



For a Revolutionary Workers Party—For a Workers Government!

Capitalist Decay, Racist Reaction

Break With Laborism!

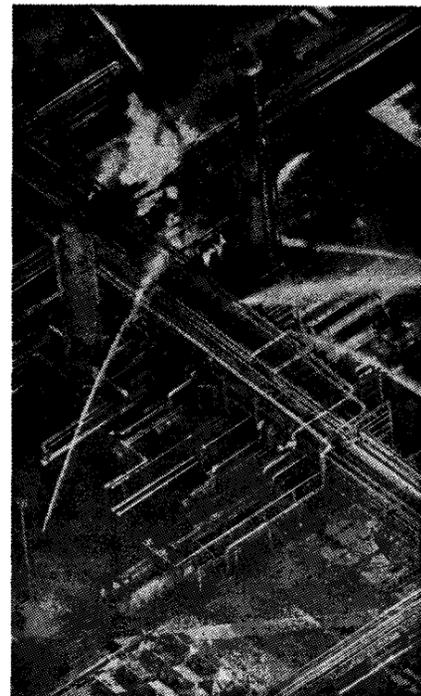
Despite three years of vicious attacks on working people and all the oppressed, the Coalition government of John Howard narrowly won re-election in October. It was a contest in which no party stood, even in a crude way, for the interests of the working class. As we said in our article "No Vote to Labor!" (*ASP* No. 165, Spring 1998), "Both the Coalition Tories and the social-democratic ALP pledge continued attacks on the working class, women, Aborigines, immigrants and youth." Ominously, in the face of this bipartisan

"consensus," the virulently racist, fascist One Nation Party received over 750,000 votes. While some gloat that One Nation only won one (Senate) parliamentary seat, One Nation and the outright fascists with which it is interpenetrated have been emboldened in the current climate of relentless union busting, destruction of jobs and working conditions, racist attacks on immigrants and Aborigines and wholesale slashing of social services.

In every capitalist country, the tiny minority that lives through the exploitation of the labour of the vast majority are hellbent on maximising their profits, destroying the livelihoods and very lives of millions as poverty and disease run rampant. These attacks have sharply intensified since capitalist counterrevolution engulfed the bureaucratically

degenerated Soviet workers state. Now, no longer muted by the common goal of destroying the USSR, rivalries between the imperialist powers are escalating as each strives for domination. The war on labour and minorities "at home" is part and parcel of the drive to war between the imperialist powers as they struggle to redivide the world between them. As at the beginning of this century, escalating interimperialist conflicts will certainly lead to world war, the inevitable product of the capitalist system unless it is overthrown by international proletarian revolution.

The capitalist economic crisis centred in Asia has sent millions of workers into struggle against International Monetary Fund-imposed starvation austerities. Deeply fearful of the struggling masses, at the recent Asia-Pacific Economic Co-



Ray Kennedy

Explosion at Esso plant in Victoria killed two, left millions without heat, hot water.

operation (APEC) meeting in Kuala Lumpur the Howard government, following its Labor predecessors, wanted to stand by their "friends," the bloody Indonesian and Malaysian rulers.

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There is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts! Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

NOVEMBER 28—Black political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal is under immediate threat of death by the state's executioners following a 29 October decision by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania upholding his conviction on

false charges of killing a policeman in 1981. Jamal is an innocent man, an eloquent and outspoken opponent of racism and injustice who has been hounded by the Philadelphia police and FBI since the time he was a teenage spokesman for the Black Panther Party in the late 1960s.

In 1995, it took a massive campaign of international protest, including by trade

workers from Chicago ATU Locals 241 and 308, along with members of United Auto Workers Locals 551 and 890 and Teamsters Local 705. Members of Communications Workers of America Local 4250 carried their union's banner.

Statements of solidarity were sent by South African unions, such as the National Union of Mineworkers, the French journalists union SNJ-CGT and

South Africa, which made Jamal an honorary member when facing execution in 1995, declared: "We call upon the entire working class movement to unite against the Pennsylvania state ruling," continuing, "Abu-Jamal has been on the forefront of the struggle against injustice and man's inhumanity to man."

Rally speakers included the Chicago Labor/Black Struggle League and the Spartacus Youth Club, whose banner read: "Capitalism Means Racism and War—For Socialist Revolution!" Solidarity, the League for the Revolutionary Party and other left groups also spoke.

Many different organisations have become interested in Jamal's fight. This is good. However, some people reject the call to **free** Mumia, pleading instead only for a "fair trial." But the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal—from the original 1982 frame-up to the subsequent appeal

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Jennifer Beach

Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

unions representing millions of workers from Italy to South Africa, to stay the hands of the executioners in the face of a warrant for Jamal's death that June. While Jamal's attorneys fight to wield every legal weapon they can in his defence, what is urgently needed right now are mass mobilisations particularly drawing on the power of the multiracial working class.

On 21 November, in response to the Partisan Defense Committee call, "All Out to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" some 250 protesters, largely black trade unionists, as well as youth, socialists and anti-racist activists turned out at Chicago's Federal Plaza. The demonstration drew transit

unions in Canada and Mexico. In Australia the Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union endorsed, as did the Metals Division Shop Stewards Committee of the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union at Holden Engine Operations in Melbourne. A letter from the Media Workers' Association of

The Spartacist League and the Left

See Page Four

The Fight for a Revolutionary Trotskyist Party

For a Workers Republic of Australia, Part of a Socialist Asia!

On 14 November, the Spartacist League held a forum in Sydney centred on our recently published statement of program. Printed below is the introduction to that statement which will be published in a new edition with an appendix, "The Spartacist League and the Left" (see page 4).

We are pleased to present "For a Workers Republic of Australia, Part of a Socialist Asia! Program of the Spartacist League of Australia." The Spartacist League, a revolutionary Trotskyist, i.e., Marxist and Leninist, organisation, is the Australian section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

The ICL's Third International Conference, held in early 1998, adopted a "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program," published in English-language *Spartacist* No. 54, Spring 1998, as well as in other languages. The International Conference also mandated ICL sections to undertake the necessary study and discussion to codify programs for the countries in which they work, within the overall framework of the ICL's "Declaration of Principles."

Our statement of program applies the ICL's proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist principles to the particular political and social conditions of Australia, and it is infused with the understanding that the struggle for workers revolution in Australia is inextricably linked to the class struggles of the workers throughout Asia. The product of an intensive process of education and discussion, as well as substantial international input from other ICL sections, the statement was adopted at the Spartacist League's Twenty-Sixth National Conference in September 1998.

"For a Workers Republic of Australia" reflects our continuing efforts to understand the political and social heritage of this country, the political realities with which we must contend, and where to apply the Marxist lever to further the cause of international workers revolution. An educational on the early Australian Trotskyists gave us a renewed appreciation of the pressures exerted by

the very right-wing social-democratic Australian Labor Party. A presentation on the history of communist struggles for women's emancipation in this deeply male chauvinist country included discussion of the SL's own proud history of Marxist work in the women's liberation movement of the 1970s. Discussion of the Aboriginal question emphasised our political understanding that the unremit-

ting proletarian defence of Aboriginal rights is closely tied to the fight of the multiracial working class to overturn virulently racist Australian capitalism.

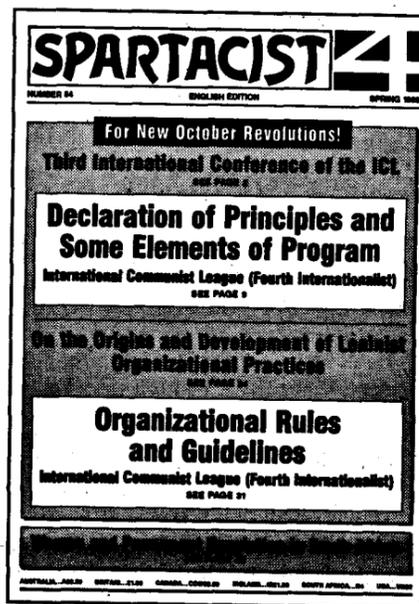
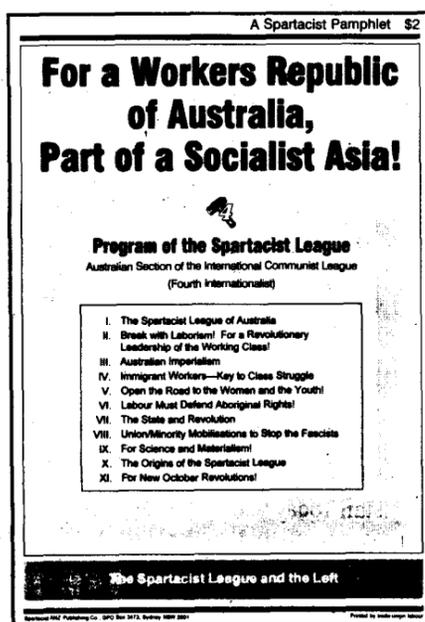
"For a Workers Republic of Australia, Part of a Socialist Asia!" is our statement of intransigent opposition to this violent and irrational system of capitalist imperialist exploitation. Far from looking for false unity, the task of the communist vanguard is to clarify and sharpen the differences between competing political tendencies in order to assemble the cadre for a Leninist party. A genuinely democratic-centralist revolutionary international—a reformed Fourth International—will be built in struggle against all the pretenders to Marxism, the centrists and reformists, whose opportunism reflects the pressures of their own national ruling classes. Those who share our revolutionary goals are urged to study our principles and program.

We seek to bring the ICL's powerful revolutionary Marxist program into the working class, infusing the class with the understanding of its historic task: the seizure of state power in a thoroughgoing workers revolution. As the ICL's "Declaration of Principles" states:

"The victory of the proletariat on a world scale would place unimagined material abundance at the service of human needs, lay the basis for the elimination of classes and the eradication of social inequality based on sex and the very abolition of the social significance of race, nation and ethnicity. For the first time mankind will grasp the reins of history and control its own creation, society, resulting in an undreamed-of emancipation of human potential, and a monumental forward surge of civilization. Only then will it be possible to realize the free development of all."

—October 1998

Introducing the Program of the Spartacist League of Australia



Program of the Spartacist League, \$2; English-language *Spartacist* No. 54, Spring 1998, \$2.50. Order from/make cheques payable to: Spartacist ANZ Publishing Co., GPO Box 3473, Sydney NSW 2001.

Decay...

(continued from page 1)

The U.S. imperialists, more interested in escalating their attacks on their Japanese rivals, backed pro-IMF stalwart and former Malaysian deputy premier Anwar Ibrahim against the Mahathir government with its strong links to Japan. Caught between their U.S. big brother "protector" and Japan, their biggest trading partner but also target of their deepest racist fears, the Australian rulers felt compelled to toe the U.S. line. And again they unreservedly supported the American war machine's threats to rain down more terror and destruction on the Iraqi people. We say:

Defend Iraq against imperialist attack! Meanwhile, the jackal Australian imperialists continue to militarily assert their bloody "interests" in Asia. Australian troops out of Papua New Guinea, Bougainville, Irian Jaya and Malaysia!

The burning need is to build revolutionary Marxist, that is, Trotskyist, parties who stand in irreconcilable opposition to the entire capitalist system of war and untold misery. In Australia such a party will be built in a struggle to break the political stranglehold of Laborism.

No Gas, No Electricity, No Water

The ALP governed this country from 1983 to 1996. Far from defending

workers' interests, the ALP administered the capitalist state for the bosses, launching the aggressive attacks on hard-won union gains and social rights now carried on by the bourgeois Coalition. Today, a mere ten percent of the population owns nearly half the wealth, with the top one percent owning 15 percent. The Australian imperialist ruling class wants more—and not even the most basic social infrastructure is safe. Starting in the early 1990s, the Keating Labor government and then Howard's Coalition have carried out massive privatisations designed to increase the profitability of Australian capitalism while breaking the power of strategic unions. Between 1995 and 1997 Australia's combined electricity, water and gas supply industries slashed their workforce by 30 percent. In six years Esso sacked over one-third of the trades staff central to safety and maintenance.

The results were predictable. In September a massive explosion and fire in Esso's Longford plant shut down Victoria's gas supplies for two weeks. Homes were without hot water, heating and cooking facilities, while thousands of workers were stood down as large sections of industry closed. This follows the months-long poisoning of Sydney's privatised water system, electricity black-outs of large parts of Queensland, the weeks-long electricity black-out of Auckland, New Zealand, and an earlier winter shutdown of much of Melbourne's industry due to a frozen gas main owned by Esso.

The wilful neglect of maintenance and safety standards combined with the speed-ups and longer hours demanded to "increase productivity" is a deadly mix for workers whose very lives are at risk on the job. The explosion at Esso's Longford plant killed two. In NSW railworkers are being killed on the job—the result of axing track signalmen. Thousands more workers are seriously injured and maimed each year, including (according to official records) more than 1,600 children, some as young as 12.

