist attacks.

bureaucracy — loyal to the capitalist system, preaching the inviolability of its state and implacably hostile to such independent mobilisations of the working class.

We are giving critical support to the Socialist Labour Party (SLP) whose campaign draws a class line, albeit crudely, against Blair's anti-working-class New Labour. They are standing *against* Labour, including the so-called "lefts", and refusing to call for a vote to Labour elsewhere. But we counterpose our revolutionary programme to the SLP's programme which is Old Labour parliamentary reformism — a programme which has always served British imperialism. While the SLP harks back to the 1945 Labour government which presided over the

Oldham — racist attacks, police terror, no jobs, grinding poverty and appalling social conditions — illustrates the vicious and irrational workings of British capitalism. During labour shortages immigrant workers are brought in to do the lowest paid and dirtiest jobs; when no longer needed they are discarded. In Oldham, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and black Caribbean workers once worked in the textile mills, but as in Bradford and elsewhere they have been pushed out of the workforce by the devastation of manufacturing industry. Unemployment levels for the Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities are as high as 25 per cent and most of this generation of youth, particularly mi-

continued on page 9

## Spartacist League election statement

# Vote Socialist Labour Party, against New Labour!

MAY 14 — In the general election the Spartacist League says no vote to Labour, which promises only to carry out more of the same racist, anti-working-class policies they have dished out over the past four years, and we say no vote to the Socialist Alliance whose campaign is subordinate to getting Labour re-elected. We urge a vote for the Socialist Labour Party (SLP) which is running an independent working-class campaign that draws a class line, however crudely, *against* the Labour Party. Unlike the misnamed Socialist Alliance the SLP refuses to call for a vote to Labour and is willing to stand against so-called Labour "lefts" such as Jeremy Corbyn. Labour has whipped up a racist frenzy which is inciting deadly attacks on the minority population. Blair's brutal crackdown on the fuel protesters was a measure of his commitment to enforcing capitalist austerity. From the war on Serbia to the British Army siege of Catholic areas in Northern Ireland to the ongoing bombing of Iraq, the Labour government are imperialist butchers.

We refused to call for a vote to Ken Livingstone — a zealous supporter of the bombing of Serbia — when he ran for mayor of London; needless to say the Socialist Alliance backed him. This month Livingstone and Blair unleashed thousands of cops on May Day protesters in London. The Spartacist League says: Defend the May Day protesters! Drop all the charges!

In contrast to the Socialist Alliance, the SLP forthrightly calls for British troops out of Northern Ireland. The SLP calls for a united Ireland. We oppose the forcible reunification of Ireland which would mean reversing the existing terms of oppression. The only just solution is one in which the rule of capital is overthrown on both sides of the Irish border and both sides of the

Irish Sea. We fight for an end to the oppression of the Catholic minority in the North and oppose the imperialist-brokered "peace" fraud which is necessarily at the expense of the oppressed Catholic minority and won't do any good for working-class Protestants either. We say: Troops out now! For a workers republic in Ireland as part of a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles!

The SLP raises some demands which we fully support, not least the call for the abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords and the right of self-determination for Scotland and Wales. They also call for free abortion on demand and for rebuilding health and public services, including re-nationalisation of rail and public utilities such as gas, water and electricity. These demands speak to the felt anger of working people against the crimes of the capitalist system.

The key question is what kind of party and programme does the working class need to represent its interests and those of all the oppressed — minorities, women, gays and youth — in the struggle against capitalism. We seek to build a party which is proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist, modelled on the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky which led the great October Revolution of 1917.

The SLP, which raises many supportable demands, at bottom is nothing but a party of nostalgia: "Clause IV socialists" looking to a Labourite past, not a socialist future. "Clause IV", which promised "common ownership", was written into Labour's constitution at a time when workers were electrified by the impact of the Bolshevik Revolution. The myths about "common ownership" were concocted deliberately to dupe workers into believing that "socialism" could be achieved *without* a workers revolution,

and through parliament. The SLP harks back to the supposed "good old days" of Clement Attlee's post-World War II Labour government which nationalised huge swathes of British industry in what amounted to an enormous capitalist bailout of failing enterprises. These companies were then subsidised by working people through high taxes and low wages while the former owners were given exorbitant rates of compensation. Attlee's Labour government were imperialist butchers who presided over the bloody partition of India and crushed the Communists in the Greek Civil War.

The Blair government's mania for privatisation exceeds even that of Thatcher — the air traffic control system and the London Tube are on the list. We oppose privatisations, which always mean attacks on unions, jobs and working conditions, throwing safety to the wind. But for revolutionaries, the answer is not a return to the bad old days of British Rail à la the SLP, or Ken Livingstone's bonds-

plus-public ownership scheme, which again subordinates the operation of public transport to the overall dictates of the capitalist system. Livingstone has hired Bob Kiley, a notorious union-buster and former CIA operative to run the city transport system. Workers are currently engaged in one-day strikes over safety. Bob Crow, the chief rail union bureaucrat who was long a prominent SLP stalwart, has done his utmost to channel workers' anger into support for Livingstone/Kiley. Tube workers were infuriated when Crow called off a recent strike.

Our programme is for *expropriation* of transport without compensation to the capitalist bosses *as part of the struggle for a workers government and the establishment of a planned economy*. Expropriate private rail and bus — no compensation! Urban transportation ought to be free — rip out the ticket barriers! Such a programme is incompatible with the perspective of Scargill's SLP. We fight for a powerful industrial union embracing rail, Underground and bus workers. Workers must rely on their own strength and must be mobilised independent of the capitalists and their state. The unions need a class-struggle leadership, not sell-outs like Bob Crow. The only way to get a safe, reliable transport system that also meets the needs of the workers in the industry is by the overthrow of capitalism through the seizure of power by the proletariat.

The SLP's opposition to imports of

*continued on page 9*

## No vote to Gordon Potts! Cops out of the unions!

19 May — We learned today that the SLP is standing one Gordon Potts, a Probation Service tutor and activist in the National Association of Probation Officers cop "union", as candidate for Newcastle upon Tyne Central. Probation officers, like police and prison guards, are part of the capitalist state — the bosses' "bodies of armed men" for the preservation of capitalist property, exploitation and oppression. *They do not belong in the workers movement!* We say: *No vote to Gordon Potts!*

The SLP is running a supportable campaign drawing a class line against Blair's anti-working-class New Labour. The Spartacist League is giving critical support to the SLP. But at the same time, standing Mr Potts is a crystallised expression of the SLP's "Clause IV" parliamentary reformism, which is based on the deadly illusion that the capitalist state, its parliament, cops, probation officers, etc, are "neutral" and can be used by the working class to achieve socialism.

## Election...

*(Continued from page 1)*

peal to potential BNP voters! *Socialist Worker* (16 June) scandalously gave sympathetic interviews to BNP supporters, supposedly attempting to win the argument "with people who voted for the BNP that we need black, white and Asian unity to fight for better living conditions for everyone". The article pretends that: "The majority of people who voted for the Nazis are not hardcore racists. Some fell for the idea that voting BNP was a protest vote." In other words these "softcore" racists are "lapsed" Labour voters whom the SWP seeks to win back into the fold.

### Critical support in action

Arthur Scargill had a field day making fun of the Socialist Alliance — for their support to Blair, their constant whining about the SLP "splitting the left vote" and their appeals to the SLP to join the Alliance. At a 4 June SLP meeting in London, there was laughter as he banged the table saying the groups who now form SA have in the past wanted to join the SLP, but they also wanted to continue supporting New Labour: "You're almost like an unrequited lover" he shouted, "we don't want you... For Christ's sake get it through your heads."

Our critical support met contradictory responses. Some SLP branches were split down the middle over whether to accept our offer to canvass for their candidates. Two London branches — Islington North and Hornsey/Wood Green — rejected, saying they wanted "full support" not "critical support". But in the spirit of the united front we used our own leaflet and made placards calling for votes to the two SLP candidates there — Steve Cook and Ella Rule. Rule belongs to the Stalin-worshipping wing of the SLP and is vehemently anti-Trotsky. Our comrades joked that the placard for her should read: "Vote for Stalinist MisRule!". By contrast Manchester SLP members welcomed our comrades. We helped distribute SLP election leaflets door-to-door and they expressed their appreciation by publishing a photograph of the canvassing team on their website. In most areas the SLP did little or no campaigning and thus were able to tap into only a fraction of working-class anger against Blair.

Many members of the SLP come from a Stalinist background and some got their first introduction to genuine Trotskyism in the campaign. We Trotskyists uniquely fought against counterrevolution in the USSR. In August 1991 we sought to mobilise Soviet workers to defend and preserve the gains of the October 1917 revolution which had been betrayed by decades of Stalinist misrule, but not overthrown

until 1991-92. We fought for unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of Eastern Europe against imperialism and capitalist restoration. This is also our programme today for the remaining deformed workers states — China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam. We call for proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucratic caste, whose conciliation of imperialism and "market reforms" weaken the planned economy and increase the danger of counterrevolution.

The fake-Trotskyist outfits all joined with their own capitalist rulers in fighting for the destruction of the Soviet Union and the Eastern European deformed workers states and today refuse to defend China against imperialism. Within the SLP, the dominant force on the Russian question is the Indian Workers Association (IWA) which regards China as a "socialist" country and opposes counterrevolution but has no programme to prevent it. According to the IWA, the problems in the USSR began

*continued on page 8*

**Spartacist**  
(English edition)

**No 55**  
Autumn 1999  
56 pages, £1

Spartacist is sent to all  
*Workers Hammer* subscribers

Make cheques payable/send to:  
Spartacist Publications  
PO Box 1041  
London NW5 3EU



# Ireland's "neutrality" is a lie

DUBLIN — On 7 June the Irish government held a referendum on the Nice Treaty, which lays the groundwork for the expansion of the EU to Eastern Europe and for the establishment of a European Rapid Reaction Force. Although nearly two thirds of the electorate didn't vote, the referendum was defeated by 54 per cent. The Dublin Spartacist Group advocated a No vote and welcome the outcome which was a slap in the face to the government and means that the Nice Treaty cannot be ratified by the EU until it is approved in a future referendum in Ireland. We revolutionary proletarian internationalists oppose the European Union as an imperialist trade bloc, which is a vehicle for co-operation among the European capitalists to attack workers and minorities and to compete against their imperialist rivals in the US and Japan.

