

SocialistVoice[★]

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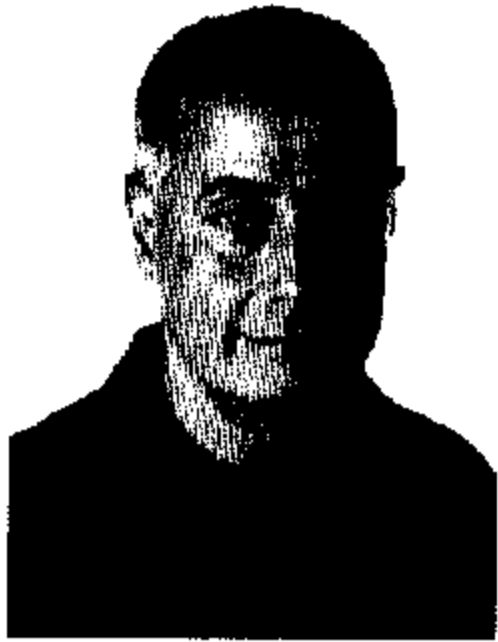
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Brazil: PSTU begins its presidential campaign

A Brazil for workers will be achieved in the struggles and the factories



The PSTU* is in the middle of a campaign for Zé Maria's candidacy for president and Claudia Durans' candidacy for vice president for the national election that will be held in October.

Zé Maria is a metalworker who was part of the leadership of the massive strikes that spread throughout Brazil in the late 1970s and 1980s, and which overthrew the military dictatorship.

Cláudia is a teacher in Maranhão (North of Brazil) and a militant of the Black feminist movement.

The campaign is taking place in the most exploited and oppressed sectors of the working class.

Zé Maria campaign started in the Complexo da Maré, a region where diverse communities live and which is now occupied by the Brazilian armed forces. There he spoke with residents and supporters about the need to build a socialist and working class alternative in order to change the country.

Claudia Durans started her campaign talking to the residents of the neighbourhood of Liberdade, in São Luís (capital of Maranhão), where she was born and her family live. Liberdade has a black community and is in the quilombola region, a region where escaped slaves went during slavery.

On 16 July, Zé Maria visited construction sites in Fortaleza, where workers recently ended a successful strike. Zé Maria explained to them the reasons for his candidacy, "We make the country, so we can and must rule the country".

He later visited the Democratic Trade Union Federation of Metalworkers in Minas Gerais. This union was created following the 1980s' strikes. Zé Maria was the founder of the Federation and one of the main leaders of the 1980s' struggle.

The PSTU programme explains what necessary change is needed in the economic, political and social structure of the country. It means answering the problems in relation to health, education, housing, public transportation, land reform, decent pension, employment and wages that are required by the working class and the youth.

It is a programme to replace capitalism

and to promote a socialist alternative in the country. To implement it requires a working class government that breaks from the bankers, contractors and multinational companies.

This is why the PSTU did not make an alliance with the PSOL (Party for Socialism and Liberation). The program advocated by PSOL is limited to radicalising bourgeois democracy. It therefore rejects a rupture with capitalism and the establishment of a working class government.

Obviously, a change of such magnitude will not come only from elections. It needs workers', youth and oppressed sectors' to continue the struggle from June 2013, when millions took to the streets.

*PSTU is the United Socialist Workers Party, Brazilian section of the International Workers League - Fourth International.



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Fight cuts and closures of libraries

Liverpool City Council, led by the Labour party, is considering the possible closure of 11 libraries. Over 10,000 signatures against these closures have been collected in Liverpool.

The Labour party is doing the government's dirty work by implementing austerity regardless of the impact. Joe Anderson, mayor of Liverpool, said in reply to campaigning groups like Old Swan Against the Cuts, "I will not be chaining myself to the rails in Downing Street", that is he will do as he is told by the Tories.



Two council meetings over library closures have heard residents and campaigners express their outrage at the plans. Kelly Butchard from Huyton spoke passionately to councillors on the 10 September.

"I use the Dovecot, Old Swan and Kensington libraries. These libraries are on the planned closure list. What will become of the residents who use these life line services?"

My disabled four year old is called Layla. To her visiting a library is part of her daily route. It is place where she feels safe in, a place she is not judged, a place where the staff remember her name and ask after the well being of her mother. A place we, as a family, can go without fear of comments being made or getting stared at. Will the council be the ones to tell her and break her heart?

The support groups that provide valuable support for local residents; the self help books users; the 75 year old lady who visits the library to see photos of her grandchildren in Australia; the babies and new mums who attend the baby sessions; learning new skills mixing with people from other cultures; the lonely people who have no one to talk

Co-ordinate two day's national strike action on 14 October

Socialist Voice comment



Striking public sector workers in Liverpool voted for a two day strike

The Con-Dem government is offering a zero wage increase for public service workers. This means a fall of 12 to 15 per cent in relation to inflation since 2010. The NHS is a major victim of this attack on pay.

The Con-Dems are completely tied to the bankers, contractors and big business. That is why they can say that the crisis is over, and continue to cut workers' wages.

So, bankers and privateers remain well off, while workers are "worse off".

The Labour Party, for their part, say "vote for the least worst" in order to convince people to vote Labour in the next election! However they have done nothing to fight cuts and privatisations, on the contrary, Miliband says they will continue with the cuts if they become the next government.

So, workers have to rely on themselves to change this situation. A united struggle against the government and the bosses is the only way out. We support the fight against cuts and staff redundancies. And we support the campaign for a mandatory minimum staffing ratio of

to apart from the library staff; the school kids who want to use encyclopaedias not Wikipedia; the unemployed who spend hours seeking work and attending courses. Where will they go?

The libraries due for closure are in the most deprived areas of Liverpool and the UK as whole. Some families can't afford to eat and heat their homes, how will they afford a four pound bus ticket to travel to use a library. I face a 30 pound taxi ride to take my disabled daughter to

four patients to each registered nurse.

We fully support the ballot to strike in the NHS being made by Unite and Unison and urge workers to vote YES for strike action.

But we do not agree with the limited actions that are called for in this NHS ballot: for a four-hour strike; lunch time stoppages; and a work to rule. This is a retreat following the powerful 24-hour strike when 1.5 million workers stopped work and struck together in July.

Limited action does not respect the will of Liverpool strikers, and workers from other cities, who want and voted for a 2-day strike at the Liverpool rally on 10 July and therefore mandated unions to organise it.

We believe that united strike action should take place with the one million local authority workers and 400 thousand health workers on 14 October.

