

All US/British troops out of the Near East now! Hands off Syria!

Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq!

APRIL 26—The colonial subjugation of the Iraqi people under US military occupation, backed by British troops, has begun. The rapid victory of American and British forces was not a war but a one-sided slaughter. US imperialism and its British allies pounded Iraqi cities with anti-personnel cluster bombs designed to kill the maximum number of people in densely populated areas. Hospitals and morgues are overflowing with dead and wounded men, women and children. Baghdad and other cities have been without electricity or water for weeks as fear of the spread of cholera and other diseases spreads with people drinking contaminated water out of rivers. In the northern Iraqi city of Mosul ten Iraqis were killed and dozens more wounded as US Marines fired into a crowd of demonstrators protesting against the occupation on 15 April. The following day at least seven more were killed by American troops.

As Seamus Milne wrote in a column in the *Guardian* (10 April):

“What cannot now be disguised, as US marines swagger around the Iraqi capital swathing toppled statues of Saddam Hussein with stars and stripes and declaring ‘we own Baghdad,’ is the crudely colonial nature of this enterprise. Any day now, the pro-Israeli retired US general Jay Garner is due to take over the running of Iraq, with plans to replace the Iraqi dinar with the dollar, parcel out contracts to US companies and set the free market parameters for the future ‘interim Iraqi administration.’”

Troops from the British Army, which brags of the experience in terrorising civilians it has gained in the brutal 30-year army occupation of Northern Ireland, are the military enforcers in the southern Iraqi cities of Basra and Umm Qasr. Their commander is none other than British Army general Michael Jackson who was an adjutant to the Parachute Regiment that killed 14 Catholic protesters in the 1972 “Bloody Sunday” massacre in Derry.

While organisers of the Stop the War Coalition (StWC) decried Blair for joining “Bush’s war” the British imperialists are practiced at colonial subjugation. Indeed Iraq is the creation of British imperialism whose occupying forces artificially cobbled this state together from the distinct Kurdish, Sunni and Shi’ite population following World War I. When these populations rebelled against their then “liberators”, the British responded with poison gas and terror bombings. Reporting to his superiors in 1924, notorious RAF commander “bomber” Harris wrote:

“Where the Arab and Kurd had just begun to realise that if they could stand a little noise they could stand bombings, they now know what real bombing means, in casualties and damage; they now know that within forty-five minutes a full-size village can be practically wiped out and a third of its inhabitants killed or injured by four or five machines which offer them no real target, no opportunity for glory as warriors, no effective means of escape.”



Colonial murder and plunder: US/British troops patrol Baghdad (above), “secure” port at Umm Qasr (below).



Getty Images

“Anti-war” Labour Party MPs decried the war in Iraq as “illegal” because it did not have the mandate of the United Nations, while left-talking trade union bureaucrats of the RMT headed by Bob Crow put forward a motion demanding “a return to the United Nations to secure a peaceful resolution of the situation”. But the bloody rape of Iraq did not begin when the cruise missiles were launched on 20 March. It began with twelve years of UN sanctions, which hurled the most modern industrialised country in the region back decades and killed more than one and a half million people. Iraq was throttled to death, deprived of the capacity to purify water, produce paper for school books, to fertilise crops or any other process which the UN deemed might have a “military application”. In other words, the UN set up Iraq for the kill with its weapons inspectors serving as the spies for US imperialism in demonstrating that Iraq had no “weapons of mass destruction”, no ability to manufacture any or any means to even resupply such military forces as it had.

Confronted with an overwhelming military onslaught and saddled with the bloody Ba’athist regime of Saddam Hussein in the first place, the fact that the long-suffering Iraqi people managed to put up any resistance at all is heroic and a measure of the opposition to the foreign occupation and rape of Iraq’s oil-rich resources (the only sites actually being protected by US and British troops). And, while the imperialists may have won an easy military victory, the colonial occupation has already provoked outrage and resistance among the population. In the southern Shi’ite city of Nasiriya, up to 20,000 marched to protest the colonial occupation. On 18 April, tens of thousands more demonstrated on the streets of Baghdad, carrying banners in Arabic and English reading: “Leave Our Country. We want peace” and “We Reject American Hegemony.” Organised by Shi’ite mosques, this demonstration was a rare display of unity between Sunni and Shi’ite Muslims. But it took place under the green banners of Islamic reaction.

The imperialist occupation has encouraged reactionary forces to emerge, from fundamentalists demanding an Islamic republic to monarchists to “democrats” on the CIA payroll like Ahmed Chalabi, head of the US-funded Iraqi National Congress. Ethnic and religious antagonisms, stoked by the British imperialist conquest at the end of World War I and fuelled by decades of Ba’ath nationalist rule, now threaten to erupt in an orgy of bloodletting. In the areas of northern Iraq dominated by the US-allied nationalists of the Kurdish Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, mobs have driven thousands of Arabs from their villages. In Mosul, Arab protesters not only chanted “US out!” but also “Kurds out!” And the Turkmen minority is so besieged that they have appealed for military intervention by Turkey.

Mosul was a stronghold of the Ba’ath Party. However, among its population of some one million, one-third are Kurds, who also form a majority in the surrounding region. Under the Ba’ath regime’s “Arabisation” scheme, hundreds of thousands of Kurds, Turkmen and Assyrians were driven out of the region. With 300,000 Kurdish refugees planning to return, the threat of communalist bloodshed hangs over the whole area. A reporter for the *Guardian* (17 April) noted that, “Mosul looked more like a Beirut war zone than a liberated city.”

What we are witnessing is the return to old-style colonial pillage, with the hated cops of the Ba’athist regime once again terrorising the population as puppets of the colonial invaders. While cronies of the Bush administration in outfits like Bechtel and Halliburton are given the contracts to enrich themselves in the “rebuilding” of Iraq, the cultural heritage of Iraq and indeed of humanity was smashed to bits in the first days of the imperialist occupation with the looting of the Baghdad Museum and the burning of the Baghdad library. Artefacts, artistic and literary treasures which had survived every siege of Baghdad through thousands of years of human civilization were destroyed when the Americans and their British lackeys “liberated” Iraq.

The imperialist conquest of Iraq is a blow not only to the devastated peoples of that country and throughout the Near East but to the working class and oppressed masses of the world. Riding high in the saddle after their rapid one-sided “victory” over Iraq, the US imperialists immediately began beating the drums of war against Syria declaring that it was hiding “weapons of mass destruction” as well as officials from the Hussein regime. Also on the hit list is the North Korean deformed workers state with the *New York Times* (21 April) reporting:

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SWP's Chris Bambery: Join "Stop the War" or we'll shoot you!

The following statement of the Spartacist League was issued on 1 March.

The "Revolution 2003" teach-in at LSE organised by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) this weekend featured self-appointed SWP thought police dispatching goon squads to harass the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Group and to impede the public from access to our revolutionary Marxist views. Inside the teach-in, the threats escalated after floor interventions by two young women supporters of the Spartacist League, who argued that opposition to the Iraq war and its domestic repercussions in the anti-Muslim witch hunt requires opposition to

the Labour government, and exposed the SWP's support to Islamic fundamentalism, as well as its earlier support to the dispatch of British troops to Northern Ireland under a Labour government. In response, SWP honcho Chris Bambery fumed that anyone who doesn't politically support the Stop the War Coalition "deserves a bullet in the head". This is the real face of the SWP's "give peace a chance" coalition-building: you've got to silence the reds to get workers and youth to lie down like lambs with the wolves of the Labour Party whilst they wage war on Iraq and against working people at home!

Physical exclusion, political censorship and threats of violence are the despicable acts of political cowards who disdain to debate their views, preferring to substitute the fist for the brain. Today it's the Spartacist League, but who's next on the SWP's hit list? *We call on all leftists, trade unionists and anti-war activists to condemn and protest this flagrant incitement to violence against revolutionary socialists!*

What's got Bambery's knickers in a twist? The SWP must be undergoing uncomfortable contortions to present themselves as socialists while maintaining loyalty to Blair's Labour Party (whose election sent the SWP "over the moon"). In our interventions and in discussions with young militants before the meeting our comrades also warned that by promoting politicians like George Galloway and Jeremy Corbyn—who are actively campaigning for anti-war activists to join the Labour Party—the SWP and the Stop the War Coalition are helping channel the growing anger against Blair's government and its war back into the reformist confines of the Labour Party. As Lenin wrote in *Socialism and War*, "unity with the opportunists *actually* means subordinating the working class to their 'own' national bourgeoisie...it means *splitting* the revolutionary proletariat of all countries". We Spartacists fly under our own banners and argue that what working people, youth and minorities in Britain today need is not a swivel chair "regime change" of Gordon Brown for Tony Blair, but the construction of a multiethnic revolutionary workers party to sweep away the capitalist system which breeds racism, war and unemployment. Anything less, anything other, is nothing but a reformist balm on the raw rubs of the capitalist order.

Political debate is vital to clarify what programme and leadership the working

class needs to fight for its interests. This is not the first time that the SWP has resorted to political exclusionism or thuggery against the Spartacist League or other tendencies in the workers movement. In July 1980 they went berserk and assaulted SL supporters shortly after the Soviet Red Army went into Afghanistan because we exposed the SWP for attacking Margaret Thatcher *from the right* for selling British beef to Soviet troops in Kabul. We said "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" and later denounced Gorbachev's treacherous withdrawal from that country. Had the Soviets stayed and won, there wouldn't be a Gulf War today!

We say that workers and minorities in Britain and the toiling masses of neo-colonial Iraq have a common enemy in the war crazed gangs running the White House and 10 Downing Street and a common interest in defending Iraq against US/British attack without giving one iota of political support to Saddam Hussein's brutal capitalist regime. Imperialist wars such as the threatened slaughter of thousands of Iraqis are inherent to the system of capitalism, and to put an end to them what is needed is an international succession of socialist revolutions. For that purpose we say workers in this country need not a "reclaimed" Labour Party, but a multiethnic revolutionary workers party modelled on the Russian Bolshevik Party. It was the Bolshevik Party that, by successfully tearing the working class away from the pro-capitalist Corbyns, Galloways and Bamberys of the time, led the working class to power and took Russia out of the massacre of World War I through the 1917 October Revolution.

Like the Bolsheviks, we seek to win the working class and the oppressed to the revolutionary socialist programme through the open clash of opposing political programmes; be it at mobilisations such as the massive demonstration held in London on 15 February, in the trade unions, through electoral campaigns, through united-front actions in defence of the interests of workers and the oppressed, or at political meetings such as today's "Revolution 2003" teach-in. *Protest SWP political exclusionism and threats of violence! For open political debate!* ■



TROTSKY

On the British invasion of Baghdad

When the British imperialists invaded Baghdad in 1917, they, too, claimed to come as liberators, not occupiers. As Britain proceeded to impose a bloody occupation over a state artificially cobbled together from the distinct Kurdish, Sunni and Shi'ite populations, it used poison gas on rebellious villagers and unleashed a massive wave of terror bombings throughout the country. In a 1922 letter, "representatives of the Mesopotamian people" appealed to the

Communist International for solidarity. In a reply on behalf of the Comintern, Gregory Zinoviev warned against any illusions in the League of Nations, predecessor of the United Nations.

I have read your letter with the greatest interest for your cause. The tragic history of the subjugation of Mesopotamia is the clearest possible expression of the hypocritical and treacherous policy pursued by the English government. And where has English imperialism ever acted otherwise? In India, Egypt, South Africa — everywhere we find the same policy of lies, treachery, and ruthless cruelty...

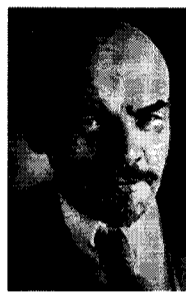
In your letter you refer to the fact that the regime introduced by English imperialism into your native country is a violation of the principles of the League of Nations. Here there seems to be a grave misunderstanding. The League of Nations was called into existence after the war, by the imperialist victors: England, France, etc., in order that the vanquished might be the better robbed. It is precisely England who now heads this institution.

Thus the "principles" of the League of Nations differ in no way from those "high principles" now being put into practice in Mesopotamia by England, and realized by a bombardment of the defenceless population from aeroplanes. I beg in all friendship to draw your attention to this misunderstanding, and request that you enlighten all those who share your views on the matter, in order to avoid the serious errors rendered inevitable by an incorrect estimate of the true character of the so-called "League of Nations."

The emancipation of Mesopotamia will never be attained with the aid or support of this or that imperialist state or League of Nations, but by the organized struggle of the broad masses of the town and country population of Iraq against the occupation. These masses are to be convinced that their material position will be alleviated and improved when the English are driven out: all traitorous Mesopotamians, with Emir Feisal at their head, who are seeking for personal enrichment from the oppression of the people, are to be exposed to the contempt they deserve, the confidence of the neighbouring countries is to be won and when all this is realized, then the victorious end of your heroic struggle against English imperialism is secured.