Fortress Europe has meant a tightening of immigration controls and "Fortress Ireland" is a racist nightmare for those immigrants who manage to get here. Over the past year, Irish immigration cops have been stationed in French ports to intercept potential asylum seekers and immigrants, resulting in a 95 per cent drop in the number of claims for asylum in Rosslare port. For full citizenship rights for all immigrants! For the right of asylum!

Those who voted against the treaty did so for various reasons: out of fear that the expansion of the EU would mean fewer subsidies for Ireland, to defend Ireland's "neutrality" and from reactionary opposition to abortion (which the treaty does not include). It is a feature of referendums that you can't distinguish your No vote from those in opposition for quite different reasons — in this case including clericalist and nationalist reactionary forces.

The Labour Party and most of the trade union bureaucracy joined the government in calling for a Yes vote on the Nice Treaty. The ATGWU and the reformist left like the Socialist Party and the newly-launched Socialist Alliance (which includes the Socialist Workers Party [SWP] and the USec's Socialist Democracy) called to vote against the treaty. These groups opposed the treaty from a left-nationalist perspective of defending Irish "neutrality". This was also the stance of Sinn Fein, the Green Party and sundry bourgeois pacifists and liberals such as the Peace and Neutrality Alliance.

The Socialist Alliance campaigned under the slogan "NO to a corporate Europe, NO to a military Europe" and stated:

"All this means that Irish neutrality is finished. Irish neutrality was often inconsistent and used as a cover to hide how Irish foreign policy was aligned with the US. "Yet the Nice Treaty goes much further and dispenses with any obstacles to Irish soldiers joining a Euro army to protect the

colonial ambitions of the multi-nations."  
— undated Socialist Alliance fact sheet

Likewise, the ATGWU claimed that the Nice Treaty would mean "opening up the possibility of Irish military participation in conflicts in Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe" (*Irish Times*, 8 May). These statements bury the role of Irish troops who have been deployed around the world as part of UN "peace-keeping" missions for decades to defend the interests of the imperialists and those of the Irish bourgeoisie. Currently hundreds of Irish troops are stationed in the Balkans, Lebanon and East Timor where the presence of Ireland's "neutrality" is used to cover up the fact that they are in fact part of the *imperialist troops*. We demand: British/Irish and all imperialist troops out of the Balkans, East Timor and the Near East! Smash NATO through workers revolution!

For workers in Ireland, the main enemy is the Irish capitalist class. The Irish bourgeoisie attacks the workers and oppressed at home and lines up with one or another imperialist power because that is where their class interests lie. Ireland's "neutrality" has always been a nationalist myth. There was nothing neutral about Ireland's attitude towards NATO's anti-Soviet Cold War. This policy was laid out for the first Irish UN delegation: "Ireland was to do what she could to preserve Christian civilisation and to support wherever she could those powers primarily charged with the defence of 'the free world' against communism" (*Ireland Since the Famine*, FSL Lyons [1971]). Today the imperialists target the Chinese deformed workers state. While an EU military arm could potentially be a competitor of NATO, the European and US imperialists have a common interest in fomenting capitalist counterrevolution in China. Thus the current issue of *NATO Review* states, "Asia, too, is an area about which Americans and Europeans must learn to think in unison... This is especially the case with respect to China" (quoted in the *Phoenix*, 8 June). For their part, the reformists, who joined with their own bourgeoisie in cheering the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, today oppose defending China against the imperialists. We stand for the unconditional military defence of China against imperialism and internal



Conor O'Clery

East Timor: Irish soldiers form part of imperialist occupation forces.

counterrevolution.

The SWP and Socialist Party claim to oppose the "militarisation" of Europe, but they supported the re-election of Blair's British Labour government which only two years ago was the most belligerent bomber of Serbia. Likewise the Socialist Party is opposed to the basic demand for the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland, and while the SWP raises this call in Ireland, they don't in Britain — where it counts! Labour's imperialist "peace" deal is a lie, British troops out now!

Far-right clerical nationalists opposed the Nice Treaty: the No to Nice Campaign headed by former High Court judge Rory O'Hanlon was run from the offices of the Youth Defence anti-abortion bigots. These groups oppose the "liberalisation" of Ireland which they blame on Ireland's integration into the EU. But Ireland remains a deeply reactionary clericalist state where abortion is banned by the constitution in all cases except where the woman's life is threatened (but in practice not even available then). The main parties, including Labour, refuse to touch this explosive social issue.

There have been no substantive changes to the law although there were tremendous social struggles in the early 1990s around

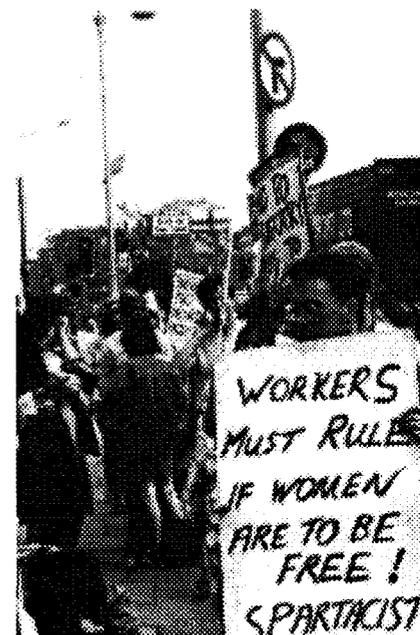
abortion rights. At the time the Dublin Spartacist Youth Group fought for a class-centred struggle for free abortion on demand. While the potential to wage such a fight was palpable, the fake-left groups consciously tailored their demands to "constitutional" reform.

To wrest the right to free abortion on demand means to take on the combined power of the church and the clericalist state. Without a perspective to struggle for proletarian state power, the reformists concentrated on subminimal tinkering. Their major campaign was the "Repeal the 8th Amendment Campaign" which we described as the "Keep Abortion Illegal Campaign" since it didn't touch the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act which firmly prohibits abortion. The right to abortion is a necessary part of the fight against women's oppression. For the separation of church and state! For free abortion on demand!

The only way to liberate the working class, women and all the oppressed is through socialist revolution. The DSG fights to build a Leninist vanguard party in Ireland necessary to lead such a revolution. For an Irish workers republic in a federation of workers republics in the British Isles, part of a Socialist United States of Europe! ■



Sygm



Workers Hammer

Dublin: 1992 protest against High Court anti-abortion ruling (left). Spartacists fight for free abortion on demand.

Visit the ICL  
web site!

[www.icl-fi.org](http://www.icl-fi.org)

# Free Mumia Abu-Jamal now!

## Prosecutors, press try to bury new evidence of innocence

The Philadelphia district attorney's office, with the aid of a shameless black-out by the capitalist media outside Philly, is doing everything in its power to make sure that dramatic new evidence of Mumia Abu-Jamal's innocence will never be heard in court — or anywhere else. On 4 May, Jamal's new legal team filed affidavits that blew to bits the frame-up that railroaded him to death row for the 1981 killing of Philadelphia policeman Daniel Faulkner. The affidavits included the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly in 1999 that he shot Faulkner and that "Jamal had nothing to do with the shooting." In his own affidavit, Mumia says categorically, "I did not shoot Police Officer Daniel Faulkner. I had nothing to do with the killing of Officer Faulkner. I am innocent."

In new papers filed on 29 May, Mumia's attorneys point out, "It is a rare habeas petitioner who is able to come before the United States District Court with a full blown confession from the true perpetrator of the offense of which the Petitioner was convicted and which proves that the Petitioner is innocent." But the prosecutors and the capitalist rulers they represent could not care less about Mumia's innocence. They want to execute Jamal because they see in this black journalist, MOVE supporter and former Black Panther Party spokesman a symbol of defiant opposition to their system of racist repression. They want to execute Jamal in order to send a chilling message to all those who challenge cop

made to allow illegal activity including prostitution, gambling, drugs without prosecution in the center city area." Beverly went on to state that police officers were present in the vicinity when Faulkner was shot on 9 December 1981. "I was not worried about the police being there since I believed that since I was hired by the mob to shoot and kill Faulkner, any police officers on the scene would be there to help me."

The prosecution and its local media mouthpieces claim it is "ridiculous" that Beverly could have been hired by cops or the mob to kill Faulkner. Although lie detector tests are certainly not foolproof, they are routinely used by police and government agencies and are admissible in many courts. It is notable that the prosecution is attempting to discredit Beverly as an inveterate liar with the claim that he failed two lie detector tests. But like every prosecution fabrication that preceded it, this new lie was blown away on 29 May when Mumia's lawyers submitted Beverly's actual polygraph reports. According to an affidavit of polygraph expert Dr Charles Honts, he administered two lie detector tests in 1999 and concluded Beverly was being truthful each time. The *only* time Beverly was being deceptive was when he *denied* being the one who shot Faulkner. Honts also concluded that an earlier test performed by another examiner was "irremediably flawed and without probative value".

Yet while trying to dismiss Beverly as

Mumia Abu-Jamal during interview with *Workers Vanguard* from death row, 1996.



Workers Vanguard

than three FBI investigations, and police brass were hysterical about the possibility of informants. Among the targets were James Carlini, head of homicide; John DeBenedetto, Chief of the Central Division where Faulkner worked; and Inspector Alphonse Giordano, the senior cop at the scene of Faulkner's shooting. The federal probes ultimately led to the convictions of over two dozen cops, including DeBenedetto and Giordano. Carlini was an unindicted co-conspirator. After testifying against DeBenedetto, one FBI informant was gunned down and an ex-cop linked to Giordano was named as a suspect in the murder. Now Beverly's account of Faulkner's killing has been backed up by the "Straight Scoop" columnist in the *Philadelphia New Observer* (16 May), who reported: "I heard this very, same story over a month before the local media released it. The sad tale came from a cop who works a downtown detail."

Beverly's account was also buttressed by the affidavit filed on 4 May of Jamal's brother, Billy Cook, who reported that his partner, Kenneth "Poppi" Freeman, was a passenger in Cook's VW when it was pulled over by Faulkner the night of the shooting. While Billy was looking in the back of the car for his own's registration, Freeman got out of the VW, shots were fired and then Freeman was gone. "Later Poppi talked about a plan to kill Faulkner," Cook said. "He told me that he was armed on that night and participated in the shooting." Cook's friend Arnold Howard testified at Jamal's 1995 Post-Conviction Relief (PCRA) hearing that he had loaned Freeman his driver's licence the night of the killing; that licence was found on Faulkner's body. Howard also reported that Freeman said he'd been present at the scene of the shooting.

