

## Israel “celebrates” founding by slaughtering Palestinians again



May 15: Palestinian boy wounded when Israeli soldiers opened fire on protesters at Lebanese border (left); Zionist troops take aim at approaching demonstrators in Golan Heights (right). AP photos

**For Arab/Hebrew workers revolution!  
For a socialist federation of the Near East!**

The following article is adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 981, 27 May 2011.

In a wave of protests, thousands of Palestinians from Syria, Lebanon, Gaza and the West Bank gathered at Israel's borders on 15 May to mark the “Nakba”, or “catastrophe”. This is what Palestinians call the anniversary of the founding of Israel in 1948 and the war with Arab states, when hundreds of thousands were driven from their homes and land—many to squalid refugee camps where they and their descendants live to this day. Israeli troops celebrated the anniversary in their own customary way by gunning down demonstrators, killing over a dozen and injuring scores more.

Ever since Israel was established in 1948 in accordance with a United Nations partition plan, Palestinians have been treated as *untermenschen* (subhuman), subjected to deadly cycles of war and terror, repeatedly robbed of their land and driven into ghetto-like enclaves. The drive for a “greater Israel” was inherent in the establishment of the Zionist state. Today, the entire West Bank, which Israel occupied along with the Gaza Strip as a result of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, is dotted with military outposts, checkpoints and fortified settlements. Zionist settlers repeatedly rampage in the West Bank. That area is criss-crossed by “bypass roads” that are off-limits to Palestinians, who are walled

off in towns and villages where water and other necessities of life are scarce.

Two and a half years ago, the Zionist butchers—armed with US warplanes, helicopters and missiles—slaughtered more than a thousand Palestinians and wounded thousands more in the Gaza ghetto. When a flotilla of volunteers carrying medicine, construction supplies and other goods defied the Israeli blockade of Gaza last year, elite naval units blasted away at the 700 passengers in international waters, killing nine people.

Workers internationally must take up the defence of the besieged Palestinian people and demand: **All Zionist troops and settlers out of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights! For immediate removal of all anti-Arab fortifications! Down with the blockade of Gaza!**

### Obama backs Zionist terror

President Barack Obama last week repeated Washington's long-held position in favour of a supposed “two-state solution” in which the Palestinians would be granted a rump state consisting of Gaza and part of the West Bank. Obama proposed Israeli-Palestinian negotiations based on the borders existing before the 1967 war, supplemented with land “swaps”. What that means was shown in secret documents released early this year (the so-called “Palestine Papers”) reveal-

ing the details of years of such “negotiations”. The documents describe how former Israeli foreign minister Tzipi Livni told Palestinian negotiators that land swaps should involve separating Arab villages from Israel and annexing them to an eventual Palestinian state. Tens of thousands of Arabs could lose their Israeli citizenship under this scheme.

In presenting the US government's position, Obama used language that was meant to appeal to Arab audiences in the Near East and North Africa, a region that has been swept by a series of protests and uprisings. His particular choice of words enraged Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu as he was about to arrive in Washington for talks with the White House. The Israeli government insists that final control of the territory seized in 1967 must remain in the hands of Israel. This has long been the consensus of all bourgeois parties in Israel, including the Labor Party.

Obama then took the occasion of a speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee—the main Zionist lobby—to reassure Tel Aviv that the US would not waver in its support to Israel. The White House has made this clear by opposing a planned UN resolution in favour of a Palestinian state. To defend its interests in the oil-rich Near East, US imperialism each year pumps some

\$3 billion in military aid to Israel and another \$1.3 billion for Egypt's military, relying as well on the Saudi monarchy and the despots ruling the Persian Gulf states. **Down with US aid to Israel, Egypt!**

At the heart of the Palestinian question is the impossibility of achieving national justice for geographically interpenetrated peoples within a capitalist framework. Both Palestinian Arabs and Hebrew-speaking Israelis lay claim to a small portion of the Near East. Key to the creation of a nation of Hebrew-speaking people in Palestine was the rise of the Nazis in Germany, which caused massive waves of Jewish emigration both before the Holocaust and again after World War II. The Zionists had appealed directly to British imperialism, which controlled Palestine militarily, to sponsor a so-called “Jewish homeland”. The British rulers, anti-Semitic to the core, agreed because they saw this as a way to further their divide-and-rule schemes in the Near East, at a time when the British Empire was in sharp decline. The European-derived Jewish settlers were supplemented by an influx of Oriental Jews fleeing Arab countries.

As we explained in “Birth of the Zionist State, Part Two: The 1948 War” (*Workers Vanguard* no 45, 24 May 1974):

“It was clear that the establishment of an independent nation-state, either by Palestinian

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# Israel...

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Arabs or the Jews, would occur in Palestine only at the expense of the other nation. When national populations are geographically interpenetrated, as they were in Palestine, an independent nation-state can be created only by their forcible separation (forced population transfers, etc.). Thus the democratic right of self-determination becomes abstract, as it can be exercised only by the stronger national grouping driving out or destroying the weaker one. "In such cases the only possibility of a democratic solution lies in a social transformation."

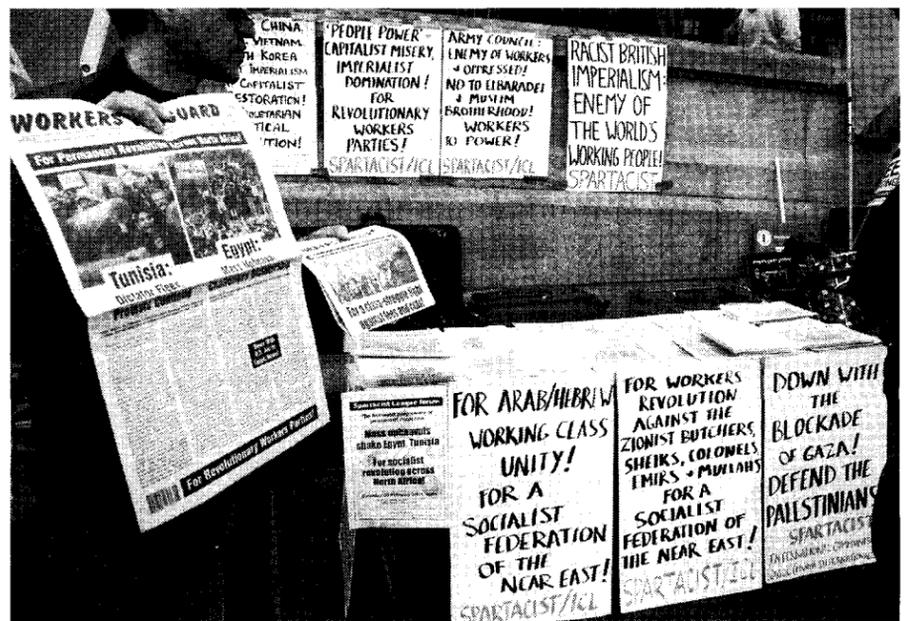
So long as the national principle prevails, the oppression of the Palestinians by the massively armed Zionist state will only deepen. The only way to achieve an equitable solution to the conflicting national claims of the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking peoples is through the overthrow of capitalist rule in Israel and the surrounding Arab states, where millions of Palestinians languish. The national emancipation of the Palestinians—including the right of all refugees and their descendants to return to their homeland—necessarily entails workers revolutions to shatter the Zionist state from within and to sweep away the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, where more than half the population is Palestinian, as well as the Syrian Ba'athist and Lebanese regimes.

The Arab working masses must be broken from Islamic fundamentalism and bourgeois nationalism, and the Israeli workers must be broken from the Zionist consciousness that politically binds them to their Israeli exploiters. We have no illusions that this is an easy task, but the alternative is the perpetuation and deepening of the misery of the Palestinians and continual threats of military conflict, with a nuclear-armed Israeli state prepared to obliterate its neighbours, whatever the consequences. Israel is a class-divided society, with high income disparities. Sephardic Jews, though overwhelmingly under the sway of right-wing and religious parties, suffer widespread discrimination and poverty.

Revolutionary Marxists fight to forge workers parties throughout the region in political combat against all forms of nationalism and religious reaction. **Down with the oil sheikhs, emirs, kings, colonels and Zionist rulers—Workers to power! For a socialist federation of the Near East!**

## Bankrupt Arab nationalism

The outlines of what Washington sees as a "solution" in Israel/Palestine were laid out in the 1993 Oslo "peace" accords between Israel's Labor Party government of Yitzhak Rabin and Yasir Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Brokered by then-president Bill Clinton, the deal established the Palestinian



Workers Hammer

SL/B literature table at 12 February Egypt solidarity demonstration in London.

Authority as the Zionists' police auxiliaries in the Occupied Territories, giving it some limited powers in the West Bank and Gaza. We noted at the time that the accord "does not offer even the most deformed expression of self-determination" ("Israel-PLO deal for Palestinian ghetto", *Workers Hammer* no 137, September/October 1993).

The Oslo accords led directly to the doubling of the settler population in the

Occupied Territories by the end of the decade. Most significantly, the Palestinians became even more marginalised from Israel's economy as the Israeli capitalists increasingly resorted to the use of migrant labour from Asia and elsewhere.

The political bankruptcy of the PLO and the increasingly desperate situation the Palestinians faced set the stage for the rise of reactionary Islamic groups like

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TROTSKY

As an antidote to the barrage of obsequious drivel we were subjected to by the bourgeois media during Queen Elizabeth's visit to Ireland in May, we reprint below an article by Irish socialist James Connolly on the occasion of the visit to Ireland by King George V in 1911. For his part in leading the 1916 Easter uprising against British rule in Ireland, Connolly was executed by his British captors.

Fellow-Workers,

As you are aware from reading the daily and weekly newspapers, we are about to be blessed with a visit from King George V.

Knowing from previous experience of Royal Visits, as well as from the Coronation orgies of the past few weeks, that the occasion will be utilised to make propaganda on behalf of royalty and aristocracy against the oncoming forces of democracy and National freedom, we desire to place before you some few reasons why you should unanimously refuse to countenance this visit, or to recognise it by your presence at its attendant processions or demonstrations. We appeal to you as workers, speaking to workers, whether your work be that of the brain or of the hand—manual or mental toil—it is of you and your children we are thinking; it is your cause we wish to safeguard and foster.

The future of the working class requires that all political and social positions should be open to all men and women; that all privileges of birth or wealth be abolished, and that every man or woman born into this land should have an equal opportunity to attain to the proudest position in the land. The Socialist demands that the only birthright necessary to qualify for public office should be the birthright of our common humanity.

Believing as we do that there is nothing on earth more sacred than humanity, we deny all allegiance to this institution of royalty, and hence we can only regard the visit of the King as adding fresh fuel to the fire of hatred with which we regard the plundering institutions of which he is the representative. Let the capitalist and landlord class flock to exalt him; he is theirs; in him they see embodied the idea of caste and class; they glorify him and exalt his importance that they might familiarise the public mind with the conception of political inequality, knowing well that a people mentally poi-

## James Connolly on royalty

soned by the adulation of royalty can never attain to that spirit of self-reliant democracy necessary for the attainment of social freedom. The mind accustomed to political kings can easily be reconciled to social kings—capitalist kings of the workshop, the mill, the railway, the ships and the docks. Thus coronation and king's visits are by our astute never-sleeping masters made into huge Imperialist propagandist campaigns in favour of political and social schemes against democracy. But if our masters and rulers are sleepless in their schemes against us, so we, rebels against their rule, must never sleep in our appeal to our fellows to maintain as publicly our belief in the dignity of our class—in the ultimate sovereignty of those who labour.

What is monarchy? From whence does it derive its sanction? What has been its gift to humanity? Monarchy is a survival of the tyranny imposed by the hand of greed and treachery upon the human race in the darkest and most ignorant days of our history. It derives its only sanction from the sword of the marauder, and the helplessness of the producer, and its gifts to humanity are unknown, save as they can be measured in the pernicious examples of triumphant and shameless iniquities.

