

## No to UN sanctions!

# Down with US/British war moves against Iran!



US Navy

Above: *USS John C Stennis* has been sent to Persian Gulf, part of US war provocations against Iran. Right: British checkpoint near Iranian border in southern Iraq, February.



Wisam Ahmed/Reuters

## Imperialists out of Iraq, Afghanistan now!

The following article is adapted and abridged from *Workers Vanguard* no 887, 2 March.

Having already reduced Iraq to a living hell under the US and British occupation, the Bush administration is carrying out one provocation after another against Iran while steadily beefing up military forces in and around the Persian Gulf. Two US aircraft carriers have been positioned near the Iranian coast. *BBC News* online (20 February) reports that the US has readied plans for attacks on Iran, to be triggered either by "confirmation that Iran was developing a nuclear weapon" or "a high-casualty attack on US forces in neighbouring Iraq...if it were traced directly back to Tehran". A US bombing campaign "would target Iranian air bases, naval bases, missile facilities and command-and-control centres".

At Washington's behest, the UN Security Council in December demanded that Tehran halt its uranium enrichment programme and imposed a first round of sanctions on Iran, barring technology sales that could be used for nuclear or missile development. Washington imposed additional sanctions targeting specific Iranian banks and other companies. This came after

almost three years of inspections in which the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) found no evidence of a nuclear weapons programme.

The British Labour government is acting as Bush's "hard cop" against Iran. Foreign secretary Margaret Beckett insisted "it was clear Iran was still enriching uranium" (*Guardian Unlimited*, 22 February), while prime minister Tony Blair said: "the tougher we in the international community are, the more likely we are to get the result we want. Any sign of weakness is lethal" (*Guardian Unlimited*, 27 February). According to the *Observer* (25 February), a Foreign Office official said that the key now is "to 'ratchet up the pressure' by getting the toughest possible new UN resolution capable of winning not only American and EU support but that of a more sceptical Russia and China as well". As for the EU, its foreign policy chief Javier Solana, who last year spearheaded talks with Tehran on behalf of the EU and the UN, commissioned a report

which is said to indicate that "Iran will be able to develop enough weapons-grade material for a nuclear bomb and there is little that can be done to prevent it" (*Financial Times* online, 12 February).

UN sanctions are having a marked impact on the Iranian economy, especially on oil production, its lifeline. A number of oil fields are in dire need of modern technology to reverse their normal decline (such as by reinjecting natural gas to flush out more oil), for which Iran needs foreign technical expertise. US officials have warned oil companies that they risk financial sanctions if they help promote Iran's oil development. Imperialist military threats are also having an economic impact. "Oil companies are simply assessing risk, including what some see as the real risk of a military strike against Iran," said a former State Department official. "Some are deciding it's not worth it" (*New York Times*, 13 February).

In February, stock markets around the world took a huge hit, with US

shares marking their greatest losses since markets were reopened after the September 11, 2001 attacks. While the sell-off was triggered by a large drop in Shanghai's stock index, the *Financial Times* online (28 February) reported that "concerns over Iran, worries about the US subprime mortgage market and a warning from Alan Greenspan, former chairman of the Federal Reserve, about a possible US recession punctured recent market optimism".

### Iran needs nuclear weapons

As revolutionary opponents of British imperialism, the Spartacist League opposes any economic sanctions against Iran. No one should be lulled by government claims that sanctions are an alternative to a military attack: sanctions are acts of war. Both the 1991 and 2003 wars against Iraq were preceded and prepared by UN-imposed sanctions. In the event of military attack against Iran by US/British imperialism or by Israel—the only

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## Women and Revolution



In honour of International Women's Day  
**The Suffragettes, the Russian Revolution and women's liberation**



# Iran...

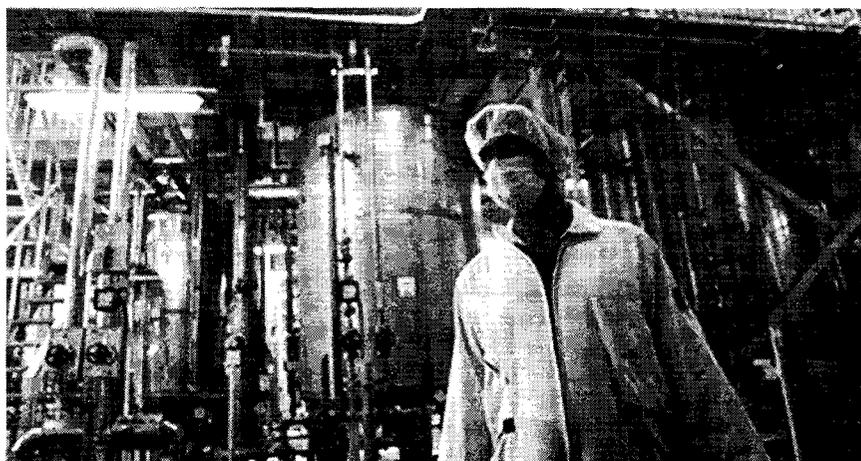
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nuclear-armed country in the Near East — or by any other force operating on behalf of the imperialists, our stand as Marxists is one of revolutionary defensism: for the military defence of Iran against imperialist attack without giving an iota of political support to the reactionary Tehran regime. The Iranian regime says that its nuclear energy programme does not include plans to develop the bomb. The biggest menace to the working people and oppressed of the world is US imperialism and its loyal British ally. As we wrote last year in "US/Britain hands off Iran!" (*Workers Hammer* no 194, Spring 2006):

"The fact of the matter is that in the context of threats by the nuclear-armed imperialists, Iran desperately needs nuclear weapons and adequate delivery systems to defend itself. In today's world, possession

of nuclear arms has become the only real measure of national sovereignty."

It takes some chutzpah for the US and British rulers to complain about Iranian interference in Iraq. The destruction of Iraqi society under imperialist occupation has engendered the horrors of mass murder and population expulsions. Almost daily, scores of civilians die in the ethnic and communal slaughter unleashed by the war and occupation. Bodies, often showing signs of hideous torture, turn up constantly in sewers and garbage dumps, victims of murderous militias and death squads that often overlap with the police and military. The flight of Sunnis and Shi'ites from once-mixed neighbourhoods has turned into the greatest refugee crisis in the Near East since the Zionists' 1948 expulsion of Palestinians and the creation of Israel. According to the UN, two million Iraqis — about eight per cent of the pre-war population — have fled the country, mostly to Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Iraq's smaller Christian and other minori-



AFP

Iranian uranium conversion facility near Isfahan.

ties are threatened with being eradicated from their homeland.

Blair made his long-awaited announcement about troop reductions in Iraq, amounting to withdrawal of about 1600 troops out of a total of 7100 (fewer than previously indicated) even as he also made it clear that British forces in Afghanistan are to be beefed up. A report by Patrick Cockburn in the *Independent* (23 February) contradicts the rosy picture painted by Downing Street of British troops handing over power to the Iraqis, saying: "southern Iraq has, in effect, long been under the control of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (Sciri) and the so-called 'Sadrist' factions". The *Financial Times* online (22 February) describes the partial withdrawal of troops as "the beginning of the end to a damaging and discredited enterprise", noting that in large part it means "leaving swaths of the south under the control of Shia paramilitaries and an assortment of local clans and bandits — even if they are wearing crisp new Iraqi uniforms".

In the leadup to the US/British invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, we called for the military defence of both countries without giving any political support to the reactionary Taliban cut-throats or the bloody capitalist regime of Saddam Hussein, which had slaughtered thousands of Communists, trade unionists, Kurds and others. Today, we call for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all US and British troops from Afghanistan, Iraq and Central Asia. As we did when Bush and Blair launched these wars under the rubric of the "war on terror", we call on the British proletariat to wage class struggle against the capitalist rulers at home.

## Reformists advocate "little England" policy for British imperialism

When the US invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, reformist groups such as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Socialist Party did not even raise the elementary call for the military defence of those countries. In the face of imperialist nuclear blackmail against Iraq, they do not mention the fact that Iran needs nuclear weapons to defend itself against attack. The Stop the War Coalition (StWC), built by the SWP, bases its policy on pleading with the British imperialist rulers to reorient their priorities and to end the "special relationship" with US imperialism. As a *Socialist Worker* article (12 August 2006) put it: "The main task of the anti-war movement in Britain is to force our government to break with George Bush's imperial project." The call for British imperialism to distance itself from the US — long upheld by "little England" Labour "lefts" such as Tony Benn — does not oppose British imperialism as a system, but merely demands a change in its foreign policy. This view is widely supported in the bourgeois press, thus the *Independent's* political

editor Andrew Grice wrote an article (7 February) titled "Blair's defence of special relationship with US has hollow ring", while Claire Short, who resigned as Blair's international development secretary over Iraq, claimed the government was "humiliating" Britain by being an "echo" of US foreign policy in the region (*Guardian Unlimited*, 28 February). The reformists couple this with time-worn calls for money for schools and the National Health Service, not Trident nuclear missiles, absurdly demanding that the rulers of the capitalist profit system serve the interests of those they exploit and oppress.

As the SWP's description of Her Majesty's government as "our" government shows, the reformist left's fundamental allegiance is to bourgeois democracy: the political shell for the dictatorship of the capitalist class. Fostering illusions in the "Mother of Parliaments", *Socialist Worker* (17 February), in an article mobilising for the 24 February demonstration for "No Trident/Troops Out of Iraq" complained that "the complicit House of Commons gives no voice to the majority feeling in Britain against the war", adding that "we want no more Bush wars against Iran or anyone else". Andrew Murray, chair of StWC argued: "it is past time to bridge the gulf between parliament and people that the Iraq war has opened up. The people will be on the streets once more next Saturday, demanding that our troops come home from Iraq, that we abandon our nuclear weapons folly and disengage from George Bush's rolling war. Since no MP seems to have a better idea, let the people's will prevail" (*Guardian*, 17 February).

For Marxists, the British imperialist troops are not "our troops". Moreover, mass slaughter is not due to a misguided foreign policy but is the concentrated expression and ultimate logic of the "normal" brutal workings of the capitalist system. The atrocities visited on the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan, the pounding attacks on the lives and livelihoods of working people and minorities in Britain, the US and around the globe — this is the face of imperialism, of the irrational, anarchic, profit-driven capitalist system in its epoch of decay. The only road to putting an end to the horrors engendered by this system is that of socialist revolution. British imperialism — which ran the world with racist, militaristic brutality when it had the wherewithal to do so — is today weak and decrepit and therefore dependent on the US to defend its interests abroad. To lead the British proletariat in smashing the imperialist order requires a revolutionary workers party, forged through the struggle to break the working class from its allegiance to Labourite reformism, which has always served the interests of British imperialism at home and abroad.

## War lies, and more

In January, Bush threatened that US forces would "seek out and destroy"

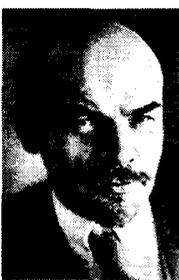
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## The Russian Revolution and the liberation of women

*The bourgeoisie and its supporters condemned the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917 for having, among other things, violated democracy. On the second anniversary of Soviet rule, Lenin wrote that, despite the famine and all the suffering caused by the imperialists' invasion, soviet or socialist democracy swept away such "pompous but false words" declared war on this hypocrisy*



TROTSKY



LENIN

and granted rights to women far in advance of the capitalist world.

The status of women makes clear in the most striking fashion the difference between bourgeois and socialist democracy and furnishes a most effective reply to the question posed.

In a bourgeois republic (i.e., where there is private ownership of land, factories, shares, etc.), be it the most democratic republic, women have never had rights fully equal to those of men, *anywhere in the world, in any one of the more advanced countries*. And this despite the fact that more than 125 years have passed since the great French (bourgeois-democratic) Revolution.

In words bourgeois democracy promises equality and freedom, but in practice *not a single* bourgeois republic, even the more advanced, has granted women (half the human race) and men complete equality in the eyes of the law, or delivered women from dependence on and the oppression of the male.