Indeed, Beverly's account is corroborated in numerous ways. Beverly asserts that he and another man were hired to shoot Faulkner; no less than five witnesses during Mumia's 1982 trial and subsequent post-conviction hearings said they saw one or more black males flee the scene of the shooting. Beverly says that he shot Faulkner and then "Jamal was shot shortly after that by a uniformed police officer who arrived on the scene." After debriefing the cops on the scene that night, homicide officers

told the medical examiner's office that Jamal was shot by "arriving police reinforcements". But at the trial, the prosecution claimed Jamal was shot by Faulkner in self-defence.

A centre-piece of the prosecution's case in 1982 was the claim that Jamal yelled out a "confession" when he was taken to the hospital for treatment of his near-fatal gunshot wound. The supposed "confession" was only raised by cops *two months after* that night. The cop assigned to guard Jamal from the time of his arrest to his treatment at the hospital filed an official report at the time stating, "During this time, the negro male made no comments." In his affidavit, Mumia states emphatically, "Because of the blood in my lungs it was difficult to speak, and impossible to holler. I never confessed to anything because I had nothing to confess to."

In another statement submitted on 4 May, Temple University professor and journalist Linn Washington tells how a hospital worker and another reporter told him when he visited the hospital that "police were beating Mr. Abu-Jamal in the ER". A veteran police reporter, Washington describes being shocked by the "total lack of police" when he visited the shooting scene less than five hours after the shooting, saying it brought to mind other instances of "police destruction of a crime scene", the most memorable being after the 1978 cop siege of the MOVE Powelton Village house. When one cop was killed by police crossfire, the cops razed the house to cover their tracks. Nine MOVE members were framed up and convicted for the murder.

In the 29 May papers, Jamal's attorneys advised Federal District Court judge William Yohn that they will be filing a new post-conviction relief petition in the Pennsylvania state courts with new evidence of ineffective legal counsel at the earlier PCRA appeal and subsequently. This is based in part on the fact that Beverly's confession was suppressed for nearly two years by Jamal's former legal team of Leonard Weinglass and Dan Williams and that Williams authored a treacherous, recently published "inside account" of the case titled *Executing Justice*, after which he and Weinglass were fired by Mumia. It was the suppression of Beverly's confession



Workers Vanguard

Revolutionary Contingent at 12 May Jamal rally in San Francisco. Mobilise trade union/minority power to fight for Mumia's freedom!

terror in the ghettos, who stand up for labour's rights on the picket lines, who protest US imperialist mass murder abroad. Jamal's case symbolises what the death penalty — and the whole apparatus of capitalist state repression — is all about.

Beverly confessed that he had been "hired, along with another guy, and paid to shoot and kill Faulkner" because Faulkner reportedly "was a problem for the mob and corrupt policemen because he interfered with the graft and payoffs

a liar, the DA has sought a blanket ruling knocking his confession out of court and barring Jamal's attorneys from taking Beverly's oral deposition — a simple but essential step to preserve his testimony, given that Beverly is a marked man to the forces who hired him to kill Faulkner. If they really believed Beverly was lying, the prosecutors would want the opportunity of cross-examination afforded by a deposition.

At the time Faulkner was shot, Philadelphia cops were the subject of no less

From Labourite reformism to Trotskyism:

# “Why I left the SWP to join the International Communist League”

We reprint below an abridged letter to the Spartacist League dated 21 January 2001.

After even only a short time being a member of the SWP I had felt that their failure to defend the gains of the revolution in the former USSR, Cuba, China and other workers states seemed strange for a revolutionary organisation. It was very hard for me to believe that the collapse of the USSR had been only a change from one form of capitalism to another. What had happened had been a very real disaster for millions of workers, surely the Revolution of 1917 had meant some sort of social gain in Russia? I had at the time felt that the position of the SWP was incorrect, but my faith in the intentions of the other members had led me to read nothing into it.

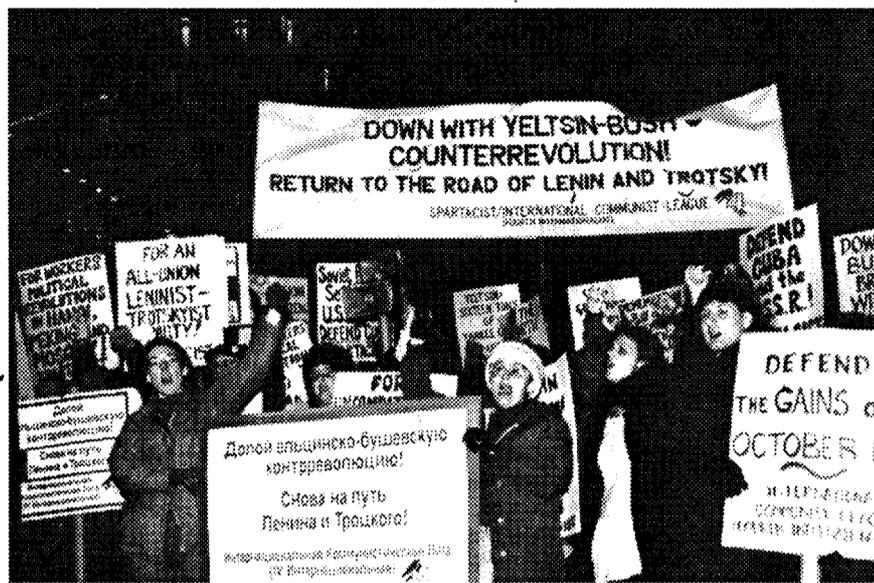
Later, I acquired literature from the Spartacist League, which exposed the “theory” of state capitalism (and others) as a cover for capitulation to Cold War anti-Soviet pressure from the ruling class in the capitalist nations. I now understood the reasons for this opportunist position, I didn’t agree with it, but I was still convinced that I was in a party with genuinely revolutionary intentions.

It wasn’t very long before another issue came up that aroused my suspicions. For a revolutionary party, the SWP seemed remarkably keen to involve themselves with elections centred around the Socialist Alliances. When I questioned this, I was told of the importance of using elections as a platform for revolutionary propaganda. This made sense to me, but where was this revolutionary propaganda? The demands being made were entirely reformist (these were explained to me as being “transitional demands”). I was not convinced; exceptional importance was being put on returning the Labour candidates and I argued against this at the meetings, saying that any campaign should be separate from a call to vote Labour. This was the time that I first began to question the direction of the leadership of the SWP,

but still I stayed a member, and felt that the important thing was that most of the members were committed to genuine class struggle.

It was around this time that I had again met members of the SL, and stayed in contact. I was starting to read not only literature like Workers Hammer and Workers Vanguard, but books by Lenin (The State and Revolution, The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky and “Left-wing” Communism, an infantile disorder) and Trotsky (The Revolution Betrayed, In Defence of Marxism and Lessons of October) that I had never been encouraged to read by the SWP. My political consciousness started to take a massive leap. More and more I was starting to see that the politics of the Cliffites were totally compatible with Labourite reformism. Nothing was said or done that even started to split the working class from Labourism, always the Party’s literature was written with the patronising assumption that any revolutionary message was somehow far too advanced for workers. This kind of thinking was clearly an adaptation to only the most backward consciousness. The arguments that I was having were now coming to dominate local meetings and I had made it clear that I was not happy about asking people to vote Labour. The Central Committee were putting out a lot of left sounding rhetoric about building a Leninist party, but this had absolutely nothing to do with what Lenin had said in the books that I had now been reading.

The Spartacists seemed very different. I could see that this was an organisation of professional revolutionaries who were committed to the programme that the Bolsheviks had fought for. This was totally unlike the SWP and other left groups I had met who put very little importance on organisational discipline. The Cliffites hadn’t even been concerned that I didn’t believe in state capitalism (as long as I didn’t conclude that they had a Labourite programme)! My



January 1992: ICL protest in New York as Yeltsin visited his Wall Street masters. We fought against capitalist counterrevolution in USSR, SWP cheered it.

resignation was only a matter of time. I came to a turning point when it became clear that not only did they have no revolutionary aspirations, but this party was actually an active barrier to proletarian revolution. Every moment that I (and many other potentially revolutionary young members) had spent campaigning on their programme only served to postpone the dictatorship of the proletariat. I submitted a letter resigning from these renegades from the Fourth International, explaining my intention to enter joining discussions with the ICL.

It is my intention to fight for the authentic communism of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, working to build a vanguard party of the working class, one that is truly international, never taking the side of capitalism against the workers states or claiming to be in some “third camp” (the third camp is the camp of the bourgeoisie!). True communists defend the workers states and the social gains that they represent, but at the same time point to the only way to return them to the course

of the socialism that Lenin fought for — internal political revolution, not capitalist restoration.

Revolutionaries in the tradition of the Bolsheviks work to expose the mis-leaders of the class — the bourgeois workers parties and the trade union tops who tie the workers to them, and the fake revolutionaries who turn the efforts of the most militant sections of the class away from effective class struggle at the most critical times.

The task of a Leninist party is to fight relentlessly to split the proletariat from the organisations that bind them to parliamentary social democracy, to lead the class in international revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie and its organs of class rule. Only by taking state power can the dictatorship of the proletariat be established and extended. The SL/ICL is the only organisation that fights programmatically and effectively for the aims of the Bolshevik revolution.

Yours fraternally  
J Palmer

and Billy Cook’s corroborating statement that prompted Partisan Defense Committee staff counsel Rachel Wolkenstein and Jonathan Piper, another attorney associated with the PDC, to resign from Jamal’s legal team two years ago. Cook says in his affidavit, “Rachel wanted me to testify but Leonard didn’t.”

In the 14 years since the Spartacist League and PDC first took up Jamal’s fight, we have brought his case to millions of trade unionists, students and minorities worldwide through publicity and labour-centred, united-front protest actions. We pointed to Jamal’s frame-up to expose the true nature of the capitalist state as a machinery of organised violence against the working class and the oppressed. While advocating that every possible legal avenue be pursued on his behalf, we place all our faith in the mobilisation of the social power of labour at the head of black people and all the oppressed to win his freedom, and no reliance on the “justice” of the capitalist courts.