The Communist International, which unites the millions of revolutionary workers and peasants of England, France, Germany, Russia, etc., assures you of its sympathy and support in your fight for liberty.

— "The Leaders of the Mesopotamian People to the Comintern,"
International Press Correspondence (3 May 1923)



LENIN

Letter to Spartacist League/Britain

Workers Hammer has received the following letter from Anti-Imperialist Action written in response to the SWP's exclusion and threats of violence towards the Spartacist League (see above article). We thank the comrades for their letter defending workers democracy in this instance and are happy to publish it here, notwithstanding our many political differences.

Anti-Imperialist Action is a small grouping promoting an anti-imperialist political line. As such, we are naturally concerned at any attempts to silence other forces upholding a general anti-imperialist approach whatever other political differences we may have with them. Members of Anti-Imperialist Action have themselves been threatened when carrying one of our banners which has on one side "Victory to the Palestinians" and on the reverse "Down With Zionism."

There is no doubt that the Spartacist League is anti-imperialist. The latest edition of their publication *Workers Vanguard*, dated March 14th 2003, has an article beginning with a two thirds front page headline of, "All U.S. Troops Out of the Near East Now! Defend Iraq!" The sub-head is, "Down With U.S. Imperialism! For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers!" The bottom third of the page has the start of an article on North Korea

with the headline of, "Defend North Korea's Right to Nuclear Weapons!" and the subhead of "All U.S. Troops Out of Korea!" This is from a paper which is produced and sold in the United States! Their British paper, *Workers Hammer*, upholds a similarly aggressive anti-imperialist perspective.

In a leaflet, *Pacifism or Anti-Imperialism*, published in mid-2002, Anti-Imperialist Action defined the Socialist Workers Party dominated Stop the War Coalition as follows.

"The *Stop the War Coalition* is based on a *pacifist* political line. The general message is that war is bad because people get killed and therefore we should try to stop it. Opposition to the attack on Afghanistan by US and British imperialism has been based on this position. Stop the war opposed *both* the Al-Qaeda attack on the World Trade Centre *and* the bombing and invasion of Afghanistan.

The leading element in STWC has been the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). This Trotskyite organisation is not in theory pacifist but has opportunistically put forward a pacifist line on Afghanistan so as not to alienate other elements involved in the campaign such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). As usual, far from the SWP's manipulatory opportunism winning it influence and members it has achieved the opposite."

The *Stop the War Coalition* is a lowest

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WORKERS HAMMER

Marxist newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain

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

The Spartacist League is the British section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

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Defend Iraq! All US/British troops out of the Near East now!

The following statement was issued on 21 March.

With the loyal backing of Blair's "New" Labour government, the nuclear madmen in the White House have unleashed the military might of US imperialism for the bloody slaughter of Iraq. This is nothing but a colonial war of naked imperialist aggression to be followed by a colonial occupation of this oil-rich Near Eastern country. We stand for the military defence of Iraq against US and British attack. Every setback for these imperialist forces abroad is a blow in defence of the interests of the working class and oppressed masses around the world. It is the job of the working people of Iraq, and throughout the Near East, to get rid of the bloody regime of Saddam Hussein and all the colonels, sheiks and dictators, including the Zionist butchers who are using the cover of this war to ratchet up their daily killing of Palestinians with the aim of forcible expulsion. It is our job here to build the revolutionary leadership that can mobilise the only force with the social power and class interest to challenge the rule of capitalist imperialism: the multiethnic working class.

The working class in Britain and the Iraqi people face a common enemy in the British imperialist rulers today represented by Blair's Labour Party. To unleash more troops for the slaughter of Iraq, Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott has announced he will enforce a settlement on the firefighters who have been baited as "Saddam's friends" for struggling to better their miserable wages and working conditions. But just as the imperialists want to enforce class peace at home in order to wage their dirty colonial wars abroad, every successful fight in defence of the workers' interests breaks a cog in the imperialist war machine. In bringing munitions trains to a grinding halt in Scotland, ASLEF train drivers demonstrated the social power of the working class that can and must be mobilised against this war. But to mount such a class-struggle opposition requires a policy of uncompromising opposition to, and independence from, all the institutions and agencies of capitalist class rule.

The Stop the War Coalition makes much of uniting the broadest forces possible against the war. But unity with whom and for what? *Socialist Worker* (22 March) demands that the "Labour rebels" who voted against war turn their words into actions by "building the anti-war movement". But what were their words? Arguing that "the case for war against Iraq has not yet been established, especially given the absence of specific UN authorisation", the amendment put forward in Parliament by "antiwar" Labour MPs ended by declaring "total support will be given to British forces if hostilities do commence"! Needless to say, "total support" to the military forces raping Iraq renders impossible any effective class-struggle mobilisation against war. Here is the real face of "unity" based on a programme of bourgeois pacifism, one which sows illusions in capitalist "democracy" as the road to peace while rallying behind "god, queen and country"

Break with Labour "Old" and "New" — Build a Bolshevik Party!

when the bombs start dropping.

And when the bombs started dropping on Baghdad, the Stop the War Coalition was not far behind, decrying: "This war is a travesty and tragedy. There is no UN mandate and no justification." *For the past 12 years there has been a UN mandate for sanctions which have taken the lives of over one and a half million Iraqis, far more than were killed in the 1990-91 Gulf War!* Bob Crow, the left-talking leader of the RMT, likewise declaims that Blair has taken "illegal action" (ie, without the authority of the United Nations) to argue that "we should also take illegal action". Vaguely referring to civil disobedience, Crow certainly isn't talking about anything so "illegal" as trade union action in defiance of the government and its anti-union laws. On the contrary, the trade union tops in Britain could not even summon up the nerve to participate in the 10-minute work stoppage called by the European trade unions on 14 March.

To mobilise any genuine proletarian opposition to the war, workers must understand that war is simply the concentrated expression of a system based on the exploitation of labour; that for the imperialists guns are butter; that the United Nations since it was established at the end of World War II has operated solely to perpetuate and enforce the world's domination by the imperialist powers, centrally the United States. That this den of imperialist thieves, their satraps and victims is now being flouted by American imperialism is simply testimony to the US' emergence as the world's unrivalled military power following the capitalist counterrevolution that destroyed the former Soviet Union. The Labourites who run the Stop the War Coalition do not strive for the abolition of capitalism but simply want to align British imperialism more independently from the Americans.

Although bureaucratically degenerated and undermined by Stalinist misrule, the Soviet Union continued to embody gains for the working class achieved through the overthrow of capitalist rule by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. The International Communist League fought until the bitter end to defend those gains against imperialist attack and the forces of internal counterrevolution. Today we continue this fight in defence of the remaining workers states—Cuba, Vietnam, China and North Korea—including their urgent right to develop nuclear weapons. In contrast, most of those leftists who now protest the nuclear cowboys in the White House for throwing their military might around the world, lined up behind US imperialism and its allies in backing the very forces of counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet Union.

In his classic antiwar book *Socialism and War*, written in the midst of the car-

nage of the first imperialist world war, Bolshevik leader VI Lenin wrote:

"Opportunism and social-chauvinism have the same politico-ideological content—class collaboration instead of the class struggle, renunciation of revolutionary methods of struggle, helping one's 'own' government in its embarrassed situation, instead of taking advantage of these embarrassments so as to advance the revolution."

Lining up as the loyal lapdog of American imperialism has caused great embarrassment for Blair's "New Labour" government with the resignation of government ministers and opposition of backbenchers reflecting the increasing fractures between the overtly pro-capitalist leaders of the party and its working-class base.

We fight to exacerbate these contradictions, to split the working class from the grip of Labourism which has long served to tie the proletariat to the interests of capitalist class rule. Our purpose is to build a genuine workers party, one which fights for a thorough-going social revolution culminating in the class rule of the proletariat. But for the rest of the self-proclaimed "socialist" left, aligning themselves behind "left" Labour MPs like George Galloway, Blair's troubles in time of war are seen as the opportunity to breathe life back into the politics of "Old" Labour—where "Her Majesty's Parliament" was promoted as the "road to socialism" and public welfare programmes were offered to console those at the bottom of this system of brutal exploitation of the many by the few, and particularly to ward off the possibility of any serious social struggle.

With its calls for a "global general strike" Workers Power merely seeks to put a bit of left gloss on this project of "reclaiming Labour". This is all so much idiotic hot air. A general strike poses the question of which class shall rule. But for Workers Power it merely poses a parliamentary regime change. Arguing that a general strike could "easily develop into a battle over who rules the country" they point to 1974 when, "faced with a strike over pay by miners, the government turned it into a struggle over who rules the country" (*Workers Power*, March 2003). In 1974, the Tories were voted out of office and the Labour Party was voted in!

The Labour Party has always loyally served the interests of British imperialism. It went along with the imperial carve-up of the Near East after World War I which created the artificial state of Iraq and left the Kurds without a homeland. The Labour Party joined in a coalition government with Winston Churchill's Tories during World War II that maintained the relentless subjugation of colonial India. The post-World War II government of Clement Attlee marshalled British troops and bombers for the slaughter of over three million



British colonial terror returns to Iraq. Troops out now!

Koreans during the UN-sanctioned Korean War. It was the Labour government of Harold Wilson which sent British troops into Northern Ireland to back up the Orange statelet and its subjugation of the oppressed Catholic population. Not a word in opposition to these troops is today uttered by the Stop the War Coalition.

Far from advancing a struggle for "peace", those putative leftists who peddle illusions in parliamentary "democracy" promote the chauvinism of the capitalist rulers. They denounce Blair for joining "Bush's war", yet it was Blair's Labour Party government which launched a "war on terror" at home, outlawing immigrant and refugee organisations more than a year before the US imperialist rulers seized on the criminal attack on the World Trade Center to launch its own draconian witch hunt against immigrants. Organisations like the Turkish leftist Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front (DHKP-C) have been outlawed, their offices raided and a number of people now face criminal charges. *British troops out of Northern Ireland! Down with the anti-terrorism laws! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

Millions of people around the globe have poured out in protest against US imperialism's drive to war against Iraq. The mammoth demonstration in London on 15 February was a stunning measure of the increasing hatred of Blair's "New Labour" party. But none of this stayed the hand of the mad bombers in the White House or their toadies at 10 Downing Street. If there is one lesson that can and must be drawn by workers, antiwar youth and others who genuinely oppose this naked colonial war of imperialist aggression it is the absolute necessity of splitting with the social chauvinists and fighting to end the entire system of capitalist imperialism which generates war and the ideology which justifies it. *Only socialist revolution can end imperialist war! Defend Iraq! All US/British troops out of the Near East now! Break with Labour "Old" and "New"—Build a Bolshevik Party!* ■

Iraq...

(Continued from page 1)

“Hardliners in the Pentagon — and some at the White House — say that the United States should use its speedy victory in Iraq to drive home to North Korea that it could meet the same fate.”

Against those who appealed to the United Nations for “peace” and liberal pacifists who impotently bleated “no to war”, the International Communist League (ICL) took a side in the war, calling for the military defence of Iraq against the imperialist invaders without giving an iota of political support to the bloody Hussein regime. As proletarian internationalists who fight to build the world party of socialist revolution that can break the bloody grip of imperialism and its local henchmen on the world, we say: *Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! All US/British troops out of Iraq and the Near East now! Hands off Syria! For the unconditional military defence of the North Korean deformed workers state and its right to nuclear arms! For the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland!*

Defend the Palestinians! Israel out of the Occupied Territories!

Just as no “mass graves” were ever found in Bosnia — the lie peddled by the NATO imperialist powers to launch a terror bombing campaign against Serbia and echoed by most of the putative left in Britain and throughout Europe — not one “weapon of mass destruction” has been uncovered by the occupation forces in Iraq. Now various Labour MPs, as well as sections of the Tories and Liberal Democrats, are clamouring for a public inquiry into intelligence reports that Blair wielded as “proof” of the Hussein regime’s supposed arsenal of death. Of course, no one is talking about the power in the region that is armed to the teeth with “weapons of mass destruction” — the nuclear-armed Zionist military garrison state of Israel.