Bourgeois democracy is the democracy of pompous phrases, solemn words, lavish promises and high-sounding slogans about *freedom and equality*, but in practice all this cloaks the lack of freedom and the inequality of women, the lack of freedom and the inequality for the working and exploited people....

In the course of two years of Soviet power in one of the most backward countries of Europe more has been done to emancipate woman, to make her the equal of the "strong" sex, than has been done during the past 130 years by all the advanced, enlightened, "democratic" republics of the world taken together.

Education, culture, civilisation, freedom — all these high-sounding words are accompanied in all the capitalist, bourgeois republics of the world with incredibly foul, disgustingly vile, bestially crude laws that make women unequal in marriage and divorce, that make the child born out of wedlock and the "legally born" child unequal and that give privileges to the male and humiliate and degrade womankind....

The Soviet Republic, the republic of workers and peasants, wiped out these laws at one stroke and did not leave standing a single stone of the edifice of bourgeois lies and bourgeois hypocrisy.

— VI Lenin, "Soviet power and the status of women", 6 November 1919, printed in VI Lenin *Collected Works, Volume 30* (Lawrence & Wishart, 1976)

# WORKERS HAMMER

Marxist newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain

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

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## Overt overturn the chauvinist "English-only" policy at SOAS

# Down with the racist "war on terror"!

The racist "war on terror" continues to be a deadly reality for Muslims in Britain. On 31 January police conducted a series of dawn raids on Muslim homes in Birmingham, arresting nine men under the anti-terrorism laws on the pretext of a supposed plot to kidnap and behead a British Muslim soldier. Abu Bakr, one of the arrested men who was released after a week for lack of evidence, aptly described Blair's Britain as a "police state for Muslims". Previous "anti-terrorism" raids by the cops have resulted in the killing of Brazilian electrician Jean Charles de Menezes in Stockwell Tube station in July 2005 and the shooting of Mohammed Abdul Kahar in Forest Gate, East London in June 2006.

The US government is seeking the extradition of former School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) student and human rights campaigner Syed Talha Ahsan, together with Babar Ahmad, a former technician at Imperial College London. Ahsan was arrested on 19 July 2006, accused of "conspiracy" to provide "material support and resources to persons engaged in acts of terrorism in Afghanistan, Chechnya and elsewhere". The Free Talha Ahsan campaign stated on 21 July 2006, "Although the police have not charged him with any crime and have not found any criminal activity on his part, he is to face extradition to the US despite not having committed any criminal acts there" ([www.freetalhaahsan.com](http://www.freetalhaahsan.com)). Under the conditions of the Extradition Act 2003 between the US and Britain, no *prima facie* evidence is required for any "terror suspect" to be extradited, only that the US government provide documentation of the appearance of guilt. This is an outrage!

The fact that both Ahsan and Ahmad studied or worked at a university underlines the ominous purpose of the November 2006 government guidelines issued to universities "to tackle violent extremism in the name of Islam". These guidelines aim to reinforce the witch hunt against Muslim students and societies on campus by urging university staff to police student societies' activities, "sharing information" on student groups. Reporting on an earlier, leaked version of the guidelines, the *Guardian* (16 October 2006) revealed this to mean campus staff should "share" information with Special Branch, "and not wait to be contacted by detectives". As we wrote in "Anti-Muslim witch hunt on universities" (*Workers Hammer* no 197, Winter 2006-2007):

"These 'guidelines' amount to a state-sponsored witch hunt of Muslim societies. Make no mistake, this is an attempt to silence or purge any student, campus organisation or lecturer who speaks out against the brutal colonial occupation of Iraq or Afghanistan, or defends the Palestinians against murderous assault by the Zionist state, by branding them as potential 'terrorists'."

On campuses, Zionists have been acting as auxiliaries of the US and British imperialists and the state of Israel, targeting the lecturers union, Muslim students and Palestinian activists. Nasser

Amin, a Muslim student at SOAS was viciously witch-hunted for an article he wrote in the March 2005 issue of campus magazine *SOAS Spirit* advocating

but this will hardly make amends for the damage done to his life and his studies.

It is in the vital interests of students,



Workers Hammer

SYG lit table at SOAS, 7 March, with placard against "English-only" policy.

the Palestinian people's right to defend themselves against murderous Israeli terrorism. He fought for and obtained an apology from former SOAS Principal Colin Bundy, who falsely claimed that Amin had been reprimanded, and received £5000 in compensation,

lecturers and campus workers to oppose the "war on terror" on campuses. At SOAS this means fighting to overturn the chauvinist "English-only" rule for societies' literature upheld by the SOAS Student Union Clubs and Societies Guide which outrageously demands

that "All publicity must be in English", supposedly to "ensure that the Equal Opportunities Policy is adhered to". Scandalously, Clare Solomon of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Respect, who is part of the SOAS Student Union bureaucracy, tried to enforce this policy against the Spartacus Youth Group table at the September 2006 Freshers Fair. We vehemently opposed this attempt at anti-communist censorship at the time and have campaigned against the policy ever since, noting that it is aimed primarily at Muslims and will be used to target anyone who opposes British imperialism. SYG members have intervened into campus events and held regular sales of our literature (including in Arabic, Chinese, Turkish, Tagalog and other languages) and fought to overturn this threat to all students.

As part of our fight against the "war on terror" at SOAS and in defence of students who will be targeted, the SYG drafted a motion for the 20 February Union General Meeting, stating:

"That this 'English-only' rule has nothing to do with 'equal opportunities' and everything to do with enforcing the so-called 'war on terror' on campus. All students and

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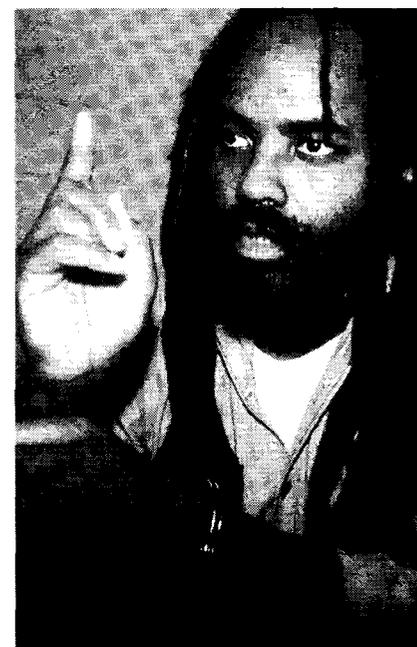
## Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man!

**FREE MUMIA NOW!**

### Mumia's life is in danger: mobilise now!

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man. A former Black Panther Party spokesman, supporter of the MOVE organisation and an award-winning journalist known as "the voice of the voiceless", Mumia was framed up in 1982 on false charges of killing a Philadelphia police officer. Sentenced to death explicitly for his political views and activities, Mumia has spent 24 years on death row for a crime he did not commit. The frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal shows what the death penalty is all about: a legacy of chattel slavery, the lynch rope made legal. The racist rulers see in Mumia the spectre of black revolution, a voice of defiant opposition to the oppression of black people that is a cornerstone of American capitalism.

Mumia's case is now before the US Third Circuit Court of Appeals. A decision could come within weeks or months; the outcome could be life imprisonment, further legal proceedings, or upholding the death sentence and an execution warrant. Understanding that *there is no justice in the capitalist courts*, we need to re-mobilise internationally *now* the millions who have taken up Mumia's fight for freedom, in the trade unions, on the campuses and in the streets, to demand: **Freedom now for Mumia Abu-Jamal!**



Terry/Gamma-Liaison

## RALLY!

Sponsored by the Partisan Defence Committee

Speakers include Rachel Wolkenstein, Partisan Defense Committee staff counsel and former member of Mumia's legal team

**Saturday 5 May, 1.00 pm**

**University of London Union, Room 3C&D, Malet Street, London WC1**

Nearest Tube: Russell Square or Goadge Street

For more information and to help build the campaign:

Tel: 020 7281 5504 E-mail: [partisandefence@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:partisandefence@yahoo.co.uk)

## Abolish the racist death penalty!

## Dubious BT hawks its wares to Socialist Party

Last November, at the Socialist Party's "Socialism 2006" weekend the so-called International Bolshevik Tendency (BT) sponsored a fringe meeting entitled "Why the Socialist Party is not socialist", featuring a former member of the Socialist Party, Michael Wainwright, as a speaker. The Socialist Party, led by Peter Taaffe, sometimes at least nominally appeals to "socialism" or the working class. However its antecedent, the Militant tendency, spent decades as an organic part of the old Labour Party. Today, despite its denunciation of New Labour as a bourgeois party, what the Socialist Party offers is merely "Clause IV"-style old Labourism.

This programme was upheld by successive Labour governments in the past as they served the interests of "democratic" British imperialism, including sending British troops to Northern Ireland in 1969; introducing grotesque racist measures such as "virginity tests" for Asian women immigrating to Britain in the 1970s, and strikebreaking against the unions at home. The Taaffeites too have a record of lining up on the side of "democratic" imperialism and of refusing to call for the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland.

The BT offered some orthodox-sounding criticism of the Socialist Party but this was limited to the Taaffeites' most blatant reformism on the state: the call for the "commanding heights" of the economy to be nationalised through an "enabling act" in parliament; for community control of the police and the claim that the police are "workers in uniform". Wainwright also exposed the fact that the Public and Commercial Services union (PCS), whose leadership is dominated by Socialist Party members, includes immigration police. This is a scandal. The police are a core part of the capitalist state and are deadly enemies of the workers movement and the oppressed. We demand: **Immigration police out of the PCS!**

### Today's old Labour reformists

We have decisively refuted the Taaffeites' positions on the state in our 1994 pamphlet "Militant Labour's touching faith in the capitalist state", based on Lenin's understanding that the state "is an organ of class rule, an organ of the oppression of one class by another" (*State and Revolution*, 1917) that cannot be reformed or pressured into acting on behalf of the working people and the oppressed, but has to be *shattered* by workers revolution.

As our comrades pointed out, the BT's "discovery" that the Socialist Party is reformist is hardly a shocking revelation on the British left. Moreover the BT fully embraces the wretched politics that define the Socialist Party more broadly—pandering to backward consciousness, anti-communism and Labourism. Thus BT speakers in the meeting were silent about the Taaffeites' blatant chauvinism regarding Northern Ireland, their support to counterrevolution in the USSR and Eastern Europe, and their gross capitulation to the racist "war on terror". However, with

the Taaffeites, what you see is what you get—old Labour reformism pure and simple. But with the BT, what you see is not what you get.

Taken at face value, the BT could be mistaken for just another grouplet that rightfully belongs in the Labourite swamp. But unlike most other groups on the left, politics is not primarily what defines the BT. Mainly its purpose is

took up Logan's case at its foundation and later declared him its leader. Over the years this outfit has engaged in all manner of lies, smears and provocations against us, which stands in stark contrast to its fawning over Labourite reformists.

### Fawning social chauvinists

As our comrades argued in the BT meeting, the Socialist Party's record on

ence from the cops is a demand which Marxists can support" ("Cops, Crime & Capitalism", *1917 West*, October 1992). The notion that the police—the front line enforcers of capitalist state repression against workers and minorities—can be made accountable, is the essence of reformism. The call for civilian review boards or for police accountability is a standard ploy by reformists to



Mark Chilver/Observer

London, July 2005: armed cops, front line of racist "war on terror" (left). Spartacist pamphlet refutes Socialist Party's reformism on the state, including the absurd notion that police are "workers in uniform".

the drive to destroy the International Communist League. It was created in 1982—originally calling itself the External Tendency (ET) of the international Spartacist tendency—by a handful of embittered quitters who fled from our hard Soviet-defensist politics in the face of renewed Cold War in the early 1980s. But unlike other people who quit—some of whom remained friendly, others went their separate ways—the BT coalesced into an outfit that slanders our organisation as a maniacal "political bandit operation" and an "obedience cult". As we wrote:

"Although they came together as a formation largely motivated by subjective malice, on a political level they were the crystallized reflection of the pressure of anti-communist public opinion. Insofar as the BT claims to present a version of Spartacist politics it is a counterfeit one: along with their anti-Sovietism goes an indifference—at best—to the necessary link between the struggle for black freedom and the struggle for working-class emancipation in the United States."

