

Socialist Voice

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International Socialist League International Workers League Fourth International

£1



Free Palestine End Genocide End British complicity

Fight low pay
Fight poverty
Fight cuts



USA/China trade
war and
protectionism

Building the IWL in
USA and France

The 1997 election
and after
Bill Hunter



Newspaper of the ISL

International Socialist League

British section of the IWL-FI

(International Workers' League
Fourth International)

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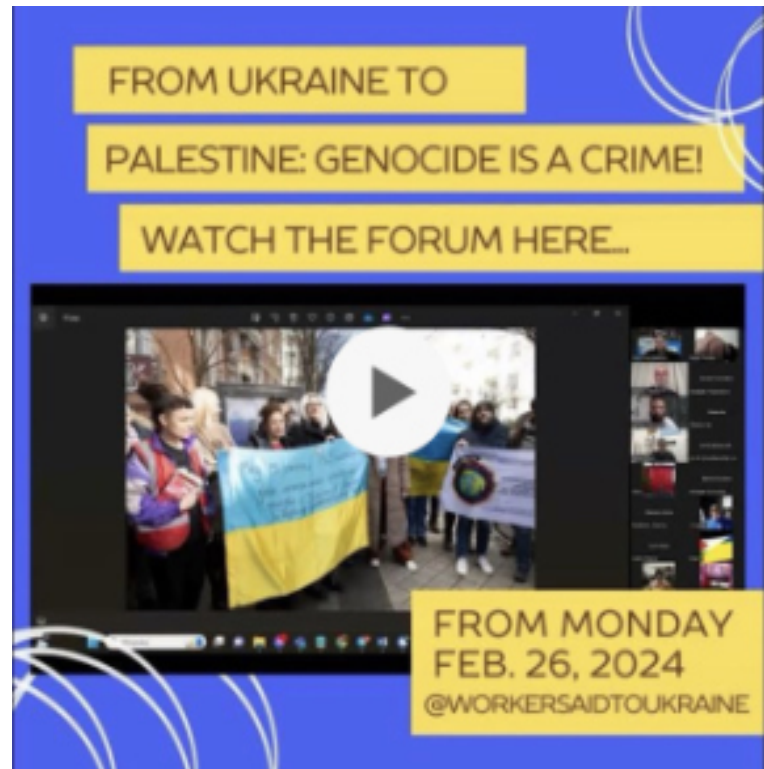
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Life of the IWL

From Palestine to Ukraine genocide



*Link to video
recording of
meeting
available on
Youtube*



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Reader's write

The International Socialist League would like to hear your thoughts on the news and information published in the Socialist Voice.

As a British based organisation we are interested in your feedback, we are interested to hear what you are involved in.

We are the British section of the International Worker's League - Fourth International. You can find up-to-date news on the litci.org/en website, there you will find information on the Fourth International's work around the world, along with news from over 23 other organisations affiliated to the IWL-FI.

Low pay, cuts and profits causes poverty

Margaret McAdam and Ashley Walker

Based on data from 2023, around 12 million people, 18% of the population, live in absolute poverty, with a housing and homelessness emergency escalating as families struggle to bear the costs of permanently high prices including energy costs. An estimated 13% of households in England are in fuel poverty, and food-bank usage has risen to 1.5% of the population.

The acute shortage of affordable homes, according to Shelter, means more people face the insecurity of sofa surfing, sleeping in their cars or being forced onto the streets. At least 309,000 people in England spent Christmas without a home, including almost 140,000 children, an increase of 14% in one year.

The total property income declared by unincorporated (individual) landlords in 2021/22 was £48.86 billion, compared with £46.37 billion in 2020/21. Last year 74 per cent of all buy-to-let purchases in England and Wales were by limited companies and in the year to April data from Zoopla shows rents for 'new lets' increased by 10.4%.

