



Socialist Alliance backs Labour, again

Labour's racist campaign targets all workers

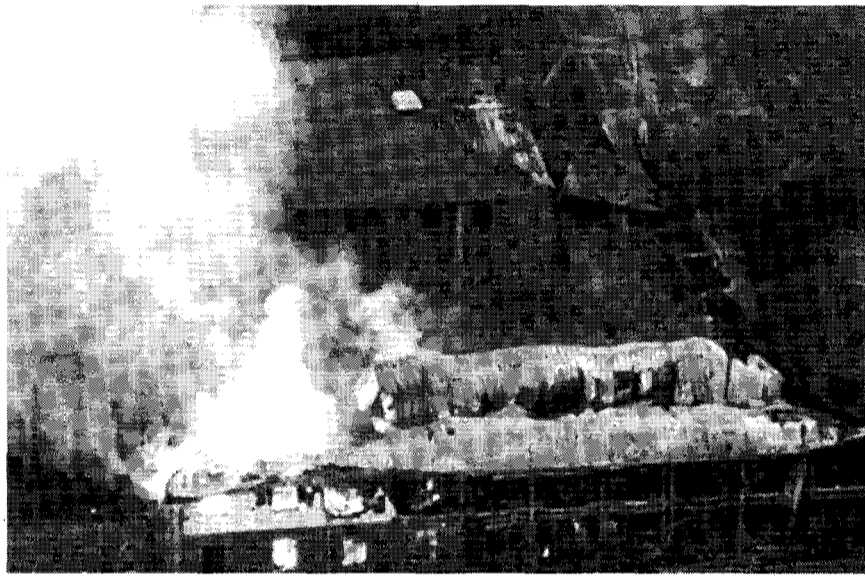
Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Le Pen's strong showing in the French presidential elections was dramatic confirmation of a shift to the right in European politics, also seen in the election of right-wing governments in Italy, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Portugal. This is accompanied by a polarisation at the base of French society, evident in the huge, angry protests against Le Pen that erupted throughout the country. With the Socialist Party and Communist Party out of the running because their vote collapsed, practically the entire left did their bit to channel the anger in the streets into votes for Chirac, "against" Le Pen. As our comrades in the Ligue trotskyste de France pointed out, this is like being asked to "choose" between cholera and the plague. It was Lionel Jospin's popular-front government that paved the way for Le Pen's success in the first round.

Labour seized the opportunity to assert itself front-runner among European governments trying to compete with the far right in racist measures. In the May local elections, Home Secretary Blunkett gave a provocatively racist speech about immigrants "swamping" state schools, as a justification for segregating them out of these schools, in addition to announcing new detention camps

for asylum seekers in backward rural shires. Minister for Europe Peter Hain outrageously blamed British Asians for their supposed "separatism". Upon re-election, Chirac agreed to close down the Sangatte refugee centre, something Labour have demanded for months. Meanwhile Blair and Spain's Premier Aznar have agreed that further tightening the frontiers of racist "Fortress Europe" and targeting immigrants is a priority for the EU at their summit in Seville.

Labour's racist frenzy benefited the fascist British National Party (BNP), which won three seats in Burnley and got 27 per cent of the vote in Oldham. Grotesquely, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the dominant force in the Socialist Alliance, leapt to the side of the racist Labour government. Their "Don't vote Nazi" campaign called for votes for *any* party other than the BNP. An Anti Nazi League (ANL) leaflet (22 April) said: "if you have a Nazi candidate in your ward then you must vote — for any other party — against the BNP!" For the SWP, drumming up votes for Labour is hardly news — never in its entire history has it opposed a vote for Labour. The ANL's slogan "Don't vote Nazi" has always meant vote Labour. But just as the French left embraced



February 14, 2002: Fire at Yarl's Wood "detention centre" for refugees. Shut down Labour's racist concentration camps!

Chirac, so the SWP lurched further to the right, maintaining its support to Labour and opening the door to votes for overtly bourgeois parties, which could include the Tories. We say: Down with Labour's racist anti-immigrant witch hunt! In the general election, we said: "No vote to Labour, imperialist butchers!" and no vote to the Socialist Alliance, who helped elect Labour. In opposition to the "war on terrorism" we call for class struggle against British capitalism and its Labour government!

Labour in government has relentlessly attacked immigrants. Their latest anti-immigrant legislation hasn't been passed yet, but already there's another bill in the making, under which Royal Navy warships would patrol the Mediterranean to intercept (or sink) boats carrying immigrants; aid to developing countries would be withheld unless they accept the deportees. Just as people from Kosovo topped the list of refugees during the Balkans War, today the highest number comes from Afghanistan. In the past decade, we have noted that it would not require fascism to come to power in Western Europe to bring about mass deportations of immigrants. Blair is planning "bulk" removals of Afghan immigrants by the RAF to Baghram air base, which is occupied by British troops. British and all imperialist troops out of Afghanistan! No deportations!

"War on terrorism" fuels attacks on Muslim women

The domestic reflection of the "war on terrorism" has been vastly increased state repression, codified in "anti-terrorism" legislation, much of which pre-

dates September 11. Labour has spearheaded a racist witch hunt, particularly against Muslims, leading to attacks against all minorities. In early June Mohammed Ashraf collapsed and died following an attack on worshippers at his mosque in Wales by a racist gang. According to a Europe-wide study of hate crimes since September 11 conducted by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, there are more racist attacks on Muslims in Britain than in any other European country, and the vast majority are against women wearing the veil (*hijab*). It cites a *Guardian* (8 December 2001) report that from September 11 until the end of December:

"there had been around 300 assaults on Muslims in Britain, and most of the victims were women. These include verbal abuse, physical assault and even rape. For example, Muslim women have been 'spat at, punched, kicked, called names, hit with umbrellas at bus stops, and pelted with eggs and fruit. They have received dog excrement and fireworks through their letterboxes and bricks through their windows.' Similarly, a woman attacked a 3-year-old boy, shopping with his mother, with pepper spray. His mother was wearing the hijab."

Within days of September 11, several mosques had been attacked; an Afghan taxi driver in London was paralysed by racist thugs.

Across Europe, the onset of recession has sharply reduced the demand for labour and fuelled the shift to the right. Blair's "war on terrorism" is a pretext for a stepped-up offensive against the working class as a whole. It particularly targets immigrant labour, as well as

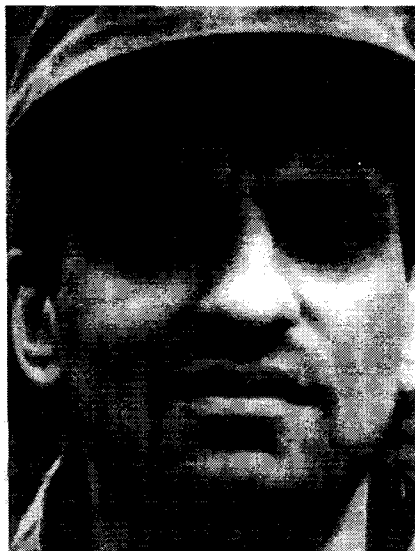
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London, 16 March: Rail workers join postal workers demonstration against privatisation, massive job losses.

Workers Hammer

Satpal Ram free!



FRFI

Unbowed in his militant opposition to racist injustice, Satpal Ram walked free from Blantyre House prison on 18 June, after 16 years of prison hell. During his imprisonment he was moved 72 times in an attempt by the state, ruled by Labour for the past five years, to crush his defiance of their system of racist oppression. Satpal was jailed for murder in 1987 for defending himself against a potentially fatal attack by a gang of racists in an Indian restaurant in Birmingham.

On his release, Satpal said: "I had to endure countless indignities and was put through a process where I was systematically abused. I have lost members of my family. I have lost my mother and father and nobody can ever compensate for 16 years behind bars."

Satpal Ram is a living condemnation of the British capitalist state and the

racist injustice of its courts. There can be no justice for blacks and Asians nor working people under this racist capitalist system. The police, military, cops, courts and prisons form the core of the state to maintain the power and property rights of the ruling class over the working class and oppressed. Winston Silcott has also been in jail since 1986 for a murder he did not commit. Freedom now for Winston Silcott and all victims of racist repression! ■

France: Down with anti-sex censorship!

Earlier this spring, the headmaster of the Henry IV high school in Paris banned the student publication *Ravallac* after it ran nude photos of high school youth on its cover. The magazine, named for the assassin of the school's royal namesake, has featured articles on homosexuality, pornography, sex and prostitution. The attack on the pro-sex publication takes place in the context of a major rightward shift in French bourgeois politics, exemplified by the second-round presidential election in May that pitted the racist right-wing incumbent, Jacques Chirac, against outright fascist Jean-Marie Le Pen. The anti-immigrant, anti-labour policies of the Socialist Party-led "left" coalition government paved the way for this shift. We publish below the translation of the 26 May statement by the Comité de défense sociale (CDDS), a legal and social defence organisation in political solidarity with the Ligue trotskyste de France, section of the ICL, protesting this anti-sex censorship and the intrusion of the state into private life.

demand the *immediate lifting of the ban on Ravallac! Down with the witch hunt against the students!*

The editors of *Ravallac* are not only under attack by the administration of the school and risk expulsion, they are also facing physical aggression at the hands of the fascists of French Action! These youth must be defended against this royalist rabble!

As Marxists, we oppose attempts by the bourgeois state and its institutions to interfere in all aspects of life. We say: *Down with censorship!* We oppose the school administration deciding what youth can publish and discuss! Cops, priests, headmasters: Out of the bedrooms and the classrooms!

The repression against *Ravallac* shows the total hypocrisy of bourgeois "morality", where students are repressed because of some innocent nudes in a photo; go to the nearby kiosk and there you'll find some *hard* stuff; and if you want some really bloody nakedness go to see the portraits of Jesus in the church at the corner. Meanwhile, the capitalists present as the height of "democracy" the "choice" between a crook and a fascist! They talk about the "protection of youth" while with their racist security campaign, from both the right and the "left", they jail more and more youth, mainly of Maghrebian [North African] origin, in prisons where everyone knows that what rules is rape.

We fight for a socialist society which will be free from exploitation and oppression, and free of this kind of regimentation of youth and the grotesque interference by the state into the private lives of individuals.

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 783, 14 June 2002.



Down with the monarchy and the Union Jack!

Twenty-five years ago we published an article in Workers Vanguard describing the Silver Jubilee as a carnival of reaction. We reprint here extracts which illustrate the Labour Party's national chauvinism and sycophantic crawling to the Queen and the Union Jack.



LENIN

TROTSKY

The monarchy performs important functions for the British ruling class. First of all,

it serves an ideological purpose as a popular focus for national chauvinism and reaction. British ideologists argue that the Queen is a symbol of an advanced civilization, of general social achievement and—especially—of class harmony. The bourgeois economic order replaced the feudal one, they say, but look how well we retain our continuity with the past! The English social revolution, which came early and was somewhat truncated, makes for a pretty, if inapplicable, myth of class peace: the feudal aristocracy and the bourgeoisie which supplanted it reached accord and became the Establishment, embodied in the monarchy, the House of Lords and the Established Church.