It is essential to build the rank and file organisation to demand the organisation of a two-day strike on the 14 October, uniting all public workers in a single struggle, because the attack comes from a united opponent - government, Labour, Bankers and bosses.

Central library.

These communities are being penalised, a generation of kids will grow up not knowing the joys of going to the library with their parents and friends. The heart and soul of these communities is getting ripped out.

Libraries gave us power, the government and Liverpool city council seem determined to crush the spirits of these communities."

Residents and unions fight these cuts!

The Scottish What lies beneath

Margaret McAdam, International Socialist League

The national question arises in many parts of Europe, as in Scotland and in Catalonia, driven by the deep changes imperialism is making because of the disintegration of the old social structures.

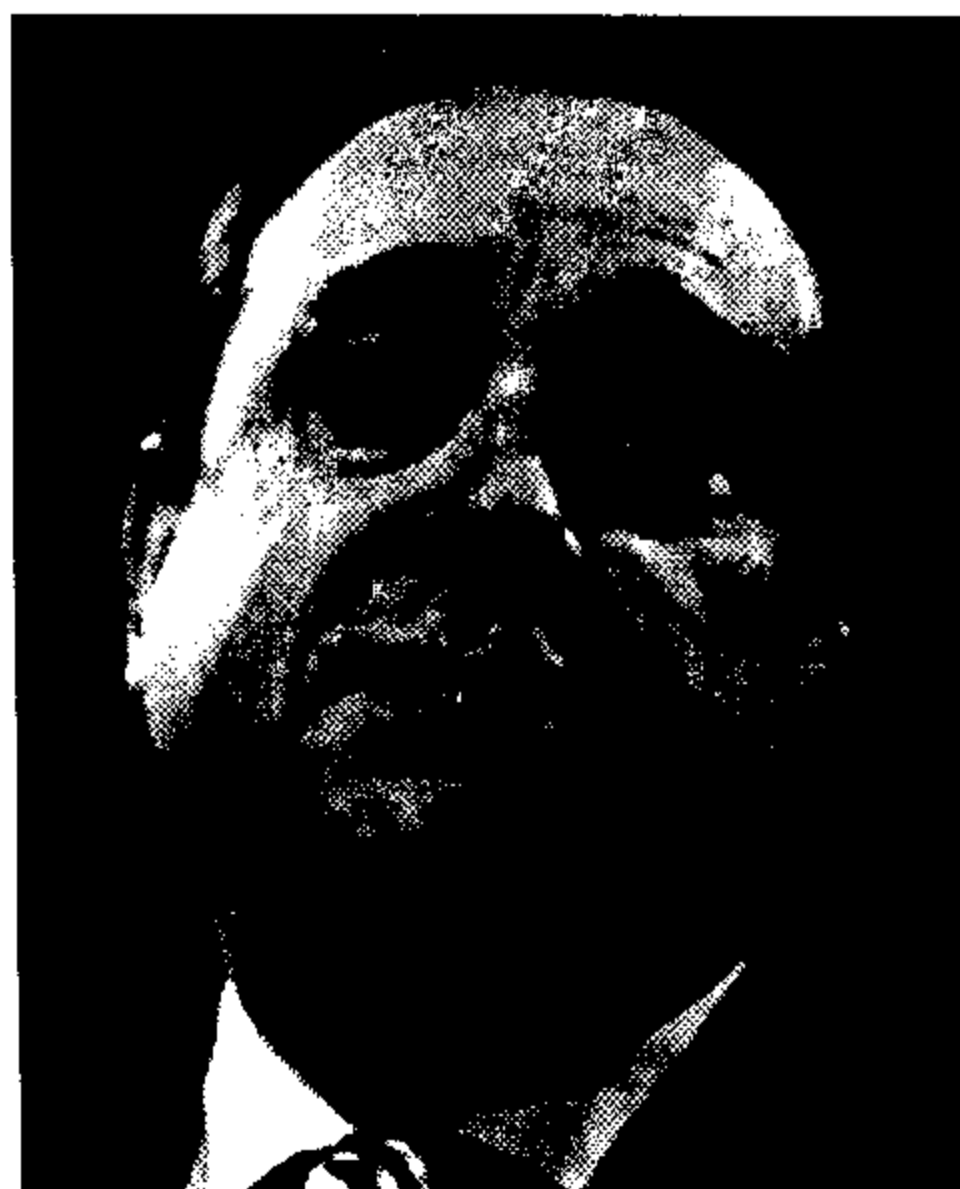
The current world economic crisis, the ending of the welfare state, the drive towards precarity of working conditions and the attacks of the Thatcher era, have strengthened feelings that Scotland would fare better as an independent state.

The question of Scottish independence has divided all classes and the left in Scotland and Britain.

The campaign for independence is led by the SNP (Scottish National Party), a nationalist bourgeois party which has given a few concessions to the working class to win their support.

Alec Salmond, SNP leader, is on the side of the capitalists, especially medium and small size companies, many who trade mainly inside Scotland.

More than 1300 of the smaller companies, "Business for Scotland", support independence, they are pushed by the economic crisis and financial centralisation in the City of London, they want to re-organise the economy in order to extract more of Scotland's wealth.



SNP leader Alec Salmond

Stop Tory and Labour bullies

Cameron threatens the Scottish people by saying they will not be allowed to use Sterling, and that independence is irreversible. Then another threat from south of the border was made by Ed Miliband. "If you don't want borders, vote to stay in the United Kingdom". He also stated he would look at border guards and passport checks. Neither Cameron or anyone else has the right to use blackmail to change minds.

All are competing for a higher share of profits and increased public finance subsidies in Scotland.

The SNP have promised to slash Corporation Tax to 3 per cent, which would give more handouts to business in an independent Scotland than London allows at the moment.

The SNP claim this to be in the interests of the "Scottish nation," that is in the interests of Scottish capitalism.

Independence is opposed by 130 Scottish industrial capitalists. They represent the big profiteers such as HSBC, and many major Scottish companies.

The City of London and the speculators want to maximise profits without hindrance. They are politically represented by the main capitalist parties in London, which jointly run the NO campaign.

As Cameron and the Lib Dems - representing the City of London - are hated in Scotland, the Labour Party have been defending finance capital.

The three parties have an austerity programme that will continue after the 2015 election. But how different would austerity be in an independent Scotland ruled by the SNP?

Nothing is in the interests of the working class but a common fight against austerity.

Currency

The question of currency is a major problem for the Yes campaign. Sterling will continue to be managed by the Bank of England and the financial capital. Monetary union would lock the Scottish and English economies together, leaving economic autonomy severely curtailed.

