



**For a class-struggle offensive against the Labour government!**

# Fuel blockade rocks Blair's Britain



Sean Dempsey/PA



Martin Arnes



Matthew Fearn

Trade union bureaucracy including TGWU leader Bill Morris (above right) crucially aided Tony Blair in breaking the fuel blockade.

We print below an adapted version of an article that first appeared in *Workers Vanguard* no 741, 22 September.

A blockade of oil refineries and depots by protesters brought Britain to the brink of total shutdown in a matter of days and gave vent to the seething anger felt by millions of people against Tony Blair's Labour government. The protests were called off as Blair moved army fuel tankers into position to break the blockade. Crucially aiding Blair in this was the Labourite Trades Union Congress (TUC) bureaucracy which, meeting at its annual conference at the height of the protests, moved a resolution denouncing the blockades as "a crude attempt to hold the country to ransom". The protesters have given the government 60 days to meet their demand for lower fuel prices and, while the petrol tankers have started rolling again, Labour's crisis is far from over. The effects of the blockade will be felt for weeks, while the hatred towards the arrogant Blair government remains.

Protests in Britain followed closely on similar blockades by French truckers and farmers; protests have since erupted throughout Europe and continue to spread in countries from Ireland to Germany and Poland. These actions are hugely popular expressions of opposition to the social-democratic administrations of Blair, France's Jospin and Germany's Schröder which, as capitalist governments, seek to jack up the bosses' bloated profits by devastating attacks on the livelihoods of the working people, dismantling welfare programmes and grinding down the poor. Exorbitant taxes on items such as petrol and diesel are regressive taxes which impact most on poor and working people. In "rip-off Britain", fuel prices are higher than anywhere else in Europe. Taxes and duties

make up 76 per cent of the price of unleaded petrol, which costs around 80 pence a litre. In the past 18 months alone, the cost of petrol has risen by 18 pence a litre. The cost of public transport is astronomical, as is the cost of running a car. In an industrial society, cars are not a luxury but are essential for vast numbers of workers to get to work.

The blockades were initiated and led by farmers' organisations and road haulage companies—small and medium-sized capitalist companies, often employers in their own right—who are driven by the need to compete with their rivals in other countries, particularly within the European Union. The protests also enjoyed tacit support from the giant oil corporations, at least at first. While the forces leading this revolt were for the most part petty-bourgeois, the issue at stake—cheaper fuel prices—is clearly in the interests of the working class, as was reflected in the overwhelming support for the protests among the population as a whole.

The attitude of Marxists to such petty-bourgeois mobilisations is based upon the target of the protests and the nature of the demands raised: do they further the interests of the proletariat? In this case, the protests were clearly aimed at the Blair government and indeed the demand is one supportable from a proletarian standpoint. Because of their position in society between the two classes with social power—the capitalists and the working class—groups like the farmers and hauliers will swing widely in their orientation, sometimes militantly protesting alongside the workers and sometimes becoming the recruiting grounds for the fascists.

A revolutionary leadership of the workers movement must seek to take the lead of protests such as this in order to

direct them clearly against the real culprit: capitalism and the Labour government which administers it. The fuel crisis is the most acute social crisis Britain has seen since the great miners strike of 1984-85. It has starkly illustrated the venal nature not only of Labour but particularly of the trade union bureaucracy, which acted as Blair's partner in crime and played a decisive role in saving the government's hide.

A tanker drivers' strike would transform the protests into a mighty class struggle against the Labour government. It could appeal to rail and all transport workers to strike the railways and the privatised public transport system which is equally hated. Such a mobilisation by the union membership requires implacable opposition to the pro-capitalist trade union bureaucracy. While the oil blockade used militant tactics, and gentleman farmers were heard to repeat the fashionable phrase "direct action works", the fundamental question is one of political programme and leadership. Forging a revolutionary proletarian party as the necessary instrument to lead the working class in struggle, committed to nothing less than victorious workers revolution against the whole rotting capitalist system is the urgent task posed. It is such a party that we in the Spartacist League/Britain seek to build.

Tony Blair, having been chased around Yorkshire by angry protesters, summoned oil bosses and police chiefs to Downing Street, reportedly demanded they get tough with the protesters and declared on national television that within 24 hours the oil tankers would be back on the roads. In order for Blair's boast to become a reality, unionised tanker drivers had to drive the tankers out and break the blockade which they had supported until then. Enter the trade

union bureaucrats, whose slavish loyalty to "their" anti-working-class Labour government and the bourgeois order it upholds knows no bounds. Initially, many drivers refused to move oil except for emergency supplies. But the bureaucracy of the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) scandalously instructed their members to bring the oil out. A TGWU press release issued 12 September, the same day as Blair's ultimatum, said: "The Union which represents tanker drivers urged its members to continue working as long as it was safe to do so", adding: "We urge the protesters to remove the blockades and allow our members to resume deliveries." TGWU general secretary Bill Morris egged on the cops, saying "If they are breaking the law, the protesters should be arrested" (*Guardian*, 13 September).

According to a report in the *Sunday Telegraph* (17 September): "While Mr Blair pondered sending in the troops, Mr Brown was attempting a different plan to break the dispute—by using the trade unions." It goes on: "At the TUC in Glasgow the day before, he had met Bill Morris, the leader of the Transport Union, whose members include many tanker drivers. He convinced him of the need to end the crisis." John Prescott urged Blair that sending in troops would backfire and would wreck "delicate negotiations taking place that night between trades union leaders and tanker drivers". Thus, the trade union bureaucracy was pivotal to the Labour government in defusing the crisis.

The depth of the crisis triggered by the oil protests provoked the government into a response which illuminates the workings of the capitalist state and the sinister forces that are arrayed against the working class and its allies in times

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# Labour's witch hunt against "sex offenders" unleashes vigilante terror

Reactionary hysteria whipped up by Labour's crusade against so-called "paedophiles" and "sex offenders" was stoked to white-hot heat over the summer. Throughout the country—from Manchester to Bristol, London to south Wales—people were injured, threatened, driven from their homes and to suicide by lynch-mob terror. In one instance, a woman paediatrician was attacked by a vicious, moronic mob. Particularly nasty and violent were the rampages which took place at the Paulsgrove estate near Portsmouth following the publication of a hit list of "suspected paedophiles" by the *News of the World* in its now-notorious "name and shame" campaign. The tabloid's editor and architect of this campaign, one Rebekah Wade, is a feature at New Labour fundraising dinners. An account in the *Independent on Sunday* (13 August) summarised:

"Rioters smashed windows, burnt a car, caused a convicted paedophile to flee and go to ground, forced out four other families with no record of child abuse, waved placards calling for lynchings and deportations (to South America, for some reason) and touched off among their own children infantile eruptions of hatred and vandalism. A list of 20 rumoured paedophiles was produced and circulated. A suspected child sex offender from nearby Southampton shot himself dead. A second suspect also committed suicide."

Scenes of children and toddlers in Paulsgrove carrying signs reading "Don't House Them/Hang Them!" and chanting "stab him, burn him, kill him" made it clear there was some serious abuse of children going on—by the reactionary vigilantes! And it could hardly be clearer that laws which call for publicising names and addresses of "sex offenders" are an incitement to terror. A similar campaign in Italy, stoked in particular by Alessandra Mussolini's fascist National Alliance, also took place over the summer, with attempted lynchings in at least four seaside resorts where ferocious crowds chased and beat men accused of "sex offences" with minors. Indeed, these reactionary mobilisations are a culture medium for fascist filth.

The ground has been firmly laid by the Labour government since its election. Weeks after Labour was elected, it brought in the Sex Offenders Act which extended police monitoring of former

"sex offenders", requiring them to become part of a police "register" available to "individuals" in "the community". It detonated an outburst of reactionary vigilantism at the time (see "Labour's frenzy over 'paedophilia': pretext for state repression", *Workers Hammer* no 163, July/August 1998). This time around, Blair's porcine deputy John Prescott vowed to bring in even tougher legislation, including extension of the use of life sentences for "sex offenders". Syd Rapson, Labour MP for Portsmouth North which includes the impoverished, heavily unemployed Paulsgrove estate, embraced the vigilante mobilisations as "democracy having its way" (*Independent*, 10 August). We say: *Down with Labour's reactionary anti-"paedophile" campaign!*

Coming from the Labour government which brought you the New Deal and pitiful wages for youth, slashed social benefits and levied fees for higher education, talk about concern for youth is so much hypocritical cant. So, too, is the cynical wielding of understandable horror and outrage over the murder of young people such as Sarah Payne. When it comes to that, the bloody Blair government's crimes in Northern Ireland, the starvation blockade of Iraq, the NATO bombing of Serbia have meant taking the lives of *hundreds of thousands* of children and youth.

## Marxism v bourgeois bigotry

Crocodile tears have been shed—both in the bourgeois press and in ostensible "socialist" newspapers—about "innocent" people being victimised in the recent round of government-sponsored hysteria. Thus, it's common to bewail the fact that teenage lovers, victims of mistaken identification, little kids "playing doctor" and others have been targeted both by the state's "register" and vigilante mobilisations. Such was the climate that, on 6 August, a rabid crowd gathered outside the home of pop singer Gary Glitter following the announcement by a Sunday tabloid of his return to London after five months abroad. Glitter had recently served a jail sentence for the "crime" of...downloading child porn from the Internet! His persecution was truly obscene. But who then are the "guilty"? From tabloid rags

to the government and the fake-left Labourite press, the answer is "paedophiles".

"Paedophilia" simply means sexual desire towards children. To equate this with child murder and rape is grotesque and partakes of the same reactionary bourgeois bigotry which declares all sex other than heterosexual monogamy to be "deviant". We oppose the persecution of those who engage in consensual inter-generational sex, we oppose the reactionary "age of consent" laws and we have a long record of defending against



Ms London



Workers Vanguard

**Spartacists fight for women's liberation through socialist revolution and oppose state interference in consensual sexual activity.**

persecution organisations such as the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) and the British Paedophile Information Exchange, whose leaders were jailed in 1984 for advocating the right of youth under the "age of consent" to have sex with adults. In defending NAMBLA against a sinister effort to frame it up, bankrupt and crush it, our comrades in the Spartacist League/US noted that this group, which prints excerpts from works by Walt Whitman and William Shakespeare as well as historical essays on figures from gay history, has been witch hunted for the more than 20 years since its inception. A 24 May letter by a NAMBLA spokesman stated: "NAMBLA opposes laws that punish consensual relationships. It has always taken the strongest stand possible against any violence, sexual or otherwise, against children" (*Workers Vanguard* no 741, 8 September). But this simple truth—in the US as here—runs counter to hysteria about sex, homosexuality in particular, and sex involving young people above all.

It was no coincidence that, at the height of the reactionary mobilisations against "paedophiles", the House of Lords decision on "Section 28" upheld this vicious anti-homosexual law. Not even a minimal liberalisation of Britain's draconian anti-gay legislation, some of which dates from the 19th century—criminalising "cruising", group sex and even kissing in public—will come from Labour and the "Vicar of St Albion" Tony Blair. Instead the anti-gay bigotry of the capitalist rulers encourages fascist atrocities like the nail bombing of the Admiral Duncan, a gay pub in Soho.