Every class in society save royalty, and especially British royalty, has through some of its members contributed something to the elevation of the race. But neither in science, nor in art, nor in literature, nor in exploration, nor in mechanical invention, nor in humanising of laws, nor in any sphere of human activity has a representative of British royalty helped forward the moral, intellectual or material improvement of mankind. But that royal family has opposed every forward move, fought every reform, persecuted every patriot, and intrigued against every good cause. Slandering every friend of the people, it has befriended every oppressor. Eulogised to-day by misguided clerics, it has been notorious in history for the revolting nature of its crimes.

—James Connolly, "Visit of King George V, 1911", printed in James Connolly, *Collected Works, Volume One* (New Books Publications, 1987)



LENIN

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AUSLAND: AUSTRIA: BRITAIN: CANADA: GERMANY: IRELAND: ITALY: NORTH AMERICA: USA: U.S.A. 2011

# For workers republics on both sides of the Irish Sea!

# Down with the monarchy and the “United Kingdom”!

When the starving poor of Paris demanded bread, the haughty French Queen Marie Antoinette famously said “let them eat cake”. For British working people facing the deepest economic crisis since World War II, the equivalent is “give them a royal wedding”. Hardly had the hoopla subsided over the nuptials of William and Kate in April when the whole royal circus was re-enacted in the meticulously choreographed visit of Elizabeth II to Ireland a few weeks later.

A popular joke doing the rounds in the run-up to the royal wedding went along the lines of: “Prince William says he doesn’t want the traditional fruit cake at the wedding, but Prince Philip says he doesn’t give a toss and is going anyway.” Forever the butt of jokes due to his unstoppable, bigoted ravings on royal engagements, Prince Philip is often portrayed as a senile old reactionary in contrast to a reserved, reverential Her Majesty. But whatever comparable tact the Queen may display, Prince Philip’s outbursts are an unashamed expression of the racist, class contempt that is the institution of the monarchy.

David Cameron and his cabinet celebrated the announcement of the royal wedding last autumn with a banging of fists on the table in the manner of those educated in public schools, inculcated as they are with the arrogance that they are born to rule. For Cameron & Co, the event would be a “wedding of mass distraction” in which the population would fawn over the marriage of two pampered parasites and would put the devastating cuts and job losses to the back of their minds. But that is not quite how it turned out, as Polly Toynbee reported on the “big day” itself:

“Yet despite months of coverage, rising to a crescendo of print and broadcasting frenzy this week, the country has remained resolutely phlegmatic. Cameras pick out the wildest enthusiasts camped out or dressed as brides, yet the Guardian/ICM poll and others put those expressing ‘strong interest’ at only 20%.

“In poll after poll, more than 70% refused to be excited. Laconic, cool, only half the population said they would watch Friday’s flummery.”

— Guardian, 29 April

If there was little enthusiasm in England, Scotland and Wales showed even less excitement over the royal spectacle.

But we had to put up with it nonetheless: the absurd yet very real gossip about the Prince marrying a “commoner”, which says a lot about this country’s “in-your-face” class prejudice. Kate Middleton’s millionaire parents belong to the top 0.5 per cent income bracket and this “commoner” went to the same public school as the wives of the prime minister and the chancellor. In the eyes of the aristocracy, she is not high-born enough for her and her sibling to avoid the tag of “the wisteria sisters” in reference to their social climbing, or to avoid the “doors to manual” dig at her mother, a former airline stewardess. There was the endless bunting, the portrait of “Wills and



Left: Queen with Irish president Mary McAleese at memorial to Republicans, Dublin, 17 May. Above: Protest in Ireland against Queen’s visit.

Kate” emblazoned on the Union Jack — that butcher’s apron, the flag of an empire where “the sun never set” and the blood never dried and of the continued imperialist slaughter of Iraq, Afghanistan and now Libya.

For those wanting to protest against the royal carnival, the message from Metropolitan Police Commander Christine Jones was that this could be deemed criminal. In a statement she declared, “this is a day of celebration, joy and pageantry” adding, “Any criminals attempting to disrupt it, be that in the guise of protest or otherwise, will be met by a robust, decisive, flexible and proportionate policing response.” In a suspension of democratic

rights, dozens of people were barred from central London on the day of the wedding. Using the occasion as an excuse for a political clampdown, squats and social centres were raided.

Several student protesters were arrested and charged, including Alfie Meadows, the student who required brain surgery when he was struck down by police at a tuition fees protest in December. Scores of people were pre-emptively arrested in connection with the wedding, including several who were charged with “conspiracy to cause a public nuisance” for planning activities such as a Right Royal Orgy event, a proposed piece of street theatre in London. The bourgeoisie were taking

no chances with their feudal freak show. Some 5000 police officers were part of the royal wedding security operation on the day, with 550 armed police put on a shoot-to-kill footing.

Abolition of the monarchy, the House of Lords and the established churches is an elementary democratic demand but one that is integral to a revolutionary programme in Britain. The continued existence of such feudal relics is an assertion that class privilege and vast inequality is part of the “natural” order of things in which each — “the rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate” — has his place. We stand in the tradition of the English Revolutionaries of the 17th century who “turned the world upside down”, overthrowing the feudal order with the king at its head, and of the revolutionary Chartists in the 19th century who disdained to bow in awe before the monarchy and marched with pikes and muskets in their hands. Opposition to the monarchy as the pinnacle of the British class system is a precondition for building a party fit to overthrow capitalist rule in this country.

## The Queen “forgives” the Irish!

The Queen’s visit was the first time that an English monarch had set foot in southern Ireland since independence in 1921, indeed since George V’s visit in 1911. The bourgeois press in Britain and Ireland was awestruck as the Queen, accompanied by Irish president Mary McAleese, laid a wreath at the Garden of Remembrance in Dublin, dedicated to those who fought for Irish freedom against the British crown, from the 1798 United Irishmen to the 1916 Easter Rising and the 1919-21 war of Irish independence. Typical of the obsequious press coverage was the London *Independent’s*

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Beheading of Charles I in 1649. Regicide marked the overthrow of the feudal order in England.

# Israel...

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Hamas. In 2006, Hamas won a Palestinian parliamentary election and then seized power in Gaza in a military conflict with Palestinian Authority forces. Presented by some in the Western left as a paragon of resistance to Zionist rule, Hamas in fact was initially promoted by the Israeli rulers as a counterweight to secular Palestinian nationalists. Israel set up conservative "Village Leagues" in the Occupied Territories where the Islamic Association, a front group of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and predecessor of Hamas, gained prominence. The Zionist government also funded welfare programmes to help the Islamists win a base among the poor. Israel broke relations with Hamas in the fall of 1989 after discovering that Hamas had killed two Israeli soldiers.

Recently the new Egyptian military regime brokered a "reconciliation" agreement in Cairo between Fatah, the dominant party in the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, and Hamas, the ruling party in Gaza. Twelve smaller organisations, ranging from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine on the left to the hardcore reactionaries of Islamic Jihad, also signed on. The agreement calls for holding new elections and forming a coalition government, allowing the Palestinian parties to present the UN in September with the basis for declaring in favour of the semblance of a Palestinian state. In fact, this is more in the nature of bargaining over the terms of oppression of the Palestinians, who would remain locked down in their desperate ghettos.

The pro-Palestinian rhetoric of the capitalist rulers of the Arab states—which have long had their own *modus vivendi* with the Zionist rulers—is a cynical means to divert popular discontent at home into a show of opposition to Zionism. Thus, forces in Syria linked to strongman Bashar al-Assad bussed "Nakba Day" protesters to the normally off-limits border of the Golan Heights, which Syria lost to Israel in 1967. This came as Assad's military and security forces have for weeks unsuccessfully sought to drown in blood the almost daily mass protests sweeping the country.

Contrary to the myth of Arab unity behind the Palestinian cause, the bourgeois Arab regimes have been ruthless enemies of Palestinian national emancipation. When Arab armies went to war

with Israel in 1948, it was not to liberate the Palestinians but to seize territory allotted to the Palestinians under the partition plan. Between 1948 and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, Jordan and Egypt occupied the West Bank and Gaza respectively, brutally repressing the Palestinians, who remained politically dispossessed. In 1970, Jordanian King Hussein carried out the "Black September" massacre of some 10,000 Palestinians—with the acquiescence of Egyptian president and Arab nationalist idol Gamal Abdel Nasser. From the oil sheikhs of the Gulf emirates to the bankers of Beirut and the bonapartists of Cairo and Damascus, the ruling classes of the Near East are subordinated to the imperialists, subject to the dictates of the world capitalist market and ultimately dependent on the US and other capitalist powers for their own survival.

## For proletarian internationalism!

Particularly since the Zionist rulers' massacre on the Gaza aid flotilla in May 2010, many defenders of the oppressed Palestinians, as well as reformist left groups have renewed their calls for "boycotts, disinvestment and sanctions" against Israel. As revolutionary internationalists, we support time-limited trade union actions against the Israeli state such as the Swedish dockers' boycott of Israeli ships and goods in the wake of Israel's attack on the "Freedom Flotilla".

In general, we are in favour of the trade unions refusing to handle *military* goods being shipped to Israel, which would be a blow not only against the Zionist rulers but also against the British, US and other imperialist ruling classes. But we are politically opposed to standing boycotts and to campaigns for disinvestment and sanctions against Israel, which are counterposed to the international working-class struggle on which the liberation of the Palestinians is premised. Such campaigns serve to promote illusions in the benign nature of other capitalist powers—not least British imperialism—relative to Israel. If successful, boycott campaigns would hurt the working class of Israel, both Hebrew-speaking and Arab, causing mass layoffs and weakening its social power, which can and must be mobilised to smash the Zionist state from within through socialist revolution.

The uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt during what has been dubbed the "Arab spring" have been dominated by class-collaborationist coalitions ranging from viciously anti-woman Islamic fundamentalists to bourgeois liberals and reformist leftists. In the name of "national unity", the proletariat, whose strike actions had con-



Above: Barack Obama meets with Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu (left) and Palestinian Authority's Mahmoud Abbas (right) in New York, September 2009. Below: Palestinian police block protesters en route to Jewish settlements in Hebron, West Bank, on 15 May.



tributed to the downfall of Tunisia's Ben Ali dictatorship and Egypt's Mubarak regime, has remained politically submerged as a class. In Libya, the "coalition" of Islamists, tribal leaders, CIA stooges and defectors from Qaddafi's regime appealed for imperialist military intervention and, aided by NATO bombs, has provided the ground troops.

In Egypt, the same military that had been the backbone of the Mubarak regime came forward openly as the governmental power, arresting and torturing hundreds of leftists, worker militants and others. The same military rulers who won plaudits for arranging the Palestinian "unity" agreement had earlier set their forces against Egyptians trying to march to the Gaza border on "Nakba Day" in solidarity with the Palestinian masses. Women and Coptic Christians are increasingly besieged by reactionary fundamentalists. This is the reality behind the

so-called "Egyptian Revolution".

Revolutionary Marxists fight for the proletariat to emerge as a contender for power in its own name, independent of all bourgeois political forces. A socialist revolution in Egypt, with its large, militant working class, could open a vista of national and social liberation for the oppressed Palestinian masses, and, extending a hand of working-class solidarity to the Hebrew-speaking proletariat of Israel, could help lay the basis for shattering the Zionist garrison state of Israel from within through Arab/Hebrew workers revolution. Throughout the region, internationalist workers parties must be forged. By linking the struggle for socialist federations of the Near East and North Africa to the fight for proletarian power in the US, Britain and other imperialist centres, such parties will open the way for a world society free of poverty, national oppression and war. ■

# Liu Xiaobo...

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socialism, or capitalist enslavement and imperialist subjugation.