At the same time hundreds of thousands are unemployed. Youth unemployment stands at 29.9 percent, with 58.8 percent of youth in Melbourne's north-western suburbs out of work. Not counted among the unemployed are casual and part-time workers who comprise at a minimum fully one-quarter of the workforce.

Immigrant Workers: Key to Class Struggle

Immigrant families are especially suffering. Jobs are virtually impossible to find, but immigrants are barred from social services for two years. Minority youth are systematically confronted with racist police brutality (see page 9). Thousands of immigrants languish in detention camp hellholes, imprisoned by both ALP and Coalition governments whose racist message is the same as One Nation's: starve or get out.

Indeed the government is escalating attacks on desperate refugees who are

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Australasian

SPARTACIST

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Down With Fundamentalist Terror! Defend Taslima Nasrin!

Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

In October, sections of the International Communist League joined in protests initiated by the Worker-communist Parties (WPI) of Iraq and Iran in defence of Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasrin. Faced with an arrest warrant as well as a *fatwa* (religious edict) death threat for her outspoken opposition to Islamic fundamentalism, Nasrin fled the country in 1994. Returning in September to visit her dying mother, she was again subjected to threats of imprisonment and death and forced into hiding.

The ICL joined 30 October protests in New York City, Los Angeles, London and Sydney. A Spartacist League speaker addressed the Sydney protest, which no other left groups attended. The next day, the Canadian Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste joined demonstrations in Toronto and Vancouver. Among the Toronto protesters were representatives of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and supporters of Socialist Action and the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty. A TL speaker linked the threats against Nasrin with religious anti-woman terror in the U.S. and Canada. TL signs included, "Defend Taslima Nasrin! Bangladesh Government Keep Your Hands Off!" and "Down With Anti-Woman Bigotry—Free Abortion on Demand!" The TL contingent, joined by WPI supporters and others, then marched to a protest against the murder of Dr. Barnett Slepian by "right to life" terrorists in Buffalo, New York.

Below we reprint a leaflet issued by the TL and distributed by the ICL internationally.

Taslima Nasrin is a passionate advocate of women's freedom and an opponent of religious reaction and murderous communalism. Today, the Bangladeshi woman writer is in hiding, threatened with death by Muslim fundamentalists and with imprisonment by the government in Dhaka for "blasphemy" and "insulting Islam." In Bangladesh, one of the poorest countries on earth, capitalist oppression falls hardest on women, millions of whom are locked away in *pardah* (seclusion) under Islamic law, and kept as the mostly illiterate property of fathers or husbands. Nasrin's writings have been a special target of fundamentalist wrath because of their outright challenge to male dominance and their blunt critique of Islam.

As Nasrin herself said in a statement dated October 25, "Women in Bangladesh...are taught for centuries that they would be the slaves of men. I wanted to wake [them] up so they can struggle for their freedom." The defense of this courageous woman is vital to the fight for women's emancipation throughout Asia. The Trotskyist League and International Communist League therefore commend the initiative of the Worker-communist Parties of Iran and Iraq (WPI) in organizing protests in defense of Nasrin internationally.

The WPI's position is in stark contrast to most of the intelligentsia and self-proclaimed feminists in Bangladesh and elsewhere in the Islamic world, who have ignored Nasrin's case, or even actively denounce her. These people fear Taslima Nasrin because, in confronting head-on the explosive questions of women's oppression and religious bigotry, she threatens to disturb the pipe-dream of an orderly, liberal capitalist

development for neocolonies of imperialism like Bangladesh.

Worse yet, some so-called leftist organizations have embraced the very forces of Islamic reaction which today scream for Nasrin's death. Notably, the International Socialists [I.S.—co-thinkers of the British Socialist Workers Party and the International Socialist Organization in the U.S.] have been all but silent on the plight of Taslima Nasrin for more than four years. This is hardly an oversight. The I.S. supported the Islamic "mass movement" which took power in Iran in 1978-79, an unparalleled disaster for women, workers and oppressed nationalities like the Kurds. Earlier this year, the I.S. outrageously defended agents of the Iranian regime against militant protest at the Toronto International Women's Day fair. The Trotskyist League stood together with the WPI, who initiated the action which drove out the agents of this deeply misogynist torture regime.

While we join with the WPI in the urgent fight to save Taslima Nasrin from murderous religious reaction, we do take issue with one of the demands raised in their campaign call. The WPI demands that the Bangladesh government "guarantee the safety of Taslima Nasrin and her mother while they are in the country." We on the other hand demand that this regime *keep its hands off* Taslima Nasrin. We note that it is precisely the "secular" Bangladesh government which, ~~bowing to pressure from Muslim religious leaders, has issued the warrant for Nasrin's arrest.~~

The WPI's evident hopes in the potential neutrality of the capitalist Bangladesh state is in keeping with their program for Iran, entitled "A Better World." This document raises an extensive series of reform demands, calling to "impose on capitalism the most far-reaching reforms." Such calls feed dangerous illusions in a supposed progressive potential of the capitalist state, which is in fact the central weapon for upholding bourgeois rule against the working class.

At bottom, this perspective reflects the WPI's failure to transcend the framework of "revolution by stages." In the "first stage," the working class in the neocolonial world is called upon to support (or look to) bourgeois nationalist forces to undertake the task of creating an independent capitalist "democracy." However, the weak local bourgeoisies of countries like Iran and Bangladesh, tied by a thousand threads to imperialism and terrified of their "own" oppressed masses, *cannot* achieve even democratic tasks such as agrarian revolution, political democracy and the separation of state and religion. As has been repeatedly shown—from China in 1925-27 to Indonesia in 1965 and Iran in 1978-79—the "first stage" ("democratic revolution") does not lead toward socialism but means the massacre of communists and devastating defeat for the oppressed.

The WPI has sometimes explicitly appealed to the UN or other imperialist agencies to intervene on the side of the oppressed. For example, a statement by the Worker-communist Party of Iraq for a September 14 demonstration in London defending Iraqi political prisoners called for a "team of international inspectors to visit Iraqi prisons" to investigate prison conditions. And a 25 May Internet posting by the Iraqi WPI demanded a UN-supervised plebiscite on Kurdish independence, claiming that UN observers

would "give legitimacy to the results of the referendum."

In the neocolonial world, Trotskyists fight for the program of *permanent revolution*: the overthrow of imperialist domination through workers revolution, uniting all of the oppressed behind a revolutionary internationalist Leninist vanguard party. In particular, such a party will mobilize the revolutionary determination of women workers, as the Bolsheviks did throughout the Muslim East following the Russian Revolution of 1917. In Bangladesh today, women comprise fully 80 percent of the manufacturing workforce. Throughout Asia, the millions of proletarian women will be a motor force for socialist revolution.

This struggle is inextricably tied to the fight for proletarian power in the imperialist centers themselves. Indeed, the stranglehold of religious reaction has been deliberately strengthened by the imperialists in order to secure their domination. For example, in the 1980s, the U.S. armed reactionary Islamic forces in Afghanistan in their "holy war" against "godless Communism" represented by the Soviet Red Army. The CIA funneled millions to their Afghan cutthroats, who waged war to reimpose the head-to-toe veil—symbol and instrument of the enslavement of women—and who murdered teachers for teaching young girls to read.

The horrors of Taliban rule in Afghanistan today are the direct result of the victory of that imperialist-backed anti-Communist *jihad*. Anti-Soviet "leftists" like the I.S. hailed the CIA's religious assassins. In contrast, we hailed the Red Army in Afghanistan, demanding "Extend social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples!" We condemned the 1989 withdrawal of Soviet forces by the disintegrating Stalinist bureaucracy, a treacherous appeasement of imperialism which helped pave the way for the destruction of the Soviet Union itself.

Since capitalist counterrevolution engulfed the Soviet Union in 1991-92, religious reaction has been sharply on the rise in the imperialist centers as well. As Taslima Nasrin has said, "Every religion oppresses women." In North America, women's rights—especially the right to abortion—are central targets of violent Christian fundamentalist bigotry. Fanatical right-wing outfits like Campaign Life and the Christian Coalition have whipped up a crusade to ban abortion again, rabidly denouncing doctors and clinic workers as "serial killers."



Taslima Nasrin with her mother in 1994, before fleeing Bangladesh in face of threats of imprisonment and death.

Such ravings are an open incitement to murder. Only a week ago, respected Buffalo physician Dr. Barnett Slepian was gunned down by an anti-abortion fanatic. Four other doctors who provide abortions have been wounded by sniper attacks in cities across Canada and in upstate New York. The fight for abortion rights is on the cutting edge of the fight against religious and capitalist reaction in North America today. The WPI's declaration that "The Worker-Communist Party is against the act of abortion" ("A Better World") puts them on the wrong side of this vital question.

We Trotskyists fight for free abortion on demand, including access in areas where it is not presently available, as part of a necessary struggle for free quality health care for all. In this, as in all social struggles, we look not to the reactionary bourgeois state but to the social power of the working class. Women's liberation requires the overthrow of capitalism. Liberals and pseudo-leftists seek to invest the forces of imperialism with a supposedly "democratic" mission. This has been repeatedly displayed in calls by self-proclaimed leftists for UN or NATO intervention against Iraq and most recently Serbia! In sharp contrast, we say that the imperialist rulers are the main enemy of the world's working people.

We commend the WPI for its initiative in actively campaigning in defense of Taslima Nasrin. Recognizing our differences, we are pleased to unite in action today in defense of this fighter for women's rights against the deadly threat to her life by fundamentalist reactionaries.

As part of our fight to reforge Leon Trotsky's Fourth International, the essential instrument for the liberation of humanity, we say: Defend Taslima Nasrin! Bangladesh government, keep your bloody hands off! Women's liberation through world socialist revolution! ■

Women and Revolution

Issue No. 44
Winter 1994—Spring 1995

Contents Include:

- Islamic Fundamentalists Vow to Kill Woman Writer—Defend Taslima Nasrin!
Women and the Permanent Revolution in Bangladesh
- Interview With Taslima Nasrin
- Vladimir Lenin by Taslima Nasrin

\$1.50 (40 pages)

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The Spartacist League and the Left

The following statement is being published as an appendix to "For a Workers Republic of Australia, Part of a Socialist Asia!" the programmatic statement of the Spartacist League, Australian section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

Ours is not the only organisation, internationally or in this country, claiming adherence to revolutionary Marxism. We believe that political struggle with contending parties and currents within the working class is therefore essential for the ascendancy of a clear, defined and organised revolutionary vanguard party.

The politics of centrist and reformist organisations, whatever the subjective intentions of some of their members, lead in an objectively anti-revolutionary direction, reflecting the great political and ideological pressure of the bourgeoisie, expressed in this country above all in capitulation to Laborism. With the gulf between their socialist pretensions and their actual program and practice, such organisations are political obstacles to the achievement of revolutionary class consciousness by the working class. At bottom they oppose the dictatorship of the proletariat, and from this flows their opportunism.

Combating opponents derives from the Marxist premise that the false consciousness of the proletariat can and must be changed to a higher class consciousness of its revolutionary tasks. This means combating reformist illusions that tie the working class to its own bourgeoisie. Particularly pernicious are centrists—they couch their accommodation to the reformists, and therefore to the existing capitalist order, in pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric.

Neither false unity—the papering over of programmatic differences—nor slander and distortion can serve the ends of a revolutionary party. As we wrote in *Spartacist* (No. 53, Summer 1997):

"Since our inception we have understood that revolutionary regroupment is a crucial element to forging a Leninist international party, requiring both patient and intransigent polemical struggle and work such as united-front actions in which the political viewpoints and strategies of different organisations are tested in action. The purpose of such struggle is to split subjectively revolutionary elements from reformist and centrist organisations and lay the basis for fusion into a common, principled organisation based on the programme of revolutionary Marxism."
—"Revolutionary Regroupment or Centrist Alchemy?"

We sharply oppose violence and exclusion within the radical and left movement. Treating opponents as though they were the class enemy destroys the potential for unity in action of the revolutionary and working-class movements. Violence in the left is a cowardly substitute for political struggle, anathema to the process of programmatic clarification and polarisation.

We are proud of our program and history. Every issue of *Australasian Spartacist*, which began publishing in 1973, is available, and the work, history and views

den's 'Group': Shamefaced Defectors From Trotskyism").

In the spirit of Lenin, whose *Collected Works* consist preponderantly of sharp polemical articles delineating the Bolshevik vanguard from Menshevism and centrism, we outline here the characteristic positions of some of our opponents, focusing on those who claim a connection, in some cases very attenuated, to Trotskyism. These groups fall into two categories: the ones for whom pretty much "what you see is what you get," and others, the International Bolshevik Tendency and the Social-

the rabid anti-communist Robert Hawke. The "left," here as elsewhere, moved sharply to the right. The ISO (and the Socialist Workers Party, now Democratic Socialist Party) rallied for reactionary, priest-infested, pro-capitalist and anti-Semitic Polish Solidarność alongside the sinister "Captive Nations" crowd. Cheering the bloody CIA-backed Afghan mujahedin against the Soviet Red Army, they attended a "Captive Nations"/Maoist rally whose ranks included a notorious fascist. In 1991 they hailed the ascendancy of Boris Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary forces, crowing "Communism is dead.... It's a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing" (*Socialist*, September 1991).

