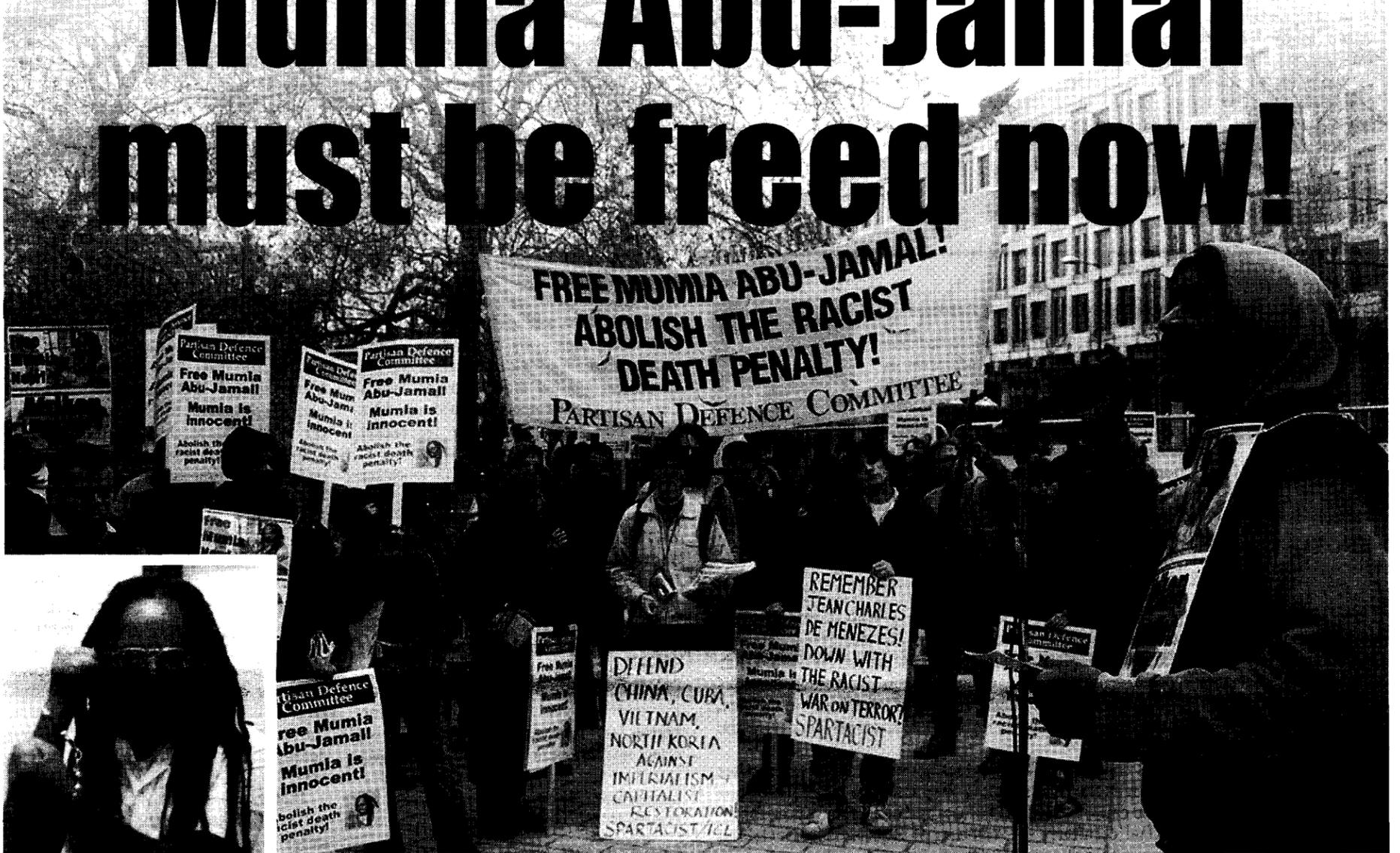




PDC international protest campaign

Mumia Abu-Jamal must be freed now!



Free Mumia protest in London, 19 April, initiated by the Partisan Defence Committee. Brother Omowale of Galaxy Radio speaking.

On 27 March, the US Third Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the conviction of Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther, MOVE supporter and award-winning journalist known as the “voice of the voiceless”, who was framed up for the 1981 killing of Philadelphia policeman Daniel Faulkner and sent to death row solely for his political beliefs. Upholding an earlier 2001 federal court ruling, the appeals court decision means that either a new sentencing hearing will take place, in which the death sentence could be reinstated, or Mumia will be condemned to life imprisonment. This is an outrage! There is a mountain of evidence that demonstrates that Mumia Abu-Jamal is an innocent man who should never have spent one day in prison!

In anticipation of the court decision, last summer the Partisan Defence Committee—a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defence organisation associated with the Spartacist League/US—together with the fraternal defence organisations associated with other sections of the International Communist League (ICL), called for emergency protests immediately after the ruling came down. These protests, which took place on 28 and 29 March, were followed over the next four weeks by united-front demonstrations called by the PDC and the other ICL-allied defence organisations, and heavily built by the Spartacist League (SL) and other ICL

sections. On 19 April, over 100 protested at the US Embassy in London and a similar number demonstrated in Toronto, while 200 mobilised for the united-front protest in Oakland, California. United-front protests were also held in Sydney, Australia, on 23 April, on the campus of the National Autonomous University (UNAM) in Mexico City on 24 April, and in Chicago and Los Angeles on 26 April. And on 17 May 50 people attended a rally in Melbourne, Australia.

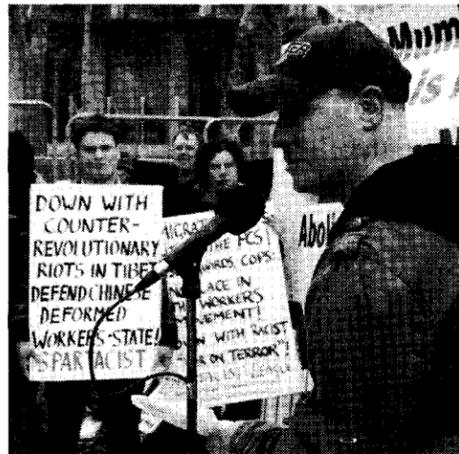
In addition to the united-front protests, the PDC and the New York Labor Black League for Social Defense mobilised a Class-Struggle Contingent of some 150 people for the 19 April demonstration in Philadelphia called by the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal (ICFFMAJ), which drew some 600 protesters. The same day, the Committee for Social Defence (CDDS), the PDC's fraternal defence organisation in France, also built a contingent of over 60 people at a Paris protest that drew over 200 demonstrators, while our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the ICL, participated in a protest of some 50 people in Mexico City. On 12 April, the Committee for Social Defence (KfV) in Germany had mobilised a Class-Struggle Contingent of 80 people in a demonstration called by the Berlin “Free Mumia Abu-Jamal” Coalition that drew about 300. These contingents marched under

the slogans: “Mumia Abu-Jamal is innocent! Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty! There is no justice in the capitalist courts! Mobilize labor's power—For mass protest!”

The united-front protests initiated by the PDC were called under the slogans: “Mumia Abu-Jamal is innocent! Free Mumia now! Abolish the racist death penalty!” The PDC initiated the united-front protests to provide an internationalist platform for trade unionists and fighters for the oppressed throughout the world to express their solidarity with Mumia whose case has come to represent struggle against racist injustice worldwide.

Trade unions in many countries representing hundreds of thousands of workers around the world were among more than 500 individuals and groups who endorsed the protests. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) Western Cape issued a statement declaring: “COSATU endorses the campaign to free Comrade ABU JAMAL.... We will stand with the millions of people across the world that are calling for justice to be done and will join the protest against this travesty of justice.” The International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 in San Francisco endorsed the

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Workers Hammer photos

Paul Moffat, Eastern Region Secretary of CWU, and Jessica Huntley, addressing London protest.



Mumia...

(Continued from page 1)

Oakland rally. Union endorsers of the international campaign included the SUD Rail Workers Union of Paris Left Bank, the OPZZ Konfederacja Pracy (All-Poland Workers Trade Union Confederation of Labour) and the All-Workers Fighting Front (PAME) union federation of Greece, which is allied with the Communist Party. In Scotland, the Aberdeen Trades Union Council and the Scottish Trades Union Congress endorsed, with Grahame Smith, general secretary of the STUC declaring in his greetings to the protests that Mumia "should be freed immediately from prison. He is innocent, and the inherently racist death penalty should be abolished." (For a full list of endorsers go to: www.partisandefense.org). Sections of the Rail, Maritime and Transport (RMT) union in London Underground and the Communication Workers Union (CWU) Eastern

Region also endorsed.

The PDC also sought support for Mumia's cause among students, antiwar and gay rights activists, minorities, immigrant communities, left organisations and other public figures. Endorsements for the united fronts were received from former Black Panther Party leaders Elaine Brown and David Hilliard, Day-Mer Turkish and Kurdish Community Centre in London, Jim Deery of the Greater New Lodge Community Forum in Belfast, the head of the VVN-BdA (Association of the Victims of the Nazi Regime—Coalition of Anti-Fascists) in Berlin, Cynthia McKinney (US Green Party candidate for president), and writers including the poet Benjamin Zephaniah, Cornel West, Gilles Perrault, Robert Allen, Michael Eric Dyson and Manning Marable. From Cuba, we received endorsements from author Celia Hart and Che Guevara's daughter, Aleida Guevara March. A statement of solidarity was sent by Leonard Peltier, the longtime jailed American Indian Movement

leader who remains unbowed in the face of a decades-long vendetta by the US government. The protests were also built and attended by black nationalist and Pan-Africanist groups in London, Chicago and Oakland, gay rights activists in Chicago, and others. Speakers included trade unionists, family members of slain Black Panthers and former Black Panthers facing frame-up charges today. And in every locale, from London to Sydney to Mexico City, protesters took to the platform to denounce not only the racist US imperialists but the race, national and class oppression meted out by their "own" bourgeoisies. Where participants took up the PDC's invitation to express their own views, a range of political viewpoints was aired and debated, which only made more powerful the shared commitment to the urgent fight for Mumia's freedom.

Many speakers at the Los Angeles and Chicago protests on 26 April expressed outrage at the acquittal on 25 April of the New York cops who killed Sean Bell in a hail of 50 bullets. Labor Black Struggle League speaker Bernard Branche stated that "two of the cops who killed Sean Bell were black, and in gunning down a black youth they were just doing their jobs in the eyes of the racist rulers. We seek to mobilise labour in protest against these outrages while explaining to the masses that things like racist cop terror can only be ended when the class that the cops protect is removed from power by the working class." The PDC and others at the protests called for freedom for the eight MOVE prisoners in the US, who have endured 30 years in the hell of Pennsylvania's prisons for the "crime" of surviving the horrific cop siege of their Philadelphia home in 1978. Outrageously, five of the MOVE prisoners have recently been denied parole; two others have parole decisions pending and one will become eligible for parole later this year. The MOVE prisoners are innocent and should not have spent a day in jail! **We demand the immediate, unconditional release of the MOVE prisoners!**

London: "Workers of the world unite for freedom for Mumia!"

Our strategy in the fight to free Mumia is that of **class-struggle defence** based on the understanding that capitalist society is fundamentally divided between two hostile classes — the capitalist exploiters and the working class — and that the capitalist state and its courts are organs of repression against working people and the oppressed. While every legal avenue must be pursued, it is the power of mass international protest centered on the trade unions that can make the courts yield.