In their own way, China's Stalinist rulers sense that they are sitting atop a social volcano. This is clearly evident in their response to the mass protests that toppled Egyptian despot Hosni Mubarak. The state-directed television news showed pictures of protests from afar in which not a single demonstrator was visible. Instead they focused on broken windows at banks, trucks in flames and looting, accompanied by commentary about how the government was striving to restore order. In the wake of the political turbulence in North Africa, there has been increased suppression of dissent (arrests and detentions of activists, artists and lawyers as well as more internet censorship).

For their part, elements in American ruling circles evidently saw an opportunity to encourage some Chinese intellectuals and other members of the educated (and materially privileged) petty bourgeoisie to take to the streets in the name

of "democracy". This was labeled "the Jasmine revolution". Anti-Communist émigrés in the US, grouped around the Democratic Party of China, took to their computer keyboards and issued calls in cyberspace for actions in Beijing, Shanghai and other Chinese cities. A headline in the *New York Times* (29 April) captured it: "Trying to Stir Up a Popular Protest in China, From a Bedroom in Manhattan." The "Jasmine revolution" turned out to be a bust. Only a handful heeded the call, including the US ambassador, who just "happened to be passing by" one of the announced locations at the time. The very places chosen for these "democracy" protests spoke to their upper-class character: Starbucks, McDonald's and Wangfujing, a fancy shopping district in Beijing patronised by foreign tourists and China's newly rich.

## Fake Trotskyists push "democratic" counterrevolution

Someone might argue that would-be participants in the "Jasmine revolution" were cowed by effective police-state repression. However, this same period saw a three-day strike and angry protests

in Shanghai by truckers, most of whom own their own rigs, directed at soaring prices for gasoline and also high government fees. There is no lack of seething discontent among large sections of the Chinese populace—workers in both state-owned and private enterprises, peasant leaseholders and also members of the urban petty bourgeoisie. The question is what political direction will opposition to the ruling Stalinist bureaucracy take. A decisive factor will be the character and aims of the leadership of such opposition.

When the political situation in China opens up, revolutionary Marxists will confront tendencies that advocate classless "democracy" while also claiming to stand for the interests of the working class and even for socialism. These will include groups that falsely claim the mantle of Trotskyism, such as *October Review*. This outfit is aligned internationally with the United Secretariat (USec), which has a long history of serving "bourgeois-democratic" counterrevolution by prostituting Trotsky's revolutionary opposition to Stalinism. During the last phase of the Cold War in the 1980s-early '90s, the

USec, led by the late Ernest Mandel, supported every imperialist-backed, anti-Communist force in the Soviet sphere, from Solidarność in Poland to the "democrats" around Boris Yeltsin in Russia. The *October Review* crowd is, if anything, even more strident in expressing anti-Communist hostility towards China than were the Mandelites towards the Soviet Union. But this is simply a matter of degree.

Genuine Trotskyism means carrying forward the revolutionary proletarian-internationalist banner of the October Revolution of 1917. As we concluded our article on Charter 08:

"A proletarian political revolution producing a China of worker and peasant councils would be a beacon for the oppressed working masses of Asia and the entire world, dealing a deathblow to the bourgeoisie's 'death of communism' propaganda, lifting up the downtrodden masses of the former Soviet Union and East Europe and inspiring the workers in the imperialist heartlands. This, ultimately, is the only perspective that can defeat the siren call of 'democracy' pushed by imperialist-backed outfits as well as fake 'socialists' who are enemies of the gains of the Chinese Revolution." ■

# Federal Appeals Court orders new sentencing hearing

# Mumia Abu-Jamal is innocent

## —Free him now!—

On 26 April, the US Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit turned down for a second time the Philadelphia district attorney's appeal to reinstate the death penalty for Mumia Abu-Jamal, a supporter of Philadelphia MOVE and a former Black Panther who was railroaded to death row in 1982 for a crime he did not commit. The court ordered the state of Pennsylvania to convene a new sentencing hearing within 180 days solely to determine whether Mumia should be re-sentenced to death or remain in prison for life. The Philadelphia DA intends to appeal the ruling to the US Supreme Court. Mumia, who has been in prison over half his life, remains on death row.

The Third Circuit ruling came in response to a January 2010 order by the US Supreme Court to consider reinstating Mumia's death sentence, which had been overturned in 2001. While the new ruling removes the threat of an immediate reimposition of the death sentence, it provides no justice for Mumia, a political prisoner who should never have spent a day in prison. His conviction for the 1981 killing of Police Officer Daniel Faulkner was based on lying testimony extorted by the cops, a "confession" manufactured by the police and prosecutors and phony ballistics "evidence". His death sentence was secured after prosecutors cited political statements he made as a teenage leader of the Philadelphia Black Panthers. The courts have steadfastly refused to hear the overwhelming evidence of Mumia's innocence, including Arnold Beverly's confession that he was the one who shot and killed Faulkner (see the 2007 Partisan Defense Committee

Mumia Abu-Jamal at Graterford Prison, 1995



fact sheet "Murdered by Mumia: Big Lies in the Service of Legal Lynching").

At issue in the Third Circuit ruling are the sentencing form and jury instructions at Mumia's 1982 "trial", which, the court ruled, did not allow jurors to freely consider mitigating circumstances weighing against a death sentence. While this ruling went against the prosecution, those fighting for Mumia's freedom must have no illusions in the "fairness" of a legal system that has conspired against Mumia since Day One of his ordeal. The 2001 decision by federal judge William Yohn that overturned Mumia's death sentence simultaneously upheld every aspect of his frame-up con-

viction. As for the Supreme Court, its 2009 decision summarily turning down Mumia's petition to overturn his conviction essentially put an end to his legal efforts to win freedom, consigning him to execution or life in prison hell.

The Spartacist League/US and Partisan Defense Committee, which first took up Mumia's case in 1987, have always supported the use of every possible legal avenue available to Mumia while fighting against illusions in the courts of the capitalist class enemy. Our fight has centred on the need for mass protest based on the power of the working class in the US and internationally—the one force with the

social power to give pause to the capitalists' legal lynching machine. When Mumia faced a death warrant in the summer of 1995, worldwide protests that included trade unions representing hundreds of thousands of workers played a crucial role in staying the executioner's hand.

The cops, courts and prosecutors have never let up in their vendetta against Mumia, an award-winning journalist renowned for his searing exposés of cop brutality and racist oppression. Seeking to spike early efforts on Mumia's behalf, two decades ago a Philly Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) leader railed that Mumia's supporters were "a misfit terrorist group" that deserved the "electric couch". In 1995 a mob of cops screaming for Mumia's execution besieged Philadelphia hospital workers union Local 1199C, which had dared to rent its hall for a fundraiser for Mumia. Just last month, the FOP lashed out at the American Federation of Teachers after its California state affiliate passed a resolution denouncing Mumia's continued imprisonment and calling for the courts to hear the evidence of his innocence.

In seeking to execute this innocent man, the capitalist rulers are sending a message to the working class and all who would fight against exploitation, oppression and imperialist war that they, too, are in the state's gun sights. The fight to free Mumia, as with all struggles against racial oppression, can go forward only when they are based on a clear understanding of the class forces involved. **Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty!**

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 980, 13 May.

## Monarchy...

(Continued from page 3)

statement that "what made the appearance all the more memorable, was the Queen's tilt of the head—apparently silencing centuries of conflict" (independent.co.uk, 22 May).

More grovelling followed when the Queen went to the national stadium in Croke Park, scene of the original Bloody Sunday when in November 1920 British auxiliary troops, the hated "Black and Tans", opened fire on a crowd at a Gaelic football match, killing 14. This massacre was an act of revenge for the assassination by Irish nationalists of eleven undercover British agents earlier that day. In a speech in Dublin the Queen intoned: "With the benefit of historical hindsight, we can all see things which we would wish had been done differently—or not at all." Thus the British rulers would whitewash the history of their colonial rule in Ireland. This "reconciliation" is of a piece with Tory prime minister David Cameron's grudging admission a year ago that the 1972 Bloody Sunday killing of 14 unarmed protesters in Derry was "unjustified", while adding that of course Bloody Sunday is not the defining story of the British Army's role in Northern Ireland from 1969-2007. At the time we wrote:

"This is a blatant attempt to bury the memory of British Army brutality in Northern Ireland once and for all. The theme about the need to 'move on', to erase the memory of Bloody Sunday from history, is echoed *ad nauseam* in the British capitalist press. By portraying Bloody Sunday as an exceptional incident within an otherwise

impeccable record, the Saville Report [on Bloody Sunday] is being used to refurbish the credentials of the imperialist forces who today shoot-to-kill with impunity in Afghanistan and Iraq."

— *Workers Hammer* no 211, Summer 2010

An official visit to Dublin by an English monarch would have been unthinkable if not for the imperialist "peace deal" codified in the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, under which the Irish Republican Army (IRA) agreed to disarm itself and the Irish nationalists of Sinn Fein joined the Northern Ireland government in Stor-

mont. Sinn Fein refused to condemn or protest the Queen's visit, and were not part of the formal reception. The "peace process" gave cosmetic surgery to the Orange state but it remains fundamentally the same repressive, anti-Catholic state that it was at the time of partition in 1921. Independence for Ireland replaced the yoke of British domination with a clericalist, Catholic state in the south. We fight against the national oppression of the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland; at the same time we oppose the bourgeois nationalist programme for a "united Ire-

land", which would create an oppressed Protestant minority. We insist that the conflicting claims of the interpenetrated Catholic and Protestant communities can only be equitably resolved in the framework of an Irish workers republic within a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles.

The Queen's visit and the ballyhoo about the "normalisation" of relations between Britain and Ireland is not unconnected to the fact that today Britain has more trade with Ireland than it does with Brazil, Russia, India and China combined. Amid fears that the Irish government might default on its loans from the European Central Bank, the debt-ridden British government has a vested interest in ensuring that its loans are paid back. An article in the Irish satirical magazine the *Phoenix* (3 June) titled "British Queen frees the Irish from themselves" wryly noted: "The British lent us their Queen for a few days so as to revive our tourist industry and to bury the hatchet, sorry, the past." It summed up: "Britain offered a loan (that protects British investors) and makes tut-tutting noises at nasty continentals".

A comrade reporting from Dublin during the Queen's visit said: "The visit has been accompanied by the largest security operation in the history of the state, with Dublin in almost complete lockdown for three days." There were small protests by groups of Irish nationalists which were encircled by riot police who continually harassed and beat the demonstrators and arrested many. The Irish Anti-War Movement, dominated by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), also

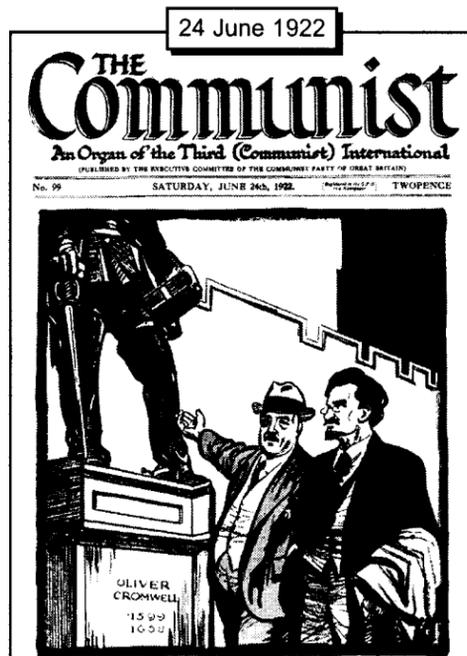
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Portrait by Robert Walker

Above: Oliver Cromwell.

Right: British Communist Party cartoon contrasts Labour leaders' and Bolsheviks' attitudes to Cromwell and revolution.



### POINTS OF VIEW

Before the Statue of Oliver Cromwell outside the House of Commons.

ARTHUR HENDERSON: A great man! Notice the Bible?  
LEON TROTSKY: True, a very great man! Notice the Sword?