In contrast, the reformists who have taken up Jamal’s cause have demobilised those who want to fight for his freedom by pushing illusions in the capitalist

“justice” system. Thus, they have raised calls like “New Trial for Mumia” and “The Evidence Must Be Heard”. Now that conclusive new evidence of Jamal’s innocence has surfaced, they abet the bourgeois press blackout by ignoring or greatly downplaying Beverly’s confession. As Jamal said in a statement to the 12 May defence rallies in Philly and San Francisco, “Many of you have said that you don’t believe in the system, yet, in your hearts you refuse to let it go.” Despite detailed presentations of the new evidence by Jamal’s attorneys at these rallies, in their coverage of the demonstrations *Revolutionary Worker* (27 May) said not a word about the Beverly confession and *Workers World* (24 May) devoted all of one sentence to it. Neither even bothered to quote Mumia’s own statement.

Mass protest centred on the social power of the multiracial labour movement is not only urgently needed to free Mumia but would strike a blow against the whole capitalist frame-up system. **Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty!**

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 760, 8 June 2001.

**ORDER NOW!**



**Black History and the Class Struggle**

Free with a yearly subscription to *Workers Vanguard* and *Workers Hammer* (£8.00) or 75 pence each.

Order from/make cheques payable to:  
Spartacist Publications, PO Box 1041, London NW5 3EU

# A parliamentarist sideshow

We publish below edited excerpts from a report by a comrade on a Socialist Alliance (SA) election rally in Brixton, London on 29 May.

It was an incredible achievement of a meeting for the parliamentary cretins of the Socialist Alliance. They held a meeting in a young and black area of London at a time when Oldham is under police siege due to fascist provocations and they drew nearly 100 old white people and mentioned Oldham precisely once in the presentations. Oh, and what did they say about Oldham: "It would be nice to have a candidate there, what with everything that's going on there with the BNP." Wouldn't that just have the cops shaking in their boots!

Here are a selection of words that did not pass the lips of any of the speakers: working class, Scargill, the SLP, British imperialism, revolution, strikes, Northern Ireland, Garvaghy Road [site of Loyalist/RUC sieges against Northern Ireland Catholics]. Or to paint the picture another way, here are a selection of quotes: "Peo-

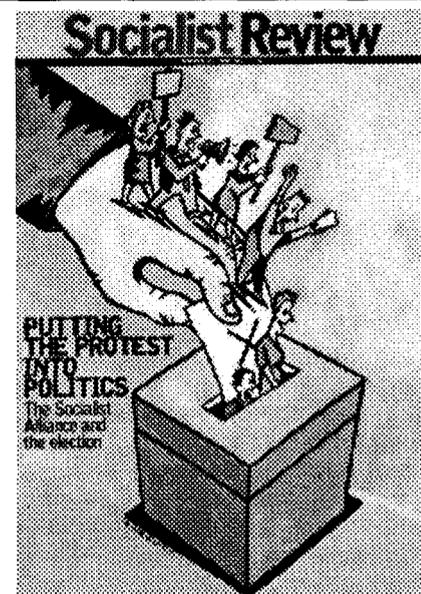
ple are bored into supporting the Socialist Alliance" (Paul Holborow of the Socialist Workers Party [SWP], chair of meeting). "A vote for the SA is not a wasted vote because all votes will send a signal to New Labour" (SWP Socialist Alliance candidate Teresa Bennett). "The Socialist Alliance has picked up what the Labour Party has thrown away — the red flag" (SA candidate Brian Kelly).

Former Labour Party "left" Liz Davies assured us that despite leaving the Labour Party NEC [National Executive Committee] and joining the SA she has had no Damascene conversion, she still has the same politics. She listed what she didn't like about this government and then went on to say that there are some good things this government has done. To quote Liz, "A vote to SA will make it harder for Blair to say he has a mandate for privatisations" and — the best one — "Socialist Alliance is a home for the tens of thousands who voted for Labour in 1997 and have a sour taste in their mouth." According to the SA, their main battle zone is St Helens, where Blair has

given "ex"-Tory Woodward a safe seat. For these Labourites this is "shameful", "shocking", etc. In fact, one speaker said that *this* was the proof that Labour has contempt for the working class.

Our comrade got to intervene. He started by saying: You wouldn't know from the speakers that Oldham is on fire. He was prompted by the chair to ask a question, so he replied: "Oh, you want it to be like Prime Minister's questions. Okay, does the speaker not agree that the situation in Oldham illustrates well what Lenin said of the capitalist state and the utter bankruptcy of Labourite parliamentary reformism?" He also got out that we are voting SLP, but not for [probation officer Gordon] Potts. And he said that the SA is for a Labour government by telling people to vote for Labour in other constituencies. The mooing and braying had reached such a level at this point you'd think a MAFF [Agriculture Ministry] inspector was on his way into the meeting.

In response to our intervention, Kelly stated: "We give unequivocal support to Asian youth in Oldham and all those



SWP aims to corral youth and workers into fold of Labour.

combating fascism and police brutality. The SA opposes the fascists." SWPer Rob Hoveman said: "It is not true that we are for a vote to Labour — we do not have a position. I myself would maybe look to Labour if I didn't have an SA candidate to vote for, but that is just personal." Hoveman is only the national organiser of the Socialist Alliance, after all!

## Election...

(Continued from page 4)

with Kruschev, Stalin's successor, thus they say that in 1991 "the once-mighty Soviet Union itself collapsed, as a culmination of three decades of Kruschevite revisionist betrayal of, and departure from, the principles of Marxism-Leninism..." (Lalkar, January/February 2000). A political counterrevolution occurred in the USSR in 1923-24 when a privileged bureaucratic layer led by Stalin usurped political power and then embraced Stalin's nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country". This was a qualitative political break from the internationalism of the Bolsheviks and was used to alibi gross betrayals of the proletariat internationally such as selling out the British general strike in 1926 and the Chinese revolution of 1925-27. Stalin and his heirs destroyed the revolutionary consciousness of the Soviet proletariat and ultimately delivered the degenerated workers state to imperialism.

### For revolutionary leadership of the unions

Labour's privatisation plans have been met by strikes in the Post Office and London Underground. Workers in the public sector are also threatening to break the unions' historic link to Labour by withholding their donations. The issue is being debated within the ranks of several major unions: the RMT and ASLEF rail unions, Unison (health and local government workers — the largest union in the country), the CWU postal workers union and the Fire Brigades Union, who pay several million pounds to Labour each year. Glenn Kelly, a supporter of the Socialist Party, aptly described the process as "feeding the hand that bites us" (*Independent*, 22 June). Blair is also threatening to sever Labour's link to the unions and to refashion Labour from a bourgeois-workers party into an open bourgeois party along the lines of the Democrats in the US. By 1998, donations to Labour from big business equalled the contribution paid by the trade unions.

Actions to stop union dues being poured into the coffers of New Labour are certainly supportable. However, the recognition that the relationship between Labour and the unions can no longer go on



Spartacist comrades with SLP candidate Ron Sinclair canvassing in Manchester (left). We also campaigned for Steve Cook and Ella Rule in London.

in the same old way begs the question: what kind of party does the proletariat need to represent their interests, independently of the capitalists. What's vital is not simply an organisational but a *political* break from Labourism — the programme which ties the working class to their exploiters. We believe the working class needs a revolutionary internationalist party. This will be built through struggle, not least in the unions to oust the sell-out bureaucrats and to forge the unions as fighting organisations of the working class on the basis of a revolutionary programme.

The reformist Socialist Party uses the slogan "free the funds"; however they uphold the principle that the unions should fund a political party. They are wedded to the Labourite model of a reformist party to which trade union members affiliate en bloc. Labourites regard the existence of such a party as the natural order of things, indeed the SLP copied this structure. This organisational arrangement befits a reformist party but is antithetical to building a proletarian revolutionary party, which must be a party of the most class-conscious elements of the working class capable of translating the historic interests of the proletariat into a fight for socialist revolution. As we wrote:

"A Leninist vanguard party is counterposed to Karl Kautsky's conception of the 'party of the whole class', of which the Labour Party and its organisational setup is a particular example. A party 'of the whole class' necessarily submerges the most

advanced layers of the class into the most backward ones; hence such parties are inevitably chauvinist, based on the dominant ethnic grouping and tied to the defence of the imperialist interests of its own ruling class."

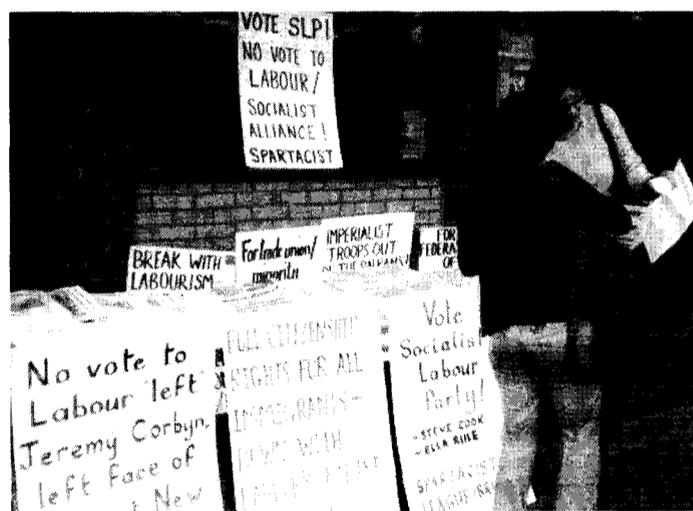
— *Workers Hammer* no 158, September/October 1997

Key sectors of the proletariat are willing to resist Labour's attacks through class struggle, but the union bureaucracy is tied to Labour. Sensing the anger against Labour among union members, Sir Ken Jackson, head of the engineering union, has called for a ban on strikes in the public sector and TUC General Secretary John Monks, fearing that Labour's arrogance will provoke a confrontation with the unions, warned Labour politicians:

"I could not believe it. I say to them 'Look at the lessons of history. Look at 1978-79, when there was such a confrontation and it was an electoral disaster for Labour and trade unionism'. We still walk with those ghosts of 20 years ago."