Violent abuse and rape of children is a terrible crime. Once the question of "child abuse" has become a political

football, however, the state wilfully will not tell the difference between Jack the Ripper and Lewis Carroll. As Marxists, not sociologists or professional researchers, we address social issues such as "child abuse" precisely because they have become politicised. Thus, it is in the context of the Labour government's virulent anti-sex witch hunt (and the shameful aid and comfort given to it by so-called "socialists") that we offer some general considerations.

Human sexuality is a relative thing—relative to the nature of society, class,

individual. Western bourgeois society considers children asexual creatures. Among the challenges to this myth was Sigmund Freud's insight—considered shockingly wicked by his contemporaries—that children are born with sexual urges and that their first sexual objects are their parents. Indeed, Freud's entire theoretical premise was that individual maturation and the development of civilisation in general is based on the *postponement* (ie repression and sublimation) of instinctual gratification. (Of course to some extent Freud's worldview was affected by the deeply constraining, sexually repressive Victorian values of his society.) We live in a society that is brutal, ignorant, anti-sexual and hostile. Stripped of the pathologies of class society and the patriarchal family, in an environment free of constraining taboos, questions about children and sexuality could be dealt with in a rational fashion. As it stands now, there is much we simply can't and don't know.

Culturally, there is a great deal of relativism here as well. For instance, the Koran holds that a girl may be married when she turns nine. In *Centuries of Childhood*, Philippe Ariès described the lack of sexual reserve of and towards children in Europe during the Middle Ages and commented:

"The attitude to sex, and doubtless sex itself, varies according to environment, and consequently according to period and mentality. Nowadays the physical contacts described by Heroard [court physician to the French king Henri IV] would strike us as bordering on sexual perversion and nobody would dare to indulge in them publicly. This was not the case at the beginning of the seventeenth century."

The guiding principle for sexual rela-

*continued on page 4*



Guardian



Independent

vigilante mobilisations at Paulsgrove estate were whipped up by Labour government's campaign against "sex offenders".

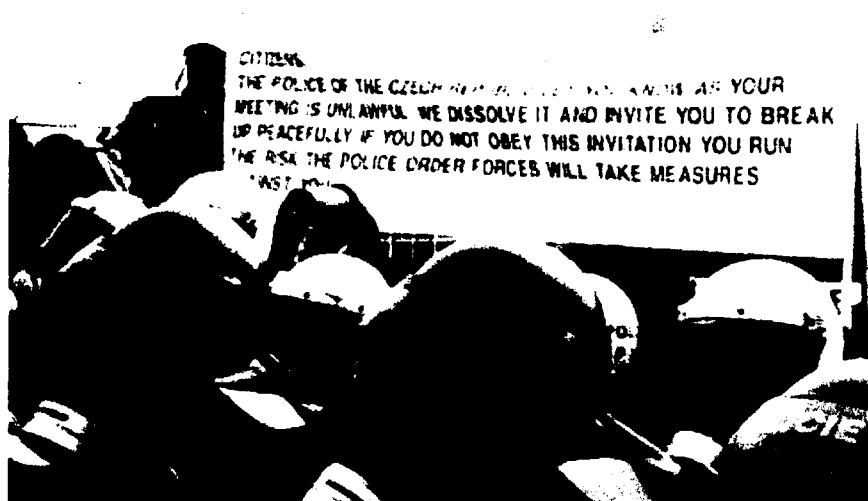
# Stop repression against Prague protesters!

We print below a 30 September letter from the International Communist League to Vaclav Havel, President of the Czech Republic; the Czech Ministry of the Interior; and Czech Embassies around the world.

The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) demands the immediate release of all leftists arrested while protesting against the World Bank and IMF summit in Prague on September 26 and 27, 2000. We further demand that all charges against them be dropped. The Czech based OPH (Obcanske Pravni Hlidky) legal observers report 859 overwhelmingly Czech prisoners and most are being denied legal recourse. Other reports indicate that the actual number of prisoners may be much higher.

Released prisoners and other wit-

nesses have reported extreme police brutality. The Italian *Liberazione* (30 September) reports that one woman, Silvy Jolanda Machova, was thrown from the window of a Prague police station and required surgery (police reports say that she "fell"). Other reports, including in the German *junge Welt*, indicate severely violent beatings, denial of water and food, "disappearance" of prisoners, denial of medical attention to injured demonstrators as well as medicine to the sick, extreme overcrowding with reports of 22 demonstrators crammed into a 4 square meter cell while 30 demonstrators were kept in an outdoor courtyard overnight without blankets or food. *Liberazione* reports that the police released 500 foreign prisoners yesterday, leaving them in the



Undercurrents

Sinister Czech cop banner threatens Prague demonstrators.

middle of desolate countryside. Eyewitness reports by released prisoners also describe processing rooms where groups of 40 to 60 people were spread-eagled while being beaten, their heads knocked back, groins kicked and punched, while handcuffed protesters were thrown downstairs.

The police brutality was obviously long planned. The Czech government worked overtime before the protests to seal the borders against protesters. FBI and Scotland Yard advisors provided lists of potential demonstrators. The Czech government banned the demonstrations while borrowing tear gas grenades from Germany and water cannons from Greece. Some 12,800 armed police were mobilized, twice as many as the official police count of demonstrators. This was clearly aimed at punishing the demonstrators to prove that this former deformed workers state has a reliable bourgeois state apparatus to defend

capitalism against its working class and plebeian victims. This inhuman treatment of young leftist demonstrators exposes the lies of "freedom" of opinion and press put forward as bait by proponents of the so-called "velvet revolution" which was actually a social counterrevolution which has brought widespread misery through the restoration of capitalism. Capitalist counterrevolution has led to a surge in anti-Semitism and terror directed at the Roma people.

We stand as proletarian internationalists in the tradition that "an injury to one is an injury to all". Once again we demand the immediate release of all the leftist demonstrators and the dropping of all charges against them. We will publicize these atrocities to the working classes throughout Europe, the Americas and Asia.

Len Meyers  
for the International Communist League  
(Fourth Internationalist)



TROTSKY

## "Ultra-imperialism" and pacifist reformism

Various liberal and leftist theoreticians of the "global economy" assert that "multinational" corporations and banks have today displaced nation-states as the dominant power in the capitalist world. This is not at all a new notion. In the period around World War I, the revisionist "Marxist" Karl Kautsky echoed many bourgeois ideologues in maintaining that international capitalist cartels could



LENIN

establish a stable and peaceful division of the world economy. In fact, as Bolshevik leader VI Lenin explained in 1916, the inter-imperialist war was the necessary product of the major capitalist powers' striving to redivide the world. Lenin exposed Kautsky's "ultra-imperialism" as a reformist-pacifist denial of the need for proletarian revolution. This was demonstrated a year later in Kautsky's hostility to the Bolshevik-led October 1917 workers revolution in Russia.

Certain bourgeois writers (now joined by Karl Kautsky, who has completely abandoned the Marxist position he had held, for example, in 1909) have expressed the opinion that international cartels, being one of the most striking expressions of the internationalisation of capital, give the hope of peace among nations under capitalism. Theoretically, this opinion is absolutely absurd, while in practice it is sophistry and a dishonest defence of the worst opportunism. International cartels show to what point capitalist monopolies have developed, and the object of the struggle between the various capitalist associations. This last circumstance is the most important; it alone shows us the historico-economic meaning of what is taking place; for the forms of the struggle may and do constantly change in accordance with varying, relatively specific and temporary causes, but the substance of the struggle, its class content, positively cannot change while classes exist. Naturally, it is in the interests of, for example, the German bourgeoisie, to whose side Kautsky has in effect gone over in his theoretical arguments (I shall deal with this later), to obscure the substance of the present economic struggle (the division of the world) and to emphasise now this and now another form of the struggle. Kautsky makes the same mistake. Of course, we have in mind not only the German bourgeoisie, but the bourgeoisie all over the world. The capitalists divide the world, not out of any particular malice, but because the degree of concentration which has been reached forces them to adopt this method in order to obtain profits....

The epoch of the latest stage of capitalism shows us that certain relations between capitalist associations grow up, based on the economic division of the world; while parallel to and in connection with it, certain relations grow up between political alliances, between states, on the basis of the territorial division of the world, of the struggle for colonies, of the "struggle for spheres of influence."

— VI Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916)

## Protest anarchist attack on SOP in Prague!

We print below a statement issued by the Spartacist League on 11 September.

An "international appeal to the left and workers movement" issued by the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI) on 24 August reported an attack on members of the SOP (Socialist Workers Organisation), Czech section of the LRCI, on 3 August in Prague. According to the LRCI's appeal, a group of some twelve anarchists carried out a vicious unprovoked attack on two SOP members, sending one to the hospital with a broken nose. The Spartacist League, British section of the International Communist League, condemns this attack!

Taunting the SOP members about Kronstadt and shouting "you will be hanged", the anarchists carried out an act of anti-communist gangsterism and one which can only invite police attack. Indeed, the Prague police are gearing up for violent repression of the anti-IMF protest due to take place there later this month, with the co-operation of cops from Britain and elsewhere. As for Kronstadt: this was the 1921 uprising against the young Soviet workers state which took place in a key garrison in the Gulf of Finland, only miles from Petrograd. At its base, the mutiny was largely peasant; its leadership consisted of those with extensive ties to counterrevolutionaries and former Tsarist officers, egged on by the imperialist powers. (Indeed, bourgeois publications such as *Le Matin* and the *New York Times* managed to report in detail on this uprising...two weeks before it actually

occurred!) Suppressed by the Bolsheviks in an elementary act of defence of the gains of the October Revolution, Kronstadt has been an anti-communist war cry not only for various anarchists but for all manner of scummy enemies of the first workers state.

It was with the ignorance characteristic of such thugs that the anarchists attacked the LRCI/SOP members for being what they are *not*, ie communists and Trotskyists. In fact, the LRCI reneged on the Trotskyist duty to unconditionally defend the Soviet degenerated workers state and the East European deformed workers states which were destroyed by capitalist counterrevolution. Today they similarly refuse to defend the Chinese deformed workers state.

The Spartacist League/ICL is known for our vigorous adherence to and defence of workers democracy. Violence has no place in the workers movement! Open political debate is necessary to clarify the questions facing the working class and oppressed as to how to bring about a society in which those who labour rule. We note that there is a considerable gap between the principles of workers democracy to which the LRCI appeal, and its anti-communist exclusion of the Spartacists from its meetings. This has been the longstanding practice of the LRCI's British section, Workers Power, and is a form of soft-core political violence. We stand wholly opposed to the attack on the SOP and we protest the wanton anti-communist violence carried out by the anarchists against them. ■

## WORKERS HAMMER



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

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

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

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

# Witch hunt...

(Continued from page 3)

tions should be that of effective consent, nothing more and nothing less than mutual agreement and understanding as opposed to coercion. One might say that a girl of 11 is too young, whereas one of 14 is able to decide for herself what she wants to do. In any case this is not a matter to be determined by the capitalist state which upholds in every way it can the inherently oppressive nuclear family, including enforcing sexual repression and fear, with untold results of increased human misery. We vehemently oppose state intervention into people's sexual activities and private lives: *State out of the bedroom!*

Our view on this, an application of elementary democratic rights — including to the most vulnerable sections of the population — is taken from that of the early Soviet workers state which issued from the 1917 October Revolution. Writing in 1923, Grigori Batkis, director of the Moscow Institute of Social Hygiene, explained:

"Soviet legislation bases itself on the following principle: it declares the absolute non-interference of the state and society into sexual matters so long as nobody is injured and no one's interests are encroached upon.... Concerning homosexuality, sodomy, and various other forms of sexual gratification, which are set down in European legislation as offences against public morality — Soviet legislation treats these exactly the same as so-called 'natural' intercourse. All forms of sexual intercourse are private matters." — "The Sexual Revolution in Russia", 1923, quoted in J Lauristen and D Thorstad, *The Early Homosexual Rights Movement 1864-1935* [emphasis in original]

For the capitalist rulers, religious obscurantism, reactionary social mores and the family are weapons to ensure ideological conformity and respect for the "authority" of the institutions of the bourgeois state. The great leader of the Russian revolution, Leon Trotsky, writing in 1939, explained:

"Civilization can be saved only by the socialist revolution. To accomplish the overturn, the proletariat needs all its strength, all its resolution, all its audacity,

drugs" or any number of pretexts — poses a threat to broader civil liberties for all sections of the working class and the oppressed. And in today's rotting, barbaric capitalist society, periodic anti-sex witch hunts are a distraction from struggle against and cover for grinding poverty and its attendant frustration and violence, much of it perpetuated within the family, the chief institution for the oppression of women and youth in class society. (Thus, the condition of many women and children on the Paulsgrove estate, with unemployment at some eleven per cent, is surely miserable.) These witch hunts are also aimed at imposing on youth abstinence and guilt about sex.