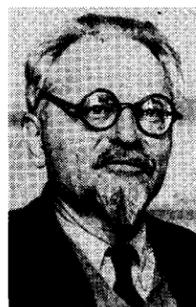
The London protest on 19 April brought out significant support from the multiethnic trade unions—including

from the RMT Finsbury Park branch and the CWU Eastern Region whose speakers had worked to build support for Mumia's freedom in their unions. Rally chair Eibhlin McDonald also welcomed speakers from several organisations representing London's black minority community, noting that they "have embraced the campaign for Mumia's freedom as part of their ongoing fight against the brutal repression that is a daily fact of life for London's black minority population". This mobilisation showed in embryo the forces which must be mobilised in their thousands—trade unions and minorities—for Mumia's freedom. The united front is a tactic for common actions undertaken under the watchword, "march separately, strike together". That means unity in action based on agreed-upon slogans and complete freedom of criticism—ie, open debate about what strategy is needed to rebuild the movement for Mumia and fight for his freedom. In addition to the PDC and the Spartacist League, other speakers included Dr Paul Mason of the Cardiff Nexus Innocence Project, Corinna Lotz of A World to Win, Nicki Jameson of *Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism!*, Sista Mawasi of the Afrikan Liberation Day Organising Committee, Brother Ras Lloyd for the Pan-Afrikan Society Community Forum and Brother Otongogara for the George Jackson Socialist League. Jessica Huntley, who helped found Bogle-L'Ouverture Press, recalled meeting and being interviewed by Mumia in 1981 in New York. Describing his professionalism and political acumen as a journalist, she said, "I found him to be very knowledgeable about the struggles in Britain against racism and fascism and discrimination." She recalled getting Mumia's phone call the following year, telling her he had been arrested and imprisoned for a crime he did not commit. Urging wider mobilisation for Mumia she continued, "Mumia's courage and determination is a beacon to all of us here."

PDC speaker Kate Klein stressed the need to fight against the racist capitalist order in Britain as well as in the US, saying:

"British and US imperialism together are the biggest terrorist force on the planet, just look at the hellholes of Iraq and Afghanistan. And we know that the British state kills too here at home, it doesn't have the death penalty but that doesn't mean it doesn't kill. We will never forget the shooting down in cold blood of Jean Charles de Menezes on a Tube train in 2005, that is the Labour government's racist 'war on terror' brought here.... The British state and its Labour government demonises today the Muslim population just as they have framed up and jailed innocent Irish Catholic people like the Guildford Four and Birmingham Six. We say drop the charges against Aamer Anwar who is a Scottish lawyer facing contempt of court charges today for his defence of his client against bogus 'terrorism' charges, part of the anti-Muslim witch hunt."

In Britain, black people are subjected to stop-and-search at least **six times** more—and Asians twice as often—as whites. And black deaths in police custody continue with impunity. On 25 April Edward Sharman, a 32-year-old black man, was detained on suspicion of burglary and died in a London hospital five days later; on 11 May 23-year-old Ayodeji Awogboro was arrested for a traffic offence, taken to Islington police station where he "became unwell" and also died in hospital. Underlining the racist nature of the British state, Klein said: "For black people Britain has always been a racist hell.... The reality for black youth whose parents or grandparents may



TROTSKY

The Transitional Programme

We seek to carry forward the international working-class perspectives of Marxism as developed in theory and practice by Lenin and Trotsky, as embodied in the decisions of the first four congresses of the Communist International and by the 1938 Transitional Programme and other key documents of the Fourth International. These materials are the indispensable documentary codification of the communist movement internationally, and are fundamental to the revolutionary tasks of our organisation.



LENIN

The tragic defeats suffered by the world proletariat over a long period of years doomed the official organizations to yet greater conservatism and simultaneously sent disillusioned petty-bourgeois 'revolutionists' in pursuit of 'new ways'. As always during epochs of reaction and decay, quacks and charlatans appear on all sides, desirous of revising the whole course of revolutionary thought. Instead of learning from the past, they 'reject' it. Some discover the inconsistency of Marxism, others announce the downfall of Bolshevism....

The Fourth International does not search after and does not invent panaceas. It takes its stand completely on Marxism as the only revolutionary doctrine that enables one to understand reality, unearth the cause behind the defeats and consciously prepare for victory. The Fourth International continues the tradition of Bolshevism which first showed the proletariat how to conquer power. The Fourth International sweeps away the quacks, charlatans and unsolicited teachers of morals. In a society based upon exploitation, the highest moral is that of the social revolution. All methods are good which raise the class-consciousness of the workers, their trust in their own forces, their readiness for self-sacrifice in the struggle. The impermissible methods are those which implant fear and submissiveness in the oppressed before their oppressors, which crush the spirit of protest and indignation or substitute for the will of the masses—the will of the leaders; for conviction—compulsion; for an analysis of reality—demagoguery and frame-up. That is why Social Democracy, prostituting as Marxism, and Stalinism—the antithesis of Bolshevism—are both mortal enemies of the proletarian revolution and its morals.

To face reality squarely; not to seek the line of least resistance; to call things by their right names; to speak the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter it may be; not to fear obstacles; to be true in little things as in big ones; to base one's programme on the logic of the class struggle; to be bold when the hour for action arrives—these are the rules of the Fourth International. It has shown that it could swim against the stream. The approaching historical wave will raise it on its crest.

—Leon Trotsky, *The Transitional Programme* (1938)

WORKERS HAMMER

Marxist newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain

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

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

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Protests in Chicago on 26 April and Toronto on 19 April, part of PDC-initiated international campaign. Class-Struggle Contingents built by PDC's fraternal defence organisations, march in Berlin on 12 April and Philadelphia on 19 April.

have been brought here to do jobs no one else wanted to do for the worst pay, today in de-industrialised Britain, for those youth there aren't any jobs, so they're written off and told they have no future."

Speaking for his region of the Communication Workers Union, Paul Moffat addressed the protest saying: "We are here today in absolute support from the Eastern Region for our brother", and noted that the court's decision confirmed "that his freedom will not be through any reliance on the capitalist corrupt courts and their politicians" but only "through total mobilisation of the broadest number of forces". Moffat has been fighting for over two years to mobilise support for Mumia's case in the CWU; now the Midlands Region has taken up the campaign and sent the protest a message offering "the support of the 30,000 members of the Communication Workers Union in the Midlands Region". Dean O'Hanlon, secretary of the Finsbury Park branch of the powerful RMT, pointed out the branch banner behind the speaker's mike, noting "We've had a commitment towards the campaign to free Abu-Jamal since the 1980s." Steve Hedley, an activist in the RMT who has long campaigned for Mumia's freedom, spoke of the inspiration drawn from the US civil rights movement by those like himself who became political through opposition to British imperialism in Northern Ireland. "We were inspired by the ideas, and ideas don't have any colour", adding "we shouldn't let people try to divide us, because the capitalists love nothing better".

However, opposition to the capitalists' racist divide-and-rule cannot be achieved simply on the basis of calls by reformist groups such as the SWP for "black and white, unite and fight". Racism is inherent to the capitalist system and the struggle against it must be linked to the struggle for socialist revolution to overthrow the capitalist order, which must be fought for in opposition to Labourite reformism. We as Leninists insist that a central imperative in the building of a revolutionary workers party is that the working class as a whole take up the fight against racist oppression as an integral part of the struggle for its own emancipation. Understanding that the interests of the working class and minorities either advance together or fall back separately, we fight to mobilise the multiethnic working class in integrated struggle against the brutal racist oppression that is inherent in capitalist society.

Brother Omowale spoke on behalf of Galaxy Radio which is connected with a network of black nationalist and Pan-Africanist organisations and had publicised the protest. Omowale stated: "We're here to give our support to the fight for freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal.... That's what unites all of us." He explained, "capitalism was born on the blood of African people", referring to the birth of the capitalist system out of feudalism and slavery and pointed out: "In capitalist countries, Africans catch an extra degree of hell" in addition to the workers, adding, "that's a double oppression" while "African women get a triple oppression".

Two of the endorsing Pan-Africanist organisations, the Pan-African Society Community Forum and the Afrikan Liberation Day Organising Committee, issued their own leaflet for the united-front protest. Speaking on behalf of the Marcus Garvey Organising Committee, Brother Minkah made clear the separatist strategy for black liberation that is the core of black nationalism, saying: "I don't need white people to tell me about capitalism. It was the enslavement of African people that mainly gave birth to this vicious system." Minkah urged support for Toyin Agbetu, arrested in March 2007 at Westminster Abbey for shouting denunciation during the hypocritical church commemoration of the end of the African slave trade attended by Tony Blair and the Queen. We demand: Drop the charges against Toyin Agbetu!

The black nationalism and separatism espoused by the followers of Marcus Garvey, including its "back to Africa" perspective, is based on despair of achieving equality for blacks in the European and American imperialist centres, promoting *separation* between the struggles of black people against racism and the struggles of the working class. We reject the black nationalist programme which would deny blacks their birthright: the wealth of this country that their labour has played a decisive role in creating. Our programme is for voluntary *integration* based on full *equality* for all, the precondition for which is the overthrow of the capitalist order through socialist revolution.

As Spartacist League speaker Julia Emery said:

"What is necessary is to mobilise the multiethnic working class for the revolutionary overthrow of British imperialism once and for all. For us the fundamental dividing line in society is *class*. This economic system offers no hope for youth, for minorities, for the working class. The British ruling class has long used racist divide-and-rule between communities; the only way to defeat the ruling class is through integrated class struggle. The multiethnic working class, for example in the London Tube and buses, has the potential power to shut down the City....

"We seek to build a party that fights against *all* instances of discrimination, what Lenin called a tribune of the people: we fight against racism, against Islamophobia, against racism against blacks, against anti-Semitism, for women's liberation, for gay rights and for full citizenship rights for all immigrants! We fight for an international socialist planned economy and for a federation of workers republics in the British Isles, part of a Socialist United States of Europe! We are internationalists: Our motto is workers of the world unite! And today we say workers of the world unite for freedom for Mumia!"

Emery took up as well the riots in Tibet and the "free Tibet" protests occurring in connection with the Olympic torch in London and elsewhere, saying these are counterrevolutionary provocations against the Chinese deformed workers state. Trotskyists unconditionally defend China and the other deformed workers states—Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam—against imperialist attack and capitalist restoration. We fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracies. This is counterposed to the view voiced from the platform by Corinna Lotz of A World to Win who denounced China by including it in a list of oppressive "capitalist states". Such anti-communism is typical of the Labourite left who stand with "democratic" British imperialism against the deformed workers states as seen in their support for counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union in 1991-92.

Highlighting our differences with the Labourite reformists, with the May local elections looming Emery called for no vote to Labour mayor Ken Livingstone, the supposed "lesser evil" in the London mayoral contest, who backed the cops including when they shot down Jean Charles de Menezes, and called for crossing RMT picket lines in the Underground; and she noted that the Labour government fueled the racist climate in which the vile Boris Johnson was able to get elected. We called for no vote to Respect's Left List, headed by the SWP's Lindsey German, which acted as a shill for Livingstone calling for giving him a second preference vote. Moreover

continued on page 4

Join the campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Get the facts!