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

Though the monarchy is a constant anti-democratic outrage and potential military focus for reaction, the institution goes on unimpeded by the British fake-lefts. The primary responsibility lies with the Labour Party, which has a programmatic election plank to end the monarchy but has supported this reactionary institution as part of its more general commitment to capitalism. As early as 1927 former Labour Prime Minister McDonald allayed any apprehensions about Labour's "democratic" pretensions when he accepted an invitation to the royal court and donned the traditional blue and gold-braid costume of the peerage....

For Marxists, jubilation awaits the day when the proletariat, led by its vanguard party, uproots the bourgeoisie and its entire rotten retinue of feudal remnants. The instruments and symbols of repressive imperialist power have no place outside the museums. In one of the world's first modern capitalist societies, even minimal demands of the bourgeois revolution await the revolutionary proletarian victory: Down with the Monarchy! Down with the House of Lords! Down with the Established Church!

— *Workers Vanguard* no 164, 1 July 1977

* * *

Why has the headmaster of Henry IV secondary school suspended the magazine *Ravallac*? Very simply because it talks about sex! The students at the prestigious Parisian high school Henry IV published the second issue of their journal *Ravallac* with the title: "Some Ass, Some Ass, Some Ass". On the cover of this issue, men and women pose nude. In fact, these youth are part of the editorial board of the journal. Immediately after the appearance of this issue, the headmaster suspended the publication in the name of the "protection of youth". What hypocrisy! The truth is that in Catholic France, sex can't be read about or discussed! We

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PRODUCTION MANAGER: Kate Kelsey
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Alice Ableman

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French Trotskyists on legislative elections:

Why we didn't call for a vote to Lutte ouvrière

The following article is reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 782, 31 May 2002, and was written before the French legislative elections.

MAY 27—Jacques Chirac was re-elected president of France earlier this month with the support of virtually the entire left, who rallied behind this open rightist as a supposed champion of “Republican values” against fascist

LE BOLCHEVIK

National Front candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen. Taking a page from Le Pen's book, Chirac's first order of business was to declare that his top priority will be fighting “crime”, ratcheting up racist cop terror in largely black and North African ghettos. His new interior minister, Nicolas Sarkozy, underlined the point by accompanying a contingent of riot cops on a night-time show of force in minority and working-class neighbourhoods outside Paris. Meanwhile, the popular-front coalition of the Socialist Party (PS), the Communist Party (PCF) and the bourgeois Greens, which until a few weeks ago was the government, complains that Chirac is taking credit for “security” measures, such as the “Vigipirate” campaign of racist cop terror, that they introduced when they were in power.

France today offers a striking demonstration of the reality of bourgeois “democracy”, an electoral shell game in which the oppressed simply get to choose which overseer will wield the whip. In the first round of the presidential elections, voters so decisively repudiated the PS-led coalition government that the Socialist prime minister Lionel Jospin did not even make it to the second round and promptly retired from politics. Now voters are being asked in next month's legislative elections to “choose” whether it will be the right or the “left” that carries out racist attacks and anti-working-class austerity.

The absolute independence of the working class from the capitalist class and its parties is the necessary starting point for unleashing class struggle against the bourgeois order. We give no electoral support to the parties of the popular front, a class-collaborationist alliance that ties the workers to their class enemy, derails their struggles and poisons their class consciousness. For years, the capitalist popular-front government used terror against immigrants and other minorities to deflect anger over high unemployment and attacks on social programmes. Mass deportations and Vigipirate put wind in the sails of the fascists.

The prize for being the most lying cynics on the French left must be awarded to the Pabloites of the Ligue communiste révolutionnaire (LCR). After mobilising their forces to get out the vote for Chirac, the LCR and its youth group, the Jeunesse communiste révolutionnaire, now pretend to be the

Down with racist Vigipirate!

best builders of a “social third round” against Chirac and even deny they voted for him. The audacity of their lies is in direct proportion to their craven capitulation to the reactionary national unity with Chirac, whom George Bush himself calls his “best friend” in the “war against terrorism”. We will not let anyone forget the LCR's class treason. Disgust with the LCR's line has evidently caused enough turmoil that even its newspaper *Rouge* (23 May) felt compelled to print an outraged letter

letter to LO: “If, in its campaign, LO came out clearly against Vigipirate and the cop terror, we would envision calling for voting for LO, without muting our criticisms of their program” (*Workers Vanguard* no 778, 5 April).

Under the pressure of events, LO has zigzagged sharply. With mass protests sweeping France following Le Pen's first-round electoral success, LO stood up to considerable pressure—even vilification—for its refusal to join the chorus calling for a vote to Chirac in the



Le Bolchévik

LTF banner at Paris May Day march reads: “For class struggle against the capitalist system! Down with unity with Chirac! For a revolutionary multiethnic workers party!”

from a reader who decries the “serious political error which raises doubts about the LCR's capacities to evaluate a situation and make historic decisions.... I expect that the LCR will soon re-examine this episode and draw the lessons.” The LCR is positively oozing with goo about building “a new force” with a ten-point programme which doesn't even mention the working class, much less the need for a socialist revolution. Their “new force” is the old garbage of social democrats who deceive the workers with the lie that “democracy” can be achieved through reforms. Yet as plant closings and police repression in the *banlieues* [working-class and minority suburbs] reveal, their “democracy” is a dictatorship of the capitalist ruling class.

Lutte ouvrière (LO), a group claiming to be Trotskyist, sought during the presidential elections to draw a crude class line against the popular front by refusing to call for a vote to Jospin. However, LO's stated opposition to the government was belied by its refusal to oppose Vigipirate and by its explicit support to reactionary cop mobilisations last autumn. Our comrades of the Ligue trotskyste de France (LTF) refused to give LO even the most critical support, while declaring in an open

second round. After Chirac's re-election, LO continued briefly to strike a left posture, stating that the policies of the Jospin government had been racist and had paved the way for Le Pen—something they never deigned to admit when the popular front was in power. But LO quickly lurched back to the right, continuing—and deepening—its embrace of the campaign for “secu-

ity”, a code word for cop terror. When Sarkozy announced that cops in minority housing projects would be armed with guns that fire golf-ball-sized rubber bullets (“flash-balls”), even the thoroughly reformist PCF denounced the move. But not LO, which called it “an electoral trick in order to continue doing nothing serious against insecurity” (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 24 May)!

By making common cause with the government's “security” campaign, LO swears fealty to bourgeois “law and order” and demonstrates how its perennial economism and contempt for the fight against all forms of special oppression pander to backward consciousness within the working class. In her keynote speech at the annual LO Fête on 19 May, LO presidential candidate Arlette Laguiller never so much as uttered the words “racism”, “war” or “imperialism”. She went out of her way to solidarise with the “security” campaign and call for a “humanised” police—while bemoaning the fact that “flash-ball” guns are so expensive that not all cops will be given them! Meanwhile, the only criticism the LCR makes of LO in their legislative campaign is that they are “sectarian” for refusing a joint slate: not one word against LO's pandering to the pro-cop vote and capitulation to the racist security campaign!

In a 14 April posting on its website, the centrist Internationalist Group (IG), a handful of defectors from our Trotskyist programme in the mid 1990s, raved that we had supposedly extended “conditional critical support” to LO. A few weeks later, in a 4 May statement, the IG idiotically asserted that LO “encouraged a vote for Chirac in the second round”. Then at a 17 May demonstration in New York, IG founder-leader Jan Norden taunted our comrades, “LO, LO”, while one of his acolytes ranted: “It's the LO supporters!”

Such absurdly flagrant lies have all the hallmarks of political desperation. The IG has been trying to posture as the

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Lawyers for capitalist “national unity” in India

To its credit, the Socialist Labour Party (SLP) calls for the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland. Yet the SLP Youth takes a very different stand when it comes to the Indian army occupation of Kashmir. The SLP Youth are associated with the journal *Lalkar* (edited by SLP national executive committee member Harpal Brar) and until recently with the Stalinist Indian Workers Association (IWA). Far from calling for troops out, an article by SLP Youth leader Joti Brar titled “Kashmir: is secession the answer?” (*Spark* no 10, 2002) goes out of its way to justify India’s claim to forcibly keep Kashmir within a unitary state:

“We have shown that the transfer of the whole of Kashmir to Pakistan on the basis of religion could only increase communal violence on the subcontinent, but what would happen if Kashmir should become independent of both India and Pakistan?... “An independent Kashmir would in reality be nothing but a US base on the subcontinent, superbly placed to threaten and bully all those countries neighbouring Kashmir not entirely happy to hand over their economies lock, stock and barrel into the imperialist coffers.”

As though the Hindu-chauvinist bourgeoisie’s continued subjugation of the overwhelmingly Muslim Kashmiri people doesn’t fuel communal violence, not least the slaughter of tens of thousands by Indian occupation forces over the past decade! As though the Indian government isn’t offering India up as a base for the US imperialists and selling the country to the International Monetary Fund and World Bank!

What all Brar’s spurious arguments add up to is the line of the BJP-led Delhi government itself: Kashmir can’t join with Pakistan, Kashmir can’t be an independent state—in short, Kashmir is India, now and forever! Brar arrogantly lectures: “it seems the Kashmiri workers have mistaken the nature of their oppression, thinking it a national when it is in fact a class antagonism”.

This is what Bolshevik leader VI Lenin described as *social-chauvinism*, “socialism” in words and chauvinism in practice. And in this *Spark* is true to its mentors of the IWA/*Lalkar* and the Indian Stalinist organisations from which it is derived, the Communist Party (CPI) and its offshoots, the CPI (Marxist) and CPI (Marxist-Leninist). The CPI(M) and CPI(ML) oppose communalist violence, like the anti-Muslim pogroms orchestrated by the BJP in Gujarat. But while they say they oppose a war with Pakistan and the CPI(ML) boasts of leading a campaign of anti-war protests, they definitely do not oppose the war aims of the Indian bourgeoisie.

A 24-26 May CPI(M) Central Committee statement demands that “India continues to mount political and diplomatic pressure to see that the Pakistani regime acts upon the promises it made” and complains that “a war will only help to divert attention from the question of fundamentalist-terrorist violence directed against India”. The more left-talking CPI(ML) likewise tries to

advise the BJP-led government on how best to combat *Kashmiri* terrorism. Observing that “it is foolish to expect the US to abandon Pakistan and fight India’s battle against terrorism”, an editorial in the weekly *ML Update* (22 May) insists that the “only option” is “direct and effective bilateral diplomatic engagement”. Nowhere is there even a hint that the fate of Kashmir is a mat-

ter to be decided not by the rulers of India and Pakistan but by the Kashmiri people.



Morning Star

Punjab, May: Congress Party supporters hanged effigy of Pakistan’s General Musharraf. *Spark* looks to Indian Stalinists who look to Hindu-chauvinist Congress.

Such refusal to oppose the national oppression of the Kashmiri people is in keeping with the entire wretched history of Indian Stalinism. From the CPI to its “Marxist” and “Marxist-Leninist” offshoots, all variants of Indian Stalinism foster illusions in the “secular democracy” of Indian capitalism and embrace the Indian nationalism identified most consistently with the “secular” Congress Party. What this has meant in practice is upholding the integrity of the Hindu-dominated Indian prison house of peoples against all challenges, internal and external. The last time India went to war with Pakistan over Kashmir, in 1965, the CPI shamelessly supported its bourgeoisie.