Monetary union would operate like the Euro, which has been used by the European Union, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund to take finance from the weakest countries to the main imperialist powers (Germany and France) and their multi-nationals.

The weakest nations of Europe are dominated by Germany and France, who use the EU and the Euro to deepen the attacks on Greece, Ireland, Spain and Portugal. London would use Sterling to the same effect.

The subservience of the SNP would be no different to the subservience of the rulers of Greece or Spain.

Keeping the Queen, keeping the land for aristocrats

Keeping the Crown means that Scottish people have no right to choose the head of state and will, indirectly, keep the power of the House of Lords over Scotland.

people will decide the yes and no votes

So, the Scottish working class will not be politically better off – as many on the left say – because the current lack of democracy will continue.

The SNP does not want to challenge Royalty for another reason. There is a strong allegiance to the Queen from the Scottish landowning aristocracy.

More than half of Scotland is owned by fewer than 500 rich peers and it has the most concentrated pattern of land ownership in the developed world.

According to Jim Hunter, who proposes land reform, after seven years of an SNP government nothing has been done to alter the concentration of land in the hands of the Queen's friends.

The SNP campaign for independence does not go beyond the capitalist limits at all and does not deal with British imperialist domination over the working class. It is an attempt by sectors of Scottish business to obtain more economic autonomy.

The position of the Left

The Scottish Socialist Party state that "Scotland's working class majority can be economically, socially, culturally and politically better off with independence. We believe Scots should be able to make their own choices, free from the chains of the neo-liberal, warmongering British state".

However, they cannot explain how Scotland could be stronger while keeping Sterling or how being part of NATO and the EU would free Scotland from the warmongers.

Nor can they explain how the working class can improve economically if the SNP maintain the anti-working class laws introduced from the days of Thatcher, such as the anti-trade union laws.

The same is true for the many left parties in Britain who support independence but fall short of any convincing arguments.

The Socialist Party call "for a critical yes vote in the referendum, while at the same time warning that only socialism – an independent socialist Scotland as part of confederation with England, Wales and Ireland – would offer an end



They are all in it together, for the British banks

to austerity".

This referendum is not a step forward to an "independent socialist Scotland"; rather it will form a new capitalist nation with its intelligence service and army.

It is seeking to advance that section of capitalism which is Scottish and which has long been part of British imperialism.

Splitting the working class

The working class will be split by the creation of new borders and the fight for socialism, which means the abolition of nations and their borders, will take many steps back.

The Socialist Workers Party states that, "the breakup of the imperialist British state would be a positive thing," and argues that the separation into two states would not harm the joint struggle of the British and Scottish workers.

But British imperialism will continue to rule and the borders between nations will be an actual obstacle for the unity of the working class.

The right to self-determination and workers struggle

The ISL and the International Workers League defend unconditionally the right to self-determination for all oppressed peoples, and that means their right to independence if such is the will of the majority of the people.

But the right to self-determination cannot be used as an instrument of separation from the working class in

England and Wales. The right to separate is a necessary defence of a democratic right to achieve the unity of the working class in common struggle against British capitalism.

We are against the creation of pseudo independence, which will maintain submission to the British imperialist bourgeoisie, and because, despite the phrases of the British left, the secession posed for Scotland represents a backwards step and an obstacle to the unity and solidarity of the British working class.

It is not a step toward a free confederation of socialist republics (England, Scotland, Wales).

The left are substituting support for the united struggle of the working class against austerity, and imperialism for a nationalist struggle.

This shows how far they have travelled from a perspective of revolutionary class struggle.

What is needed, but not fought for by the majority of the left or trade union leaders, is unity with the whole of the British working class against cuts and privatisation, with broad autonomy for Scotland and Wales against British imperialism and the EU.

Together with the demand for the right to self-determination, we defend the Free Union of Socialist British States as an aim to be achieved in the struggle for the world socialist revolution.

World war led to

Martin Ralph, International Socialist League

The war to end all wars was a slogan adopted to deceive and encourage the working class to enlist and fight in WWI, a war waged between imperialist countries.

In 1914, the British Labour and trade union leaders, right and left, assisted the mobilisation for war by promoting patriotic jingoism. They argued that increasing the militarisation of Britain would defeat Germany and that would end all wars!

But WWI had long been predicted by Marxists. In 1887, Frederick Engels stated: "No war is any longer possible for Prussia-Germany except a world war and a world war indeed of an extent and violence hitherto undreamt of. Eight to ten millions of soldiers will massacre one another and in doing so devour the whole of Europe until they have stripped it barer than any swarm of locusts has ever done."