PDC fact sheet pamphlet, *Big Lies in the Service of Legal Lynching* (30p each, £2 for 10) is a detailed refutation of the recent book *Murdered by Mumia* by right-wing journalist Michael Smerconish and Maureen Faulkner, whose lying tract is a rallying cry not only to execute Mumia but for the death penalty itself.



Funds are urgently needed for legal defence!

Make a contribution today, payable to Partisan Defence Committee. Write "Jamal legal defence" on the back of the cheque and mail to the address below. Such contributions as well as collections at PDC or other events for Mumia's legal defence are receipted and transferred in full to the National Lawyers Guild Foundation account in New York as has been designated by Mumia's lawyer for this purpose.

Organise protest! Pass motions in your unions, campus, community and religious organisations demanding Mumia's freedom. Get your union or organisation to make a contribution and join rallies and protests for Mumia. Publicise Mumia's case in your union or organisation's newsletter.

Spread the word! Distribute the *Workers Hammer* supplement, "Freedom for Mumia Abu-Jamal!" (July 2007), containing reports and speeches from the May 2007 rally in London, £1 per bundle of 10. Order from/make payable to: Spartacist Publications, PO Box 42886, London N19 5WY.

Order the PDC pamphlet *The Fight to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal—Mumia is Innocent!*, detailing the political basis of the state vendetta against Mumia and the explosive evidence of his innocence. It is available for 70p. Get the PDC badge: "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" £1 each. Order the DVD made by the PDC, *From Death Row, This is Mumia Abu-Jamal*, £2 each.

Order from, make cheques payable to Partisan Defence Committee, BCM Box 4986, London WC1N 3XX.

Contact the Partisan Defence Committee

partisandefence@yahoo.co.uk • Telephone: 020 7281 5504 • www.partisandefence.org

Mumia...

(Continued from page 3)

Respect is not even nominally a working-class organisation but a cross-class coalition, which precludes Marxists extending it critical support in elections.

Emery also took up the so-called International Bolshevik Tendency (BT), an organisation marked by utter *contempt* for the fight against racist oppression everywhere including in the US. The BT has distinguished itself in seeking to be the microbe that poisons the trade-union centred mass protest necessary to free Mumia. Insofar as they have become involved in Mumia's case, it has been to conciliate the reformists' calls for a "new trial" while attacking the PDC and SL as "sectarian" for our opposition to the reformists' strategy of reliance on the capitalist state. Reformists in Britain such as the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Socialist Party wilfully ignored our united-front protests and responded with a deafening silence to the March ruling that upheld Mumia's conviction. This is in contrast to their gushing support to prison guards during their "strike" last year.

For its part the BT in London refused to endorse the PDC-initiated demonstration while trying to sabotage it by maintaining a pretence that they were organising a demonstration at the same time and place and on the same slogans. On 17 April the PDC emailed the BT saying, "In the interests of fighting for Mumia's freedom, we think it is obvious that there should be *one* demonstration." The BT's "mobilising" of course existed only in virtual reality and in the end they brought out some half-dozen — mainly themselves — to the protest initiated by the PDC. The BT also promoted a Potemkin-village protest in Dublin that featured a speaker from the anarchist Workers Solidarity Movement who questioned Mumia's innocence without a peep in response from the BT.

At the London protest, Emery pointed to the BT's dubious history on the question of the struggle against black oppression:

"In 1985 the Philly cops bombed the MOVE commune and incinerated an entire black neighbourhood killing eleven people including five children. The Spartacist League in the US was almost unique on the left, raising a huge outcry of protest. The BT, like most of the left, remained silent. That is until we organised a memorial meeting for the victims of the MOVE commune — the survivors. [The BT] attacked the Spartacist League for not making a polemic against MOVE philosophy the centre of a memorial meeting for those who survived the government's incineration of this black neighbourhood.

"At the height of the mass protests internationally that stayed Mumia's execution

in 1995, they provided ammunition to none other than the *Wall Street Journal* which retailed the Bolshevik Tendency's slanders of the Spartacist League as a 'deranged cult', to smear the efforts of the PDC and others on Mumia's behalf. This is an organisation that is not to be taken at its word."

When the SL launched a series of trade union/black mobilisations to stop the Klan and Nazis in major US cities in the early to mid 1980s, the BT denounced us for abandoning trade-union work in favour of "community organising". We can only guess why an organisation that cares nothing about black oppression would get involved in Mumia's case. What we do know is that the BT — an organisation led by the twisted sociopath Bill Logan, who was expelled from our tendency in 1979 for crimes "against communist morality and its substrate elementary human decency" — has always pursued an unnatural and hostile obsession with our organisation.

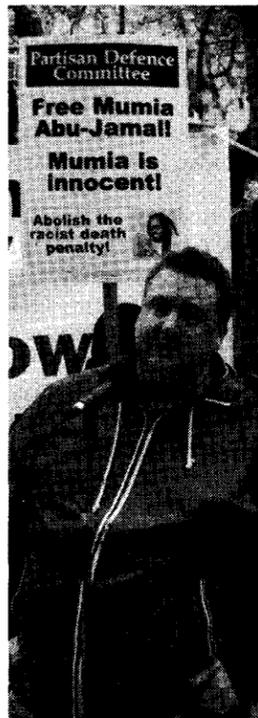
Reformists demobilised a mass movement — rebuild the movement for Mumia!

Our fight has been and continues to be to spark mass protest, centred on the power of the organised working class, demanding Mumia's freedom. But that class-struggle perspective and understanding of the capitalist state — including that for class-war prisoners such as Mumia, there is no justice in the capitalist courts — is denigrated by many of those who claim to be fighting for Mumia internationally. What was once a mass movement in the streets for Mumia's freedom was demobilised by the reformist organisations behind the various committees internationally active around Mumia's case, who have pumped out illusions in the very courts which have kept Mumia caged on death row for 26 years. This includes the SWP in Britain, which briefly took up Mumia's case in 1999-2000, on the basis of calling for a "new trial". This strategy of reliance on the capitalist state is based on illusions in the courts and "justice" system that framed and incarcerated Mumia and has repeatedly demonstrated its determination to kill this innocent man. Our fight to free Mumia is integrally connected to our struggle to mobilise the working class and oppressed to fight in their own interests to overthrow capitalism.

As Marxists, we oppose the death penalty on principle, including in the deformed workers states such as China. In the US the death penalty is the legacy of chattel slavery on which the country was founded; it is the lynch rope made legal. The fight for Mumia and to abolish the racist death penalty is part of the fight for black liberation and the broader fight for socialist revolution. The death penalty is the ultimate weapon of state terror, in the US upheld by the two main parties of racist capitalism, Democratic and Republican, and most bourgeois politi-

cians including Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama. Against illusions in Obama, widespread among youth and minorities in the US, SL speaker Reuben Samuels said at the Oakland protest:

"Democratic front-runner Barack Obama confronts race to *take race off* the agenda in the service of flag-waving national unity



Workers Hammer photos



London united-front protest speakers. Clockwise: Sista Mawasi of Afrikan Liberation Day Organising Committee; Steve Hedley and Dean O'Hanlon of RMT.

around the so-called 'war on terrorism', war on Muslims, war on Palestinians. Oh yes, Obama claims the civil rights movement brought us 90 per cent of the way to racial equality. But the courageous foot soldiers of that era did not stand up to Klan and cop terror in order to see their hopes and dreams washed away in the racist travesty of post-Katrina New Orleans, or after they protested Jim Crow justice in Jena, to see lynch ropes hanging from the halls of Columbia University to the docks of LA."

Beginning over 15 years ago, PDC attorneys Rachel Wolkenstein and Jon Piper, who were then part of Mumia's legal defence team, uncovered massive evidence of Mumia's innocence. This includes witness William Singletary, who said Mumia was not the shooter; witnesses Veronica Jones and Pamela Jenkins, who testified that the prosecution witnesses were coerced into lying; forensic evidence that proved the prosecution's story of the shooting was totally fabricated; and the sworn confession of Arnold Beverly that he, not Mumia, shot and killed Police Officer Daniel Faulkner. Mumia's own declaration in 2001 stated, "I did not shoot Police Officer Daniel Faulkner. I had nothing to do with the killing of Officer Faulkner. I am innocent." Yet the Court of Appeals decision repeats every single lie of the cops and the prosecutor.

As more and more evidence of Mumia's innocence was brought out — powerful weaponry in the fight to mobilise mass protest — the liberals and

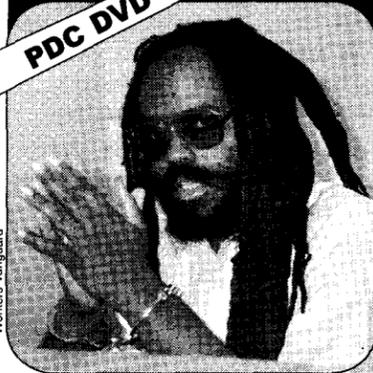
reformists mobilised around the call for a "new trial", encapsulating their programme of the reformability of the capitalist state and its courts, and carrying the implication that Mumia's innocence is questionable. In contrast to the liberal strategy of reliance on the capitalist state, an 8 April "Open Letter to Fighters for Mumia's Freedom" by the PDC in the US noted that the court ruling made it so clear that Mumia cannot get justice in the capitalist courts that "even those who have mobilized for many years on the basis that Mumia could get a 'new, fair trial' now proclaim that there should be no illusions in the American injustice system." The open letter also stated:

"The call for a 'new trial' is based on a political program of reliance on the capitalist class, its politicians and courts to afford justice to fighters for the

oppressed. Nobody ever called for a 'new trial' for Angela Davis, Huey Newton or Nelson Mandela. Had the political counterposition between our call to 'Free Mumia' and those advocating a 'new trial' been openly debated over the past decade, the movement for Mumia today would have been stronger and firmly based on the need to mobilize to free this innocent man."

The battle to free Mumia is at a critical juncture. To rekindle mass international protest, which in 1995 stayed the hand of the executioner then poised to carry out the death sentence, requires politically taking on and defeating those preaching faith in the capitalist courts. The campaign for Mumia must make a leap from the hundreds mobilised in protest after the court ruling to *hundreds of thousands* in every corner of the globe demanding Mumia's freedom. What is vital now is to turn the endorsements and statements of support for Mumia from the international trade union movement into workers actions. As PDC counsel Rachel Wolkenstein underlined at the Mexico City united-front protest: "The power to make the courts yield, the power to set Mumia free rests in the international, multiracial, multiethnic working class that can stop production, transport and communication!... This power must be used to fight for Mumia, for all class-war prisoners, as part of turning economic struggles of the working people into political struggles leading to socialist revolutions around the globe." ■

PDC DVD



PDC film showing

From Death Row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal

5 pm, Saturday 5 July 2008

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Northern Ireland:

Socialist Party champions former H-Block warden turned security guard!

Dublin
26 May 2008

Dear *Workers Hammer*,

Over the last few months a number of articles have appeared in the newspapers of both Irish and British reformist organisations about a hunger strike by “airport workers” in a legal battle against the leadership of UNITE, the trade union that organised them. The articles describe how these “workers” have been betrayed by the union leadership, and now face legal bills arising from the period when they were being organised into the union. This all sounds like the sort of fights workers have faced time and time again. However, it is only further on into the articles that the reader finds out these are not “workers” but security guards from Belfast airport demanding the union pay their £70,000 legal bills. Security guards are not workers but hired company thugs! It is an outrage that UNITE was organising these thugs in the first place. It would also be an outrage to use genuine workers’ union dues to pay their bills!