"Age of consent" laws are the handmaiden of all manner of state interference in the lives of and control over young people — from when you can drink to access to birth control. We seek to undercut the economic and legal basis of the nuclear family as part of our struggle for socialist revolution. We call for a radical lowering of the legal age of adulthood with free housing, food and a stipend provided for youth who do not wish to remain at home. Our goal is a society in which the family can be replaced; in which sexual relations can be truly voluntary, among any consenting individuals; in which the deforming guilt and shame pounded into all of us can be lifted; in which the constraints of economic necessity which force families together and often break them apart are gone.

## Labourite reformists' touching faith in the bourgeois state

The likes of *Action for Solidarity* completely wallow in Labourite backwardness and bigotry. In its 4 August issue, this newspaper of the Alliance for Workers Liberty (AWL) condemns the media coverage which "creates a climate of fear, feeding the fantasies of paedophiles everywhere" while making no distinction whatsoever between "raping and strangling" and paedophilia. Naturally, these super-slavish Labourites aim all their "concern" over "mob rule" at the "irresponsible manner" of the media; the role of the Labour government is not mentioned. The right-centrist Workers Power

policy towards the complex questions of sex or sexuality carried out by the capitalist state.

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which supported Labour, as it habitually does, in the last general election, wrote in *Socialist Worker* (19 August):

"The witch-hunt was started in a newspaper by Rebekah Wade, the highly paid editor of the *News of the World* and a

2000). This slavish looking to the repressive apparatus of the capitalist state is the essence of Labourite reformism.

The "law and order" upheld by the British state — whether or not administered by a Labour government — is vile, racist, anti-woman, anti-gay, anti-youth and anti-working-class. From the banning of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* to the trial of Oscar Wilde, the legacy of this



Neil Libbert Network

London, April 1999: Carnage at gay pub, the Admiral Duncan, in aftermath of fascist nail-bombing attack.

welcome face in Downing Street.

"It followed on from the witch-hunt against refugees, incited from the parliamentary tea rooms by William Hague and Ann Widdecombe, and the witch-hunt against gays over Section 28 — backed by the bishops in the House of Lords."

What is wrong with this picture? The racist attacks on refugees and immigrants emanate primarily from the cabinet rooms of the Labour government. Ditto the witch hunt against "paedophiles".

To this whitewash of Blair's government Julie Waterson's article, "The Abuse of Power" (*Socialist Review*, September 2000) added some advice to Labour (which it claims has merely "played into" and "conceded" to reaction). While Waterson's article notes that "it is impossible for the institutions of capitalism to face up to and deal with questions of child abuse" as the family plays a central role under capitalism, it is chock full of such advice. For example, Waterson cites "extended supervision orders, something which has been available to judges from 1992 yet rarely used". The SWP's Paul Foot went so far as to become a prominent defender of a massive police operation against child care workers amidst wild accusations that children's homes had been "infiltrated" by "organised groups of paedophiles", for example in an article carried in the *London Review of Books* (4 July 1996). Peter Taaffe's Socialist Party has bewailed the fact that "probation and prison services have also suffered serious cutbacks in recent years" and heartily approve of the "register" imposed in 1997 (*Socialism Today*, September

state is one of profound hostility to and repression against any challenge to the stifling "moral" code imposed upon the working masses (and rather less, to understate the case, upon the scions of the ruling class). Not so many years ago, students were regularly caned and orphans tortured by the pious representatives of the "Lord" on earth. Today, many youth, thrown on the scrap-heap of unemployment and lacking education, can look forward to long sentences in decrepit prison hellholes. This is the reality of capitalist Britain that we in the Spartacus Youth Group seek to change through building a communist youth organisation as the auxiliary to a revolutionary proletarian party committed to nothing less than the destruction of the whole profit system and the establishment of workers rule. No doubt, as Isaac Deutscher once noted, the tragedies of sex and death will still pursue socialist man. But at least future generations under socialism will be better equipped to deal with them, without the need to uphold ancient oppressions. We don't pretend to know how future generations will look back on us; as barbarians we suspect, but we hope also with great pity. As we wrote in *Women and Revolution* (no 43, Winter 1993-Spring 1994):

"To create genuinely free and equal relations between people in all spheres, including sex, requires nothing less than the destruction of this class system and the creation of a communist world. In a classless society social and economic constraints on sexual relations will be nonexistent, and in the words of Frederick Engels, 'there is no other motive left except mutual inclination.'" ■



Observer

London, 1994: Young gays demonstrate for equal rights. Marxists oppose reactionary "age of consent" laws, Section 28 and all the draconian anti-sex legislation.

passion and ruthlessness. Above all it must be completely free from the fictions of religion, 'democracy' and transcendental morality — the spiritual chains forged by the enemy to tame and enslave it."

— "Moralists and Sycophants", *Their Morals and Ours*

For Marxists, it should be ABC that the strengthening of the bourgeois state's repressive apparatus — whether supposedly to "protect children", to "fight

contributed its own twist to the last big round of vigilante terror by raising the call for "children's tribunals, in which adult specialists (lawyers, child psychologists, etc) can be utilised, should be set up and regulated by democratically elected representatives from schools, care institutions, reform schools" (*Workers Power*, June 1998). This is a (crackpot) scheme to make bourgeois "justice" more effective. There can be no rational or just

## Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Group forum

### The fight for a revolutionary party in Britain today

University of London Union, Room 2A, Malet Street, London WC1  
(nearest tube Goodge Street or Russell Square)  
2pm, Saturday 21 October

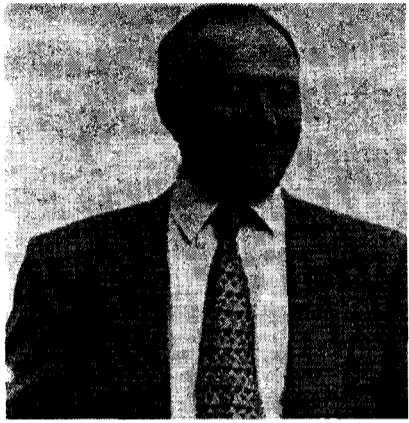
For more information call: (020) 7281 5504

# Down with Labour government's witch hunt!

## Hands off MayDay 2000 protesters!

We reprint below a leaflet issued by the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Group on 1 September.

On May Day in London the Labour government organised the largest police mobilisation in 30 years — as well as



Evening Standard

Cop-loving mayor Livingstone and his Met pals in action on May Day.

ligans" (*Independent*, 2 May). Livingstone's pro-cop mayoral campaign was part of setting the stage for the cops to rampage against these youth, in defence of the symbols of British imperialism. The state and bourgeois press were particularly rabid because demonstrators targeted monuments to British imperial-

has always been an eager participant in these murderous machinations. It will take much more than a little "guerrilla gardening" to put them out of business once and for all. It will take a successful workers revolution and the establishment of workers state power.

Such a revolutionary perspective is

government's imperialist bombing of Serbia, he is for the British Army in Northern Ireland and he is emphatically for the racist police." As genuine revolutionary Marxists, we fight to split the working-class base away from the pro-capitalist Labour Party tops and their "left" tails.



Neville Elder

putting the army on standby — against a demonstration of 6000 young "anti-capitalist" protesters. Riot-gear clad cops moved against the protesters, and sealed off a trade union demonstration nearby which was to converge on Trafalgar Square. Some Turkish youth made their way from the union demonstration in order to join the "anti-capitalist" activists under police attack. Ninety-eight protesters were arrested and nine injured. On 24 August, one of the arrested protesters was sentenced to six months in juvenile detention. He has been singled out for vilification by the bourgeois press because he went to Eton ("with Prince William!") and on May Day reportedly sported a T-shirt emblazoned with a slogan not kindly disposed towards the British monarchy. Turkish leftists were also targets of racist media

ism — among them the Cenotaph, Churchill's statue and sundry military figures. These were decorated (in Churchill's case with a mohican hairdo made of grass) and inscribed with slogans painted in red. One such slogan captured the sentiments of many: "F--- Blair!"

The Labour government's May Day witch hunt follows cop attacks on and subsequent dragnet operations after the 18 June 1999 Carnival against Capitalism in the City of London and the 30 November 1999 demonstration at Euston Station called to coincide with the Seattle WTO protests. The use of police video tapes to go after targeted protesters on spurious charges has become commonplace. Already ten men, women and youth are in jail for participating in these protests, and many more have been remanded in custody, dragged through the courts on charges such as "violent disorder" and "criminal damage", and received fines and criminal records. **Free all the jailed anti-capitalist prisoners now!**

We revolutionary Trotskyists solidarise with the sentiment expressed in the militant gestures against symbols of British imperialism and the monarchy on May Day. And while we have many political differences with the Anarchist Federation, we can enjoy their send-up of the hypocrisy of the Labour Inquisition which seeks to quash any dissent beyond polite petition to parliament. The AF's bulletin *Resistance* (no 13) revealed "a shocking non exclusive":

"the British State is part of a worldwide terror network which is hell-bent on maintaining a world of exploitation and profit for the sake of a few greedy lunatics. For as long as we can remember they have been organising a massive network of armed fanatics, also known as the police and army. This terrifying network is supported by gangs of cowardly grasses and spies lurking around the globe, or the security services as they're better known."

From the bloody exploits of British imperialism during the days of Empire to those in Northern Ireland today, to racist police killings, anti-immigrant outrages and attacks on unions "at home", the rulers of this country are drenched in the blood of workers and the oppressed worldwide. The Labour Party leadership

anathema to those like the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Workers Power (WP) in the London Socialist Alliance (LSA) who campaigned for the pro-imperialist pig Livingstone — an avid supporter not only of the Metropolitan Police but of the imperialist war against Serbia. The SWP in particular, who politically liquidated its organisation into the election campaign for "red" Ken, ostentatiously stayed away from the Parliament Square May Day event (bar a token presence) in order not to embarrass his campaign. In the aftermath of May Day, *Socialist Worker* (6 and 13 May) condemned the cops, Tony Blair and the media, but remained absolutely silent about Livingstone's very public role in witch hunting the protesters. Instead, SWP honcho Alex Callinicos lectured that "effective action depends on democratically-taken majority decisions binding on all involved" (*Socialist Worker*, 13 May). (A belated note of Livingstone's denunciation of the protests is buried in an article in the SWP's theoretical journal *International Socialism*, Summer 2000.) As for Workers Power, it too was silent as the grave on Livingstone, opining "The police were to blame — but the events were a setback for the anti-capitalist movement" (*Workers Power*, May 2000). WP wants "workers' democracy within campaigns so that an elected leadership can organise resistance and stamp on stupidity". Pretty rich coming from people who called for a vote to Tony Blair in the last general election! In fact, behind all the talk of "democracy" and "binding decisions" is the aim to channel protest in such a way as to be acceptable within the framework of Labourism and, of course, to "stamp on" any embarrassment to their candidate, Livingstone.