In 1990, as India flooded Kashmir with troops to quell a separatist insurgency, the CPI(M)’s *People’s Democracy* (10 June 1990) advised the government: “The CPI(M) Central Committee urges the National Front Government to urgently address itself to the task of restoring peace in the Valley by taking firm administrative measures.... The CPI(M) calls upon the National Front Government to immediately seal the border with Pakistan in order to stop the flow of subversives and arms.”

Both the CPI and the CPI(M) supported the National Front coalition government.

For that matter, since 1977 the CPI(M) has itself administered capitalist class rule at the head of the state government of West Bengal and, at various times, of the Kerala state government as well. This did not stop *Lalkar* from acting as a mouthpiece for the CPI(M) in the early 1990s. But after uncritically retailing the line of the CPI(M) for years, *Lalkar* balked in 1999 when the

a staple of Indian Stalinism since the late 1930s.

When the CPI did oppose Congress, during World War II, it did so from the right, in opposition to the struggle for independence against British imperialism (see “Stalinist alliance with Churchill betrayed Indian revolution”, *Workers Hammer* nos 131 and 132, September/October and November/December 1992). Trotskyists stood for unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union, while advocating revolutionary defeatism towards all the imperialist powers, for whom World War II was a struggle over colonies and spheres of influence. In contrast, the Stalinists claimed that this was a “war against fascism” on the part of the “democratic” imperialists allied with the Soviet Union. In keeping with that line, a 1942 CPI resolution declared: “Make the Indian people play a people’s role in the people’s war.” To this end, the CPI called for a no-strike pledge and for the cessation of all social struggle. In pursuit of the imperialist “people’s war”, the Stalinists came out against the demand for the British to “Quit India” and denounced any resistance to British rule as playing “into the hands of the Axis powers”. As a reward for services rendered, a grateful British Raj lifted the ban on the CPI in 1942, praising it the following year as “almost the only Party which fought for victory”.

The upheaval resulting from the struggle for independence, particularly in the immediate aftermath of World War II in 1945-46, took India to the threshold of revolution. Millions of workers, peasants and soldiers defied British reprisal all across the subcontinent with cries of “*Inquilab Zindabad!*” (Long live the revolution!). What was needed was a revolutionary vanguard party to mobilise the working class, rallying the peasantry and all the oppressed behind it, in a struggle to end British rule and expropriate the

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indigenous capitalists. Instead, the Stalinists acted to subordinate the struggle to the bourgeois nationalists of Congress and the Muslim League, which in turn acted as lackeys of imperialist Britain.

At the time of the 1947 partition engineered by British imperialism, many workers looked to the CPI to mobilise against the communalist slaughter, and in many cases CPI members were successful in preventing communalism. But that blood-bath was prepared by the CPI's support to the bourgeois nationalists.

For *Lalkar*, the problem with Congress, which has ruled India for much of the 55 years since Partition, is that its own playing of the communal card makes it a weak reed in maintaining the unity of the Indian state. A 1995 *Lalkar* article complained, "With the Congress at the helm, the unity of India and the prosperity and social advance of its people are truly imperilled." But in 1984 when the Punjab was swept by separatist and fundamentalist agitation for an independent Sikh state (Khalistan) a few months later, with Congress prime minister Indira Gandhi at the helm, *Lalkar* (May 1984) had no qualms about demanding: "It is time that the Government took action and crushed these fascist murder gangs". Gandhi did take action the following month, ordering her army to crush the Sikh fundamentalists then occupying the Golden Temple in Amritsar and perpetrating a massacre of upwards of 2000 Sikhs.

At root, such despicable capitulations are the product of the Stalinists' embrace of "two-stage revolution". According to this dogma, the proletariat must not fight for socialist revolution until it has achieved the "democratic stage", dubbed "people's democracy" by the CPI(M) or, occasionally, the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" by *Lalkar*. In practice, this means class-collaborationist subordination to the national bourgeoisie in the "first stage", followed by a "second stage" in which the bourgeoisie massacres workers and communists. That is exactly what happened in Indonesia in 1965, when the military turned on its erstwhile allies in

Peasant rally under red flag in Punjab. During WWII CPI held back agrarian struggle and pandered to communalist Muslim League, helping to lay basis for Partition blood-bath.



the Maoist Communist Party, slaughtering up to a million leftists, workers, peasants and ethnic Chinese.

In countries like India, Pakistan and Indonesia, where capitalism has developed only after the emergence of the imperialist system, the bourgeoisies are too weak and dependent on the imperialists and too fearful of the working class to carry through the tasks of bourgeois democracy and throw off the yoke of imperialism. Despite its pretensions to represent all caste, religious, national and ethnic groupings, Congress has long played the communalist card, maintained the caste system and allowed the perpetuation of such horrendous practices as *suttee* (the burning of widows along with their dead husbands). It is often the working class which is the main target of communalist terror because it is frequently drawn from local and migrant minorities.

Falsely trying to claim the mantle of Lenin's Bolshevik Party, *Lalkar* occasionally talks of the October Revolution and points to the "Road of October" as the way forward for India, claiming that this was an expression of the fight for a "democratic dictatorship of the prole-

ariat and the peasantry". But months before the October Revolution, in his "April Theses", Lenin declared, "The person who *now* speaks only of a 'revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry' is behind the times, consequently, he has in effect *gone over* to the petty bourgeoisie against the proletarian class struggle". *Lalkar* rejects the Bolshevik internationalism that animated the Russian Revolution. That victory was prepared by Lenin's indefatigable struggle for the right of self-determination of all oppressed nations. It was a confirmation not of "two-stage revolution", but of Leon Trotsky's programme of *permanent revolution*. In his 1939 article "Three Conceptions of the Russian Revolution", Trotsky summarised the understanding of permanent revolution he first advanced at the time of the 1905 Revolution:

"The complete victory of the democratic revolution in Russia is inconceivable otherwise than in the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat basing itself on the peasantry. The dictatorship of the proletariat, which will inescapably place on the order of the day not only democratic but also socialistic tasks as well, will at the same

time provide a mighty impulse to the international socialist revolution. Only the victory of the proletariat in the West will shield Russia from bourgeois restoration and secure for her the possibility of bringing the socialist construction to its conclusion."

Betraying the fight for international socialist revolution in the name of building "socialism in one country", the Soviet Stalinists succeeded in preparing the way for the imperialist-backed counter-revolutionary overturn of the October Revolution.

In the name of "democratic revolution", the Stalinists of *Spark/Lalkar*, the CPI(M) and the CPI(ML) today betray not only the national aspirations of the oppressed peoples of the Indian sub-continent but, above all, the proletariat's struggle for socialism. It is only under the banner of permanent revolution, and the leadership of a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party committed to the programme of international socialist revolution, that the proletariat can put an end to communalist fratricide, the caste system and all the other vestiges nurtured and propped up by the blood-drenched Indian bourgeoisie and its imperialist overlords. ■

Kashmir...

(Continued from page 12)

second-largest Muslim population in the world—larger than Pakistan's. Pakistan's claim to constitute "one nation" of all Muslims masks the domination of the Punjabi ruling class over Baluchis, Pashuns and other oppressed nationalities. Similarly, India includes a myriad of national and pre-national groupings chafing under the rule of the Hindu-centred "all-India" bourgeoisie. The vile chauvinism pushed by the BJP is simply a deepening of the communalism promoted for decades by the avowedly secular Congress Party. Despite its pretensions of representing all caste, religious, national and ethnic groupings, Congress presided over the brutal suppression of numerous separatist insurgencies.

Age-old caste oppression remains pervasive in India and has been intensified under the high-caste BJP, while women are the slaves of slaves throughout the subcontinent. In Pakistan, women are subjected to *pardah* (seclusion) and jailed or stoned to death for adultery and similar "crimes" under Islamic law or murdered in "honour killings" by their own families. India has seen an alarming revival of *suttee* (the religious practice of burning wid-

British imperialist butcher Mountbatten (centre), flanked by Indian Congress leader Nehru and Muslim League head Jinnah. Imperialist partition in 1947 set stage for horrific communalist slaughter.



ows to death on their husbands' funeral pyres) and dowry burnings—the murder of young brides by husbands' fami-

lies greedy for a second dowry.

National and social justice for all the oppressed of the Indian subcontinent

requires the revolutionary overthrow of both the Indian and Pakistani bourgeoisies. This task can only be realised through the forging of Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard parties based on an internationalist perspective. *For a socialist federation of South Asia!*

Fuelled by imperialism, the conflicting nationalist appetites of the Indian and Pakistani ruling classes pose the possibility that millions of people in South Asia could be incinerated in a nuclear holocaust. But the greatest danger to the continued existence of humanity lies in the vast arsenals held by the major capitalist powers, particularly the US. And as history has shown, there are no bounds to the scale of imperialist barbarity—from the US A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 to the horrendous massacres perpetrated by British imperialism in colonial India. The alternative lies in the proletariat establishing its own class rule around the globe, seizing state power from all the exploitative ruling classes and ushering in an international socialist society. The fate of humanity lies in the timely reforging of Trotsky's Fourth International to lead the struggle for new October Revolutions around the world.

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Young Spartacus

Derry, Northern Ireland: Bloody Sunday 1972 A Marxist perspective

We print below an edited version of a presentation in Dublin by Edward Welles of the London Spartacus Youth Group at a forum on 27 April.

Before I start the main part of the forum I just want to say a few things about the situation in the Near East. In the context of the massive onslaught against the Palestinian people, with even the bourgeois press in Britain reporting "war crimes" in refugee camps, we say that the international working class must rally to the defence of the Palestinians against the Zionist military machine. There are massive illusions among many leftists and Palestinian nationalists that the imperialist powers, Britain or the US, either directly or in the guise of the UN, can intervene on behalf of the Palestinian people.

The history of British imperialism "defending" oppressed minorities is quite clear from the experience of Northern Ireland, of Bloody Sunday, and also the experience of the current imperialist-brokered "peace" fraud; the scenes last summer from the Holy Cross school in Ardoyne, where Catholic schoolgirls were confronted daily by Loyalist mobs baying for blood, show the bitter reality of Labour's "peace" deal. And it was a Labour government as well, under Clement Attlee, who is idolised by much of the fake left in Britain today, which created the Zionist state of Israel in the first place after the Second World War. And soldiers of the Southern Irish bourgeois state participated in 1982 in Lebanon in the disarming and transfer

have the democratic right to self-determination—but within a capitalist framework the exercise of this right by one community will necessarily be at the expense of the other. So we say that the only solution for the Palestinian people is within a socialist federation of workers states in the Near East, just as we call for a socialist federation of the British Isles. And we don't

events to take place. They are also the closest the families of the murdered people have seen to a public acknowledgement of the massacre. You might want to think about why this is the case.

Politically the films can be criticised: McGovern ignores the Civil Rights movement, which is pretty important, while Greengrass' film portrays the

Catholic civil rights. He was also surrounded by leftists, people who described themselves as revolutionary socialists.

Origins of the Civil Rights movement

One of the main points for Marxists to address is what these self-styled socialists, like Eamonn McCann, did at this time, when there was some kind of integrated struggle, and what the lessons are that revolutionaries need to be able to draw from the experience and their failures. The politics of the Civil Rights leadership are also shown in the films, with the pacifism they peddled emphasised throughout and the appeals to British imperialism present in the beginning and at the end of the film by Cooper in his press conferences.