The most vocal defenders of these security guards in their battle against UNITE is Peter Taaffe’s Socialist Party. The Socialist Party has long proclaimed these guards “workers”, in fact it played a central role in organising them into the trade union. To add insult to injury, these reformists are now calling on trade unionists around the world to support the bosses’ hired thugs. Knowing full well that security guards are not necessarily popular with workers, they have been circulating a petition which simply refers to them as “workers” and “shop stewards”, omitting what they really did for a job. Lying and hiding basic truths is nothing new to social democrats like the Socialist Party, who are committed to trying to convince workers that the capitalist state can be made to act in their interests.

Even more disgusting, they and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), have also completely disappeared the fact that, prior to patrolling Belfast airport, one of these “workers” was a prison warden at the infamous H-Block/Maze prison! According to the *Belfast Telegraph*, Madan Gupta was for years part of the murderous regime that beat and tortured Republicans. He was an overseer during the Hunger Strike in 1981! By championing such thugs, the Socialist Party and SWP are spitting on the memory of heroic men like Bobby Sands and the nine others who died on hunger strike that year.

The Socialist Party’s support to security guards is of a piece with their notion that cops and prison guards are part of the workers movement. This includes elements of the Northern Irish security apparatus such as H-Block prison wardens. As Marxists we have a duty to expose and politically combat these cowardly frauds. This is part of the struggle to achieve clarity in the workers movement, in particular on the nature of the capitalist state, which at its core consists of cops, prisons and

courts. Prison guards and cops in capitalist countries are not workers, but the hired thugs of the capitalist state. The state is not some neutral arbiter above all classes, as the reformists would like

supported both by the majority of Catholics and many Protestants, erupted in 1968 demanding an end to the daily discrimination of the Catholic minority, the Orange state and their

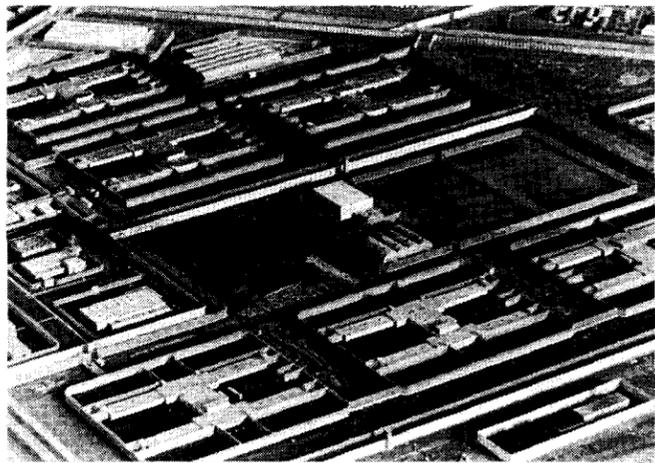
Security guards out of the unions!

to portray it, but simply the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Cops and security guards are used against workers during class struggle, beating pickets and protecting scabs. Indeed, around the world airport security is at the very front-line of the imperialists’ ongoing “war on terror” targeting, in particular, Muslims. As usual, the Socialist Party cares little for the plight of the besieged Asian communities in Britain or the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland, seeking

Loyalist terror groups responded with increasing violence. By 1969 the British government decided to “stabilise” the situation by pouring in thousands of imperialist troops onto the streets of Belfast and Derry. Soon, the army and the RUC were filling internment camps with hundreds of “suspected Republicans” without even the façade of a trial. Innocent civilians were gunned down on the streets—on one day alone paratroopers murdered thirteen in

was the gruesome message that Thatcher’s government sent to the world when it provoked the Hunger Strikes in 1981. After years of protests against the brutal and demeaning regime under vicious wardens, Republican prisoners led by Bobby Sands insisted on regaining the status of political prisoners, as indeed they plainly were, including the simple rights to wear their own civilian clothes and to organise educational pursuits. The British state saw an opportunity to provoke the threatened hunger strike. It not only refused to listen to the demands, calling Bobby Sands and the others “common criminals” but began renegeing on earlier agreements. Thatcher looked on gleefully as Bobby Sands, aged 27, and the others suffered slow, painful deaths.

At the height of the hunger strike, Sands was elected to the House of Commons and, fellow hunger striker,



Long Kesh/the Maze prison (top), British imperialism’s notorious torture camp in Northern Ireland where Bobby Sands (on right of picture) died on hunger strike in 1981. Right: London, June 1981: Spartacist contingent in London demands: smash Britain’s torture camps, troops out now!



instead to rally the working class to the defence of the very cops, security and prison guards that are used to beat, torture and imprison them.

There are few places in the Western world where the precise nature of the state and its “special bodies of armed men” is clearer than in Northern Ireland. Since its inception in 1921 as an Orange statelet, the local capitalist class and their British imperialist masters in London maintained their rule through naked anti-Catholic terror. The heavily armed RUC and “B-special” auxiliaries tortured and murdered with impunity, in particular targeting Republicans or anybody that dared question Orange rule. When a mass civil rights movement,

Derry, the infamous Bloody Sunday massacre in 1972.

In contrast to the reformists, the ruling capitalist class makes no apologies for its state and the actions it takes to defend it. To this day, the British ruling class has refused to admit that the troops murdered innocent civilians on Bloody Sunday. The fact that the slaughter of the unarmed civilians is on film, and dozens of eye witnesses have testified, is irrelevant to the arrogant imperial masters. Their message to the population is quite clear: we rule! This is the same message sent out when cops executed Jean Charles de Menezes in July 2005 in London, and repeated in every denial of any wrong doing. And it

Kieran Doherty to the Dail [Irish Parliament] as part of mass protests against the system slowly killing them. Both the British and Irish states quickly introduced new laws banning prisoners from running for election—making it clear to all that bourgeois “democracy” is nothing more than a veneer. A veneer that the likes of the Socialist Party hold in the highest of regard.

Because reformists hold that the capitalist state can change its spots and that socialism can be achieved without any need for a workers revolution, ie the smashing of the capitalist state and the need to establish a workers state, they must deny the very class nature of this

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Thirty years...

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repudiated Trotskyism. Meanwhile the centrist USec pursued one after another substitute for a conscious Trotskyist vanguard, adapting to, rather than combating, prevailing petty-bourgeois consciousness and frittering away a generation of would-be Marxist revolutionaries. In the late 1970s, along with the rest of the fake-Trotskyists, the USec embraced the imperialist anti-Soviet crusade for "democracy" and "human rights" led by US president Jimmy Carter.

The Russian Question point blank

The Soviet Red Army intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 against the woman-hating, anti-communist Islamic reactionaries of the *mujahedin* posed the Russian Question point blank and was an acid test for the left internationally. The imperialists massively ratcheted up their drive to war against the USSR and under the pressure of Cold War II, groups like the USec and the WSL howled with the imperialist wolves, giving the lie to their formal claims to Soviet-defencism.

The correctness of the TF's struggle for the Trotskyist programme of the Spartacist tendency and its rejection of the Labourite politics of the British fake left is shown in the subsequent history of those groups, particularly under the impact of Cold War II. They supported every opponent of the Soviet Union, particularly Polish Solidarność, the spearhead of capitalist counterrevolution in Eastern Europe. In the early 1980s the WSL and the USec's British affiliate, the International Marxist Group pursued Pabloite "entry" work in the Labour Party. Like all Labourite pseudo-Trotskyists they supported Boris Yeltsin's counterrevolution in Moscow in 1991-92, a defeat of historic proportions for the working masses of the world. Today, the reformist left cheers on the CIA-backed Dalai Lama and the "Free Tibet" movement against the Chinese deformed workers state. The erstwhile IMG and WSL eventually merged and are now known as the International Socialist Group which operates inside George Galloway's Respect coalition, a popular-frontist alliance with Muslim politicians that makes no pretence to being a working-class formation and has renounced socialism, secularism and even the abolition of the monarchy!

The Spartacist tendency uniquely carried out Trotsky's injunction to his supporters, to stand on the last barricades in defence of the USSR against capitalist counterrevolution. We said "Hail Red Army!" in Afghanistan and "Extend the gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples!" We fought with all our might to defend the workers states, notably through our intervention in the unfolding political revolution in East Germany in 1989-90 and later fighting counter-revolution in the USSR itself. We continue to stand for the unconditional military defence of the remaining deformed workers states — China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam — against imperialism and internal counterrevolution, and for proletarian political revolution, as an integral part of our struggle to reforge the Fourth International which alone can lead the workers and oppressed to new October revolutions.

In defence of the revolutionary programme

Declaration of the Trotskyist Faction

"On the most general level the Belgian events teach that the prime necessity is to build a revolutionary cadre. This task cannot be evaded by any consideration of immediate tactical success or to win approval from centrists of other tendencies. It cannot begin if major theoretical questions are not brought forward for discussion or if efforts are made to form combinations in which principled questions are put to one side. It cannot begin by support for centrist 'personalities' or the establishment of relationships which involve concessions on principle."

— *The World Prospect for Socialism*, resolution of Socialist Labour League, 1961

"We are told by the comrades that we did not take up the IMG adequately at the [second CDLM] conference. That we should have made a clear statement on their role as a left cover for the Stalinists. Such a course of action would have been a disaster. It would have been certain to drive the IMG out of the CDLM.... Had we done that [driven the IMG out of the CDLM] the possibilities we have now in Scotland would have been out of the question. Had the platform or the organising committee made such a statement the Scottish people would have walked out with Grogan and Pennington convinced that we were sectarians."

— Comrade Thornett's reply to "The WSL and the Governmental Crisis", *Internal Bulletin* 21, p 7

For the International Committee's struggle against Pabloism

(1) *The International Committee* — In this epoch of capitalist decay the only hope for humanity is the ability of the international working class led by a Leninist party to make a socialist revolution. This was the political basis of the International Committee's fight against the liquidationist Pabloist tendency, both in 1951-53 and at the time of "reunification" in 1963. Any revolutionary organisation today must base itself upon this initial fight, despite that fight's flaws and shortcomings. Arguing against the idea that Stalinist parties or petit-bourgeois nationalists could make the socialist revolution, the IC clearly stood for the building of Trotskyist parties in every country, for the central role of the working class in the colonial revolution and for the programme of political revolution in the Soviet Union and the deformed workers' states.

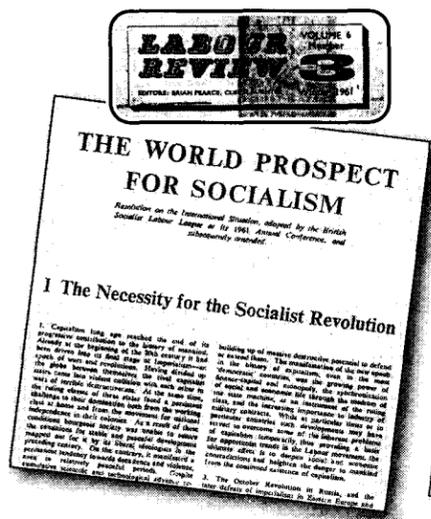
The IC was flawed by the delayed and incomplete nature of the fight against Pablo and by its failure to establish an international democratic-centralist structure. These inadequacies, coupled with isolation in imperialist America during the Cold War period, prepared the way for the defection of the initially dominant section, the Socialist Workers Party, in 1963. Nevertheless the IC maintained an essentially correct stand against Pabloism during the fifties and early sixties, exemplified by the SLL's international resolution of 1961, *The World Prospect for Socialism*, which reaffirmed that:

"... Any retreat from the strategy of political independence of the working class and the construction of revolutionary parties will take on the significance of a world-

historical blunder on the part of the Trotskyist movement."