—*The International Bolshevik Tendency*  
—*What Is It?* (1995)

The BT is led by one Bill Logan, a man we expelled in 1979 as a "proven, massive liar and a sexual sociopath who manipulated the private lives of comrades for reasons of power politics and his own aberrant appetites and compulsions". In a party trial, Logan was found guilty of inhuman torture of one comrade whom he rendered suicidal in his attempt to force her to have an abortion and, failing that, to give up her baby for adoption. Knowing his history, the organisation that today calls itself the BT

the "war on terror", the cutting edge of racist terror in this country, is rotten. The BT was silent on this, which stems from their own indifference to racist oppression. Following the criminal London Tube and bus bombings in July 2005, amid a wave of racist anti-Muslim hysteria over "terrorism", the Taaffeite newspaper repeatedly ran a banner headline that said "No to terrorism, no to war". This was a gross capitulation to those like Labour MP Alice Mahon and London mayor Ken Livingstone, who oppose the occupation of Iraq (out of concern for British imperialism's image abroad) but *support* the "war on terror" at home. The loathsome Livingstone pledged his backing for the police, *after* they killed Brazilian electrician Jean Charles de Menezes in cold blood.

Spartacist speakers also exposed the BT's efforts to pose as opponents of "community control of the police". The BT raised its very own version of "community control of the cops" in the US. Against the background of a multi-racial explosion in Los Angeles in 1992, when the racist cops who sadistically and repeatedly beat and tortured black motorist Rodney King were acquitted, the BT threw itself into a California outfit called "Copwatch" whose stated aim was to "reduce police violence and harassment through accountability". While pretending to uphold the Marxist position on the state, the BT also argued that, "depending on the political composition and effective powers given to it, establishing a civilian police review board with a real measure of independ-

foster illusions that the institutions of "democracy" can be used to curb the "excesses" of the police.

During the Israeli invasion of Lebanon last year, the Taaffeite organisation in Israel published a leaflet that had not a single slogan addressing the defence of the Lebanese or the Palestinian peoples (see "Israeli Taaffeites Capitulate to Zionism Over Lebanon", *Workers Vanguard* no 879, 27 October 2006). Yet the BT raises a howl about social chauvinism over Lebanon—not against the Taaffeites—but against the ICL. They lyingly accuse us of "social patriotism", based on the fact that in 1983 we did not cheer as an act of "anti-imperialism" the deaths of 241 US Marines in Beirut blown up by a car bomb—planted by persons and forces unknown amid a squalid, multi-sided communal civil war. We conjuncturally raised the slogan "Marines Out of Lebanon, Now, Alive!" to intersect a moment of popular revulsion in the US against Reagan's Lebanon adventure, coupled with "U.S. Out of Grenada, Dead or Alive!" (*Workers Vanguard* no 341, 4 November 1983).

Little does it matter to the BT that we used both slogans precisely to underline the fact that unlike in Lebanon, we *did have a side* in Grenada with the Cuban-allied nationalist regime against the imperialists. As we noted at the time, the ET's vicarious bloodthirstiness was directly proportional to their distance from where the blood was being shed. On numerous occasions our comrades have challenged BTers to get up in meetings of the Socialist Party and argue that



British troops in Northern Ireland should “live like pigs, die like pigs”, as they said about Marines in Lebanon, but this outfit wouldn’t dream of it. Its venom is reserved exclusively for the ICL.

When it comes to conciliating national chauvinism, the Socialist Party and the BT are not fundamentally different. Taaffe’s organisation is particularly egregious on Northern Ireland—an acid test for socialists in Britain—having refused for decades to call for immediate withdrawal of British troops. It also has a history of making common cause with anti-Catholic Loyalist scum, such as in 1995 when the Taaffeite group in Northern Ireland invited Loyalist paramilitary leader Billy Hutchinson to its meetings. Today it campaigns for the “democratic rights” of the Orange Order to march—ie to stage anti-Catholic provocations.

In a similar vein the BT’s flagship group in Canada—where the oppression of Quebec is a dividing line between national chauvinism and revolutionary internationalism—has a profile as apologists for Maple Leaf Anglo chauvinism, *opposing* the call for independence for Quebec. This organisation has the dubious distinction of being *the* “socialists” officially invited to a Montreal “Canadian unity” rally on the eve of a 1995 referendum on Quebec sovereignty. As we noted: “It’s no accident the BT was invited to this ‘we love Canada’ rally organised by top business leaders—because the BT’s leaflet on the referendum (issued only in English!) also called on Quebec workers to vote No to independence” (“Kneeling Before the Body of General Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham”, *Workers Vanguard* no 827, 28 May 2004).

Here is an “International” “Bolshevik” Tendency that opposes our call for an independent, socialist Kurdistan and sneers at virtually every other struggle against national and racial oppression. The BT’s group in New Zealand, a white imperialist enclave whose history is marked by xenophobia and brutal repression of the Maoris, has written barely a word about the oppression of the Maoris. Yet in 2003 this selfsame BT fabricated an allegation of “vulgar chauvinism” *against us*, and then circulated the slander at the Socialist Workers Party’s (SWP) annual “Marxism” event in London to further incite the SWP goons and censors against our comrades. As the BT knew full well, a few months prior to “Marxism” SWP honcho Chris Bamberg had publicly threatened our comrades for our principled opposition to the class-collaborationist Stop the War Coalition, fulminating that anyone who doesn’t politically support it “deserves a bullet in the head”. (See “Bill Logan: From Krafft-Ebing to Mother Theresa? BT: Renegades for Hire”, *Workers Vanguard* no 807, 1 August 2003).

### Lies and provocations in the service of larger forces

The BT has a rather consistent history of staging provocations against us just when other forces—ranging from the reformists straight up to agencies of the bourgeoisie—are gunning for us. Thus in 1983, the ET (as it was then known) launched an international campaign labelling us as “violent”, lying that we had assaulted one of their members. We were at the time engaged in a very serious legal fight against the FBI, which had targeted our organisation as “violent”. And here we had a group formed by ex-members of our party screaming that we are “violent”. Whose interests did this serve?

A classic example of how the BT slander of us as a “cult” serves the interests of larger forces that are the enemies of the

working class and oppressed can be seen in the campaign to free American black political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. In 1995, the *Wall Street Journal*, mouthpiece for the American capitalist rulers, tried to undercut the growing international protest in defence of Jamal who was then under

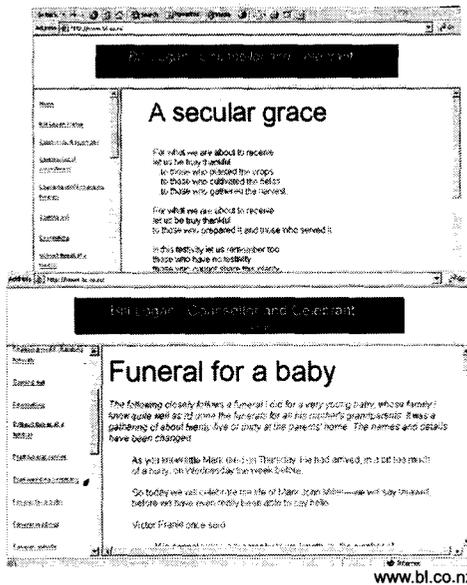


Workers Vanguard

**Sociopathic leader of anti-Spartacist BT, Bill Logan (left), advertises grotesque “services” on his private website (right).**

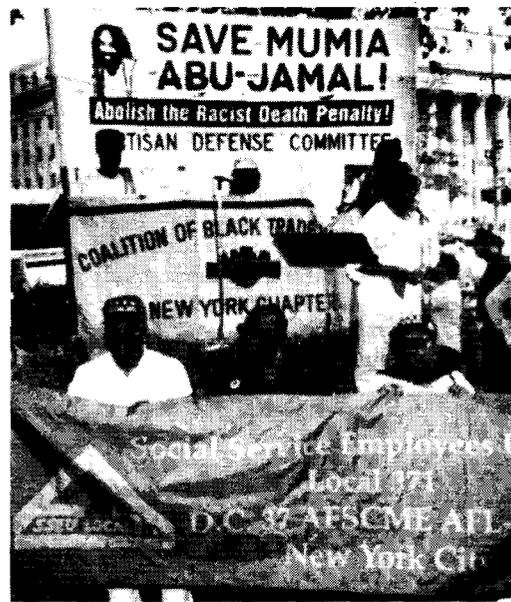
immediate threat of execution. In their efforts to portray Jamal as a depraved “cop killer”, they used the BT as an authority to smear the Partisan Defense Committee—the central organisation that had been fighting for others to take up his case—as associated with a crazed “cult”. Quoting the BT’s slanderous piece, “The Road to Jimstown” (*Bulletin of the External Tendency of the iSt*, May 1985) the *Wall Street Journal* (16 June 1995) wrote: “The Spartacists are led by a man named James

with ammunition was not the BT’s only service to those who would like to see Mumia Abu-Jamal dead. Today the BT postures as defenders of Mumia, who is a former Black Panther and supporter of the MOVE organisation. In May 1985, the Philadelphia police in collusion



www.bt.co.nz

with the FBI dropped a bomb on the radical back-to-nature MOVE commune, murdering eleven black people (five of them children) and incinerating a whole neighbourhood. The New York Spartacist League sponsored a memorial meeting for the bombing victims, inviting MOVE supporters to attend and speak. In the very first issue of its new periodical *1917* (Winter 1986), the BT grotesquely complained about the “convivial atmosphere” at the meeting



Workers Vanguard

**As SL/PDC spearheaded worldwide protest campaign to stop execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal in 1995, US capitalists’ house organ picked up BT’s slanders to smear Mumia’s supporters.**

Robertson, prompting the International Bolshevik Tendency, a group of former Spartacists, to deride their old party as ‘Jimstown,’ a takeoff on Jonestown in Guyana, the jungle site of mass suicide”.

The *Wall Street Journal* certainly got the point of the BT’s lurid smear of our party as an “obedience cult” and its allusion to the notorious 1978 mass suicide by an evangelical religious cult. Two years before the *Journal* article appeared, charges of “cultism” had been used to justify the Clinton administration’s murderous assault on the Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Texas, resulting in the incineration of some 100 men, women and children. As we have often said, the intent of the *Wall Street Journal* was clear enough; how and why the BT was so easily used as a tool by them is not.

Supplying the *Wall Street Journal*

because we did not politically attack MOVE and “SL speakers confined their remarks to denouncing the authors of the hideous massacre”. The BT, on the contrary, saw the occasion as the time to denounce a spokesman for the government’s victims and to go after the SL for not turning the *memorial* meeting into a political free-for-all against MOVE!

### Embracing counterrevolution in China

The BT’s hostile obsession with us is intertwined with their social-democratic anti-communism. They hated our Trotskyist defence of the Soviet Union when it existed and today reject our stand for unconditional military defence of China and the other remaining deformed workers states—Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam—against imperialist attack and counterrevolution. At the

same time we fight for a proletarian political revolution to sweep away the Stalinist bureaucracy and replace it with a government based on workers and peasants councils.

At a meeting on China presented by Peter Taaffe during the “Socialism 2006” weekend, the BT meekly suggested there might be a case for defending China, if it were attacked by imperialism. But if the Chinese deformed workers state faced the immediate threat of counterrevolution, there is no question Taaffe would take a side—with the forces of counterrevolution. As Spartacist comrades pointed out, in 1991 in Moscow, Taaffe’s supporters were present on Yeltsin’s barricades of counterrevolution. Moreover, Taaffe has already taken the side of the “democratic” imperialists against China over Taiwan. Taaffe says:

“Nevertheless, the Chinese regime is a dictatorship. Moreover, from the standpoint of the Taiwanese masses they would not wish to put themselves under its control, preferring the democratic rights, however limited, which they enjoy under a bourgeois-democratic regime, which is what Taiwan is.”