Today the ISO claims that counter-revolution in the Soviet Union confirms "state capitalism." But if the USSR was already capitalist, then how to explain the ravages of mass unemployment, starvation and bloody nationalist fratricide that followed the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state? "State capitalism" is not a theory, but a rationalisation to cover the ISO's political defection to their own bourgeoisie.

The ISO's fundamental loyalty is to the racist, pro-imperialist Australian Labor Party. But the ALP, a *bourgeois workers party*, ties workers to their exploiters and is thus an *obstacle* to class struggle. The ISO and others adapt to existing trade-union consciousness. Our perspective is to build a revolutionary workers party by splitting the working-class base of the ALP from the pro-capitalist tops, centrally through the fight to replace the social-democratic union misleaders with a class-struggle, revolutionary leadership of the unions.

The ISO *always* calls for a vote to Labor, the historic party of White Australia racism, and deeply believes that the social democracy in power is something other than a capitalist government. In their "What we stand for" column, the ISO correctly claims "The capitalist state—parliament, the military, the law—is a weapon of class rule and must be smashed." Yet they believe this "weapon of class rule" can be pressured to serve the interests of the oppressed and exploited—especially under Labor—and so they call on it to stop fascist and racist provocations.

Rejecting Lenin's clear description of the capitalist state's "armed bodies of men," the Cliffites *support* strikes by prison guards—the same ones who murder Aborigines in jail. As for cops, the ISO's British co-thinkers say (*Socialist Worker*, 8 February 1997) if cops "rebel collectively" they cease to be "agents of the state"! But police strikes or other forms of "rebellion" are bonapartist attempts by the cops to get more power to attack workers and minorities.

The ISO's ingrained opportunism has seen them pursuing openly anti-working class forces. From Indonesia, where they push illusions in Islamic leader Amien Rais, to Algeria, where they claim the Islamic Salvation Front "reflects the rise of revolutionary feeling," the Cliffites fatuously portray Muslim fundamentalism as "anti-imperialist." In fact, the imperialists cultivate Islamic fundamentalism as a weapon against communism. In 1950, U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles pointed to a "common bond" with the "religions of the East," whose "spiritual beliefs cannot be reconciled with Communist atheism and materialism."

Like most of the fake left, the ISO hailed the Khomeiniite reactionary "mass movement" that overthrew the bloody Shah in 1979. After nearly 20 years of anti-woman, anti-worker barbarism in Iran, they are *still* apologists for this



L.V. Leonidov
Bolshevik leaders V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky. International Communist League fights for new October Revolutions!

of the ICL are documented in carefully indexed bound volumes of *Workers Vanguard*, *Spartacist*, *Women and Revolution* and other publications.

To educate and arm our comrades and supporters, the publications of our main political opponents are available in the local offices of every ICL section. Sections also publish and distribute "Hate Trotskyism, Hate the Spartacists" and similar bulletins containing the most leftist criticisms of our party written by our opponents. While most of the left are either silent, lie or present sanitised versions of their organisations, we strive to be candid in assessing our tasks and difficulties. We have made public certain internal documents, including on sharp factional struggles. Most recently we made available the documentary record of our fight against what became the Internationalist Group (see *International Bulletin* No. 38, "Nor-

ist Equality Party, whose motives are obscure to say the least and certainly cannot be judged by what they write or say.

International Socialist Organisation

The ISO is the Australian satellite of the British Socialist Workers Party whose leader, Tony Cliff, was justly expelled from the Fourth International in 1950 for refusing to defend the North Korean deformed workers state against British and U.S. imperialism. Cliff's bogus "theory" that the USSR was "state capitalist" marked his break from revolutionary Marxism in capitulation to the anti-Communist British Labour Party leadership.

The "Russian question" has been the defining political question of the 20th century. As our ICL "Declaration of Principles" states: "We Trotskyists stayed at our posts and fought to preserve and extend the revolutionary gains of the working class while every other tendency on the planet capitulated to the ideological pressure of imperialist anti-communism. Above all our defense of the USSR was expressed in our fight for new October Revolutions around the world" (*Spartacist* No. 54, Spring 1998). We continue to stand, as we did with the USSR and the deformed workers states of Eastern Europe, for unconditional military defence of China, Vietnam, North Korea and Cuba against imperialism and internal counterrevolution and for proletarian political revolution to oust the narrow, nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies whose continued misrule threatens further defeats for the international working class.

The Cliffite mantra "neither Washington nor Moscow" always meant support for the "democratic" imperialists against the "totalitarian" workers states. For the ISO (and not only them) lining up behind their "own" imperialists against the USSR was the passport into the Laborite swamp. During most of the Cold War 1980s Australia was run by Labor under



Spartacist
ICL proclaimed "Soviet Workers! Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!", raised banner of Trotskyist Fourth International at November 1991 Revolution Day rally in Moscow.

regime. Scandalously, their Canadian co-thinkers *defended* Iranian government representatives who had been accorded a display at the 1998 Toronto International Women's Day and slandered as racists the Worker-communist Party of Iran, our Trotskyist League of Canada comrades and others, who drove out these reactionaries.

There is a vast gulf between the ISO's socialist pretensions and their actual social-democratic program and practice. Hence they fear criticism from their own ranks, and use lies, exclusionism and violence against the Spartacist League to try to shield their members from authentic Trotskyist politics. In their violence the virulently Stalinophobic ISO apes Stalin's suppression of the Left Opposition.

Workers Power

Internationally affiliated to the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI), Workers Power came to Australia in 1996. WP originated in Britain in a 1975 split from the Cliffites. Following the imperialist outcry over the 1979 Soviet Red Army intervention in Afghanistan, WP stepped left, repudiating Cliff's ignorant "theory" that the former USSR was "state capitalist" and, on paper, adopting the Trotskyist position that the Soviet Union was a degenerated workers state. Yet as centrists—revolutionary in word, opportunist in deed—WP recoiled from drawing the hard revolutionary conclusions. They simultaneously joined the imperialist



Spartacist

Moscow, August 1991. DSP, Militant supporters, WP literally stood on Yeltsin's barricades of counterrevolution with nationalists, black marketeers, yuppies and priests.

condemnation of the Soviet intervention while opposing the withdrawal of Soviet troops (see *Hate Trotskyism, Hate the Spartacists* No. 1, "Workers Power and the Irish Workers Group").

Taking their cue from Cold War social democracy, WP openly embraced the British Labour Party's anti-Sovietism. In 1981 they backed Polish Solidarność while admitting that all the "dominant tendencies" in it sought capitalist restoration. By 1990 they were organising a "trade union" speaking tour by one Yuri Butchenko, a Russian fascist. A year later when the counterrevolutionaries made their bid for power in the USSR WP literally stood on Yeltsin's barricades with the monarchists, racketeers and yuppies.

Now WP has brought their "theory" in line with their practice of backing every anti-Soviet provocation of imperialism. Claiming the state in the former Soviet Union had been bourgeois since at least 1927, WP has returned to their social-democratic origins in the Cliffites, a reconciliation with their "own" imperialist bourgeoisie.

WP is capable of leftist-sounding rhetoric but their open repudiation of Trotskyism on the question of the workers states dovetails with their program at home—pushing for Labor governments to wield the *capitalist* state in the service of the working class and oppressed. Indeed WP Australia's first main public statement, in 1996, was to call for reelecting the racist, union-busting ALP

Socialist Worker

May 1988

Just as socialists welcomed the defeat of the U.S. in Vietnam, we welcome the defeat of the Russians in Afghanistan. It will give heart to all those inside the USSR and in Eastern Europe who want to break the rule of Stalin's heirs. But this does not mean giving

Socialist Worker

5 October 1996

But Taliban's success comes from popular disenchantment with the leaders who oppose it—the forces guarding Kabul melted away last week.

Tragically, the Taliban has no answer to the terrible crisis of the country either.

CIA's Afghan mujahedin murdered schoolteachers for bringing education to women. Cliffites embraced imperialist anti-Soviet crusade, "welcomed" anti-woman Islamic fundamentalist victory.

government which had already ruled for thirteen years. In slippery centrist fashion they claim their support to Labor is a "tactic" aimed at breaking workers' illusions in reformism and winning them to a revolutionary perspective.

While bowing always to their right, WP attacks as "sectarianism" our forthright declaration in the 1998 federal election, "No Vote to Labor! Build a Revolutionary Workers Party!" During elections, when a mass reformist party claims to represent the interests of the working class independently of and against the parties of the bourgeoisie, it might be appropriate to wield the Leninist tactic of critical support to exploit the contradiction between that

isation supported the Anglo-dominated status quo in Canada, calling for a vote *against* Quebec independence in the 1995 referendum. These positions, not accidentally, coincide neatly with those of the social democracy.

WP's feminist-inspired women-only caucuses in their own party are alien to Leninism, reflecting an acceptance of the divisions in capitalist society and an underlying assumption that men are unable to combat women's oppression. The ICL wins *all* its members to a party and program that opposes women's oppression. In fighting for women's liberation through socialist revolution, we stand on the Bolsheviks' record of special organised work among women to win them to the cause of socialism. In practice WP's actions, from supporting the 1979 "Islamic revolution" that enslaved Iranian women in the veil to standing with the forces of capitalist counterrevolution in the former USSR and Eastern Europe which have trampled on women's lives, are antithetical to the struggle against women's oppression.

During the 1991 Gulf War, the LRCI formally stood for the defence of Iraq against imperialism. But in 1995 the imperialist frenzy over Bosnia found a direct echo with the little drummer boys of the fake left. The LRCI/WP refused to defend the Bosnian Serbs against massive bombing by NATO forces—openly repudiating the elementary Leninist principle of military defence of a small nation or semicolonial people against imperialist aggression. This obvious betrayal led to the departure of various groups from the LRCI. Today WP continues to kowtow before the capitalists, declaring that the imperialist exploiters can be the saviours of their victims, calling on workers to "force" the G8 imperialist powers to "send massive aid, without strings, to the workers and peasants of Indonesia" (*Trotskyist International* No. 24).

Militant

Portraying themselves as ever-so proletarian, the Militant group, part of the Committee for a Workers International (CWI), are hardened reformists. Militant claims to stand for the building of a new, mass workers party in opposition to the ALP. The reality is that they slavishly support slick-talking "left" Laborite union bureaucrats, while preferencing support to the ALP at every election. Following the Laborite bureaucrats' sellout of the MUA struggle, Militant echoed the union tops' absurd claim that the deal was a "victory," declaring it a "morale boost to workers everywhere" (*Militant*, July 1998)!

Militant's British parent group the Socialist Party (formerly Militant Labour) were submerged deep inside the Labour Party for decades. While they ran candidates in the 1997 British elections, their campaign was entirely subordinated to electing a Labour government. In Australia Militant at best offers a left version of the ALP's nationalist, reformist program. They uphold the "Award system" through which the Hawke/Keating ALP governments "awarded" massive job and pay cuts to workers,

while tying workers to the capitalist state via the Arbitration courts. Their protectionist calls to "fight against tariff reductions" fuels nationalist reaction, the culture medium for the growth of fascists. Militant's maximum program is the classic social-democratic call to "bring into public ownership the top 150 companies" (a year ago it was "the top 200") while leaving intact the state apparatus that defends capitalist rule.

Militant's "unite and fight" rhetoric is tailored to the prejudices of backward workers and is necessarily hostile to the fight against national, racial and sexual oppression. This is grotesquely underscored by the CWI's refusal to call for British troops out of Northern Ireland. Indeed, Militant provided a platform for one Billy Hutchinson, a convicted Loyalist murderer of Catholics and spokesman for the Progressive Unionist Party, a front for the fascistic Ulster Volunteer Force.

In 1996 the Australian bourgeoisie exploited the terrible Port Arthur killings to push through harsher gun control laws. Marxists oppose such laws because they reinforce the state's monopoly of the means of violence. Not so the "law and order" socialists of Militant. They joined the hue and cry. Demanding the capitalist state *increase* its repressive powers over the citizenry, they called for a "national gun control law standard" and "an immediate review in every state into all those who currently hold gun licences" (*Militant*, May 1996)!

The CWI is notorious for its position that the cops are "workers in uniform" (see Spartacist pamphlet, *Militant Labour's touching faith in the capitalist state*, 1994). Militant's plea that "No racists or fascists should be allowed in the police force and police should be banned from involvement in industrial disputes" reveals its deep reformism. For Marxists it is axiomatic that the role of the cops, part of the armed fist of the capitalist

continued on page 6



ASp photo

Sydney, January 1997: SL picket in solidarity with workers struggles in South Korea.

SL and the Left...

(continued from page 5)

state, is to *protect* private property and *prevent* proletarian revolution.