Such slavish Labourite "socialists" give socialism a bad name! In fact they are an obstacle to smashing racist capitalism. For our part, the Spartacist League gave not an iota of support to Livingstone or the LSA, nor did we call for a vote to Blair. As we wrote in *Workers Hammer* (no 172, Spring 2000): "Without a doubt, a vote for Livingstone in the May London mayoral elections is a vote for New Labour: he supported the

The fight for revolutionary leadership also means fighting every instance of repression, including when it is unleashed against those with whom we strongly disagree politically, by the capitalist state. While the May Day protesters' gut impulse to strike out against symbols of their "own" imperialism is manifestly a good one, it is not enough to deface the symbols of imperialist rule. (And in the case of McDonald's what's called for is a drive to organise the horribly exploited workers of such franchises — including those under British ownership — rather than attempting to scandalise their bosses, however militantly, before "public opinion".) To transform society requires the revolutionary overthrow of the entire capitalist system of exploitation, racism and war. The working class — whose main enemy in this country is the *British* ruling class, not some "multi-national" corporation based in the US or Germany — has the power to sweep away capitalism because of its central role in capitalist production. The Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League, fights to build a Leninist internationalist vanguard party, which is needed to fight against Labourism and other forms of false consciousness in the working class, render the class conscious of its historic role, and lead it in revolutionary struggle against the exploiters. Victorious socialist revolution will put a swift end to the monarchy, the House of Lords, the Established Churches and all the capitalist state's repressive apparatus.

**Free the protesters! Drop all the charges! Livingstone/Labour government: enemies of the people! ■**



Independent on Sunday

Statue of British imperialist pig Winston Churchill on May Day.

witch hunting. We demand: **Drop all charges against the protesters now!**

Imperialist chief Blair called on demonstrators' relatives to grass on them while his lieutenant, Jack "Torquemada" Straw, has threatened to ban further demonstrations. Immediately after the cop riot, then candidate (now mayor) Ken Livingstone proclaimed: "I utterly condemn the violence and destruction of property by mindless thugs. I fully support the efforts of the police to put an end to the activity of these violent hoo-

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# Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

The Irish government has been beefing up its arsenal of racist anti-immigrant measures aiming to "fast track" the process of deportation. The Illegal Immigrants (Trafficking) Act which became law in September treats asylum seekers as suspected criminals who can be fingerprinted and detained when asylum is refused. This is part of a co-ordinated policing effort by European Union governments to strengthen their powers of deportation and exclusion from racist "Fortress Europe". A recently concluded agreement between the Irish and Romanian governments removed any remaining legal impediment to mass expulsions of Romanian immigrants who are predominantly Roma (Gypsies). Refugees are fleeing persecution and immiseration which resulted from capitalist restoration in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; black Africans are seeking an escape from war and famine. As immigrants in Ireland both groups face the kind of racist brutality which for years has been dished out to Irish Travellers.

Taking its cue from the racist Labour government in Britain, the Fianna Fáil/Progressive Democrat government instituted mandatory "dispersal" of immigrants to small towns and rural villages in which they are confined to designated accommodation from where they can easily be rounded up for deportation. This unleashed a wave of racist attacks during the summer. In Waterford in June, Stanley Obinna Chukwu was beaten while out with fellow Nigerian immigrants. A black British worker was driven out of Ireland by racist terror against his family which included the near-murder of his father, David Richardson, a white man attacked by a gang of knife-wielding racists while walking in Dublin with his black wife and son. John Tanway, an immigrant who fled the genocidal wars in Rwanda, said "maybe I should have stayed where I was, even though I might have been dead by now" (*Sunday Tribune*, 30 April). In April, an African-owned business in Dublin's Parnell Street was smashed up by a gang of up to ten racist thugs from the local pub, some wielding pool cues.

Xenophobic outfits such as the "Immigration Control Platform" have distributed leaflets in Dublin and Cork inciting racist terror while fascist anti-abortion forces have also been active. Former president Mary Robinson, now United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, spoke in Dublin voicing bourgeois liberal concern that "the State's image abroad had been damaged by recent racist attacks and by attitudes towards refugees and asylum-seekers." She was howled at by anti-abortion bigots, who view her presidency as having opened the door to abortion rights, even though she stated that she "supported the right to life of all, including the unborn" (*Irish Times*, 10 July). Fascist forces, from Youth Defence anti-abortion scum to racist terror gangs to vigilante squads who hound Travellers are but an extreme expression of the political programme of the clericalist capitalist state itself which is the enemy of workers, women, Travellers and immigrants.

The Dublin Spartacist Group (DSG), section of the International Communist League (ICL), says: No deportations! Workers and minorities must be organised to clear the fascist gangs off the



Dublin, 1997: Asylum seekers, victims of racist anti-immigrant frenzy, forced to queue outside "Justice" Department.

Derek Speirs

streets. For free abortion on demand! We fight for *full citizenship rights for all immigrants*, regardless of how they entered the country. Our call is counterposed to proposals for temporary work permits which mean immigrants can easily be deported when unemployment rises. It is designed to protect the unity and integrity of the working class as a whole by undercutting attempts to scapegoat foreign-born workers for the ills of capitalism which inevitably produces cycles of mass unemployment.

Our task is to build a revolutionary workers party which will mobilise the working class as a defender of all the

asylum seekers to be allowed to work and endorsed a call by Catholic bishops for an amnesty for asylum seekers in the country, but they do not oppose deportations and have criticised the government because the process is too slow. Party leader Ruairi Quinn wrote in the *Irish Times* (3 May): "A coherent asylum and immigration policy will involve deporting people who have no case to remain here. But in a state that estimates its need for foreign workers to be large and growing, deportation as a sole policy response to immigrants already in the country is deeply inadequate."

Ireland's economic growth and falling

nians have applied for asylum in Ireland, of which half have been processed and 15 were granted!

It is expected that half the workers coming into Ireland will be returning Irish emigrants and Harney specifies other countries to be targeted: "We will have to go further afield to some of the eastern Europe countries, the new countries that will be joining the EU, to the US, to New Zealand and many other countries where there are young people who can travel around the world" (*Irish Times*, 1 March). Obviously no blacks or Roma need apply. This illustrates that in Ireland as elsewhere bourgeois immigration policies are necessarily racist and this remains true when immigration is encouraged by particular governments to meet the requirements of the labour market to keep down wages. The movement of workers into Ireland today is part of the international process explained in the ICL's "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program":

"Modern capitalism, i.e., imperialism, reaching into all areas of the planet, in the course of the class struggle and as economic need demands, brings into the proletariat at its bottom new sources of cheaper labor, principally immigrants from poorer and less-developed regions of the world — workers with few rights who are deemed more disposable in times of economic contraction. Thus capitalism in ongoing fashion creates different strata among the workers, while simultaneously amalgamating the workers of many different lands. Everywhere, the capitalists, abetted by aristocracy-of-labor opportunists, try to poison class consciousness and solidarity among the workers by fomenting religious, national and ethnic divisions. The struggle for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism is thus a vital task for the proletarian vanguard."

— *Spartacist* no 54, Spring 1998

Labour was part of the previous government which ratified the Dublin Convention, an anti-immigrant agreement between EU governments, they also tightened border controls by passing an amendment to the Aliens Order. The role of reformist groups such as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the struggle against racism is to channel it into support for the wretched Labour Party which is a key prop of racist capitalism. In May, over 3000 people turned out to an anti-racism demonstration in Dublin organised by the SWP's "Anti-Nazi League" (ANL). With Labour in opposition, the SWP is helping to invest them and the trade union bureaucracy with "anti-racist" credentials. They produced an "anti-racism declaration", collected



Frank Miller

Immigrants, anti-racists protest in Dublin's O'Connell Street on 20 April against brutal racist attack on Paul Abayomi.

oppressed — immigrants, Travellers and women. Anti-immigrant racism is a weapon in the hands of the bosses to divide workers and thus keep down labour costs. Therefore the struggle against racism must be linked to the fight against capitalist exploitation and for socialist revolution and it must be conducted not only against the state and racist gangs but also as a political battle against the reformist misleaders of the workers movement — the Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy.

## The fight against racism means opposition to Labour

Labour is a bourgeois workers party which has a working-class base but a thoroughly pro-capitalist leadership. Together with the trade union bureaucracy they tie the proletariat to the capitalist order, not least by preaching the lie that the working class are in "partnership" with their exploiters in the "Celtic Tiger" economy. Today Labour calls for

birth rate mean that the labour market is relatively tight. It has ceased to be a major exporter of cheap labour and for the first time has experienced net inward migration over the past few years. This has triggered a racist backlash on the one hand but it has also generated widespread opposition to racism, particularly among youth, and has opened up certain contradictions within the union bureaucracy. Early this year *Tánaiste* [deputy prime minister] Mary Harney announced the economy will need 200,000 workers from outside the country over the next few years because of shortages of particular skills. The government is thus simultaneously recruiting workers from abroad while preparing mass deportations of blacks and Romanians. The *Irish Times* (3 April) wrote that "Up to 5,000 Romanian asylum-seekers could be repatriated within the next year under 'fast track' measures being considered by the Minister for Justice, Mr. [John] O'Donoghue." Since 1992, 5500 Roma-

thousands of signatures on it and boasted: "Almost all the Labour Party TDs, including the party leader Ruairi Quinn, have backed it." No surprise there, its concluding call was simply a plea to the government to issue work permits to asylum seekers, saying: "Instead of treating refugees as a burden, we call on the government to give them the right to work. We believe that asylum seekers deserve our compassion and help. We call on everyone who wants to see a tolerant and multi-cultural Ireland to oppose this wave of racism and to make their voices heard" (*Socialist Worker*, 24 May-7 June). Racism is inherent in the capitalist system and therefore to achieve a "tolerant and multi-cultural Ireland" requires the revolutionary overthrow of that system.

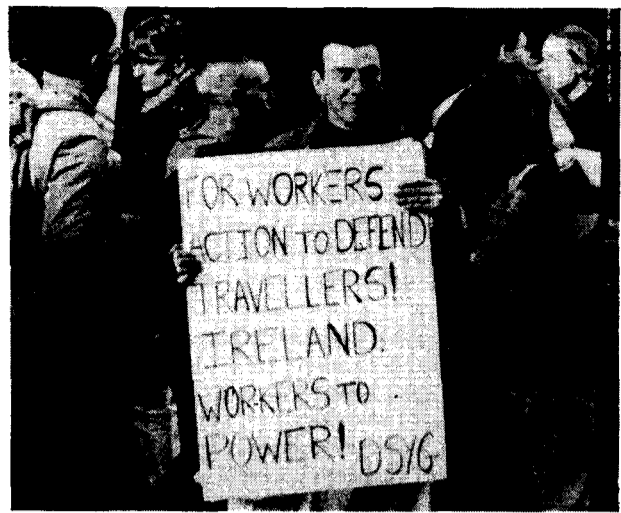
In contrast to the SWP's patronising liberalism, we *internationalist* proletarian revolutionaries do not regard immigrants merely as victims deserving of "compassion"; in situations where they become an integral part of the workforce they form an important addition to the proletarian vanguard who will play a key role in the struggle for socialism and who constitute a living link to the proletariat in their country of origin.