But to properly understand what the Civil Rights movement was, it's necessary to consider the context of its origins which was as a protest movement based on the oppressed Catholic workers of Derry in the late 1960s. The Civil Rights movement grew out of deep grievances felt by the 70 per cent Catholic population of Derry which arose from Unionist political and economic domination of the city. And this was many-headed; for example, although a majority of the population of Derry voted anti-Unionist, a Unionist council was consistently elected, due to a system of electoral rigging, gerrymandering. So Unionists controlled the allocation of housing, and they were able to control this whole set-up by refusing to house Catholics outside the one constituency, which was awfully congested. And they refused to build any new houses. So many people were often forced to share the one house. The fact that votes were only given to householders—people who *owned* houses—meant that there was frequently only one vote for a group of several adults, for an extended family who shared a house.

The basic bourgeois-democratic demand for "one man, one vote" was therefore a very prominent and deeply felt one in the Civil Rights movement. There was no universal suffrage in the North until 1968; that tells you a lot about British bourgeois "democracy". Most of the jobs in the city were also controlled by Protestant businessmen, who discriminated in favour of giving jobs to Protestants; approximately a third of Catholic males were unemployed in the late '60s.

It was the question of housing which contributed to much of the early activism in Derry. The Derry Housing Action Committee (DHAC), a loose collection of left-Labour and left-Republican young activists, in the late '60s, began inter-



Seventeen-year-old Jack Duddy killed by the British Army on Bloody Sunday.

think you're going to get very far unless you win over a section of the Israeli working class to the defence of the Palestinians. We don't think that imperialism can intervene to defend them.

There were some films shown a few months ago on TV, one called *Bloody Sunday* directed by Paul Greengrass, and *Sunday* directed by Jimmy McGovern, which you might have seen.

events as if it was a lack of communication between the officers and as if it was some rogue elements within the army that caused the soldiers to murder 14 innocent people. He obscures the fact that this was a deliberate and orchestrated act of mass murder. The films should still make you consider what the British Army is doing there; what it was doing there then and what it is doing there



British occupation forces on the rampage in Belfast.

to Tunisia of PLO militants in refugee camps, which paved the way for the Sabra and Shatila massacres of defenceless Palestinians by fascist Christian militias, who were sent in by then defence minister Ariel Sharon.

The situation in the Near East is one of geographically interpenetrated peoples who both lay claim to the same tiny sliver of land. Marxists say that both peoples

These films depicted the events of Bloody Sunday, when 27 Catholic demonstrators were gunned down by the butchers of the Parachute Regiment of the British Army, and 14 of those people died. The films tell the essential truth about the massacre, they portray it very vividly. In the case of McGovern's film it shows the intention of the British government for something like those

now. It speaks volumes about their presence, what it means. But the Civil Rights movement, and especially one of its leaders, Ivan Cooper, a Protestant MP, who was on all of the flyers and posters for the film (James Nesbitt was the actor) were central to the film by Greengrass, which is important. And it's explicit in this film that this ex-Labour Protestant was fighting for

rupting public meetings, blockading roads and things like that, in attempts to get people housed in decent accommodation. They had individual but much publicised successes. Their orientation was towards Catholic families, but they did begin to be approached for help by working-class Protestant families after it was discovered that they were having limited but renowned impact, and Protestant families from the poor Fountain district of Derry in particular approached them. This is an area where living standards for Protestants

man, one job", which had meant more jobs, now assumed an anti-Protestant character, ie jobs held by Protestants to be given to Catholics. A determined effort was made to make the movement seem respectable: the fact that socialists were not prominent as socialists, and that the Republicans, who were reactivating in Derry, were pushed to the sidelines was very heavily emphasised.

Now McCann today likes to act as if he had nothing to do with the CAC, and that he opposed it. This is simply

Farrell, leader of People's Democracy, appealed for an international peace-keeping force to be sent in to protect Catholics.

People's Democracy was quite an important organisation. It was a left-wing group, especially prominent in Belfast, and included a lot of Protestant students, and it was based on the campuses, who were inspired in particular by the French students who had sparked a general strike. But the politics they were fighting for—the politics spouted by Michael Farrell—were counterposed to what was necessary. They looked to what they saw as the "decent" British bourgeoisie and its Labour government to intervene against the Loyalist bigots and the Orange statelet. What was necessary, and what wasn't there, was a proletarian vanguard, a Leninist vanguard, acting as the tribune of the oppressed to split the Civil Rights movement along class lines, and to lead some kind of joint class struggle. Only a programme for socialist revolution could have offered a way forward for oppressed Catholics.

Opportunities for a class polarisation did arise. For example, there was a bus drivers' strike in Derry in late '69 which posed the opportunity for an intervention with proletarian politics to force some kind of split. And key to this would be understanding the role played by the Citizens Action Committee as the key obstacle to joint class struggle in Derry at that time: a leadership tailed by people calling themselves socialists, who were telling people that Catholic workers had more in common with the Catholic bourgeoisie North and South, than with Protestant workers.

British troops out now!

Michael Farrell got his "peace-keepers". The British Army was sent in. It was *absolutely necessary* for any would-be revolutionary to make the demand at that time for the troops to get out. Their presence could only be

workers in Britain needed to be won to this understanding, to opposition to British imperialism. For British workers to take up the demand for British troops out of Northern Ireland would have meant blowing class collaboration in Britain to pieces. And this demand was and still very much is a basic test of the revolutionary credentials of any left group: it registers your opposition to the British imperialist state if you say it in Britain. Workers in Britain must be won to this call in order to be able to make a revolution, because this would signify a definitive break from class collaboration, a huge component of which historically in Britain has been anti-Irish chauvinism.

McCann, who is now in the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), at the time could only say that the Catholic youth who were defending their community—he actually refers to them in his book consistently as "hooligans"—hadn't won victory when the troops were sent in. They hadn't won victory just because the RUC had gone. He did not call for the immediate withdrawal of the troops, the British Army butchers. When Labour home secretary James Callaghan visited the Bogside in August 1969, which was after the troops were sent in, his presence did not meet with any sort of protest from McCann or his acolytes, even verbally. More importantly, McCann and three others who were kind of in his circle went to see Callaghan in a private meeting, and asked him to make the B-Specials disband and to make the RUC give up its weapons! And I wonder what force controlled by Callaghan they were looking towards to do that. McCann also made the usual demand that Stormont be abolished. He did not so much as once raise the question of the British Army. Then, when Callaghan went outside to rapturous applause from the Catholics who had gathered, McCann did not warn against any faith in the Labour government



2002 Bloody Sunday commemoration: banner pronounces "nothing has changed" with RUC name change.

were not much better than in the worst-off Catholic areas.

So clearly there were latent class issues which needed to be addressed, and there was the basis for some kind of joint class struggle against the capitalists of Derry and the Orange statelet, and for the intervention of a revolutionary leadership with a proletarian programme. At the base of this movement there was considerable revolutionary potential and it was not inevitable that they would end up being led by Ivan Cooper and John Hume. And early on in the Civil Rights struggles, and in Belfast in particular, there was significant support from Protestant students, in Belfast, including even those around the Methody college.

Class struggle v nationalist dead-end

However, when the DHAC led their first big demonstration in 1968, consisting of 400 people, their politics became pretty clear. The police, the RUC, brutally attacked the march, they baton-charged it and injured countless numbers of people, which led to the radicalisation of a whole layer of especially Catholic youth and workers. Once the Housing Action Committee, which included Eamonn McCann—he figured very prominently in it—once they realised what it was they had opened up, they became very anxious to put a lid back on it.

As a result, within the next few days they handed over the responsibility for the Civil Rights movement to the Citizens Action Committee (CAC). McCann describes this very well in his book *War and an Irish Town*, which is an account of the period. He says the Citizens Action Committee consisted of "the Catholic business community, the clergy, the professions, trade union officialdom and the Nationalist Party". In other words, not people who could stand up for the rights of oppressed Catholic workers, never mind Protestant workers. So the class issues which had been at the forefront of the protests were pushed into the background. Previous demands like "one

untrue. And it is obviously untrue just from watching Greengrass' film, where McCann sits next to Cooper at his press conference and stands right next to him on his truck on the march. His capitulation to the gentlemen of the CAC is portrayed very graphically. Maybe this is the real reason he says he prefers the other film. The anti-Protestant character of this leadership is most obvious through its refusal to dissociate itself from the constitution of the Southern bourgeois state. This is a very reactionary, very Catholic constitution. If there was one sure way of alienating Protestant workers it was this identification with the clericalist state in the South.

Myth of British state "neutrality"

During the period of the Civil Rights movement Catholic communities, especially in the Bogside in Derry, were under constant attack from the RUC and the B-Specials, which was an anti-Catholic auxiliary force to the RUC. Catholic youth had been successfully, although at much cost, defending their community against these onslaughts, and had established what was called "Free Derry". The troops were sent in to replace the RUC in these battles, who were not having the effect the government desired. The majority of the so-called "leftists" in Derry at the time thought that British imperialism was some kind of more "neutral" force that could intervene to protect Catholics against the savage police-state repression meted out by the Orange statelet. So, for example, Bernadette Devlin, who was a prominent Civil Rights spokesperson, appealed for English police to be sent in to protect Catholics against the RUC. And there was a march from Belfast to Derry at this time by some radical student pacifists trying to emulate the French and American students—this is right after May '68, and after the Civil Rights movement in the US—and this was a march that half of the marchers failed to complete because of injuries suffered from attacks by the lumpen scum led by Ian Paisley. After this march Michael



Postal workers at funeral for Catholic co-worker Daniel McColgan, murdered by Loyalist paramilitaries.

oppressive to the Catholic population. We have always raised the call for their *immediate and unconditional withdrawal*. After that initial period, when the Bogside Catholics, who had faced days of RUC rampage, kind of accepted the presence of the troops, the reality of what the occupation meant hit home, with the continuous presence of the troops on the streets, and eventually curfews and internment.

The demand for troops out was also vital for breaking Protestant workers away from the Unionist bourgeoisie, and to the understanding of the special oppression of Catholics. And crucially,

administering British imperialism. Because he agrees with that.

SWP supported troops in 1969

And so McCann has never called for the withdrawal of the British troops. Even after Bloody Sunday—and if he was ever going to say it he would have said it then—even then he did not make the demand. It is therefore fitting that McCann is a member of the SWP. They supported the troops going in in 1969; they said it would offer a "breathing space" for Catholics. They weren't

continued on page 8

N Ireland...

(Continued from page 7)

capable of registering any opposition to the Labour government that sent the troops in.

The failure of these fake leftists was based on their belief in the supposed "neutrality" of the British imperialist state, that it could defend Catholics, and that this "neutrality" is especially the case when the Labour Party is in power. This is why they were an obstacle then, as they are now: telling workers not to use their social power to fight for their interests, but to prostrate themselves before the bourgeoisie and its bloodthirsty state and beg for mercy. And so the fake left in Britain is pretty much unanimous in its support for the so-called "peace" deal today: it's based on their capitulation to the British Labour Party. The SWP claimed that the "peace" deal would provide a "space" — there's that word again — for Catholic and Protestant workers to fight for their interests, ignoring the oppression of Catholics, so that what they call "sectarianism" can be combated within a nice bourgeois democracy. And they're by no means alone in this, pretty much all the groups on the left like the Socialist Party and the Communist Party say this. We say that Labour's "peace" is a lie. These guys should ask the Catholic schoolgirls of Holy Cross school in Ardoyne in Belfast whether the "peace" deal has got rid of the oppression of Catholics.