— *Times*, 13 June

The ghosts haunting the trade union bureaucrats are previous class battles, most importantly the miners strike of 1984-85. The problem was *not* that this mighty class confrontation took place, but that the miners were isolated, stabbed in the back and sold out by the TUC and Labour Party misleaders. We seek to impart the lessons of that battle to British workers today, and to combat the lie that



Workers Hammer photos

working-class struggle is a ghost from the past. Scargill led the NUM in a heroic and militant class battle against the full might of the capitalist state but could not win on the merits of trade union militancy alone. We fought to extend the strike to other unions, calling for rail and the dockers to strike with the miners and to shut down the country. Our perspective is one of fighting for working-class power; Scargill's perspective was a Labour government.

The tasks facing the unions today are similar to those described by Leon Trotsky in "Trade unions in the epoch of imperialist decay" (1940):

"the trade unions in the present epoch cannot simply be the organs of democracy as they were in the epoch of free capitalism and they cannot any longer remain politically neutral, that is, limit themselves to serving the daily needs of the working class. They cannot any longer be anarchistic, i.e. ignore the decisive influence of the state on the life of people and classes. They can no longer be reformist, because the objective conditions leave no room for any serious and lasting reforms. The trade unions of our time can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers and for obstructing the revolution, or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat."

### Down with protectionist poison

Among the fundamental disagreements between a revolutionary and a reformist

outlook, the issue of protectionism is a sharp difference we have with Scargill's SLP. Intervening at an SLP election rally in London on 4 June, a Spartacist comrade challenged Scargill, citing his nationalist rant at a meeting in Leicester:

"You were very upset about French water and German car manufacturing, etc. We differ there because we are not for national chauvinism — 'British jobs for British workers' or 'American jobs for American workers' or 'German jobs for German workers'. What's necessary is for international struggle across borders for jobs for all, which requires a fight to overthrow the capitalist system."

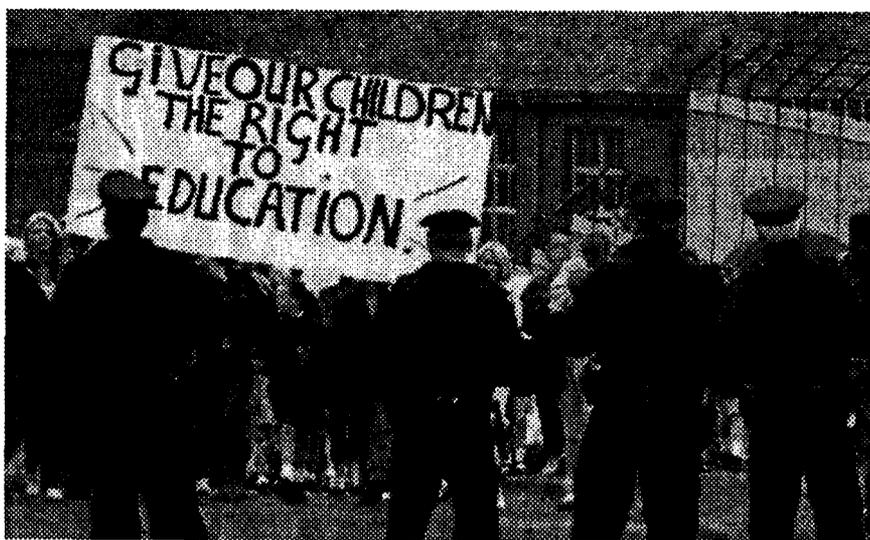
Scargill replied:

"Let me make it absolutely clear to you, we are in favour of import controls and we're in favour of controlling our own economy and we're in favour under a socialist society of imposing import controls. I'll tell you why. I don't want to see a situation ever again where the Third World in Africa has its agricultural industry destroyed by the dumping policies of the European Union and its Common Agricultural Policy. That's why import controls would have saved millions of lives. Don't preach to me about internationalism. I know about internationalism. Internationalism is best practised by defending our own class here and that those workers abroad see by our exam-

ple that it's time, not to work with child labour producing coal, but to overthrow their own system and establish a socialist system of society in their country."

Invoking internationalism and the fight for socialism abroad, Scargill sounds worlds away from the German-bashing chauvinism of the union bureaucrats who organised the Rover demonstration in April 2000, but his line boils down to shared support for import controls to "protect" British jobs. The notion that this would constitute a blow against child labour and poverty in underdeveloped countries is absurd. Imperialist powers are deadly enemies of workers in the Third World; their world market starves the oppressed masses, creating and deepening the abject poverty which forces desperate families to send their children out to work for a pittance instead of going to school. Workers revolution in Britain will indeed strike a huge blow against imperialism in the Third World, but proletarian revolution is not the SLP's goal or programme. Instead its perspective is Labour's "Clause IV" which referred to "common ownership" of the means of production, under capitalism.

Since the bourgeoisie will not willingly submit to being expropriated and has at its disposal the apparatus of state repres-



Richard Lewis/AP

**Belfast: RUC block access to Catholic school in the Ardoyne area after wave of Loyalist attacks in June.**

sion — army, police, jails, judiciary — to protect its profits, the socialisation of the means of production can only be realised through revolutionary class struggle culminating in the seizure of working-class power. The SLP's model for "common ownership" is the nationalisation programme of the post-World War II Labour government. Labour was swept to power then by a proletariat anxious for a payback for the sacrifices and privations of the war. But Labour's nationalisations of coal, steel and rail were a giant state bailout of the most inefficient and failing industries, nonetheless vital to the capitalist economy as a whole, in order to make British industry more competitive. Nationalisations by the capitalist state meant massive handouts to the bosses and bleak austerity for the working class. At the end of World War II, the Stalinists and social democrats in Europe had to work hard to prevent the kind of working-class upheavals that followed World War I. The possibility existed to mobilise the proletariat in a revolutionary struggle to expropriate the bourgeoisie and set up a workers government to implement a planned economy. This would have pitted the proletariat against the Labour government whose bailout schemes saved British capitalism. Protectionism is a reactionary utopia

which cannot defend the British working class from the effects of the world market. It diverts the working class from struggle for full employment and higher living standards across national boundaries into competition against foreign capital and against workers in other countries in alliance with their "own" bourgeoisie. What's needed is international socialist economic planning for human need and an international division of labour, but capitalism is based on production for private profit and on the nation state, which are fetters to the further development of the productive forces. In order to realise profits the capitalists must have markets for their products but these can only be obtained at the expense of their rivals, so inevitably the imperialist powers come into open conflict. Import controls lead to trade wars, which lead to shooting wars and the final tariff negotiators are the generals.

Only socialist revolution on a world scale can prevent the outbreak of renewed inter-imperialist war and barbarism. In Britain, the Spartacist League fights to break workers from Labourism, for the perspective of a new October Revolution. For a federation of workers republics in the British Isles! For a Socialist United States of Europe! ■



Workers Hammer

**Birmingham, April 2000: Union bureaucrats organised an outpouring of poisonous anti-German chauvinism over redundancies at Rover plant.**

## Vote SLP...

(Continued from page 4)

coal and oil is protectionist poison which fuels national chauvinism and racism; it dovetails with calls to protect British industry at the expense of its rivals by nationalising British coal and manufacturing industry. Rivalry between imperialist powers has intensified in the wake of counterrevolution which destroyed the former Soviet Union; this rivalry leads to trade wars which lead to shooting wars. The logic of this kind of corrosive nationalism in the workers movement was shown at the April 2000 Rover demonstration organised by union bureaucrats in the car industry which was an outpouring of nationalist flag-waving. We fight for: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Trade-union/minority mobilisations to crush the fascists! What's needed is a fight across national borders for jobs for all, as part of the struggle to sweep away capitalist rule.

The SLP manifesto refers to the miners strike of 1984-85, which was led by Scargill and was one of the greatest class battles Britain has ever seen. We Trotskyists draw the lessons from it for the British proletariat. On the eve of the strike, Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party set up Scargill for a witch hunt over his correct statement that Polish Solidarność was anti-socialist. And it is notable that Healy's favourite Labour

politician was...Ken Livingstone. The miners strike took militant trade-union struggle as far as possible; it was sabotaged by the Labour Party and TUC tops. But Scargill remained tied to the Labour Party and the miners union fought alone. We sought to extend the strike to other unions, calling for miners, railworkers and dockers to shut down the country.

Capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and the Eastern European deformed workers states was a catastrophe for working people there and internationally. US and British imperialism are preparing the ground for war against the People's Republic of China. The SLP manifesto "condemns the use of economic and political blockades or sanctions which are used by international capitalism against countries — such as Cuba — that challenge the very basis of capitalism". We call for the unconditional military defence of Cuba, as well as the Chinese, Vietnamese and North Korean deformed workers states against imperialist attack and capitalist restoration. We Trotskyists fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies. The overthrow of capitalism in the imperialist heartlands is the best way to defend the existing workers states and to go forward to a world socialist society. For a federation of workers republics in the British Isles! For a Socialist United States of Europe! ■

## Racism...

(Continued from page 3)

minorities, have no hope of ever finding a decent job.

Both under Labour and Tories, the capitalist system has looted and devastated the wealth of this country — which was built by the sweat of the working class "at home" and the exploitation of the colonial masses abroad. Racist divide and rule, practised in the colonies for centuries, is used to weaken the working class, scapegoating immigrants and minorities for the capitalists' economic crises. Oldham is not unique; former industrial areas of Scotland, South Wales and the north of England have been laid waste. In some areas, three generations have been without jobs, and the looming economic recession promises worse to come. The organised workers movement must wage a class battle, including linking up with the unemployed, in a fight for jobs! And in the car plants of the West Midlands, Luton and Dagenham; in the railway and transport system in every major city, in London Underground as well as every hospital in the country, blacks and Asians are an integral part of the workforce. A militant battle for a shorter working week with no loss in pay, for union control of hiring and union-run job training requires a workers leadership that fights for what we need, not what capitalism can afford.

Our perspective is based on the *Transi-*

*tional Programme* by Leon Trotsky (1938) which asserts that the right to employment is the only serious right left to the worker in a society based on exploitation, that workers' rights are determined in struggle and that: "If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish."