Big business makes bumper profits from their destruction of nature and exploitation of workers. "Shell, Equinor, ExxonMobil and BP – some of the UK's biggest suppliers of gas – made £65bn in net profits in 2023..."(ibid).

In 2023 HSBC made a net profits of £31bn, Lloyds £5.5bn and Barclays £5.3bn. In 2022 British privatised water companies paid £1.4bn in dividends to shareholders, as they vastly polluted British rivers.

As profits rise, local services declined at an alarming rate - with increasing potholes, fewer bus services, library and leisure centre closures.

"Between 2010-11 and 2022-23, net spending per person on cultural services was cut by 43% in real terms, on roads and transport by 40%, on housing by 35% and on planning and development by a third – with more cuts pencilled in for this year."

Poorly funded public services and inadequate social security systems help the state bully workers into staying in terrible jobs, out of fear of reliance on a very poor social security



system, as unemployment serves a purpose in driving down wages by maintaining a constant supply of replacement labour.

No levelling up

There has been no levelling up! What is up is poverty, exploitation, unemployment and a deterioration in the quality of life at work and in neighbourhoods. While the wealthiest engage in parasitic activities and gambling, a significant aspect of modern capitalism, wealth increasingly diverts to the top minority layers of society.

The drastic worsening of working conditions in recent decades is combined with attacks on social welfare provisions, thus public money can benefit capitalists. The real wastage of state finances are subsidies and assistance to capitalism, particularly the distribution of public assets among private capitalists who reap vast fortunes from privatisation.

Reorganisations and combinations of capital demand job losses and increased precarity, whilst capitalism individualises the blame for unemployment and precarity on the people it affects. Precarious workers suffer flexible hiring and firing according to fluctuations of the market, while the most exploited workers (many immigrant workers) face appalling conditions similar to 19th century sweat shops.

Profits rise poverty increases

Massive profits and a rise in poverty is no coincidence, it is the result of deliberate government policy to transfer wealth to rich people and big business. The productive capacity of capitalism floods the world market with commodities and capital, and drives capitalist anarchy. They hail the sanctity of free trade (as monopoly

increases) and participate in trade wars and protectionism.

Since the mid-1970s, workers have suffered drastic retreats and a weakening of their organisations in face employers' offensives. That weakening – a change in the relationship of classes – has made possible all the other evils; the destruction of the National Health Service and the social security net; oppressive individual contracts and deteriorating conditions at work alongside increasing workload and stress.

The strike wave of 2022–2023 promised the beginning of a new working class combativity revealing a working class raging against cuts to wages and conditions and ready to fight. Consequently, politicians, economists and journalists, backers of capitalism, who declare against state interference, support the brutal blocking and criminalisation of workers' right to organise, strike and protest against their increasing exploitation.

However, new struggles will emerge and new leaderships must be built that seek unity in struggle, class independence and internationalism – for there is an international war against workers that requires socialism and workers' power.

NOTE: Absolute poverty measures how many people this year cannot afford a set standard of living. The Department for Work and Pensions currently defines it based on the living standard an average income could buy in the year ending in March 2011. If your income is 40% below this, after adjusting for rising prices since then, you are classed as living in absolute poverty.

1 <https://tinyurl.com/2v3ks3zv>

2 <https://tinyurl.com/mwrcrbaku>

3 <https://tinyurl.com/3b8vwn4w>

4 <https://tinyurl.com/4ykv2mda>

5 <https://tinyurl.com/bdz5cz5e>

China/US Trade war engulfs the world

Martin Ralph

Britain and many countries are against U.S. protectionist policies that create massive subsidies via tax breaks and other incentives to deepen the trade war with China.

The economic shock waves emanating from this inter-imperialist trade conflict between U.S.A and China threatens greater conflict in the world capitalist system.

The 2022 Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), as part of the trade war aims to achieve a 40% reduction in greenhouse gases from 2005 levels, by 2030. This has been described as the most significant climate legislation in U.S. history. However, it requires many commodities to be “Made in America” and seeks to combat China’s growing investment in green technology production.