Socialist Worker, the newspaper of the SWP, published quite a few articles on Bloody Sunday recently, because of the 30th anniversary. None of these articles was complete without a eulogy to the Saville Inquiry. What they don't say is that the Saville Inquiry is headed by a lord, Lord Saville, and that it was set up by this Labour government to white-wash the British Army. They are still debating whether those who were murdered were "innocent" or not. We intervened against McCann at the official Bloody Sunday meeting this year in London, and we raised the question of the British troops and we raised the "peace" fraud, and his silence on these questions. He refused to respond to the counterposition of our revolutionary socialist politics to his Labourism. And another speaker at that meeting, Tony Benn, similarly failed to accept our invitation for him to explain to everyone in the room why he supported the Labour government of '69 of which he

bring some "reconciliation". The SWP's running point for the Labour government in trying to contain class struggle is also obvious from recent events. A young Catholic postal worker, Daniel McColgan, was brutally murdered in North Belfast this year by the fascistic scum of the UDA. This was met with a walk-out by Catholic and Protestant post workers in Belfast and followed by mass protests across Northern Ireland including in Derry, which included many workers. They were protesting the murder of their Catholic co-worker and the death threats against other Catholic workers and teachers in Belfast, and that was

significant, demonstrating the social power of the working class (the threats have been withdrawn for the time being) and providing the basis for a proletarian intervention, they were constrained by the trade union bureaucracy and their "left" tails who accept the framework of the capitalist state, so they can do nothing to address the urgent needs of Catholic and Protestant workers. It is also important to consider that when the SWP had their man Eamonn McCann on national television in the debate that took place after McGovern's film, he didn't mention that Catholics are still oppressed, or even that the troops are still there. So what did he

it means is the forcible reunification of the North with the Southern bourgeois republic into a unified capitalist state, which we oppose. Protestant workers are correct to think that they would be a specially oppressed minority in such a state. What this means is, without a proletarian vanguard, Protestant workers will be cemented behind the Unionist bourgeoisie, which is counterposed to the necessary task, which is to break them from Unionism. This is one of the main reasons why the Civil Rights movement as led by the Citizens Action Committee (which was tailed by Eamonn McCann and his crowd) could never gain considerable Protestant support, because of its association with the clericalist state in the South.

For a socialist federation of the British Isles!

This is why it is necessary for the revolutionary vanguard to fight against nationalism as one of the obstacles to the kind of class polarisation necessary for proletarian revolution to get rid of the Orange statelet in the North, the clericalist state in the South and British imperialism. So, one of the main lessons from the failure of the Civil Rights movement to secure equality for Catholics is that you cannot get this within the framework of the capitalist state. If you follow the logic of nationalism, it would mean reversing the terms of oppression against Protestants.

What was absent in Derry in the late '60s and early '70s, and this is really the crucial point, was a Leninist vanguard that could force a split along class lines in the Civil Rights movement, clarifying the necessity of a proletarian perspective to polarise it. The Civil Rights movement had its death warrant signed by the British Army on Bloody Sunday. The bourgeois elements — the John Humes and Ivan Coopers — left to form the wretched SDLP, the Social Democratic Labour Party. The best — those who wanted to smash British imperialism, who had the anger and courage to take it on, those who would have formed some of the most vital elements of the revolutionary party — in the absence of any alternative, they joined the Provisional IRA. Most of them never split politically from what was being pushed by the Civil Rights movement. That means that now they're fighting the same struggle, and many of them are trying to whip up support for the latest blind alley of the nationalist cause, the "peace" fraud.

In the South there was considerable motion in the working class after Bloody Sunday, and the outrage felt led to significant political strikes by workers against British imperialism. So there was the basis in this period of fury and disgust *against* British imperialism, for the intervention of a revolutionary working-class organisation to win people over to a programme for socialist revolution both sides of the border and both sides of the Irish Sea. The vital task now is the construction of revolutionary workers parties in Britain and Ireland to lead the struggle for the overthrow of the brutal system of capitalist oppression and murder, through socialist revolution throughout the British Isles. This means intervening with a revolutionary programme into opportunities such as that presented by the Civil Rights movement in Derry, and winning people to the understanding that the only solution for Protestant and Catholic, English, Irish, Scottish and Welsh workers is a socialist federation of the British Isles. We fight for a reformed Fourth International that Trotsky would recognise as his own. Join us in our struggle! ■



13 June 1981: Spartacist League/Communist Faction anti-imperialist contingent at London demonstration against H-Block torture camps.

explicit. The Spartacist Group Ireland intervened into these protests, trying to bring a revolutionary perspective to workers and making the point that the fight against anti-Catholic terror requires a fight against capitalism North and South and against British imperialism.

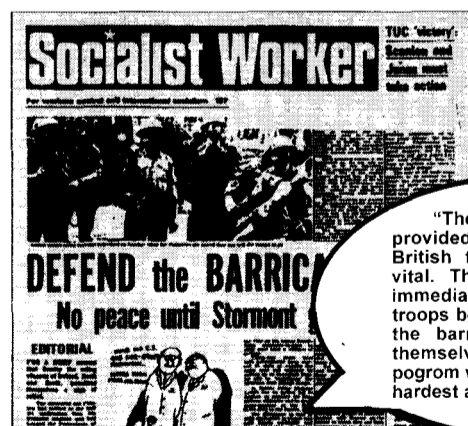
You wouldn't know any of this from listening to the Labourite left and the SWP in particular. They all said that the protests were "against sectarianism", and the front page of *Spartacist Ireland* has a picture of the protest, that says "End sectarianism now". That's what was coming from the bourgeois politicians and trade union bureaucracy. And this is a very nice phrase that completely obscures the fact that Catholics remain a specially oppressed minority in Northern Ireland, repressed by both the Orange statelet and British imperialism. And this slogan comes from the very people like the trade union bureaucrats and the capitalist politicians from

spend his time doing? He spent his time arguing with some general, the former commander of the British land forces in Northern Ireland, about who shot first, the IRA or the British Army. That's what we mean when we say that they obscure the role of British imperialism.

Not Orange against Green but Class against Class!

We also make the call for programmatically-based anti-sectarian workers militias to combat Orange and Green terror and imperialist rampage. These militias shall require a strong programmatic basis in order to avoid being derailed or co-opted by one force or another, which means that the presence in them of trained Leninist cadre is vital, as is the presence of at least one member of each community. The growth of such militias, which are necessary just for self-defence of the working class, is therefore integrally linked to the fight for and development of a Leninist party armed with a revolutionary programme.

It is also important to consider when addressing the question of the failure of the Civil Rights movement the question of Irish nationalism. A current example of the demobilising effect of Irish nationalism on the class struggle can be seen through the fact that at the time of the Belfast protests, the INLA, a petty-bourgeois nationalist formation, threatened to murder Protestant workers at Marks & Spencers in North Belfast in what they called revenge for the murder of Daniel McColgan. You can imagine the effect that would have had on smashing the elementary class unity we saw on 18 January on the demonstration. One crucial aspect of Irish nationalism as an obstacle to joint class struggle and socialist revolution is the fact that what

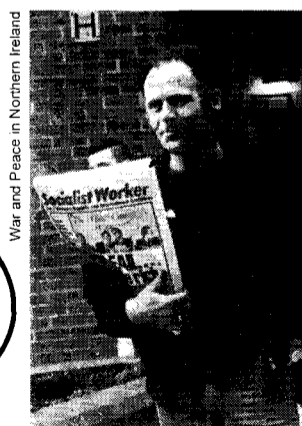


SWP hailed Labour sending British troops to Northern Ireland, September 1969. Eamonn McCann pushes same pro-imperialist line today.

was a part sending the British Army in. Essentially, the SWP wants Saville — Lord Saville — to bring "justice" so that this running sore for British "democracy" can be consigned to history, and everyone can now move forward with the "peace" deal. Even the director of this film, Greengrass, when he received an award for the film in Germany, said he hoped this would

whom the SWP along with most of the rest of the fake left take their lead. They also failed to make the point anywhere that Republicans who oppose the "peace" deal were barred from the protests, even while, obscenely, anti-Catholic murderers as represented by David Ervine of the PUP were allowed to attend.

Although these protests were very



War and Peace in Northern Ireland

Labour...

(Continued from page 1)

British blacks and Asians, the second and third generation of the post-World War II wave of immigrant labour, who today form a significant proportion of the working class and the trade unions. Immigrant workers, including “illegal” immigrants, are not simply defenceless victims of the capitalist exploiters and their state. They are an integral part of this country’s multiethnic working class, and a precious link to workers in other countries. Anyone who has made it here should have the same rights as those born here. The trade unions and working class as a whole must take up the fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Mobilising the social power of the working class in defence of all immigrants is not only a matter of self-defence of the entire working class. By exercising their social power as the producers of wealth in society in defence of all the oppressed and exploited, the organised workers can place themselves at the head of a struggle to sweep away the system of capitalism and to reorganise society on a socialist, egalitarian basis.

There is massive discontent with the Labour government, not only for its racism but also for its eager participation in every military campaign by US imperialism. The bombing of Afghanistan led to the largest demonstrations for 20 years, which had significant trade union support. Several unions are supporting the 22 June national demonstration against deportation, detention and dispersal of refugees. This overlaps with significant disgruntlement in the trade union base of the Labour Party, provoked by Labour’s vicious anti-union policies. Blair’s project is to remodel Labour as an outright bourgeois party. The split between Labour’s working-class base and the pro-capitalist leadership is not taking place in the way Leninists envisaged, through leftward motion in the proletariat and a leap in consciousness, but rather from Blair initiating a split with the trade union base of the party, and with the trade union bureaucracy, which sits on top of the unions. Nonetheless this presents a welcome opening for revolutionaries to intervene and to demonstrate the need for a political break from Labour in all its forms, and for a genuinely revolutionary party. Such a party would place the struggle against racism and chauvinism at the centre of the fight against capitalism and reject the perspective of administering the capitalist state, fighting to mobilise the working class against the capitalist class to put the working class in power, ie to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

For a multiethnic revolutionary workers party!

We seek to win workers and youth who are politicised by hatred of Labour’s racism, wars and attacks on the trade unions, to our fight to build a multiethnic revolutionary workers party. This will be built through class struggle, rather than pleading for favours from “Her Majesty’s parliament”. For example, class struggle by the racially-integrated and very powerful unions in London Underground could galvanise opposition to the hated Labour government, against privatisation, against racist attacks and in defence of immigrants and asylum seekers. This means confronting the anti-union laws, which are designed to make effective class struggle almost

impossible, but the only way to win anything substantial is through mass struggle by the working class.

The role of the SWP, the Socialist Alliance and the Socialist Party is to contain struggles by leftist workers and youth within the framework of pressuring Labour and parliament, not least by peddling illusions in “left” union bureaucrats. A typical feature of reformist parties like the SWP is to maintain a strict separation between “trade union” issues, and issues such as racism and war. A February trade union rally in London titled “RMT and PCS on Strike—Support the unions now!” built by the Socialist Alliance condemned all the attacks by the Labour government—but not racism, which was not mentioned until our comrade spoke. Likewise an ANL London rally on 27 May titled “Unite to kick the Nazis out” didn’t make any link with attacks on the unions, and the word

about to come to power in Europe today. Leading SWPer Chris Bambery writes that recent election campaigns by the BNP and Le Pen’s National Front make the situation analogous to Mussolini’s Italy and Nazi Germany, simply because these fascist takeovers were preceded by election campaigns:

“Months before coming to power Mussolini signed a ‘truce’ with the Socialist Party, the main target of the fascist gangs, promising an end to the attacks by fascist squads on socialists and trade union activists, clubs and newspapers.... The truce was a trick. The fascist squads continued the wave of terror....