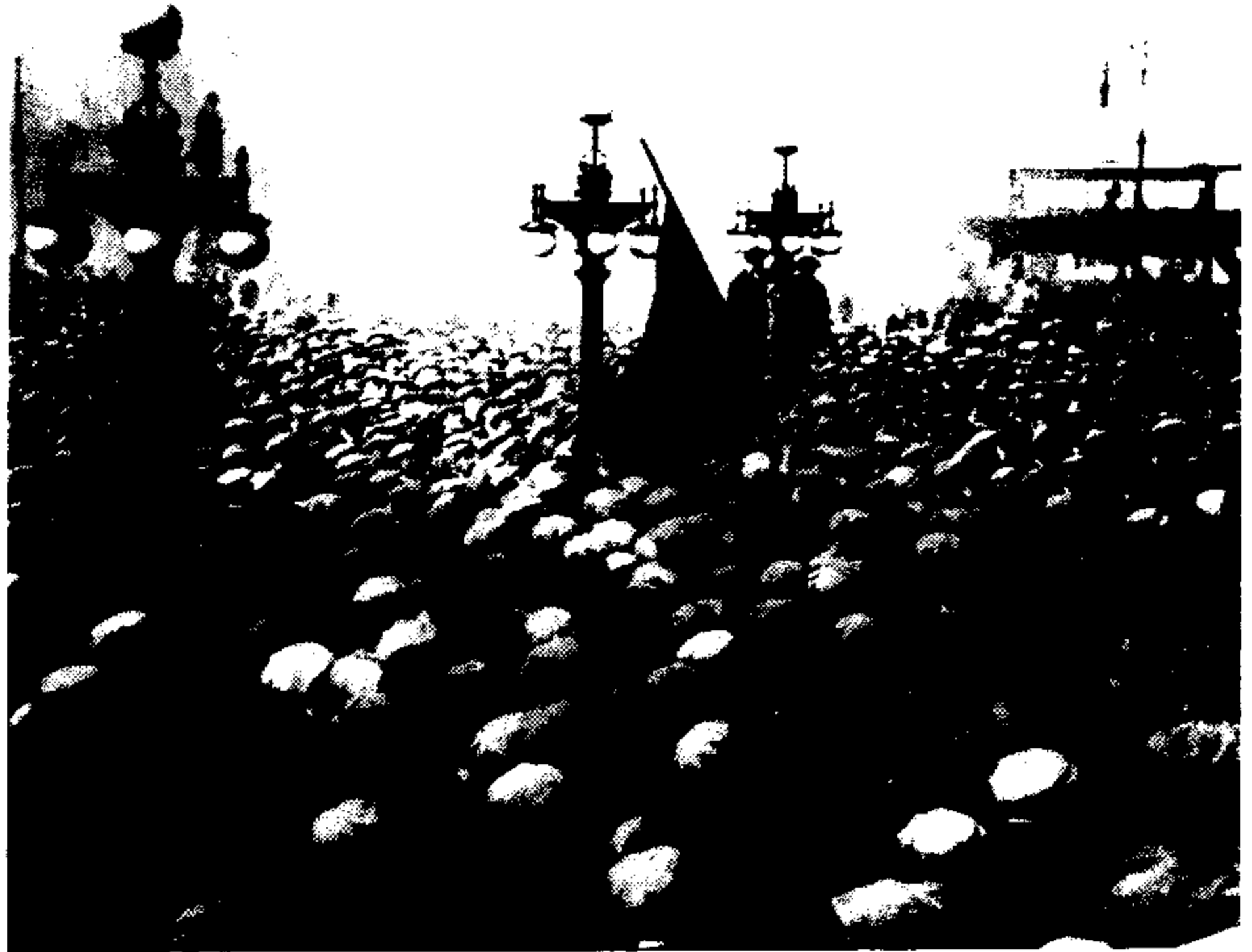
Imperialist wars are fought for reasons of profit and control. As Lenin said in 1920, "The first imperialist war of 1914-18, was the inevitable outcome of this partition of the whole world, of this domination by the capitalist monopolies, of this great power wielded by an insignificant number of very big banks—two, three, four or five in each country. This war was waged for the repartitioning of the whole world. It was waged in order to decide which of the small groups of the biggest states—the British or the German—was to obtain the opportunity and the right to rob, strangle and exploit the whole world."

Opposition to imminent war

The Second International (of socialist and Marxist parties) made its opposition to war clear.

The 1912 Basel Socialist Congress, whose aim was to prevent war, proposed in its manifesto that the working classes and their parliamentary representatives should "exert every effort in order to prevent the outbreak of war by means they consider most effective".

"In case war should break out anyway it is their duty to intervene in favour of its speedy termination and with all their powers to utilize the economic and political crisis created by the war to arouse the people and thereby to hasten



Striking workers in George Square raising the red flag in 1919

the downfall of capitalist class rule."

The Basel manifesto stated that the most important task fell to the working class of Germany, France, and England. "At this moment, it is the task of the workers of these countries to demand of their governments that they refuse any support either to Austria-Hungary or Russia that they abstain from any intervention in the Balkan troubles and maintain absolute neutrality."

Social unrest

1910 to 1914, was a period of large strikes which were often violently attacked by the state. In Liverpool in 1911 (known as the year of revolution), two striking workers were shot dead by the army.

Opposition to the war became a major issue in the shipyards around Glasgow and workers formed the Clyde Workers' Committee (CWC) against WWI to fight the employers and to oppose union leaders who were supporting the national government.

In 1915, over 10,000 workers in Glasgow took unofficial strike action against the attacks on their living standards.

In October 1915, John Maclean from the Clyde, revolutionary and Marxist, was arrested under the Defence of the Realm Act 1915 (DORA), and charged with "uttering statements calculated to prejudice recruiting".

In March 1916, an article appeared in "The Worker", newspaper of the CWC

Please look this in Top of Lower Back of Window.

Glasgow Labour Party Housing Association

**RENT STRIKE
AGAINST INCREASES**

**WE ARE
NOT REMOVING**

Rent Strike poster issued by the Glasgow Labour Party Housing Association, 1915

revolutionary revolt

titled "Should the workers arm?" Soon afterwards three leaders were arrested and charged under DORA with the offence of intending to cause sedition. They were sentenced to 12 months imprisonment.

War-time profiteering by armament manufacturers, and the cutting wages and conditions, sparked many fights for trade unionists and socialists during the war. During 1915, there were unofficial strikes in Glasgow and unofficial class organisations were formed in Sheffield, by engineering workers, and in South Wales by miners.