(2) *Cuba* — The correct programmatic stance of the IC lacked a firm theoretical underpinning — a consequence of the hasty and in some respects superficial fight carried out against Pablo in 1953. This weakness was graphically revealed in the IC's inability to assess correctly the Cuban revolution.

The Pabloites, joined by the American



deformed workers' state. Essentially similar conditions had produced the Chinese and Yugoslav deformed workers' states after the Second World War and were subsequently to result in the Indo-Chinese deformed workers' states. While insurgent petit-bourgeois guerrilla forces can in certain situations successfully overturn capitalist property relations they are inherently incapable of establishing a revolutionary workers' state — that is a workers' state in which the class-conscious proletariat holds political power — precisely because the guerrilla strategy relegates the proletariat to an essentially passive role. The workers' states which come into being in these circumstances are necessarily deformed from their inception by the rule of a bureaucratic caste, originally centering on the guerrilla leaders. The active intervention of the working class, led by a Trotskyist party, is required to overthrow the bureaucracy and establish workers' democracy through political revolution, allowing the fight for socialism to be carried forward.

(Some members of the WSL look to some revised variant of Mandel/Wohl-



Documents of struggle for the Trotskyist programme: International Committee's *The World Prospect for Socialism* (1961) and *Spartacist* article "Genesis of Pabloism" (1972).

SWP, prostrated themselves before Castro and described the Cuban regime as a healthy workers' state. By maintaining that Cuba remained capitalist after the expropriations of 1961, the SLL avoided capitulation to the Cuban leadership's immense popularity among petit-bourgeois radicals but only at the expense of denying reality — ie, denying that a deformed workers' state had been established in Cuba. The SLL's refusal to make a correct characterisation was at bottom Pabloism afraid of itself. The SLL accepted the Pabloites' false premise that to say Cuba was a workers' state (even if deformed) was necessarily to say that Castro was indeed a genuine, if only "instinctive", Marxist. This laid the basis for the Healy leadership's subsequent Pabloite capitulation to the Stalinist bureaucracies of China and Vietnam — undeniably (deformed) workers' states.

At this time only the Revolutionary Tendency in the American SWP had the correct position on the Cuban question: that the class character of the regime established by the petit-bourgeois guerrillaists was, from the time of its consolidation in mid-1961, that of a deformed workers' state. As they pointed out at the time, the destruction of the Batista state apparatus by Castro's petit-bourgeois guerrilla forces, the feebleness of the domestic bourgeoisie and the weakness of the organised proletariat as a contender for power in its own right together produced a situation where, when US imperialist hostility forced the Castro regime to look to the Soviet Union for material assistance, the guerrillaists were able to establish a

forth's theory of "structural assimilation" as an alternative explanation of the guerrilla-derived workers' states, including Cuba. This pretentious "theory" has not only the disadvantage of falsely posing the whole question solely in terms of the military might of the Soviet Union, but it is also profoundly reformist in methodology: the new guerrilla-initiated states are held to be originally bourgeois, and to be transformed into deformed workers' states through a *peaceful process of reforms*.)

(3) *Pabloism undefeated* — The incomplete character and ultimate failure of the IC's opposition to Pablo and his followers is testified to by the subsequent convergence of the SWP with the International Secretariat forces, the continued existence and growth of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" and the rapprochement between the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste of France and the United Secretariat. Only by deepening and making consistent the IC's assault on Pabloism will it be possible to destroy politically the United Secretariat and thus lay the basis for the recreation of the Fourth International.

The degeneration of the IC and the development of the WSL

(4) *Programmatic degeneration* — Marxists must take the history of their own movement seriously. In the case of the WSL this means above all a critical assessment of the history of the IC, and particularly of the SLL/WRP. However, thus far the WSL leadership has dealt with the question of the date

and character of the SLL/WRP's qualitative degeneration in the most haphazard and confused fashion. In the proposed submission to the XIth World Congress of the United Secretariat, "The Poisoned Well", the leadership suggests that the SLL abandoned the Transitional Programme in 1971, but that in any case this programmatic question is subordinate to the question of the later loss of "precious worker cadres". Similarly *The Battle for Trotskyism* suggests that the expulsion of the WSL comrades at the end of 1974 marked the point of qualitative degeneration in the SLL/WRP. Yet when the WRP's *Workers Press* collapsed in early 1976 it was called a "savage" "blow to Trotskyism" (*Socialist Press* 28) so perhaps there was no qualitative degeneration at all! To straighten out this mish-mash we must recognise that the question of programme is central to our characterisation of a political tendency.

The flaws in the IC's formal defence of Trotskyism crystallised into a qualitative revision of programme in 1966-67. During this period the SLL, the dominant section of the IC, adopted an approach which was indistinguishable from the Pabloite revisionism that the IC had originally been formed to fight. On a number of decisive questions *the SLL began to look to forces other than the proletariat under Trotskyist leadership as the revolutionary "vanguard"*.

(a) *Stalinism*—The SLL's growing softness on Stalinism was consolidated into blatant tail-ending of the Vietnamese NLF leadership and the Chinese Red Guards. The apologetics for Vietnamese Stalinism seen in the WRP's press in 1975 were presaged almost a decade earlier by a posture of first silence on, and later uncritical support for, the NLF. According to M Banda, writing in the *Fourth International* of February 1968:

"[Vietnam] demonstrates the transcendental power and resilience of a *protracted people's war* led and organised by a party based on the working class and the poor peasantry and inspired by the example of the October revolution....

"It is indisputably true to say that, on the basis of the Vietnam experience, guns combined with the courage and endurance of individual guerrillas would have meant little or nothing if Ho Chi Minh and the other leaders were unable to analyse the principal and secondary contradictions within Vietnam as well as between Vietnam and imperialism and on that basis outline a strategy for the conquest of power." (emphasis in original)

Similarly, the SLL enthusiastically took sides in the bureaucratic infighting of the Chinese "Cultural Revolution", praising the Red Guards as "those who are fighting to defend the conquests of the Chinese revolution and to extend those conquests" (*Newsletter*, 14 January 1967), and even equating the Maoist youths with

the SLL's own Young Socialists in Britain.

(b) *Arab nationalism*—The SLL's support for Arab nationalism (dressed up as support for something called the "Arab Revolution") betrayed the same approach. The political independence of the working class, and the consequent necessity for the Trotskyist vanguard was abandoned in favour of the "national revolution" and Nasserism:

"Nasserism is progressive insofar as it represents the hopes of millions of down-trodden fellaheen and workers, artisans and professional workers for a better future and a happier one in a united Arab world."

—*Newsletter*, 24 June 1967

This capitulatory policy, which amounted to nothing less than a complete denial of the validity of the strategy of Permanent Revolution for the Arab East, was adopted by the SLL to justify support for the "progressive" Arab bourgeoisies in their 1967 war with Israel—a predatory, inter-capitalist war which resulted from the conflicting territorial ambitions of the Israeli and Arab ruling classes.

(c) *"Make the Lefts Fight"*—This slogan was first advanced by the *Newsletter* on 3 December 1966. The demand was aimed at the left social-democrats, who were called upon to adopt a programme of "socialist policies" (a phrase which could easily be seen to encompass the existing policies of the reformists), and who were put forward as an alternative leadership against the top rightwingers of the Labour Party.

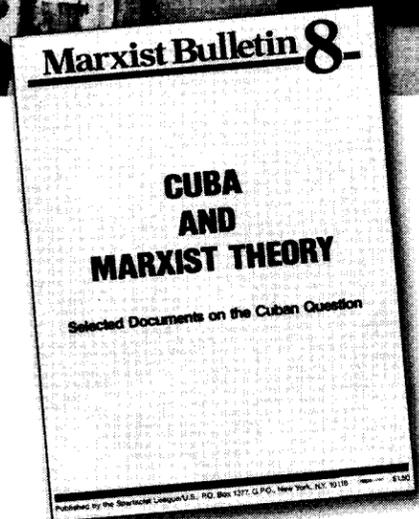
The OCI did not share the SLL's grosser programmatic revisions, but as the passive and subordinate partner of the IC's federated bloc it made no public critique of the SLL's revisions. Since then the OCI has moved markedly to the right, particularly in its capitulation to the "Union of the Left" and its wholesale adaptation to social democracy.

It is clear that the degeneration of the IC predated the factional struggle in the WRP by seven years. What then did the development of the WSL represent?

(5) *Development of the WSL*—In the fight against Healy the group that went on to form the WSL broke partially from the WRP's conception of party-building as simply a matter of meeting recruitment targets and sought to develop policies which could mobilise the working class over basic attacks on living standards and jobs. The mystifications of Healy's "philosophy" were pragmatically abandoned and a stance of openness to questions which the Healyites addressed inadequately, if at all—such as the history of the Fourth International, the development of consistent trade-union work, Ireland, or the oppression of women—was adopted. But without a serious investigation of the origins of the SLL/WRP's degeneration, with nothing approaching a consistent revolutionary programme, nor



Glinn/Magnum



Triumph of Castro's petty-bourgeois rebels (above) led to deformed workers state. Basic documents of Spartacist tendency include analysis of Cuban Revolution (left).

even any real will on the part of the leadership of the WSL to develop such a programme, this initial apparent openness was to have little effect on the organisation's subsequent development.

What *has* been central to the WSL's development though is the trade-union work at Cowley [Oxford car plant]. The rejection of Healy's sectarian ultimatum, which first produced the fight within the WRP, represented a positive response to the WRP's crisis-mongering and maximalism. More importantly, however, this rejection did not signify a willingness to take up a fight for the full Transitional Programme in the unions but in fact signalled a retreat from political confrontation with the existing consciousness of the working class in favour of radical trade unionism. The WSL's break from Healyite maximalism was, in the final analysis, a break towards economism and minimalism.

It is from the worst period of the SLL/WRP, the period following its qualitative degeneration in 1966-67, that the WSL has inherited and developed its central orientation—its programmatic adaptation to the existing consciousness of the masses, and the fraudulent mass work justified by that adaptation. Likewise, the WSL's accommodation to social democracy comes from this period, and even the slogan which most aptly expresses

that accommodation, "Make the Lefts Fight"!

The WSL's opportunist, step-at-a-time interpretation of the Transitional Programme, was developed in part in opposition to the WRP's inconsistent and unserious attitude to trade-union work. But the claim that "programme... begins from the existing state of consciousness...and directs towards the necessary policies" (*Socialist Press* 72) directly contradicts Trotsky's understanding of the nature and role of our programme:

"The program must express the objective tasks of the working class rather than the backwardness of the workers. It must reflect society as it is and not the backwardness of the working class. It is an instrument to overcome and vanquish the backwardness.... We cannot guarantee that the masses will solve the crisis, but we must express the situation as it is, and that is the task of the program."

—Trotsky, *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, 1st edition, p 125, "The Political Backwardness of the American Workers", discussion of 19 May 1938

The leadership's desire to opportunistically short-cut the fight for revolutionary leadership in the working class is demonstrated by the chronic unwillingness to advance in full the basic principles of the Transitional Programme. Two recent examples of the use of such a partial (ie minimal) programme are in the recent Cowley election campaign and in the CDLM—neither of which could be characterised as anything other than left-reformism.