# Kenya's independence struggle in the 1950s

## The Mau Mau uprising against British imperialism

In April four elderly black Kenyans appeared in the High Court in London seeking recognition of atrocities committed against them during British imperialism's brutal colonial rule. The Kenyan claimants, Ndiku Mutua, Paulo Nzili, Wambugu Wa Nyingi and Jane Muthoni Mara are survivors of the barbaric torture that was meted out to countless thousands of black Africans in detention camps between 1952 and 1961. Of the four claimants (a fifth died before the High Court hearing) Jane Mara was subjected to sexual abuse, one man was castrated and another was beaten unconscious during an atrocity in which eleven men were clubbed to death. British imperialism pillaged and exploited Kenya and used savage repression to crush the anti-colonial revolt known as the Mau Mau uprising.

The survivors are demanding that the British state take responsibility for their treatment in the camps and that the government pay around £2 million, a trifling sum, into a welfare fund. With swinish racist arrogance, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) insists that Britain cannot be held responsible, and that any atrocities that may have been committed under colonial rule became the responsibility of the Kenyan government that took over at the time of independence in 1963. Furthermore, says the FCO, too much time has elapsed for the claims to be valid.

The High Court has yet to decide whether or not the case will proceed to trial. But if the British state had got its way, the evidence in this case would never have seen the light of day. Since independence, the former colonial overlords have kept a tight lid on the documentary record of repression in Kenya. Nonetheless, much effort by researchers and advocates for the survivors has resulted in a significant victory. In May the FCO was forced to hand over 300 boxes of files, some 17,000 pages, including material relating to the suppression of the Mau Mau revolt. The departing colonialists destroyed many of the files at independence and removed others, having "made a calculated decision not to hand over any of its colonial era files to the Kenyan government" (*guardian.co.uk*, 5 April). A letter dated 7 November 1967, issued under Harold Wilson's Labour government, explains that the general practice at independence was not to hand over files that "might embarrass HMG [Her Majesty's Government] or other governments" or members of the police or military forces (*guardian.co.uk*, 5 April).

The mass torture and imprisonment of Kenyans during the uprising has long been documented by historians. To this day, any attempt to expose the truth of what happened has been sharply contested by apologists for imperialism. Caroline Elkins, author of the book *Britain's Gulag: The Brutal End of Empire in Kenya* (2005), who is an expert witness for the survivors in the current court case, noted that: "My book was resoundingly criticised at the



Langata concentration camp near Nairobi, 1954. British imperialists imprisoned and tortured mass of Kikuyu people during Mau Mau revolt.

time of its publication. Historian Andrew Roberts wrote that I had committed "blood libels against Britain" (*Guardian*, 14 April). Elkins estimates that between 160,000 and 320,000 people were detained in camps and at least 100,000 killed. David Anderson, author of another major work, *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's dirty war in Kenya and the end of the Empire* (2005), documents 1090 hangings of alleged Mau Mau. Mark Curtis in *Web of Deceit* (2003) estimates that 150,000 black Kenyans died as a result of British policy in this period.

The British capitalist rulers have carried out mass murder and torture on an immense scale, from the brutal occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq to the bombing of Libya today. Much of the wealth that laid the foundations of British capitalism was acquired from trade in African slaves. Brutal subjugation of the colonial world was part and parcel of imperialism's drive to

secure world markets, cheap labour and raw materials. From Kenya to Aden, Cyprus, Malaya, Nigeria and the Indian subcontinent, the globe is strewn with colonial victims of the British Empire's pursuit of profits.

In Kenya the colonial rulers imprisoned in concentration camps a large proportion of the million and a half Kikuyu people, the country's largest ethnic group. The Mau Mau rebellion was essentially a peasant-based revolt of the landless Kikuyu people against colonial rule that had dispossessed them of their lands, the basis of their existence. Although it was ultimately defeated, the uprising forced an end to colonial rule. In its terminal years, British rule consisted of naked state repression, culminating in an official "State of Emergency" lasting from 1952 to 1960. Arrayed against the Mau Mau was the armed might of the British colonialists combined with that of their Kenyan

stooges, including the Home Guard and other forces. The colonial regime co-opted a layer of rich peasants composed of land-owning, educated Christians. These "loyalist" Kenyans included Kikuyu landowners who were deeply hostile to the landless Kikuyu masses and supported the British in suppressing them. This deep social polarisation within Kenyan society is key to understanding the independence struggle in Kenya and its outcome.

With independence in 1963 British imperialism was forced to relinquish direct rule over Kenya, just as it had been driven out of many of its other colonial holdings in Africa and Asia following World War II. Reverting to indirect domination, the imperialists now relied on the national bourgeoisie which in turn became more directly the oppressor of the masses. Nationalist leader Jomo Kenyatta, who had been locked up for supposed Mau Mau sympathies, was released from prison in 1961. He was correctly regarded by the imperialists as safe hands for maintaining their interests in the region. Kenyatta had denounced the Mau Mau and was regarded by the more militant leaders of the movement as a traitor to their goals of land and freedom, which indeed he was.

The national bourgeoisie that came to power in Kenya was incapable of resolving any of the fundamental problems forced on the Kenyan masses by imperialist subjugation—dire poverty, lack of education and all the attendant social and economic backwardness. The land-hungry peasants did not regain their lost lands; the plantations and large white-owned farms were not expropriated. The outcome of the Kenyan independence struggle confirms in the negative the programme of permanent revolution codified by Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky, who with Lenin led the 1917 October Revolution in Russia. The Bolshevik Revolution established the dictatorship of the proletariat, expropriated the landlords and capitalists and granted land to the peasants. The programme of permanent revolution means that in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the proletariat must draw behind it the millions of peasant poor to oust the colonial powers in a struggle for a socialist revolution against the local bourgeoisie. This requires a Leninist-Trotskyist party dedicated to international proletarian revolution both in the neo-colonial countries and in the imperialist centres.

### Imperialist subjugation of Kenya

Britain first laid claim to Kenya and other East African territory when Africa was carved up by the imperialist powers in the 1880s. The rapid expansion of the system of world trade fuelled competition between dominant capitalist powers to establish spheres of influence and to control land, raw materials, markets and sources of cheap labour. In contrast to



London, 7 April: Kenyan victims of British rule outside High Court.

Congo and South Africa, where the imperialists extracted enormous mineral wealth, British interest in Kenya was mainly strategic. To control access to the source of the Nile, the British built a railroad from Mombasa on the Indian Ocean coast to Lake Victoria in inland Kenya. Completed in 1901, the railway was financed by loans from the British government. The colonial overlords decided the loans would be repaid, and the cost of administering the colony would be met, through profitably farming the millions of acres of land through which the railway ran. To make this land productive, they brought in white settlers, mainly from Britain but also from South Africa, to produce cash crops.

The first British settlers arrived in 1902, lured by the British government's promise of cheap land and unlimited cheap labour. Writer Colin Leys describes the rationale behind it thus: "The settlers would invest capital and produce crops; the railway would earn revenue by carrying them to the coast, and by carrying the imports inland they would earn abroad", while "the government would finance its activities by levying tariffs on these imports". The British capitalist rulers were determined to force the toiling black masses to bear the cost of imperialist domination over them. As Leys describes it:

"The highlands were 'alienated' to Europeans; that is, Europeans bought the land at nominal prices from the colonial administration. But at first they had neither the knowledge nor the capital to farm it very differently from the Africans on their land. They had not, moreover, come to Kenya to work as peasants. Their 'farms' were extremely large—an average of over 2,400 acres per 'occupier' in 1932. There was therefore only one solution, to make the Africans work for them. This the Africans had no reason to do, unless the Europeans had been willing to pay in wages more than Africans could earn from farming on their own account. But such wages would have meant little or no profit for the Europeans. Therefore Africans had to be compelled to work, partly by force, partly by taxation, and partly by preventing them from having access to enough land or profitable crops to enable them to pay taxes without working for wages."  
—*Underdevelopment in Kenya* (1975)

### Roots of nationalist revolt

In order to claim the farmlands of the Central Highlands, part of the Great Rift Valley, the British slaughtered Kikuyus by the thousands. Many indigenous Kenyans driven off their lands were pushed onto "native reserves" set up by the colonial regime in 1915. These reserves were separated by ethnic grouping as part of reinforcing divisions among the Kenyans. As the population in the Kikuyu reserves grew and more British settlers seized the arable land, subsistence became even more difficult. The landless and impoverished black population was subjected to a system of racist laws regulating land, as well as a poll tax and a hut tax. There were also pass laws (*kipande*) like those in South Africa, prohibiting free movement including in the search for employment. Access to education for the poorest was nil; a small privileged layer was able to attend schools run by Christian churches.

The early British settlers were heavily drawn from the notoriously racist aristocracy. According to Robert Edgerton (*Mau Mau, An African Crucible*, 1990) "the Norfolk hotel, where they congregated when they visited Nairobi, quickly became known as the 'House of Lords'" and "their goal was to recreate the Virginia plantocracy in which white gentlemen of breeding and leisure oversaw vast plantations worked by black men". Sir Charles Eliot, the High Commissioner appointed to rule the East Africa Protectorate, as it was then known, proclaimed Kenya a "white man's country".

Outside the reserves other displaced



Jomo Kenyatta, first president of independent Kenya. Left: (centre) in British detention. Above: taking oath of office, 1963.

Kikuyu became squatters on the white settlers' farms in conditions akin to serfdom, raising their own livestock and crops for local sale in return for working the settler's plantation. Beginning in 1925, with a surplus of available workers, the colonial government and settlers turned the screw on squatters. Rights of tenancy and to own livestock were cut back to the point where squatters laboured for the white farmers for below-subsistence wages. During the depression and World War II, forced labour was instituted to keep the settlers' plantations functioning. By the mid-1940s there were over 200,000 registered squatters in the so-called White Highlands. With market prices for their produce set far below what the settlers earned for the same crop, the squatters were reduced to starvation conditions. Floggings by landlords were commonplace and squatters were evicted if they refused to sign new labour contracts on worse terms.

In the years leading up to the revolt the squatters were transformed from independent tenant-producers to rural, des-

regarded by the colonialists as potential allies and largely exempted from the anti-squatter measures. By the late 1940s the movement of resistance among the squatters had linked up with resistance in the reserves and Kikuyu radicals in Nairobi.

Kenya's agricultural resources—principally coffee, tea and sisal—were profitable cash crops grown for the export market. World War II led to increased British investment in mechanisation, resulting in vastly increased profits for the settlers while forcing more black labourers off the farms and onto the reserves, which were already unable to support their population. This fed the disparity between the landed elite and the desperate and landless masses among the black population. By 1948 the population of the colony comprised some 30,000 European settlers, 5.2 million indigenous black Africans, and 98,000 Asians who were brought in as cheap labour but were banned from owning arable land and composed a mercantile layer. The White Highlands—the best farmland in the colony—was in the hands

war veterans formed an organisation called the Forty Group which would go on to play a key role in the Mau Mau.

### Divisions within African nationalism

The Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) had been founded in 1924 in opposition to the theft of Kikuyu land and lack of education. Jomo Kenyatta, an educated Kikuyu who had spent some 16 years in Europe, was a leading member of the KCA at this time. On behalf of the KCA he went to London in 1929 to pressure the colonial government for better terms for the Kikuyu. But contrary to a perspective for independence, his programme was for "meaningful cooperation between the colonial state and his people" (*Mau Mau and Kenya*, Wunyabari Maloba, 1993). Kenyatta returned to Kenya in 1946 where he was widely revered as the Kikuyus' leader, the "Burning Spear" who symbolised the growing anti-colonial sentiment among the black population. After the KCA was outlawed in 1941 the Kenya African Union (KAU) was formed in 1944. In 1947 Kenyatta became the leader of the KAU, nominally a nationalist party of all African ethnic groups but dominated by the Kikuyu. The KAU included some trade union militants; its leaders were educated and some had lived abroad. Its demands centred on better conditions for the black population under colonial rule. Although the KAU was for independence in principle it did not see this as attainable in the near future.