The Zionist rulers have taken full advantage of the Iraq war and the massive US military presence to intensify their murderous war of annihilation against the Palestinians. While Blair bleats that his US imperialist allies must revive their “road map” for “peace” in Israel/Palestine, the policies of the Bush administration are increasingly determined by a cabal of Zionist neo-conservatives and Christian fundamentalists. These types are intent on again reshaping the Near East — as it was earlier reshaped by British and French imperialism after the fall of the Ottoman Empire — including through creating a *cordón sanitaire* between Israel and potentially hostile states. The reason they have their sights aimed on Syria has nothing to do with any alliance between it and Saddam Hussein’s regime. In fact, Syria supported Iran against Iraq in the 1980-88 war and backed the US-led Desert Slaughter in 1991. The Syrian leadership’s real crime in the eyes of both the Bush gang and the Democratic Party, which is no less rabid in its support to the Zionists, is its hostility to Israel, from whom Syria demands the return of the Golan Heights seized in 1967.

In our interventions into the mass anti-war protests around the world, sections of the ICL highlighted the defence of the Palestinians against the Zionist genocide demanding: Israel out of the Occupied Territories! Defend the Palestinians! Throughout the surrounding region the working people and minorities are seething with anger at the miserable Arab rulers, the despised clerical ayatollahs in Iran, and the oppressive government in Turkey. Turning the screws on the oppressed masses of their own countries, these regimes did nothing but appease US imperialism in its drive to war against Iraq.

The criminal role played by the Kurdish nationalist leaders in acting as pawns for US imperialism will only set the Kurdish people up for yet another betrayal. What all the regional bourgeoisies, as well as all the imperialist powers, do not want to see is the creation of an independent Kurdish state, which would challenge the stability of the bourgeois order in the Near East.

Justice for the Kurds, the Palestinians, women hideously oppressed by *sharia*, the toilers of the region must be achieved in struggle against all the bloodsucking rulers and imperialist invaders in a fight for a *socialist federation of the Near East*. Hebrew-speaking workers must be won to the understanding that their own class interests require that they break with the Zionist rulers, and that they defend the Palestinians who are increasingly being brutally crushed under the jackboot of the Israeli military.

Such a revolutionary perspective is a far cry from what those self-proclaimed socialist organisations heading up or otherwise tailing the anti-war movement had



British troops march into Baghdad, 1919, amid imperialist carve-up of Near East, following World War I.

on offer. In the early days of this movement in Britain, the Stop the War Coalition, dominated by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), had two central slogans: “Stop the war! Freedom for Palestine!” But in the name of building the broadest possible unity of “anti-war” forces — which ranged from Labour Party MPs to the Church of England — the call for freedom for the Palestinians was dropped for fear of offending the sensibilities of bourgeois pacifists who abhor all “violence” particularly that which may be used by the oppressed against their oppressors.

The centrist Workers Power group (WP) had nothing to offer other than calls for “Victory to the Intifada”. We stand with the oppressed Palestinian people against the Zionist butchers in the Occupied Territories. But in a situation where desperate Palestinians face the overwhelming military might of the Zionist state, “Victory to the Intifada” can only mean politically supporting the bankrupt policy of Arab nationalism which has helped to bring the Palestinians to their present tragic impasse.

The Iraqi people faced even greater military odds confronted with the might of the most powerful imperialist country on the face of the planet. That is why we emphasised that the chief means of giving content to our call for the defence of Iraq was through class struggle against the imperialist rulers, especially in the US and Britain. For their part, Workers Power pontificated that its call for “victory to Iraq, defeat imperialism” be achieved by “any means necessary: guerrilla attacks, deception, suicide bombs, taking help from foreign volunteers, arms smuggled from Syria”. While advocating that the Iraqi people fight to the last drop of their blood, strap their bodies with explosives and hurl themselves against the imperialist invaders, on the home front where these vicarious guerrilla fighters might actually have to implement what they say in their

press it was a rather different story. Here WP came out with defiant calls proclaiming... “we must not just march: we must do or step pro-war MPs, hold dies-ins, lobby MPs surges, surround bases, picket media headquarters” (*Workers Power Global Week*, 30 March). And that’s the crux of it. All of Workers Power’s “defeat imperialism” rhetoric is merely a smokescreen for a political programme as much rooted in the notion that the “road to peace” lies through lobbying “Her Majesty’s Parliament” as those of the Stop the War Coalition, in which WP played its now-accustomed role of the loyal opposition.

Why the Stop the War Coalition didn’t

Millions of people from every continent demonstrated their opposition to the war against Iraq. The 15 February anti-war demonstration in London was the largest in the city’s history as some two million people poured into the streets. While a welcome statement of defiance of US

has long been the Labour Party. But just as workers are leaving the Labour Party in droves, propelled by hatred for the union-busting Blair government and with disaffected youth no longer buying the idea that you have to vote Labour to “fight the right” — a hatred and disaffection expressed in the mass outpouring against the war — the StWC sought to breathe new life into Labourite parliamentary reformism. To this end, they assiduously boosted the “anti-war” credentials of so-called Labour Party rebels.

A particular hero of virtually the entire left in Britain is maverick Labour MP George Galloway, who is now being witch hunted by Grand Inquisitor Blair and his minions in the right-wing press for taking a side with the Iraqi people against the US/British attack and refusing to recant his statement that British soldiers should refuse orders to slaughter Iraqis (see box opposite). Together with other Labour lefts like Jeremy Corbyn and various trade union leaders, Galloway had been central to the Socialist Campaign Group and its feeble attempts to “reclaim” the Labour Party for “peace and socialism”. As we wrote in “ICL in Worldwide Protests” (*Workers Vanguard* no 798, 28 February):

“These Labour ‘lefts’ all hark back to ‘real Labour.’ Just what are they referring to? The Labour Party which joined in a coalition with Winston Churchill’s Tories to pursue the aims of British imperialism during World War II, including the relentless subjugation of colonial India? The post-World War II government of Clement Attlee which marshaled British troops and bombers for the slaughter of over three million Koreans during the Korean war? The government of Harold Wilson, which dispatched British troops to Northern Ireland in 1969? The government of James Callaghan, which imposed the wage-slashing Social Contract on the combative British unions in the late 1970s and enforced such racist immigration policies as virginity tests for Asian women arriving in Britain?”

But Galloway is obviously a more astute politician than his fellow inhabitants of this campaign group. Concerned that the war, together with the government’s increasing attacks on workers and the oppressed, are demolishing illusions in parliamentary democracy and that the Labour Party as it stands is no longer a credible vehicle for containing the burgeoning anger at the bottom of this society, Galloway is now openly mooted the need to build a new social-democratic party. As he warned in *Labour Left Briefing* (April 2003): “Britain never needed a Labour Party more. No modern, industrialised, democratic country can be without a Labour Party. This is a political vacuum — and if nature abhors a vacuum it abhors a political vacuum most of all.” And Galloway was very clear about his concerns of what could fill such a vacuum as he insisted “I don’t mean a Leninist party or a Marxist party” (*Socialist Worker*, 5 April). The Labour Party, which lined up on the side of the imperialist powers against the 1917 Russian Revolution — the only successful anti-war movement in history — has always hated Leninism like the plague because it represents the programme and the kind of party that can end the rule of imperialism by leading the working class to power.

The other labour leaders promoted by the StWC were the sometimes left-talking trade union bureaucrats reviled by the bourgeoisie as the “awkward squad”. There is no question that their union members, such as the courageous ASLEF train drivers in Scotland who refused to move arms to NATO depots, displayed an inspiring combativity which gave a small taste of the social power of the working class. But this stood in sharp contrast to the union misleaders. While taking to the platforms at anti-war rallies to make militant speeches about mobilising union opposition to the war, they caved in as

imperialism and its British lapdogs in the Blair Labour government, such massive protests did not make a dent in the imperialist war machine. Opposition to the imperialists’ wars of colonial aggression can only be based on opposition to the entire system of capitalist imperialism whose drive for profit, gained through the exploitation of labour, leads it to fight to conquer new markets and spheres of influence around the globe. But the politics of the organisers of the anti-war protests in the StWC were not based on any such opposition. On the contrary, their declarations that the war could be stopped by uniting the broadest possible forces against it amounted to nothing more than peddling the age old parliamentary myth that capitalist class rule in Britain is “democratically” beholden to the “will of the people”. This was clearly expressed by SWP leader Chris Nineham, who proclaimed: “We need to reinvent democracy, to give a voice to the anti-war majority” (*Guardian*, 13 March). The fraud of bourgeois “democracy” was skewered by Lenin in his book *The State and Revolution*: “To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament — this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism”.

The Spartacist League/Britain and Spartacus Youth Group intervened with revolutionary internationalist contingents in the anti-war demonstrations under the banner: “Defend Iraq against US/British attack! Labour government means racism, union-bashing and war! For a multiethnic revolutionary workers party!” We fought for another kind of unity — the unity of the proletariat in struggle against the capitalist class enemy at home! That means a split with the forces whose purpose is to keep the exploited tied to their exploiters. In this country the central vehicle for this purpose, and for diverting the struggles of the proletariat into parliamentary channels

soon as the bombs started dropping, refusing even to participate in the ten-minute European-wide work stoppage against the war. FBU leader Andy Gilchrist called off the scheduled firefighters' strikes as these coincided with the day the war was launched. Here he was true to his declarations of being "a patriot" when the FBU was being hounded by Blair's Labour government for obstructing the mobilisation for war. As we wrote in a leaflet addressed to the FBU strikes last autumn, "Union leaders who buy into or capitulate to the government's war drive undermine the ability to wage class struggle at home." And having called off any further strike action to further demonstrate his patriotism Gilchrist is now trying to shove a sell-out deal down the throats of an angry membership. As for the Labour Party "rebels", they too were true to the words of their parliamentary "anti-war" amendment which promised, "in the event that hostilities do commence" to give "total support for the British forces".

In a television interview, John Rees, a long-time leader of the SWP as well as prominent spokesman for the StWC, declared that the best way to support the troops was to bring them home. Such social patriotism was put more baldly in a leaflet by Edinburgh StWC, prominently featured on its website, which opined: "To oppose unjust war, to oppose the misuse of our troops' [sic] loyalty and courage, is one of the most patriotic acts we can do." Here is the real face of the "unity" preached by the SWP and the StWC — unity with and behind the forces of the capitalist state.

It is the British and American imperialist rulers who bear all the responsibility for sending young working-class and minority men and women to kill and be killed in order to extend their power and profits. But we had a side in this war, in defence of the Iraqi soldiers and others who resisted the imperialist invasion. In contrast, support for "our troops" necessarily meant support for what they were doing, ie for the colonial subjugation of Iraq by American and British imperialism.

Workers Power — housebroken oppositionists

Now that the impotence of the StWC's protests is demonstrable, the centrists of Workers Power who served in building the unity of this coalition, have discovered that in fact it was an obstacle to stopping the war. *Workers Power Global Week* (13 April) declares:

"Millions hated the war but could not stop it. For this the reformist party leaders and the trade union bureaucrats are to blame. Once again, these labour lieutenants of capital snatched defeat from the jaws of victory.

"The leaders of the main trade union federations in both Britain and the USA — despite months of pacifistic talk — snapped to attention and called for a speedy victory for 'our boys' once the fighting started. This revealed their typical two-faced nature: apparent pacifists until the bugles sound, then the staunchest of patriots overnight.

"Even the left wing union leaders and supposedly militant federations in Britain, France, Italy, Spain, made no serious attempt to call more than token strikes against the war (15 minutes, two hours, a day at best). The leaders of the antiwar coalitions, like Stop the War in Britain, argued it was too soon to build local councils of trade unionists and antiwar activists to mobilise for all-out strike action, general strikes etc. Now it is too late. It seems the time is never quite right to challenge the bureaucracy's stranglehold of the mass organisations of the working class."

But the problem with the anti-war coalitions was not a matter of poor timing but of political programme and perspective. Similarly for WP "the time is never quite right" to break politically with the reformist class traitors. In the buildup to

the war against Iraq, *Workers Power* (December 2002) ran an article headlined "Break with Blair — We Need a New Workers' Party." They even allowed that "It needs to be a revolutionary party." But they go on to dismiss any such prospect saying "many workers don't yet agree with the need for revolution". Instead they called for another workers party to be headed by the very trade union bureaucrats that they now denounce for selling out the anti-war struggle such as Bob Crow and Andy Gilchrist.

Younger leaders of WP dismissed our interventions into the 9 March meeting of Youth to Stop the War, arguing that the working class and anti-war youth are not ready for revolutionary politics. Instead they peddled the StWC's calls to build a broad "people's" anti-war movement. Trotsky responded to similar arguments made by the centrists of the German Socialist Workers Party (SAP) in the buildup to the second inter-imperialist world war in his article "To Young Socialists and Communists Who Wish to Think" (22 July, 1935):

"Socialism is also not 'timely' as long as we are not in a position to realize it. But we have inscribed it on our banner and carry this banner quite openly to the masses. Once we became convinced that the struggle against war and for socialism requires the revolutionary consolidation of the proletarian vanguard on the basis of a new program, we must immediately set about the task....