“Both Mussolini and Hitler first took office as part of a wider coalition with establishment parties. They used the respectability this gave them to gain power and then when they felt the time was ready jettisoned their erstwhile allies.... Currently the most successful fascist organisations concentrate on electoral tactics.”

—Socialist Review, June 2002



Paul Mattsson

London, April 2001: Demonstration against Labour’s racist anti-immigrant laws. Muslim women are primary target of racist attacks in Britain.

“strike” was never mentioned.

In contrast, a Leninist party is a “tribune of the people” and seeks to infuse broad layers of the working class with the understanding that to defend its own class interests—opposing redundancies, defending working conditions, and fighting for a living wage—it is necessary to oppose the British capitalist rulers on a range of issues. The decisive questions we fight for today include opposition to racism, not least Labour’s racist witch hunt of immigrants and minorities; opposition to the oppression of women which is bolstered by Blair’s “Christian Socialist” crusades. We seek to mobilise workers in opposition to British imperialism’s wars and military assaults against Afghanistan and Iraq; we call for British troops out of Northern Ireland now, and for unconditional military defence of the deformed workers states in China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam. We fight for abolition of the monarchy, the House of Lords and the established churches and for a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles.

The SWP/Socialist Alliance look to pressure social-democratic parties, through putting them into office. Since counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union in 1991-92, capitalist governments across Europe, mostly led by social-democratic parties, have been scapegoating dark-skinned immigrants while carrying out severe attacks on workers, stirring up a racist furore. This has paved the way for right-wing reaction.

In the service of the “Don’t vote Nazi” campaign, the SWP have been trying to make it look as if fascism is

Bambery omits to mention that the SWP uses this absurd “analysis” to justify their conclusion—support to the Labour government, which is by far the biggest source of racist terror against immigrants and minorities in Britain today. Fascism is more than just an ultra-reactionary or racist outlook; it seeks to crush the workers organisations. Fascism can become a mass phenomenon only in a situation of profound social crisis, where the bourgeoisie believes it can no longer rule through parliamentary democracy. The ruling class turns to fascism only as a last resort. At present, particularly since the destruction of the Soviet Union, the ruling classes see no fundamental threat to the capitalist order and thus there is no basis for a mass fascist movement in Western Europe. The situation is hardly analogous to Germany in the early 1930s, when Hitler had 100,000 stormtroopers in the streets terrorising Jews and attacking trade union and left meetings. Since the proletariat in France today (or in Britain for that

matter) does not currently pose an immediate threat to the bourgeois order, the capitalists are not about to resort to fascist dictatorship.

This issue came up two years ago when Jörg Haider’s openly racist Freedom Party (FPÖ) entered a coalition with the right-wing People’s Party (ÖVP) in Austria. Social-democratic parties across Europe screamed that Austria was on the verge of a fascist takeover. This was the excuse to pressure the ÖVP to kick out Haider and reinstate its long-standing coalition partner, the Austrian Socialist Party (SPÖ). By their history and convictions, Le Pen and Haider are fascists. However, while Le Pen’s electoral success will certainly embolden his fascist thugs, the National Front and the Freedom Party today are primarily electoral phenomena. Haider’s FPÖ in the Austrian government is an ultra-rightist formation elected within the framework of bourgeois democracy.

Fake left panders to racism

For all the SWP’s bluster about the need to “fight” fascism, during the local elections their sole concern was to get people out to vote. The 22 April ANL leaflet which called for a vote “for any other party” than the BNP, is titled: “Use your vote and Don’t Vote BNP, A warning from France”. It warns that Le Pen’s vote “was boosted by millions being so disillusioned that they did not vote” adding “This should serve as a chilling warning to us, as we face a Nazi threat in the local elections here in May. We cannot allow the Nazis to build on apathy and disillusionment”. The BNP are fascists, who carried out pogroms against Asian families last summer in Oldham and Bradford. The fact they got some councillors elected will embolden their paramilitary thugs, but their success was an electoral victory in council elections in one locality. Furthermore, fascist attacks can and must be repulsed, but this cannot be done at the ballot box!

Last July, when the Asian population of Oldham were attacked in their homes by BNP fascists and subsequently besieged by police who swamped the neighbourhood, we issued a statement which said:

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

—reprinted in *Workers Hammer* no 177, Summer 2001

This kind of mobilisation requires a struggle within the unions against the bureaucracy, who are tied to Labour and to parliamentarism. The fight against fascism must be linked to the need to overthrow the capitalist system that breeds it.

The SWP are incapable of such a struggle because they are politically

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Contact Addresses

Spartacist League/Britain

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

Spartacist Group Ireland

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

International Communist League

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

Visit the ICL website: www.icl-fi.org

Labour...

(Continued from page 9)

beholden to Labour and the trade union bureaucracy, as was abundantly clear during the local elections. Having taken some heat for their refusal to stand a candidate against Labour in Oldham in the general election, this time the Socialist Alliance fielded a couple of token candidates, but their campaign was totally eclipsed by the "Don't vote Nazi" campaign.

On the ground in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford, the SWP's campaign was tailored to the trade union bureaucracy, whose main concern was about Labour's vote collapsing. On 25 April, the TUC General Council published a statement on racism in Europe, which conveyed "strong support to the French trade union confederations for their efforts to maximise the vote for democracy" and pointed to "voter apathy" and the "desertion of the Socialist Party" as the main lessons to be learned from France. Their conclusion was: "This makes it all the more important for the TUC to continue to combat the BNP and other similar racist bodies and to urge the Labour Government to do its utmost to boost its national support".

Labourite groups such as the SWP ape the union bureaucrats and Labour by pitching their appeal to backward workers who are turning to the BNP. In the local elections, the SWP/ANL/Socialist Alliance sunk to new depths in pandering to racists. The Burnley Socialist Alliance election statement openly appealed to racist voters, saying: "Don't feel tempted to vote for the BNP because Labour has let you down." A typical article distributed by the ANL (published by Bradford TUC) is headlined "BNP—promise the world and deliver nothing" and opens with "questions" such as: "Does hating Asian people make Bradford a better place? Will voting British National Party (BNP) provide white Bradfordians with better jobs?" Faced with the fact that Labour's austerity measures are driving people

concise description of what the SWP/Socialist Alliance did.

Even while saying vote anybody except the fascists in Britain, Chris Harman had the nerve to chastise the French left that "there was no need for the left to vote for Chirac in order to stop Le Pen getting anywhere near the presidency"; but he also advises not to "cut yourself off" from the pro-Chirac left. In Britain, the SWP's home turf, they had exactly the same line as the pro-Chirac camp in France. In any case, the SWP's difference is only tactical—Harman says other forces "made sure that even among right wing voters Chirac beat Le Pen by two to one" (*Socialist Review*, June 2002). The SWP are once again trying to lash up with the LCR in France, who were foremost among the left groups hustling votes for Chirac. (See "Why we didn't call for a vote to Lutte ouvrière" on page 3.)

"Awkward squad" tells unions: stick with Labour

Central to building a Leninist vanguard party is the construction of a revolutionary opposition within the unions, with the aim of transforming them into instruments of revolutionary class struggle on behalf of all the oppressed, as opposed to the perspective of the present reformist leadership, which is class collaboration and pandering to chauvinism. For the past century, the trade union bureaucracy has personified the link that binds the unions to Labour and to the capitalist order. They have been complicit in selling jobs down the river, telling workers that their only option is to pressure a Labour government. Former textile towns like Oldham and Bradford are fertile soil for the fascists because they are economically derelict, but so too are whole swathes of Britain, from Scotland to the former coal and steel areas of northern England to South Wales.

Local government workers and further education lecturers are currently engaged in a series of strikes and other unions are balloting for strikes. The unions most directly under attack by



Tony Leather/Royal Navy

British troops at Baghram airbase. Blair plans mass deportations of refugees to Afghanistan.

breach to go no further than this; he is denouncing those who want to break from Labour, just as Labour denounced him a few months ago. But the RMT is threatening a strike in London Underground, which is in the throes of privatisation, over safety. This could pose a major confrontation with the Labour government. Like Crow, "left" leader of the FBU Andy Gilchrist opposes disaffiliation from Labour. However the FBU are threatening a national strike for a 40 per cent pay rise, which the government wouldn't think twice about calling out the army to break—they threatened to use troops to smash the fuel protests, but the union bureaucrats forced the tanker drivers to transport the fuel and Labour didn't need the army.

PCS union members elected Mark Serwotka general secretary despite bitter opposition from the right-wing bureaucracy, and subsequently the outgoing president refused to leave the job. But Serwotka's response has been to drag the union through the capitalist courts, which is scandalous. It shows touching faith in the capitalist state, shared by the SWP and the Socialist Alliance who are cheering on Serwotka in the court case. The capitalist state is not neutral—the unions must clean their own house! The union bureaucracy's perspective of class collaboration, which is shared by the "lefts" as well as the right wing, goes hand-in-hand with chauvinism and fuels racism. Tony Woodley, who is now regarded as one of the "awkward squad" and whose election as deputy general secretary of the TGWU the SWP supported, is a case in point. Woodley, who sold out huge numbers of jobs in the car industry, built the Rover demonstration in Birmingham against job losses in April 2000, with the support of the SWP, Workers Power and the Socialist Alliance. It was such a grossly British nationalist, anti-German outpouring that the fascists tried to join it.

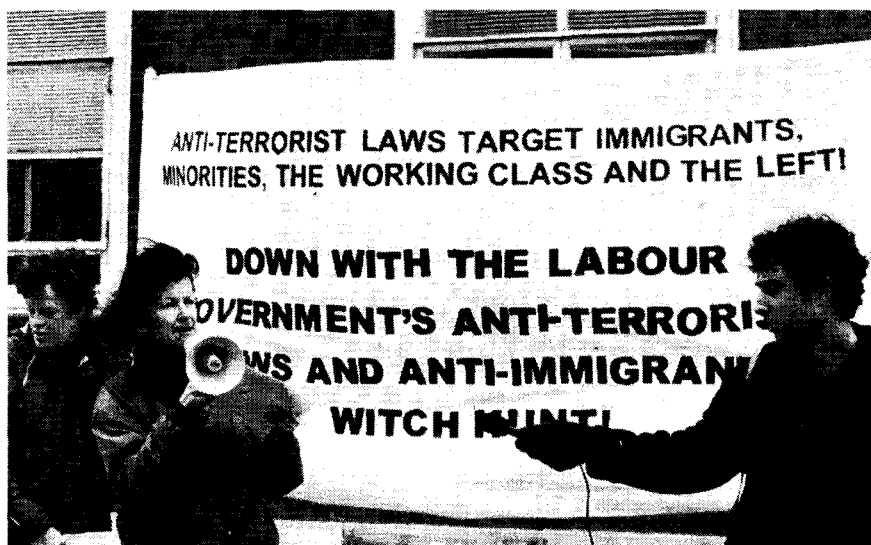
Labourite organisations are wedded to the concept of "bloc affiliation" of trade unions to a political party. Necessarily this party is a reformist one which submerges the most advanced workers into the most backward layers. In the debates over the political fund, the current slogan of the SWP and Socialist Alliance is "democratise the political fund", meaning unions should be able to support candidates other than Labour in elections. We oppose using the political fund as a blank cheque, ie as an ongoing subsidy to any political party; organisations of the workers movement and oppressed should approach the unions for support for a specific issue or campaign. Like the slogan "vote for any

other party" except the BNP, "democratise the political fund" is deliberately open-ended. It could mean union funds being used to support class-struggle candidates or campaigns; on the other hand it opens the door to supporting bourgeois parties or candidates, which union bureaucrats such as Bill Morris favour.