Indeed, the one state that they consistently opposed was the Soviet degenerated *workers* state, where their Russian affiliates criminally stood on Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary barricades in August 1991. Consistent with that, today the CWI's affiliates in Russia entertain at their public meetings the NBP fascist group, Nazi-style armbands and all!

Democratic Socialist Party

Not proletarian, not revolutionary and not internationalist, the DSP's program is defined by cynical manoeuvres in the quest for "respectability" in the eyes of the Australian powers-that-be. Boundless in their opportunist appetites, the DSP and its forebears have pursued "unity" with an endless array of organisations whose stated political positions are not only at sharp variance from those of the DSP but with each other (including the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, Militant and more).

In its earlier incarnation as the Socialist Workers Party (allied with the quirky reformists of Jack Barnes' U.S. SWP), the Percy leadership claimed, falsely, to adhere to Trotskyism. After falling out with Barnes, they sought a lash-up with Barnes' factional opponents in the so-called United Secretariat of the Fourth International led by Ernest Mandel. When that came a cropper, the SWP declared that they had broken with (their pseudo-) Trotskyism, officially repudiating what they had always rejected in practice. Drawing a bloodline, an SWP leader obscenely lauded the Vietnamese Stalinists' 1945 *murder* of the Trotskyists who rose up in opposition to the Stalinists welcoming back French imperialism at the close of World War II (see *ASp* No. 113, October/November 1985).

The SWP denounced the Trotskyist program of proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist betrayers, claiming the nationalist bureaucracies could reform themselves. But while hailing the slaughter of proletarian revolutionary opposition to Vietnamese Stalinism, the then-SWP were among the most vocal cheerleaders for Polish Solidarność' counterrevolutionary grab for power, a position they maintain to this day. They hold up the Stalinist Castro regime in Cuba as a model, but they supported the capitalist counterrevolutions that ravaged Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, catastrophic defeats which left the Cuban revolution economically prostrate and at the mercy of the imperialist powers. Today, as the Cuban regime undermines the very foundations of the revolution by introducing the dollar economy and foreign capital investment, the Trotskyist program of

proletarian political revolution is more urgently posed than ever.

The SWP's selective "Stalinophilia" was directed at cosying up to various petty-bourgeois nationalist forces. So at the same time, they denounced Trotsky's program of permanent revolution. The core of permanent revolution is that in the imperialist epoch, in dependant countries where the national bourgeoisie is tied by a thousand strings to the imperialists, solving the most basic democratic tasks—national liberation and the agrarian question—requires socialist revolution, the seizure of power by the proletariat at the head of all the oppressed. This was manifestly proven true by the Russian Revolution. Nevertheless, the DSP falsely claimed that the essence of Leninism is the Menshevik/Stalinist "two-stage" revolution schema which, from China in 1927 to Indonesia in 1965, has been the political formula for drowning the proletariat in blood. For example, the DSP pushes alliances with Indonesian bourgeois oppositionists such as Megawati Sukarnoputri and Islamic leader Amien Rais, which can only help to prepare another bloody betrayal.

In 1983 the then-SWP leadership's appetites led them into a truly grotesque alliance with a shadowy Australian outfit, the Croatian Movement for Statehood (HDP). The HDP were followers of the Croatian fascist Ustasha, World War II butchers too bloody even for the Nazis, who turned the puppet state of Croatia into a vast slaughterhouse for Jews, Roma, Serbs and many Croats (see "SWP Defends Ustasha," *ASp* No. 103, August/September 1983).

The DSP proclaims itself for women's rights, for gay rights, but this is evidently a program for Australians only. From Iran to Poland, they have backed forces of reaction that have trampled mercilessly on the rights of women and gays. Today they are silent on the fight for abortion rights in countries such as Indonesia, and say little about the deep-going oppression of women there.

Making a false distinction between Lenin and Trotsky in an effort to woo various Stalinoid forces, the DSP leadership claims to uphold Leninism against Trotskyism. But their relationship to Leninism is that of the anti-Bolshevik renegade Kautsky's relationship to Marxism—a sham to cover capitulation to the capitalist class. Like Kautsky, who proclaimed the supposedly eternal virtues of classless, i.e., bourgeois, "democracy" as he denounced the Russian Revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, the "DSP stands for the universal application of the principle of democracy" (*What is the DSP?*).

The DSP's maximum demand, "the main assets of society must be publicly owned and democratically managed," is nothing other than a call for "reforming" capitalism while not touching a hair on the head of the capitalist state that defends it. Changing their name from Socialist Workers Party to Democratic Socialist Party in 1989 as the counter-

The Laborite social-democratic swamp in 1998 federal elections. SL said: "No Vote to Labor!"

Socialist Worker

Kick the Liberals out

× Don't vote racist
Put One Nation last
× No GST—tax the rich

START THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

Green LEFT

Reject Liberals & Democrats

14 reasons

Workers Power

SOCIALIST GUIDE TO THE ELECTION

VOTE LABOR FIGHT FOR:

No GST: Tax the rich!
Rescind the cuts - Full funding for public services
Repeat the IR laws
32hr week. No loss of pay
No CVA - Living income for all
Land rights now!
No immigration controls! Full citizenship rights
Free abortion & contraception on demand

GLOBAL ECONOMIC & POLITICAL SITUATION - PG 8

revolutionary tide swept Eastern Europe made unambiguous the DSP's anti-proletarian orientation in favour of petty-bourgeois "community" and sectoralist politics. Having some years back decided that the ALP, which they had spent years tailing, had all along (!) been a capitalist party, the DSP still calls for votes (preferences) to the ALP (not to mention genuinely capitalist parties such as the Democrats and the anti-immigrant Greens).

The DSP's current posture as seemingly "left" critics of the ALP stems not from opposition to these racist pro-imperialists but from the fact that the DSP think their brand of reformism is not dependent on the ALP as its agent. Their perspective is to pressure larger forces—necessarily to their right—to pressure the capitalist state. Thus a hallmark of the DSP and its predecessors has always been to appeal to the venal racist Australian imperialists to adopt "a progressive foreign policy." Against the revolutionary program of "not one man, not one penny for the imperialist army," the DSP actually welcomes Australian military adventures under the guise of providing "humanitarian" assistance from Somalia to Cambodia to Irian Jaya. Denouncing the struggle to destroy imperialism through proletarian revolution, the DSP are what Lenin termed social-chauvinists, supporting their "own" ruling class, for instance in the reactionary 1995 mobilisations against Australia's French imperialist rivals over nuclear testing in the South Pacific.

International Bolshevik Tendency

The International Bolshevik Tendency's dubious nature and history in relation to our party merit documentation. The IBT began life as the "External Tendency," founded by embittered ex-members in the U.S. and Canada who individually quit our organisation in the 1980s under the ideological impact of Cold War II when defence of the Soviet degenerated workers state was posed point blank. For years the ET/BT exhibited an unnatural obsession with our party. During the 1980s in the U.S., whenever we were in the cross-hairs of the state, the BT was close at hand, feeding the anti-communist political climate aimed at us with its lies and anti-communist ravings that we were an obedient cult, violent and internally corrupt.

These quitters really wanted to swim in the anti-Soviet swamp with the rest of the pseudo-socialist left. And swim they did, softening our angular positions in defence of the Soviet Union enough to gain entry to the rad-lib meetings and rallies from which we were excluded.

Eager to get rid of the nagging "Russian question" and any nominal claim to being Soviet defencists, at the time of Yeltsin's August 1991 counter-coup the BT rushed to proclaim that the Soviet degenerated workers state had been destroyed. Berating us for not giving "military support" to the impotent, pro-perestroika "Gang of Eight" coup plotters, they happily wrote off in advance (and from afar) any possibility that decisive working-class resistance could have swept away Yeltsin and his supporters. As we said in the ICL "Declaration of Principles," (*Spartacist* No. 54, Spring 1998): "Only those who were under the sway of capitalist ideology or its material perquisites were in a hurry to write off the Soviet Union at that time." It was only when it was clear that the working class was not going to move against Yeltsin, who was rapidly consolidating a capitalist state apparatus, that we recognised that the Soviet workers state had been definitively destroyed.

The character of the IBT can be measured by looking at its leading light and head of the New Zealand Permanent Revolution Group, one Bill Logan. Our party expelled Logan at our first international conference in 1979 for crimes against "communist morality and its substrate elementary human decency." In at least 18 separate cases he used his position as national chairman of our Australian section to grossly interfere in the most intimate personal life decisions of our comrades, and he was found guilty of every charge—and then some. We have made widely available the internal bulletins documenting the Logan case so that information about this man and his crimes is generally available to the workers movement.

From its inception, the North American BT took up the defence of Logan, despite admitting that "Logan was undoubtedly guilty of running a grossly abusive regime" and the fact that some BTs, then members of our organisation, had voted for Logan's expulsion (the decision was unanimous). But when they fused with Logan's PRG to become the "IBT" a central premise of the formation of this "international" tendency was the supposed good character of Bill Logan, that he was innocent and maliciously framed up. So the BT, an organisation whose sole reason for existence was the lying claim that the ICL is a "cult," fused with an organisation led by a sociopath whom the ICL expelled precisely for his cult-like manipulation of comrades' personal lives!

With Logan at the helm, the IBT has moved rapidly right. Presumably inspired by Logan's earlier opportunist entry into the New Labour Party in New Zealand, in Britain they dissolved into Arthur

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST



Workers News

In 1980s, DSP (then SWP) defended Croatian Ustasha fascists, worked closely with sinister HDP.

Scargill's Socialist Labour Party (SLP). (Against the New Labour Party of Tony Blair, the SLP hankers for the pro-imperialist "old" Labour Party which loyally defended the interests of British capitalism.) Inside the SLP they linked up in an electoral bloc with supporters of imperialist intervention in Bosnia, cheerleaders for Polish Solidarność and apologists for Ukrainian fascists (see "Scargill and His 'Left' Critics," *Workers Hammer* No. 151, July/August 1996).

In the U.S. they have always had a repulsive indifference to the necessary link between the struggle for black freedom and the struggle for working-class emancipation. Showing the same blindness to forms of special oppression, the PRG has barely a word to say about the oppression of the New Zealand Maori people (see "Strange Things Under Wellington's Rocks," *ASp* No. 157, Summer 1995-96). In Canada they wallow in Anglo chauvinism, *opposing* independence for the oppressed Québécois. With regard to Scotland and Wales, this baby "league of Anglo-chauvinists" is *silent* on English chauvinism.

On the principled question of the picket line the IBT has loudly upheld their supporter's scabbing on the 1996 New York City building maintenance workers strike. No-one split over *this*, but a handful did decamp recently over the IBT's abstentionist line on the anti-working-class Maastricht Treaty...of 1992! Indeed, the tiny IBT has suffered a number of splits. As we have said before, "buyer beware." The IBT (as are its by-products) is a political animal of a bizarre, dubious sort.

Socialist Equality Party

A different kettle of (stinking) fish is the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) which is neither for socialism nor equality. The SEP and the "International Committee of the Fourth International" (creature of the notorious Gerry Healy, led today by one David North) are sometimes capable of putting some orthodox-sounding lines on paper, but, to use Lenin's term, they are "political bandits"—that is, political pirates who will say and do *anything* to serve their grotesque opportunist appetites. In 1979 this outfit extolled the murder of 21 Iraqi CPers by Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime as a blow against "counterrevolutionary Stalinism," a posture which paid big dividends as they raked in millions in money "for services rendered" to various oil-rich Middle East capitalist dictators. Nick Beams' Australian section, then the Socialist Labour League, was generously compensated from the same sources. This does not exhaust the crimes of the Healy/North/Beams gang, which we have fully documented (see, for example, "Healyism Implodes," *Spartacist* No. 36-37, Winter 1985-86, and "On Baghdad,

Healyite political bandits hailed 1979 murder of Iraqi CPers. Nick Beams' SLL (now SEP) served Arab bourgeois paymasters as loyally as Healy/North.



and Bagmen," *ASp* No. 138, September/October 1990).

The SEP's political "method" consists of cop-baiting, slander and violent thugery. To supplement their forces they have long used the capitalist state's muscle to harass, frame up and bankrupt their leftist opponents. An infamous example is Alan Gelfand, a Healyite agent provocateur who took the American SWP to court after they expelled him in 1979. In the name of the Healyites' demented "Security and the Fourth International" slanders that central leaders of the SWP were agents of both the FBI and the Stalinist secret police, Gelfand demanded the bosses' court order him reinstated and pry into SWP financial records and minutes. The Northites also ran point for the capitalist state's prosecution of SWP supporter Mark Curtis on frame-up, rape charges (see "Why Should Anyone Believe David North? The Workers League and Mark Curtis," *Workers Vanguard* No. 480, 23 June 1989).