The IRA tax credits for “green” industries are conditional on production and final assembly being based in the U.S.

The massive subsidies through tax breaks to companies producing electric vehicles, batteries for electric vehicles, and other dubiously “green” technology may see European companies decamping to the U.S.

This is not only a problem for Europe as Japan, Canada and Australia have increased their protectionist investment in “green” energy batteries, solar panels, wind farms and solar panels in response to U.S. actions.

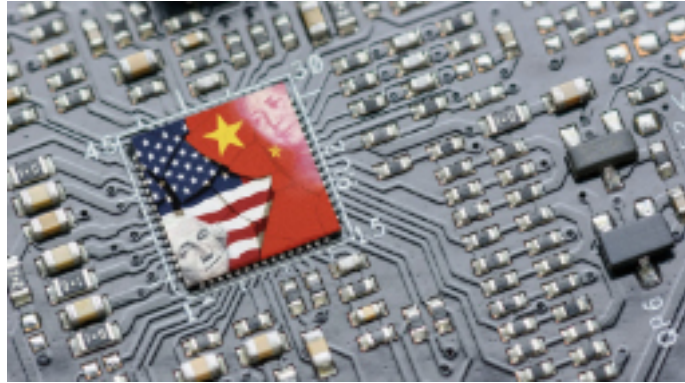
France is calling for a EU response to the IRA with a “Made in Europe” policy a relaxation of state aid rules, providing economic advantage to France and Germany.

There could be a mass-scale relocation of European businesses in clean hydrogen, carbon capture, and solar industries to the U.S. with the trade war against China spreading across the world.

While the U.S. and China engulfs the world in its trade war, the struggle for resources, markets, and control has pushed Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates to join BRICS.

UK falling behind

The UK is already behind the EU and the U.S. investment in “green” industries and electric car manufacturers in the UK say the IRA



will make them less competitive as global investment will be drawn to the U.S.

The government refused to provide adequate subsidies supporting technologies and avoid the collapse of the Britishvolt start-up, which planned to build a giant factory to develop electric car batteries. Jaguar Land Rover has not committed to its planned EV UK production increase, and Arrival, a startup in electric vans, abandoned its plan to start production in the UK and relocated to the U.S.

The IRA also threatens Britain’s hydrogen industry. The London-based “green” hydrogen fund, Hydrogen One Capital, has confirmed plans to shift focus to the U.S. The UK’s £1.1 billion hydrogen projects may relocate if the government does not match U.S. support.

This decline in investment illustrates British capitalism’s weakness and industrial decay.

The capitalists have destroyed industrial production over many years and spent decades plundering the world and Britain. Years of austerity, privatisations, deindustrialisation, lack of investment, a world economy in crisis and trade wars mean the Brexit policy, dependent upon massively increasing global trade, as part of a utopian Great British policy has failed.

With trade is incredibly disrupted, and imperialist nations becoming more protectionist, British capitalism faces a mountain of problems.

The powerful financial markets of the City of London, along with a few powerful global companies, cannot save the British economy.

It will only survive by unleashing deep attacks on the working class and its most vulnerable including precarious workers, women and

immigrants while it tries to fully privatise public services and places health and education under control of the multi-nationals. This will happen under a Tory or Labour government.

International conflict and struggle

China is laden with a deep economic crisis as its economy needs deep structural change. One option is to create a dignified work and social security system, healthcare and pensions, and for workers that only socialism and workers’ control can deliver.

The CCP will never provide comprehensive work and social welfare policies instead they continue their imperialist struggle against the other big powers and gain more exports by undercutting manufacturers in other imperialist countries by state aid and brutality against the working class.

British class struggle will intensify

British capitalism salvages what it can attacking and dividing the working class, but the strike wave and the mass mobilisations for Palestinians builds workers confidence to unite in struggle and fight back. Rising inter-imperialist rivalry shows working people in Britain the need for a real collaboration with European and all workers fighting for the future.