The base of Irish society is seething with discontent and the union bureaucracy is fearful of the growing number of strikes against wage constraints. One of the speakers at the ANL demonstration was SIPTU president Des Geraghty, who is trying to keep a lid on growing opposition among his union, the largest

increasingly means catering and the meat industry. To their credit the Longford branch of SIPTU recently sent a letter in Hungarian to newly-arrived Hungarian workers at a meat plant explaining the pay and conditions to which they were entitled and inviting them to contact the union if they had problems. Unionising immigrant workers undermines attempts by employers to drive down wages by paying lower rates to immigrants. In contrast to this, a SIPTU shop steward at a Monaghan poultry plant scandalously shopped six Romanian workers to management for not having valid immigration documents, causing them to be handed over to government officials and no doubt to face deportation. This is playing the bosses game. Union members must oppose deportations and fight for full citizenship rights for *all* immigrants irrespective of whether the state deems them to be "legal" or "illegal".

### Capitalist counterrevolution fuels anti-immigrant racism

The Socialist Party (SP) is the main force behind the Anti-Racism Campaign but their claim to oppose racism is bogus. Whereas SIPTU leader Des Geraghty stated that his union opposes racism, the SP's Tom Crean in an article in the *May Voice* describes the racist backlash against immigrants as "understandable". Crean writes: "it is understandable that there is anger that the government seems to be prepared to spend millions to buy hotels around the country to house asy-



Dublin Spartacists in picket of Palace Bar protesting racist ban on Travellers, 1991.

Europe and for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy. We fought tooth and nail against counter-revolution, as today we fight for unconditional military defence of the remaining deformed workers states — China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba. In the USSR in 1991 we mass distributed propaganda calling on Soviet workers to "Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" The SP, whose parent party was for decades an organic part of the British Labour Party, never defended the USSR, wedded as they were to "democratic" imperialism. It is obscene for this outfit to prate about workers democracy, the precondition for which was defence of the planned economy, having backed the forces which dismantled it. These pro-imperialists stood shoulder to shoulder with Yeltsin's forces for counterrevolution. Like the SWP who gushed that: "Communism has collapsed. . . . It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing" (*Socialist Worker*, 31 August 1991), the SP (then known as Militant) enthused: "The collapse of these corrupt regimes and the recent crushing of the hardline Stalinists in the USSR has removed a huge weight from the shoulders of the population" (*Militant* [Ireland], October 1991).

Tell it to the Roma refugees! Capitalism inevitably brought the ravages which impacted directly on Roma, many of whom previously worked on collective farms but were driven off the land which was reclaimed by private owners. They were hounded out of the country by murderous pogroms perpetrated by skinheads and the police.

Having supported counterrevolution, both the SP and the SWP supported every social-democratic government elected in Europe in its wake, all of whom were openly committed to driving home massive attacks on workers and immigrants. ICL sections gave no support whatsoever to Labour in Britain or Ireland or to the popular-front governments of Jospin in France or Schröder in Germany.

For decades Irish workers have had unrestricted right to enter and work in Britain and have been part of a common labour market with British workers.

From the mid-19th century onwards the expansion of British capitalism required the importation of impoverished peasants from its oldest and nearest colony. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels insisted that English workers, who were infected by their rulers' imperialist antagonism towards Irish workers, must overcome this chauvinism as a precondition to their own emancipation as a class. They also noted that Irish workers tended to view all English workers as members of the oppressor nation.

Today the ICL upholds the internationalist tradition of Karl Marx. In Britain, we are unique on the left in fighting for the immediate unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland. The poisonous division between Catholics and Protestants in the North, based on subjugation of the Catholic minority, is an extreme example of imperialist divide-and-rule. We say: Not Orange against Green but class against class! We seek to instill in the working class in the South the need to oppose every manifestation of oppression, not only of Catholics in the North but of Travellers, who face forcible evictions by cops and vigilantes and blatant discrimination. The fight for abortion rights is key to the fight against women's oppression and it cuts to the heart of the clericalist capitalist state. Abortion is banned in all but the most extreme circumstances — when a risk to the life of the woman can be established. We fight for separation of Church and state. *For free abortion on demand!*

The proletariat in Britain is multi-ethnic, consisting of Irish, English, Scottish and Welsh, as well as British Asian and black workers. The Spartacist League/Britain struggles to forge a multi-ethnic revolutionary workers party, recognising that minorities will play a key role in the British proletarian revolution. The DSG along with our comrades in the Spartacist League/Britain fight to smash the rotten capitalist system through workers revolution on both sides of the border and both sides of the Irish Sea. *For an Irish workers republic, part of a federation of workers republics in the British Isles!* ■



Morning Star

March 2000: Striking bus drivers in Dublin. Social power of proletariat must be mobilised to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

in Ireland, to the "Programme for Prosperity and Fairness". He said "racism is always used as a device to divide the working class. We won't accept it as an election issue, even though they will try to make it one. Our union stands for the right of immigrants to work in this country" (*Socialist Worker*, 24 May-7 June). Geraghty however opposes the government's proposal for further immigration, saying "The wholesale importation of hundreds of thousands of workers is not the correct way to go. . . . I would place a lot more attention on upskilling" (*Irish Times*, 25 March). Thus Geraghty pits immigrants and Irish workers against each other, contradicting his claim to oppose racist divide-and-rule of the working class. Such national chauvinism is part and parcel of the bureaucracy's lie that the interests of Irish workers are served by "partnership" with Irish bosses and that workers must forego wage rises in the interest of the "Celtic Tiger".

The unions can become powerful weapons in defence of the interests of the working class and the oppressed, but they must be independent of the bourgeoisie and the capitalist state, which boils down to the need for revolutionary leadership. In situations when immigrants are employed they are usually consigned to the lowest paid, dirtiest jobs. In Ireland this

lump seekers while 100,000 languish on the housing list." This "understanding" of chauvinism and pandering to backward consciousness is characteristic of the SP who are persistent champions of the fascist Loyalist UVF in the person of Billy Hutchinson, himself a sectarian killer of Catholics.

Addressing why refugees are fleeing Romania today they point to the restoration of capitalism as the chief cause, which is certainly true, but neglect of course to mention that they bear a share of the responsibility because they supported it. They say:

"The Socialist Party always opposed the absence of any democracy in the former Stalinist states with Romania being a particularly odious example and we supported the overthrow of Ceaucescu. However we made the point at the time of their collapse that handing back the economy to the free market would wreak disaster for the workers and peasants alike and instead we called for a workers' democracy, that is, genuine democracy and democratic planning of the state owned economy as the key initial task for building a socialist society."

— *Voice*, June 2000

We of the ICL uniquely fought for the Trotskyist programme of unconditional military defence of the former Soviet Union, a degenerated workers state, and the deformed workers states of Eastern

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国际共产主义同盟 (ICL) 1983年10月10日出版

# Fuel...

(Continued from page 1)

of social crisis. The police presence at refineries was reinforced, use of troops was prepared and in Essex, tankers leaving a depot had a cop riding shotgun.

## Break with Labour!

Behind the veneer of parliamentary democracy lurks the reality of the repressive British state. The capitalist state, as Lenin explained, consists of special bodies of armed men — the cops and the army — who are committed to the defence of private property. The capitalist state cannot be reformed; the power of the capitalist class must be broken and replaced by a workers state. The Privy Council, presided over by the Queen, met to accord "exceptional powers" to the government to assume control of fuel distribution, including the use of military facilities, for the purposes of breaking the oil blockade. This "private" council of the Queen is composed of current and past ministers and includes Labour "left" Tony Benn. We say: Abolish the monarchy!

The farmers and small haulage firms leading this protest openly espouse national chauvinism, reflecting their economic interests. This was expressed ad nauseam by Brynle Williams, a prominent spokesman for the farmers blockade in Cheshire, who said: "We don't like the idea of Irish drivers coming over here with their cheap diesel then working two or three days and bringing over their cheap meat, robbing us of a living" (*Guardian*, 12 September). The interest of the working class in contrast lies squarely with the workers of other countries. As protests engulfed France, Britain and Belgium, there was a burning need for proletarian international solidarity in sharp opposition to the anti-French chauvinism promoted also by Blair & Co. The proletarian internationalism seen during the 1984-85 miners strike, when workers from France and other countries raised money for their British comrades and French miners sang the Internationale with British miners, is an example of the kind of international class solidarity which is needed. We fight to mobilise workers in opposition to every manifestation of national chauvinism and racism and for full citizenship rights for immigrants.

ICL sections in Britain and France gave no support whatsoever to Blair's Labour and Jospin's Socialist-led popular front. This is in stark contrast to fake "socialists" in both countries who helped elect the Blair and Jospin governments and are beholden to them. Jospin's bourgeois Green coalition partners, in acting as the most hardline opponents of lower petrol taxes, underlined the anti-working-class character of Green environmentalism. Today, a class-struggle fight would galvanise opposition to these anti-working-class, racist governments. The Labour Party is a bourgeois workers party — revolutionaries seek to split the working-class base from the pro-capitalist tops and win it to the need for a revolutionary programme and party. From the strikebreaking Labour governments of the 1970s to knifing the heroic miners strike, the Labour Party and the TUC tops are the strategic obstacle to the fight for working-class rule.

In addition to Morris' scabberding, Bill Speirs, general secretary of the Scottish TUC, denounced the protests as a "bosses' blockade". This was also the line of the union bureaucracy in France to justify scabbing and to save the Jospin government in its hour of crisis. TUC general secretary John Monks out-

geously compared the fuel protests to the CIA-backed truck drivers mobilisations against the Allende regime in Chile in 1973. Those mobilisations were part of an imperialist "destabilisation" campaign against the popular-front Allende government which culminated in the bloody military coup by General Pinochet and were fundamentally aimed at crushing the Chilean working class in the midst of a prerevolutionary situation. To draw an analogy with popular mobilisations against a Labour-administered capitalist government in Britain today is a measure of the utter fealty of the trade union bureaucracy to this government. Blair actually more resembles Pinochet's fan Margaret Thatcher during the year-long miners strike and the later poll tax upheaval than Allende.

The reformist left demonstrated their

ing of all this — should all be opposed." WP condones "opposition" to the government within limits but nothing stands higher than keeping Labour in power.

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) initially enthused over the protests, headlining "Bitterness explodes in Blair's face", while neglecting to mention that they were "over the moon" when Labour was elected in 1997. Within a week, however, with Labour's poll ratings plummeting, the SWP was squealing in anguish that: "Labour's vanished lead over the Tories in last weekend's opinion polls will have sent a shiver of fear through millions of people around the country" (*Socialist Worker*, 23 September). The "shiver of fear" running up the spine of the SWP leadership was that Labour might now lose the next election — hence the organisation was



Spartacist Britain

**Ogreave, May 1984: Miners pickets battle cops. Heroic miners strike was betrayed by treachery of Labour/TUC leaders.**

loyalty to Labourism in the course of the protests. The Communist Party's *Morning Star* (13 September) opposed the protests and urged Blair: "The government should take all lawful steps necessary — without the use of police violence — to ensure free movement of oil and petrol."