—“Marxists, Taiwan and the national question”, *Chinaworker.org*, 26 August 2005

The claim that Taiwan suffers national oppression (which is laughable coming from Taaffe, whose organisation prides itself on not opposing British oppression in Ireland) is bogus: what divides it from China is the class character of the respective states. Taiwan has since ancient times been part of China; since 1949 it has been a staging post and a pretext for counterrevolutionary manoeuvres against China.

Like Taaffe, the BT—which opposes the struggle for national independence virtually everywhere on the planet—professes a touching concern for national oppression in Tibet. This is nothing but a cover for the BT’s embrace of counterrevolutionary forces against the Chinese deformed workers state. According to the BT’s *1917* (2004): “By agreeing that the Tibetans or Uighur have the right to control their own domestic affairs, a revolutionary government in China would signal its willingness to coexist with Tibet’s traditional ruling caste and Xinjiang’s mullahs as long as they retain popular support.” The BT’s conception of a revolutionary workers state is one that should co-exist with an independent or autonomous Tibet run by imperialist-backed counterrevolutionary forces, including the CIA’s favoured “god-king”, the Dalai Lama.

### BT spits on our Soviet defensism

The BT’s support for counterrevolutionary forces in China confirms what we have always said—that its founders couldn’t stomach our Trotskyist defence of the Soviet Union in the early 1980s. Their depiction of our organisation as a Stalin-style “gulag” and personality cult, a central tenet of their existence, goes hand-in-hand with this anti-communism. This outfit hated our slogan “Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!” which expressed our unconditional military defence of the USSR and our recognition that, whatever the intentions of the Stalinist bureaucracy, this military action posed the possibility of extending the social gains of the Russian Revolution to the peoples of Afghanistan, especially its brutally oppressed women.

In August 1991, Boris Yeltsin seized on the coup attempt by Gorbachev’s former lieutenants to launch a power bid, acting as the local representative of the US

*continued on page 8*



## In honour of International Women's Day

# The Suffragettes, the Russian Revolution and women's liberation

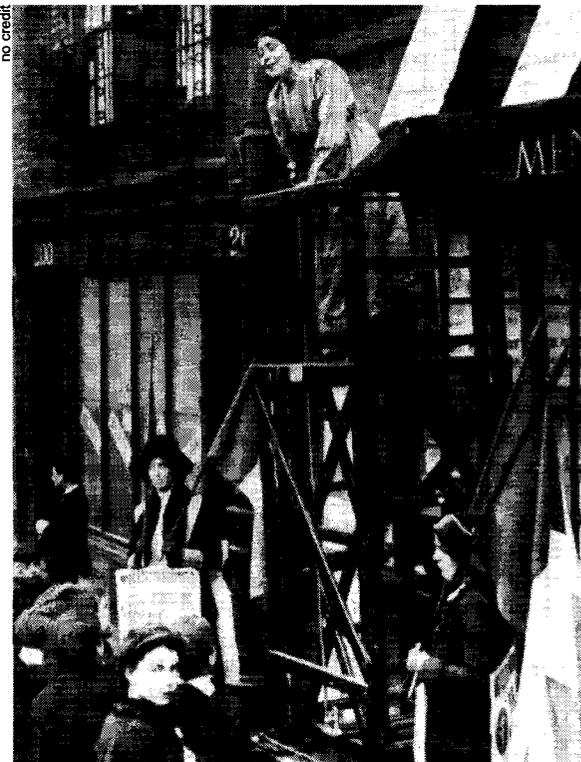
We print below an edited and expanded version of a presentation given by comrade Julia Emery at a Spartacist dayschool in London on 15 April 2006. Other presentations included "Class struggle, Labour betrayal and the fight for Irish independence" and "France: Workers, students defeat CPE" which were published in Workers Hammer no 195, Summer 2006.

For many activists around the world, the British Suffragette movement represents one of the high points of women's struggles, bringing women out on the streets in large numbers for militant and even heroic actions in support of the right of women to vote. Today, those who want to fight for women's liberation would do well to study the lessons of the fight for women's suffrage in the early 20th century. The story of the suffrage movement is the story of a movement which split into two camps — feminist and revolutionary socialist — in the face of social crises, centrally the wave of class struggle in Britain known as the "great unrest", followed by World War I and the Russian Revolution. Before I talk about the Suffragette movement, I want to say a word about our attitude to the fight for women's liberation.

We differ from feminists in that they consider the main division in society to be that between men and women. For us Marxists the fundamental division in society is the class division. Under capitalism the division is between the bourgeoisie, owners of the means of production, and the working class who sell their labour power. Winning liberation for women requires a workers socialist revolution to overturn capitalist property relations. While we fight to defend every gain won from the ruling class through hard struggle, our perspective is to build a revolutionary workers party that champions the interests of all the oppressed based on the understanding that the entire capitalist system must go and workers states must be established internationally. Only the advance to a socialist society will liberate women from their oppression and lay the basis for full integration and equality for women in society.

As Marxists we recognise that the special oppression of women is rooted in the institution of the family. Friedrich Engels in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884) traced the origin of the institution of the family and the state to the division of society into classes. When human society developed the capacity to produce a social surplus beyond what is needed for basic subsistence, a ruling class was able to form based on private appropriation of that surplus. With the emergence of private property the family became the necessary instrument to ensure that property would be inherited by the true biological heir, requiring women's sexual monogamy and social subordination. Engels called this the "world historical defeat of the female

**Sylvia Pankhurst addressing a crowd in Bow Road, East London, where she moved in 1912 and worked among working-class women.**



sex". Under capitalism the family serves as the instrument for raising the next generation of wage slaves and for inculcating bourgeois moral values, training youth to obey authority and to accept the social order.

The proletariat alone has the potential power to overthrow the system of capitalism, because of its organisation and its role in production. Women's participation in the proletariat gives them the social power to fight alongside their male co-

articles under *Women and Revolution* mastheads in our quadrilingual journal *Spartacist* and also in the press of ICL sections. I recommend comrades read the early *Women and Revolution* articles we wrote about the Pankhursts, who were prominent leaders of the Suffragette movement ("The Pankhursts: Suffrage and Socialism", in *Women and Revolution* no 12, Summer 1976 and "Sylvia Pankhurst and the Workers Movement", in *Women and Revolution* no 17, Summer 1978).



Suffragettes wearing prison clothing on release from prison, 1908.

workers for revolutionary change in society. In a socialist society the institution of the family as we know it will be replaced and household labour will be performed by collective institutions. The emancipation of women is the task of the working class as a whole and to this end, we intervene into the working class and social struggle with our programme, fighting for women's liberation through socialist revolution. Our press regularly publishes

At the beginning of the 20th century, it was still relatively uncommon for women to continue in paid employment after marriage. A woman once married was considered the property of her husband and her primary role was to look after the household and raise children. The origins of the Suffragette movement lay in the Independent Labour Party (ILP) which was founded in 1893. The ILP was instrumental in the forma-

tion of the Labour Representation Committee and affiliated to the Labour Party when it was formed in 1906. The Labour Party was what Lenin termed a bourgeois workers party, having a pro-capitalist programme and leadership but a mass working-class base. Emmeline Pankhurst and her husband Dr Richard Marsden Pankhurst joined the ILP in 1894. The Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) was formed in October 1903 by Emmeline Pankhurst and other ILP women as a male-exclusionist group to campaign on the single issue of women's right to vote "on the same terms as that agreed or may be accorded to men". Thus it upheld the class bias of the Third Reform Act of 1884 which contained a property qualification, leaving roughly a third of men, predominantly from the working class, disenfranchised.

The WSPU engaged in a crescendo of protests, ranging from marches, speeches, and breaking windows to arson and martyrdom. Their members suffered constant police harassment, beating, imprisonment, brutal force-feeding and even death in the fight for parliamentary reform that would allow women the elementary right to vote. The WSPU broke with the ILP in 1907 when Emmeline and her daughter Christabel insisted that WSPU members could not support any other party until women had won the vote. In particular, they were keen to win the support of rich conservative and upper-class women. This class prejudice meant that WSPU members were prohibited from campaigning for the ILP, which mobilised manual labourers and which many in the WSPU had actually worked to build. Sylvia Pankhurst, also the daughter of Emmeline, in 1912 founded the East London Federation of Suffragettes, which was affiliated with the WSPU but based on the working-class constituency of East London. It was founded in the context of the "great unrest" from 1910 to 1914, a period marked by major industrial struggles including by miners, railwaymen and other transport workers. This period also saw protests for women's suffrage as well as agitation for Home Rule in Ireland which was then under British rule.

In Britain, trade union membership had increased threefold since the 1889 dockers strike while wages had decreased by ten per cent between 1910 and 1912. The capitalists tried to maintain their profit rates by decreasing wages, provoking massive outbursts of class struggle. It's very common among reformists on the left to argue that the history of the Suffragettes, and particularly of Sylvia Pankhurst, shows that feminism and socialism are very closely intertwined. A leading exponent of this view during the 1970s was Sheila Rowbotham of the International Socialists, precursor to the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Rowbotham's book *Hidden from History* (1973)



argues that “there was a close connection between feminism and socialism in the early years of this [20th] century, and the divorce between the two was long, painful and protracted”. Three decades later the SWP’s Paul Foot wrote that “the division among many WSPU supporters can be exaggerated. In many cases, support for the WSPU overlapped with a growing conversion to socialist organisation” (*The Vote*, 2005).

In fact, nothing could be further from the truth: the Suffragette movement confirms that the ideology and social programme of feminism is counterposed to the perspective of socialist revolution. Both may have seemed compatible at the beginning of the 20th century, when there was relatively little social struggle. But the sharpening of class antagonisms and the outbreak of imperialist war, followed by the Russian October Revolution in 1917 exploded this myth and forced all those fighters for women’s liberation to choose: feminism or the programme of socialist revolution. The impact of these tumultuous events was reflected in the Pankhurst family and Sylvia was won to communism as a result of the October Revolution.

The polarisation within the Suffragettes over whether to take the side of the working class was evident in 1912 when troops were sent to break a strike in London docks, in which the strike leaders had been jailed for calling on troops not to shoot the workers. In the WSPU’s paper *Votes for Women* Christabel Pankhurst attacked the right of workers to strike and said “we would ask the Government if they propose to make the organisation of strikes punishable by law”. The WSPU protested that “this offence was more serious than any committed by the Suffragettes and should have been more seriously punished”. In contrast Sylvia Pankhurst’s East London Federation displayed increasing sympathy towards the workers movement.

In 1913 the working class of Dublin, led by socialist leaders James Connolly and Jim Larkin, were locked out by the Irish bourgeoisie in an attempt to smash the transport union. Sylvia Pankhurst’s solidarity with the embattled workers in Ireland caused a split in the Suffragettes. On 1 November 1913 she spoke on the platform at a meeting in London’s Albert Hall, alongside left-wing ILP representative George Lansbury and James Connolly. Connolly and Larkin campaigned for concrete acts of solidarity by the unions in Britain, as opposed to simply providing money and fine speeches, but their demands were rejected by the social-chauvinist Labour and trade union leaders in Britain and the Dublin workers were defeated. As a consequence of Sylvia Pankhurst’s appearance at this meeting she was immediately summoned to the WSPU headquarters in exile in Paris and told by Christabel that the East London Federation must become a separate organisation at once.