The organised working class was relatively weak, but was young and combative. The trade union component of the KAU leadership represented urban workers including government clerks, taxi drivers, shop workers and others. The African Workers Federation was formed by Chege Kibachia, who organised a strike of dockers—a potentially strategic workforce—in the port city of Mombasa. He was arrested in 1947 while fighting for a general strike in Nairobi and detained in a remote outpost for ten years. In 1949 the East African Trade Union Congress was formed by Fred Kubai, who was later imprisoned, and an Asian communist, Makhan Singh. This organisation was banned in 1950 and Singh was deported and held in a remote area near the Ethiopian border for eleven years.

By late 1947 evicted squatters had become frustrated at the lack of any gains through the gradualist methods of the KAU. Members of the KCA led a militant illegal society and began using the Kikuyu oath to cement unity in struggle. The Kikuyu fighters referred to themselves as the Land Freedom Army or "the movement" but came to be called Mau Mau. The colonial rulers seized on the oath to demonise Mau Mau and to legitimise savage repression against the Kikuyu people. The Mau Mau became the vehicle for mass resistance to the eviction of squatters

*continued on page 10*



"Operation Anvil", April 1954. All Kikuyu in Nairobi were rounded up.

perately impoverished wage labourers. Resistance among squatters took the form of illegal cultivation and sale of produce, mass refusal to sign new contracts and in some areas organised strikes. As described in a study by Frank Furedi, by the late 1940s, this resistance became "transformed into a militant wing of Kenyan nationalism". The Mau Mau revolt was "the last stand of the Kikuyu squatter before his final destruction as an independent peasant producer" (*The Mau Mau War in Perspective*, 1989).

Although there were other ethnic groups among the squatter population, the Kikuyus were the most numerous and were subjected to special repressive measures. Pastoral groups such as the Nandi people, who included many police, were

of the white settlers, some 0.7 per cent of the population.

During WWII more than 75,000 black Kenyans joined the British Army and fought in the King's African Rifles and other regiments in Africa, Asia and the Near East. But in contrast to white settlers who served in the British Army and were rewarded with land and low-interest loans, blacks returned to worse conditions than when they left. Many returning black soldiers were inspired by independence movements like those sweeping the Indian subcontinent. With no land, some gravitated to Nairobi where the scarcity of jobs and housing forced many into an urban lumpenproletariat. Amid mounting bitterness towards the colonial power for which they had risked their lives, landless

# Monarchy...

(Continued from page 5)

called a “black balloon” protest under the slogan: “Remember the deaths at the hands of Her Majesty’s forces in Iraq and Afghanistan.” Conveniently not mentioned is the Irish bourgeoisie’s role in supporting the imperialist occupation of Afghanistan, including making Shannon airport available for US military operations. Also whitened out of history is British imperialism’s role in Northern Ireland.

## “United Kingdom” and English domination

The *Sunday Times* (29 May) reported that: “The Queen has signalled in a private meeting with David Cameron her concern at the prospect of the break-up of the United Kingdom”. This was in response to the victory of the pro-independence Scottish National Party (SNP) in the Scottish elections in May. Similarly, at the time of her 1977 Silver Jubilee the Queen declared: “I cannot forget that I was crowned Queen of the United Kingdom, Great Britain and Northern Ireland.” We revolutionaries oppose the reactionary entity known as the “United Kingdom”, which incorporates the Orange statelet in Northern Ireland and rests on English domination over Scotland and Wales. The Westminster parliament reflects the favoured status granted to finance capital and the City of London by the ruling class, which has contempt for the former industrial areas of northern England, as

well as Scotland and Wales.

A tirade of English chauvinism followed the victory of the SNP which now enjoys an outright majority in the Scottish parliament. The English press worked up a lather over the fact that the SNP might hold a referendum on independence—heaven forbid that the Scots should be allowed to decide such a question for themselves! The Spartacist League upholds the right of self-determination for the Scottish and Welsh nations—which means the right to separate (or *not* to separate). In reality, SNP leader Alex Salmond is in no rush to set a date for a referendum on independence because despite the popularity of certain SNP policies, such as lower student tuition fees than in England, the electorate might well vote no to independence. The SNP’s vision is one of an independent capitalist Scotland, under the English Crown and accepting the British armed forces. If an independent capitalist Scotland came into existence it would fare little better than Ireland, whose “Celtic Tiger” economy was once the SNP’s model.

Our attitude to the national question in Britain is grounded in intransigent opposition to all forms of nationalism—first and foremost the dominant English chauvinism. Our programme is for workers revolutions to overthrow all the capitalist regimes in Britain and in Ireland, North and South. The myriad forms of national oppression will be resolved when workers revolution has swept away capitalist rule on both sides of the Irish border and both sides of the Irish Sea.

## Recall the fate of Charles I!

In opposition to the royalist blather of the ruling class about “tradition” and “heritage”, we revolutionary Marxists have our own traditions. We recall the historic fate that befell Charles I in 1649 as a result of the defeat of the Royalist forces by Oliver Cromwell’s army. The English Revolution that began in 1640 took the form of a civil war



1839 Chartist uprising in Wales.

between Royalists, who had the support of the landed aristocracy and the Anglican Church, and the Parliamentarians who included the rising capitalist class, backed by the labouring masses of the day. In 1645, Cromwell founded the New Model Army, heavily drawn from the ranks of yeomen, peasants and labouring classes of the cities, who became the decisive force in the revolution.

The New Model Army inflicted crushing defeats on the Royalists and in 1645 they captured the King. The conservative bourgeois elements in Parliament sought a compromise with the Royalists, enraging the army ranks who were led by the Levellers, the left wing of the revolution. In 1647 Parliament tried to disperse the army regiments, ordering them to enlist for Ireland or face immediate dismissal. The ranks mutinied, seized the King, held him captive and demanded that Cromwell should resume leadership of the army, which he did. But political debates raged between the Levellers and the generals and a split in the army was averted when the King escaped (or was

freed) and the civil war reignited. Throughout 1648 Cromwell’s army again inflicted defeats on the Royalists. In Cromwell’s absence the army leadership in London, in alliance with the Levellers, decided to put the King on trial, which meant he would face execution. After some initial hesitation Cromwell endorsed the regicide, declaring: “I tell you we will cut off his head with the crown on it.” The execution of Charles I on 30 January 1649 marked the decisive defeat for the feudal order in England. The result was unprecedented progress, not least in the abolition of the monarchy under the appropriately irreverent and rational wording “the office of a king in this country is unnecessary, burdensome and dangerous to the liberty, safety and public interest of the people”. The House of Lords was also abolished for a time, being deemed “useless and dangerous”. The English Republic adopted Common Law over the “Royal Prerogative”, abolished the “Star Chamber” system of courts and permitted a degree of religious dissent.

Two years after Cromwell’s death, the monarchy was restored in 1660. But there would be no going back to the situation where the feudal nobles ruled over the bourgeoisie. Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the October 1917 Russian Revolution, pointed out that, in the course of defeating the Royalist side, Cromwell had created a new society and that this could not be undone by decrees of Parliament. He explained:

“In dispersing parliament after parliament Cromwell displayed as little reverence toward the fetish of ‘national’ representation as in the execution of Charles I he had displayed insufficient respect for a monarchy by the grace of God. Nonetheless it was this same Cromwell who paved the way for the parliamentarism and democracy of the two subsequent centuries. In revenge for Cromwell’s execution of Charles I, Charles II swung Cromwell’s corpse up on the gallows. But pre-Cromwellian society could not be re-established by any restoration. The works of Cromwell could not be liquidated by the thievish legislation of the Restoration because what has been



Tony Blair with the Queen.

## Letter

The following letter has been shortened for reasons of space.

New York City  
1 May 2011

Dear comrades,

May Day greetings! I was trying my best to ignore the royal wedding, but I have been inexorably drawn in. ...

In a piece of sanctimonious diplomacy the Syrian envoy was disinvited from the wedding by the Conservative foreign minister William Hague, due to the well-known concern of the British government for the human rights of Arabs. Not to be outdone, and without a scintilla of irony, one of Her Majesty’s loyal opposition toadies, the Labour Party’s Denis MacShane, a former Foreign Office minister, said: “There is blood on the hands of other regimes who want to promote positive media coverage by walking down tomorrow’s red carpet...we are seeing crass insensitivity in allowing representatives of some of the world’s most odious regimes take part in the royal wedding” (*New York Times*, 29 April).

But the royal wedding and the monarchy itself represent the most odious regime of the blood-soaked British property-owning class.

The imminent visit of the Queen to Ireland must be protested. It is one hundred years since the last visit by the monarch, and not a day too long. The Irish bourgeoisie are not just literally bankrupt, but on top of subjecting the working people of Ireland to years of austerity ahead, they

invite the Queen to visit, bringing forth a wretched ancient holy relic which can only be a reminder to the Irish people of the centuries-long subjugation to the Crown suffered by the Irish, and of how much worse things could get.

The spectacle of the future head of state of Britain choosing to marry in the dress uniform of the Irish Guards is quite a statement too. It turns out he is a Colonel of the Irish Guards, although he serves with the RAF. To mark the occasion of her grandson’s wedding, the Queen in her generosity dusted off a few expired titles that it seems no one else mounted any claim to, and made William Duke of Cambridge, Earl of Strathearn and Baron Carrickfergus. Carrickfergus was a paramount English stronghold in Ireland from the time of the Norman conquest, through the Plantation (except for a week during the Seven Years War when a French flotilla captured it for supplies and then promptly left). Carrickfergus was also where William III’s troops landed in 1690. It makes me wonder if William and Kate will be the new William and Mary?

The British Army web page says the Irish Guards are “affectionately” known as “The Micks”. And less affectionately known as **bloody imperialist occupiers!** From Belfast to Basra; from Kuwait to Kosovo; and today in Afghanistan, the British Army is the enemy of all the oppressed, and the Irish Guards have fought in all those war zones. The British Army still has over 3000 troops stationed in Northern Ireland and we demand they leave now!

Trotsky explained that Parliament was not so fundamental to the rule of the propertied classes in Britain as

the monarchy, House of Lords, the army, cops and judiciary. He used the example of Ulster to show this. When the propertied class was feeling the pinch from the discussion in their own parliament on Home Rule for Ireland, they thought nothing of organising armed resistance. Lord Carson’s UVF was openly supported by the parliamentary Conservative Party. This is a good polemic against Labourism and “peaceful” parliamentarism under capitalism. It applies to Westminster and Stormont too.

Of course, to talk in any detail about the monarchy and Ireland, it would behoove us to reiterate our class understanding of Cromwell’s role in Ireland as we did in the article on Christopher Hill [*Workers Hammer* no 184, Spring 2003]. One point from Hill which I appreciate is that the restoration of the monarchy (done over Cromwell’s dead body) was a clear statement by the bourgeoisie that the revolution was over and the lower classes were to “know your place”, ie in subservience. Trotsky’s advice to revolutionaries from 1925 holds true today: “The clarification of the historical significance of the seventeenth-century revolution and the revolutionary content of Chartism is one of the most important obligations for British Marxists” (“Where is Britain going?” 1925).

As to Kate Middleton being a “commoner”, I can only assume that the Queen realised that she hadn’t had too much luck with the fillies from the established stables, and so decided to let this stud graze in fresher pastures.

Comradely,  
Edith G.

written with the sword cannot be wiped out by the pen.”

—“Where is Britain going?” (1925)

### Cromwell's conquest of Ireland

After the defeat of the Royalists in England, Cromwell organised an expedition to Ireland. In the outline of a report on the Irish question to the Communist Educational Association of German Workers in London, Karl Marx noted that “By engaging in the conquest of Ireland, Cromwell threw the English Republic out the window” (16 December 1867).