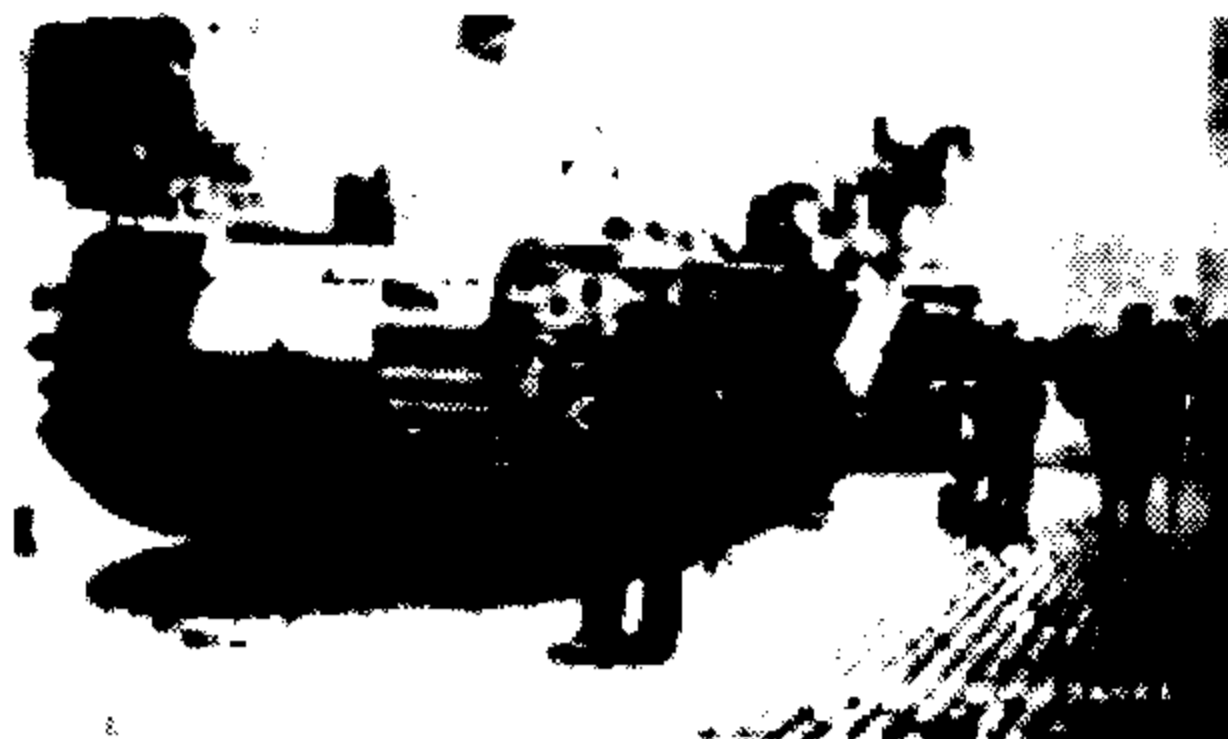
A revolutionary upsurge in Britain

The war ended in November 1918, but the government needed to keep an army ready for possible action against the Soviet Union and Ireland, and other interventions. However, in January 1919, with increasing numbers of soldiers wanting to be de-mobbed, mutinies broke out, in several areas especially in the camps in and around London where mutineers commandeered lorries and drove to Whitehall. Nearly 50 mutinies occurred at the start of 1919.

Prime Minister Lloyd George promised troops returning from the horrors of the war "a land fit for heroes", this was a monstrous lie. As millions lay dead, bankers thrived on war profits, food



George Smillie, Miners Federation' President in 1919



A tank in Liverpool used to crush the police strike of 1919. An archive photograph contains the slogan "We now protect our banks with tanks"

prices rose by 170 per cent while wages rose by only 130 per cent.

By the end of 1918 and into 1919, many unions, large and small, were active in disputes throughout Britain. By mid-1919, Britain was in the grip of a massive strike wave, involving miners, engineers, transport workers and the police. Workers went on strike for almost 35 million work days in that year.

War, war profits, the treatment of soldiers and sailors, the attacks by the national government (with support from Labour and trade union leaders) on the working class and the Russian revolution created conditions that were ripe for revolution.

The ruling class were terrified at the developing working class revolt in Britain. "This country was nearer to Bolshevism that day than at any time since," stated Lloyd George.

Leaders betrayed

The leaders who betrayed the working class in 1914, did so again. During 1919, the Triple Alliance (formed in 1914 of miners - 800,000, transport workers - 250,000, and railway workers - 300,000) was demanding improved wages and conditions. On the Clyde workers demanded a 40-hour week. Nationally, engineers, railway workers and ship yard workers won a 48-hour working week and substantial pay rises.

However, during the build up to further strikes the Triple Alliance was summoned to meet Lloyd George, who told them "Gentlemen, you have fashioned in the Triple Alliance of the unions represented by you a most powerful instrument. I feel bound to tell you that in our opinion, we are at your mercy. The army is disaffected and cannot be relied upon. Trouble has

occurred already in a number of camps ... if you carry out your threat and strike, then you will defeat us.

"But if you do so, have you weighed the consequences? The strike will be in defiance of the government of this country, and by its very success will precipitate a constitutional crisis of the first importance. For, if a force arises in the State which is stronger than the State itself, then it must be ready to take on the functions of the State itself, or withdraw and accept the authority of the State. Gentlemen, have you considered, and if so, are you ready?"

Robert Smillie, President of the Miners Federation, known as a left, responded to this saying, "From that moment on, we were beaten and we knew it." The leadership agreed with Lloyd George, they did not want revolution.

The Bolshevik party had been formed 14 years before 1917, and had gone through continuous struggle to build a party under the Marxist leadership of Lenin. The Communist Party was not formed in Britain until 1920, but this time the situation had reverted and the young CP had a great deal to learn.

Lenin had been right - WWI had created a revolutionary surge in Europe, and in Britain. There could have been revolution but an international party with deep roots in the working class would have had to exist because the role of the party is the most important question in such situations.

Without a revolutionary internationalist Marxist party there cannot be a successful revolution.

That is the lesson we take from that period and why the task of the ISL is to build a party in Britain that is Marxist, revolutionary and internationalist.

For a single democratic, secular, non-racist Palestinian state

An edited version of the article by the same name from Marxism Alive, no 14

The Zionist myth claims that the creation of the State of Israel was part of the wars for national liberation that achieved political independence for many countries in Africa and Asia after the WWII.

But the reality is completely different. Israel was born as a colonial enclave inside Palestine to defend the interests of imperialism in the Middle East. The creation of Israel is based on "transplanting" a foreign population, Jewish immigrants, where Zionism took advantage of support and sympathy for the Jews after the Nazi genocide, and the waves of immigration that occurred after the WWII. Zionists were financed by European Jewish millionaires such as Rothschild and supported by imperialist US and Britain. Another myth that is a complete lie, is that Palestine was "a land without people"; those territories had been inhabited for centuries by the Arab Palestinian people.

This means that the Jewish settlers who came to live in Palestine are not an oppressed nationality expelled from their country, but a foreign population that occupied the land of the natives and are actual oppressors at the service of imperialism.

As a "transplanted" colonial minority they have acquired a racist and militarist character in order to survive, just as happened during the white administration in Rhodesia, with the French settlers in Algiers, and during Apartheid in South Africa.

A racist state

Israel is officially "a Jewish state", that is to say, it is not for all inhabitants, as only those considered to be Jews can be citizens. 90 per cent of the land is reserved exclusively for Jews, through the Jewish National Fund, whose statute states that the "lands of Israel" belong to this institution and cannot be bought or leased or even cultivated by someone who is not a Jew.

The Law of Nationality makes it clear that only Jews could obtain citizenship and accede to the endless privileges that the non-Jewish natives are barred from.

The Law of Return entitles any Jew in the world to become a Jewish citizen.

But the relatives of the Palestine



citizens of the State of Israel who live abroad (many expelled from their land in Palestine, or their children) are not entitled to the same privilege simply because they are not Jews.

The Law of Absentee allows for the expropriation of land that has not been farmed for a certain time.

The expropriations are mainly carried out on land belonging to Palestinian refugees and Palestinians residing on the West Bank of the river Jordan.