Hatred of the Soviet Union has been the political constant for the SEP. These renegades hailed every reactionary, anti-Communist movement in and on the borders of the USSR, from Solidarność and sundry fascist-infested nationalist movements to the barbaric Afghan *mujahedin*. On the eve of the 1984-85 British miners strike they instigated an anti-communist witchhunt of miners' leader Arthur Scargill for his truthful statement that Solidarność was an "anti-socialist" organisation. In 1986 their anti-Communism dovetailed with pursuit of cold, hard cash when they printed, as a "commercial" deal, the *Bell of Saigon*, exile organ of Vietnamese fascistic thugs.

When the demand for national self-determination served as a "democratic" fig leaf for imperialist attacks on the

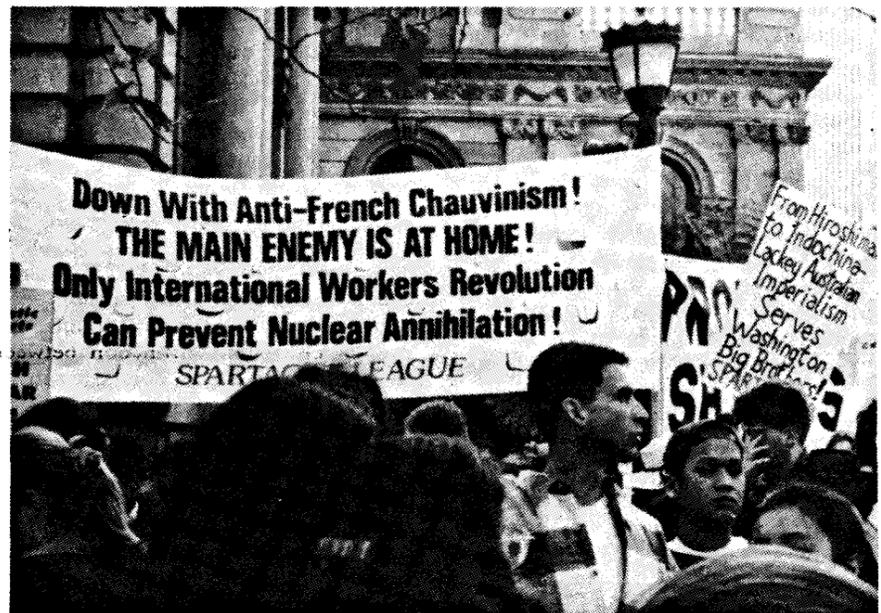
Soviet degenerated workers state, North/Beams were unswerving in their support to "national rights." Now that the Soviet Union is no more, the Northites have refused to take a side for the military defeat of the army of *capitalist* Russia in its neocolonial war against Chechnya (see "From Support to Capitalist Counterrevolution in the USSR to Great Russian Chauvinism," *Hate Trotskyism, Hate the Spartacist League* No. 11). Today they oppose the right of self-determination for nations, claiming

workers around the world who, in solidarity with the Liverpool strikers, refused to handle ships loaded by scabs. After the 1995 UAW Caterpillar strike in the U.S. was sold out, North & Co. justified strikebreaking, attacking the union tops for "diverting the anger of strikers towards the 'scabs,' i.e., those union members who decided to cross picket lines" (see "David North, 'Socialist' Apologist for Scabbing," *WV* No. 637, 19 January 1996). The Beams gang didn't need their current "globalisation" theory to justify their own member crossing Builders Labourers Federation picket lines while the union was being smashed by the ALP's Hawke government in the 1980s.

Echoing the racist White Australia rulers, the SEP dismisses Aboriginal land rights, claiming "the very conception of ownership of land was completely alien" to Aboriginal society. The colour-blind SEP blames Aboriginal leaders, not this racist capitalist system, for the hideous oppression of the Aboriginal people. So too do the Northites denounce us for putting front and centre the fight for black liberation through socialist revolution in the U.S. The "politics" of these sewer "socialists" are based on *opposition* to almost all struggles of the oppressed.

Fight for Revolutionary Trotskyism! Join the ICL!

Laborite reformists, right-moving centrists, political bandits—each group has



ASp photo

Revolutionary Internationalism: amidst 1995 nationalist orgy in support of Australian Imperialists against French rivals, SL declared "The Main Enemy is at Home!"

national independence is not only impossible but downright reactionary in a "globalised" economy. Backing the chauvinist status quo, the SEP denies the right of Tamils, East Timorese, Québécois, Chechens and other oppressed nationalities to independence.

But yesterday's orthodoxy is tomorrow's anathema. For years the SEP demanded the trade-union bureaucracy and "left" wing of the ALP kick out the "right" and form a "workers government." The SEP's current anti-ALP rhetoric is part of an increasingly open opposition to trade unions. For today, as the capitalists everywhere ratchet up their war on trade unions, the SEP has written the unions off, claiming they are not workers organisations and that union struggles against the bosses' attacks are useless. This "theory" is a prescription for strikebreaking. In 1995 the SEP denounced as a "fraud" the actions of dock

a distinctive profile. But all, long ago, made their essential peace with the imperialist ruling class, rejecting the struggle for the rule of the working class everywhere. Bowing to imperialist triumphalism over the restoration of capitalism in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, these groups and others are rapidly abandoning even a pretence to Leninism. As we wrote in "For New October Revolutions! Third International Conference of the ICL":

"No other tendency but the ICL can confront and surmount the historic crisis of proletarian leadership which, as Trotsky insisted, is the crisis of mankind's future. We will not paint the task of uprooting capitalist exploitation and oppression everywhere on this planet as easier than it is, and there are no guarantees. But there is no other way. Forward to a reformed Fourth International, the indispensable world party of socialist revolution!"

—*Spartacist* No. 54, Spring 1998 ■

Special ICL Bulletins

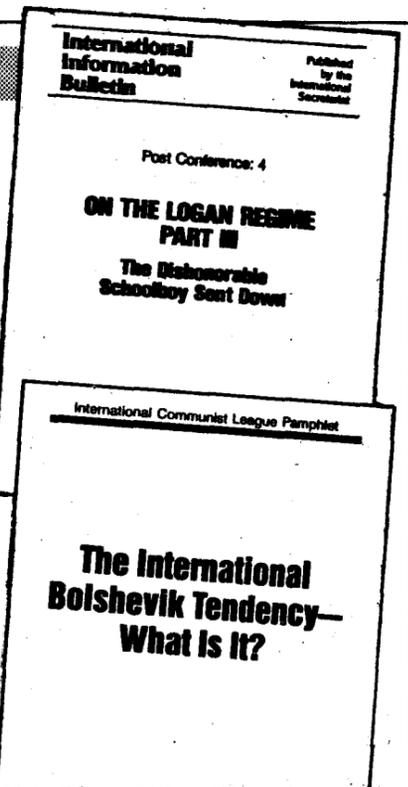
On the Logan Regime (Three parts)

In 1979, Bill Logan was expelled from the international Spartacist tendency for crimes "against communist morality and its substrate elementary human decency." Logan is now the leader of the "international Bolshevik Tendency." As a service to the workers movement we have made our international bulletins documenting Logan's crimes publicly available. Part I (82 pages), Part II (44 pages), Part III (79 pages) \$4 each

The International Bolshevik Tendency—What Is It?

International Communist League pamphlet, August 1995 \$1.50 (10 pages)

Order from/make cheques payable to: Spartacist ANZ Publishing Company GPO Box 3473, Sydney NSW 2001



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International Communist League

Box 7429 GPO, New York, NY 10116, USA

Mumia...

(continued from page 1)

hearings—starkly demonstrates that there is no justice in the capitalist courts.

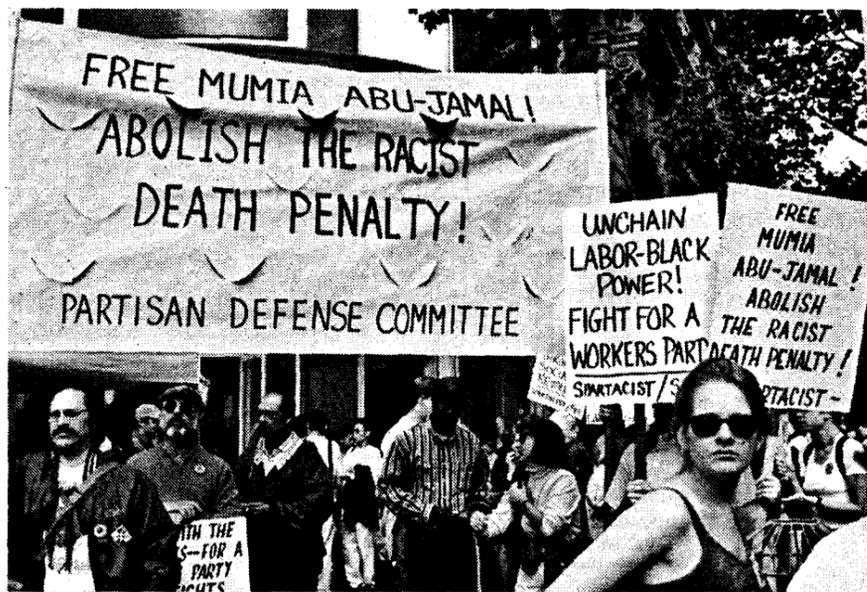
The capitalist state, its cops and its courts exist to defend the class rule and profits of the few, profits which are based on the increasingly hideous exploitation and oppression of the many. It is particularly critical, therefore, to reject the politics of groups such as the International Socialist Organisation who hold that cops and prison guards are part of the workers movement. This is a deadly falsehood as the obscene racist campaign by the U.S. Fraternal Order of Police to kill Mumia proves. The ISO refused to endorse or attend the Chicago demonstration.

Such leftists typically call for lowest-common-denominator "unity" in order to build impotent liberal coalitions aimed at appealing to the capitalist government to do the right thing. This also serves as a pretext to censor and suppress the Marxist views of the SL. Such "unity" hurts the cause of the working class and the fight for Jamal's freedom by obscuring the enemy—the capitalist state—and lulling the working class with illusions that the state can somehow be "pressured" into acting in their interests. In Australia, this directly reflects the pressure of the social-democratic ALP and the Laborite trade-union bureaucracy who above all else are committed to defence of Australian racist imperialism.

The backdrop in Australia to the renewed struggle to free Jamal is bipartisan attacks on the rights of labour and minorities—a wave of racist cop terror in the cities, intensified attacks on Aborigines and immigrants, cop mobilisations against union pickets (from the docks to warehouse workers). In taking up the fight for Jamal's freedom, the working class will be striking a blow against an entire system based on brutal racist exploitation. In political struggle against Laborism, we aim to infuse the multiracial working class with the consciousness of its historic interests: the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of an egalitarian socialist society.

We print below the U.S. Partisan Defense Committee's 5 November call for the Chicago demonstration.

An innocent man, an award-winning writer, a lifetime fighter for the oppressed is in danger of execution. Any day now, Republican Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge may sign a death warrant for Mumia Abu-Jamal. On October 29, the state Supreme Court upheld the racist frame-up conviction



Workers Vanguard

SL/PDC contingent at 31 October emergency demonstration in San Francisco. Multiracial labour movement is key to fight for Mumia's freedom.

that railroaded Mumia to death row more than 16 years ago. This is a fight for more than the life and freedom of one courageous man. They want to kill Mumia because of what he represents: defiance of this racist system which saps the lifeblood from the many millions to ensure fabulous profits for a wealthy few. **All of labor must mobilize now to demand: Free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty!**

Mumia, a MOVE supporter, has been in the cross hairs of the racist rulers from the time he was a 15-year-old spokesman for the Black Panther Party, which was targeted for destruction by the FBI's COINTELPRO terror operation against black revolutionaries. If they get away with killing Mumia, it will be a blow against all black people, all minorities, all working people—because the state will have strengthened its forces to move against all of us. It will embolden the cops in "Segregation City" to intensify their daily terror in the ghettos and barrios. **Black rights and union rights go forward together or fall back separately.**

Those who howl for Mumia's execution—from the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police and District Attorney's office to the governor on up—are the same forces which bust up picket lines, break strikes and seek to criminalize the very unions which were built to defend our jobs and livelihoods. The unions are the only racially integrated mass organizations in this country. The bosses and their state hate and fear the integrated union movement because there lies the power to challenge the racial divisions they promote to weaken the working class. And it is precisely the power of the integrated trade unions that must be mobilized to free Mumia. In mobilizing to defeat the frame-up of Jamal, the unions will take a huge step forward in

becoming instruments of struggle to defend not only their own immediate interests but those of all the oppressed.

When Philadelphia transit workers went out on strike last summer, Mumia spoke out powerfully on their behalf from the dungeons of death row. Now all of labor must speak out and act on Mumia's behalf. Every union in the Chicago area should follow the example of Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 241, which has taken up the call by the Partisan Defense Committee to build for a powerful united-front labor/black mobilization to demand Mumia's freedom and abolition of the racist death penalty.