Cromwell's conquest of the country was a continuation of the English Crown's hundreds of years-long subjugation of Ireland. It represented, in the words of the Marxist authority on the English Civil War, Christopher Hill: “the first big triumph of English imperialism and the first big defeat of English democracy”. A necessary precondition for the English bourgeoisie's invasion of Ireland was rooting out the Levellers from the ranks of the army. The prospect of being shipped to Ireland had provoked a Leveller revolt in the army in 1649. This time, unlike in 1647, Cromwell and his generals did not side with the mutineers. The Levellers were crushed by Cromwell at Burford, their leaders were arrested, four were executed. The episode showed that while the English Revolution, as a bourgeois revolution, was progressive in its ascendancy against feudalism, once the bourgeoisie took power, the progressive content soon gave way to reaction as the capitalist class consolidated its hold on power. Once established, bourgeois rule in its Irish colony was based on the profit-accumulating, imperialistic interests of that class.

In his writings on Britain Trotsky emphasised the revolutionary traditions that the British working class needed to reclaim and emulate. This is in counter-position to the reformist Labour Party “lefts” who insisted that British workers could learn little from the experience of the Russian Revolution, as Britain was a more civilised, Christian country with established democratic channels through which socialism could patiently and peacefully be phased into existence. Trotsky advocated that British workers should learn from the Roundhead and Chartist traditions of revolutionary struggle, as against the Labour Party's Fabian tradition of gradualism and pacifistic class-collaboration. Trotsky observed:

“The British bourgeoisie has erased the very memory of the seventeenth-century revolution by dissolving its past in ‘gradualness’. The advanced British workers will have to re-discover the English revolution and find within its ecclesiastical shell the mighty struggle of social forces. Cromwell was in no case a ‘pioneer of labour’. But in the seventeenth-century drama, the British proletariat can find great precedents for revolutionary action.”

—“Where is Britain going?” (1925)

Contrasting Cromwell with the Labour Party leaders who “dare not refuse pocket money to the Prince of Wales”, he declared “the dead lion of the seventeenth

century is in this sense immeasurably greater than many living dogs”.

On the Chartist tradition Trotsky insisted: “As the Chartists tossed the sentimental preachers of ‘moral force’ aside and gathered the masses behind the banner of revolution, so the British proletariat is faced with ejecting reformists, democrats and pacifists from its midst and rallying to the banner of a revolutionary overturn.” Chartism was the first mass independent workers movement, brought into being by the upheaval of the Industrial Revolution. The powerful left wing of the Chartists was republican, interna-



Left: 1920 Soviet poster shows Lenin sweeping away kings, priests and capitalists. Right: Revolutionary soldiers march through Moscow, 7 November 1918 at celebration of first anniversary of October Revolution.

tionalist and revolutionary-minded. They asserted the right to bear arms and bitterly opposed the new, semi-military professional police in working-class districts across the country. Chartism was defeated and demoralised in the aftermath of the failure of the European-wide 1848 revolutions and the ensuing reaction. This paved the way for “Christian-socialist” Fabianism and the Labour Party, which since its founding in 1900 as the political expression of the trade union bureaucracy has worked to tie the working class to the bourgeois order.

### Her Majesty's Labour Party vassals

Loyal to the capitalist state and its institutions, the Labour Party has always been a reliable prop for the monarchy, whether through staunch support or presenting the institution as a harmless irrelevance. At the Labour Party conference of 1923, when a resolution questioning the need for the monarchy was proposed, the “left” George Lansbury argued “what is the use of bothering about that just now” and the motion was voted down by 3,694,000 to 386,000!

The Labour leaders have a history of grovelling before the Crown—from Ramsay MacDonald, Labour's first prime minister, donning royal plumage when invited to Buckingham Palace in 1927 and graciously allowing King George V to arrange the 1931 popular-front government between Labour and the Tories, to Tony Blair's craven service to the royal family following the death of Lady Diana and his insistence that the Queen is the “best of British”.

There was at least one amusing spectacle at the royal wedding—much to his chagrin, Blair's fawning over the monarchy was not even rewarded with an invite. Whether the royal snub was a result of Blair's conversion to Catholicism, the fox-hunting ban so loathed by the aristocracy or just his connection to the Labour Party (however tenuous its links to the working

class) we can only speculate. Labour's current leader, Ed Miliband, was keen to show he was fit for prime-ministerial office with his support for the royals and contempt for working people when, in the period before the royal wedding, he railed against the possibility of strikes being called anywhere near the occasion. Not that strikes were ever likely to disrupt such a patriotic affair given the present bunch of trade union misleaders.

Whatever occasional mutterings against the monarchy may come from Labour Party “lefts”, the reality on the ground is very different. That darling of the



reformist left, Tony Benn, an avowed republican, has in fact sworn an oath in defence of the Crown, as a member of the Queen's Privy Council, a position granted to everyone who becomes a governmental cabinet minister. It should be remembered that Benn was a member of the Labour cabinet that sent troops to Northern Ireland in 1969. Labour's shameful tradition also includes Arthur Henderson who, as a cabinet member, was in the King's “advisory” Privy Council when the British government ordered the execution of James Connolly for his heroic role as the head of the proletarian Irish Citizen Army in the Dublin 1916 Easter Rising against British rule.

### British “far left”: latter-day Fabians

The British “far-left” organisations are steeped in Labourism and so they soft-pedal any opposition to the monarchy. In 1997, during the media-induced hysteria surrounding the death of Princes William and Harry's mother Diana Spencer, the left whistled to the tune of Tony Blair's “people's princess” platitudes. Our article at the time reported:

“The fake-revolutionary left, ever in Labour's tow, was swept along, nominal disclaimers to the contrary notwithstanding. Diana Spencer may have been the girl from the 10,000 acres next door, but for the cen-

trist Workers Power group, ‘Her depression, bulimia, suicide attempts and ultimately divorce provided a glitzy microcosm of the plight of millions of less wealthy women’ (*Workers Power*, September 1997). That (and more) said, Workers Power assured its readers that it would ‘not be joining in the wave of national mourning’ and even vowed to ‘do everything’ to get the monarchy ‘scrapped forever’—everything, that is, but oppose Blair's Labour Party at election time.

“In the same vein, but even more nauseating, was the so-called Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB)... The CPGB's *Weekly Worker* (4 September) carried a front-page eulogy by chief spokesman Jack

Conrad. While allowing that ‘even a bourgeois republic is preferable to the anti-democratic monarchy’, Conrad outdid even Blair himself in his treacherous musings for the ‘troublesome princess’ who ‘represented a soul in a soulless world’: ‘Her brief 36 years epitomise the struggle and fate of the 20th century personality who by chance and/or design has been iconised and thus commodified and sold by the uncontrollable, all pervasive power of capital.’”

—*Workers Hammer* no 159, November/December 1997

In contrast, our article maintained:

“From the standpoint of the working class, the death of the ‘Princess of Wales’ was not a tragedy; special interest in the affairs of royalty, which places the life of an aristocrat above that of her chauffeur, betrays something of a servile instinct. The archaic institution of monarchy should long ago have been consigned to the dustbin of history.”

For its part, the British SWP has gone a step further than the other reformists. At the founding of their ill-fated Respect Coalition in 2004, SWP leaders ensured that a resolution which called for the abolition of the monarchy was **voted down!**

For the reformist left, any opposition to the monarchy is framed by the consideration that it is an expensive excess and an embarrassment to the façade of bourgeois parliamentary democracy.

continued on page 11

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# Kenya...

(Continued from page 7)

from white farms. The core of the guerrilla fighters, led by WWII veterans, trained and lived in the forests of the Aberdare Mountains and Mount Kenya. Their weaponry was sparse and they were barely fed and clothed—and then only due to the heroic efforts of sympathisers in the reserves.

It is impossible to overstate the extent of racist hysteria among the settlers and colonial government, which reverberated in the pages of the *Daily Mail* in Britain. Whole pseudoscientific theories were concocted about the “illness” particular to black Africans. Typical was the ranting of colonial secretary Oliver Lyttelton who wrote: “The Mau Mau oath is the most bestial, filthy, nauseating incantation which perverted minds can ever have brewed” (quoted in *Mau Mau, An African Crucible*).

The colonial state used widespread repression between 1950-52. However, the audacious daylight killing by Mau Mau of a prominent loyalist chief in October 1952 was seized on by the new colonial governor, Evelyn Baring, as a pretext for declaring a State of Emergency and letting loose a reign of terror by the security forces. Kenyatta and other KAU leaders were imprisoned and later convicted of masterminding Mau Mau in a sensationalised and rigged show trial.

The deep division between wealthy loyalist Kikuyu and the landless poor was brought home in the Lari massacre in March 1953. Lari, near the Aberdare forest not far from Nairobi, symbolised the dispossession of land once farmed by peasants and systematically stolen, much of it now in the hands of wealthy loyalists. Mau Mau fighters killed a major loyalist chief and some 97 others at Lari, indiscriminately targeting families, including many women and children. In retaliation, up to 400 Kikuyu were slaughtered by the government forces, including the Home Guard, which was a key military force alongside the British Army and the colonial forces. Eventually 71 people were hanged for the Lari killings. This episode sharply fed the racist frenzy among the settlers and in Britain and increased the polarisation among the Kikuyu people.

Under the State of Emergency the settlers, British Army and Home Guard were permitted to summarily execute anyone who failed to stop when ordered. Thousands of Kikuyu were shot on sight. The Kenya Regiment and Kenya Police Reserve, both made up of settlers, were notoriously brutal. However, many authors also stress the extreme brutality of the Home Guard, loyalists who often had personal scores to settle with their neighbours. And they were not few: there was

in fact an aspect of civil war to the Mau Mau uprising, between those who had benefited from co-operation with colonialism and those who were dispossessed and recipients only of brutality and exploitation. There is a similarity to the French colonial war in Algeria that took place at the same time, in which the French imperialists killed a million people—over a tenth of the population. In both cases there was a colonial settler population and a large loyalist militia co-opted from among the indigenous population.

Virtually the entire population of one and a half million Kikuyu were rounded up and “screened” during the Emergency. In Nairobi, where the rebel command was based, the colonial forces carried out a devastating month-long siege in April 1954 known as Operation Anvil, in which all Kikuyu in the city were rounded up and up to 30,000 were taken away for further “interrogation”. Screenings were usually performed by loyalist Kikuyu who wore hoods to conceal their identities from people they had often known their entire lives.

were always killed in order to instill fear into others who might think of concealing the truth.”

— *The Brutal End of Empire in Kenya*

By 1954-55, the colonial government undertook a programme of land consolidation called the Swynnerton Plan which anticipated the land settlement that would be agreed at independence. The plan aimed to reinforce class divisions, rewarding loyalists with large parcels of land, declaring: “Former government policy will be reversed and able, energetic or rich Africans will be able to acquire more land and bad or poor farmers less, creating a landed and a landless class. This is a normal step in the evolution of a country” (quoted in *Underdevelopment in Kenya*).

By late 1956 the guerrillas had been militarily defeated but mass detention and torture continued into 1959. That same year, public opinion in Britain turned sharply against colonial rule in Kenya when evidence came to light of a massacre in Hola camp, a particularly brutal detention centre for Mau Mau, in which eleven

by the CIA in 1961. In 1960 South African troops massacred 69 black activists at Sharpeville who were protesting the hated apartheid pass laws. The CIA worked with South African armed forces and in 1962 tipped them off to Nelson Mandela’s whereabouts, leading to his 27-year imprisonment.