Workers Power (WP) also echo the line of the trade union bureaucracy. An Internet posting ("Britain: fuel blockades needs a working class answer", 18 September) describes the protesters saying "as a movement it is a bosses' movement", then states baldly: "This class character is decisive for us. It means that we give no support to the 'blockade movement' as a whole." While forced to admit that "its demands are popular and, in themselves supportable" they conclude this "is also irrelevant". The farmers and hauliers are indeed petty-bourgeois. However, it was unionised tanker drivers supporting the blockades who held the Labour government to ransom and that's the reason Workers Power opposes them and refuses to support the demand for lower fuel taxes!

Workers Power produce a centrist contortion in order to present their support for Blair, Morris & Co against the fuel protests as "opposition" to the Labour government. Concerning the "blockade movement" they write: "the fact that it is in conflict with a government that we also oppose, however — and as such does represent a small scale split in the ruling class — is something the working class needs to take full advantage of. How? The Labour government's invocation of emergency powers, its threat to use troops and its denunciation of any action that challenges the 'rule of law' — and the trade union leadership's faithful echo-

placed on a "war footing" and given "60 Days To Shift New Labour" (SWP circular, 20 September). Readers of *Socialist Worker* are likely to be sent dizzy by the plethora of demands, ludicrously placed on the Labour government and "Iron Chancellor" Gordon Brown — "Tax the oil companies"; "Emergency plan for public transport"; "Lift all pensioners out of poverty"; a call for renationalising the privatised bus and rail companies; a call for union leaders to "set up blockades and picket lines to save Dagenham" etc. However, what is most important here is what is missing. Conspicuous by its absence is any call to support the blockades or for reducing fuel prices — *the very issue that threatened to bring down the Blair government!* This demonstrates that *Socialist Worker's* shopping list of wretched reformist demands is nothing but a smoke-screen to conceal that, when push comes to shove, the SWP's most fundamental loyalty is to the Labour government.

Support to the fuel protests is counterposed to supporting the government and the SWP has already committed itself in advance to returning Labour for another term. In the September 2000 issue of *Socialist Review*, SWP honcho Chris Harman spells it out: "most socialists will be supporting socialist candidates where possible in the next general election, but will still be voting Labour when there is no socialist standing." Meanwhile they alibi the treacherous role of the trade union bureaucracy. A front-page headline asks: "Why won't trade union leaders act?" (*Socialist Worker*, 16 September). But the union bureaucracy *did* act — predictably to get the oil flowing again.

The SWP seeks to make Labour elect-

able, but the interests of workers fighting privatisation, job losses and racist attacks are diametrically opposed to the election of Labour for another term. The SWP, along with most of the British fake-left groups, today makes reference to the workers struggles in 1978-79 — known as the "winter of discontent". After the massive strikebreaking of the then Labour government, the SWP, WP and the rest of the Labour-loyal left all called for a vote to Labour in the general election.

## Labour rules for British imperialism

Oil is not just another commodity; it is the source of more than 40 per cent of the world's energy. Access to oil is thus of vital strategic importance for modern capitalist states. Ever since the 1920s, control over the Persian Gulf oil fields has given British and American imperialism an enormous strategic advantage over rivals Germany and Japan. London, in alliance with Washington, massacred tens of thousands of Iraqis during the Gulf War in 1991 to secure US and British control of the region's oil supplies. One and a half million people, including half a million children have been killed through a starvation embargo. The imperialists continue the slaughter with almost daily bombing raids and sanctions, which prevent Iraqi oil from reaching the world market. If you want cheaper oil, break the blockade of Iraq! We say: Down with the starvation sanctions!

Shaken by the impact and depth of support for the fuel blockades, the Blair government is gearing up for a major confrontation. The *Financial Times* (16 September), mouthpiece for the City, editorialised: "Ministers should dig out the files from 1981 when Margaret Thatcher gave in to the miners. She was not prepared; coal stocks were low. But after the 1983 landslide, she was ready and a year later the miners were vanquished." The Spartacist League fought to extend that strike to rail and the docks and to shut down the country. But although the miners fought militantly and heroically against the forces of the capitalist state, they were betrayed by the treachery of the Labour leaders and the union bureaucracy, while miners leader Arthur Scargill remained tied to the Labour Party. We seek to instil the lessons of that strike into workers' consciousness so that the working class can go forward to victories.

The action of the petrol tanker drivers almost brought the country to a halt. With petrol pumps running dry, supermarket shelves emptied, banks ran low on cash and rail operators warned that workers would not be able to get to work. This explodes the myth of a "new economy" according to which "global" capitalism operates in virtual reality and goods are moved around the country by the click of a mouse. The capitalist economy is dependent on the labour of the proletariat and on fuel which is delivered by tanker drivers.

The working class is the only force which has the power, the social cohesion and the direct interest in defeating the attacks of the government. This must be linked to a struggle to overthrow the system of class exploitation, national oppression, racism and war, a system Labour upholds with a vengeance. Large numbers of workers who face plant closures, privatisation and racist attacks are itching to engage in some militant class struggle of their own. We seek to build a party committed to leading the proletariat in socialist revolution to expropriate the capitalist class, including the oil companies, and the construction of a planned socialist economy. ■



# Prague...

(Continued from page 12)

dency and the crackpot and ever-shifting "theorists" of the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI, aka Workers Power) and other renegades from Marxism (see "The Bankruptcy of 'New Class' Theories", *Spartacist* [English-language edition] no 55, Autumn 1999). According to the Cliffites, the triumph of counterrevolution in the former USSR was merely "a step sideways" from one form of capitalism to another. Their rabid Cold War anti-Sovietism was expressed at the time: "Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing" (*Socialist Worker*, 31 August 1991).

Today, the proletariat has been hurled back, worldwide, and the US imperialists unhindered by Soviet military might now ride roughshod over the planet, sometimes using the United Nations as a fig leaf, wrapping global military interventions in the cloak of "humanitarianism". Rival imperialisms, especially Germany and Japan, no longer constrained by Cold War anti-Soviet unity, are pursuing apace their own appetites for control of world markets and concomitantly projecting their military power. These conflicting national interests led to the breakup of the WTO talks in Seattle last year. These inter-imperialist rivalries outline future wars; with nuclear weapons, this threatens to extinguish life on the planet.

Thus the task of wresting power from the capitalist exploiters is more urgent now than ever. Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. Today the basic premises of authentic Marxism must be motivated against the false and prevalent misidentification of the collapse of Stalinism with a failure of communism. Stalinist rule was not communism but its grotesque perversion. The Stalinist bureaucracy, a parasitic caste resting atop the workers state much like a labour bureaucracy sits atop a trade union, arose in the Soviet workers state under conditions of economic backwardness and isolation due to the failure to extend the revolution to any of the advanced capitalist countries. The Stalinists claimed they were going to build "socialism in one country", an impossibility, as Leon Trotsky (and before him Marx and Engels) explained since socialism is necessarily international in scope. "Socialism in one country" was a justification for selling out revolutions internationally to appease world imperialism. As Trotsky brilliantly explained in *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936), the contradictions of Soviet society could not endure forever:



Giase/Seattle Post-Intelligencer

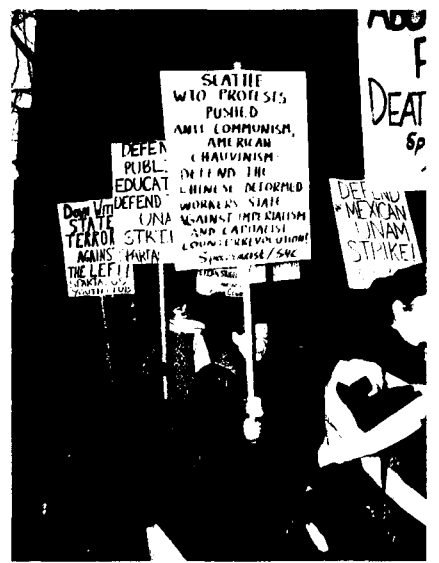
"Will the bureaucrat devour the workers' state, or will the working class clean up the bureaucrat?" That contradiction was resolved bitterly in the negative.

## Marxism v anarchism and "globalisation"

People who call themselves "anarchist" run the gamut from right-wing petty-bourgeois thugs who hate the working class and attack communists to subjective revolutionists who solidarise with the proletariat and genuinely seek the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. In the latter case, anarchism's appeal is a healthy rejection of the parliamentary reformism of the social democrats, the ex-Stalinists and the fake leftists who prop up and maintain the capitalist order. In fact, for opposing the reformist falsifiers of Marxism, Lenin himself was denounced as an anarchist. When the Bolshevik leader arrived in Russia in April 1917 and called for a workers revolution to bring down the capitalist Provisional Government, the Mensheviks denounced Lenin as "a candidate for...the throne of Bakunin!" (Sukhanov, *The Russian Revolution, 1917: A Personal Record* [1984]). (Bakunin was the anarchist leader in the First International.) As Lenin put it in *State and Revolution*: "The opportunists of modern Social-Democracy accepted the bourgeois political forms of a parliamentary, democratic state as the limit which cannot be overstepped; they broke their foreheads praying before this idol, denouncing as Anarchism every attempt to destroy these forms."

It is not surprising that there is something of a revival of anarchist beliefs, fertilised by the all-sided bourgeois triumphalism that "communism is dead". The Russian Revolution redefined the left internationally and its final undoing is having a similar impact in reverse.

Seattle WTO protests last autumn were politically dominated by AFL-CIO bureaucracy's chauvinism and anti-Communist China-bashing, with signs reading: "People first not China first." While fake lefts hailed "spirit of Seattle", Spartacists denounced circus of pro-imperialist protectionism.



Workers Vanguard

When the new workers state was in fact a beacon of liberation, and at the height of the international revolutionary upheavals spurred by the Russian Revolution, the best of the anarchist and syndicalist militants (eg, James P Cannon, Victor Serge, Alfred Rosmer) became dedicated and disciplined fighters for the communism of Lenin and Trotsky. Before his later break from Marxism, the anarchist Serge reviled the social democrats who led the workers to the imperialist carnage of World War One and he travelled to Soviet Russia to support the new workers state. In the course of struggles against counterrevolutionary

idealism which appeals to the alleged innate goodness of even the most rapacious imperialists to serve humanity. The League of the Just (which changed its name to the Communist League around the time Karl Marx joined it in 1847) had as its main slogan "All men are brothers." Observing that there were some men whose brother he was not and had no desire to be, Marx convinced his comrades to change the slogan to "Workers of all countries, unite!"

Historically, anarchism has proven to be a class-collaborationist obstacle to the liberation of the oppressed. Uniting with the counterrevolutionary White armies,



David Ahmed

London, May Day: Blair Labour government unleashed riot police on protesters who defaced symbols of British imperialism, arresting nearly 100. Drop the charges now!

revanchists (which some anarchists criminally supported) Serge joined the Bolshevik Party and wrote to his French anarchist friends (*La Vie ouvrière*, 21 March 1922) motivating communism against anarchism:

"What is the Communist Party in a time of revolution? It is the revolutionary elite, powerfully organised, disciplined, obeying a consistent direction, marching towards a single clearly defined goal along the paths traced for it by a scientific doctrine. Being such a force, the party is the product of the necessity, that is the laws of history itself. That revolutionary elite which in a time of violence remains unorganised, undisciplined, without consistent direction and open to variable or contradictory impulses, is heading for suicide. No view at odds with this conclusion is possible."