Bosses, governments and their policies impoverish workers and enrich themselves. Join us to build an international revolutionary party with the IWL for socialism and to build the fight back in the interest of the working class to oppose capitalism and imperialism in a concrete international struggle to overcome these dangerous imperialist plans.

Palestinian women, your struggle is not indifferent to us

As women, we know very well what it is to be a victim of oppression. As workers and doubly oppressed and exploited, we should not and cannot be indifferent to the massacre that the Zionist and genocidal state of Israel is committing against the Palestinian people and, in particular, against Palestinian women.

By: Érika Andreassy, PSTU, Brazil (section of the IWL) – full version Internationalsocialistleague.net

For 75 years, Palestinian women have been victims of Israeli colonial oppression. In all these years of Zionist occupation, with the support and complicity of imperialist countries, rapes and sexist violence have been used as a weapon of war to humiliate and force them out of their lands; they suffer from violent attacks by Israeli settlers and live under the constant threat of having their houses destroyed and be displaced; they are afflicted by the fear that their parents, husbands and children will be arrested, wounded or killed and, if not, by their own mourning for the loss of their loved ones by the forces of repression.

The confiscation of goods and land and economic blockades to the territories where most Palestinians are confined (Gaza and the West Bank) raises female poverty and the lack of access to basic resources for survival to dramatic levels, which is aggravated by the impossibility of accessing the labour market, due to restrictions on movement between cities. The overload by households and unpaid care chores faced by poor women of the working class, is combined with the difficulty of keeping their families in extremely hostile conditions, because even with access to restricted work, they are forced to support their families alone when their husbands are incarcerated, injured or killed.

Women arrested often spend weeks or months in prison, without the right to defence and are subjected to the worst forms of humiliation.

What is happening is just another chapter of the policy of expulsion from the occupied territories and ethnic cleansing, which for decades the oppressive state of Israel has imposed on the Palestinian people and women.

Bombing hospitals, mosques and refugee centres or leaving civilians without light, without drinking water and without food, even preventing them from crossing the border to avoid death, has nothing to do with eliminating "terrorists". It is a deliberate genocide and far from 'isolated cases.' This is a massacre, deliberately committed by the Israel Defence Forces, whose sexist component is expressed by the fact



that Palestinian women (and their children) are the main targets, as part of the Zionist project to expel Palestinians from their lands and must be vehemently repudiated by women workers.

Pillars of the Palestinian resistance

But Palestinian women are not only victims of the conflict, they are an integral part of the struggle for the liberation and emancipation of the Palestinian people, partners of men in the resistance and fighters against occupation and colonisation. Historically Palestinian women have been very active protagonists in the struggle for national liberation, the history of Palestinian resistance is full of the names women who dared to face the invading army while their territory was colonised. The role they have played and continue to fulfil as fighters, organisers and leaders of the resistance, demonstrates both the revolutionary potential of women, and should serve as an example for fighters around the world.

In 1921, they formed the first Union of Arab-Palestinian Women, which organised protests against the British mandate and the Balfour Declaration - in which England, with the consent of France, Italy and the United States, expressed its intention to facilitate the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestinian lands.

In 1936, they were essential in the national strike against British colonialism that favoured the migration of Jews to the Palestinian territory. In addition to promoting protests and collecting funds to assist the families of the dead and prisoners,

they were part of the operations to transport basic goods and weapons to members of the organised resistance. In particular, peasant and Palestinian working class women played a key role in these processes, hiding weapons in their clothes or in the fields and traveling through the ground, sharing important information with the guerrillas, such as the location of British troops and supply routes.

The intifadas were also well known for the central involvement of women in their action (to give you an idea, in the first intifada between 1987-1993, a third of the casualties were women). And every year, women join the protests on the anniversary of Nakba, demanding the right of return of the refugee population.