"No high-sounding phrases on the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat can wipe away the real, that is, pacifist, character of the SAP policy which proposes to gather 'all forces' for disarmament and peace, to form for this purpose an 'all-inclusive committee.' Whoever preaches that the imperialists can — under the 'pressure' of the masses — disarm peacefully, denies at the same time the necessity of proletarian revolution. For what sort of revolution can there be against a *disarmed bourgeoisie*?"

Only socialist revolution can end imperialist war!

Workers Power argues that, "an international conference needs to be summoned by the militant anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist forces that were the backbone of the antiwar movement and driving force at the ESF in Florence in November 2002." Here WP promises that it will fight for "a programme for global revolution to uproot war and imperialism."



British Army experience of terrorising civilians in Northern Ireland is brought to Iraq.

Don't hold your breath. Coming out of its interventions in last year's meetings of the cabal of European Social Democratic parties and sundry reformist and centrist organisations, WP joined Rifondazione comunista, the Ligue communiste révolutionnaire and the SWP in signing an ESF declaration calling "on all the European heads of state to publicly stand against this war, whether it has UN backing or not, and to demand that George Bush abandon his war plans."

Down with witch hunt of George Galloway!

Emboldened by their "victory" in Iraq, the Labour government and the capitalist press are waging a vicious witch hunt against left Labour MP George Galloway for opposing the war. The purpose is to send a chilling message to any and all who would demonstrate any dissent with the aims and ambitions of British imperialism. This was captured in a 22 April article in *The Daily Telegraph* warning that others should "be reluctant to march in support of this kingdom's enemies in future".

In the midst of the war Galloway's statement that "The best thing British troops can do is to refuse to obey illegal orders", provoked howls of outrage in the press. The *Sun* rag ran a front-page article with Galloway's picture over the headline, "TRAITOR", leading to dozens of death threats against him. The gears started turning in the Labour government with threats to haul Galloway before a disciplinary star chamber. Then on 22 April a *Telegraph* reporter came up with a story that in the midst of the devastated rubble of a government building in Baghdad he had miraculously uncovered a file folder containing putative correspondence "demonstrating" that Galloway was on the take from Hussein's Ba'athist regime. How convenient! Now the witch hunt really went into high gear.

A *Telegraph* column (22 April) lamented the death penalty no longer applies for "traitors"; the Labour leadership promised a full investigation the very day these "claims" were published; and the Attorney General has launched an investigation into Galloway's Mariam Campaign, an organisation that campaigned for years against UN sanctions on Iraq and its murderous effects on Iraqi children. After the US/British imperialists murdered countless Iraqi men, women and children in order to plunder the oil resources of Iraq, Galloway is charged for allegedly cashing in on the UN's oil-for-food programme. What rank hypocrisy!

Galloway is pilloried for urging Iraqis to fight the "foreign invaders". Unlike the rest of the left, we have no truck with Galloway and his efforts to revive Labourism. But as revolutionaries who took a stand forthrightly fighting for the defence of Iraq we can salute him for standing with the Iraqi people against the imperialist invaders. We would also note that he showed more courage of his convictions than his so-called socialist camp followers in the Stop the War Coalition (StWC), like the Socialist Workers Party who whined that "peace is patriotic" when the bombs started dropping.

The line up against Galloway is truly sinister. The staunchly pro-war, pro-Zionist *Telegraph* has in the board of its parent company none other than Richard Perle, a prominent player in the pro-Zionist, Christian fundamentalist Bush cabal (*Private Eye*, no 1077, 4-17 April). And renegade MI6 agent Richard Tomlinson has accused the editor of the *Sunday Telegraph* of working with MI6 (*Guardian Unlimited*, 22 April). After publishing its "expose" on Galloway, this right-wing mouthpiece for the imperialist powers that be is also going after StWC chairman and Communist Party supporter Andrew Murray for being "an active communist and supporter of North Korea".

The witch hunt against Galloway is an attack on all workers, minorities, youth and leftists who dare challenge British imperialism and solidarise with its victims. We of the Spartacist League say: *Down with the witch hunt of George Galloway!* ■

As the capitalist rulers of France, Germany and Russia struck a cynical posture as the "peace-loving" opponents of American "unilateralism", revolting cries of "vive la France" came from the speakers platforms at anti-war demonstrations in Britain and throughout Europe. But the complaints of these European govern-

example, hope to hold on to massive French investments in Iraq on behalf of oil giant TotalFinaElf. But the US masters insist that they fought for and stole Iraq themselves and no one else is going to get their nose in the trough. Having been the driving force behind the UN starvation blockade for the past twelve years, the US imperialists are now calling on the UN to lift the sanctions — and demanding that France, Germany and Russia forgive billions of dollars in loans — so that they can fully exploit their control over Iraq's oil wealth on the world market.

The emergence of the US as the unrivalled imperialist military power pummeling the face of the planet is bitter testimony to the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92. The left, which now decries the depredations being visited upon the working people and oppressed of the world by American imperialism, while lining up behind their "own" imperialist rulers, made their contribution to the current shape of the world. Virtually to a man the fake Trotskyists backed the imperialist-sponsored forces that led to the capitalist counterrevolutions that have ravaged the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In this too they invoked the credentials of capitalist "democracy" against "Stalinist totalitarianism".

The Soviet Union was deformed by the rule of the nationalist Kremlin bureaucracy, but it remained a workers state based on collectivised property forms and its military might stayed the hand of US imperialism. We fought until the bitter end in defence of these gains against the imperialists and their counterrevolutionary

continued on page 10

We print below the programme of the Spartacus Youth Group (SYG). We of the SYG intervened into the recent anti-war protests, fighting to win youth to the programme of proletarian internationalism and socialist revolution in opposition to the reformist programme of the Stop the War Coalition and its various Labourite components.

The SYG is the student/youth auxiliary organisation of the Spartacist League, British section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). It is a transitional organisation where revolutionary-minded youth can gain an apprenticeship in



Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Group contingent on 12 April London anti-war demonstration. Workers Hammer photos



Marxist politics, through study and active political intervention on the campuses and amongst workers and the oppressed. The SYG is organisationally independent of the Spartacist League and fights alongside it on the basis of our common proletarian, revolutionary, internationalist programme—the programme of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky—for new revolutions like the Russian Revolution of October 1917!

If you agree with the programme below and want to fight for a socialist future free from capitalist exploitation and imperialist slaughter, join us!



Spartacus Youth Group ten point programme

1. Mobilise youth and students behind the social power of the multiethnic working class! The trade union bureaucracy are “labour lieutenants of capital”: agents of the capitalist class within the workers movement—for a class-struggle leadership of the unions! Picket lines mean don’t cross! For union-run minority job recruitment and training programmes! For union control of hiring! Jobs for all at union wages! Organise the unorganised! Down with multi-tier wages which pit younger and older workers against each other! No to New Deal “work for dole” schemes and all benefit crackdowns! Cops, screws and security guards out of the unions! Keep the capitalist government and courts out of the unions! For class struggle to smash the anti-union laws!

2. For the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland! The existing tie between Northern Ireland—a sectarian, Orange statelet created by imperialist partition—and the British state can only be oppressive to the Catholic population. Labour’s imperialist “peace” deal is a lie, based on military repression by maintaining these troops. We oppose any imperialist “peace” deal! No to the forced reunification of Ireland which would reverse the terms of oppression against Protestants! For the revolutionary overthrow of British imperialism, the Catholic clericalist state in the South and the Orange statelet in the North! For an Irish workers republic, part of a voluntary socialist federation of the British Isles!

3. Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Down with racist immigration laws! Shut down the government’s refugee detention centres! No deportations! Defend all victims of state repression! Free Winston Silcott! The capitalist state is inherently racist. No reliance on the capitalist cops and courts! Ethnic minorities form a strategic part of the working class, not only are they at the forefront of class struggle here but they form a crucial bridge to the working class abroad. For mass trade union/minority mobilisations to stop the fascists and

race terrorists! Fascist terror is not a question of free speech! Smash the NF/BNP/Combat 18!

4. The capitalist state—at its core consisting of the cops, courts, prisons and the standing army—is the executive committee of the ruling class, an instrument of organised violence by the capitalists against the working class and the oppressed. The capitalist state is not neutral and cannot be reformed—it must be replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat! Defend the victims of racist cop terror and police frame-ups! Down with Labour’s Terrorism Act! There is no justice in the capitalist courts! No illusions in “community control” of the police! For the right to bear arms and the right to self-defence!

5. For women’s liberation through socialist revolution! For free abortion on demand! For free, quality 24-hour child care! Equal pay for equal work! We oppose the privatisation of the NHS and welfare system! For free, quality health care for all! Down with reactionary age of consent laws! Government out of the bedroom: all forms of consenting sexual activity are private matters! Down with anti-gay Section 28 and all family values and anti-gay legislation! Full democratic rights for gays! Down with Labour’s reactionary witch hunt against so-called “sex offenders”! Down with all laws against “crimes” without victims—prostitution, consensual sex, drugs!

6. Abolish the monarchy, the House of Lords and other reactionary relics of the feudal system! For separation of church and state! Defend science against superstition and mysticism! Down with the licensing laws! Down with English chauvinism! For the right of self-determination for the Scottish and Welsh nations, including the right to independence! At the present time, we advocate common class struggle for workers in the British Isles. For a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles!

7. For free quality education for all! No

tuition fees! For an end to streaming! Keep religion out of schools! For open university admissions with a state-paid living grant! Abolish the administration—the universities should be run by those who work and study there! Drive police and army recruiters off the campuses! For the right of people to be educated in the language of their choice!

8. Britain is an imperialist country in chronic capitalist decay. The British bourgeoisie, living off superprofits extracted from toilers around the world, is the main enemy of the working class in Britain! For the defeat of British imperialism through workers revolution! We oppose the European Union—not for national-chauvinist, protectionist reasons—but because it is an imperialist trade bloc, a vehicle for capitalist co-operation against all the working classes of Europe. Down with racist “Fortress Europe”! No to a European imperialist Rapid Reaction Force! All British/UN/NATO/OSCE troops out of the Balkans, East Timor and the Persian Gulf! Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq—all US, British and Allied troops out now! Imperialist troops are the bloody enemies of the world’s workers and oppressed!

9. Defend the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution, which smashed the rule of landlords and capitalists, and collec-

tivised property! For unconditional military defence of China and the other deformed workers states—Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea—against imperialism and internal counterrevolution! For workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats and establish regimes of workers democracy based on the power of workers councils and revolutionary internationalism! Workers of the world unite! For international working-class solidarity!

10. The Labour government rules for racist British imperialism! Labour is the historic barrier to proletarian revolution in Britain, tying workers and the oppressed to the bourgeoisie. It is a bourgeois workers party, with a working-class base and a pro-capitalist leadership. We seek to split the working-class base away from these leaders. Break with Labour—Build a Bolshevik party! For the expropriation of the whole capitalist class! Old Labour-style nationalisation of failing industries amounts to a cash bailout of the capitalist owners at the expense of workers and fuels national chauvinism. Down with the poison of protectionism! For a revolutionary, multiethnic workers party that fights for socialist revolution! Look to the example of the heroic, Bolshevik-led workers of 1917 Russia! For new October revolutions! For the international dictatorship of the proletariat! ■

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Hey, Labourites, leave us kids alone!

On "day X", as the US/British imperialists finally unleashed their bloody terror against the people of Iraq, thousands of school students, particularly from secondary schools and sixth form colleges walked out of their classes and poured into the streets in spirited protests to express their gut hatred of this slaughter. In sharp contrast to these youthful protesters, the motley crowd of Labour MPs, trade union bureaucrats and liberals, with whom fake socialists like the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) built "unity" to "stop the war", rushed to support "our troops" once the shooting began. Around the world, from London to Paris to Sydney, school and college students were in the vanguard of the massive anti-war protests.

The spectacle of pupils marching through the school gates to oppose the murder of thousands of Iraqis provoked outrage among MPs and head teachers. In response to the hypocritical concern for their "safety", one 16-year-old sixth form student defiantly declared: "Tony Blair, obviously, doesn't think Iraqi children are too young to be bombed, so how can we be too young to protest?" (*Guardian*, 6 March). Demonstrators of all ages were punched, kicked, gassed and arrested by the cops, learning a painful lesson in the true nature of the capitalist state. Once the thin veneer of "democracy" is stripped away, the state is revealed as little more than a policeman's truncheon wielded on behalf of the ruling class against workers, youth and the oppressed. Such cop brutality is a daily fact of life for minority and immigrant youth under Labour's racist rule. At the 20 March demonstration at Parliament Square, young supporters of the Socialist Labour Party (SLP), of minority background, were arrested and beaten up by the police.