Although the SWP/Socialist Alliance oppose outright disaffiliation, to the SWP's dismay, FBU head Andy Gilchrist roundly denounced their slogan on the grounds that it would get the union expelled from the Labour Party, arguing: "If unions are to protect and advance their members' interests, they need a parliamentary voice" (*Morning Star*, 14 May). Responding to Gilchrist, Socialist Alliance chair Liz Davies agrees entirely that the role of the unions is to pressure the Labour government, but says that this can best be done from outside of Labour. Davies says: "At the moment, trade unions are a forceful lobby to the extent that they are prepared at least to threaten to withdraw their funding from New Labour and, most of all, to the extent they are prepared to flex their muscles outside Labour Party structures", adding that "if we want to increase these pressures, we need, among many other things, to build an effective left alternative in elections" (*Morning Star*, 3 June).

According to the SWP, the purpose of the Socialist Alliance is "to offer disaffected Labour Party members and supporters a new political home" (*Socialist Review*, April 2002). Workers Power are trying to persuade the SWP that the Socialist Alliance should become a party and adopt a "revolutionary programme". But Workers Power agrees with the Socialist Alliance on voting Labour, and for them programme is secondary, what's most important is unity with the reformists: "In our view the door is wide open to unity with workers who have not yet broken with their old reformist ideas around the project of building such a party. There should be no conditions and no ultimatums in this. The programme is something that the future party will have to discuss and decide on" (*Workers Power*, May 2002).

The Socialist Party (SP) postures somewhat to the left of the SWP and Socialist Alliance, in so far as they call for a break from Labour, but not a political break. According to them, the process of turning Labour into a bourgeois party is complete and thus it is time to reconstitute a "new mass workers party". The Socialist Party are living proof of the need for a political, not just organisational break from Labour. This organisation replicates all the worst



Workers Hammer

London, 13 March: Spartacus Youth Group initiated protest at School of Oriental and African Studies against Labour's anti-immigrant witch hunt.

into the arms of the fascists, the SWP/Socialist Alliance are pimping for the racist status quo.

Despite the SWP's best efforts to cosy up to the union bureaucrats, TUC leader John Monks blamed the Socialist Alliance for the success of the BNP in Burnley. The SWP responded out of the left side of their mouth, with the "revelation" that: "There are cynical figures in New Labour and the unions who see the threat of the far right as a useful tool to shore up declining support for the government and to beat down those who want to break to the left" (*Socialist Worker*, 1 June). In fact this is a pretty

Labour—the rail unions, the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), Unison and the civil servants union (PCS)—are led by "left" union bureaucrats, dubbed the "awkward squad". In contrast to right-wing leaders such as Ken Jackson, who is for unity with Labour no matter what, the "lefts" are compelled from time to time to openly oppose Labour, reacting to pressure from their base.

In January, Labour viciously denounced the rail union leaders during a series of rail strikes. The RMT has pledged to sponsor MPs only if they oppose privatisation of rail. But RMT general secretary Bob Crow wants the

chauvinist aspects of Old Labour—they refuse to oppose the British Army in Northern Ireland; pander to Ulster Loyalist thugs; support police strikes, to name but a few of their unsavoury characteristics. They issued a four-page supplement for the local elections (in which they got two councillors elected), which did not mention one word on racism, or on war. An entire pamphlet on “The case for a new workers party” devotes less than a sentence to the issue of racism—while devoting several column inches to toxic waste—which leaves little doubt that their mass workers party would be a social-chauvinist re-hash of Old Labour.

The Scottish Socialist Party shares all the SP’s chauvinist positions, and then some. An odious column by Kevin Williamson in *Scottish Socialist Voice* (17 May) argues against “equat[ing] racism with genuine concerns over how we cope in practical terms with the current levels of immigration”. Among the “genuine concerns” which Williamson cites is supposed “preferential treatment” in housing for asylum seekers. The following week, Tommy Sheridan felt compelled to defend Williamson’s

column, saying that people who want to come to Scotland should be “allowed to take up citizenship” but he agrees with Williamson that those who oppose immigration to Scotland “are not racists or fascists, but simply duped by the wall-to-wall distortion of the question presented in newspapers, radio shows and television programmes”. The SSP has imbibed Scottish nationalism which perpetuates the myth that there is no racism in Scotland. They have flirted with the possibility of a coalition with the Scottish National Party. Against the dominant English chauvinism in Britain, we call for the right of self-determination for Scotland and Wales.

The real question posed by the rift between the unions and Labour is what kind of party does the working class need to represent its interests, independently of the capitalists. Social-democratic parties such as Labour are based on the dominant ethnic group, their perspective is class collaboration and defence of the interests of their “own” capitalist class. Labour has always put the interests of Queen (or King) and country first—supporting the Empire while it lasted and support-

ing Britain in two imperialist world wars. They supported US imperialism in Vietnam and the Korean War, and they were steeped in anti-communist hostility to the Soviet Union when it existed.

Immigrant workers from the former colonies were recruited into Britain during labour shortages after World War II and faced racist discrimination both from the Labour government and the trade union bureaucracy of the day. With the oil crisis of the early 1970s, recession set in, the demand for labour dropped and primary immigration was halted. Long before Blair, Labour governments competed with the Tories (and the fascist National Front) for racist rhetoric and passed anti-immigrant laws, including restrictions on relatives and partners of immigrants. The 1974-79 “old Labour” government introduced the obscenity of virginity tests for Asian women at Heathrow airport.

Unemployment in places like Bradford and Oldham today is sky high, and the huge level of job losses in manufacturing will only get worse as recession sets in. What’s needed is not schemes to

put pressure on the government but a class-struggle fight to unleash the power of the unions who are currently in the government’s sights—in rail, post office, local government and the fire brigade—in a struggle to defend all workers. We demand: jobs for all; work sharing on full pay; a sliding scale of wages and hours. All the work should be divided between the employed and unemployed with no reduction in wages. Organise the unorganised in unions! For workers defence guards against racist attacks! These demands must be pursued through class struggle, using mass picket lines and factory occupations.

A multiethnic revolutionary workers party will be built through a political break from all forms of Labourism. Our model is the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky that led the October Revolution in Russia. A new revolutionary leadership can unite the working class in opposition to the class enemy and its racist system. We seek to win workers, including immigrant workers and the new generation of activist youth, to build such a party to fight for workers revolution. ■

LO...

(Continued from page 3)

militant in-the-streets wing of the anti-fascist electoral “unity” pushed by the French left in the tow of the popular front—beating the drums for mass mobilisations, even for “demonstrations and workers strikes” to “boycott” the second round of voting. While admitting in passing (in its 4 May statement) that “Le Pen is not about to take power”, the IG’s articles are full of the same “fascism is around the corner” rhetoric—with analogies to Adolf Hitler in Germany, Marshal Pétain in France, etc—that the French “left” used to justify lining up behind Chirac.

As we remarked in “France: Fake Left Backs Chirac” (*Workers Vanguard* no 781, 17 May), the IG pushed the same line in the case of Austria two years ago, when Jörg Haider’s openly racist Freedom Party (FPÖ) entered a coalition with the right-wing People’s Party (ÖVP). Social democrats across Europe screamed that Austria was on the verge of a fascist takeover and mobilised to pressure the ÖVP to kick out Haider and reinstate its longstanding coalition with the Austrian Socialist Party (SPÖ). Then, too, the IG posed as the militant voice of anti-fascist unity, devoting 20 pages of its *Internationalist* (June 2000) to “proving” that Haider’s FPÖ is fascist. “So does the IG think Austria is fascist today?” we challenged them in our last article. Unable to answer this question, these liars and charlatans instead sputter and fume.

Haider’s political outlook is indeed fascist. But the FPÖ’s rise is essentially an electoral phenomenon. Likewise, while Le Pen’s gains at the polls have triggered a sharp shift to the right in the bourgeois political spectrum and are sure to further embolden his fascist thugs, the National Front’s current success is mainly an electoral phenomenon. Indeed, if fascist terror against immigrants is not now rampant in France, it is largely because the popular-front government was already carrying out the kind of programme of cop terror and deportations that is the fascists’ rallying cry.

As we wrote last issue: “Where the IG aims only to be the ‘militant’ tail of whatever’s in motion, we engage in clear and honest programmatic struggle

because our aim is to build a conscious proletarian vanguard party on the basis of the Trotskyist program.”

We reprint below the translation of a 17 May leaflet by the LTF distributed at the LO Fête and elsewhere.

* * *

Anyone who thought LO had finally woken up to the need to fight racist oppression and the security campaign, which above all targets dark-skinned workers, is going to be bitterly disappointed. Despite LO’s commendable opposition to the swamp of reactionary unity with Chirac on the second round of the presidential elections (a swamp into which the miserable LCR jumped headfirst) and despite their acknowledgement (better late than never) that the Mitterrand and Jospin governments paved the way for Le Pen with their anti-immigrant policies, LO has returned to its shameful line of capitulation to racist police repression, exactly one week after “France’s top cop”, Jacques Chirac, named his new government.

Faced with the escalation of Vigipirate (on which LO maintains a deafening silence), with anti-woman and anti-immigrant round-ups in minority communities, LO gives its advice on how better to police the *banlieues* and doesn’t utter a single word against racist terror! LO “opposes” the Chirac government because its security campaign is not effective enough! The content of LO’s nauseating call on those who voted for Le Pen to not vote for him a second time now becomes more understandable. Instead of defending immigrants and all those targeted by the CRS [riot police] and racist round-ups, LO declares in their editorial this week:

“The first act by Sarkozy, the new minister of the interior, was a staged photo op showing him in a Seine-Saint-Denis district accompanying a police patrol in plebeian neighbourhoods. This will not solve insecurity in the plebeian neighbourhoods. It will eliminate neither the pimping of prostitutes nor the exploitation of these unfortunates from East European countries, but it will satisfy right-thinking people and will, with a cheap fix, restore state authority over the weakest.”

With this prostitution before bourgeois “morality” enforced by the CRS, one has to wonder what LO will say in their presentation on the Bible at the “scientific” stand at this year’s LO Fête.

In the same issue of *Lutte Ouvrière* (17 May) there is a long article in which



Le Bolchévick

French soldiers at Eiffel Tower in April. Vigipirate campaign means racist cop terror against immigrants, minorities.