The existing legislation excluded manual workers—who were the base of the Labour Party—from voting and Christabel Pankhurst shared the British ruling class’s contempt for manual workers and didn’t want any taint of association with Lansbury, who campaigned not just for votes for women householders but for all men and women. Christabel considered the East London Federation’s working-class base a liability and said that working women were “the weakest portion of the sex”, adding: “Surely it is a mistake to use the weakest for the struggle”

(quoted in *The Suffragette Movement* by Sylvia Pankhurst, 1931). Therefore in March 1914, the East London Federation began publishing its own newspaper called *Woman’s Dreadnought*. At the time Sylvia Pankhurst was opposed to the split. Despite her misgivings about some of the WSPU’s tactics, particularly arson, what distinguished the East London Federation from the WSPU was its class composition and sympathy, but its programme was not substantially different. Sylvia had in reality created a proletarian auxiliary to a bourgeois feminist movement.

## Feminism turns to jingoism

However, things changed very fast with the outbreak of World War I. Mary Davis, who wrote a biography of Sylvia Pankhurst, said that “the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 propelled the WSPU away from feminism in the direction of patriotism” (*Sylvia Pankhurst*, 1999). This is not the case. Feminism is perfectly compatible with patriotism. Because feminists see the

the bourgeoisie: in 1915, they toured areas of great industrial militancy, particularly in the north of England and the mining areas of South Wales, to denounce “Bolshevism”.

Sylvia Pankhurst, by contrast, was not caught up in the outbreak of jingoism that followed the start of the war. She consistently attacked the war, demanded peace and denounced the WSPU’s bloodthirstiness. She continued to campaign for adult suffrage, but as her political outlook moved to the left she embraced broader questions, particularly poverty and class oppression. Her paper *Woman’s Dreadnought* was renamed *Workers’ Dreadnought* and carried articles dealing with a wide range of social issues, including inadequate allowances for servicemen’s wives and poor working conditions. Many of her followers were amongst the poorest women in East London, where starvation was rife and so there was relatively little flag-waving compared to the country as a whole. She led



VAAP



Above: Women’s demonstration in Petrograd, 19 March 1917. Banner says “As long as the woman is a slave there can’t be freedom—long live women’s equality”. Bolshevik Revolution in October wiped out all laws enshrining the oppression of women. Left: 1919 Manchester leaflet for “Hands Off Russia!” campaign. Mass workers’ protests in Britain forced capitalist rulers to call off military intervention to crush Bolshevik Revolution.

fundamental division in society as being between men and women they seek to build a movement to fight for a better position for women within the existing capitalist order. It therefore follows logically that when that order is threatened, feminists loyal to bourgeois society will mobilise to defend it.

When World War I broke out, Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst immediately suspended all activities of the WSPU and called on members to serve “their” country. Feminists in other belligerent countries lined up in the same way with their “own” bourgeoisies. The WSPU changed the name of its paper from *Suffragette* to *Britannia* and it bore a dedication, “for King, for Country, for Freedom”. It also took to the streets to hand out “white feathers of cowardice” to any able-bodied men found on the streets. The WSPU actively called for national service for women and conscription for men even before the government introduced it in 1916. This was not the first time these feminists took a clear side with

demonstrations and deputations to the government to protest working conditions, but also pioneered neighbourhood relief programmes, which included maternity and infant clinics providing free medical care and milk, a day care centre, a toy factory and a “Cost Price” restaurant. The strength of her organisation, the East London Federation, lay in the fact that she tied the question of wartime working conditions to a campaign against the war itself.

When on 4 August 1914 the German Social Democratic Party (SPD)’s parliamentary fraction voted for war credits for the German government, Lenin concluded that the Second International was dead as a force for socialist revolution. The majority of the social-democratic parties including the British Labour Party had taken the side of their “own” bourgeoisie. Exceptions to this were the Bolshevik Party, as well as socialists such as Karl Liebknecht in Germany, while in Scotland workers leader John Maclean was imprisoned for agitating against the war. For Lenin,

the treachery of the official “socialist” parties signified the need for a political split with social democracy, as an essential part of building parties that would lead the working class to the overthrow of their own bourgeoisie. He concluded that a new, revolutionary international had to be built. These lessons were tested and confirmed by the Bolshevik Party’s struggle to successfully lead the October Revolution.

## Bolshevik Revolution laid the basis for women’s liberation

The Bolshevik Revolution proved definitively that the road to women’s emancipation was through socialist revolution. The greatest victory for the working class and oppressed masses to date, the revolution smashed tsarist/capitalist rule and the Bolshevik-led soviets (workers and peasants councils) seized power. Land was taken from the landlords; industry was soon collectivised and the new workers state took steps to establish a planned economy. The revolution sought to bring women into full participation in economic, political and social life, and brought enormous gains to working women. The new workers state gave women a level of equality and freedom unparalleled anywhere in the world at that time—sweeping away centuries of patriarchal and religious power. Civil marriage was established, divorce was allowed at the request of either partner and all laws against homosexuality were abolished. However the Bolsheviks also understood that emancipation of women, and indeed of the toiling masses, requires an end to scarcity and poverty and therefore could not take place within the confines of an impoverished workers state. Rather it necessitated a vast leap in the development of the productive forces, which in turn required the extension of the revolution internationally, particularly to the more advanced capitalist countries such as Germany.

Lenin’s Bolsheviks attached great importance to the establishment of the Third International, which was founded in 1919 for the purpose of building communist parties in all countries. The Bolsheviks’ revolutionary experience was generalised and codified in the 21 “Conditions of Admission to the Communist International” which aimed for hard splits from the social patriots and reformists among the parties seeking affiliation to the Communist International.

Under the impact of the Russian Revolution, the positions of those on either side of the split in the Suffragette movement were carried to their logical conclusions. After the February Revolution, Emmeline Pankhurst, with Prime Minister Lloyd George’s agreement, travelled to Russia to persuade the Provisional Government leader Kerensky to honour the tsarist commitment to the Triple Entente and stay in the war. After the Bolshevik Revolution, she called on the British government to intervene militarily against the workers state.

Not so Sylvia Pankhurst, who called on workers to support the Soviet form of government and strongly welcomed the October Revolution. In 1916 the East London Federation of Suffragettes had been renamed the Workers’ Suffrage Federation. In 1918, following the Russian Revolution, it was renamed the Workers’ Socialist Federation (WSF) and its stated aim was the formation of workers soviets and international working-class revolution. The WSF paper reported on the

continued on page 10

# BT...

(Continued from page 5)

imperialists. Again the ICL stood out prominently. We were unique in our efforts to mobilise Soviet workers, mass distributing our leaflet headlined "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counter-revolution!" throughout the Soviet Union. While we recognised that the state power had been decisively fractured by Yeltsin's counter-coup in August, we attempted to spark working-class action against the counterrevolutionary forces and for proletarian political revolution in defence of collectivised property forms. Only when it was clear over the course of the next year that the working class was not going to move against Yeltsin, who was rapidly consolidating a capitalist state apparatus, did we conclude that the Soviet workers state had been definitively destroyed.

The BT cynically called for a military bloc with the pathetic coup plotters — although there was no military engagement and not a single shot was fired — only to unburden themselves of any nominal claim to being Soviet defensists, proclaiming that the Soviet degenerated workers state had been destroyed the moment Yeltsin defeated the coup plotters. Thus they gladly wrote off in advance (from a distance) **any possibility of working-class resistance**, which could have swept away Yeltsin and his forces and opened the road to proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy who were selling the Soviet Union to the capitalists.

The BT's positions are fully imbued with the anti-communist stereotype that "Stalinist totalitarianism" has reduced the working class in the deformed workers states to mindless automatons. This is at the root of their insistence that there was no possibility of a revolutionary outcome in East Germany in 1989-90. This is combined with bitter hostility to the one organisation that fought to realise this — the ICL. Having accepted the triumph of capitalist counterrevolution in advance, the BT sneered in an article headlined "Robertsonites in Wonderland" that we had invented an "imaginary political revolution" (1917, Third Quarter 1991). There was nothing imaginary about the fact that hundreds of thousands of workers took to the streets of East Germany to demand an egalitarian socialist society.

The BT was contemptuous of the fact that we mobilised our resources internationally in the effort to provide Trotsky-

ist leadership to that incipient political revolution, fighting for a red Germany of workers councils. We initiated the 250,000-strong united-front protest in East Berlin's Treptow Park on 3 January 1990, which was taken up by the ruling Stalinist party, that was called to protest the fascist desecration of a memorial to Soviet soldiers who died liberating Germany from Hitler's Nazis. The BT spits on this pro-Soviet rally, which was premised on defence of the workers states, com-



White House, May 2001: US president George Bush hosts "god-king", the Dalai Lama. BT would have imperialist-backed forces run Tibet.

plaining that we did not offer a platform to the anti-Soviet, pro-capitalist West German Social Democratic party (SPD). In denouncing our Treptow demonstration the BT is taking a stand **against** the defence of the DDR and the Soviet Union; **against** the incipient political revolution and **for** the SPD, the Trojan horse for counterrevolution in East Germany.

### Wedded to Labourite social democracy

Following his expulsion from our organisation, Bill Logan resurfaced in his native New Zealand as leader of the "Permanent Revolution Group" (PRG), an outfit that has much in common with the Taaffeites when it comes to Labourism. In 1989-90 Logan's PRG liquidated into the New Labour Party when it was founded by Jim Anderton as a split from the Labour Party. In the context of an extremely right-wing Labour government, Anderton's party was founded in the "real" spirit of the original Labour Party. To say he represented no political break from Labourite politics is something of an understatement

—by 1999 he was deputy prime minister; he supported the government on the bombing of Afghanistan and now leads the Progressive Party, which is not even a working-class formation.

Inside Anderton's New Labour Party, the PRG formed a loyal opposition. (See "Strange things under Wellington's rocks", *Australasian Spartacist* no 155, Summer 1995-96). The PRG boasted that: "We were quite open that we sup-

ported the New Labour Party and wanted to build it" and added that: "We made it clear that we saw this attempt at establishing a democratic workers' party open to all tendencies — including revolutionaries — as a good thing" (*Against Centrism/An Exchange of Documents between the Permanent Revolution Group and the Communist Left*, 1991). Following its expulsion a year later, the PRG swore its continuing fealty to New Labour's "principles and objectives" and rhapsodised about its "potential to be a voice of ordinary working people, of the oppressed and disadvantaged" (PRG leaflet, "Violence, Democracy & Jim Anderton MP", 26 April 1990).



### Bill Logan — a sinister minister

While at the same time clearly counterposing our Leninist-Trotskyist programme to the SLP's reformism. Inside the SLP, the BT opposed Scargill **from the right**, arguing in favour of supporting the Socialist Party in the 1997 election. The Socialist Party's campaign was totally subordinate to voting Labour (or anyone) to "get the Tories out".

We have documented the BT's record as a walking provocation against the ICL and exposed the manipulative sociopath, Bill Logan, it embraces as its leader (see "BT: Renegades for Hire", *Workers Vanguard* no 807, 1 August 2003 and "BT: A Walking Provocation", *Workers Vanguard* no 808, 29 August 2003). We do this not simply for the purpose of elementary political sanitation, but because a new generation of leftists must be made aware that the likes of Logan have no place in the workers movement. We took the unusual step of publicly releasing our three internal bulletins "On the Logan Regime" after we expelled him from our international organisation (then the international Spartacist tendency) in 1979. The Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand Central Committee charged Logan "with systematic and conscious violations of communist morality during his tenure as national chairman of the SLANZ between the years of 1972 and 1977" and "with repeated, conscious intervention into comrades' personal lives as part of a pattern of calculated personal and sexual manipulation, passing off intimate managing of comrades' personal lives as a legitimate and central function of the national chairman" (see "On the Logan Regime Part III", *International Information Bulletin* no 16, November 1983).

Today Logan advertises his services as a professional "counsellor, narrative therapist and celebrant" on his website (bl.co.nz). The man who tried to force a young woman communist to have an abortion now provides sample texts for funerals for babies and boasts, "I've done ceremonies for Hindus and atheists, Christians and Buddhists, followers of Krishnamurthy and Christian Science". Under the heading "Ceremony & Celebrancy", Logan intones: "Ceremony is important to our lives, from the dinner table to a coronation or presidential inauguration". The man who aped the attitudes of the British ruling class and manipulated the internalised oppression of working-class youth, women and those from the "colonies", now offers a "secular grace" gushing with condescending thanks to "those who planted the crops...those who gathered the harvest...to those who prepared it and those who served it".