School heads used truancy laws to keep many students from leaving their classrooms, while suspending and expelling others for the "offence" of protesting against the Labour government's war on Iraq. Students were instead patronisingly told to "express themselves in alternative ways", such as in citizenship lessons and school assemblies. But the curriculum of capitalist education is designed to instil into young people the reactionary ideologies of a capitalist ruling class which offers no future for working-class and particularly minority youth in inner city schools other than low-paid jobs flipping burgers, or else the dole or jail. These same youth are the target of a plethora of reactionary laws such as the anti-sex legislation: age of consent laws and the anti-gay Section



Ray Tang/Rex

Militant school students were vanguard of anti-war protests, braving expulsion and cop violence.

28. It is these youth who are to be the cannon fodder for imperialism's wars of plunder.

The Spartacus Youth Group (SYG) demands that all students suspended or expelled for taking part in protests against the war be reinstated and their records cleared! Drop the charges!

The SYG intervened into the anti-war protests. In counterposition to the Labourite pacifism of the Stop the War Coalition (StWC), we fought to win young anti-war protesters to the understanding that to get rid of war it is necessary to get rid of the capitalist system that breeds war. The imperialists' predatory wars are merely the continuation, by more violent means, of the "normal" workings of capitalism, which daily condemns millions of working people around the world to poverty, malnutrition, racist terror or death in industrial "accidents". In the war on Iraq we took a side: for the military defence of this semi-colonial country against the imperialist onslaught. In doing so, we gave not an iota of political support to the bloody Ba'athist regime of Saddam Hussein. We understood that the Iraqi people had no means of defeating the might of the US/British military on the battlefield and that therefore the main way to defend Iraq was through class struggle in the imperialist countries — particularly here in Britain and in the US — against the capitalist rulers and their governments. *Only workers revolution can end imperialist war!*

The plunder of Iraq under US military occupation, enforced by British troops, has provoked cries of protest from other

capitalist powers like Russia and France who want to get their share of the spoils. The rivalries between these powers exposes the myth promoted by the "anti-globalisation" milieu that the nature of imperialism has fundamentally changed, with "multinational corporations" independent of nation states dominating the world. Millions of young people around the world passionately wanted to prevent the brutal rape of the Iraqi people. They demonstrated en masse, joined in sit-down protests and "direct action" against the war. But imperialism cannot be pressured into being more "peaceful" any more than it can be pressured into not exploiting workers. Those youth who are seeking a way to struggle against the imperialist system of racism and war need to understand what is wrong with anti-war movements like the StWC.

The various components of the StWC all told workers and youth the lie that to stop the war it was necessary to build the broadest possible movement to pressure Blair not to support "Bush's war". They therefore promoted unity with "left" trade union bureaucrats and pro-imperialist "Old Labour" figures like Tony Benn, Jeremy Corbyn and George Galloway — the very forces who are most effective in forging the ideological chains that bind workers and the oppressed to the capitalist system through fostering illusions that capitalism can be reformed through parliament. Revolutionary struggle against the capitalist system as a whole to end war requires not unity, but the sharpest break with "Old Labour". The StWC is not an anti-imperialist opposition to war — it did not take a side for defence of Iraq and could not even make the elementary call for British troops to get out of Northern Ireland.

One group, which peddled its wares in the school students' anti-war protests, is "Revolution" (Revo), the youth group of Workers Power, which is active in Youth to Stop the War (YSW). Revo postures as the left wing of the StWC and writes:

"While mass marches are important, they won't be enough to stop the war. We revolutionaries need to keep arguing inside the stop the war movement for the kind of actions that will. We need to fight to turn the mass movement STW has built into a mass militant movement that will strike, walkout and blockade against the war".

— *Revolution* no 57

They neglect only to mention the crux of

the whole matter: that the obstacle to such working-class strike action against the war was precisely the "left" trade union bureaucrats, with whom they are allied in the StWC and who worked overtime to prevent or undermine any action against the war. Lenin exposed what such "unity" mongering means at a time of war when he wrote: "Unity with the social-chauvinists means unity with one's 'own' national bourgeoisie, which exploits other nations; it means splitting the international proletariat." He stressed that a break with the social-chauvinists "is necessary and inevitable for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat" ("Opportunism and the Collapse of the Second International", January 1916). Making tactical criticisms of the StWC, while maintaining unity with Benn, Corbyn & Co, Revo merely give a "left" cover to the StWC and thus help to keep the more leftist elements bound to pro-imperialist Labourism.

Another group that was active in the school student protests was International Socialist Resistance (ISR), a youth front of the Socialist Party (SP). Members of the SP/ISR also argue that it is necessary to be in the StWC in order to turn it into a "socialist" organisation. The SP's calls for a "new mass party" of the working class are designed to dupe youth into believing that the SP/ISR represents a socialist alternative to New Labour. Don't be fooled. The SP/ISR is a deeply reformist organisation whose talk of "socialism" means *not* revolution to expropriate the capitalist class, but an "Old Labour"-style government in parliament to "Take into public ownership the top 150 big companies, banks, building societies that dominate the economy" and for "Compensation to be paid on the basis of proven need"! ("What we stand for" column, *The Socialist*)

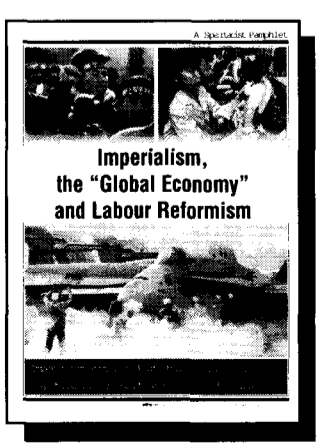
They raise the call to "Stop the US-UK Occupation of Iraq", but lest any youth be fooled that the SP/ISR are opponents of British imperialism, in true Labourite fashion they partake of the chauvinism of the British ruling class and refuse to call for British troops out of Northern Ireland and to defend the oppressed Catholic minority. The SP/ISR's adaptation to reactionary prejudices that are instilled in the working class by the capitalists and their lackeys is shown by Northern Irish SP leader Peter Hadden. While women in Northern Ireland are viciously oppressed under clerical reaction, Hadden declares that for the SP, "Abortion, while an important issue is not a make or break question". And the SP/ISR are notorious for their assertion that the police — the racist armed thugs of the capitalist state — are "workers in uniform". Try telling that to workers and youth on the receiving end of cop terror.

Young people who have become radicalised by the imperialist slaughter in Iraq are well advised to beware the tired old StWC Labourites who are today acting as cheerleaders for the school protests. Many of these youth may not be old enough to vote, but they should know that the likes of the SWP and Workers Power helped to elect this Labour government and will seek to exploit the student protests as pressure to replace Blair with "Old Labour". Those youth who have no wish to become voting fodder for the Labour Party of racism and war should check out the revolutionary programme and practice of the SYG! ■

This pamphlet assesses recent changes in the world economy in a historical perspective, from the origins of modern imperialism in the late 19th century through the capitalist counterrevolution in Eastern Europe and the former USSR and its aftermath. Reformist ideologues of globalisation seek to obscure the role of the capitalist nation-state and the danger of inter-imperialist war which is inherent in capitalism, while amnestying the refusal of the trade union bureaucracies to wage class struggle against their respective bourgeoisies.

Exploitation, poverty and social degradation can be eliminated only through proletarian revolutions in the imperialist centres as well as the neocolonial countries, laying the basis for an international planned socialist economy.

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Cromwell...

(Continued from page 12)

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

—Where is Britain going?

Trotsky railed against "left" Labour leaders for their religiosity, cowardice and servility to the monarchy—as he put it, they "dare not refuse pocket money to the Prince of Wales". The monarchy is an integral part of the "parliamentary democracy" that Labour leaders revere. One of the few Labour figures today who professes to oppose the monarchy is Tony Benn, and he's a member (for life) of the Queen's Privy Council, a secret body whose members swear "by Almighty God to be a true and faithful servant unto The Queen's Majesty"! Benn's "anti-monarchism" makes us Red Republicans look longingly on the day when Oliver Cromwell summoned his troops to disperse the Long Parliament with the words, "call them in, call them in".

While he was a young student at Oxford in the mid 1930s, Christopher Hill joined the Communist Party, as indeed did many youth who were radicalised by the rise of the Nazis in Germany and by the Spanish Civil War. This was a time when the capitalist

and nail against the capitalist counter-revolution of 1991-92. We don't know what Christopher Hill did in World War II. But given that he openly professed his Marxist sympathies, it seems unlikely that he could have played a role comparable to heroic Soviet spies Kim Philby, Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean and Anthony Blunt, his contemporaries and comrades who were recruited at Cambridge.

Hill was outstanding even among Communist Party historians such as EP Thompson, Eric Hobsbawm, AL Morton and Rodney Hilton who were his peers. He wrote cogent history because he mainly restricted his work to seventeenth century England, on which there was no Stalinist line. One exception is Hill's 1947 book *Lenin and the Russian Revolution*, which is inferior to any of his works on the English Revolution. He denies Trotsky's role alongside Lenin as co-leader of the Russian Revolution while elevating Stalin to great heights.

Class forces in the Civil War

Key to understanding the English Revolution is recognising the class forces in conflict. On the side of King Charles I were the old feudal landed aristocracy and the Anglican Church. The latter became the official church with the Reformation against the



Portrait by Robert Walker
The Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell, called the "great revolutionary of his time" by Leon Trotsky.

—Introduction to the English edition of *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* (1892)

During his reign, Charles I connived with the Catholic absolutist monarchies of Europe, including through his queen, Henrietta Maria of France. The grip of the Crown and Church on the populace in England would be difficult to overstate: the king ruled by "Divine Right"; both Church and Crown operated their own courts; non-attendance at one's local parish church was punishable by law and church taxes were levied in the amount of one-tenth (a tithe) of one's produce or profit. The dominant force on the Parliamentary side was the rising Presbyterian bourgeoisie based on the City of London and the merchant capitalists who had been accumulating vast amounts of capital. This class dominated the House of Commons, which had become three times as rich as the House of Lords. But the feudal system was an enormous barrier to the expansion of trade and industry and thus the merchant capitalists were compelled to remove these fetters on their profit accumulation. Parallel with the rise of capitalism went developments in science, and the capitalists needed science, which gave them added impetus to rebel against the Established Church.

In the countryside, the encroachment of capitalist economic relations meant higher rents for tenants. Lower sections of the landed gentry—from which Cromwell hailed—were being squeezed by the big feudal landowners. Also pitted against the feudal nobility were the yeomen—a stratum of independent farmers—who became the backbone of Cromwell's army, as well as petty-bourgeois layers—small producers and craftsmen. The majority of wage-earners in England at the time were domestic servants and there was no industrial working class to speak of. The radical wing of the Parliamentary side, known as the "Independents", came into conflict with the conservative Presbyterians, while Cromwell occupied an intermediate position between these two wings.

Cromwell's army, instrument of revolution

England in 1641 was crisis-ridden: the Royalists pulled out of Parliament because it would not do their bidding; a wave of riots against the enclosure of common land engulfed the countryside and an uprising in Ireland provoked a major crisis. In this context civil war between Parliamentarians and Royalists erupted in 1642. The Presbyterian bourgeois elements were alarmed by the social forces unleashed in the countryside against land seizures. The Royalists had created their own army, but the "Parliamentary" side tried to avoid doing like-

wise, hoping at first to leave the task of defeating the Royalists to the Scots, with whom Parliament signed a "Solemn League and Covenant" in 1643.

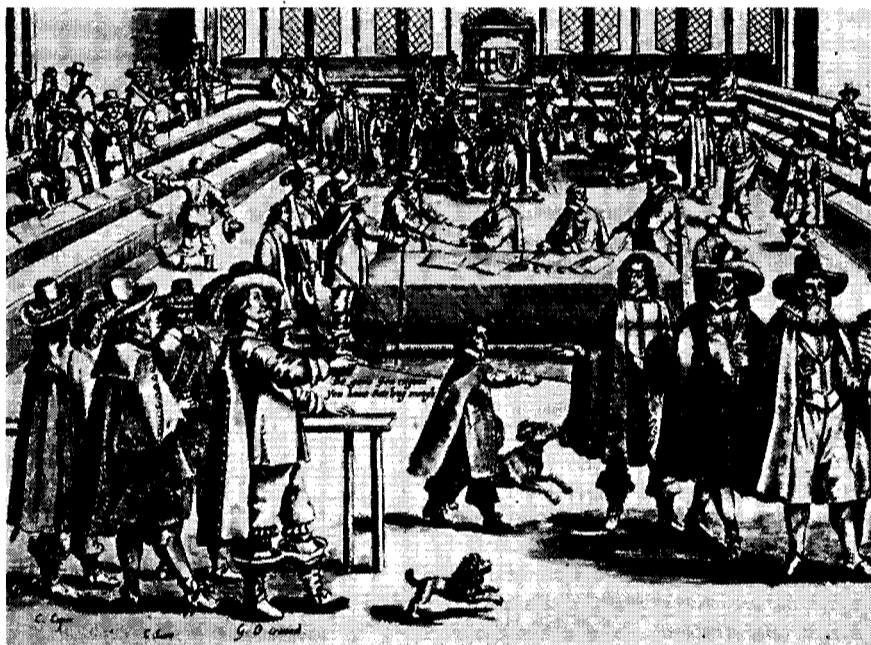
However in the course of battle Cromwell became convinced of the need for an army that would decisively defeat the Royalists. In 1645 he founded the New Model Army which became the decisive force in the revolution. In it he welded together yeomen, peasants and labouring classes of the cities—who had already engaged in effective battles against the Royalists—into a disciplined army. The New Model Army cut across aristocratic disdain for the

"lower orders" by promoting men according to merit, up to the rank of general, which was normally the preserve of the nobility. Cromwell famously said: "I had rather have a plain russet-coated captain that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows than what you call a gentleman and is nothing else" (quoted in *God's Englishman*).