The programme and practice of the WSL

(6) *The Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement*—The CDLM encapsulates the WSL's parochial and opportunist practice. Although it has turned out to be a miserable failure, it was first founded as an ambitious organisational expression of the WSL's aim to get closer to the working class and carry its politics into the trade unions. It therefore deserves the closest scrutiny.

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Pathfinder

ICL stands on heritage of James P Cannon (left) and SWP's fight to defend Trotskyist programme against Pabloite liquidationism. Right: Michel Pablo and Ernest Mandel abandoned Trotskyism in favour of tailing Stalinist, social-democratic and petty-bourgeois nationalist forces.



Le Bolchevik

Thirty years...

(Continued from page 7)

(a) **Programme**—The programme of the CDLM is a programme of minimal trade-union reformism which omits many points that the WSL leadership agrees with formally. The only two clauses which address questions outside of the trade-union area: "For Women's Rights!" and "Stop Racialism!"—were introduced only as a result of pressure from the Pabloites of the IMG and the ICL [International-Communist League, now Alliance for Workers Liberty].

The CDLM programme ignores the vital internationalist obligations of the working class in Britain: there is no reference to Ireland, to South Africa, or to NATO and the EEC (both of which are anti-Soviet, imperialist alliances which we have a duty to fight and expose, a task which is particularly important at this time because of the Carter administration's current "Human Rights" campaign which is designed to garner popular support for the military mobilisation continually underway against the Soviet Union).

The reformism of the CDLM programme lies in its failure to even attempt to connect the daily struggles of workers with the struggle for state power. Thus while the CDLM is for the nationalisation of "genuinely bankrupt" companies, it has nothing to say about the necessity for the working class to expropriate the capitalist class as a whole, in order to lay the basis for a planned economy. There is no call for a workers' government (which for revolutionaries is a call for the dictatorship of the proletariat), nor is there any statement on the need to oust the bureaucracy in the trade unions and replace it with a revolutionary leadership.

The CDLM programme ensures that the political struggle between the revolutionary party and the present inchoate and reformist consciousness of the masses of workers will never occur. This conflict is vitally necessary for the training of a Trotskyist cadre in the trade unions.

(b) **The CDLM Mark II**—The warmed-over version of the CDLM presented in the NC majority's British Perspectives document is designed by the leadership to forestall criticisms of the disastrous organisation it has created by adding a hard, organised *image* to the unprincipled programme and practice of the existing CDLM. Although there is a gesture to the left—mention of international questions that must be taken up by workers in this country—it is clear that in all its essential features the "new" CDLM will closely resemble its discredited reformist predecessor. Already we are told that the new organisation will have "a programmatic answer to the immediate burning questions facing trade unionists and industrial workers"—which for the leadership means another minimum programme.

(c) **Propaganda bloc**—The tactic of the united front has a dual aim: to advance the struggle of the proletariat around elements of our programme, while simultaneously providing an opportunity for the revolutionary vanguard to destroy political formations that are hostile to it. This is achieved through the conclusion of limited agreements with other political tendencies to undertake joint *action* around a particular question while retaining full freedom of criticism. If the reformists and centrists refuse to cooperate with us, this provides an opportunity to expose their unwillingness to fight for the interests of the working class.

It is, however, impermissible for revolutionaries to bloc with centrists or

reformists to produce common propaganda purporting to offer a general political perspective to the working class or a section of workers. The CDLM is such a rotten propaganda bloc, in which the WSL shows no qualms about liquidating itself into a partnership with the IMG and, to a lesser extent, the ICL. This is not surprising: since the programme of the CDLM is not revolutionary, non-revolutionaries like the IMG and ICL have no trouble agreeing with it. The joint intervention at the SWP Rank and File conference, the jointly produced car bulletin and the Scottish CDLM conference have one common implication: that the Pabloites and ourselves do not essentially differ when it comes to the "real" struggle.

by the CDLM, the organising of trade-union groups which include members and sympathisers of the WSL, to be built in *selected* factories and trade unions where our work will have the maximum political impact and which can serve as an *example* of how communists do trade-union work. Such groups should be based on the fundamental demands of the Transitional Programme, culminating in the slogan of a workers' government. Membership in them should be conditional on agreement with this programme and willingness to fight for it under the discipline of the group. Naturally the programme of such groups must be amplified in accordance with the specific conditions in the unions concerned as well as the

lot just as they did the last time he stood.

(c) **Trade-union work at Cowley**—The WSL's roots in the working class are deepest at Cowley, and it is as a result of the work carried out there that the organisation is best known. Victories at Cowley can point the way forward for the class, while mistakes represent real setbacks for at least a section of it. Bearing in mind the pressures towards opportunism and economism which inevitably operate on cadres in the unions, the organisation must exert tightly centralised control over all trade-union work. In particular the work at Cowley must be closely supervised by the National Committee and the day-to-day lessons of our most important area of work must be made accessible



London, November 1980: Spartacists protest H-Block prison hellhole in Northern Ireland (above). We have consistently demanded withdrawal of British Army, butchers of innocent Catholics on Bloody Sunday in 1972 (right).

The opportunist logic of this bloc is produced in Cde Thornett's reply to the document "The WSL and the Governmental Crisis" quoted at the beginning of this document, where he clearly states that he is more concerned about jeopardising the WSL's friendly relations with the Pabloites by appearing "sectarian" than about exposing their revisionist politics. In typical opportunist fashion this snuggling up to the Pabloites was excused by reference to "the possibilities we have now in Scotland", and the argument that *accommodation* to the politics of the IMG would help win over a section of the Scottish Socialist League. But softness towards revisionism never won anyone to revolutionary politics, and sure enough, it did not win the SSL—which is now ensconced within the IMG. Left elements can be broken from the IMG only if we ruthlessly criticise the revisionism of their leadership.

(7) **Trade-union work**—The WSL's trade-union work has no overall national plan and is without clear perspectives. No attempt has been made to concentrate forces in particular factories or unions of importance. In an unconscious way the WSL has turned to work in support of particular strikes as a primary field of activity, without any consideration of what political lessons can be drawn from them, and with no consideration of whether we have the resources to do this work without damaging other fields of work or the training of cadres.

(a) **Trade-union groups on the full Transitional Programme**—We counterpose to the liquidationist perspective of haphazard "mass work", exemplified

political issues of current importance to the working class both nationally and internationally.

(b) **Trade-union election policy**—Despite its ritual obeisance to the Transitional Programme as the programme on which it supposedly bases its trade-union work, the recent election campaign at Cowley was waged around the *real* trade-union programme of the WSL: opposition to corporate bargaining, opposition to participation, advocacy of a sliding scale of wages combined with a call to "kick out the Right Wing". We call for a break from this opportunist practice. Where we stand candidates for election they must present a revolutionary political alternative to the reformists and centrists—they must stand on our full trade-union programme, the Transitional Programme, otherwise we are only campaigning for reformism within the unions. Where we are not able to stand our own candidates for election, we may use the tactic of critical support to vote for a candidate of another political tendency but only if he or she is committed to fighting for something which in a crucial way would represent a gain for the working class. The record of the League to date has been to promiscuously extend its none-too-critical support to various reformist bureaucrats. One outstanding example of this is Bob Wright who campaigns on his record as a proven scab, a loyal enforcer of the Social Contract and an advocate of reactionary chauvinist import controls, but whom the leadership has decided to support in the second round of the forthcoming AUEW [engineering union] bal-

to the whole membership.

(8) **The Labour Party**—The inability to see politics except through the grimy spectacles of the Labour Party is a chronic affliction on the British left. Two opposite but complementary deviations result from this. The economists of the SWP/IS exemplify one pole: the dismissal of parliamentary and governmental events as irrelevant to workers. By confining themselves to militant trade unionism and leaving the reformist leadership of the working class unchallenged, they in fact strengthen the Labour Party's hold on the working class. The *Militant* group represents the other extreme: the subordination of the proletariat's struggles to the pre-ordained necessity to elect a Labour Government (or to keep one in power) and the abandonment of any perspective of politically destroying the Labour Party or of attempting to build a revolutionary party. The strategy of the *Militant* amounts to pressuring the Labour bureaucracy towards "socialism". While it stands to the left of both organisations, the League veers between these twin courses of capitulation. The fundamental impulse is "radical" trade unionism which divorces "trade-union struggles" (for which the minimum programme of the CDLM is sufficient) from "politics"—a sphere worthy of comment in internal discussion or in the pages of *Socialist Press*, but which the leadership really views as the preserve of the "lefts" and members of the Labour Party. The central strategy of the leadership with relation to the existing leaders of the working class is summed up by the phrase "Make the

Lefts Fight". The slogan derives from an ill-formed conception that the Labour Party falls into two quite distinct wings, left and right, seen by the leadership as in some way representing the proletariat and the bourgeoisie respectively. Hence the "critical" support given to the "Lefts". Rather than offering an alternative to the betrayals of the right, the "Make the Lefts Fight" slogan only serves to lend our authority to the "left-wing" credentials of the thoroughly rotten counter-revolutionary parliamentary cretins in the Tribune group and thus serves to tie the political development of the working class to a wing of social democracy.

(9) **The Lib/Lab coalition**—The refusal to counterpose the programme of Marxism to the Labour Party and all currents at present in it (shown in the "Make the Lefts Fight" policy and by the opposition to the WRP standing candidates against Labour in the 1974 General Election) is confirmed by the leadership's policy on the Lib/Lab coalition. The coalition with the Liberals is equivalent to a Popular Front. Labour Party candidates in this period stand as representatives of a *bourgeois* political formation, the coalition, and thus to extend even the most critical support to them is a breach of principle.

With some exceptions, the resurgence of bourgeois coalitionism in Western Europe in recent years has taken place in the *absence* of extra-parliamentary mobilisations on a scale which can produce soviet-type bodies that can be counterposed directly to the class collaboration of the reformist bureaucracies. It is therefore vitally necessary to confront Popular Frontism in the context of parliamentary politics through principled electoral opposition to coalitionism, thereby drawing the class line between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie with the greatest clarity. Only an organisation which is capable of drawing this line can act as a firm pole of opposition in the workers' movement to the class collaboration of coalitionism.

(10) **The oppression of women**—The crisis of proletarian leadership must be resolved through sharp political warfare against all tendencies which would *mislead* the working class. The WSL's abject failure to tackle this job in the Women's Liberation Movement (a failure which derives from the Healyites' economist and male-chauvinist disdain for the struggle against the oppression of women) abandons women who are politicised through their particular oppression in bourgeois society to the leadership of feminists (both openly bourgeois and "socialist"), revisionists and reformists. As Lenin stated in *What is to be Done?*, a revolutionary must seek to be "the tribune of the people, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects" (Lenin, *Collected Works*, volume 5, p 423).

The oppression of women today is rooted in the bourgeois family, an

essential economic and social unit of capitalism. In our intervention in the women's movement we must seek to win the best elements to the understanding that only through proletarian revolution will it be possible to create the material conditions for the replacement of the family and the ending of the oppression of women. We stand for an aggressive intervention into the Women's Liberation Movement against the infinite number of petit-bourgeois utopian "solutions" to the question of women's oppression. Our objective must be to build a *communist women's movement*, based on the Transitional Programme and linked to the revolutionary party through its leading cadre.