Chicago is a labor and black town. It is the birthplace of the modern labor movement. Remember the Haymarket martyrs—executed for leading the fight for trade-union rights and the eight-hour day in 1886. Among these heroic working-class fighters was Albert Parsons, who also fought for labor to champion equal rights for black people. **We don't need more martyrs! We need Mumia back in the arms of his family and free to serve on the front lines of the struggle against this racist system of poverty, war and death.**

Chicago area unions have a proud history of joining efforts to defend black rights against the union-hating lynchers of the Ku Klux Klan, from the June 1982 labor/black mobilization which spiked a Nazi provocation against Gay Pride Day to the January 1994 Springfield mobilization against a KKK race-hate rally on the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. In 1987, the ATU and other unions joined forces to beat back the racist frame-up of black transit worker Cassandra Seay. Many of these same unions supported the successful fight waged by the PDC to defend the Anti-Klan Three, who faced imprisonment for their role in stopping a violent Klan attack in Daley Plaza in June 1996.

There must be no illusions that the capitalist state lacks either the power or the will to execute Mumia. There must be no illusions that Mumia can get a fair trial in the capitalist courts, despite massive evidence of his innocence in the December 1981 killing of a Philadelphia policeman. From the sham trial in 1982

to the rigged appeal hearings in 1995-96 to the latest ruling, Jamal's case itself has shown that this "justice" system is racist and anti-working-class to the core.

Neither must there be any illusions in the Democratic Party, which is no friend of labor and blacks but a party of big business no less than the Republicans. Clinton has condemned millions of women and children to starvation through the devastation of welfare. His White House has implemented a vast intensification of racist "law and order," including the "war on drugs" which has filled the prisons to overflowing and a massive expansion of the death penalty. For the social power of the working class to be unleashed, labor must be independent of the political parties and the state that represent the enemy class. That also means ridding the labor movement of cops and opposing court intervention. The working class cannot effectively fight the racist frame-up of Jamal with cop-infested and government-controlled unions.

The Partisan Defense Committee is a non-sectarian, class-struggle legal and social defense organization which champions cases and causes in the interests of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the views of the Marxist Spartacist League. We understand that the cops, courts and prison system which have persecuted and seek to kill Mumia are at the core of an apparatus of repression which protects the rule and profits of the employing class. The death penalty is at the pinnacle of this system of capitalist repression. And Mumia's case symbolizes what the death penalty is all about: it is legal lynching pure and simple, rooted in the Southern slave system smashed by the Civil War and in the oppression of the black masses which has been the bedrock of American capitalism ever since.

We seek to bring together the broadest possible forces in labor-centered united-front actions—where all participants are free to express their own particular views—to free Mumia and abolish the racist death penalty. In taking up the fight for Mumia's freedom, the working class will be striking a blow against an entire system predicated on the brutal exploitation of labor and rooted in the racist oppression of the black population. The fight for black freedom is central to the emancipation of labor itself. Those who labor must rule!

Trade unions, civil rights organizations, students and youth, all opponents of racist injustice: Mobilize now to bring out your members for a mass, defiant protest at Federal Plaza on November 21! Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty!

Funds for Mumia's Legal Defence Are Urgently Needed!

Mobilise your unions, student and community groups to join the fight to free Mumia now. Contact the PDC in Sydney on (02) 9281 2181 or in Melbourne on (03) 9654 4315. Donate generously: make cheques or money orders out to "Partisan Defence Committee—Jamal Legal Defence," and send to P.O. Box Q217, QVB, Sydney NSW 1230. The PDC will forward every penny to the New York-based Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Contents Include:

- Mumia Abu-Jamal's Life of Struggle
- Court Hearings: New Evidence of Frame-Up
- From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal "La Amistad and American Law"
- The Frame-Up of Mumia Abu-Jamal
- For Non-Sectarian, Class-Struggle Defense!
- Desperation, Segregation and the "Ebonics" Controversy
- Down With "English Only" Racism!
- Coleman Young: From CIO Union Organizer to Overseer for Auto Bosses

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Black History and the Class Struggle
No. 15

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

SAVE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL!
ABOLISH THE RACIST DEATH PENALTY!
PARTISAN DEFENSE COMMITTEE

New York City, August 1982. Labor-centered united-front demonstration initiated by Partisan Defense Committee, part of international campaign of protest and publicity that won stay of Jamal's execution.

Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Spartacist League Forum

There is No Justice in the Capitalist Courts!
Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!
Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!

Sydney

Friday, 18 December, 7 pm
George Hunt Room, Trades Hall, 4 Goulburn St

For more information: phone (02) 9281 2181

NSW ALP Wages War on Minority Youth Carr's Capitalist Cops Run Amok

On 29 October, 130 cops, with horses and dogs, invaded the heavily immigrant suburb of Bankstown in Sydney. By 3 a.m. the next day the cops had threatened 500 young people, searched 199 and arrested 24. Arrogantly declaring Bankstown (45 percent Arabic-speaking) "our patch," the cops swooped down on parks, malls and train stations, claiming to be looking for "crimes" such as "truancy" or "anti-social" and "offensive" behaviour. This was pure racist terror, orchestrated by the NSW Labor government.

Two days later, someone shot at the Bankstown-area Lakemba police station, causing minor damage and no injuries. ALP premier Bob Carr immediately fanned the flames of racist reaction, outrageously declaring a "Lebanese gang" guilty and raving about "people trying to destroy the Australian way of life" (*Daily Telegraph*, 3 November). With the capitalist media screaming that the attack on the police station was "un-Australian" and an "act of war," state Labor MP Tony Stewart spewed racist filth, "these mongrels have to be found" (*Australian*, 4 November).

Youth, especially minority youth, should get danger pay for surviving in New South Wales under the ALP! Groups of three or more are now

deemed a "gang" and are illegal. New laws against carrying knives allow the cops to conduct arbitrary body searches of *anyone*. Non-white youth are ostentatiously targeted often under the guise of the "war on drugs." Even youth going to school or just taking out the garbage have been subjected to the cops' vindictive probes. Carr has proposed giving the police even more sweeping powers, allowing them to set up road blocks to search "suspect" vehicles and demand drivers' identities.

Carr's cops are *killer cops*. Only a few weeks earlier, Greg Nicholls, a 15-year-old Aboriginal youth in Sydney's Earlwood was gunned down, executed for allegedly "breaking and entering" a liquor store. On 21 November, the cops killed again, this time a 39-year-old man at the centre of a domestic dispute.

The cops stand in violent defence of an entire system based on a few rich capitalists squeezing immense wealth out of the blood and sweat of the vast majority of the peoples of the world. This means murdering Aborigines, smashing workers pickets, terrorising youth and immigrants, and assaulting and arresting anti-racists. And when the ALP social democrats are in power, they administer the capitalists' state—the police, prisons and courts—on behalf of the capitalist class.

As far as Carr is concerned (and tory John Howard and the rest are no different) youth shouldn't be seen *or* heard. Indeed, they shouldn't have a life, the meaning of Labor's proposed deadly "squeal rules" requiring doctors and others to report anyone under 16 years who they think is having sex. After a widespread outcry Carr retreated from this perverse policing of youth sexual activities. But the reactionary age of consent laws remain, especially targeting male homosexuals, for whom the age is 18, while for everyone else it is 16.

Capitalism holds no future for young people. The schools are overcrowded and underfunded and the universities are all but closed to minority and working-class youth. Meanwhile youth unemployment is astronomical—over 50 percent in some parts of NSW. Cop terror and social regimentation are meant to cow youth into obedience, not least in preparation for being slaughtered on future battlefields in the interests of white Australian imperialism.

Meanwhile, Carr's ravings about "Asian drug gangs" fuel the rise of fascist terrorists who are advocating fascist "self-defence groups" of white students, and who plaster the city with chilling threats calling to "execute Asian, Arab and African drug dealers."

The fascists must be stopped with massive trade-union/minority mobilisations!

As we said in our leaflet addressing youth protesting the racist One Nation:

"The question is, how to fight back? How to win? Young people themselves don't have a lot of social power. But the integrated working class, with its hands on all the levers of production and distribution of wealth, does. To be sure, youth who have never witnessed a winning strike, let alone a revolution, may think the fight for socialist revolution is way 'out there.' But what is really crazy is the notion that the present system can be made humane and just. No amount of tinkering can get rid of capitalism's purpose: the exploitation of the world's peoples for the profits of a tiny handful."

—"Capitalist Rulers Target Aborigines, Immigrants, Workers," *ASP* No. 165, Spring 1998

The Spartacus Youth Clubs don't sucker youth into the dead end of reformist pressure politics, and we won't be telling youth to vote Labor in the next NSW elections (unlike Workers Power, the International Socialist Organisation and others). Our goal is to help build a multiracial revolutionary workers party that fights all manifestations of oppression on the road to overthrowing this consummately violent, racist capitalist system. The SYCs are organisations of revolutionary action and education. Join us! ■

Decay...

(continued from page 2)

routinely denied asylum and then deported to face torture and death in their homelands. About 1,700 East Timorese asylum seekers are threatened with deportation. In mid-November only emergency action by civil libertarians and trade unionists in Perth saved a Somali man from being dragged in shackles onto a plane and sent to his death. The pilot refused to fly the craft and ground workers proclaimed they would not refuel it. Asylum now for refugees—Stop the deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

The ALP is part and parcel of the capitalist system (in power or in "opposition") which targets immigrant workers in order to ratchet up the exploitation of the working class. Yet immigrant workers, for example, in Sydney and Melbourne transit and in manufacturing industries, form a strategic component of the proletariat. A revolutionary leadership would take up the vital task of struggling for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism which poison class struggle.

In the face of capitalist immiseration, social democrats, union bureaucrats and assorted ostensible leftists blame "economic rationalist" policies. This is their way of denying that it is the capitalist system itself which must be overturned, breeding illusions that it is possible to have a fairer, more humane form of capitalism. They call for protectionism to "defend" Australian industry, i.e., the profits of the bosses. Thus they directly line up the working class behind the racist imperialist aims of their "own" ruling class in the name of a nonexistent "partnership" between capital and labour.

Our fight is *with*, not against, the workers in other countries, in common struggle against the capitalist rulers. To combat unemployment we need jobs for all, a shorter workweek at no loss in pay. Against job-trusting craft unionism, created explicitly to exclude immigrants, minorities and women, we need *indus-*

trial unions and aggressive union-run recruitment of those historically discriminated against. Equal pay for equal work! To build such unions requires a drive to organise the unorganised, a task made impossible when unionists routinely scab on each others' strike. Picket lines mean don't cross!

For a Class-Struggle Fight Against Racist Reaction

Hand-in-hand with the immiseration of the masses the bourgeoisie is enormously strengthening the repressive apparatus of the capitalist state. Prisons in Victoria and New South Wales are overflowing with Victoria's top cop bragging "There are more people in prison today than ever before in Victoria's history" (*Age*, 24 October 1998).

This increased state repression is racist to the core. A recently released video documents in horrifying detail cops at Melbourne's Custody Centre viciously beating prisoners last March. In just over 60 seconds the cops struck dozens of murderous baton blows against the prisoners, many of them Aboriginal and Samoan who the cops had subjected to vicious racist taunts. Five of the *prisoners* were later charged, three of them Aborigines.

This is par for the course in racist Australia. The whitewash Royal Commission into black deaths in custody under Hawke's ALP government "investigated" 99 cases completely exonerating the cops and prison guards despite the clear evidence that many of these "deaths" were outright racist murder. Today, "deaths in custody" are once again skyrocketing.

Cops and prison guards are the front-line of the capitalist state, the repressive apparatus which exists to defend capitalist class rule. A union movement that "organises" the hired guns of the class enemy *cannot* effectively fight for the workers' interests. Cops, prison guards out of the unions!

During the elections the ALP maintained a racist conspiracy of silence on Aboriginal rights as they openly courted One Nation supporters. Having no objection in principle to Howard's anti-native title Wik amendments, the ALP



As deaths in custody skyrocket, racist cops rampaged against prisoners inside Melbourne Custody Centre, 6 March 1998.

now aggressively carries out their provisions, especially in Queensland—One Nation's racist base. We say there must be a class-struggle fight in defence of Aboriginal rights.

Vile "We are One" Australian nationalism pushed by the ALP and the bourgeois parties, combined with soaring unemployment and union-busting have fuelled One Nation and fascist terrorists such as National Action. Leftist bookstores and offices have been attacked, and on 30 September fascist thugs savagely beat Adelaide anti-racist campaigner Peter Lord in his own home. Now the fascists are threatening a nationwide December tour of the leading member of the British National Front. What's needed are union/minority mobilisations, organising all the fascists' intended victims, to sweep the race-terrorists from the streets!

Break with Laborism!

Unchaining the power of the working class against racist capitalism requires a sharp political struggle against and break from the ALP, a fight to oust the current trade-union tops through forging a class-struggle leadership. The ALP is a bourgeois workers party, thor-

oughly capitalist in its program, outlook and leadership while based on the trade unions. The Laborite union misleaders act as agents of the capitalist class in the workers movement, preaching defeatism and demoralisation, while demobilising the potential power of the working class in the name of reliance on the capitalist courts and waiting for the next elections.