That this man is the anointed leader of a putatively Marxist organisation should tell you just about all you need to know about the BT. ■

## Special ICL Bulletins

### On the Logan Regime

(Three parts)

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

- Part I £1.50 (82 pages)
- Part II £1.50 (44 pages)
- Part III £2.00 (79 pages)

### The International Bolshevik Tendency — What Is It?

International Communist League pamphlet, August 1995  
75p (10 pages)

Order from/make cheques payable to:

Spartacist Publications,  
PO Box 42886, London N19 5WY

INTERNATIONAL DISCUSSION BULLETIN  
Published by the Interior Secretariat

### ON THE LOGAN REGIME PART I

"Run, run, run, run, run,  
run, run... Chop."

International Communist League Pamphlet

### The International Bolshevik Tendency— What Is It?

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Visit the ICL website: [www.icl-fi.org](http://www.icl-fi.org)

# Iran...

(Continued from page 2)

Iranians supposedly arming and training insurgents in Iraq. In a calculated provocation, American troops the next day seized five Iranians who even Iraqi officials maintained were diplomats. US officials then upped the ante by revealing that Bush had authorised the military to "kill or capture" Iranian agents in Iraq. A *New Yorker* online article (25 February) by Seymour Hersh quotes a former senior intelligence official saying that "the word went out last August for the military to snatch as many Iranians in Iraq as they can" and that "they had five hundred locked up at one time". A former National Security Council official told Hersh: "This is all part of the campaign of provocative steps to increase the pressure on Iran. The idea is that at some point the Iranians will respond and then the Administration will have an open door to strike at them."

Hersh noted that with the two carrier strike groups near Iran due to be relieved in the spring, there is worry within the military that the two groups "may be ordered to stay in the area after the new carriers arrive". The former intelligence official told him that contingency plans "allow for an attack order this spring". Many commentators have said that the US is looking for a new "Tonkin Gulf" incident, referring to the cooked-up 1964 "attack" on a US warship by North Vietnamese forces that provided the pretext for a massive escalation of American forces in Vietnam.

To bolster Washington's claims that "the highest levels of the Iranian government" were targeting US forces in Iraq, American officials pointed to captured armour-piercing explosives that they said were fabricated in Iran. But attempts to whip up anti-Iran sentiment are falling flat. First it was revealed that a press conference originally scheduled for late January had been repeatedly postponed because the "evidence" was so dubious that no official in Washington would take responsibility for it. (The briefing was finally presented off-camera by anonymous officers in Baghdad.) Then the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff contradicted the "revelations", insisting that he saw no evidence of Iranian government involvement. Bush had to admit that he did not really know if attacks "were ordered from the top echelons of the government" in Tehran (*New York Times*, 15 February).

As revolutionary opponents of British and US imperialism, we recognise that when the insurgents in Iraq carry out strikes against the imperialist

occupiers, such acts coincide with the interests of the international proletariat. However, we do not imbue these forces with "anti-imperialist" credentials and stand in intransigent opposition to the murderous communal violence that is often carried out by the very same forces fighting the occupation armies. Should the Iraqi proletariat raise its head, it would face not only the sav-

was one of the few genuinely progressive acts by the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy, offering the possibility of extending the social gains of the 1917 Russian Revolution to the oppressed peoples and women of Afghanistan. The Kremlin's treacherous withdrawal of Soviet forces in 1988-89 was the opening for the victory of imperialist-backed counterrevolution throughout



SL/SYG lit table at 24 February anti-war demo.

agency of the imperialists but also the brutality of the reactionary Islamic fundamentalists and bourgeois nationalists that dominate the "resistance".

In regard to the hysteria over Iranian nukes, as the UN Security Council considered imposing further sanctions, the *Guardian* (23 February) reported: "Much of the intelligence on Iran's nuclear facilities provided to UN inspectors by American spy agencies has turned out to be unfounded." In the 1980s, when Washington and London were funnelling vast quantities of arms and money to the Islamic fundamentalists fighting Soviet troops in Afghanistan, the CIA sought to cover its tracks by supplying the *mujahedin* with Russian guns purchased from international arms merchants. Imperialist support to religious reaction in Afghanistan demonstrated how US and British imperialism fostered the growth of Islamic reaction during the Cold War as a counterweight to Communism and secular nationalism in the Muslim world.

While the bulk of the "left" howled along with the imperialists against the Soviet intervention, we said, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" We noted this

Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union itself. The restoration of capitalism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union—a historic defeat for the world proletariat—has brought devastation to the working people of those societies and emboldened the imperialists in their attacks globally while fuelling the resurgence of religious reaction throughout the world.

## For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

The Iranian clerical regime would be perfectly amenable to a reconciliation with Washington, if conditions permitted. The Iranian mullahs observed a tactful silence during the 1991 Gulf War against Iraq. They strongly encouraged the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and played a key role in the negotiations that set up a quisling government in Kabul under Hamid Karzai. Since then, Tehran has arrested hundreds of suspected Al Qaeda fighters streaming into Iran from Afghanistan, turned them over to Saudi Arabia and other countries and provided names, photographs and fingerprints to US intelligence officials.

According to a number of press reports, Tehran offered in 2003 to end its military support for Hezbollah and Hamas and to help the US "stabilise" Iraq in return for Washington lifting sanctions and dismantling the Mujahedin Khalq, an Iranian opposition group with bases in Iraq. The offer was reportedly rejected out of hand by vice-president Cheney.

The reactionary 1979 Iranian "Islamic Revolution" that overthrew the CIA-backed Shah was supported by the bulk of the left internationally in the name of "anti-imperialism". This included the pro-Moscow Tudeh (Masses) party in Iran, which had a base among the country's strategic, heavily Arab oil workers. Uniquely on the left, the International Communist League (then the international Spartacist tendency) gave no political support to Ayatollah Khomeini's forces. We warned that absent a decisive break by the working class with the Islamic forces, the 1978-79 upheaval would have a disastrous outcome. We said: "Down with

the Shah! Don't bow to Khomeini! For workers revolution in Iran!" After taking power, the mullahs enslaved women in the veil, slaughtered thousands of leftists and trade unionists and intensified repression against Kurds and other minorities.

The current regime has continued the murderous repression. On 24 February, Iranian soldiers near the Turkish border killed 17 militants associated with the Party of Free Life of Kurdistan, an offshoot of the Kurdistan Workers Party based in Turkey. Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who says that Israel should be "wiped out from the map of the world", has called the slaughter of six million Jews in the Nazi Holocaust a "myth" and last year organised a conference with Holocaust deniers from around the world, including outright fascists.

In one significant way, Iran is, in this period, an anomaly in the Near East. The growing opposition in that country to the current regime appears to have a significant secular component, as many aspire to free themselves from stifling religious rule. Ahmadinejad took the presidency in June 2005 having promised to provide more jobs, fight corruption and redistribute wealth. However, inflation has exploded, with the price of staples like bread and meat rising as much as 25 per cent, students are disaffected, workers' strikes have been growing and the Kurdish and Azeri north, the Arab southwest and the Baluchi southeast are simmering. In December's municipal elections, the president's political allies suffered an embarrassing defeat.

It is the task of the working class in Iran, leading women, national and ethnic minorities and all the oppressed behind it, to overthrow the Persian-chauvinist Islamic regime. Key to this perspective is the forging of a Marxist workers party. Such parties must be built throughout the Near East to unite the proletariat—Arab, Persian, Kurdish and Hebrew, Sunni and Shi'ite, Muslim and Christian—in struggle against imperialism and against the Zionists, mullahs, colonels, sheiks and all the other capitalist rulers. The fight for workers rule in the Near East crucially includes shattering the Zionist garrison state from within through Arab/Hebrew workers revolution.

This is the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution, which vitally includes the fight to extend working-class rule to the imperialist centres, not least through the struggle for socialist revolution in Britain and the US. In the struggle for a socialist federation of the Near East, Marxist workers parties are essential to break the proletariat of the region from fundamentalism, nationalism and illusions in imperialist "democracy". The Stalinised Communist parties of the Near East, which made a mockery of this revolutionary perspective with their support to various bourgeois forces, share responsibility for the growth of Islamic fundamentalism among the working and oppressed masses.

## Down with British imperialism!

As further sanctions loom, the Iranian government has taken the just stand that it will defy UN strictures against its nuclear development. While Russia accommodated the US by voting for UN sanctions, it has also provided Iran with \$700 million worth of TOR-M1 anti-aircraft batteries, "whose likely target in the event of conflict would be American fighters and bombers" (*New York Times*, 18 February). Russian leaders were

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# Suffragettes...

(Continued from page 7)

1916 Easter uprising in Dublin and Sylvia Pankhurst, who was sympathetic to the Irish liberation struggle, was very saddened by the execution of Connolly by the British imperialist rulers. The *Workers' Dreadnought* had frequent articles and speeches by Lenin and reports from the Russian Revolution, including many by the American communist John Reed, which were run under a series called "Red Russia". The paper was internationalist in scope, reporting on the labour movement in Germany as well as the importance of the anti-colonial struggle, including in India.

A Franchise Bill was introduced in Britain in 1917 and signed into law in early 1918. The Russian Revolution, which was welcomed by millions of workers across Europe, played a decisive role in the achievement of votes for women in Britain. The bourgeoisie granted this concession in the face of the Russian Revolution and massive class struggle between 1917 and 1920. According to Sylvia Pankhurst herself:

"Undoubtedly the large part taken by women during the War in all branches of social service had proved a tremendous argument for their own enfranchisement. Yet the memory of the old militancy, and the certainty of its recurrence if the claims of women were set aside, was a much stronger factor in overcoming the reluctance of those who would again have postponed the settlement. The shock to the foundations of existing social institutions already reverberating from Russia across Europe, made many old opponents desire to enlist the new enthusiasm of women voters to stabilise the Parliamentary machine."

— *The Suffragette Movement*

While Emmeline Pankhurst supported the Franchise Bill, the WSF opposed it because it only gave the vote to women over the age of thirty and included a property qualification. These restrictions were not lifted until 1928 when women got the vote at the age of 21 on the same terms as men.

## "Hands Off Russia!"

Sylvia Pankhurst was a member of the steering committee of the Hands Off Russia Committee, a mass campaign for defence of the fledgling Soviet state. The campaign was particularly effective in the East London docks. There is a story that I like. In 1920 there was a rumour that some ships were being loaded with weapons destined for the Polish front against Soviet Russia. The WSF and the Hands Off Russia Committee were very active in campaigning against this and when they found out that munitions were being loaded they went down to the docks to argue with the dockers not to load these weapons. They didn't seem to be getting much of a response and Harry Pollitt, who at the time was a member of the WSF (and went on to become a leader of the Communist Party of Great Britain) says an old dock worker tapped him on the shoulder and said, don't worry, we have this situation in hand. Shortly thereafter, the rope broke and the entire cargo ended up sinking into the North Sea.

The Hands Off Russia campaign led to strikes by London dockers, who refused to load the Jolly George ship in 1920 with munitions bound for Pilsudski's nationalist forces in Poland to fight against the Soviet army. Dockers and railway unions throughout Britain also refused to load munitions. As some 350 "councils of action" sprang up throughout the country, the Labour and trade union leaders sought

to maintain control of this upsurge. They established a national council of action and threatened a general strike to stop military intervention against Soviet Russia, which forced the British ruling class to call it off.

## The need for communist parties

Despite the failure of revolutions in the rest of Europe with the receding of the post-war revolutionary wave of 1918-19, there were continuing political crises and outbreaks of tremendous class struggle in Europe. In Germany in March 1920, the right-wing Kapp putsch against the SPD government was defeated through a nationwide general strike with the armed mobilisation of the workers. 1920 was a year of massive strikes in Italy culminating in factory occupations in August and September. Also the Red Army had just repulsed Pilsudski's forces in the Ukraine and was advancing towards Warsaw, posing the possibility of revolution in Poland and the direct linking up with the German proletariat. The Communist International anticipated continuing revolutionary opportunities and a major task of its Second Congress in July and August 1920 was the formation of effective communist parties to take advantage of them.