An increasingly militarised and violent society

A state like Israel must exert permanent violence against the dominated population, because in order to maintain its colonial and racist character it cannot tolerate the slightest internal resistance or challenge to its frontier.

Ever since Israel's foundation, it has practised a policy of "ethnic cleansing", driving Palestinians away from their ancestors' land or ruthlessly repressing Palestinians who live within the frontiers.

Because of this the Israeli population live on a permanent "war path". Once they are 18, every Israeli – man or woman – is conscripted.

After that, they remain as "reservists" until the age of 50, compelled to a month of training every year, and may be called to fight at any time, such as in Gaza today.

The population therefore is trained to

be in the service of the army – which constitutes the most important institution of the state – and they work mainly in factories or offices related to the military industry.

For the majority, the use of extreme violence against the Palestinians or neighbouring Arabs is "something natural". For example, the continual repression in Gaza and West Bank is rarely reported in Israel. Palestinians are not regarded as humans, at least not with full human rights. The dead and the tortured are merely a consequence of "Israel's right to self-defence" against the Intifada or the rockets.

Discussion on the solution for Palestine in general focuses on two major positions.

The most widespread is the creation of two states: one Jewish and one Palestinian, which points in the same direction as the UN 1947 resolution that divided the Palestinian territory and created Israel. The retreat of the PLO under the leadership of Arafat led to the creation of the so called Palestinian Authority that legitimised Israel and posed the impossible task of building a viable "Palestine State" on the basis of isolated Bantustans, totally dominated economically and militarily by the racist oppressor.

But after 23 years of applying the Oslo Agreements, the building of the Wall of Shame, the theft of more than half the

Does the Socialist Party support the two-state solution?

Marcos Margarido, International Socialist League

land and water sources on the West bank has made this "Palestine mini-state" totally unviable.

The only real solution: destroy the state of Israel

We are back to the important issue: there will be neither peace in the Middle East nor any real solution for Palestine unless the State of Israel is definitively defeated and destroyed. That is to say unless the imperialist cancer is removed. Any other solution will mean the survival of the cancer and the continuity of its lethal and destructive action.

What actions are necessary to achieve the destruction of Israel? In this struggle, every blow delivered against the Zionist State and its army and every action that causes feelings of foreboding and insecurity in the population of the enclave, is positive. That is why missile raids on kibbutzim and cities are absolutely legitimate and necessary in a war of national liberation.

We are for the destruction of the State of Israel, because only this will allow the recovery of the historic territory of Palestine and the construction of a single Secular, Democratic and Non-Racist Palestine, a fundamental demand of the PLO in the 1970s which was abandoned by the late Arafat. In this Palestine, millions of Palestinian people will be able to return and recover full rights of citizenship, as well as those Jews who are willing to live in peace and in equality.



Firstly, it is important to say that unity in struggle against the Israeli military aggression, the brutal occupation imposed on Gaza, and the attacks in the West Bank strengthens the struggle for Palestine. It is important that parties such as the Socialist Party have condemned Israel for slaughtering the Palestinian people. But this cannot mask our differences.

The Socialist Party, and its international, the Committee for a Workers International, argue for a "two states - a socialist Palestine and a socialist Israel" solution.

We do not agree. Firstly, to destroy the negotiations with the Palestinian Authority was the immediate reason for Israel's attack, under the pretext of the murder of three Israeli children by Palestinians, which has never been proven.

they are socialist states they would have no border between them. There can be no boundaries between socialist states, except if one defends the farce of "socialism in one country" advocated by Stalin.

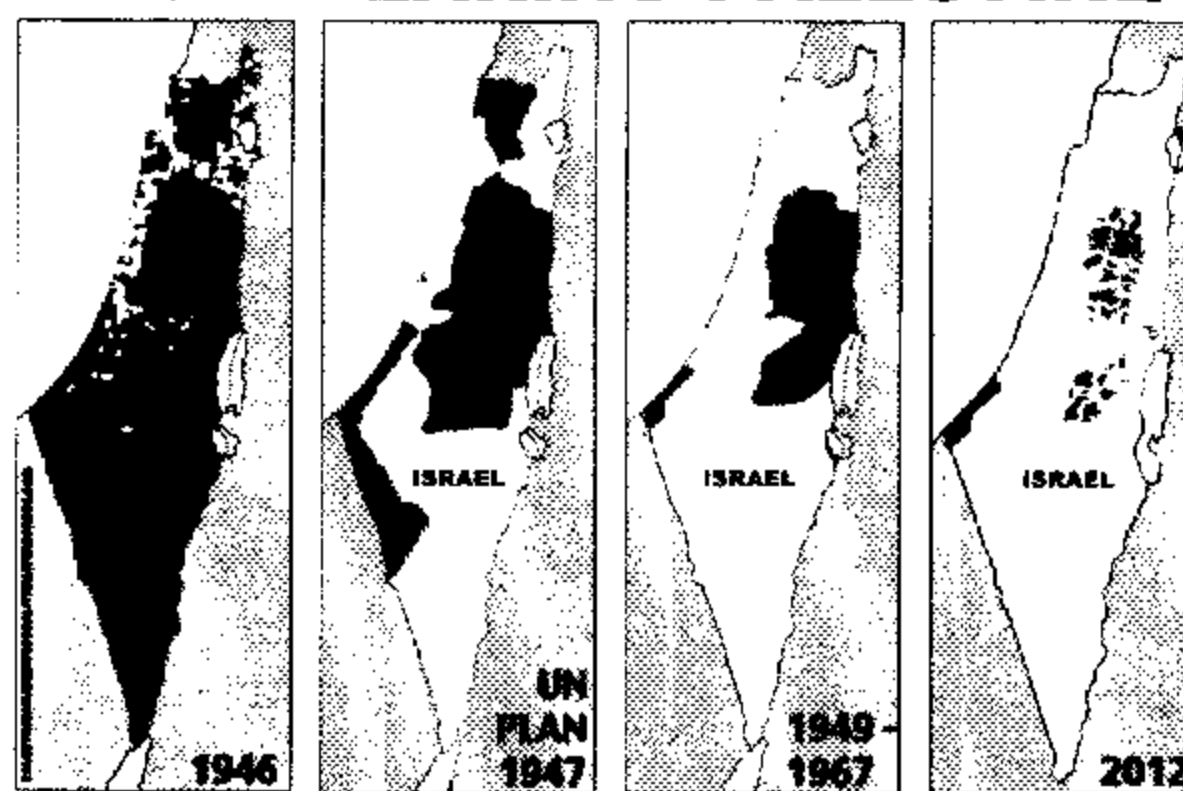
Peter Taafe further says that the "Palestinian and Jewish peoples have decided that they could not live together in one state".