For example, earlier this year the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) brass pushed cowardly obedience to the dictates of the bosses' union-busting Workplace Relations legislation, and connived with the ACTU to bury the MUA struggle in the courts. Dismantling picket lines (and painting cops as friends of the workers), they declared "victory" following intervention of the bosses courts and scuttled the struggle, ramming through massive redundancies of Patrick's employees, effective pay cuts and speed-up. Now the maritime bosses are taking aim at P&O dock workers. The prostration of the union tops has only fuelled the hunger of the capitalists to destroy any opposition to their pursuit of profit.

Refusing to fight the capitalists in class struggle, the Laborite bureaucrats

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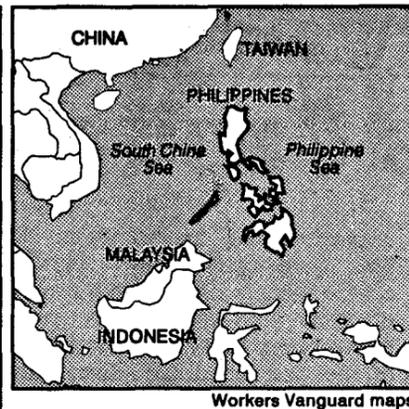
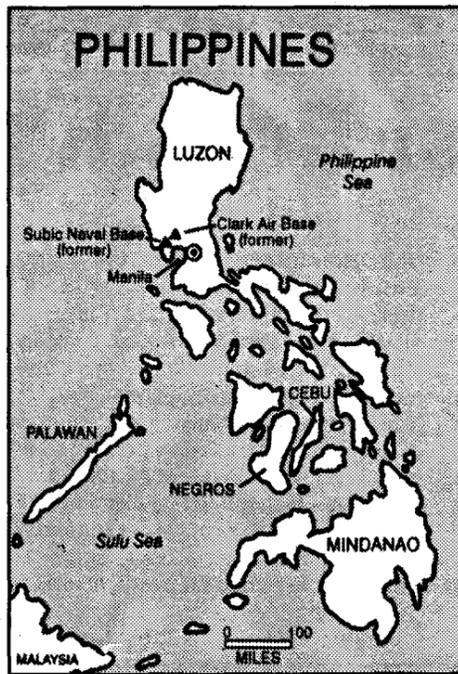
Philippines...

(continued from page 12)

seized the archipelago in the 1898 Spanish-American War which signaled America's emergence as an imperialist power. In the process of suppressing nationalist resistance, the U.S. military launched a brutal, racist war that resulted in the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Filipinos. As we noted in "A Century of U.S. Imperialist Plunder" (WP No. 686, 13 March): "The conquest of the Philippines, leading to decades of bloody colonial repression, was a statement of U.S. imperialist appetites in the Pacific and a harbinger of the future war with Japanese imperialism, which culminated in the American A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945."

The strategic importance of the Philippines for the U.S. was laid out following World War II by General Douglas MacArthur, whose father commanded the war of extermination against independence fighters at the turn of the century: "Now the Pacific has become an Anglo-Saxon lake and our line of defense runs through a chain of islands fringing the coast of Asia" (quoted in Nautilus Research, *Pacific Command: The Structure and Strategy of the US Military in the Pacific* [July 1983]). In 1951, MacArthur told the U.S. Congress: "From this island chain we can dominate with sea and air power every Asiatic port from Vladivostok to Singapore and prevent any hostile movement into the Pacific."

Despite half a century of nominal independence, the Philippines remains an impoverished semicolonial vassal of the U.S. Described by the London *Economist* as an "archipelagic aircraft carrier," the country has long served as a linchpin of the anti-Communist ASEAN alliance in Southeast Asia. During the anti-Soviet Cold War, the Philippines provided strategic military bases at Clark and Subic Bay for U.S. imperialism's savage counterrevolutionary war in the 1960s and '70s against the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants. When the U.S. opted to abandon its Philippine bases shortly after the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-



Workers Vanguard maps

U.S. uses Philippine neocolony as strategic outpost against Japanese imperialist rival and to quell social unrest in region. U.S. military presence is dagger at throat of Chinese deformed workers state.

92, the Pentagon took literally everything, except the tons of toxic waste left behind. For more than half a century, the U.S. military arrogantly treated the Philippines as its warehouse. Thousands of Amerasian children were abandoned when the U.S. military left. Now these children, especially those of black GIs, face ostracism in the communities around the former bases.

Estrada became the darling of the nationalist "left" in good part because he spoke out against the U.S. military bases while serving as an opposition senator under the administration of President Corazon "Cory" Aquino. Recognizing the brittleness of bourgeois rule in a neocolony situated in a potential cockpit of interimperialist rivalry, Estrada now openly courts the favors of the United States. The VFA allows the U.S. military unlimited access to ports and installations throughout the Philippines. U.S. interests are especially focused around General Santos City at the southern tip of Mindanao—where USAID funds were used to upgrade the airport and ship handling facilities—which faces the maritime boundary with Indonesia and Malaysia.

The VFA, which has provoked nationalist protests by elements ranging from the powerful Catholic hierarchy to the Stalinist and social-democratic left, is a response to intensified interimperialist competition and growing social turmoil in the region. The Philippines offers the U.S. a strategic position from which to threaten the sea lanes that are Japan's shortest oil supply routes as well as a jumping-off point for military intervention to quell social unrest in neighboring semicolonial countries. We say: Smash the VFA and ASEAN! U.S. troops out of the Philippines!

Dead End of Bourgeois Populism

Estrada's election was hailed by a host of liberals and avowed leftists as a "victory for the people." In fact, Estrada is simply the latest in a long line of imperialist-sponsored "populist" or *cacique* (landowner) politicians, from colonial Commonwealth caudillo Manuel Quezon and post-independence president Ramon Magsaysay to dictator Ferdinand Marcos and Aquino herself. For decades, Washington propped up the hated, corrupt Marcos dictatorship. When Marcos became too discredited to continue ruling in the 1980s, the U.S. promoted longtime CIA asset and millionaire Benigno Aquino. Following his assassination by Marcos' thugs in 1983, his wife took up the baton of the "democratic" opposition.

Three years later, Cory Aquino, one of the largest landowners in the country, was catapulted to office by the "people power" movement supported by Washington, the Catholic Church...and much of the "left." Months after becoming president, Aquino unleashed troops and cops on a demonstration in Manila calling for agrarian reform, killing 18 peasants and wounding scores more. Despite a veneer of parliamentary democracy, the Philippines remains a brutal police state in which leftists and working-class militants face imprisonment and death-squad terror.

Estrada was a loyal Marcos supporter who organized goon-squad attacks against Aquino's followers. He gained popularity playing grade B movie roles as a hoodlum and, ironically, an incorruptible union leader, and earned his political spurs as the mayor of San Juan, a suburb of Metro Manila. One of his chief patrons is billionaire businessman and former Marcos crony Eduardo Cojuangco. When Cojuangco allowed the peasants on one of his eleven *haciendas* on the island of Negros to become "stockholders" in the plantation, Estrada hailed his *padrino* as the "godfather of land reform." Under the government's fraudulent "land reform" scheme, Cojuangco retains 60 percent control while the "emancipated" tenant farmers continue to slave as his plantation hands.

As the case of Cojuangco illustrates, the bourgeoisie and the landlord class in such semicolonial countries are inextricably intertwined. Half of the peasantry consists of tenants who are forced to

hand over up to three-quarters of their crops to rapacious landlords, while well over a third of the overall population lives below the official poverty line. Food prices have skyrocketed in recent months amid widespread shortages. Genuine agrarian revolution—expropriation of the landed estates—can only be realized through the overthrow of capitalist class rule. Directly related to the land question is the oppression of the dozens of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities on this chain of over 7,000 islands. Various Muslim insurgencies have raged for years on the island of Mindanao, one of the poorest areas in the archipelago. And, as in Indonesia and elsewhere in the region, ethnic Chinese are simultaneously represented in the bourgeoisie and subjected to vile racist persecution.

The woman question is also a central and explosive issue in this 80 percent Catholic country. While large numbers of women have been drawn into the workforce in recent years, they have also been the hardest hit as unemployment climbs in the spreading economic crisis. Even before, millions of women were forced to seek work abroad—in the U.S., Japan and the oil-rich Arab emirates—as nurses or servants, many of them treated literally as slaves. Philippine law enshrines the oppression of women, who cannot even sign contracts without a husband's consent. The 1987 constitution promulgated under Aquino includes one of the most severe anti-abortion laws in the world, and a bill proposed last year would make abortion punishable by death both for the woman and the doctor who performs it.

It is necessary to fight for free abortion on demand and free quality health care for all. Marxists call for strict separation of church and state and oppose every manifestation of discrimination against women, homosexuals and ethnic, national and religious minorities. Religious backwardness—whether Catholic or Muslim—serves to bolster the family, the key institution for the oppression of women.

To even begin to emancipate women from domestic slavery and all-sided oppression, the system of capitalist exploitation must be swept away through socialist revolution, leading to the creation of an international planned, collectivized economy. The ICL seeks to build an internationalist revolutionary vanguard party to act as a tribune of the people, mobilizing the proletariat in defense of all the oppressed against the common class enemy. Particularly in Asia, the fight for the emancipation of women is a key component of this perspective. **For women's liberation through socialist revolution!**

For Proletarian Class Independence!

The chief condition for any real struggle against imperialist subjugation and capitalist exploitation and oppression is the class independence of the proletariat. Yet the Filipino left has historically been mired in class collaboration. In advanced capitalist countries, such class collaboration often takes the political form of "popular fronts"—bourgeois coalitions of reformist workers parties and openly capitalist parties. In semicolonial countries, the same treacherous strategy is generally manifested through the vehicle of bourgeois nationalism.

In the recent elections, the various left groups either tailed Estrada or politely refrained from opposing him, giving their supporters the signal to go vote for "Erap." But many voters who had earlier sported the bumper sticker "Erap para sa mahirap" have now replaced it with one reading, "I'm sorry I voted for Erap." And a columnist for *Manila's Today* (25 July) observed, "Those who can't afford to buy bumper stickers, much less a car to stick them on...suffer the greatest disillusionment and feel the deepest sense of betrayal." In turn, the reformist "socialists" now seek to distance themselves from Estrada.

Decay...

(continued from page 9)

urged workers instead to "punish" the Coalition government at the ballot box by voting for the ALP. Beazley & Co. refused to pledge themselves to overturn even a single Coalition attack other than opposing the proposed deeply regressive Goods and Services Tax. This didn't stop the trade union bureaucrats from holding stop-work rallies, not to defend union rights, but to get out the Labor vote. At one Sydney meeting, the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union tops lied that the ALP would overturn many of the anti-union laws. Echoing ALP pandering to One Nation voters, they were silent on One Nation's virulent racism, telling this heavily immigrant and minority workforce that the problem was that One Nation didn't really oppose the GST!

What passes for the left in this country proclaimed their holy writ, "Thou shalt vote Labor," including the centrist Workers Power (WP) who like to posture as revolutionary Trotskyists. Denouncing the Spartacist League for being "the most instructive example of sectarianism," *Workers Power* (No. 12, November-February 1998/9) simply lies that "For them the ALP, like the Liberals, are an outright capitalist party..." Could it be that in reading our election article WP missed our statement that the ALP is a "bourgeois workers party"? Perhaps. But more to the point is our Marxist insistence that an ALP government, indeed any social-democratic government, is and can be

nothing other than a *capitalist* government. This is what WP denies—for them the social democracy in power is some sort of half-way house to socialism that is only "ultimately... unable to meet workers needs."

For simply telling the truth that class-conscious militants had no-one to vote for, WP claims that we were "effectively advocating a boycott of the elections." So they drag out a 1935 quotation from Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky arguing that "As a general principle, a revolutionary party has the right to boycott parliament only when it has the capacity to overthrow it." But insurrection is the furthest thing from WP's mind. Crawling before the capitalist state, WP insists that the working class must always vote for someone, anyone, a chemically pure expression of parliamentary cretinism. Not confined to Labor-loyalism, WP has voted for outright bourgeois formations such as Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland.

The struggle to forge a Leninist vanguard party through fighting for a class-struggle leadership of the unions, winning away the ALP's base from the pro-capitalist traitors, is anathema to WP. As we wrote last issue, for WP "the working class as a conscious factor in history does not exist, and they cannot even conceive of workers struggling outside of or against the Labor Party."

We understand and act otherwise. We fight to build a revolutionary workers party, tribune of the people, that can organize the working class into a class for itself and put an end once and for all to the capitalist system. Join us in the struggle for a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia! ■

Such opportunist twists and turns are in keeping with the whole history of Filipino Stalinism and help explain why the left there consists of a veritable alphabet soup of groups which are barely distinguishable politically—all agreeing on the Menshevik/Stalinist “two stage” model. Each new betrayal tends to result in a cliquist split in which one faction or another is denounced for relying too much on the “national bourgeoisie” and not understanding the “leading role of the working class in the democratic revolution” or for focusing too much on “guerrillism” instead of electoral politics.