The "Protestant work ethic" played an enormous role in the rise of capitalism by providing an ideology that was tailor-made for the rise of a system based on private property. Calvinism was the clearest expression of this "work ethic" and Puritanism, the ideology of Oliver Cromwell and the yeomen, was heavily influenced by Calvinism. Puritanism emphasised the virtue of hard work, thrift, self-discipline and individual merit, over factors such as "noble birth". The Puritans opposed the Presbyterians' involvement in enclosures—the seizure of common lands from peasants by declaring it to be private property. Hill cites a Puritan tract urging Presbyterian gentlemen to "first go hang yourselves for your great thefts of enclosures and oppressions, and then afterwards you can go hang your poor brethren for petty thefts" (quoted in *The World Turned Upside Down*). A variety of small Protestant sects, tending to represent more radical social layers, emerged with the rise of capitalism. Because they favoured the right to choose one's own religion and some regarded women as equal, they were persecuted as subversive. Within the army ranks there was considerable tolerance for these views and Cromwell's army became a vehicle for major changes in many areas of social life.

The New Model Army inflicted crushing defeats on the Royalists, culminating in the battle of Naseby in 1645 in which they captured the King. With victory in their grasp, the conservative bourgeois elements in Parliament sought a compromise with the Royalists. This outraged the army ranks who, under the influence of the Levellers, were becoming politically independent. The Levellers organised a system of elected Agitators and acquired a substantial following in army regiments. With the King's fate now hanging in the balance, Christopher Hill describes the situation as one in which: "Army and Parliament now existed side by side as rival powers in the State" (*The English Revolution of 1640*).

In June 1647 Parliament tried to disperse the army regiments, ordering them to enlist for Ireland or face immediate dismissal. The ranks mutinied, the Agitators seized the King, held him captive and led a march on London. This led to the ultimate nightmare scenario for every fat-headed Parliament-



Radio Times Hulton
Oliver Cromwell confronts Parliament in 1653, during short-lived English republic following execution of Charles I.

world was beset by the Great Depression, yet the Soviet Union was undergoing dramatic economic development. In Britain there was mass disaffection with Labour's betrayals, precipitated by Labour leader Ramsay MacDonald joining a "National Government" in 1931. But while the British Communist Party that Hill joined was distrusted by the British bourgeoisie for its loyalty to the Kremlin, it nonetheless was a party of parliamentary reformism. Posthumously, Hill is being accused of having spied for the Soviet Union in the period during World War II when he worked in military intelligence and at the Foreign Office. For the British establishment and their Labour Party lackeys, this is the ultimate betrayal. Spying for the Soviet Union against an imperialist power, if indeed he did, is certainly no crime as far as we Trotskyists are concerned. The Soviet Union emerged out of the Bolshevik October 1917 revolution and continued to embody the gains of that revolution despite the political counterrevolution that took place in 1923-24 with the rise to power of the conservative Stalinist bureaucracy. For this reason we defended the Soviet Union and fought tooth

Catholic Church a century earlier, which also led to much political power (and land) passing to the Crown. The fifteenth-century Wars of the Roses, in which overmighty and some mighty nobles killed each other, had the virtue of reducing the old feudal lords.

Outside of England, the Catholic Church dominated the feudal world and was the main bulwark against social, economic and scientific progress. As Europe emerged from the Middle Ages, the nascent merchant capitalist class was forced into a collision with the feudal system. Friedrich Engels described the role of the Catholic Church:

"The great international centre of feudalism was the Roman Catholic Church. It united the whole of feudalized Western Europe, in spite of all internal wars, into one grand political system, opposed as much to the schismatic Greeks as to the Mohammedan countries. It surrounded feudal institutions with the halo of divine consecration. It had organised its own hierarchy on the feudal model, and, lastly, it was itself by far the most powerful feudal lord, holding, as it did, fully one-third of the soil of the Catholic world. Before profane feudalism could be successfully attacked in each country and in detail, this, its sacred central organization, had to be destroyed."

arian: the revolutionary army purged Parliament of its main conciliators, causing all the Presbyterians to flee from "the House". Parliament subsequently assigned Oliver Cromwell to negotiate with the mutinous ranks. The Agitators met Cromwell and demanded that he should lead the army, while making clear that, if he chose not to, they "would go their own way without him". Cromwell and the generals made a deal with the Levellers and Cromwell resumed command of the army.

Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution* (1931) referred to this stage of the English revolution, describing it as "dual power" between Parliament and the army. He noted:

"It would seem that the conditions are now created for the single rule of the Presbyterian bourgeoisie. But before the Royal power could be broken, the parliamentary army has converted itself into an independent political force. It has concentrated in its ranks the Independents, the pious and resolute petit bourgeoisie, the craftsmen and farmers. This army powerfully interferes in social life, not merely as an armed force, but as a Praetorian Guard, and as the

ued to seek a compromise with the King. However this time the army leadership in London, in alliance with the Levellers, also decided to put the King on trial, which meant he would be sentenced to death. This was done while Cromwell was finishing off the military campaign in the north of England. Upon his return, Cromwell hesitated before endorsing the regicide, although hardly out of principle—he is reputed to have told his soldiers earlier that he "would as soon discharge his pistol upon [the King] as at any other private person" (quoted in *God's Englishman*). When Cromwell made his mind up, he wholeheartedly supported the execution of Charles I, declaring: "I tell you we will cut off his head with the crown on it."

On 30 January 1649 the King was executed, along with other leading Royalists. The regicide marked the decisive defeat for the feudal order in England. And as the first revolution of its kind, the significance of this victory was enormous. In March the monarchy and House of Lords were formally abolished and England became a republic.

way for the parliamentarism and democracy of the two subsequent centuries. In revenge for Cromwell's execution of Charles I, Charles II swung Cromwell's corpse up on the gallows. But pre-Cromwellian society could not be re-established by the restoration. The works of Cromwell could not be liquidated by the thievish legislation of the Restoration because what is written by the sword cannot be wiped out by the pen."

— *Where is Britain going?*

Having brought revolution to England, Cromwell brings tyranny to Ireland

The execution of Charles I so alarmed the bourgeoisie that within days they re-opened negotiations with the Royalists. The latter were regrouping and were actively engaged in battle in Ireland. In March 1649 Parliament nominated Cromwell to command an invasion of Ireland. The prospect of being shipped to Ireland provoked a Leveller revolt in the army, as had happened in 1647, but this time on a much larger scale. However this time Cromwell and his generals did not side with

that would carry this out. As an added incentive for a military conquest, Parliament had passed an "Adventurers Act" in 1642 inviting English money-men to "invest" in the army, in return for which they were guaranteed Irish land. Under this scheme Cromwell himself had loaned over 2000 pounds and had been promised land in Leinster.

Cromwell's military campaign in Ireland was designed to colonise Ireland with settlers, by seizing land from Catholic landowners, who were sent to Connaught. Tenants were offered the choice of going with the landlord, or remaining to serve the new lord as "hewers of wood and drawers of water". Cromwell also instituted severe repression for the 1641 uprising. For sheer brutality his campaign is regarded to this day as the most repressive English invasion ever. It has also been seized upon ever since by supporters of Catholic reaction and Royalism, as an example of the barbarity of what they termed the "regicide republic". A Jesuit historian, Father Denis Murphy, became the leading Irish authority on Cromwell's campaign. In 1883 he published fabricated tales about Cromwell's indiscriminate slaughter of women and children, to inflate the death toll of this already bloody campaign. Judged by military standards of the day, and of the Civil War battles in England and Scotland, Cromwell's policy was ruthless (though not indiscriminate). His army demanded the surrender of the garrisons at Drogheda and Wexford and when this was refused he took no prisoners but put to death all men at arms, including Catholic clergy.

Christopher Hill aptly describes Cromwell's conquest of Ireland as "the first big triumph of English imperialism and the first big defeat of English democracy" (*The English Revolution of 1640*). In this he echoes Karl Marx who said in 1869 that "English reaction in Ireland (as in Cromwell's time) had its roots in the subjugation of Ireland" (Letter to Engels, 10 December 1869). Cromwell's army conquered Ireland, crushed the resistance and seized two-thirds of the land. In addition, Cromwell encouraged colonial settlement of Ireland, particularly from among Leveller-influenced regiments in his army, as a way of dispersing trouble-makers.

The fact that Cromwell's army had brought progress and liberation from the yoke of absolutism to England, yet offered nothing but brutal colonisation to Ireland, seems contradictory at first. But the same phenomenon can be seen for example when we look at the impact of the French revolutionary regime in Haiti, a French colony. The French Revolution itself had inspired a slave rebellion in Haiti that struck fear into the slavemasters and property-owning classes. However, the class that came to power in France under the banner of "liberty, equality and fraternity" was the bourgeoisie and the new rulers were horrified at the prospect of abolishing slavery in Haiti, because the wealth of the leading capitalists in France depended on the enormous profits that flowed out of the Antilles. For the same reason, the relationship of Cromwellian England to Ireland would necessarily be oppressive because the determining factor was the profit the English capitalists raked in from its Irish colony, where the London-Derry Company had been established before Cromwell's reign.

The fact that the bulk of the Irish poor were Catholic certainly added to the hatred displayed by Cromwell's troops. It is true that the struggle against feudalism had to be conducted in the

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Spartacists at 1980 New York protest against Prince Philip visit (right). Trotskyists uphold revolutionary traditions of Cromwell against pro-monarchist, parliamentary sycophancy of Labour leaders like Blair.



political representative of a new class opposing the prosperous and rich bourgeoisie. Correspondingly the army creates a new state organ rising above the military command: a council of soldiers' and officers' deputies ('agitators'). A new period of 'double sovereignty' has thus arrived: that of the Presbyterian Parliament and the Independents' army. This leads to open conflicts. The bourgeoisie proves powerless to oppose with its own army the 'model army' of Cromwell—that is, the armed plebeians. The conflict ends with a purgation of the Presbyterian Parliament by the sword of the Independents. There remains but the rump of a parliament; the dictatorship of Cromwell is established."

Political debates between the Levellers and the generals raged within the army, most famously at Putney in London in November 1647. The very idea that soldiers could argue with their officers was unheard of. The Levellers argued for equality between rich and poor, expressed in the phrase by Colonel Rainborough that "the poorest he that is in England has a life to live as the greatest he"; to which Ireton, Cromwell's son-in-law responded: "liberty cannot be provided for in a general sense, if property be preserved" (quoted in *The Century of Revolution*). The Levellers' most radical democratic demands were in advance of the social and economic conditions of the time and of the social forces that could realise them.

The King's head rolls

The immediate possibility of a split in the army was averted when the King escaped (or was freed) which re-ignited the civil war. Throughout 1648 Cromwell's army inflicted defeats on the Royalists in England and Wales; they also defeated a pro-Royalist army from Scotland that threatened to invade. Once again, Colonel Thomas Pride purged Parliament of those who contin-

Compared to later revolutions, it had many limitations but judged by the conditions of its time, it was unprecedented. Common Law was adopted and although this was no equivalent of the Code Napoleon introduced by the French Revolution it was a major advance from "Royal Prerogative". The Star Chamber court was abolished and although separation of church and state was not achieved, a measure of Protestant religious dissent was allowed. Christopher Hill eloquently captured what was meant by religious toleration, and how it was achieved, saying: "Cromwell, [by] stabling in cathedrals the horses of the most disciplined and most democratic cavalry the world had yet seen, won a victory which for ever stopped men being flogged and branded for having unorthodox views about the Communion service" (*The English Revolution of 1640*).