Where the Palestinians decided this is not stated. The Palestinians are the ones facing genocide, it is not they who are deciding who they should or should not live with.

Against Boycott, disinvestment and sanctions

The SP are against BDS. They say in relation to boycott campaigns, "if threatened with destruction, the Israeli population will fight". Seven weeks of

DISAPPEARING PALESTINE



5 million Palestinians are classified as refugees by the UN

Israeli leaders say their aim is to turn the Gaza Strip to dust. Arnon Sofer, one of the leading demographers of the country, on forecasting the demographic imbalance between Palestinians and Jews in the territory of historic Palestine stated that "if we want to remain alive, we have to kill and kill and kill, all day, every day. If we don't kill, we'll cease to exist". That's what Israel does.

Defending two socialist states in the region in the future, is defending a two-state solution now, because for two socialist states to exist in the future it is necessary that they exist before being transformed by revolutions.

This is also wrong in the long run. The SP calls for two socialist states, that is two separate states, existing side by side with each other. But if

slaughter supported by a large majority of Israel's population proves that Israel's war threatens Palestine with destruction.

Judy Beishon in *Socialism Today* (No.169, June 2013) argues that there "are the limits on what boycotts are likely to achieve".

But international support from the US, the EU, South Africa and across the world is mounting. It also gives the youth and working class communities actions that they can carry out. It means that the international struggle and solidarity is key for Palestinians.

Without the struggle for a single state of Palestine Zionism will achieve its dream. Therefore, both in the present struggle and in the future, the only solution is a single, secular, non-racist Palestinian state.

Australia's Gulags

Derek Mortimer

To many people in the northern hemisphere the names Christmas Island, Nauru, and Manus Island, in Papua New Guinea, sound exotic, tropical, a place to go, if you had the money, to soak up the sun and relax.

But for thousands of refugees fleeing persecution they are Australia's tropical gulags, places of no escape, of mental torture, self-harm, sickness, desperation and even murder.

The demonising and imprisonment of asylum seekers began in 1992, under a Labor government led by Paul Keating, with bipartisan support. It was in contravention of the United Nations Convention relating to the status of Refugees under which the Australian government is legally obligated to grant anyone fleeing persecution and seeking asylum the right to enter the country by whatever means possible. The Article states that signatory countries are not to impose penalties on or indefinitely restrict the freedom of movement of those seeking asylum.

Mandatory detention

Since mandatory detention was introduced successive Labor, and right-wing Liberal Party-National Party coalition governments have increased the oppression of asylum seekers in a political race to the bottom. They claim they were responding to the sentiments of the electorate. At no stage has the Labor Party fought such racist conceptions.

In 2013, in an attempt to win right-wing support during the elections, the then Labor Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said, "asylum seekers who come here by boat without a visa will never be settled in Australia".

The international company Serco, which runs prisons in the UK, Australia, and other parts of the world, administers detention centres, where the brutal and inhuman incarcerations have one purpose, to dissuade men women and children from seeking asylum in one of the most prosperous countries in the world by making conditions in the camps so horrendous that they are worse than the countries the asylum seekers flee.

Boats crammed with refugees are intercepted at sea by Australian "border"



Protest by refugee support group

patrols to prevent them landing on the mainland where they would have to be processed and could remain if found to be genuine refugees.

Prime Minister Tony Abbott vowed before the last election in 2013, that he would "stop the boats". To a large extent he succeeded. In 2012-13, 25,273 asylum seekers arrived by boat. Since then there have been almost none, that is until a boat loaded with 157 Sri Lankan Tamils, 37 of them children, sailed 5348 miles from the Indian port of Pondicherry, only to be intercepted by Australian border protection forces some 1200 miles from Australia.

In yet one more escalation of bastardy, the government kept the children,



Protest by refugee support group

women and men confined in small spaces on the Australian Customs vessel, Ocean Protector, for one month separating families and only allowing them out a few hours a day. The Minister for Immigration, Scott Morrison, refused to provide human rights groups or the

media with information.

Asylum seekers later said that at one stage they were told they would have to navigate their own way back to India on rubber lifeboats. None had any boat skills and nine of them were given minimal instructions on navigation so they could make the five-hour journey to Kanyakumari, a town on the southernmost tip of India. One of the refugees said later that they were so terrified that they refused to eat after that.

Hugh de Kretser, executive director of the Human Rights Law Centre, said the revelation made a "complete mockery" of the government's claims to care for the wellbeing of asylum seekers if it was prepared to load 157 men, women and children onto lifeboats somewhere in the Indian Ocean.

"Secret detention on the high seas, trying to dump families in lifeboats in the ocean, secret overnight transfers, misleading the public, frustrating access to lawyers and to the courts - such behaviour ... is trashing the foundations of Australia's democracy," he said.

Eventually all were transported to the Curtin detention centre in the desert of remote Western Australia, then flown over 5000 miles to Nauru.

While this was taking place Tony Abbott claimed that Sri Lanka is "a society at peace". He was supported by former

of the Tropics

Labor Foreign Affairs Minister Bob Carr, who said that Sri Lanka asylum seekers are “economic migrants”.

The lies of both men were refuted by Graeme McGregor, the Refugee Campaign Coordinator for Amnesty International Australia. He said, “Amnesty International and the Human Rights Law Centre have long documented the human rights abuses widely committed by the Sri Lankan authorities ... Despite the end of the 2009 conflict, the Sri Lankan Government has systematically and violently cracked down on its critics.

“Sri Lankan asylum seekers have faced torture upon return to Sri Lanka from countries such as the UK. Torture has been reported in rehabilitation camps ... and also in the context of civil policing. All ethnic groups in Sri Lanka continue to face risks of torture in police custody, including sexual violence. In several known cases, Tamils who have been returned to Sri Lanka have faced arbitrary arrest and detention”.

He said “there is no way for a Sri Lankan to flee persecution without leaving their country”.

He added that at least 15 media workers have been killed since 2006, and more than 80 journalists have gone into exile since 2005.

Authorities abuse child immigrants

While the harassment of Sri Lankan asylum seekers was taking place at the hands of the Australian government a national inquiry into children in immigration was taking place at which medical and legal experts and former staff, told of self-harm, abuse, and children being deprived of medication while at detention centres.

Psychiatrist Dr Peter Young, who was the director of mental health services at detention centre service provider International Health and Mental Services (IHMS) until a few months previously, told the inquiry that the Department of Immigration tried to suppress a report which referred to the terrible mental affects of incarceration.