—reprinted in *The Serge-Trotsky Papers*, Cotterill, ed (1994)

The diffuse popularity of "anarchism" among youth today is itself a reflection of the retrogression in political consciousness in the new political period which began with the colossal defeat of capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR and Eastern Europe. At bottom anarchism is a form of radical democratic

some anarchists hailed the Kronstadt uprising against the Russian Revolution and Kronstadt remains an anti-communist touchstone for anarchists today. During the Spanish Civil War, anarchists became ministers in the popular-front government which disarmed and repressed the armed workers' struggle against capitalism, opening the road to decades of Franco's dictatorship.

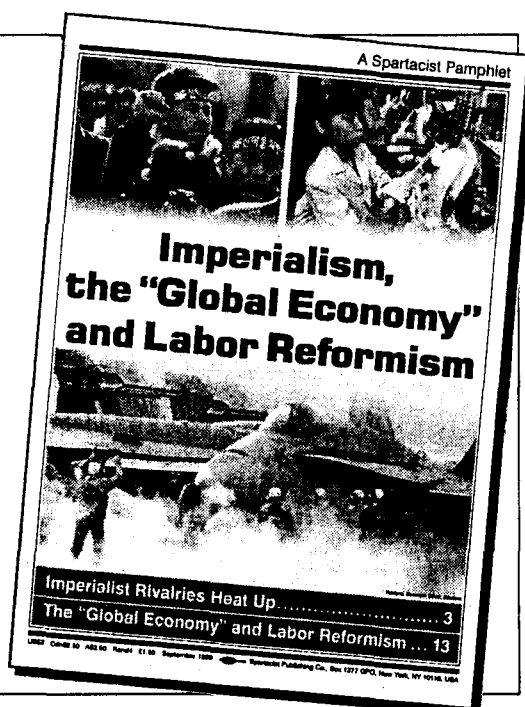
Today the fundamental differences between revolutionary Marxism and anarchist liberal idealism can also be seen in the "globalisation" protests. The notion that large capitalist corporations have today transcended the nation-state system and now rule the world through institutions like the IMF and WTO is false to the core. "Globalisation" is a present-day version of the notion of "ultra-imperialism" put forward by the German Social Democrat Karl Kautsky, who argued that capitalists in different countries can resolve their conflicts of interests through peaceful (even democratic) means. As we pointed out in our pamphlet *Imperialism, the "Global Economy" and Labor Reformism*: "So-called multinational or transnational firms do

continued on page 10

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# Prague...

(Continued from page 9)

not operate above or independently of the nation-state system. Rather they are vitally dependent on their own bourgeois national states to *protect* their investments abroad from popular opposition and rival capitalist states. Hence, imperialist states must maintain strong military forces and a corresponding domestic industrial base."

Many organisations supporting the Prague mobilisation call for "democratic control" over the IMF or World Bank in order to better the conditions for people in the "Global South" (Asia, Africa and Latin America). The German PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism) argues that the work of the IMF and World Bank must become more transparent and for a genuinely international United Nations. We've called these appeals for action on behalf of the workers and the oppressed by their direct imperialist overlords and oppressors "human rights imperialism". Not only absurd, these appeals to imperialism to somehow become responsible and humane are reactionary because they foster deadly illusions that the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in its "democratic" trappings can somehow be the agent for social change in the interests of the workers and the oppressed. This lie binds the exploited to their exploiters and charts a dead-end road for social struggle.

The notion that a "global" United Nations could act in the interests of humanity is a lie which masks the fundamental economic mechanisms of capitalist imperialism. Imperialism is not a policy based on "bad ideas" but is integral to the workings of a system based on private property, the extraction of profit, and the necessity for capitalism to conquer new markets. As Lenin explained regarding the UN's predecessor, the League of Nations: "It became plain that the League of Nations was non-existent, that the alliance of the capitalist powers is sheer fraud, and that in actual fact it is an alliance of robbers, each trying to snatch something from the others.... Private property is robbery, and a state based on private property is a state of robbers, who are fighting for a share of the spoils" ("Speech to Chairmen of the Executive Committees", 15 October 1920).

The UN's first intervention (1950-53) was a "police action" against the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states, slaughtering up to four million Koreans. A decade later, the murderous military intervention in the ex-Belgian Congo was led under UN auspices and included the killing of left-nationalist Patrice Lumumba.

At the left end of the anarchist spectrum appears an article on the anarchist "A-Infos web site" which stands out among builders of the Prague demonstration for its sharp opposition to begging the class enemy to act morally and "cancel the Third World debt". They call to smash the IMF and World Bank and propose: "Direct demands will be placed not on the appeasers and Co., but on workers organizations and their reformist leaderships to scrap the IMF-World Bank and to cancel the trillion-dollar debt — NOW!" But the world won't be transformed through slogans raised at one big demo or even one big strike, and the reformist leaderships they call on support capitalist imperialism. How then do we get from capitalism to socialism? That's the question to which anarchism has no response.

Marxist theory and the model of Lenin's Bolsheviks leading the working class to state power in the October 1917

Russian Revolution is the only revolutionary solution. The workers can not take hold of the machinery of the capitalist state and "reform" it in the interests of the oppressed. They must fight for power, smashing the capitalist state and creating a workers state — a dictatorship of the proletariat — which will put down the counterrevolutionary resistance by the former capitalist rulers. Lenin's Bolsheviks cancelled the debt amassed by the tsar and the Russian bourgeoisie by taking power and refusing to pay it. This was part of the Bolsheviks' revolutionary internationalist perspective — against appeasement of imperialism, they fought to extend the Russian October to world socialist revolution. They understood that socialism could not be built in one country.

Against the reactionary aspects of the idealism preached by traditional anarchists like Proudhon and echoed today by petty-bourgeois "Greens" that workers should not aspire to wealth but live a spartan communal existence, we Marxists fight for the elimination of scarcity, for a society where workers enjoy the fruits of their labour which today are expropriated by the capitalists. Telling workers to "tighten their belts" is in fact the programme of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank through starvation "austerity" policies inflicted on the masses of the "Third World". In the name of "defending the environ-



Roma (Gypsy) children in Slovakia. Capitalist counterrevolution has unleashed pogromist terror against oppressed minorities and immigrants.

ment" the Green parties now in the governing coalitions in Germany and France are even more aggressive in imposing capitalist "austerity" than the social democrats. In the face of recent mass protests against extortionate fuel prices, the French Greens opposed the concession by the Socialist prime minister to reduce the tax on fuel by 15 per cent.

In contrast to the anarchist/green impulse to hold back technological advancement and drive down levels of consumption, we Marxists side with Big Bill Haywood, a leader of the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World aka the "Wobblies"). When reproached by a comrade for smoking a good cigar, he replied: "Nothing is too good for the proletariat!" Marxists recognise that the history of human progress has been a struggle to master the forces of nature. The development of agriculture and domestication of animals was a successful incursion into the "natural ecology" of the planet which created a social surplus, opening a way forward from the brief and brutal struggle for daily survival in early human society. To extend to the impoverished masses of the "Third World" all the things Western petty-bourgeois leftists take for granted — electricity, schools, clean drinking water on tap, medicine, public transport, computers — will require a huge leap in industrial and technological capacity.

That leap requires a victorious international revolution led by a conscious revolutionary vanguard to render the working class conscious of its mission and to break it from the grip of capitalism's reformist and pseudo-revolutionary lackeys.

It is precisely the loyal service of bourgeois-nationalist "Greens" to the ruling class that leads them to ignore the greatest ecological disasters on the planet. Thus Joshka Fischer, the "Green" Foreign Minister for the Fourth Reich, vociferously backed bombing Serbia. The Balkans are now riddled with depleted uranium shells; the poisoned water and destruction of modern industrial and social infrastructure mean the true death toll of the Balkans War will be tallied for years to come. With "Greens" like this, who needs Dr Strangelove, IG Farben and Dow Chemical Company?

Likewise the 1991 Gulf War against Iraq has destroyed one of the most advanced societies in the region. Ten years ago, the child mortality rate in Iraq was among the world's lowest and today it is highest; a population whose overwhelming majority was literate and had access to medical care now is literally being starved to death by the ongoing United Nations blockade. So-called "leftists" who opposed the devastating air war against Iraq counterposed UN sanctions as a "humanitarian" alternative. The ICL opposed sanctions as *an act of war*



## Тов. Ленин ОЧИЩАЕТ ЗЕМЛЮ ОТ НЕЧИСТИ.

V Deni and M Chremnykh

Soviet cartoon after Bolshevik Revolution shows Lenin sweeping away kings, priests, capitalists.

the defence of the victims of imperialist war. The orgy of social-chauvinism of ostensible leftists is a direct reflection of their support to the European governments prosecuting the Balkans War. Two years earlier, the British Socialist Workers Party (SWP) campaigned for and declared itself "over the moon" for the election of Tony Blair who was the biggest NATO hawk in Europe. While posturing to the left in the Balkans War against the craven "poor little Kosovo" crowd, the SWP gave their game away in their fulsome support to "New" Labour's Tony Benn, whose opposition to the war was steeped in "Little England" chauvinist anti-Americanism. To argue that the war should be run directly by Europe's imperialist pigs rather than Americans is hardly an anti-war movement!

At the right end of this nationalist spectrum are the fascists. Last year, German Nazis marched against the Balkans War with slogans like "No German blood for foreign interests!" The nationalist anti-Americanism which the European "anti-globalisation" movement deeply imbibes shades over to outright fascism. Czech fascist organisations plan to stage a provocation for their genocidal programme in Prague on 23 September.

In the crucible of the first major war in Europe in fifty years, the fake "Trotskyists" proved themselves to be decomposition products of the "death of communism". Today they jockey for position to wrest control of the "anti-globalisation movement". Only a fool could trust that groups which helped bring the present European capitalist governments to power can now fight these governments, their banks and institutions in the interests of the oppressed. Far from a Marxist alternative to anarchism, the pseudo-Trotskyists are active opponents of revolutionary Marxism embodied in the programme and practices of the ICL.

### The material basis for opportunism and national chauvinism

Bourgeois ideology — eg nationalism, patriotism, racism and religion — penetrates the working class centrally through the agency of the "labour lieutenants of the capitalist class", the parasitic trade union bureaucracies based on a privileged upper strata of the working class. If not replaced by revolutionary leadership, these reformists render the working class all but defenceless against capitalist attacks and allow the organisations of the proletariat to be destroyed or rendered impotent by tying the unions increasingly to the capitalist state. In his

1916 work, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin explained:

"The receipt of high monopoly profits by the capitalists in one of the branches of industry, in one of the numerous countries, etc., makes it economically possible for them to bribe certain sections of the workers, and for a time a fairly considerable minority of them, and win them to the side of the bourgeoisie of a given industry or a given nation against all the others. The intensification of antagonisms between imperialist nations for the division of the world increases this urge. And so there is created a bond between imperialism and opportunism.... The most dangerous of all in this respect are those (like the Menshevik, Martov) who do not wish to understand that the fight against imperialism is a sham and humbug unless it is inseparably bound up with the fight against opportunism."