LO explains how to really fight crime. Since September 11 and the ratcheting up of Vigipirate, minority youth are besieged by an army of cops who stop them for identity checks in the *Métro*, in the streets and in the entrance halls of their own apartment buildings. While the Chirac government announces an escalation in the police occupation of Paris with an additional 400 cops, LO writes: “The policy of state budget cuts has, in turn, led to a...virtual disappearance of the police presence in plebeian neighbourhoods.” What planet do you live on, LO? France is the European country with the highest number of cops per citizen (one for every 265 people). The cops are the guard dogs of capital against the working class and the oppressed.

In the same article, LO demands:

“As for police duties which are indispensable to society, they should be carried out by people who are close enough to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood where they are deployed to be able to defuse many conflicts.”

It is *criminal* for a supposedly leftist party to speak of “police duties which are indispensable”! Their duties are to break strikes and oppress youth who oppose this society which offers them no future! Furthermore, LO’s proposal to deploy even more cops and *gendarmes* in the *banlieues*/ghettos and to station cops closer to the housing projects was already implemented by the Jospin government, and it provoked riots against police repression!

To cover this rotten line, LO might remind you of their more seemly (and

rarer) articles in defence of *sans-papiers* [undocumented immigrants] and against the security campaigns of all the governments of the past 20 years, articles which they published as the country was shaken by the gigantic anti-racist and anti-Le Pen demonstrations. Regarding LO’s zigzags, it must be noted that LO bowed before the anti-racist demonstrations by youth, but it has not broken with its grotesque historical line. Hence, it appears that LO’s declarations against the past anti-immigrant security campaigns of the Mitterrand and Jospin governments were only embellishments to cover its capitulation before the current security campaign.

We say: Beware of false advertising! LO’s opposition to class collaboration is emptied of all content by its capitulation to the racist security campaign, which is a crucial mechanism in France for tying the workers to their own bourgeoisie. As we explained in our open letter to LO, LO’s indifference to racial oppression is the consequence of their perspective of class collaboration, to reform the rotten capitalist system instead of sweeping it away through proletarian socialist revolution. There is no party in these elections for which one can vote to advance the interests of the working class and the oppressed. This party has to be built. The Ligue trotskyste de France fights for a genuine revolutionary multiethnic workers party. We say: *Down with Vigipirate! Down with the racist security campaign! For full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Stop the deportations and racist round-ups!* ■

—All Indian, Pakistani troops out!—

Kashmir: flash point for war

JUNE 11 — The latest confrontation between India and Pakistan over the disputed territory of Kashmir brought the two regional powers to the brink of another full-scale war, potentially with nuclear weapons. Some one million troops still confront each other at the Line of Control dividing Kashmir between India and Pakistan. Intense artillery shelling in recent weeks has already killed hundreds of villagers on

nuclear brinkmanship, these come from the only country ever to *use* nuclear weapons; even now, as it prepares for an assault against semicolonial Iraq, Washington refuses to rule out the possibility of a nuclear strike against that non-nuclear state. All imperialist troops out of Central Asia and the Near East — US and Britain, hands off Iraq!

It is the US and Britain that have stoked the flames of war on both sides,

This potentially catastrophic tit for tat is being used to divert the massive discontent of the impoverished workers and oppressed masses away from their own capitalist governments. It is notable that one of the strongest voices for war with Pakistan in the BJP-led government is defence minister Georges Fernandes, a former “socialist” who deployed the army and navy two years ago to break a strike by 100,000 dockers. What helped

a struggle for secession by East Pakistan (Bangladesh) was taken over by the Indian military. The 1948 war, fought when both armies were still under British generals, resulted in the de facto partition of Kashmir along the ceasefire line, the so-called Line of Control. (A small part of eastern Kashmir is held by China.) But the Kashmiris in Pakistani-controlled Azad (Free) Kashmir are no more free than those under Indian occupation. Despite intense oppression under the Hindu-chauvinist New Delhi regime, the overwhelmingly Muslim Kashmiri population has not historically sought to join the Pakistani theocracy.

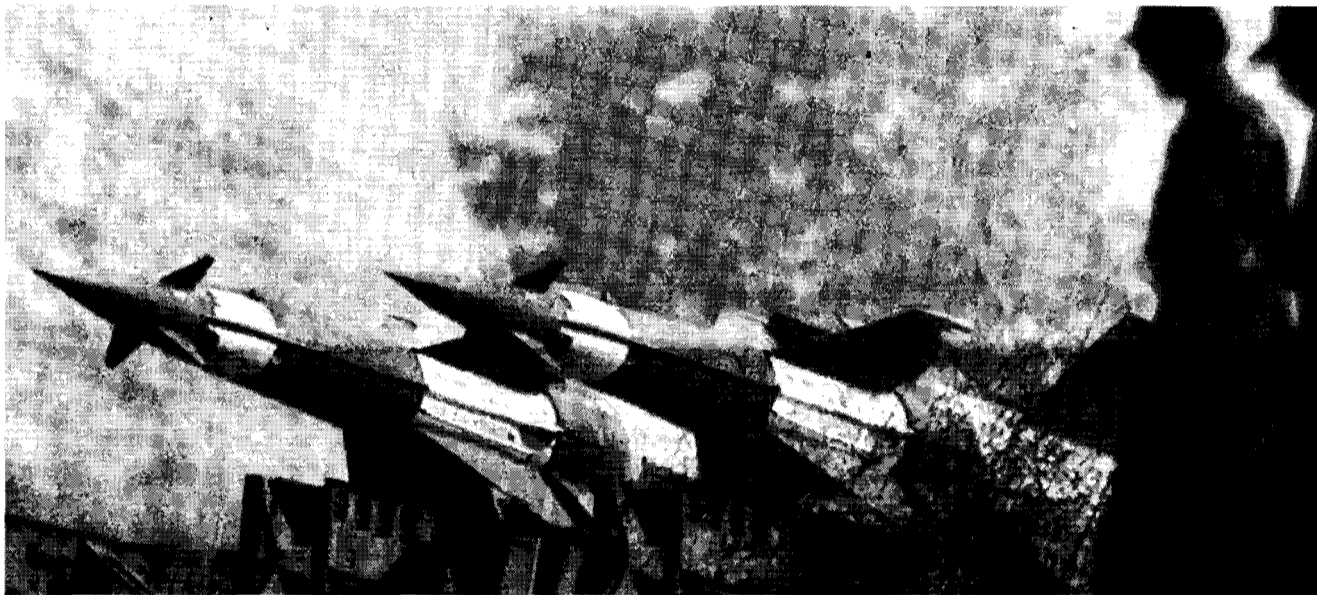
As we wrote in “Brutal crackdown in Kashmir” (*Workers Hammer* no 115, July 1990), following the outbreak of an insurgency against Indian rule in 1989:

“We demand the withdrawal of the Indian army and security forces from the Kashmir valley, and of the Pakistani army from ‘Azad Kashmir’. Defence of the oppressed and of the right of national self-determination is not conditional upon the character of the leadership, and as long as the Kashmiri struggle is not decisively subordinated to the intervention of the Pakistani ruling class (as was the Bangladeshi struggle to the Indian ruling class in 1971 with the Indian army’s invasion) we defend the exercise of the right to self-determination. But short of a revolutionary perspective throughout the whole sub-continent the prospects for Kashmiri liberation are far from rosy. This is especially so given its strategic location and historical role in relations between India and Pakistan.”

There can be no genuine expression of the right of Kashmiri self-determination, either as a politically independent state or through voluntary union with Pakistan (or India), without the withdrawal of both occupying armies from Kashmir. Today the struggle in Kashmir is manifestly subordinated to the conflict between India and Pakistan. And none but the most rabid nationalists could presume that the fate of Kashmir should be determined at the cost of a nuclear war taking millions of lives. While Bolshevik leader VI Lenin strongly supported Poland’s right to independence from the Russian tsarist empire, in the particular context of World War I he argued: “The Polish Social-Democrats cannot, at the moment, raise the slogan of Poland’s independence, for the Poles, as proletarian internationalists, can do *nothing* about it without stooping, like the ‘Fracy’ [social-chauvinists], to humble servitude to *one* of the imperialist monarchies” (“The discussion on self-determination summed up”, July 1916).

Both Pakistan and India are prison houses of peoples. Pakistan includes over a million Hindus, while India has the

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Arko Datta/Reuters

Missiles near Amritsar on Indian side of border with Pakistan. Indian and Pakistani proletariat must fight to overthrow warmongering bourgeoisies.

both sides, and tens of thousands more have been forced to flee their homes for safety. While both India and Pakistan seem to be backing down under pressure from US imperialism, Kashmir remains a potential tripwire for war between the two countries. As in the three wars already fought between India and Pakistan, Marxists would advance the position of *revolutionary defeatism*, calling on the workers to turn their guns the other way. As the reactionary capitalist governments in New Delhi and Islamabad threaten to plunge the sub-continent into a nuclear conflagration, it is all the more necessary for the workers of India and Pakistan to unite around their common class interests in opposition to the chauvinism of their “own” bourgeoisies.

The appeals for peace by the Bush administration and its junior partner, the Labour government of Tony Blair, reek of imperialist arrogance and hypocrisy. It was British imperialism, under an earlier Labour government, that implemented the 1947 partition of India along religious-communal lines, leading to the slaughter of up to a million people and paving the way for the subsequent decades of war and fratricide. As for the sanctimonious lectures by US imperialism about the dangers of

helping to bring the decades-old antagonism between the Indian and Pakistani bourgeoisies to fever pitch. In pursuit of their “holy war” against Soviet forces in Afghanistan in the 1980s, the imperialists poured tens of billions of dollars in weaponry into the hands of the Afghan *mujahedin* and their sponsors in the Pakistani military and Inter Service Intelligence (ISI).

When Washington declared war against “Islamic terrorism” last autumn, it renewed its support to the Pakistani military dictatorship in order to buy off these erstwhile sponsors of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. While Islamabad dutifully disowned the Taliban, the Pakistani military and security forces and Islamic fundamentalist gangs under their wings escalated terror attacks in the Indian-controlled part of Kashmir. At the same time, US and British imperialism’s “global war on terror” provided the Hindu-chauvinist government of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee with a pretext for stepping up repression in Kashmir and provocations against Pakistan. The missile tests carried out by Pakistan last month were preceded by India’s test in January of a missile capable of reaching Pakistani cities with nuclear warheads.

propel the BJP on the road to power were the massive anti-Muslim pogroms triggered in 1992 by the razing of a mosque in Ayodhya by mobs led by the BJP and its communalist paramilitary allies. Pakistan is a suffocating Islamic theocracy, ruled by naked dictatorship since General Pervez Musharraf took power in a military coup three years ago.

The war build-up has been accompanied by a chauvinist frenzy in both countries. Two Christian churches in Pakistan have been subjected to deadly terror attacks, and there has been a spate of murders of Shi’ite Muslims in that predominantly Sunni country. In India in March, the government instigated the worst communalist violence the country has seen in ten years. After a train carrying Hindu fundamentalists returning from a “pilgrimage” to Ayodhya was criminally torched as it stopped in a Muslim neighbourhood in the BJP-governed state of Gujarat, killing dozens of passengers, Hindu mobs went on a rampage throughout the state. They laid siege to Muslim enclaves, setting fire to entire families and killing hundreds, while the police and army looked on or joined in the massacres.

India and Pakistan have already fought two wars over Kashmir, in 1948 and 1965, and a third war in 1971 when