For many women, being a Palestinian mother means not only starting a family, but also keeping the Palestinian people alive. As long as Palestinians continue to be born, the fight against the State of Israel will continue and the territory will not be homogeneously Jewish. For them, this is a way to resist, not to let their people become extinct. It is therefore not surprising that in the conflicts involving Israeli and Palestinian Forces (as in the current attack on Gaza) the preferred targets are women and children.

For freedom, equality and rights

This does not mean that in the struggle for national liberation, Palestinian women renounce the struggle for their own rights as women, because they know that gender discrimination and sexist violence put them in worse conditions to fight against the Zionist project.

Liberation is one step, but the other is social equality and internal democracy in Palestinian society."

Both struggles are not dissociated from the class struggle at the world level and to be victorious they need to be fought independently and from a socialist and revolutionary perspective, which has as a strategy the destruction of the capitalist system, which ultimately is the one who sustains and reproduces all oppressions.

Building the IWL

USA Workers' Voice Second National Congress

<https://workersvoiceus.org>

Over the March 9-10 weekend, Workers' Voice (WV) held its second National Congress. Elected delegates and observers from around the country participated in the event, which took place in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The delegates observed that since WV's Congress two years ago - which marked the fusion of Workers' Voice, Socialist Resurgence, and other forces - we have witnessed energised fightbacks from working class and oppressed peoples, resurgent labor militancy, growing resentment and disdain for the Democratic Party, and an increasingly violent reshuffling within the imperialist world order. A radicalisation has taken place especially among the youth, as shown in the recent mass mobilizations in solidarity with Palestine. All of this is highly positive for the building of an organization that is armed with a revolutionary socialist program.

In preparation for the congress, several resolutions - including a Political Resolution and a Tasks and Perspectives Report - were presented to the WV membership for four months of debate and a vote. In turn, the elected delegates at the congress discussed, amended, and voted on the resolutions. They also nominated and elected the members of the new central committee, which will meet regularly to provide national leadership between congresses.

A major section of the Political Resolution, and the discussion on the congress floor, focused on the heightened competition between major imperialist countries in Africa, the Middle East, Eastern Europe and the Pacific. The resolution stated that "all imperialisms must be opposed, starting with our own imperialist government and state in the United States but also the Russian and Chinese."

The resolution went on to say, "In the international arena, the war in Ukraine and Israel's ongoing war on Palestinians are the most prominent examples of the crisis of world hegemony of the United States. Both are creating internal cracks within the



old imperialist order and the Democratic Party apparatus."

The resolution noted how U.S. support for Israel's invasion of Gaza has mobilised people: "Hundreds of thousands have gone into the streets against the Israeli invasion, and many are unsure of how to continue to support the hypocritical Democratic political machine. In many respects, these demonstrations are proving to be the continuation of the upsurge that began in 2020 around the George Floyd murder."

In regard to the war in Ukraine, the resolution affirmed, "Ukraine has the right to self-determination and self-defence against an imperialist power [Russia]. It also has the right to accept arms for the purpose of self-defence. Unfortunately, Ukraine is caught between imperialist powers. There should be no illusions regarding the intentions of either the U.S. or the other members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to gain political influence and financial profits from any settlement of the war."

After voting on the Political Resolution, delegates to the congress drew a balance sheet on the organisations past two years of political activism. We assessed our

work in the immigrant rights, reproductive rights, civil liberties, Black liberation, labor, climate, LGBTQ, and anti-imperialist movements, and proposed priorities and tasks for the coming period.

The political challenges that working people face today are immense. But we are committed to building an organization that can mobilise the working class into action and that can retain the lessons and connections made in every battle against oppression and exploitation. At the same time, WV is looking to build campaigns through joint work and discussion with other socialist organizations, on a principled foundation of mass action, anti-imperialism and class independence. Hopefully, this process will lead to a furthering of the fusion process begun in 2022.