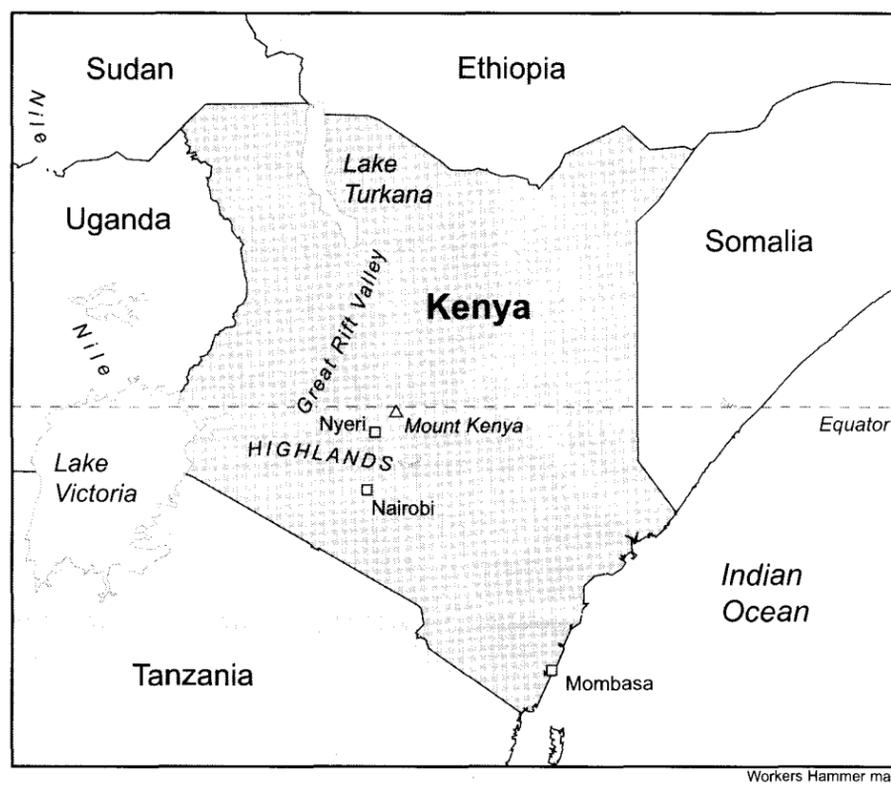
## Kenyatta: henchman of imperialism

In a 1957 speech then British prime minister Harold Macmillan said, referring to the peoples of Africa, “if they are exposed to the full force of nationalism, it is up to us to see that they are steered away from Communism” (quoted in *African Affairs*, January 1970). Jomo Kenyatta was certainly an asset to the imperialists in that regard. When released from detention in August 1961 he was still widely revered by the masses and seen as the leader who would take Kenya to *Uhuru* (freedom). As the Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiong’o, who was imprisoned for his outspoken criticisms of the Kenyatta government, noted: “Looking at Kenyatta people tended to see what they wanted to see rather than what there was: petty bourgeois vacillations and opportunism” (quoted in Maloba, *Mau Mau and Kenya*).

Kenyatta preached “forgiveness” towards the murderous chiefs and Home Guard who had been the eager jailers and torturers of the Kikuyu masses, saying they were “all brothers and sisters and there should be no revenge”. He assured the European landowners their property rights were safe. He became the leader of the Kenya African National Union party, composed of mainly Kikuyu and Luo people, which saw itself as successor to the KAU and which was voted into government in 1963. Formal independence of Kenya was granted in December of that year.

With regard to the all-important question of land ownership, Kenyatta & Co accepted a rotten deal which allowed for the rich Kikuyu to buy land from the white settlers, for which they could obtain loans from the British government. The large plantations and ranches owned by foreign capital were untouched. Needless to say the mass of peasants remained landless. Kenyatta and his cronies were prepared to give the white settlers everything; the black peasants received only continued poverty and repression. Mau Mau veterans who rejected the deal formed a new Kenya Land and Freedom Army demanding the return of stolen lands. The Kenyatta government cracked down on these fighters, sentencing them to long prison terms. As one of the former leaders of the radical wing of the KAU, BM Kaggia, commented bitterly: “We were struggling to regain our own lands which were stolen by the British colonial government. We were not fighting for the right to buy our own land” (*East African Standard*, 22 April 1965). Kenyatta turned to the police and army, just like the British who had detained him. A famous anecdote tells of a meeting two years after independence between president Kenyatta and former colonial governor Baring who was visiting. Baring said: “By the way, I was sitting at that actual desk when I signed your detention order twenty years ago.” Kenyatta replied: “If I had been in your shoes at the time I would have done exactly the same.”

Under capitalist rule, much of the wealth of the former colony continued to flow into the coffers of the erstwhile colonial masters. After independence Britain continued to dominate the economy in Kenya. The rising black bourgeoisie were at one with the propertied settlers in stifling the Asian entrepreneurs and ensuring racist economic policies and legislation discriminating against Asian-owned enterprise. Such policies culminated in the mass expulsion of Asians in 1967-68 in Kenya



With a nod of the head, these stooges sent their neighbours to detention camps. The camps were part of a vast system of prisons, interrogation centres and torture outposts known as the “Pipeline”. This included over a hundred camps and prisons, not counting the camps run by individual loyalist chiefs and white settlers throughout the Rift Valley and central provinces. In the camps, jails and screening centres Kikuyu were starved, beaten and tortured until they “confessed”.

In 1954 the government began the “villagisation” policy of uprooting Kikuyu and resettling them in new villages—actually barbed wire-enclosed concentration camps under the control of the Home Guard and military. The villages the Kikuyu left behind were burned down and their livestock confiscated. The aim was to cut off the Mau Mau fighters’ supply lines by virtually imprisoning that part of the Kikuyu population not already in detention camps. Between June 1954 and October 1955, 1,077,500 Kikuyu were relocated to 854 “villages”. One survivor recounted to Caroline Elkins the treatment of the “villagers” by the Home Guard and British:

“some people who had refused to confess were being put in sacks, one covering the lower part of their bodies while the other covered the upper part. Then petrol or paraffin would be poured over the sacks, and those in charge would order them to be lit. The people inside would die writhing in the flames. Many people were dying every day. And it was the people who refused to confess, even after all the bad things that were being done to them; they

men were beaten to death in March.

Kenya achieved independence in an international context in which British imperialism had suffered profound decline following WWII and national independence struggles had forced an end to colonial rule in India and were raging throughout Africa. The war on the part of Britain, France, Germany, Japan and the United States was an inter-imperialist conflict in which the working people and oppressed masses had no side. The working class did however have a side in defence of the Soviet workers state. The Soviet Union was no longer the revolutionary workers state that it was under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, having undergone a political degeneration, beginning 1923-1924, under the bureaucratic caste led by Joseph Stalin. Nevertheless it remained a degenerated workers state until counter-revolution triumphed in 1991-92. It was the Soviet army’s victory over the imperialist armies of Nazi Germany that ended the carnage of WWII.

Following the war the imperialists ramped up their anti-Soviet Cold War and in the 1950s a central preoccupation of the colonial powers in Africa was to curtail the influence of the Soviet Union, which had provided support to nationalist movements, albeit within the framework of “peaceful co-existence” with imperialism. At the time, “anti-imperialist” rhetoric poured forth from bourgeois-nationalist leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah, leader of newly independent Ghana, and Patrice Lumumba in the former Belgian Congo, who was murdered

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# Monarchy...

(Continued from page 9)

Obviously, the vast cost of maintaining the royal parasites is an obscenity, but while this may be the main point of emphasis for liberals and reformists, Marxists realise capitalist budgets are made in the interests of the bourgeoisie and, for the bourgeoisie, royal visits, weddings and the monarchy itself are cheap indeed for the reactionary purposes they serve. The emphasis on tradition, heritage and historical continuity which this feudal relic implies is supposed to foster illusions in a class-harmonious, evolutionary society, free of tumultuous social change. Our comrades in the US captured this perfectly in a 1977 article on the Queen's Silver Jubilee:

"The Queen thus represents the British counterpart to the American myth that U.S. society is classless. In England it is manifestly impossible to deny the existence of class-based inequality. So the ruling class maintains that while there are classes, and there may be shifts in the class structure, **there must be no class struggle**. The monarchy is the living and familiar sign that there is a grossly unequal social place for everyone, and that this is historical and inevitable. That is why the Queen is treated with such dignity, why this cow is sacred."

— *Workers Vanguard* no 164, 1 July 1977

The monarchy does not merely fulfil a symbolic role, to the advantage of the British bourgeoisie, but stands ready as a rallying point for reaction. The Queen is the head of state; it is to her, and not parliament, that the armed forces and its officer corps swear an oath of allegiance. In the event of social crisis, in which the bourgeoisie felt its rule to be threatened, it is quite conceivable that the monarchy would be used in a reactionary mobilisation to stabilise the capitalist order, providing constitutional cover for a right-wing bonapartist coup. During WWII, discussions between the pro-Hitler Duke of Windsor, formerly Edward VIII, and the Nazis in Germany, placed the Duke as the rumoured likely prospect to head a quisling government in England after the fall

of France in 1940.

In fact the royal prerogative of Queen Elizabeth II has already been used to bring down a government in Australia, where she is also head of state. As our Australian comrades explained:

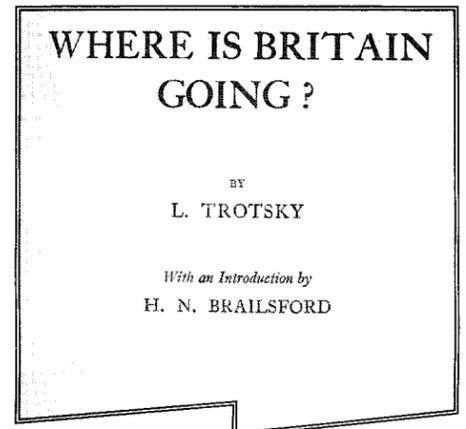
"In 1975 Labor prime minister Gough Whitlam, his government the object of a concerted CIA destabilisation campaign, threatened to expose the role of the top secret U.S. spy bases. The Queen's man and more importantly the CIA's man, Governor General John Kerr, dismissed the elected government. Utterly committed to the institutions of the capitalist state, including the constitutional powers invested in the Queen, the ALP [Australian Labor Party] tops preached loyalty to the parliamentary process rather than let an enraged working class get 'out of hand.' The events of 1975 illustrated how the constitutional monarchy in Britain and here could be used in some future crisis to bestow 'legitimacy' on the establishment of a reactionary, possibly military regime to defend the capitalist order."

— *Australasian Spartacist* no 144, Autumn 1992

## Workers revolution will sweep away mediaeval rubbish

Karl Marx reported with great affection a protest by the British working class against class oppression in 1855. This was a protest against the Sunday Trading Bill and Beer Bill which ensured shops were closed and restricted the opening hours of "places of public entertainment" (most notably public houses): their "betters" had decided the workers should be on their knees in church instead. Seeing the stark hypocrisy of the upper classes, who were not affected and who spent the day on leisurely carriage rides in London's Hyde Park, a mass demonstration of the workers was called there and concluded in the following confrontation with English high society:

"A babel of jeering, taunting, discordant ejaculations, in which no language is as rich as English, enveloped [the upper classes] from both sides. As it was an improvised concert, instruments were lacking. The chorus therefore had to use its own organs and was compelled to confine itself to vocal music. And what a diabolical concert it was: a cacophony of grunting, hissing, whistling, squeaking, snarling, growling, croaking,



Leon Trotsky, author of "Where is Britain going?". Includes scathing polemics against Labourites' loyalty to British capitalism and monarchy.

shrieking, groaning, rattling, howling, gnashing sounds! A music that could drive men mad and move a stone. To this must be added outbursts of genuine old-English humour peculiarly mixed with long-contained seething wrath. 'Go to church!' were the only articulate sounds that could be distinguished. One lady soothingly offered a prayer book in conventional binding from her carriage. 'Give it to read to your horses!' came the thunderous reply, shouted by a thousand voices."