The bitter 1984-85 miners strike showed the basis for multi-ethnic unity — black, Asian, Irish and other minorities rallied behind the miners who fought a tremendous battle against Thatcher and against the might of the state. It was betrayed by Labour and trade union leaders who left the miners isolated. Arthur Scargill, today the leader of the SLP, led the militant miners in as hard fought a battle as possible under capitalism. But he was wedded to the Labour Party, when a perspective for power was desperately needed. The establishment of workers rule and a planned, collectivised economy with a five-year plan or two is the only way to overcome the devastation of capitalism in Britain.

There is a way forward: the struggle to forge a revolutionary, internationalist, proletarian party which acts as the tribune of all the oppressed. Such a party would bring together the advanced workers and angry youth in the fight to overthrow this rotting, racist system once and for all, the fight for workers state power. This is what we in the Spartacist League stand for: join us! ■

# Zionists...

(Continued from page 12)

to crawl home, dying hours later; the next day, Arab wheat fields near Bethlehem were burned down as Israeli troops looked on; then eight Palestinians were beaten bloody near Hebron and, a day after that, settlers opened fire on houses in an Arab village near Ramallah.

Far from cowering the Palestinian populace, escalating Zionist terror has fuelled growing defiance, bringing to mind the heroic fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943. It has also provoked the sort of frustration and desperation that has led growing numbers of Palestinian youth to enlist as "martyrs" for Islamic Jihad and Hamas. We condemn indiscriminate terror attacks, like that in Tel Aviv and a bombing at a shopping mall in Netanya two weeks ago, which are directed not against the Zionist state's armed forces or its fascist settler auxiliaries but against all Jews. Such attacks are in keeping with the vile anti-Semitic — and anti-woman — aims of Hamas, which was initially built up with direct aid from the Israeli government as a counter-weight to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). In seeking to create an Islamic regime in the Occupied Territories, the fundamentalists mirror the fascist religious Jewish reactionaries who strive for a fully fledged Old Testament theocracy in Israel. In the latter's eyes as well, the Russian immigrant youth who were partying in Tel Aviv on the Sabbath are "infidels"; indeed, three of the dead were initially denied burials in municipal cemeteries because they were children of mixed marriages.

Though the Zionist butchers have the whip hand, the Near East provides ample evidence of the genocidal logic of all nationalism, including the secular version espoused by petty-bourgeois Palestinian nationalists, who have also engaged in indiscriminate terror. What drives the bloody cycle of Zionist repression and Palestinian defiance is the root cause of this conflict: two peoples lay claim to the same land. There can be no equitable resolution to the conflicting national claims of the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking peoples under capitalism. The Zionist state was created through the expulsion of some 700,000 Arabs in 1948, "The Catastrophe" (*Al Nakba*) commemorated to this day by Palestinians. Countless imperialist-inspired "peace plans" since, far from opening up any vista of liberation for the Palestinians, have served only to deepen their subjugation under the Zionist jackboot.

The Palestinians cannot prevail in a military conflict with the Israeli juggernaut. And if threatened militarily by their Arab neighbours, the Zionist madmen would be quite capable of unleashing their arsenal of nuclear weapons. The *only* way to ultimately prevent yet more catastrophes on the scale of 1948 — and to realise the national rights of the Palestinians without denying those of the Hebrew-speaking people — lies in workers revolutions to smash all the capitalist regimes in the region. The fate of the Palestinian people, and of all the peoples of the Near

East, ultimately hinges on the timely forging of Leninist vanguard parties based on the programme of proletarian internationalism.

## 1993 "peace" accord: recipe for disaster

The immediate backdrop to the ominous situation currently facing the Palestinians lies in the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. Though the bureaucratically degenerated workers state under Stalin was among the first countries to extend diplomatic recognition to the Zionist state, hoping to secure an ally against British imperialism, in subsequent decades the USSR tilted towards the Arab bourgeois regimes and petty-bourgeois nationalist movements like the PLO. The availability of Soviet military, diplomatic and financial support allowed such nationalists a certain degree of latitude in rhetorically confronting US imperialism.

In 1973, the Arab regimes launched an oil boycott — whose main effect was to

also conditioned Arafat's acceptance of the ignominious 1993 Rabin-Arafat accord which gave the PLO a handful of trappings of sovereignty while significantly strengthening Israel's position. Palestinian police trained and overseen by the CIA and Israeli security forces would carry out the day-to-day policing of the subjugated Palestinian masses while all Israeli settlements remained in place pending an indefinite "final status" agreement. The PLO, echoed by the Zionist "peace camp", hailed the 1993 accord as a first step towards Palestinian statehood. Rather, as we wrote at the time, this deal did "not offer even the most deformed expression of self-determination" and instead placed "the PLO's seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses" ("Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto", *Workers Vanguard* no 583, 10 September 1993).

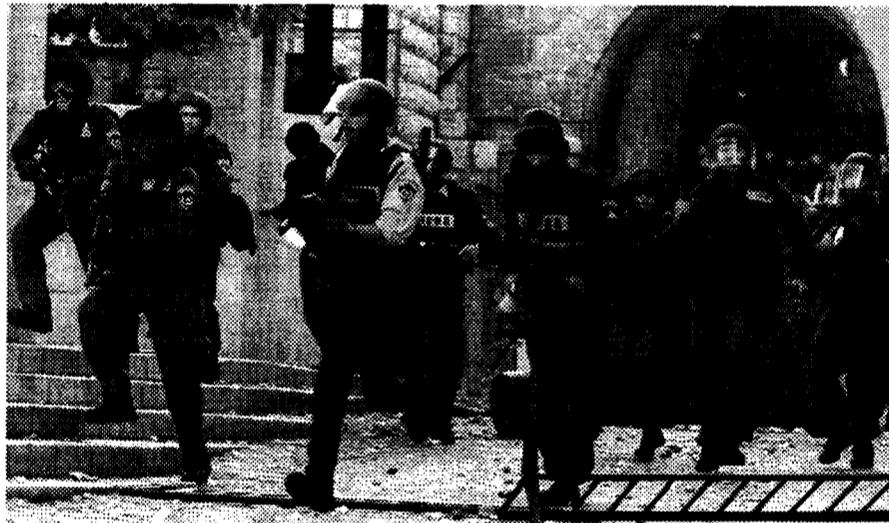
The accord laid the basis for further devastating the economy of the Occupied Territories. Gaza's GNP plummeted

units remain unoccupied.

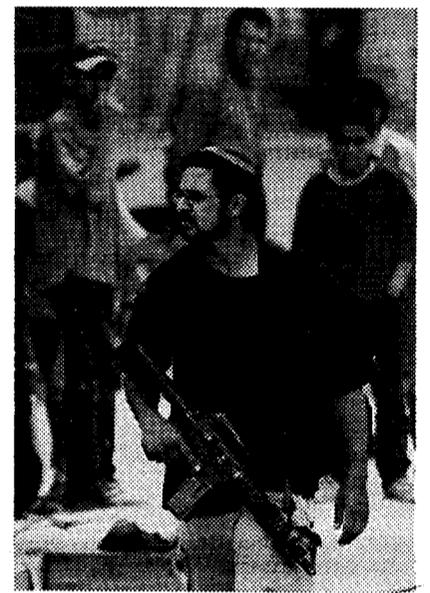
Both Sharon and Arafat claim to support the recently released Mitchell Report, which calls on the Palestinians to end the violence and on the Israelis to end expansion of settlements. It is an indication of how far things have shifted to the disfavour of the Palestinians that the issue in debate is no longer whether such enclaves of murderous Zionist fanatics should exist but whether they should continue to grow. And Israel categorically rejects any constraint on settlement expansion. Israeli Jews should imagine how they would feel surrounded by militarised Palestinian settlements linked by roads open only to Arabs! *We demand removal of all anti-Arab fortifications in the Occupied Territories — the settlements and the apartheid highway network!*

## Zionism and "ethnic cleansing"

Today, the rhetoric of "negotiation" has given way to denunciations of Arafat as "a leader of terror". The Israeli mili-



While Israeli troops rampage through Occupied Territories, fascist settler auxiliaries carry out pogroms against Palestinians.



Reuters

enrich their coffers and those of the Seven Sisters oil monopolies — nominally targeting US support for Israel. But in the face of a "nightmare scenario" that "ever bigger attacks on Israelis, ever bigger reprisals against the Palestinians... could lead to the mass exodus of Palestinian refugees across borders once again", a recent meeting of foreign ministers of Islamic countries in the oil-rich Gulf state of Qatar offered nothing more than appeals to the US "to exert pressure on Israel to accept a balanced peace" (BBC News, 27 May).

In early 1990, when Israel was not toeing the American line, George Bush Sr threatened to cut US military aid. And later that year, Washington warned Israel to stay out of the impending war with Iraq as the American imperialists successfully sought to include the other Arab regimes in their "coalition" against Saddam Hussein. But with the Soviet Union gone, the Arab bourgeois regimes have far less leverage in pressuring the US. The *New York Times* (4 June) describes how the Bush administration has resisted pressure, "particularly from the Arab world, to raise its diplomatic visibility" in the Near East.

The destruction of the Soviet Union

by 37 per cent between 1992 and 1996. Even before the start of the recent uprising, average national income in the Occupied Territories, at \$1500, was little more than half what it was before the "peace process" and less than one-tenth that in Israel. The export of agricultural produce to Israel and Jordan was sharply curtailed as was, more importantly, the number of Palestinians allowed into Israel as day labourers, a crucial source of income for the Occupied Territories. Intent on ending any reliance on Palestinian labour in agriculture and construction, the Israeli capitalists have brought in tens of thousands of migrant workers, legal and "illegal", from Thailand and other countries.

In the aftermath of the 1993 accord, more or less sporadic "security closures" became virtually permanent, denying passage not only to workers but to students attending universities in Jerusalem and the West Bank and to desperate patients needing operations in Israeli hospitals. Israel erected an electrified barbed wire fence at the Gaza border crossing and began the construction of a series of fortified "bypass roads" connecting Israeli settlements, which involved further expropriations of Arab land and farms. While the PLO envisaged an end to the settlements as a result of the "autonomy" deal, the number of settlers has in fact doubled, climbing to over 200,000, among them impoverished Russian Jews who were assigned housing in the Occupied Territories. In response to the demand that East Jerusalem become the capital of a future Palestinian state, the Zionists have "created facts on the ground", razing Arab homes and expanding Jewish-only housing, even though thousands of newly built housing

tary has assassinated over 30 middle-level PLO leaders in its campaign of "selective elimination" in the last eight months. While the Zionists and their American backers hypocritically scream for the Palestinian Authority to "end the violence", Israel's rulers are deliberately stoking spontaneous outpourings by killing those Palestinian nationalist cadre they could hope to use to quell the anger on the streets.