WV members at the congress felt exhilarated to meet in person, share experiences, and discuss the best ways to move forward. At the end of the congress, greetings from our co-thinkers in the International Workers League-Fourth International - including greetings from Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Spain, and Italy - were read to the conference.



Building the IWL

Workers Voice

10-point program:

- 1) Defend unions and workers' rights to organise! For an independent labor party based on a democratic, fighting labor movement! No support for Democrats and Republicans!
- 2) Stop all deportations now! Equal rights for immigrants! Close the camps!
- 3) Black Lives Matter! Jail killer cops! Dismantle the racist police and the criminal 'justice' system! Reparations, land repatriation and self-determination for Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and all indigenous and colonised peoples!
- 4) Reproductive justice: Free, accessible contraception and abortion on demand! Defend bodily autonomy, whether for childbearing, abortion, or gender-confirming therapy!
- 5) Free quality universal public health care now! Quality free public child care and elder care for all, 24-7! Free education for a lifetime!
- 6) Full civil and human rights for the LGBTQIA+ community!
- 7) For climate justice! Public ownership of the energy industry under workers' and community control to achieve emergency conversion to 100% renewable energy!
- 8) No U.S. military intervention abroad! Dismantle the war machine! End U.S. aid to Israel! For a democratic secular Palestine! End sanctions on Venezuela, Iran, and Cuba!
- 9) For the full integration of disabled people into social, political, and economic life!
- 10) Public ownership, under workers' control, of big industry, transport, and the banks! For a workers' government and a planned economy—for socialist

France: the new IWL group begins: En Lutte

enlutte.com

For several years now, we have been in contact with the Workers' International League (the IWL-FI), an organization present in 23 countries and with sympathisers in many others, and wish, notably with this newsletter, to participate in the establishment of this organization in France.

We are revolutionary communist activists living in France, and we believe: That we urgently need to put an end to this capitalist system, which is increasingly barbaric, continues to wreak havoc in social, environmental and economic terms, reproduces wars and dictatorships on a permanent basis, and hardens our "democracies", notably with its freedom-destroying technologies like video-surveillance.

The first paper is published on <https://enlutte.com> and includes articles on: climate crisis, 2023 pension movement, French asylum and immigration law, Feminist strike 8 March, wars in Ukraine and Palestine

We need an organization that discusses in permanent dialogue with the grassroots and decides with the grassroots how to act in the streets, neighbourhoods, businesses, schools, universities as opposed to bureaucratic parties and unions, controlled by a management, and where the grassroots do not participate and only obey. We need an organization that is concerned with the interests and needs of these workers, and participates in their mobilizations and struggles, whether in France or elsewhere in the world. For our perspective is socialist and internationalist.

The the construction of a political organization with and for workers (from youth to pensioners) must be structured at international level from the outset.

To put an end to this infamous old world, we believe it is necessary, in our country, as elsewhere, to expropriate the capitalist vampires and put the economy at the service of the workers and the people.

To defeat the current system we need to put an end to capitalist and

imperialist Europe, to the European Union which is a weapon of social war in the service of bankers and multinationals, and build a united Europe of workers and peoples, a socialist Europe.

The party we want must make it an absolute priority in its militant work to systematically intervene on behalf of workers and oppressed sectors of capitalist society: women, LGBTI+ people, working class neighbourhoods, racialised people (also known as "visible minorities"). To put it plainly, we happily claim to be with the majority of the population whom Macron considers to be "people who are nothing"! And we defend the fact that, whether natives or foreigners, we form one and the same working class (in the broadest sense).

Finally - and most importantly - the



On 12 February, more than 200 people attended a public meeting on France-Israel military cooperation in Paris. Stop Arming Israel is a key issue, both for the liberation of Palestine and for the fight against the imperialist En Lutte

inability of capitalist institutions to take the necessary measures to halt the destruction of the environment on a planetary scale also means that we need to think of other institutions, based on the political power of the working class in the broadest sense, in order to set up a system of production that aims both to satisfy social needs and to respect and preserve the environment. Without environmental preservation, no socialist perspective is possible.