— Karl Marx, "Anti-Church Movement — Demonstration in Hyde Park" (28 June 1855)

So moved by this demonstration of proletarian class outrage, Marx wrote: "We saw it from beginning to end and do not think it is an exaggeration to say that **the English Revolution began in Hyde Park yesterday.**"

We look to the revolutionary proletariat of these islands to abolish the monarchy and the House of Lords — this time for good — and the established churches, along with the bourgeois rulers and all other forms of social parasitism, through socialist revolution! To do so the working class will need its revolutionary organisation. Our aim is to build this, modelled on Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik party which, acting as a tribune for all the oppressed, led the storming of the tsar's "prison house of

peoples" and liberated one sixth of the earth from autocratic, chauvinist oppression and capitalist exploitation. The tsar was prevented from gaining asylum in Britain with his cousin King George V, who feared the repercussions this deeply unpopular move would have had for his own dynasty. Lenin and Trotsky's desire was to put the tsar on trial as with the fate of Charles I in the English Revolution and Louis XVI in the French Revolution. But with the counterrevolutionary White armies closing in on where the tsar and his family were imprisoned, the local Bolsheviks were forced to wipe the Romanov dynasty from the face of the Earth. As Isaac Deutscher relayed from Trotsky's diary:

"In the midst of civil war, [Trotsky] says, the Bolsheviks could not leave the White Armies with a 'live banner to rally around'; and after the Tsar's death any one of his children might have served them as the rallying symbol. The Tsar's children 'fell victim to that principle which constitutes the axis of Monarchy: dynastic succession'."

— *The Prophet Outcast, Trotsky: 1929-1940* (1963)

Forward to a world where the perversions of monarchy and dynastic succession are remembered only as abolished relics of the past! ■

under so-called "Africanisation". Soon after in Uganda, this same policy was carried out by Idi Amin to a particularly brutal degree.

The bourgeois nationalists who came to power in Kenya reinforced tribal divisions and upheld backward anti-woman practices. From the 1920s, the Kikuyu-based KCA was a vigorous defender of female genital mutilation (FGM). In response to a 1929 campaign waged by the Christian churches in Kenya in alliance with the educated elite against FGM, the KCA and Kenyatta defended FGM as part of

"African culture", thus condoning this retrograde and barbaric practice which is widespread today in parts of Africa, Asia and the Near East. There is nothing new in the British imperialist rulers hypocritically purporting to defend women's rights in the colonial world — such as opposing *suttee* (immolation of widows) in India and the veil in the Islamic world — as a cynical ploy to dress up imperialist occupation as a "civilising mission". While we fight every aspect of imperialist oppression, we vehemently oppose practices such as FGM, an especially brutal aspect

of the oppression of women which maims them and means a lifetime of excruciating pain. (See "The Crime of Female Genital Mutilation", *Women and Revolution* no 41, Summer/Autumn 1992.)

## For permanent revolution throughout Africa

To this day Kenyan society is riven by murderous tribal and ethnic violence which is a legacy of colonial rule. At the time of Kenyatta's death we wrote that the "Grand Old Man" of Kenya rose to the residency as a Kikuyu tribalist. We added:

"An Oxford-educated elite may be at home in the capitals of Europe, but as soon as any serious social unrest breaks out, the underlying tribalism and other indices of backwardness are quickly bared. This is not merely a holdover from the past: imperialism actually intensified and formalized ethnic rivalries with its divide-and-rule policies. Today the same patterns are fostered by the requirements of maintaining a political base in an environment of massive poverty."

— *Workers Vanguard* no 214, 8 September 1978

A workers and peasants government in Kenya would expropriate the highly mechanised and capital-intensive large white-owned farms and transform them into modern large-scale collective and state farms. Councils of workers and rural toilers would decide on land distribution. A collectivised economy must be extended to neighbouring countries in the context of a socialist federation in sub-

Saharan Africa.

The proletariat is the only class with the social power to bring the capitalist system to its knees and replace it with the dictatorship of the proletariat. The powerful South African proletariat is key to a revolutionary perspective in the whole region. Our comrades of Spartacist South Africa (SSA) fight to build a Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead the struggle for socialist revolution — for a black-centred workers government. Adequate housing for the millions in the townships, squatter camps and villages, electricity and water for the entire population, free quality education, the eradication of *lobola* (bride price) and other traditional patriarchal practices oppressive to women: these desperately needed measures require the socialist transformation of the economy and society under the dictatorship of the proletariat, fighting to promote socialist revolution throughout the African continent and worldwide. As a recent article written by the SSA said:

"As part of a socialist federation of Southern Africa, a black-centred workers government would fight to extend revolution to the imperialist centres of the U.S., West Europe and Japan. It will take an international socialist planned economy to lift the urban and rural masses out of poverty and create a classless society of material abundance — the beginning of a communist society. This is the essence of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution."

— *Workers Vanguard* no 964, 10 September 2010 ■

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## Fake Trotskyists hail imperialist running dog Liu Xiaobo

The following article is adapted from Workers Vanguard no 981, 27 May 2011.

It always seems that the more flagrant and bloody the depredations that the imperialists are engaged in, the louder they beat the drums over “human rights” wherever capitalism has been overthrown. In this vein, US secretary of state Hillary Clinton lashed out during high-level talks with Chinese representatives in Washington a few weeks ago. Referring to a renewed crackdown on dissidents, Clinton blustered that China’s leaders are “trying to stop history, which is a fool’s errand”. Liberal editorial writers and columnists have done their assigned part by bashing China over “human rights”. This at a time when the US ruling class is carrying out murderous occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan and bombing Libya, and the use of torture in the “war on terror” evokes only mild debate about just how effective it is.

A major focus of the recent clamour over “human rights” in China has been the imprisoned anti-Communist intellectual Liu Xiaobo. Especially after Liu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize last year, the Western bourgeois media glorified him as a stalwart champion of “democracy” and “human rights”. A noteworthy exception was a piece in the *Guardian* (15 December 2010), which exposed him as a rabid supporter of US imperialist militarism, past and present. Under the headline “Do supporters of Nobel winner Liu Xiaobo really know what he stands for?” Barry Sautman and Yan Hairong commented:

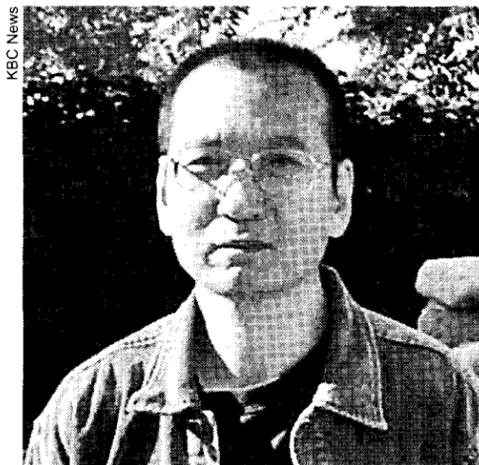
“If Liu’s politics were well-known, most people would not favour him for a prize, because he is a champion of war, not peace. He has endorsed the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, and he applauded the Vietnam and Korean wars retrospectively in a 2001 essay. All these conflicts have entailed massive violations of human rights. Yet in his article ‘Lessons from the Cold War,’ Liu argues that ‘The free world led by the US fought almost all regimes that trampled on human rights.... The major wars that the US became involved in are all ethically defensible.’ During the 2004 US presidential election, Liu warmly praised George Bush for his war effort against Iraq and condemned Democratic party candidate John Kerry for not sufficiently supporting the US’s wars.”

It is practically a requirement for those awarded the Nobel Peace Prize that they be imperialist war criminals (eg, Henry Kissinger and Barack Obama) or toadies of the imperialists (eg, the Dalai Lama).

Joining the imperialists in praising Liu are the pseudo-Trotskyists who publish *October Review* out of capitalist Hong Kong, the one part of the People’s Republic of China (besides the tiny enclave of Macao) where the CCP does not exercise a monopoly of political organisation. Describing this vocal apologist for American imperialist militarism as someone who “fought for democracy through peaceful means”, *October Review* (31 December 2010) ran an article, headlined “Liu Xiaobo Must Be Released Now! Human Rights Must Be Restored in China!” that was suffused with the anti-

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2010 Nobel “Peace” Prize winner Liu Xiaobo (right) joins roster of imperialist toadies and war criminals like Henry Kissinger (below at right with US president Nixon in 1972). Bottom: US bombing during Vietnam War, one of many imperialist wars upheld by Liu.



Communist code words “human rights” and (classless) “democracy”. “Liu being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize is also a criticism of Chinese authorities”, we are informed, “hence it can be an encouragement for the development of the democratic movement in China”. With the same language, the *Washington Post* (30 January 2009)—a major mouthpiece for American imperialism—hailed Liu’s Charter 08 movement as China’s “new democracy movement”.

True to form the anti-Communist social democrats of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) have also chimed in with the imperialists’ China-bashing over Liu Xiaobo. An article by Hsiao-Hung Pai in the December 2010 *Socialist Review* rebukes Tory prime minister David Cameron for not raising “the touchy issue of human rights” with the Chinese leadership during his November 2010 visit to

China and praises the imperialist stooge Liu and Charter 08.

#### “Human rights” imperialism against China

Liu emerged as Washington’s most favoured Chinese anti-Communist “dissident” a little over two years ago as the primary author of the Charter 08 manifesto which, as we wrote at the time, was “an explicit programme for capitalist counterrevolution in the Chinese deformed workers state, wrapped in the envelope of ‘democracy’” (*Workers Hammer* no 207, Summer 2009). Charter 08 demanded the privatisation of state-owned enterprises—the collectivised core of the Chinese economy—as well as agricultural land. This was a programme to reverse the social gains of the 1949 Revolution, which, if realised, would plunge China back into imperialist subjugation and

untrammelled exploitation. Not surprisingly, the organisations Liu has been involved in have been funded by the National Endowment for Democracy, a notorious CIA front.

While we recognised that Charter 08 represented a counterrevolutionary programme, we did not support the repression of its initiators and signatories by the Stalinist bureaucracy, which defends its privileged position through fierce, all-sided political repression. Liu and the other right-wing intellectuals were not and are not presently leading a movement threatening the existence of the Chinese workers state, as was the case, for example, with *Solidarność* in Poland in 1981. As revolutionary Marxists (Trotskyists), we called to “smash *Solidarność* counterrevolution” and fought to win Polish workers to a programme of defence of the Polish and Soviet workers states against capitalist counterrevolution and for proletarian political revolution to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies.

In China today, that programme is essential to politically defeat the Charter 08 movement and its apologists on the left, such as *October Review*. Charter 08 retrospectively supported the imperialist-backed Guomindang (Nationalist Party) regime of Chiang Kai-shek against the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in the civil war of the late 1940s. The 1949 Chinese Revolution was a progressive social revolution of world-historic significance. Hundreds of millions of peasants rose up and seized the land on which their forebears had been exploited from time immemorial. The creation of a centrally planned, collectivised economy laid the basis for enormous social progress.

However, the revolution was deformed from its inception under the rule of Mao Zedong’s CCP regime, a nationalist bureaucratic caste resting atop the workers state. Unlike the Russian October Revolution of 1917, which was carried out by a class-conscious proletariat guided by the Bolshevik internationalism of VI Lenin and Leon Trotsky, the Chinese Revolution was the result of peasant-guerrilla war led by Mao’s Stalinist-nationalist forces. Patterned after the Stalinist bureaucracy that had usurped power in the USSR, Mao and his successors, including today’s Hu Jintao regime, have maintained the profoundly anti-Marxist notion that socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—could be built in a single country. In practice, “socialism in one country” has meant accommodation to world imperialism and opposition to the perspective of international workers revolution, which is essential for the advance to socialism.

At some point, the explosive social tensions within China will shatter the political structure of the ruling bureaucratic caste. And when that happens, the fate of the most populous country in the world will be starkly posed: proletarian political revolution to establish a government based on elected workers and peasants councils and open the road to

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