The national chauvinism and craven capitulation of the organisers of a movement against "globalisation" are abundantly evident. Thus trade union organisers of the Seattle protest against the WTO united with far-right anti-communist forces denouncing "slave labour" in the Chinese and Vietnamese deformed workers states. Chinese steel was dumped in the harbour and signs proclaimed, "People First, Not China First". Illustrating why Trotsky described the American labour bureaucracy as Wall Street's ideal tool for imperialist domination of Latin



Workers Hammer

ICL called for military defence of Serbia against NATO imperialism during 1999 Balkans War.

In France, José Bové leads masses in protest against McDonald's and the incursions of American fast food on the French palate. Our interest is organising the horribly underpaid workforces in these fast food chains, whatever their national ownership or "cuisine". Moreover, if cultural or culinary preferences are synonymous with "imperialism", then by the dim lights of Bové we better worry about the Italians, because people love pizza and it is now marketed everywhere from the Aleutian Islands to the

divisions. In recent years this has reached a fever pitch in an anti-immigrant frenzy. This threatens the unity and integrity of the proletariat as a class to resist attacks by the capitalists and their state. As noted in the ICL declaration of principles (*Spartacist*, [English-language edition] no 54, Spring 1998):

"Modern capitalism, i.e., imperialism, reaching into all areas of the planet, in the course of the class struggle and as economic need demands, brings into the proletariat at its bottom new sources of cheaper labor, principally immigrants from poorer and less-developed regions of the world — workers with few rights who are deemed more disposable in times of economic contraction. Thus capitalism in ongoing fashion creates different strata among the workers, while simultaneously amalgamating the workers of different lands."

In the Schengen agreement, European powers closed their borders to immigrants, many of whom fled the counter-revolutionary destruction of Eastern Europe. The racist anti-immigrant policies of today's ruling social democrats echo "the boat is full" demagoguery of the Nazis and indeed fuel fascist terror. Meanwhile the social-democratic popular-front governments across Europe (coalition governments involving reformist workers parties and bourgeois parties) dangerously lull the workers with parliamentary illusions that the social democrats whose own policies pave the road for the fascists will "ban" the fascists. Such bans historically serve only to refurbish the image of the very bourgeoisie which resorts to fascism when its rule is threatened. Historically such bans against "extremists" have been used against the left, not the right. In Germany in the immediate post-war period, a small neo-

Nazi party was banned in 1952 to cosmetically touch up the "democratic" credentials of the heirs of the Third Reich rebuilding capitalist Germany under American imperialist auspices. The real purpose was to "justify" a constitutional ban of the German Communist Party in 1956. We demand: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No reliance on the bourgeois state! For trade union/minority mobilisations to stop the fascists!

### The party is the instrument for socialist revolution

The Leninist party is the instrument for bringing revolutionary consciousness to the proletariat, for organising proletarian struggles and guiding them to victorious consolidation in a socialist revolution. A revolutionary party must fight every instance of social injustice and all manifestations of oppression. Central to our task is combatting every instance of women's oppression and "all the old crap" which has come back with religious obscurantism, attacks on abortion rights and anti-gay bigotry. Welding the audacity of the youth to the social power of the proletariat is crucial to the fight for a new socialist society.

Our aim is a revolutionary leadership whose cadre must be tested and trained in the class struggle. The road forward is for the presently small forces adhering to the programme of Lenin and Trotsky to forge parties with the experience, revolutionary will and authority among the masses to lead successful proletarian revolutions. Nothing less than a reforged Trotskyist Fourth International will suffice for the task of leading the workers and oppressed to the victory of world socialism. We have no illusions that this will be an easy road, and we recognise that the possession of the technology of nuclear holocaust by an irrational and genocidal ruling class foreshortens the possibilities: there is not a lot of time.

We are guided by the programme and practices of authentic communism. As Trotsky wrote in "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International" (1938):

"To face reality squarely; not to seek the line of least resistance; to call things by their right names; to speak the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter it may be; not to fear obstacles; to be true in little things as in big ones; to base one's program on the logic of the class struggle; to be bold when the hour for action arrives — these are the rules of the Fourth International."

Join the International Communist League! ■



Reuters

South Korean workers protest against austerity measures dictated by IMF. Only international workers revolution can put an end to imperialist exploitation and oppression.

America, American trade union tops campaigned to ban Mexican truck drivers from work in the US. Not for nothing, the AFL-CIO is popularly known throughout Latin America as the "AFL-CIA". Incredibly, the Italian Rifondazione Comunista and the pseudo-Trotskyist *Proposta* grouping uphold the AFL-CIA's "leadership" as a model for the European workers to emulate (see *Proposta* no 27, January 2000)!

Amazon. Or was it "imperialism" when a particular German device, namely the printing press, conquered the world and made mass literacy possible?!

More seriously, the national chauvinism and opportunism of the labour tops and fake left poison class consciousness and solidarity among workers by fomenting religious, national and ethnic

Before Prague, the British SWP laboured mightily to promote a Labourite trade union demonstration in defence of saving British jobs at the Rover car plant. This demonstration was a sea of Union Jacks and virulent anti-German chauvinism pitting British workers against Germans and tying the former to the British ruling class. Slogans like "Britain won two world wars, let's win the third" give a flavour of the poison. After Rover, the SWP buried itself in campaigning for Ken Livingstone for mayor of London, a Labourite politician who was a vociferous proponent of imperialist terror against Serbia and unbridled police force at home. When anarchist protesters irreverently defaced the symbols of British imperialism in a May Day protest in London, the SWP stayed away (bar a token presence) for fear of embarrassing their candidate for London mayor, "Red" Ken Livingstone. Livingstone endorsed police repression of the May Day protesters, several of whom still languish in jail or face prosecution.

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# WORKERS HAMMER

ICL statement for Prague protest against IMF, World Bank

## Smash imperialist exploitation through world socialist revolution!

We print below a 16 September International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) statement distributed at the recent protests in Prague against the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) summit. State security forces, in league with Scotland Yard and the FBI, blocked the entrance of many would-be protesters into the Czech Republic. Even two days before the 26 September demonstration, some 11,000 cops were on patrol. These draconian measures took place under a virtual blackout of news by the bourgeois press. A massive display of police power — some 12,800 armed cops — met protesters on the streets of the city on 26 and 27 September. Demonstrators were attacked with police batons, water cannon and pepper gas. At least 859 were arrested and have been held without legal recourse, under conditions of extreme brutality and in some cases outright torture (see ICL protest letter on page 2).

So much for the supposed “democracy” ushered in by the “velvet revolution” which ripped Czechoslovakia apart and opened the floodgates to capitalist exploitation and misery! Against the pseudo-Trotskyists who hailed the capitalist counterrevolution at the time and continue to preach faith in the good offices of the social-democratic and

**Unemployed and homeless line up at soup kitchen in Berlin. Capitalist counter-revolution has brought misery to working people of Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union, increased imperialist exploitation internationally.**



popular-front governments now administering capitalism (eg vicious attacks on the working masses and oppressed) throughout much of Europe, comrades of the ICL were able to intervene in Prague with our revolutionary programme to fight imperialist exploitation through the struggle for proletarian revolution.

“Turn Prague into Seattle”? Were it not for the capitalist counterrevolution which destroyed Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union a decade ago, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund would not be meeting in Prague! The “velvet revolution” ripped Czechoslovakia apart and now the working people, women and national and ethnic minorities suffer the raw exploitation, impoverishment and depredations of the capitalist market. As for the illusions of “freedom”, today police forces specially trained by the American FBI and backed up by NATO threaten labour and leftist demonstrations with a brutal enforcement of “law and order” for the imperialist bankers.

For all the talk about concern for the toiling masses, the official call for a “global day of action” in Prague says nothing about the capitalist shock treatment which has led to a plunge in life expectancy and returned starvation to Russia, rolled back women’s right to abortion across Eastern Europe, and given rise to a murderous brown plague of fascist terror directed especially against immigrants and Roma (Gypsies). Last year’s Balkans War wreaked worse devastation on Serbia than Hitler’s Nazis. The resulting economic, social and ecological disaster in the Balkans also does not merit mention in the official

manifesto for Prague. Why is this? Because ostensible leftists organising this year’s “anti-globalisation” protest are mainly the very same people who supported the imperialist war against Serbia in the name of “humanitarian” concern for the Kosovar Albanians. They are also the same “leftists” who joined with their own capitalist rulers in fighting for the destruction of the Soviet Union and the Eastern European deformed workers states and who supported the election of the bloody cabal of fake “socialist”, ex-“communist”, and “Labour” leaders presently ruling capitalist Europe.

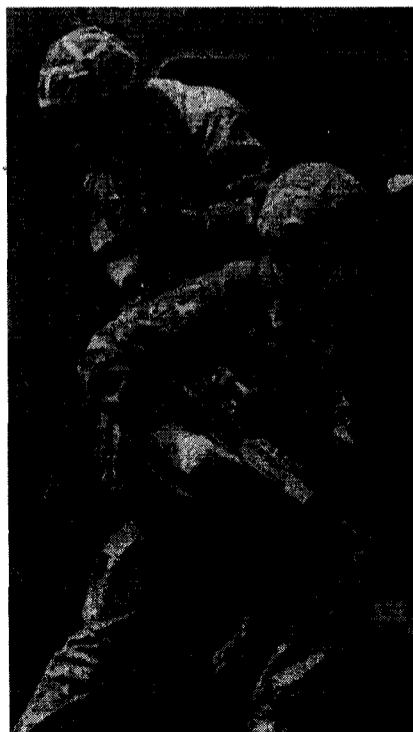
We comrades of the International Communist League (ICL) are proud to fight for the authentic communism of Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolsheviks. Our perspective is proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist. We recognise that the fundamental conflict in society is the struggle by labour against capital. Because of its central role in production, the proletariat has the social power to bring down the capitalist exploiters and their whole system of class exploitation, racial, sexual and national oppression and imperialist war. The proletariat has the power and the class interest to create a society — initially a workers state — based on collectivised property and a rational, planned international economy, leading to a classless, communist society and the withering away of the state. To achieve this goal requires the construction of an international Leninist-Trotskyist egalitarian party. We struggle to become the party fit to lead international socialist revolutions.

Integral to our fight is holding on to proletarian conquests already wrested from the capitalist class. That is why we Trotskyists fought for the unconditional

military defence of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of Eastern Europe against imperialist attack and capitalist restoration. With every resource at our disposal we fought in 1989-90 in the DDR (East Germany) to lead a workers political revolution, maintaining the collectivised property forms and replacing the Stalinist misleaders with the rule of workers councils. This could have been the beacon for resistance against capitalist restoration across Eastern Europe and for proletarian socialist revolution in the West. The ICL again fought to rouse the Soviet workers to preserve and extend the gains of the 1917 Russian Revolution which had been grossly betrayed by decades of Stalinist misrule but not overthrown until 1991-92. Today the fate of the Chinese deformed workers state and the lives of billions of working people in China, across Asia and around the world hang in the balance. We fight for the unconditional military defence of the Chinese workers state against renewed imperialist military machinations and economic encroachments. The gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution are threatened by the Chinese Stalinists’ market economic “reforms”, but these attacks have also engendered significant proletarian revolt. A Trotskyist party is necessary to lead the proletariat to victory through a workers political revolution to preserve and extend the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution.

The devastating and worldwide consequences of capitalist counterrevolution also destroy the anti-Marxist theories of “state capitalism”, espoused by the late Tony Cliff’s International Socialist Ten-

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**British Army in Macedonia. All imperialist troops out of the Balkans now!**