Only months after Arafat rejected Israel's "last, best" offer for a final settlement last summer, Barak gave Sharon a green light to stage his provocative "visit" to the Muslim holy site Haram al-Sharif (the Temple Mount to Israelis), triggering the predictable outburst of anger among Palestinians. More fundamentally, what led to the uprising was the despair among the Palestinian masses that the 1993 accord had resulted only in deeper misery and national humiliation. Meanwhile, the Hebrew-speaking population, which had been promised "peace through security", realised that they had neither.

The Zionist "peace camp" has essentially collapsed, utterly silent in the face of ever more murderous terror against the Palestinians. Many Israelis consider the settlements a running sore, and polls indicate that a majority would favour curtailment of settlement construction if it led to peace — and few but the most fanatical, mainly American Zionists, would now voluntarily move to the Occupied Territories. But the hardening of a chauvinist consensus against the Palestinians was clearly reflected in the overwhelming vote last February for Sharon, who was widely reviled as a fanatical extremist in the wake of his 1982 invasion of Lebanon even by large sections

## Contact addresses

### Spartacist League/Britain

PO Box 1041, London NW5 3EU. Tel: 020 7281 5504

### Dublin Spartacist Group

PO Box 2944, Dublin 1. Tel: 01 855 8409

### International Communist League

Box 7429 GPO, New York, New York 10116, USA

of the Zionist establishment.

The Labor Party readily accepted Sharon's invitation to join a "national unity" government, and vaunted "peace" Nobelist Shimon Peres now serves as foreign minister in this war government. Peres was an admirer of the French *colons* in Algeria and an architect of Israel's alliance with the former apartheid regime in South Africa, which involved the development of nuclear weapons for the Afrikaner rulers, who later got the weapons out of South Africa to ensure they would not fall into the hands of the ANC when it took power. "Mr Dove" Peres would better be called "Mr Settlement". As Israeli civil libertarian Israel Shahak noted in his publication *From the Hebrew Press* (July 1996), it was Peres who began the construction of settlements in heavily populated Palestinian areas when he was minister of defence in Rabin's 1974-77 government. Working with Peres at the time was Yigal Allon, who authored the so-called Allon Plan that prefigured the current dismemberment of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Territories. In the early 1970s, Allon smuggled weapons to fascist Gush Emunim leader Moshe Levinger to help him set up a tiny settler enclave in the centre of Hebron, which has meant an ongoing state of siege against the city's 100,000 Arab residents.

On the right wing of Sharon's cabinet are the likes of Tourism Minister Rehavam Zeevi, leader of the National Union, which openly calls for the "transfer"—mass expulsion—of all Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank. Serving as minister of infrastructure is Avigdor Lieberman, who vowed in February that a Sharon government would not hesitate to fire missiles at Egypt's Aswan Dam "if, for example, Egypt moves troops into the Sinai", which is Egyptian territory! Lieberman calls for stripping Arab members of the Knesset (parliament) of citizenship. Such views are not confined to settler fanatics and a handful of extreme rightists in seemingly marginal cabinet positions.

In March, President Moshe Katsav staged an official ceremony to publicise the release of a statement titled "The Balance of National Strength and Security in Israel: Policy Directions", which was produced by a conference of 300 "leading figures" described by *Ha'aretz* (23 March) as "the core of Israel's political and defense establishment". This conference smacked of the 1935 Nuremberg conference that promulgated the Third Reich's "racial laws"!

Sneering that "the Palestinians have made a decision that they want the highest rate of natural population growth in the world, but they don't have the means to support it," conference chairman Uzi Arad proposes a "humanitarian solution"



Mass demonstration in Baghdad, July 1958. Revolutionary upsurge brought powerful Iraqi proletariat to the brink of power. New York Times

detailed as follows in the statement: "It will be necessary to find some place for resettlement outside the State of Israel (perhaps to the east of the Jordan) if the Palestinian population of the territories does not curb its rate of increase." The document also calls for the forcible repatriation of a section of Israel's Arab population near the West Bank to a future Palestinian bantustan. "Asked if the shift to Palestinian jurisdiction will be imposed on Israeli Arabs living near the Green Line, despite their known objections, Arad answers: 'In a democratic state, it is the majority that determines where the national borders lie'".

Implementation of such schemes would doubtless fan imperialist fears of "destabilisation" throughout the Near East. Discredited autocratic regimes in Egypt and elsewhere could well face popular upheaval and challenges from Islamic fundamentalists and other proponents of "holy war". But it is fully in keeping with the Zionist drive for a "Greater Israel". As the open "transferist" Zeevi proudly declares, he follows in the footsteps of "Labor Zionist" founding fathers like David Ben-Gurion, who raised the banner of "conquest of the land". Ben-Gurion presided over the 1948 "cleansing" of 700,000 Arab men, women and children, which was not a "by-product" of the war with the Arab states, as the Zionists assert, but was rather a planned and deliberate terror campaign, including a series of well-publicised massacres.

Months after the end of the so-called War of Independence, in September 1948 Ben-Gurion ordered the army to launch an operation "for the conquest of the entire West Bank", according to an Israeli military commander at the time (*Ha'aretz*, 18 April 1994). When Ben-Gurion asked Allon how many Arabs would escape from the occupying forces, he was told: "As many as you decide." Ben-Gurion was forced to scuttle the plan at the last minute when his coalition

partners got wind of it and voted him down. Twenty years later, Ben-Gurion's successors did conquer the West Bank, and it is hardly inconceivable that the Israeli occupation forces could today perpetrate massacres on the scale of those in 1948.

### For a socialist federation of the Near East!

*The only salvation for the Palestinian people lies through proletarian revolution and a socialist federation of the Near East.* Illusions in the "good offices" of US or British imperialism, other imperialist powers or the United Nations are suicidal. The US has armed Israel to the hilt. The Bush administration has dispensed with even the patina of evenhandedness under which its Democratic predecessor pursued an anti-Palestinian "Pax Americana". For their part, the European Union imperialists, competing for influence in the Arab countries, have imposed token sanctions against agricultural exports from Israeli settlements. At the same time, Germany has played a prominent role alongside the US in pushing Arafat to bow to Israel's latest dictates. But all of the capitalist powers are adamantly opposed to genuine self-determination for the Palestinians—or the Kurds, carved up and oppressed by Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria—for fear it would plunge the region into even greater turmoil. And the United Nations exists to serve the imperialist powers. It was the 1947 UN partition that paved the way for the 1948 catastrophe, and it was a UN expeditionary force that disarmed the PLO fighters in Lebanon in 1982 on the eve of the Zionist massacre.

The Arab bourgeois regimes have neither the military wherewithal nor the interest to come to the defence of the Palestinians against the Zionist terrorists. In recent days, the Egyptian regime of Hosni Mubarak, the second-largest recipient of US financial aid next to Israel, has talked of a military response if Israel attacks Palestinian Authority targets (which it has been doing for months). The Israeli Air Force launched a massive war exercise yesterday, and a military statement last month warning the Arab regimes against taking advantage of the Palestinian uprising gloated: "Syria does not want a war with Israel and the air force's strike against a Syrian radar station just outside of Beirut in April left a deep impression on Damascus, which saw it as just the start of what Israel can do." Israel's nuclear arsenal is now larger than Britain's, and no one takes seriously the occasional military bluster against Israel from Cairo or Damascus.

From the Black September massacre of some 10,000 Palestinians in Jordan in 1970 to the expulsion of 200,000 Palestinian migrants by the Kuwaiti emirate in 1991, the Arab rulers have proven themselves no less hostile to the Palestinian people than the Israeli bourgeoisie itself.

When the Arab states have gone to war with Israel—in 1948, 1967 and 1973—it was not to defend the Palestinians. While Marxists gave military support to Egypt against an invasion by imperialist Britain and France (joined by Israel) in 1956, we called for revolutionary defeatism against both capitalist Israel and the capitalist Arab states in the other wars. The Arab rulers' occasional diatribes against Zionism are meant to divert the anger of the toiling masses they exploit and oppress. And the anti-Semitism peddled by the Arab nationalists and Islamic reactionaries serves only to drive the Hebrew-speaking proletariat deeper into the arms of its chauvinist rulers.

Zionist chauvinism today permeates the vast bulk of the Hebrew-speaking working class, which also benefits from an artificially high standard of living. But that relatively privileged bubble in the backward Near East would quickly burst should the US imperialists ever decide that Israel is more of an albatross than an asset. And even today, the huge Sephardic Jewish population is largely impoverished and subjected to discrimination in housing and education by the Ashkenazi (European-derived) elite. Israel is a capitalist society fundamentally riven by conflicting class interests between exploiter and exploited. Hebrew-speaking workers would do well to consider that more Jews were killed by the greed of Israeli capitalists in last week's collapse of a wedding hall in Jerusalem than died in the Tel Aviv terror bombing.

The murderous drive against the Palestinians poses the alternatives point-blank to the Hebrew-speaking proletariat: either embark on revolutionary struggle against their exploiters or the Israeli bourgeoisie will increasingly move towards a Nazi-like "final solution" of the "Palestinian question". If the Israeli Jewish proletariat is to pursue its class interests against its own bourgeoisie, it must champion the defence of the Palestinian people.

No matter how bloody the repression meted out by Israel's rulers, it will not and cannot end the underlying national antagonisms which have helped make the Near East a cockpit for war throughout the past century. If the Zionist madmen are not to ultimately unleash their nuclear arsenal and engulf the whole of the region in a holocaust, the Hebrew-speaking proletariat must join with Arab workers in sweeping away the entire rotting edifice of capitalist class rule in the Near East. Only then can the right of national self-determination for both the Hebrew-speaking and the Palestinian Arab people be assured.