Oliver Cromwell died on 3 September 1658, as Lord Protector, having refused the Crown. However, the revolution and civil war had established bourgeois rule and even though the monarchy was restored in 1660 there would be no going back to the situation where the feudal nobles ruled over the bourgeoisie. The power of the monarchy that was restored had been drastically curbed. Trotsky pointed out that, underneath the struggles between Cromwell and Parliament, Cromwell had created a new society and that this could not be undone by decrees of parliament. He explained:

"In dispersing parliament after parliament Cromwell displayed as little reverence toward the fetish of 'national' representation as in the execution of Charles I he had displayed insufficient respect for a monarchy by the grace of God. Nevertheless it was this same Cromwell who paved the

the mutineers. As Hill says the generals "were now the government; and the government decided Ireland had to be subdued once and for all" (*God's Englishman*). Cromwell and the generals crushed the Levellers at Burford; Leveller leaders were arrested and four were executed.

This was a turning point in Cromwell's revolution. The bourgeoisie heartily endorsed Cromwell's suppression of the Levellers: he was given an honorary degree by Oxford University, heretofore a bastion of Royalism, and the City Fathers in London threw a banquet in his honour. Rooting out the Levellers from the ranks of the army was seen by the bourgeoisie as necessary preparation for the upcoming invasion of Ireland. This showed that the bourgeois revolution was progressive when it was ascendant because, however reluctantly, the capitalists were pitted against feudalism and backwardness. But when the bourgeoisie took power, the progressive content soon gave way to reaction as the capitalist class consolidated its hold on power.

In September 1649, when Cromwell invaded Ireland, Royalist forces from outside were also converging there. Charles Stuart—who would later become Charles II of England—arrived in Jersey en route for Ireland and leading Royalist general Prince Rupert, nephew of Charles I, was waiting off the Irish coast. However, Cromwell's campaign in Ireland was not only carried out to defeat the Royalists and was not simply an extension of the English Civil War on Irish terrain. From the time of the 1641 uprising in Ireland—before the Civil War—both Royalists and Parliament agreed that Ireland must be subordinated to England, the only question was which side would command the English army

Cromwell...

(Continued from page 9)

first instance against the Catholic Church, the centre of feudal reaction. In Ireland, Catholics and Protestants, English and Irish fought on the Royalist side against Cromwell. But there was little incentive for Catholics to fight on the Parliamentary side, since Cromwell's Puritanism condemned all Catholics as enemies. In Cromwell's England, Jews returned for the first time since they were driven out in 1290, but there was no religious tolerance for Catholics.

Hill also points to the prevalence of anti-Irish prejudice in England, saying: "The hatred and contempt which propertied Englishmen felt for the Irish is something which we may deplore but should not conceal" (*God's Englishman*), adding that this was shared even by the poet Milton, who was far from a reactionary. Milton was a leading ideologue whose poem "Paradise Lost" refers to the wave of reaction that accompanied the end of the republic and the restoration of the monarchy. For his defence of the regicides, Milton himself risked execution.

The Levellers often expressed solidarity with the people of Ireland—William Walwyn was of the view that, "the cause of the Irish natives in seeking their just freedoms...was the very same with our cause here in endeavouring our own rescue and freedom from the power of oppressors" (quoted in *The World Turned Upside Down*). The Levellers had a radical democratic programme calling for abolition of the monarchy and House of Lords; free trade, freedom from monopolies, freedom from conscription, opening of enclosed lands, disestablishment of the church, abolition of tithes. The Diggers, who also had popular support, opposed private property and called for the abolition of wage labour while experimenting with communal farming. But the yeomen and craftsmen who were the base of the Levellers and Diggers were petty-bourgeois, and therefore lacked the cohesion and social power to take on and defeat the bourgeoisie. The birth of the factory proletariat was still far in the future. However, the Levellers earned their place in history for what they did achieve—it was thanks to

their radical programme that the bourgeois revolution achieved what was possible at the time, namely the execution of the King, the abolition of the monarchy and establishment of a democratic republic.

Paradoxically, the bourgeois revolution would lead to the destruction of the yeomen who fought most valiantly for its victory. As Friedrich Engels explained in 1892, this applies to the bourgeois revolutions in France and Germany as well. He says:

"Curiously enough, in all the three great bourgeois risings, the peasantry furnishes the army that has to do the fighting; and the peasantry is just the class that, the vic-



Richard Arkwright's textile factory. English Revolution, by destroying the feudal order and breaking the power of the landowning aristocracy, opened the road to the industrial revolution and rapid development of British capitalism.

tory once gained, is most surely ruined by the economic consequences of that victory. A hundred years after Cromwell, the yeomanry of England had almost disappeared. Anyhow, had it not been for the yeomanry and for the *plebeian* element in the towns, the bourgeoisie alone would never have fought the matter out to the bitter end, and would never have brought Charles I to the scaffold. In order to secure even those conquests of the bourgeoisie that were ripe for gathering at the time, the revolution had to be carried considerably further—exactly as in 1793 in France and 1848 in Germany. This seems, in fact, to be one of the laws of evolution of bourgeois society."

—Introduction to the English edition of *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*

Following a war with the Dutch republic in the early 1650s, England took

control of shipping to and from the colonies, which now included Jamaica. The Navigation Acts of the early 1650s laid the foundation for British domination of the seas. Cromwell's rule paved the way for development of British capitalism over the next two centuries to the point where it would become the "world's number one superpower". Beginning around the end of the nineteenth century, British capitalism went into steep decline relative to its rivals in the United States and Germany. In its prolonged decline, British imperialism has been preserved by Labour reformism, which has been implacably hostile to every revolutionary movement of the

proletariat. But they cannot bury the revolutionary traditions.

In the nineteenth century, the young proletariat produced a revolutionary movement known as the Chartists, who picked up many of the ideas of the Levellers and Diggers. In 1848 Marx and Engels published *The Communist Manifesto*, a programme for proletarian revolution. Subsequently they came to understand the vital importance of the fight against the colonial oppression of Ireland to the emancipation of the proletariat in England. Summarising his conclusion, Karl Marx described how his appreciation of this question changed over time:

"It is in the direct and absolute interests of the English working class to get rid of their

present connection with Ireland.... For a long time I believed it would be possible to overthrow the Irish regime by English working class ascendancy. I always took this viewpoint in the *New-York Tribune*. Deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite. The English working class will never accomplish anything before it has got rid of Ireland. The lever must be applied in Ireland. This is why the Irish question is so important for the social movement in general.

—Letter to Engels, 10 December 1869

The programme for proletarian revolution outlined by Marx and Engels was carried forward, developed and implemented by Lenin's Bolshevik Party who led the great revolution of October 1917 in the Russian Empire, the first workers revolution in history. The Bolshevik Revolution overthrew the capitalists, landlords and the tsarist autocracy and set up a new state power based on working-class rule, supported by the peasantry. To paraphrase Gerard Winstanley, a leader of the Diggers, the Bolshevik Revolution "turned the world upside down". And our job is to build a party that will again turn the capitalist order upside down. The revolutionary proletariat in Britain will recognise its debt to Oliver Cromwell as it establishes workers republics in Britain and in Ireland, and fights to extend working-class rule internationally. The revolutionary proletariat will take care of unfinished business: the abolition of the monarchy, the House of Lords and the established churches!

Our demands also include: British troops out of Northern Ireland and for the right of self-determination for Scotland and Wales. Together with our comrades in Ireland who fight for an Irish workers republic, our aim is a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles. This will open up the possibility of social and economic development far surpassing the English Revolution and the industrial revolution. We cannot say in advance how quickly the proletarian revolution will dissolve Parliament, but we concur with Trotsky that:

"Whether the proletarian revolution will have its own 'long' parliament we do not know. It is highly likely that it will confine itself to a *short* parliament. However it will the more surely achieve this the better it masters the lessons of Cromwell's era."

—Where is Britain going?

We are indebted to Christopher Hill for making these lessons more accessible to us. ■

Iraq...

(Continued from page 5)

agents. This was in sharp contrast to the likes of WP and the Socialist Party, who literally stood on Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary barricades, or the SWP, who cheered: "Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing" (*Socialist Worker*, 31 August 1991). As Trotsky, who with Lenin led the victorious 1917 Russian Revolution, declared: "It is the duty of revolutionists to defend every conquest of the working class even though it may be distorted by the pressure of hostile forces. Those who cannot defend old positions will never conquer new ones." Those leftists who alibied their refusal to defend the Soviet degenerated workers state by pointing to crimes of the Stalinist bureaucracy in fact share the very criminal politics of Stalinism that ultimately destroyed the homeland of the October Revolution—class collaborationism with the "democratic" imperialists and the idea that the world's capitalist rulers can be pressured into "peaceful coexistence".

Inter-imperialist rivalries which had for decades been subordinated to the common

cause of strangling the Soviet Union, burst sharply into the open over US imperialism's naked grab for the oil wealth of Iraq. Far from advancing a struggle for "peace" those putative leftists who appealed to their own bourgeoisie against "Bush's war" promote the resurgent chauvinism that paves the way for a future inter-imperialist war. In this they also strengthen the hand of their own capitalist rulers against the working class, immigrants, the poor and oppressed at home. Thus while leaders of the anti-war movement were leading chants of "vive la France", the Chirac government took advantage of this support to reinforce its vicious campaign of racist terror against Maghreb youth and step up deportations of immigrants on chartered airplanes.

The Labour government's war at home

Here, Blair's Labour government is basking in the glow of "victory" in the one-sided slaughter of Iraq. The surge of patriotism behind "our troops", promoted by the Labour "lefts", and trade union bureaucrats and echoed in the StWC's cries that "peace is patriotic", has for the present moment served to salvage the diminishing fortunes of New Labour.

Feeling the wind in its sails, the government is now rushing to strengthen the power of its state, intensifying its attacks on immigrants and minorities in the name of the "war on terror". Planning to construct offshore asylum centres to house desperate immigrants and refugees who are not even to be allowed to set foot in Britain, the Blair government is using the case of reactionary Islamic cleric Abu Hamza as a test case for implementing new legislation that will take away citizenship and deport naturalised citizens who are deemed "seriously prejudicial" to Britain's "vital interests".

This anti-immigrant witch hunt is part of an overall offensive against the proletariat. The purpose is to divide and conquer, to further weaken the working class as the government pushes ahead with its privatisation programme which is simply another name for industrial murder. To maintain the basic integrity of the proletariat and defend its organisations, the trade union movement must come to the defence of immigrants and minorities, who are also a vital component of the multiethnic working class. *Down with racist cop terror! For full citizenship rights for all immigrants!*

Emboldened by victory in Iraq, Blair

hosted a victors' summit with Bush in Belfast to help ram through the imperialist "peace deal" in Northern Ireland. Fresh from his butchery in Iraq, Blair is railing against IRA violence, telling it to declare that the "war is over" and disarm as a precondition for permitting the "devolved" Stormont Assembly to reconvene. This comes as a state-convened commission reported its "discovery" of widespread collusion between the British Army and intelligence services with Loyalist paramilitaries in the assassination of Republican activists and their defenders. Notably, the StWC's "opposition" to imperialist war never extended into opposition to British troops in Northern Ireland.

In a savage polemic against the Labour Party, then led by Ramsay MacDonald and Arthur Henderson who took the side of the counterrevolutionary White Army in its imperialist-backed war to overthrow the fledgling Soviet workers state, Trotsky captured the essence of "Old" Labourism which today is so fully imbibed by the reformist and centrist left in this country:

"We are aware that Henderson, as well as MacDonald, does protest, on certain appointed days, by means of mournful resolutions against the excesses of British

RMT official targeted in union-busting attempt

Defend Glenroy Watson!

APRIL 22—Glenroy Watson, a well-known and respected official of the Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers union (RMT) was today hauled before a London Underground (LU) disciplinary board on trumped-up charges of “gross misconduct” and demoted for one year from his job as train driver to station assistant. The lying charges were brought after Watson, a former branch secretary, a member of the TUC race relations committee and currently a union Health and Safety rep for his area, arranged safe passage out of a siding for himself and a cleaner who had remained on a train after it was taken out of service. But the real reason Watson was threatened with the sack was not for breaking an unwritten safety procedure, but because he is seen as a thorn in the side of management, a black workers leader of the RMT union which London Underground and the Labour government see as an obstacle to their privatisation plans and attacks on workers and minorities. The hounding of a leading union official by London Underground is open union-busting, which must be resolutely fought. *The RMT must be mobilised to defend Glenroy Watson!*

Watson is known as a supporter of broader causes in the interests of the oppressed such as his outspoken opposition to the racist death penalty in the US, in defence of former Black Panther and death row prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. But what has really got London Underground gunning for Watson was the action taken by RMT drivers last November when members of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) walked out on

strike. Watson was among hundreds of Tube drivers who, as the firefighters strike began, refused to take out the trains without fire cover. He voiced the concerns of drivers for their passengers' safety when he pointedly asked: “What happens if there is a derailment, who's going to cut people out?”