British capitalist rule was profoundly shaken at the time. In 1919 the country was on the verge of a general strike; however the capitalist order was assured by the treachery of the Labourite leaders of the rail, coal and steel unions—the Triple Alliance—who refused to undertake a revolutionary confrontation with the government. That same year Belfast experienced a near-general strike that united Catholic and Protestant workers. Shortly afterwards troops were sent to Glasgow to quell massive workers' protests there. Workers leaders John Maclean and Willie Gallacher were arrested and the troops were not tested out.

In this context the Labour Party positioned itself to derail the growing upsurge of working-class struggle inspired by the Russian Revolution and to channel it into support for parliament. To this end, in 1918 the Labour Party adopted "Clause IV", a nominal commitment to "common ownership of the means of production" as a deliberate ploy to deceive the working class into believing socialism could be achieved through parliament. Historically, the strategic task for revolutionaries in Britain has been to split the Labour Party, winning its working-class base to the programme of authentic communism. During 1919-20, unity negotiations took place between those groups in Britain who supported the call to form a communist party and to affiliate to the Communist International—the British Socialist Party, the Socialist Labour Party, the South Wales Socialist Society, and the WSF. Sylvia Pankhurst was one of those whom Lenin described as "ultra-lefts". These also included Willie Gallacher, leader of the Scottish shop stewards' movement and of militant workers' struggles on Clydeside during World War I. It quickly became clear that their disagreements were one of the main obstacles to forming a united communist party in Britain.

Sylvia Pankhurst, after campaigning for women's suffrage, had come to believe that revolutionaries should refuse on principle to participate in parliamentary activities like voting or running for parliament, nor should they affiliate to the Labour Party. Lenin understood that some of the best fighters in Britain shared these positions. In large part this was conditioned by the betrayals of social democracy—the Labour Party and Trades Union

Congress (TUC) had declared an industrial truce during the war, while supporting military recruitment as well as measures like the Treasury Agreements and the Munitions of War Act. These included no-strike agreements and hiring of semi-skilled and women workers at lower wages.

## Tactics towards Labour

While seeking to exclude the social chauvinists, the Communist International sought to win over subjectively revolutionary leftists, particularly syndicalists, and to convince them of the need for revolutionary parties dedicated to taking power. Sylvia Pankhurst founded her own Communist Party (British section of the Third International) in June 1920, a move that was strongly rebuked by Lenin who was critical of her for placing tactical considerations above the formation of a united communist party. Lenin's *"Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder* (1920), an extension of his arguments with Sylvia Pankhurst, argued that communists should advocate critical support to the Labour Party in the upcoming elections and also affiliate to the Labour Party, to win over its working-class base to form a communist party. Several million workers had become members of the Labour Party as a consequence of joining trade unions which were affiliated to Labour.

Lenin argued for communist propaganda and tactics, including participation in the Labour Party and in parliament among other arenas, as a necessary step to dispel those illusions and to win the working class over to an understanding of the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat. This debate continued at the Second Congress of the Communist International which was attended by both Sylvia Pankhurst and Willie Gallacher. Lenin's intervention was decisive and at its foundation the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) adopted his position. Sylvia Pankhurst agreed to join the new CPGB and argue for her positions inside. However, she insisted on continuing the publication of her own newspaper *Workers' Dreadnought* and refused to bring it under party control. She printed articles critical of the party and Comintern policy and by taking differences outside the party she only served to make the fledgling Comintern more vulnerable. She was expelled because she refused to accept this elementary requirement of democratic centralism, after which she drifted away from communism. *Workers' Dreadnought* ceased publication in 1924 and Sylvia Pankhurst ended up a follower of Emperor Haile Selassie in Ethiopia, where she died and is buried. While this meant breaking with communism, her sister Christabel on the other hand quit pol-

itics to await the second coming of Christ while her mother became a staunch Tory. Neither had to break with a single one of their feminist positions.

As a revolutionary party capable of challenging the capitalist order, the CPGB was stillborn. The sterility of the Communist Party and the absence of a real Leninist tradition in Britain have been key negative conditions enabling Labourite reformism and illusions in parliamentarism to maintain hegemony in the workers movement. Unlike in the early American Communist Party, there was no faction fight against Stalinism in the CPGB, which in turn accounts for the subsequent absence of a strong Trotskyist tradition in Britain. Trotskyism, in fact, had to be imported. We trace our revolutionary continuity through James P Cannon and the American Socialist Workers Party. Cannon was a leader of the early American Communist Party who was won over to Trotskyism from the time of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in 1928. He struggled to crystallise a Trotskyist party, initially from within the ranks of the Communist Party which, like the rest of the Comintern, succumbed to the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet Union that began in 1923-24.

This degeneration was conditioned by the failure of revolutions elsewhere, particularly in Germany in 1923, the isolation of the impoverished workers state with a predominantly peasant population and the decimation of the proletarian vanguard in the civil war. The bureaucratic caste led by JV Stalin came to power, which rolled back many gains of the Bolshevik Revolution, not least for women who were encouraged back into the family and the home. But despite this political degeneration the Soviet Union remained a workers state. Even at the time of its destruction by counterrevolution in 1991-92, the Soviet Union provided many advantages for women, such as state-supported childcare institutions, full abortion rights, access to a wide range of trades and professions and a status in many ways far ahead of many advanced capitalist societies today. We fought for unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack and against capitalist restoration from within, and for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy. The Spartacist League/Britain and the Spartacist Group Ireland are the British and Irish sections of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) and we seek to reforge the Fourth International as part of the struggle for international proletarian revolution worldwide. ■

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## China...

(Continued from page 12)

in 1997 broadened the Pentagon's list of nuclear targets in China. Since issuing a Nuclear Posture Review in 2001 that included China among seven countries targeted for possible nuclear attack, the Pentagon has moved into the Pacific five nuclear submarines carrying an estimated 720 warheads, including some with advanced Trident II missiles, according to the Federation of American Scientists.

In pursuit of their own ambitions, the Japanese imperialists, who brutally colonised Korea in 1910 and occupied much of China before World War II, have embarked on a programme of military expansion whose principal targets are North Korea and China. On 9 January, the government of Shinzo Abe re-established a fully fledged "defence" ministry for the first time since World War II, with authority to deploy the military overseas. This is a significant step towards junking Article Nine of the US-imposed postwar constitution — long flouted in practice — banning Japan from maintaining military forces. According to the *Japan Times* (22 December 2006), Japan and the US signed an agreement in December "to exchange

detailed global topographic data—a move apparently aimed at sharing information specifically on North Korea and China". Japan is also planning to launch a fourth spy satellite this month that will complete its system of global coverage.

The point at which imperialist military pressure bears down most directly on Beijing is capitalist Taiwan, where the defeated bourgeoisie under the command of the butcher Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek fled the 1949 revolution. In February 2005, the US and Japan issued a joint policy statement declaring Taiwan a "mutual security concern" and moved to reposition their military forces, including the regional deployment of antiballistic missile systems. In response to these dangerous provocations, the Spartacist League/US and the Spartacist Group Japan declared in a joint statement:

"Since the 1949 Chinese Revolution, from which the Chinese deformed workers state emerged, Taiwan has been an outpost for U.S. imperialism's counterrevolutionary schemes, military threats and interference in Chinese internal affairs through the puppet Chinese bourgeoisie. Taiwan has been since ancient times a part of China, and we Trotskyists will stand with China in the event of any military conflict with imperialism over Taiwan."

— *Workers Vanguard* no 844,  
18 March 2005

Now it is reported that in February the US and Japan will discuss a "joint operation plan for their troops" for defence of Taiwan (*Japantoday.com*, 4 January).

Beijing extends a hand to the bourgeoisie in Taiwan by pushing for its reunification with China under the formula, "one country, two systems". The nationalist Stalinist regime thus pledges to maintain capitalism on the island, as it has done in Hong Kong following the reversion of the former British colony to Chinese control in 1997. In opposition to the Stalinists and to the reactionary forces calling for Taiwanese independence, the ICL calls for the revolutionary reunification of China: for **socialist revolution** to expropriate the Taiwanese capitalists and a **workers political revolution** to oust the Beijing bureaucracy, establishing a regime of workers democracy and revolutionary internationalism.

Washington's current space policy opposes treaties proposed by China and Russia banning the "weaponization of space". Clearly the US administration's intent is to put a lot more weapons there. The Democrats, the other party of US imperialism, and such bourgeois mouthpieces as the *New York Times* advocate a space weapons treaty as a better means of

limiting China's capabilities and protecting the American advantage. Edward Markey, Democratic co-chair of the House Nonproliferation task force, declared on 20 January: "American satellites are the soft underbelly of our national security, and it is urgent that President Bush move to guarantee their protection by initiating an international agreement to ban the development, testing, and deployment of space weapons and anti-satellite systems."

To defend and extend the gains of social revolution in China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba requires fighting for proletarian revolution in the imperialist centres. Defence of the remaining workers states against imperialism and counterrevolution is critical to mobilising the proletariat in Britain as well as in the US and Japan against their own exploiters. Every advance in the workers states' military capabilities buys more time for the international proletariat. Only when workers revolutions put the advanced technology and industrial capacity of the developed countries to use in an international planned economy will the basis be laid for a socialist society of material abundance. To this end, the ICL fights to build revolutionary Trotskyist parties as part of a reformed Fourth International. ■

## Iran...

(Continued from page 9)

already furious over the eastward expansion of NATO which, having signed up the former Soviet republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, is now making overtures to Georgia and Ukraine. At a security conference in Munich in February, Russian strongman Vladimir Putin lashed out at the US over its plan to install a missile defence system—supposedly directed against intercontinental missiles launched by Iran!—in Poland and the Czech Republic.

Today, extricating their military forces from the Iraq quagmire could give the imperialists more flexibility to

pursue their threats against both neo-colonial Iran and the North Korean deformed workers state, and to pursue as well their strategic goal of capitalist counterrevolution in China, the most powerful of the remaining societies where capitalism was overthrown. It is particularly criminal that representatives of the Chinese deformed workers state voted on the UN Security Council to impose sanctions on Iran. The Chinese Stalinist regime has also collaborated with the imperialists in the ongoing "negotiations" aimed at stopping North Korea's development of nuclear weapons. We stand for the unconditional military defence of the Chinese, North Korean, Cuban and Vietnamese deformed workers states against imperialism and domestic counterrevolution. We support

Pyongyang's testing and development of nukes as a deterrent against imperialist blackmail and hailed China's successful anti-satellite weapons test in January.

Beijing's aid to the effort to disarm North Korea—an expression of the Stalinist policy of "peaceful co-existence" with imperialism—undermines China's own defence. We fight for workers political revolutions to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies and replace them with regimes based on workers democracy. Such revolutionary regimes must be guided by a programme of revolutionary internationalism, fighting to extend proletarian rule through international socialist revolution.

In Britain, we seek to mobilise the proletariat in struggle against its "own" ruling class—which together

with US imperialism forms the deadliest terrorist force on the planet. As we wrote in "Imperialists Escalate Bloody Iraq Occupation" (*Workers Vanguard* no 884, 19 January): "It is the road of class struggle that points the way toward smashing imperialism from within, through socialist revolution. If there is to be a future for coming generations of working-class and minority youth other than one of grinding exploitation, joblessness, mass imprisonment or use as cannon fodder, if the impoverished masses of the world are to have a future other than starvation and slaughter, this whole system must be torn up by its roots and replaced by a rational, planned economy under workers rule internationally." ■

## SOAS...

(Continued from page 3)

staff should be allowed to read and distribute material in any language regardless of whether it is translated. The 'war on terror' is a classic 'divide and rule' ploy, stigmatising Muslims as an excuse for a sweeping reduction in the legal rights of the entire population and a racist, imperialist 'war' of military adventures abroad. The 'war on terror' targets immigrants, minorities and ultimately the working class."