In warning against illusions in Aquino in 1986, we wrote: “Many a Third World nationalist regime has sought to protect its left flank by bringing the Communists into a ‘democratic (or anti-fascist, anti-imperialist, etc.) coalition government,’ only to set them up for a massacre on the morrow” (“Philippines Workers Must Fight for Power!” *WV* No. 415, 7 November 1986). What is necessary is a *programmatically* break with all variants of the Menshevik/Stalinist dogma of “two-stage revolution,” which subordinates the proletariat to a “progressive” or “anti-imperialist” wing of the bourgeoisie in the fight for “democratic” capitalism while putting off the struggle for socialism to a future that never comes. From the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, which was drowned in blood by Chiang Kai-shek’s nationalist Guomindang, to the slaughter of Indonesian Communists by Suharto’s military and Muslim fundamentalist gangs in 1965, history has repeatedly demonstrated that “two-stage revolution” means bloody defeat for the working class and oppressed.

This has been amply confirmed in the Philippines as well. In leading the Hukbalahap—the “People’s Anti-Japanese Army”—during World War II, the old Philippine Communist Party (PCP) followed Stalin’s prescription of supporting the “democratic” imperialist Allies. With the end of the war and American reconquest of the islands, the U.S. imperialists turned their guns on the Huks, drowning the peasant-based rebellion in blood. This campaign, assisted by Magsaysay and a young Benigno Aquino (whose family collaborated with the Japanese during the war), served as the laboratory in which the CIA developed the bloody techniques of “counter-insurgency” later used to slaughter millions of Vietnamese.

The current Philippine Communist Party (CPP) of Jose Maria Sison, which emerged as a Maoist split from the pro-Moscow PKP in 1968, is no less wedded to such nationalist class collaborationism. The Sisonites have led the New People’s Army (NPA) in a peasant-guerrilla struggle which has waxed and waned over the years as overtures are made to each new bourgeois regime. While defying murderous state repression, such “armed



Philippine Airlines workers demonstrate in support of striking pilots in June (left). Workers picket electrical utility owned by U.S. Union Oil during 1996 strike.



Tony Macasinag

struggle” is essentially a means to pressure the bourgeoisie.

Shortly before the ouster of Marcos, the Sisonites’ “National Democratic Front” demanded: “Unite all anti-imperialist forces to overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship and work for the establishment of a coalition government based on a truly democratic system of representation.” The CPP’s class collaborationism was also reflected in conciliation toward the church, serving to reinforce the reactionary social values of the bourgeoisie. Before the recent elections, the Sisonite-controlled KMU union federation invited Estrada and other bourgeois presidential wannabes to a May Day demonstration in downtown Manila. While most did not show up, the Sisonites provided a platform for a candidate connected to the sinister Catholic rightist Opus Dei organization.

Lenin on the State and Revolution

Particularly under the impact of capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR and imperialist triumphalism over the “death of communism,” the CPP’s congenital opportunism has led to an escalating proliferation of cliquist splits. One such, the SANLAKAS breakaway headed by Filemon Lagman, openly joined an Estrada rally at Manila’s Rizal Park to cheer for Lagman’s brother Edcel, who was running for senator on the Estrada ticket. Another, the Proletarian Revolutionary Movement (PRK), emerged as a “left” split from the CPP in the early 1990s. The PRK claims to be the authentic “Marxist-Leninist” organization in the Philippines and polemicizes against the multiple strains of reformism and “two-stage revolution” peddled by the Sisonites. But while correctly placing Estrada in the camp of the class enemy, the PRK nonetheless urged that his capitalist regime be “pressured” to carry out its promises to the impoverished masses.

Thus do these “Marxist-Leninists” reject the Leninist understanding of the state. The bourgeois state is not a

“neutral” agency which can be pressured to act in the interests of the masses. Rather, as Lenin stressed in *The State and Revolution*, “the state is an organ of class rule,” consisting at its core of armed bodies of men—the military, the police, the prison system. The capitalist state is an *instrument of repression* against workers and the oppressed which must be smashed through socialist revolution and replaced by a *workers state*. The PRK’s revisionist view of the state is reflected as well in its characterization of China, Vietnam, North Korea and Cuba as “state capitalist” regimes. The PRK’s refusal to militarily defend these states and its cheering for the “democratic” counterrevolutions which destroyed the Soviet Union and the East European deformed workers states represent a capitulation to “democratic” imperialism and the Philippines’ own anti-Communist bourgeoisie. Indeed, the Philippines is key to the U.S. drive against the Chinese deformed workers state.

In the “Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program” (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998) adopted at the Third International Conference of the ICL earlier this year, we assert:

“The proletariat must give unconditional military defense against imperialism to the deformed workers states in China, Vietnam, North Korea and Cuba. Our position flows from the proletarian class character of these states, embodied in the collectivized property relations—nationalized property, planned economy, monopoly of foreign trade and banking, etc.—established by social revolutions that destroyed capitalism. Despite the bureaucratic deformations of these states, our defense of them against the class enemy is unconditional, i.e., it does not depend on the prior overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracies, nor does it depend upon the circumstances and immediate causes of the conflict.”

For a Leninist-Trotskyist Party!

Yet another organization, Liga Sosyalista (LS), recently emerged around a split from the Lagmanite student group and the newspaper *Progresibo*. The LS bolted the Lagmanite organization in July after spending months as an opposition to “Stalinist and sectarian policies” and “the continuing drift of its politics...toward the right” (*Progresibo*, July/August 1998). Describing itself as a “pre-party formation of the working class,” LS argues for “an open socialist formation” to “regroup the growing number of socialists and politically conscious individuals from the mass movement.” It attacks Lagman as a Stalinist and even cites Trotsky favorably. Yet LS remains buried in the liberal coalition AKBAYAN, a motley assortment of disillusioned ex-Stalinists, left nationalists and “Christian socialists” which calls for vague “pro-people social and economic reforms.” And the same issue of *Progresibo* features a front-page headline reading, “Progressives Close Ranks: Extend the Gains of the Elections!” What is this if not a programmatic commitment to chaining the working class to the cart of the bourgeoisie?

Indeed, Sonny Melencio, now leader of LS, openly defended class collaboration in a January 1997 speech to a conference of the Australian Democratic Socialist Party (DSP). The DSP itself is

a thoroughly reformist outfit which includes in its leadership the likes of Max Lane, who served in the Australian embassy in Indonesia under Labor Party rule. Formerly linked up with Jack Barnes’ U.S. Socialist Workers Party, the DSP reformists joined with the Barnesites in the 1980s in explicitly renouncing Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution, going on to act as press agents for “human rights” imperialism and for petty-bourgeois nationalists like the Indonesian PRD. In his speech to the DSP, Melencio raised the question of “whether or not to include the bourgeois liberal forces in a broad front, form an electoral bloc with them and support them in elections.” He continued:

“Lenin’s *Left-Wing Communism—An Infantile Disorder* argues precisely for such a tactic in order to advance the class struggle and for the party to carry out an alliance (including an electoral bloc) with the bourgeois liberals in order to defeat a more reactionary target, and in order to expose the bankruptcy of the liberal line to the masses.”

This is a gross falsification of Lenin and Leninism in the service of bourgeois liberalism. Lenin argued against ultra-leftists who refused on principle to work in reformist-led trade unions or to stand *Communist* candidates in parliamentary elections. It was not Lenin’s Bolsheviks but the Mensheviks who promoted political blocs with the liberal bourgeoisie—and Lenin opposed them down the line. When the Mensheviks consummated their political appetites by entering the bourgeois Provisional Government after the February Revolution of 1917, Lenin waged an indefatigable campaign of opposition and exposure against these class traitors, counterposing the fight for workers rule: “All power to the Soviets!” It was this uncompromising struggle against bourgeois coalitionism which directly prepared the victory of the October Revolution.

And it was the Stalinist embrace of Menshevik class collaboration which prepared defeat after bloody defeat for the international proletariat and led ultimately to the final undoing of the October Revolution. In the Philippines and throughout Southeast Asia, it is necessary to forge Leninist vanguard parties rooted in proletarian internationalism and armed with the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution. Socialist revolution in the backward countries would necessarily have to link up with the struggles of the working people in Indonesia, South Korea and elsewhere in the region—and would act as a powerful impetus for proletarian political revolution in China and for socialist revolution in Japan, Asia’s economic powerhouse.

The millions of Filipino toilers who are to be found throughout Asia, the U.S. and elsewhere can serve as a living link uniting the workers of the semicolonial countries and the imperialist centers. In the U.S., the Spartacist League seeks to build a revolutionary workers party which champions the rights of blacks, women, immigrants and all the oppressed as part of the fight for proletarian revolution to smash racist American imperialism. The ICL fights to reforge the Fourth International of Leon Trotsky as the indispensable instrument for leading new October Revolutions around the world. ■

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No Illusions in Bourgeois Liberals—For Workers Revolution!

Philippines: Estrada Regime Turns Screws on Workers, Poor



Der Spiegel



Reuters

The following article is reprinted from Workers Vanguard (No. 701, 20 November 1998), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

WORKERS VANGUARD

NOVEMBER 16—Less than five months into his term as president of the Philippines, Joseph “Erap” Ejercito Estrada’s image as guardian of the *masa* (masses) is fading, and fading fast. Campaigning on the slogan “Erap para sa mahirap” (Erap for the poor) and on promises of jobs, cheap food and housing, the capitalist politician was elected in May on a wave of popular discontent over the austerity dictates imposed by his predecessor, former general Fidel Ramos, at the behest of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and U.S. imperialism. With class polarization progressively sharpening and labor militancy threatening to undermine the stability of this classic U.S. neocolony, Estrada is backing calls for emergency presidential powers and a moratorium on strikes. He is also championing the return of U.S. military forces to the country, throwing his support behind the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) signed early this year by Ramos.

Shortly before Estrada’s June 30 inauguration, Philippine Airlines (PAL) pilots walked out—defying a government injunction—against a union-busting attack by PAL boss and Estrada backer Lucio Tan. The pilots were subsequently joined by flight attendants and the combative PAL Employees Association (PALEA) representing ground crews. The day after Estrada’s inauguration, PAL strikers joined with other trade unionists, impoverished slum dwellers and youth in a 10,000-strong protest at the opening session of Congress in Manila, where the “populist” president unveiled a hard-nosed austerity program entailing deep cuts in the already measly



Moyer/Review

social services budget and wholesale privatization of remaining state-owned firms and utilities.

What lies behind the American military presence in the Philippines has been amply evident in recent days, as Indonesia again erupts in mass protests met with bloody repression. Less than six months after dictator Suharto was forced

out by student protests and plebeian upheavals, his successor and former henchman, B. J. Habibie, is likewise using military terror to prop up his austerity regime. The economic crisis which has engulfed the region, sending shock waves as far as Japan, Russia and Brazil, has driven millions to the edge of starvation. At the same time, it has impelled the urban and rural masses to fight for their very survival.

There has recently been imperialist investment in light industry in the Philippines, although the country was sidelined during the much-touted Southeast Asian “economic miracle.” Now it is being buffeted by the effects of the economic crash. The lines of men and women—sometimes stretching more than half a mile—outside the Malacañang presidential palace pleading for jobs, housing, medical care and scholarships attest to the desperate conditions throughout the country. The number of jobless has climbed by 30 percent in one year. The Philippine peso has plunged to a record low, and the only thing apparently keep-

ing the economy afloat is dollar remittances from the vast number of Filipinos working abroad. These conditions have provoked widespread proletarian unrest, measured in the 32 percent increase in strikes and lockouts over the past year. The PAL strike, which served as a beacon for workers throughout the archipelago, went down to bitter defeat

theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving *democracy and national emancipation* is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses.”

The Philippine proletariat must take its place at the head of the unemployed poor, the rural masses, women, subjugated ethnic and national minorities in a struggle for socialist revolution against all wings of the capitalist class. Such a struggle must be based on a perspective for proletarian revolution throughout the region and internationally, especially the U.S., Japan and Australia. This is underscored by the U.S. military presence, which seeks to enforce imperialist “stability” in this increasingly tumultuous region and to assist Washington’s interests against Japan. It is also a dagger at the throat of the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state, which is teetering on the brink of capitalist counterrevolution.

Trotskyists stand for unconditional military defense of China and the other remaining deformed workers states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution while fighting for proletarian political revolution to oust the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies. Socialist revolution in the Philippines would be an enormous impetus to the Chinese workers fighting the ravages of the Beijing regime’s “market reforms.” Above all, what is needed is the forging of a proletarian vanguard party committed to the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution and steeled in political combat against the myriad forms of nationalist class collaboration promoted by the Stalinist-dominated Philippine left.

An “Archipelagic Aircraft Carrier”

Significantly, the return of the U.S. military under the Visiting Forces Agreement comes 100 years after the U.S.

“With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the

No to U.S. Bases!