Workers Press

(11) **The national question**—We uphold the Leninist position on the national question. Basing ourselves on the fundamental democratic principle of the equality of all nations and peoples, we recognise the right of all nations to self-determination. However, the recognition of this right by no means pre-termines our attitude to every particular national question. In some cases the right of self-determination for nations must be subordinated to other, higher principles—such as the defence of a workers' state. We would not, for example, support the right of a bourgeois-led Ukrainian nationalist movement to separate from the Soviet Union, regardless of popular support. In other cases, for example Scotland, we are for the *right* of self-determination, but call on the Scottish people to exercise that right by choosing to stay in the same state as the other peoples of Britain.

The recognition of the right to self-determination in no way implies support to nationalism, a thoroughly bourgeois ideology completely counterposed to the interests of the proletariat, unable indeed to even accomplish the basic bourgeois democratic tasks which, in this epoch, can only be achieved through proletarian revolution. While we support any anti-imperialist actions of nationalist movements (unless they are merely acting as the instruments of a rival imperialist power) our main task with regard to the nationalist movements of the various oppressed peoples of the world is to separate the working masses from the petit-bourgeois nationalist leaderships. By championing the

right of self-determination, the revolutionary vanguard can counter the attempts of the nationalists to portray the oppressor people as a monolithic whole, thus undermining divisions in the working class along national lines and sharpening the fundamental international conflict in capitalist society—the conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

(12) **Ireland**—A correct approach to the complex national question in Ireland must begin with the recognition of the simple fact that there is no single "Irish nation". The Loyalist Protestant majority in the Six Counties, although not at this point in history itself a nation, is a people separate from the Catholics

Gerry Healy: political bandit. *Spartacist* documented Healyites' sordid history at the time of their demise in 1985.

with whom they share the region. The oppressed minority Catholic grouping is an extension of the Catholic Irish nation which has achieved a deformed and partial self-determination in the Republic of the South. Consequently the slogan of "self-determination for the Irish people as a whole" is either meaningless or is a backhanded way of siding with the nationalism of the Catholics against the Protestants *as a people*. Instead of cutting across the division between the two communities to allow the development of class struggle the slogan merely *exacerbates* the division by counterposing the Northern Catholics to the Protestants (who will resist forced unification arms in hand).

Our attitude to the Protestant working class must be based on the Marxist understanding that their objective interests are counterposed to those of both the Orange bourgeoisie and British imperialism. However this objective contradiction has been suppressed through most of recent Irish history and the Protestant workers have been led to identify with their own masters through the legitimate fear of being forcibly incorporated into a Catholic-dominated united bourgeois Ireland within which they would be an oppressed minority. It is this fear, far more than any material privileges, which has produced the virulent Loyalism of the masses of the Protestant proletariat today. Those who close their eyes to the reality of this key barrier to class consciousness among Protestant workers will be unable to mobilise them as part of a united proletarian

ariat and in effect hand them over, in advance, to their present reactionary Loyalist leadership.

We are against any forced unification of Ireland under a bourgeois regime. Only under the rule of the working class can the conflicting interests of the intermingled communities in the North be resolved in a democratic manner. We are unconditionally opposed to British imperialism's occupation of the North and call for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. We fight against the oppression of the Catholics and support actions of the Catholic nationalists which are aimed against imperialism, or are in genuine self-defence, while opposing sectarian anti-working-class communal terror directed at either population. Only integrated workers' militias built in the course of a united *class* struggle against imperialism and its agents (a struggle which can only be led by a Leninist party) can successfully defeat sectarian terror.

(13) **The state**—On certain key questions the leadership reveals a reformist attitude to the state. This attitude takes the form of promoting the belief that under pressure from the Labour Party, the trade unions or both, the capitalist state can be neutralised or even made to act in the interests of the working class.

(a) **Imperialist arms to South Africa**—Just as a number of tendencies supported sending troops to Northern Ireland in 1969 and in 1974 the American SWP began to advocate sending troops to Boston, the WSL today calls on British imperialism to intervene militarily in South Africa by dispatching arms to the black nationalist forces (*Socialist Press* 37, 41, 44). The illusion that British imperialism administered by a Labour government can be forced to aid the struggles of the black masses is not so far from endorsement of the Labour-Liberal coalition government's proposals to send a "peacekeeping force" to Rhodesia.

(b) **The police**—The NC majority has rejected the Marxist position on the question of the police. By refusing to oppose *on principle* the organisation of police for better pay and conditions and the admission of police "unions" into the TUC, the NC majority leaves the door open for future support to demands for "improved working conditions" for capital's professional thugs and for supporting their "rights" to membership in the workers' organisations. To the NC's apparent hopes of being able to neutralise the police *as part of the state* we counterpose the most basic proposition of revolutionary Marxism—the necessity to smash the repressive apparatus of the bourgeoisie.

(c) **The fascists**—The equivocation of certain leading NC members over the question of Labour Council bans on fascist meetings betrays a similar mentality—that the state under the "control" of the Labour Party can be made to

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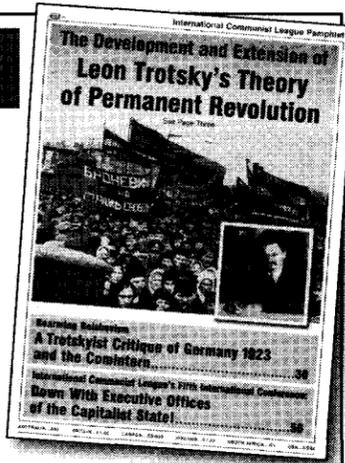
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Thirty years...

(Continued from page 9)

operate as something other than an organ of capitalist class rule.

(14) Programme first—The WSL is in chaos. It has no clear idea of its tasks or direction. The organisation struggles to maintain a weekly paper which is grossly out of proportion to the financial and human resources possessed. The numerical growth of the organisation, which is increasingly touted as the solution to all ills, shows no sign of materialising.

This situation has a political origin—to put it bluntly the movement as yet lacks any programmatic basis for existence as a distinct political tendency. Every political current from Trotskyism to reformism is represented on the NC and among the membership. For too long the leadership has tried to relegate the resolution of outstanding political questions to the background by promoting one scheme after another (the CDLM, the weekly press) each of which in turn was supposed to solve the political problems of the movement through spectacular breakthroughs in mass work. Today the leadership is still unable to address the manifest crisis of the movement with more than routine

of priorities. Consequently it is impossible for the leadership to give importance to the training of members in political struggle. Instead members must be exhorted by the leadership to hide from the political problems by throwing themselves into frenetic “mass” work without any perspectives, and sales of a newspaper without any clear line. It is no wonder the movement is in bad shape.

At this point in its history the WSL is at a crossroads. Only by a determined struggle for programme (and this means in the first place a determined struggle within the movement over political line) is it possible to make any progress at all in a revolutionary direction.

(15) The fetishisation of organisational forms—As a substitute for programme, and for the struggle for programme as the road to an international, there is a distinct tendency in the movement to pose as strategically crucial various specific organisational forms which are supposed to have some inherently revolutionary content, irrespective of the level of class struggle at which they are produced, or the leadership and programme which guide them. With neither a revolutionary programme nor the possibility of becoming real organisations of the masses, the “price committees”, “Councils of



Spartakist

Berlin, January 1990: ICL initiated pro-Soviet mass demonstration in Treptow Park. We fought for political revolution in the East, social revolution in West Germany.

both on holidays and weekdays, during periods of offensive as well as in retreat, in peace as well as in war. The International is not at all a ‘form,’ as flows from the utterly false formulation of the ILP. The International is first of all a *program*, and a system of *strategic, tactical, and organisational* methods that flow from it. By dint of historic circumstances the question of the British councils is deferred for an indeterminate period of time. But the question of the International, as well as the question of national parties, cannot be deferred for a single hour: we have here in essence two sides of one and the same question. Without a Marxist International, national organisations, even the most advanced, are doomed to narrowness, vacillation, and helplessness; the advanced workers are forced to feed upon surrogates for internationalism.”

—Writings of Leon Trotsky [1935-36], 2nd edition, p 146-7

The re-creation of the Fourth International

(16) Party-building and the struggle against centrism—A revolutionary party capable of giving direct leadership to large numbers of workers is impossible without the existence of a firm cadre—a central core of *professional revolutionaries* at all levels of leadership in the party. Given the destruction of the Fourth International by Pabloism the concrete job that we have is the construction of such a cadre—the nucleus of a vanguard party—which must be trained through an all-round political conflict with hostile political tendencies, upholding the party’s reason for existence—the programme for power. The further development of theory and programme, indeed, comes out of this political struggle.

The approach of the WSL leadership directs the membership away from conflict with our immediate competitors of

the centrist and revisionist groups and continually threatens the liquidation of our cadre through their chaotic and fraudulent “agitational” perspectives.

(a) Regroupment—Without a determined fight to politically destroy one’s opponents it is impossible to establish an organisation that is a real pole in the political life of the workers’ movement. In this struggle we will win individuals and groups from other tendencies to the revolutionary programme, resulting in splits among our enemies and crucial additions to our forces. It is always the case that a revolutionary organisation gathers cadre through winning leftward-moving tendencies in other political parties, in the fight for the Marxist programme.

Revolutionaries today, like the Left Oppositionists of the 30’s, will not assemble their initial forces primarily through a strategy of direct recruitment of trade-union militants whom we have been able to lead in struggle, but through a central emphasis on the struggle to win subjectively revolutionary elements in the workers’ movement through the power of our ideas, of our programme.

(b) Priorities—No small organisation can perform all the possible tasks it faces, or work in all arenas open to it, so it must be through careful delineation of priorities that a responsible leadership develops perspectives appropriate to the organisation. As Cannon said:

“...the adoption of a correct political program...alone does not guarantee victory. ...the group [must] decide correctly what shall be the nature of its activities, and what tasks it shall set itself, given the size and capacity of the group, the period of the development of the class struggle, the relation of forces in the political movement, and so on.”

—The History of American Trotskyism, p 80



Members of Afghan women’s militia fought alongside Red Army. Spartacist Britain no 18, February 1980.

organisational measures—voluntaristic exhortations to the membership to work harder, to “follow through” interventions, sell more papers and recruit more raw contacts. All these are not enough; neither is it enough for the leadership to prate about “method” by which it means getting close to the mass movement of the working class, adopting a programmatically vague attitude of generalised hostility to the trade-union bureaucracy and showing more thoroughness in political work.

A disciplined combat party of professional revolutionaries can only be forged on the basis of agreement on programme. Conversely any political organisation which lacks a clear and coherent programme must inevitably take on the characteristics of a swamp. The primary reason that the leadership has not been able to create a politically hardened cadre nor even lay out a clear set of priorities for the organisation is that it is itself unclear and divided over key political questions. This is reflected in *Socialist Press* where virtually anything that is handed in gets printed and readers can frequently see counterposed political positions presented in different articles on the same question. Somehow, dealing with political questions or elaborating programmatic positions is always shoved to the bottom of the list

Action”, or whatever, which the WSL would agitate for today can be nothing better than a diversion in the course of the class struggle and can have nothing to do with the real organs of dual power that will be built in the coming turmoil of pre-revolutionary class struggle. Trotsky’s dissection of some ILP positions is appropriate. He starts by quoting their erroneous theses:

“...‘The workers’ councils will arise in their final form in the actual revolutionary crisis, but the party must *consistently prepare for their organization*’ [Trotsky’s italics]. Keeping this in mind, let us compare the attitude of the ILP toward the future councils with its own attitude toward the future International... ‘the form which the reconstructed International will take will depend upon historic events and the actual development of the working class struggle.’ On this ground the ILP draws the conclusion that the question of the International is purely ‘theoretical,’ i.e., in the language of empiricists, unreal....