Members of the SWP and Respect on campus are in an excruciating contradiction over this question: on the one hand they present themselves as defenders of Muslims; on the other hand as good reformists when elected to office in the student union they enforce the "war on terror" measures on behalf of the university administration and the bourgeois state, including the "English-only" policy. Thus with student union elections pending, Clare Solomon's election leaflet claimed "The rise in Islamophobia—with proposals to spy on Asian students" is "very worrying" and said. "I've organised to fight Islamophobia". But her role in enforcing the "English-only" policy flatly contradicts this claim so she put

her name to our motion to bolster her credentials among the multiethnic student population. However, her support for the motion doesn't amount to much; she let it drop off the end of the agenda at the meeting.

### Reform v revolution

The SWP's reformist programme can be seen fairly clearly through the perspectives of the Stop the War Coalition (StWC). A *BBC news* online report of the 24 February anti-war demonstration quotes leading SWP and StWC convener Lindsey German stating that "we must intensify our call for all troops to be withdrawn now and for Britain to break the link with George Bush's foreign policy". This is what the programme of the StWC amounts to: pressuring the capitalist rulers of Britain to break from US imperialism and change their priorities to delivering "welfare not warfare".

We call for: **US/British troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan now!** However our opposition to imperialism in these countries has nothing in common with social-patriotic calls to bring "our boys" home. British imperialism—which once possessed the most powerful empire in the world—is no less savage and brutal than US imperialism, simply weaker and more

decrepit. As revolutionary Marxists, we understand that imperialism is not simply a foreign policy and the capitalist system cannot be reformed to serve the exploited and oppressed. The SWP is incapable of telling you the fundamental truth that racism, imperialist war and the violent repression of workers and minorities are intrinsic to the capitalist system and cannot be eradicated short of a socialist revolution led by the working class. We fight to build a multiethnic revolutionary workers party with the programme to sweep away this system once and for all and replace it with a workers state where those who produce the wealth of society will rule.

### For new October Revolutions!

As for defending Muslims, the SWP's opposition to Islamophobia is couched in a wholesale capitulation to Islam which, like all religions—including Christianity, the established religion in this country—is a tool for the oppression and subjugation of women. The SWP's capitulation to Islamic forces is nothing new. During the 1980s the SWP supported the US and British imperialists against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, where the Red Army was fighting anti-woman CIA-backed *mujahedin* reactionaries

who threw acid in the faces of unveiled women and shot school-teachers who dared to teach girls to read. We said "Hail Red Army!" and "Extend the gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples!" The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 was the opening shot in counterrevolution in the USSR itself, which found the SWP rejoicing at Yeltsin's 1991 counter-coup heralding the destruction of the workers state. This was a **world historic defeat** of the proletariat and ushered in the reactionary period that we live in today. Although bureaucratically degenerated and undermined by Stalinist misrule, the Soviet Union continued to embody gains for the working class achieved through the overthrow of capitalist rule by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution.

We stood for unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack and capitalist restoration and for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and establish the rule of democratically-elected workers councils; just as today we fight for the same programme for the deformed workers states in China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea. We are proud to be the party of the Russian Revolution. If you want to see a world rid of imperialist war, cop brutality, poverty and oppression, join us! ■

## Imperialists stung by Chinese weapons test

# For unconditional military defence of China!

The following article is adapted from Workers Vanguard no 885, 2 February 2007, newspaper of the Spartacist League/US.

On 11 January, a Chinese missile smashed to bits an aging Chinese weather satellite more than 500 miles above the country's Xichang space facility. The exercise marked a significant advance in the ability of the Chinese deformed workers state to defend itself against a nuclear first strike by US imperialism. The threat of such an attack has grown with Washington's plans to deploy a "missile defence system" in the Asian Pacific, which would rely on satellite technology.

The US, British and Japanese governments raised a hue and cry over the successful test. This is rich coming from the British government which is currently seeking parliamentary approval to acquire a new generation of nuclear submarines to maintain Trident, the missile system acquired in the 1980s as part of NATO's arsenal aimed at the Soviet Union. With consummate chutzpah, a spokesman for Bush's National Security Council intoned: "China's development and testing of such weapons is inconsistent with the spirit of cooperation that both countries aspire to in the civil space area." The US rulers' overwhelming military might, far exceeding that of their imperialist rivals, not to mention China, includes extensive militarisation of space. In October, the administration released a new "National Space Policy" (signed by Bush two months earlier) declaring Washington's unilateral right to "deny, if necessary, adversaries the use of space capabilities hostile to U.S. national interests". In fact, this policy is principally aimed at preventing China from developing anti-satellite weapons.

Behind the imperialist hype about mythical Chinese "aggression" lies a genuine military problem. The US war machine has become heavily reliant on a vast network of satellites for intelligence, communications, navigation and weapons targeting. The US owns or operates more than half of the 845 currently active commercial and military satellites in orbit. Dozens operate in low orbits similar to that of the destroyed Chinese Fengyun 1C satellite. According to *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (21 January), which broke the story of the anti-satellite test, the Chinese military can now "credibly threaten imaging reconnaissance and other satellites operated by the U.S.,

Japan, Russia, Israel and Europe". Moreover, according to a US official, China recently "painted" US satellites with a ground-based laser, a potentially disabling capability. At considerably higher orbits are the Pentagon's vital network of Global Positioning System satellites and other spacecraft.

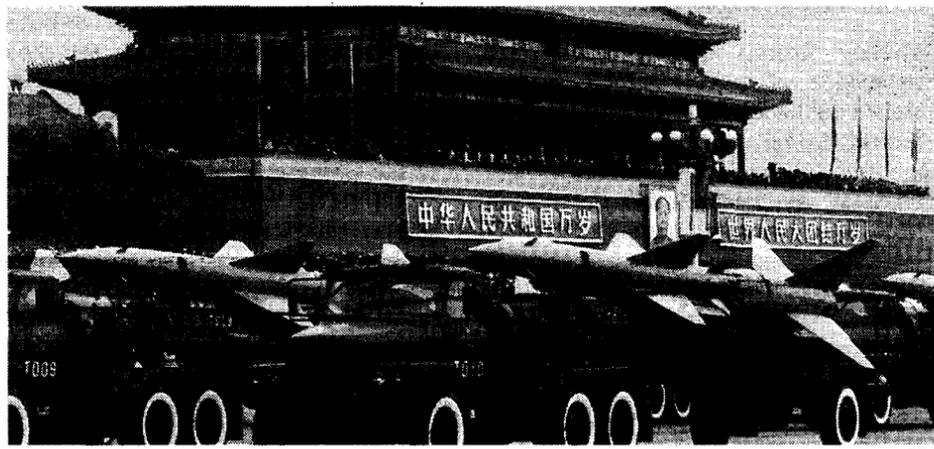
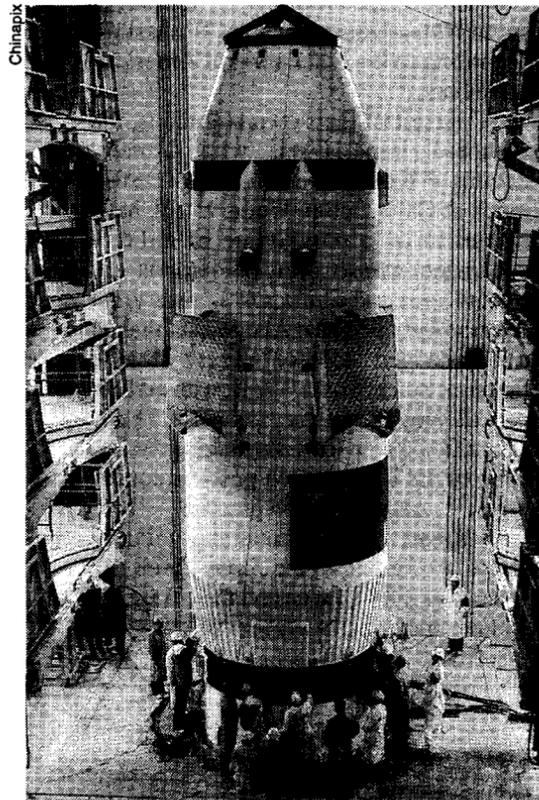
The International Communist League, of which the Spartacist League/Britain is a section, stands for the unconditional military defence of China and the other bureaucratically deformed workers states, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba, against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. We support China and North Korea's development of nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them as essential to the defence of those workers states. The Chinese nuclear force, on the order of 200 warheads with an estimated 20 deployed ICBMs capable of reaching the US, acts as a deterrent against the US mass murderers who reduced Nagasaki and Hiroshima to irradiated rubble in 1945.

China has been a target of the US nuclear arsenal, currently consisting of some 10,000 warheads, since the Korean War. For decades, the Soviet Union's nuclear force forestalled the imperialists from unleashing their deadly nukes. Since the counter-revolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state in 1991-92, Washington has shifted much of its strategic forces to target China, the most powerful of the remaining countries in which capitalism has been overthrown. The Pentagon's space forces are designed to ensure its first-strike capability by suppressing any counter-strike.

It is notable that the recent Chinese and North Korean weapons tests were carried out with the US bogged down in its murderous occupation of Iraq. Indeed, the Democratic Party's principal objection to Bush's Iraq policy is that it diverts resources away from more strategically important targets like China.

At the same time, the US has pursued the encirclement of China under cover of fighting "terrorism". Treacherously, Beijing has embraced the imperialists' "war on terror" in the interest of its economic relationship with the US. The US now has military installations in Central Asia on China's western flank and has enhanced its military presence in the Philippines. The Bush administration last year sealed a nuclear pact with India and in 2005 resumed open mili-

China's technological development is crucial for its military defence. Right: Shenzhou spaceship, part of manned space programme. Below: Army parade in Tiananmen Square.



tary relations with Indonesia. In Australia, long instrumental as a junior imperialist partner to the Pentagon's global operations, huge US bases are under construction at Bradshaw and Yampi Sound.

### China in imperialists' cross-hairs

The 1949 Chinese Revolution overthrew capitalist/landlord rule and ripped the world's most populous country out of the clutches of the imperialist powers that had long held China in their grip. Although deformed from its inception by the rule of a parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy, the Chinese Revolution laid the basis for collectivising the economy, resulting in enormous social progress for workers, women and peasants. Smashing the Chinese workers state is a strategic goal for the capitalist powers, who seek to turn China into a vast field for untrammelled exploitation and super-profits. In pursuit of counter-revolution, the imperialists are both increasing their military pressure against China and furthering their economic penetration of the mainland by taking advantage of Beijing's "market reforms".

Defence of the workers states against imperialism is undermined by the rule of the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies, whose policies are encapsulated in the dogma of "building socialism in one country". The Stalinists oppose the fight for international proletarian revo-

lution and instead pursue the futile quest for "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. A glaring case in point is Beijing's treacherous partnership with the US, Japan and others in the attempt to disarm North Korea. Following North Korea's successful nuclear test in October, China criminally voted for sanctions against Pyongyang in the UN Security Council.

The Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy played no small part in the destruction of the Soviet Union, which had been the industrial/military powerhouse of the non-capitalist world. In the wake of a falling-out between Moscow and Beijing that began in the late 1950s, Mao Zedong pursued an alliance with American imperialism against the Soviet Union. This was sealed when Mao met with US Republican president Nixon in 1972 as American bombs rained down on Vietnam and Cambodia. In 1979, only four years after the victory of the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants, China under Deng Xiaoping invaded Vietnam, acting as US imperialism's cat's paw. The alliance allowed the US under Reagan to add to its anti-Soviet arsenal the bulk of the nuclear weapons it had aimed at China, at the same time tying down significant Soviet forces in the Far East.

Following the demise of the USSR, China was placed once again in Washington's cross-hairs. A directive signed by Democratic president Clinton

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