Three years after the 1997 general election



With a general election looming the need for change, as with the 1997 general election against the hated Tory government, remains widespread today. There is a growing desire for a workers' alternative to Labour, as Starmer shifts Labour further to the right creating a party barely distinguishable from the Tories. An alternative must turn to the working class – the International Socialist League (ISL) will fight fraternally in all kinds of working class alliances to build and assist the struggles of the working class.

From the Bill Hunter archive

There was a landslide defeat of the Tories in the general election of 1997. However, the paradox was that it was a Tory *defeat*, but not a 'New' Labour *victory*. Most voters for New Labour were striking against the Tories and were not voting for the type of party and government that Blair and Brown intended to create.

After three years the New Labour government, declared to be setting the pattern for the 'Third Way' governments in Europe and noted for spin-doctoring, began to stumble from one disaster to another.

Marxists and revolutionary socialists in Britain need understand the type of leadership necessary to assist the development of an alternative anti-capitalist, real communist road for the mass of humanity.

The ISL believes with an upsurge of political struggle, which we are entering, a new workers' party can emerge. A party communicating working class anti-capitalist perspectives has a place, with methods to fight and end capitalism with full rights to discussion and organisation.

There are differences between a revolutionary Marxist party, and, a workers' party that is a broad alliance or united front of various anti-capitalist trends. The strategical aim of the ISL is the building of a



RMT struggle against cuts led them to challenge Blair in the London elections

revolutionary world mass party, to resolve the crisis of working class leadership – that is the central feature of our modern epoch, and the axis of the Transitional programme of the Fourth International.

The tactics for the development of such a party are determined by the stages of development of the working class. Discussion on tactics for building a revolutionary party begins by the questions facing working class – the only way Trotskyism can develop to real parties leading more sections of the class.

London elections

We supported the candidature of Livingstone for mayor and supported the trade unionists of the Campaign Against Tube Privatisation (CATP) standing for the London Assembly – finding ourselves in conflict with the London Socialist Alliance (LSA). London trade unions' opposition to the Blair privatisation policy posed one of the biggest questions in the London election.

In that light, we see the mistake of the majority of Socialist Alliance organisations, in their failure to make agreement with the CATP on a joint campaign.

The CATP offered places in their list to the LSA, but this was rejected because of insistence on using the name of CATP. The issue of the ownership of the London tube and

questions surrounding it, raised almost every sharp *political* question on which the mass of people criticise New Labour – 'fat cats' making a bonanza out of privatisation; deterioration of rail safety; issue of social ownership; and control of future London transport by powerful capitalist construction companies like Balfour Beatty and Siemens.

Failing to make an agreement with a movement which had support from trade union branches and the RMT London was a sectarian inward-looking mistake by the majority of the LSA. A united anti-capitalist campaign could deepen and help develop a principled unity struggle against Blairite anti-socialism in the unions.

The essential *mass party of the working class with a necessary revolutionary internationalist programme* will not be created in one leap. And this movement against capitalism is not going to organise immediately under a complete Trotskyist programme.

Our task is to make a bridge to it, as outlined in discussion on the method of the Transitional Programme, to influence its programme and organisation and proceed as a tendency with our own principles.

We must discuss programmes of action that can bring together the widest possible anti-capitalist movement, without giving up one jot of our principles, to enable close participation with others who are moving in a revolutionary anti-capitalist direction, even if they disagree with us on a number of important issues.

Our aim for a new party must be in a relationship with the working class, which must advance through all stages of its development, and bring the type of party that can take the workers to power.

If we are not to be just sectarian propagandists, we must go through several stages of principled alliances, united activity, fusions etc., with various degrees of agreement and programme – *whilst maintaining our principled positions on which we differ with our allies.*