A workers revolution in one of the Arab countries, proclaiming the internationalist unity of all the working people, would have an enormous impact on the Hebrew-speaking workers of Israel. But if Arab, Persian and Kurdish workers are to break the chains of exploitation and oppression, they must be won to a relentless struggle to extirpate the influence of the Islamic fundamentalists who now pose as the enemies of Zionism and imperialism. We look to the legacy of the Iranian proletariat that struggled for power in 1953, of the Iraqi workers who sought to make a socialist revolution five years later. To seize on such opportunities when they arise, and lead them to victory, requires above all the construction of internationalist workers parties, sections of a reformed Fourth International, in opposition to Zionism, Arab nationalism and all variants of religious fundamentalism. *Defend the Palestinian people! For a socialist federation of the Near East!*

Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 760, 8 June 2001.

## WORKERS HAMMER

Marxist newspaper of the Spartacist League

- 1-year subscription to *Workers Hammer* for £3.00 includes *Spartacist*, organ of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) (Overseas subscriptions: Airmail £7.00; Europe outside Britain & Ireland £4.00)
- 1-year subscription to *Workers Hammer* PLUS 22 issues of *Workers Vanguard*, Marxist fortnightly of the Spartacist League/US for £8.00. Subscription includes *Spartacist*, organ of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) and *Black History and the Class Struggle*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Make cheques payable/post to: Spartacist Publications, PO Box 1041, London NW5 3EU 177

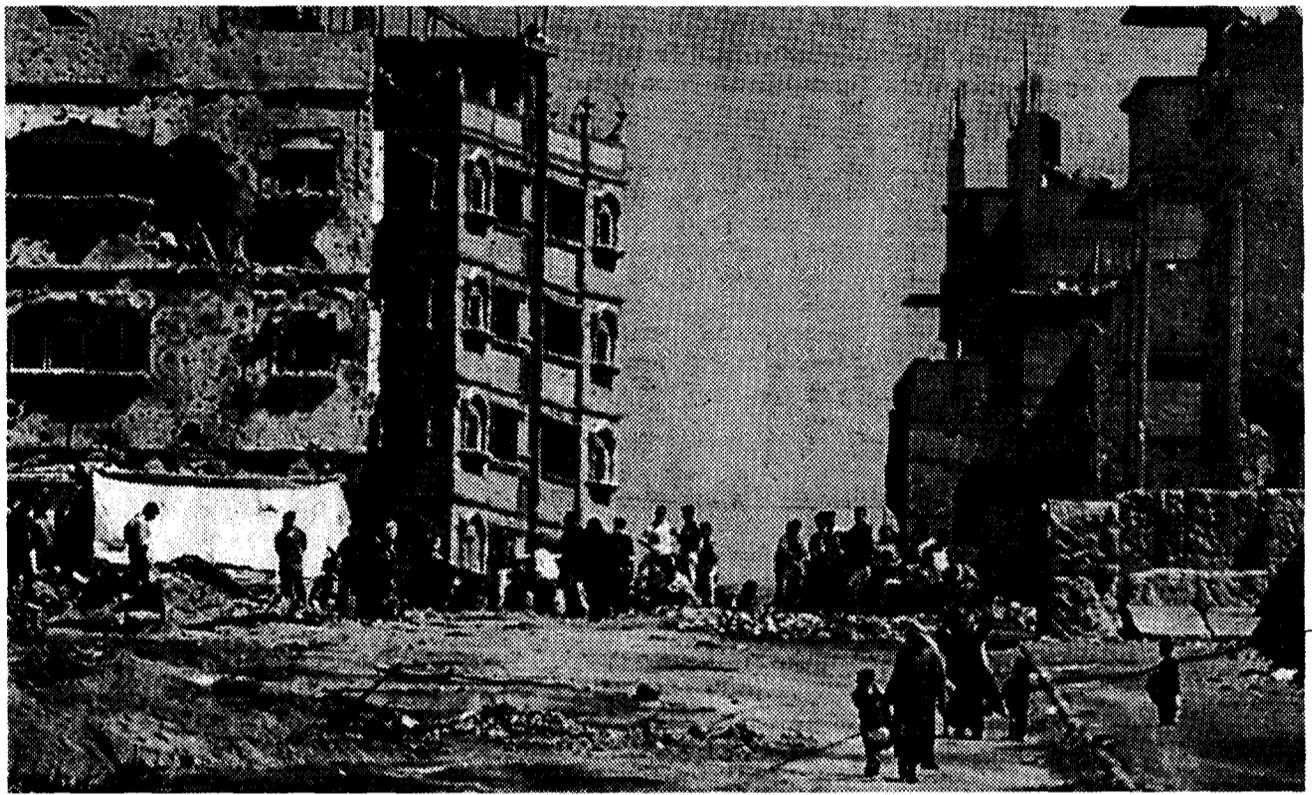
## Defend the Palestinian people!

# Zionist butchers escalate war on Palestinians

JUNE 4—Defence of the Palestinian people against the capitalist rulers of Zionist Israel is posed with utmost urgency for working people and minorities around the world. The use of US-supplied F-16 fighter bombers to blast Palestinian Authority (PA) sites two weeks ago was a bloody statement of intent by the government of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. Responding to pressure from the US in the wake of the F-16 assault, Sharon cynically announced a “limited cease-fire”, during which the Israeli military proceeded to kill nearly a dozen more Palestinians and invade supposedly “autonomous” areas of the Occupied Territories, demolishing homes and destroying farms. Now, even that sham cease-fire has come to a shattering end, as the Zionist rulers plot retribution for the reprehensible bombing at a crowded Tel Aviv dance club Friday night.

Faced with the threat of “a very severe air strike” by Israel, which now officially declares the Palestinian Authority to be a “terrorist organisation”, PA president Yasir Arafat bowed to US and Israeli ultimatums to impose a cease-fire on Palestinians and round up supposed “terrorists”. But as one Palestinian militant in Ramallah said, “Arafat gave orders many months ago to stop shooting, but it’s not up to Arafat.” While the Israelis are holding back for the moment, largely to placate their American patrons, one security official described this as “a stay of execution for the PA”.

As the military tightened its strangulation of the besieged Arab ghettos in the West Bank and Gaza, a frenzied mob screaming “Death to the Arabs!” surrounded a Tel Aviv mosque, and Israelis



Castelnuovo/NY Times

Palestinian refugee camp in Gaza razed by Israeli army in April.

talk of an imminent “apocalypse” against the Palestinians. In the US, rabid Zionist William Safire screams in his column in the *New York Times* (4 June), “Let Sharon Be Sharon.” This is a barely veiled call for a replay of Sharon’s 1982 massacre of some 2000 Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon.

Israel’s rulers have made it clear that they will stop at nothing to suppress the Palestinian masses. Even before the Tel

Aviv bombing, former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu demanded military strikes against “radio, television, media, transportation, gas, and weapons reserves, and the PA’s economic infrastructure,” railing: “We have not yet used 1 per cent of the power of the IDF [military]. If Arafat continues the terror we will make sure that his terrorist regime will collapse. It is to this end that a unity government was formed” (*Observer*, 3 June).

After eight months of Palestinian defiance and an escalating war of terror by the Israeli military and its “settler” auxiliaries, the ultra-chauvinist Zionist rulers could well be moving towards a blood-bath of catastrophic proportions. Powerful international protest, including by the large number of workers of Near Eastern descent who are integrated into key sectors of French industry, is vitally necessary. It is particularly crucial for the multiracial working class and all the oppressed in the US, Britain and internationally to demand: *Defend the Palestinian people! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories! All US, British and other imperialist forces out of the Near East!*

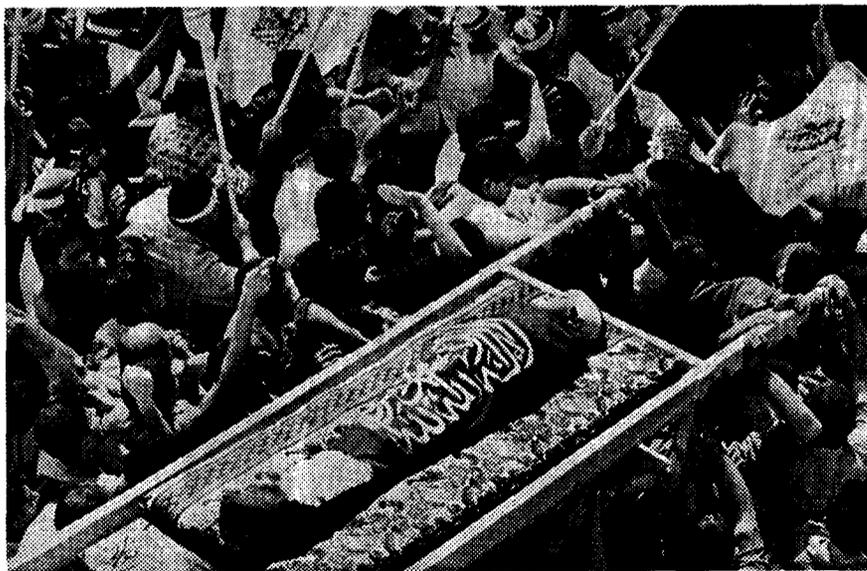
### The genocidal logic of nationalism

Israel’s rulers responded to an earlier Palestinian uprising, the *Intifada* that

began in late 1987, with “force, might, beatings to break bones”, in the words of then defence minister Yitzhak Rabin of the thoroughly bourgeois Labor Party. But lethal military terror has been the norm from the very start of the current *Intifada*, beginning with the deployment of missile-firing helicopter gunships and the massacre of Israeli Arab “citizens” by Sharon’s Labor predecessor, Ehud Barak. Where over 1000 Palestinians were killed in the course of three years in the earlier uprising, more than 500 have been murdered in the past eight months alone, many of them young children shot through the head and chest. Some 1500 others have been left paralysed from bullet wounds, with upwards of 15,000 injured overall. This amounts to a casualty rate of *one of every 200 Palestinians* in the Occupied Territories.

Palestinian towns and villages have been subjected to a starvation blockade, cut off not only by a network of “strategic highways” but now also with trenches and blockades, increasingly resembling the Jewish ghettos of Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe. Meanwhile, largely unreported in the US and British media, fascistic settlers have staged pogromist rampages on a near-daily basis. To take just a few incidents in the four days beginning 10 May: an 18-year-old student in Gaza was so badly mauled by attack dogs that it took him a full day

*continued on page 10*



Funeral march for 11-year-old Palestinian boy shot in the head by Israeli troops. Zionist terror has fuelled Palestinian defiance.