He said IHMS had collected figures showing “significant” mental health problems among child detainees.

He said the “early data” was “broadly



A vigil in Sydney for Reza Barati who was murdered during a riot at Manus Island detention centre

in line with what we are seeing with adults and perhaps a little higher”.

Dr Young said IHMS provided a report to the Immigration Department “in the couple of weeks as [the data had] come in” and that the reaction was “negative”.

“[The Immigration Department] reacted with alarm and have asked us to withdraw these figures from our reporting,” he said.

Dr Young told the inquiry there had been 128 cases of child detainees committing acts of self-harm in the past 15 reporting months, but that figure does not include Nauru.

He said he was aware children had tried to poison themselves or ingest harmful substances, and said banging heads against walls is common.

There are a further 171 cases of child detainees threatening self-harm and the Human Rights Commission says it has been told 23 children have tried to self-harm on more than two occasions.

Dr John Paul Sanggaran, who had worked on Christmas Island in 2013, said written clinical decisions by doctors were “altered and routinely being downgraded”.

He gave an example of a three-year-old girl suffering epilepsy whose medication was taken from her when she arrived at Christmas Island.

Dr Sanggaran said the child started having seizures and medication was ordered from the mainland but that ran out and the seizures returned.

Such horrors as have been exposed at the inquiry and by refugee advocacy

groups and some sections of the media are a paradox. For, while they shock anyone with an ounce of humanity, the government welcomes them. They are an indication of success, not failure. The more the horrors of Australia’s mandatory detention are broadcast around the world, the more the government feels vindicated. The government’s ultimate deterrents are not border protection patrol boats, but torture.

Abbott said he was very aware of the plight of children in detention. “What is more horrific I ask you? What could be more horrific than the idea of children perishing at sea because their parents have fallen for the false promises of the people smugglers?”

Asked about the almost 1,000 children being held in immigration detention, Abbott said they would be “dealt with in the ordinary way”.

The “ordinary way” took a new twist with the revelation that Scott Morrison is finalising talks with Cambodia to organise the dumping there of 1000 asylum seekers from Nauru. \$40 million dollars will be handed over to the government of one of the most corrupt, oppressive and impoverished countries in the world, the land of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge, where 1.5 million of its citizens were murdered between 1975 and 1979.

Cambodia is a Buddhist country, most asylum seekers are Muslim. There are virtually no refugee facilities and there is a history of arrest of minorities and government opponents.

Bill Hunter's Archives

World War One opened the age of barbarism

BILL HUNTER WROTE THIS ARTICLE AS THE USA AND BRITAIN WERE PREPARING FOR WAR IN AFGHANISTAN.

Again and again in his writings on WWI Lenin repeated and explained the dictum of Clausewitz, the German military writer, that "War is politics carried on by other means". That must be the central guide for socialists and anti-capitalists in this war.

In a speech, that was later published in a pamphlet under the title of War and Revolution, he said, "It seems to me, that the most important thing that is usually overlooked in the question of the war, a key issue to which insufficient attention is paid and over which there is so much dispute – useless, hopeless, idle dispute – I should say is the question of the class character of the war: what caused that war, what classes are waging it, and what historical and historico-economic conditions gave rise to it".

War and economic crisis are inevitable under capitalism. Eric Hobsbawm, the historian, in his book on the twentieth century "The Age of Extremes" declared it to be "without doubt the most murderous century of which we have record by the scale, frequency and length of the warfare which filled it".

Hobsbawm was not alone in his opinion on the nature of the twentieth century. At the beginning of Hobsbawm's book there were the short opinions of twelve people, philosophers, scientists, writers and a musician. Eight of them commented on its violence, the "terrible events" during the century and its disastrous course.

As the end of the millennium came nearer more and more writers adopted the conclusion that it was a century dripping with brutality and blood.

Jonathan Steel, an Observer journalist, began his two-page article (12 December 1999) under the headline, "The century that murdered peace", with a subhead, "At the bloody dawn of a new millennium, Jonathan Steele, foresees no escape for the world from the long catalogue of warfare and suffering that branded the twentieth century an Age of Barbarism".

The century began three years after the grand celebrations of sixty years of Queen Victoria's reign and its celebrations of the past, present, and future greatness of



Britain, and of its domination of a large part of the world.

It began with great optimism among "informed opinion" as to the future, even though the optimists were only fourteen years away from the terrible butchery of WWI.

At this time, although mighty British capitalism was already losing its premier position in the world, it was still one of the major imperialist powers.

The ruling class had not lost its old arrogance and its belief was still strong that the more of the earth it occupied, the more of the "lesser breeds" it brought "within the law", the better it was for the human race.

A short four years of slaughter, savagery and suffering, such as the world had never seen before, followed the launch of WWI.

By the time it had ended the British Empire had crumbled and British capitalism was reduced to a junior partnership with US imperialism.

Socialism or Barbarism

Today, there is a vast unease and anger at the nature of capitalist societies throughout the world. In all continents there is growing fear of the control of science and technology by multinationals, and a growing uncertainty of work and control of life.

At the beginning of WWI Rosa Luxemburg, the leading Marxist in the German Social Democratic Party, summed up the choice for humanity as being between Socialism or Barbarism.

The horrifying prospect now, which is being grasped by millions of people and particularly young people, is the prospect of mutilation of the very life force of

humanity by powerful and profit-greedy chemical combines. This is only part of the very real prospects arising from a continuation of capitalist control and ownership.

In Britain, New Labour leaders have disenfranchised the mass of the working population who looked on the Labour party as the party of their class. With complacent philistinism, self centred careerism, embracing the worst form of bourgeois individualism they denied the social nature of humanity's evolution of consciousness and culture.

New Labour creates a servile capitalist party dismissing contemptuously and ignorantly the most decisive force in history – that of the struggles of the common people.

The very nature of a dying system, despite its great assistance from the retreats and betrayals from leaders of the working class, is once again thrusting forward its own gravediggers out of new generations of masses of workers and common people.

It was when capitalism was in its youth and in its most virile expansion that Marx and Engels outlined the paradoxes of capitalism which would lead to the greatest and most fearsome contradictions of all – that between its great development of the forces of production and the destructive capacity that production for capitalist profit brought with it.

The theoretical writings and revolutionary practice of Marx and Engels, and of Lenin and Trotsky, two great Marxists who added to our heritage, contain invaluable guides for millions of people who will move into socialist struggle.