Many of the drivers taking action were motivated by their solidarity with the firefighters. Desperate to stop any united action with the FBU, London Underground management, prompted by Downing Street, insisted on keeping the trains running. The prospect of joint class struggle from two of the most powerful and strategically placed unions in Britain on the eve of the planned onslaught against Iraq sent the government into a frenzy. With 19,000 soldiers mobilised as strike-breakers to man the “Green Goddesses”, the FBU strike was already getting in the way of the government's war mobilisation. In response to the action of the Tube drivers, the government went into overdrive, prompting LU's campaign of intimidation to force them back to work.

The RMT should have brought out its members at the very outset of the FBU strike. As we wrote in a 19 November 2002 leaflet, distributed to striking firefighters and to Tube workers:

“This battle is no longer just about a pay rise for the firefighters but has become a test of strength between the unions and Blair's New Labour government.... Millions of trade unionists are itching to strike a blow against Blair's union-hating government. They must be mobilised to join the FBU picket lines. Bring out RMT and UNISON council workers on strike now! Screw the TUC and government's ‘pick-

eting guidelines' and anti-union laws! The only ‘illegal strike’ is one that loses.”

Instead the RMT leadership pursued a policy which left it up to individual members to decide whether it was safe to drive the trains! This was a total set-up contrary to the basic principles of trade unionism: effectively leaving the drivers to stand alone and be victimised by management. The same sell-out policy was pursued by RMT and ASLEF leaders with respect to the war on Iraq. Bob Crow, RMT leader and a leading light of the Stop the War Coalition, could sometimes talk militantly about “illegal action”, but all that was on offer was the promise of “backing” to individual RMT or ASLEF militants who took action against the war.

As British and American troops carry out the re-colonisation of Iraq following their easy victory in the one-sided slaughter, the Blair government is emboldened to increase hostilities against minorities, immigrants and unions at home. Many of the largely black and Asian workforce that Glenroy Watson represents in the RMT originate from former British colonies and in addition to the racist discrimination they experience here, have first-hand experience of what the brutality of colonial occupation means and what it will bring to Iraq.

Beholden to the “Old Labour” perspective of parliamentary reformism, trade union bureaucrats like Crow recoil in horror before class-struggle action that would pose any challenge to the stability of the bourgeois order, such as strikes against the war, so they hide behind the government's anti-trade union legislation

and derail any effective fightback against the capitalists. But such genuflection before the bosses and their state means weakening the ability of the unions to fight for the interests of their members. Crow has issued a statement calling on RMT members to support Watson, but has done nothing to mobilise the union in his defence. Meanwhile Crow sits as a member of the Transport for London management board, where he sips tea with the bosses who framed up Watson.

For London Underground to bring charges against a union official on “safety” grounds is grotesque! To work or travel on the Tube is to take your life into your hands, as the recent derailment on the Central Line showed once again. From the Kings Cross fire in 1987, in which 27 people died, to the Paddington rail crash in October 1999, which killed 31, the capitalists' pursuit of profit inevitably means blood on the tracks. The Labour government's determination to force through “public-private partnerships” (PPP), ie privatisation and union-busting on the Tube, signals more deaths, as well as an assault on the pay and conditions of the workers and the exacerbation of racist inequalities.

The unions have been in the gunsights of the Labour government for some time. An effective fightback against union-busting requires a struggle across the board against the anti-working-class, racist onslaught of the bosses and their Labour government. For that to happen it is necessary to break with the “Old Labour” programme of Crow & Co, which seeks to con workers that this system, which is premised on the brutal exploitation of the workers, can be reformed. Labour has always been a pro-imperialist party of racism and war. It is necessary to forge a revolutionary leadership in the trade unions and a multi-ethnic revolutionary workers party based on a programme of expropriation of the capitalist exploiters through workers revolution. The Spartacist League fights to build such a party. ■

imperialism. But these feeble and irresolute protests have never imperilled, and do not now imperil, the interests of British capitalism, and have never led, nor are they leading, to courageous and decisive action. They are only intended to salve the conscience of the ‘socialist’ citizens of the ruling nation, and to serve as an outlet for the dissatisfaction of the British workers.”

— *Between Red and White*, 1922

Although massive, the anti-war protests did nothing to imperil the interests of US or British imperialism. That is precisely because they were not meant to challenge such interests but rather to channel anger and combativity back into the

institutions of capitalist rule in this country. Serious working-class militants and anti-war youth who believed the sermons of the StWC that simply mobilising the greatest number of people would “stop the war” now need to draw the lessons. It is not a question of the “will of the people”, but of the revolutionary unity of the working class mobilised for its own emancipation and the emancipation of all the oppressed from the increasingly barbaric depredations of the world's imperialist rulers.

Since its inception the Labour Party has been a strategic obstacle to, and enemy of,

the necessary fight for the class rule of the proletariat. Against Blair & Co's efforts to transform the Labour Party into an openly capitalist party, modelled on the Democratic Party in the US, the Labour “lefts”, trade union bureaucrats and their “socialist” supporters seek to refurbish the credentials of social-democratic parliamentary reformism. For our part, we welcome the growing hatred of the working class,

youth and minorities for the Blair government as the means to split the working class away from Labourism and to the fight to build a revolutionary workers party. Only under the leadership of such a party, part of a reformed Trotskyist Fourth International, can there be a successful struggle against imperialist war by smashing the rule of capital through victorious socialist revolution. ■

Letter...

(Continued from page 2)

common denominator grouping based on bourgeois morality and liberal pacifism. Politically it holds no way forward except to carry on supporting the pro-imperialist Labour Party. The STWC is usually careful to criticise Blair as an individual rather than the Labour government or the Labour party. So, it is Blair who is a warmonger rather than the Labour government. STWC's idea of a ‘regime change’ in Britain appears to imply that Gordon Brown would somehow, somehow, be better than Blair!

We note that at a March 1st teach in at the London School of Economics that “two young women supporters of the Spartacist League” took the opportunity, as of course they have every right to do, to criticise the policies of the Labour government and the Socialist Workers Party. After all, is not the whole idea of a teach in to expose the participants to a range of political opinion? Apparently not, in the view of the Socialist Workers Party.

Rather than attempting to answer

these comrades politically, somewhat difficult perhaps for a grouping which supported the sending of British troops to Northern Ireland, leading SWP member Chris Bambery threatened the SL with physical violence. Reportedly, that anyone who does not support the STWC, “deserves a bullet in the head”. Such a sinister threat has no place on the left and only exposes the shallow and thuggish nature of the SWP. It is interesting that these great pacifists and humanitarians are only too quick to issue threats against political opponents from the left whilst positively pandering to those on their political right. The SWP's attempt, unfortunately largely successful, to keep any political debate out of the STWC actually ensures that the pacifist political line remains unchanged.

AIA notes that the antipathy towards exposing their members to any genuine political debate by the Socialist Workers Party leaves them with little option except censorship and political exclusion. Ted Talbot, for AIA.

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In honour of Christopher Hill

Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution

Abolish the monarchy, the House of Lords and the established churches!

Speaking last month at a “People’s Assembly” convened to protest parliament’s support for the war on Iraq, “left” Labour MP George Galloway complained that “we have a parliament that is not speaking for Britain”, a view echoed by Chris Nineham of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) who moaned that Blair was “negating democracy”. The illusion that Her Majesty’s parliament *ought* to represent “the people” has been handed down for generations. But the question is, whose interest does Parliament serve? And what is the nature of the “democracy” that the British ruling class claims to have invented in Westminster and upheld since time immemorial?

The single most important event in British history was the seventeenth century English Revolution. This shaped British capitalism, made possible the industrial revolution in the eighteenth century and laid the foundation for England, a small nation in the seventeenth century, to master the world in the nineteenth. As a result, by 1914 the British ruling class ruled over more than one-fifth of humanity. The British bourgeoisie came to power in a revolution that overthrew the feudal order—the aristocracy, the old feudal landowning monarchy and the established Anglican Church.

However the capitalist class that came to power never forgot that Cromwell’s army mobilised the “lower orders”, and that it was they who made sure the Civil War was fought to the finish, resulting in the defeat of the old order. To this day the British ruling class, aided by Her Majesty’s Labour Party, rewrites history to erase all trace of revolution and civil war, which according to them must never happen again. School students are taught that Oliver Cromwell’s Roundheads fought King Charles I and his Cavaliers in the 1640s, and that the King’s head was cut off. But bloody civil war and regicide was an “excess”. The episode was merely a “constitutional” dispute between King and Parliament, in which Parliament triumphed and established its sovereignty over the monarchy. The period between the execution of the King in 1649 and the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 is described as an

“interregnum”. The “Glorious Revolution” of 1688 is so called because there was no bloodshed and no mobilisation of the lower classes. In reality it was the removal of a king (James II of England) who overstepped the mark and acted as though the revolution had never happened.

Ever since the Cromwellian revolution, “Her Majesty’s Parliament” has been an instrument of bourgeois rule and for the suppression of struggles for the emancipation of the working class. The capitalist order has long been obsolete, just as the feudal system had become outmoded by the seventeenth century. And in order for the proletariat to prepare its historic task—the overthrow of the capitalist order—there is much to be learned from the English bourgeois revolution. The old feudal ruling class did not exit gracefully from the scene, and neither will the capitalist class relinquish power without a fight. This will require class struggle on a mass scale, pursued to the end, and must culminate in a thoroughgoing socialist revolution.

To study the English Revolution is to read Christopher Hill, the outstanding historian of Cromwellian England who died in February. Hill devoted his life’s work to rescuing the history of the English Revolution from oblivion at the hands of those who churn out “gradualist” accounts of British history. Hill’s literary output began in 1940 with the essay, *The English Revolution of 1640*, which asserted that “the English Revolution of 1640-60 was a great social movement like the French revolution of 1789”. He argued that:

“Ever since then [1660] orthodox historians have done their utmost to stress the ‘continuity’ of English history, to minimise the revolutionary breaks, to pretend that the ‘interregnum’ (the word itself shows what they are trying to do) was an unfortunate accident, that in 1660 we returned to the old Constitution normally developing, that 1688 merely corrected the aberrations of a deranged King. Whereas, in fact, the period 1640-60 saw the destruction of one kind of state and the introduction of a new political structure within which capitalism could freely develop. For tactical reasons, the ruling class in 1660 pretended that they were merely restoring the old forms of the Constitution. But they intended by that restoration to give sanc-

tity and social stamp to a new social order. The important thing is that the social order was new and would not have been won without revolution.”

— *The English Revolution of 1640*

Hill went on to become Master of Balliol College in Oxford, but stuck to his original thesis and published a variety of superb books. His commanding sweep of the social, political and cultural history of seventeenth century England resulted in books such as: *The Century of Revolution, 1603-1714*; *The World Turned Upside Down*; *God’s Englishman*; a series called *People and Ideas in 17th Century England* and many more. Hill provides an orthodox Marxist account of the revolutionary period. He highlights the role played by radical democratic movements such as the Levellers and the Diggers (or True Levellers) whose programme expressed the most radical and enlightened views of their time. The Levellers



www.kingston.ac.uk

**Christopher Hill
1912 - 2003**

British workers to study Cromwell’s revolution, as an antidote to the Labourite view of British history as “gradualism”. Those youth who have no desire to be duped by the SWP, Workers Power or the Socialist Party into supporting parliamentary reformism through an alliance with Labour “lefts” ought to relish Trotsky’s 1925 essay *Where is Britain going?*, a delightfully savage polemic against Labourite gradualism. He evokes Carlyle, Cromwell’s biographer, who noted that his job was to drag out the Lord Protector from under a mountain



National Portrait Gallery, London

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

represented the lower classes, who at the time were the lowest levels of the petty bourgeoisie, including the craftsmen and apprentices of London. Christopher Hill shows that, had it not been for the influence of the Levellers, it is unlikely that Charles I would have been beheaded in 1649.

The lessons of the English Revolution are as relevant for today’s new generation of political activists who despise Blair’s Labour Party and parliament as they were when Trotsky urged

of dead dogs, meaning a huge load of calamity and oblivion. Trotsky said that “British workers can learn incomparably more from Cromwell than from MacDonald, Snowden, Webb” (Labour leaders of the time) and added that:

“Cromwell was a great revolutionary of his time, who knew how to uphold the interests of the new, bourgeois social system against the old aristocratic one *without holding back at anything*. This must be learnt from him, and the dead lion of the

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