“...The theses turn the actual tasks of the party upside down. The councils represent an *organizational form*, and only a *form*. There is no way of ‘preparing for’ councils except by means of a correct revolutionary policy applied in all spheres of the working class movement: there is no special, specific ‘preparation for’ councils. It is entirely otherwise with the International. While the councils can arise only on the condition that there is a revolutionary ferment among the many-millioned masses, the International is always necessary:

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(17) *Building an international tendency*—Inevitably the planlessness and inconsistency of the WSL's work in Britain is accompanied by a parochial and light-minded attitude to the central task of Trotskyists today: the re-creation of the Fourth International.

Unable to build an anti-revisionist, democratic centralist international tendency on the basis of a clear programmatic attitude to the basic tasks of revolutionaries in this epoch and the decisive issues of the class struggle internationally (opposition to popular frontism, defence of the deformed workers' states, political struggle against nationalism and the necessity to re-create the Fourth International), the central leadership has led the WSL into a world of rotten blocs, cover-ups, diplomacy and intrigue—masquerading as the fight to “reconstruct” the Fourth International. The struggle for programme has been discounted in the WSL's very limited international work.

(a) *The WSL's international relations*—The WSL, the CIL [Greece] and the SL(DC) [US] are grouped together by a common past in the IC and a shared enthusiasm for liquidationist “mass work”. The fact that the CIL are Pabloites and the SL(DC) are lower-than-reformist wretches who stand in the tradition of one Albert Weisbord against Cannon and Trotsky has not in the least disturbed the tranquillity of this cozy non-aggression pact. *There has been no serious accounting whatsoever of the programme and record of these organisations.* The only work carried out abroad by the WSL, in Turkey, has in the past been characterised by a total lack of information or discussion with the WSL. The leadership document on the Turkish work

shows it to be opportunist, adventurist, Bundist and in opposition to the leadership's stated desire to build a democratic centralist international tendency.

(b) *The United Secretariat*—The current focus of the leadership's international attentions is the Pabloite United Secretariat. Here in Britain a taste has been acquired for cozying up to the IMG, exemplified by the sweaty exertions to obtain its endorsement for the third CDLM conference.

While the present uneven and semi-conscious course towards unity with the United Secretariat runs counter to the WSL's formally anti-Pabloite stance, in reality there is no good political reason why the leadership should not be able to find itself a home in the all-encompassing swamp which is the United Secretariat. The entire thrust of the document “The Poisoned Well” despite the promised amendments is to attempt to straighten out what the leadership sees as “methodological” weaknesses of the thoroughly reformist American SWP so as to better equip it for the fight against the centrist ex-International Majority Tendency wing. If agreement can be reached on the uncontentious theses at the end of the document, then the “reunification” (sic) discussions can begin. *The EC of the WSL is taking the organisation down the road to liquidation into the United Secretariat.*

Until the political line of the present document has been accepted and assimilated and the organisation redirected towards a correct revolutionary perspective, we strenuously oppose any intervention into the XIth World Congress of the United Secretariat. Similarly we call for a public break with the CIL and SL(DC) and a thor-

ough public critique of their bankrupt positions.

In contrast to the air of urgency surrounding the reply to the IMG's regroupment letter the EC took it upon itself to refuse point blank any discussion with the Pabloite ICL which is not part of the United Secretariat.

(c) *The Spartacists*—The international Spartacist tendency, the only organisation to reply to the document “Fourth International: Problems and Tasks”, has—more than a year-and-a-half later—not yet been accorded an answer. At the last WSL conference a now-buried amendment was passed, recognising the principled position of the Revolutionary Tendency (the predecessor of the Spartacist tendency) in the American SWP in the early sixties. In its fifteen years of independent existence since then the Spartacists have proved their seriousness and have, to our knowledge, committed no betrayals of principle. It is urgent that we seek to test out this anti-Pabloite tendency through a process of discussions, which must explore the possibilities for reaching programmatic agreement and moving towards fusion.

(18) *The re-creation of the Fourth International*—The re-creation of the Fourth International means the establishment of Trotskyism as the political tendency with unique authority in the international proletariat as *the* revolutionary alternative to the Social Democratic and Stalinist reformists.

The central obstacle to this is the United Secretariat, whose size, geographical spread and verbal “Trotskyism” give it a significance in the workers' movement internationally which can only be done away with through its political defeat and organi-

sational destruction. The Fourth International will be re-built not by making friendly overtures to the Pabloites, not by passing around them and not by ignoring them but only through implacable aggressive opposition to both wings of the United Secretariat.

Only a hardened Leninist cadre organisation, determined to fight for its programme “against the stream” will be capable of resolving the crisis of leadership of the working class by triumphing over the welter of treacherous centrist and reformist misleaders whose influence today constitutes the most important obstacle to proletarian revolution internationally. Those who capitulate to the Labourite illusions of the British working class; who yearn for “détente” with the Pabloite revisionists; who seek to subordinate questions of programme and principle to the petty, organisational chicanery of the “mass method” will never be able to forge the nucleus of the future World Party of Socialist Revolution. We must set ourselves the task of building that party!

“Program first! ‘Mass paper’? Revolutionary action? Regroupment? Communes everywhere?... Very well, very well.... But program first! Your political passports, please, gentlemen! And not false ones, if you please—*real ones!* If you don't have any, then pipe down!”

—Trotsky, *The Crisis of the French Section* [1935-36], p 119, ellipses in original

Alastair Green (Birmingham)
Joe Quigley (Manchester)
Alan Holford (Birmingham)
Jim Short (West London)
16 January 1978

—reprinted from [WSL] Pre-Conference Discussion Bulletin no 8, February 1978

N Ireland...

(Continued from page 5)

state. By lying to workers that their interests can be served within capitalism, they provide cover for the bourgeoisie. The Socialist Party holds that once the reformists win a majority vote in Britain, laws can be passed in Her Majesty's Parliament bringing about workers rule. That is, a bourgeois government—for any government administering the capitalist state is bourgeois—will bring workers rule to Britain! The idea that the gentlemen from the City, and their friends in Sandhurst, will simply step aside because of a plebiscite and a piece of legal paper, is muck the Socialist Party consistently tries to rub in the eyes of the working class.

It is their reformist programme that inevitably leads the Socialist Party to become craven apologists for cops and prison guards. Their disgustingly chauvinist line on members of the brutal security apparatus in Northern Ireland is nothing new. They have rightly earned themselves the title “Her Majesty's Socialists” among leftists and Republicans in Belfast and Dublin. The Socialist Party on both sides of the Irish Sea has for decades been proud to refuse to call for British troops out! They defend the “right to march” of the Orange Order, whose annual “marching season” consists of months of anti-Catholic provocations. In 1995, the Socialist Party infamously hosted Loyalist UVF killer Billy Hutchinson, who had been convicted of the murder of two innocent Catholics.

Of course, the Socialist Party is not so

“touchy-feely” when it comes to the Catholic minority and Republicans in the North. Joe Higgins, ex-TD (MP) in Dublin, regularly used the Irish Dail to denounce Republicans and anybody standing up to Loyalist terror. Higgins seized on the brutal killing of a young Catholic father, Robert McCartney, by members of the IRA, to compare the IRA to Hitler's SS (see *Workers Hammer* no 190, Spring 2005)! And when working-class youth and Republicans bravely fought off riot cops for hours to prevent a Loyalist mob marching through the streets of Dublin, Higgins was quick to join every bourgeois politician in the Dail to denounce the anti-Loyalist protest as a “sectarian riot” (see *Workers Vanguard* no 866, 17 March 2006).

The Socialist Party is the antithesis of the revolutionary workers party, that is a Bolshevik party, that the Spartacist League is fighting to build. We demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the 5000 British troops in Northern Ireland. We stand for the defence of the viciously oppressed Catholic community in Northern Ireland against Loyalist/state terror. At the same time, we oppose Sinn Féin's nationalist perspective of a capitalist united Ireland in which Protestants would become an oppressed minority, a prospect that only serves to consolidate the Protestants behind Loyalist bigots, laying the basis for communalist terror, which is antithetical to a polarisation along *class* lines. In this situation of interpenetrated peoples and fratricidal nationalism, there can be no equitable solution short of the destruction of capitalism and the institution of workers rule. Our perspective is proletarian and internationalist: for

the revolutionary overthrow of British imperialism and the clericalist state in the South—which is hideously oppressive of women, Travellers and workers—and the sectarian Orange state.

At a recent Socialist Party meeting in Dublin hosting Peter Taaffe, a speaker for the ICL laid out our perspective while exposing the anti-revolutionary programme of their international, the Committee for a Workers International, from their support for “workers in uniform”—including an ex-H-Block prison warden—to their scabbing on the Chinese deformed workers state (see *Workers Hammer* no 202, Spring 2008). Many Socialist Party members in the audience, including one who was a security guard, vented their fury at our insensitivity to the plight of these thugs, in particular the lowly security guard, and our call to oust them from the unions. Taaffe's summary, in particular in response to the ICL, was a ten-minute lesson in just how dirty a business reformism is. After explaining that, as a result of the betrayals of New Labour, it is the task of the Socialist Party to build a “new mass workers party” which is explicitly not revolutionary (ie Old Labour), he went into a long rant on the glorious struggles of the British prison officers. He painted a picture of the Socialist Party's new mass workers party: column after column of uniformed prison officers at the head of the working class! The Socialist Party actually dreams of building a “workers party” based on the brutally racist, BNP-ridden, thugs from Wormwood Scrubs and the Metropolitan Police!

Such a reactionary, Labourite per-

spective, and such deadly illusions in the capitalist state need to be vigorously combated within the workers movement! *Cops, prison wardens and security guards out of the unions!* The Spartacist League seeks to build a multiethnic revolutionary workers party, a party that will act as a tribune of the people, fighting to mobilise the working class against every manifestation of injustice, racist oppression and state tyranny: *Down with the racist war on terror! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! For free abortion on demand!* What is necessary is a revolutionary party that fights for the understanding that, as Lenin explained, “the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes”; that the liberation of the working class cannot come about “without the destruction of the apparatus of state power which was created by the ruling class” (*The State and Revolution*). These words were written on the eve of the Russian Revolution, the first, and to date, only successful proletarian revolution. Under the leadership of the Bolshevik vanguard party, the working class smashed the capitalist state and established a workers state, consisting of the “special bodies of armed men” necessary to defend the revolution against the deposed ruling class. That revolution makes clear the kind of party the working class needs to once-and-for-all throw off their chains. And it is our task to build this vanguard party!

Comradely,
Derek M

WORKERS HAMMER 4

The fight to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International

Thirty years of the Spartacist League/Britain

On 3 May at a Spartacist dayschool in London we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the founding of the British section of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt), the forerunner of the International Communist League. The Spartacist League/Britain was founded in 1978 as a fusion between the London Spartacist Group and the Trotskyist Faction (TF), which split from Alan Thornett's Workers Socialist League (WSL), one of many pseudo-Trotskyist groups in Britain at that time.

The fusion was hailed in the first issue of our newspaper *Spartacist Britain* (April 1978) as the "rebirth of British Trotskyism". To mark the anniversary, *Workers Hammer* (as the paper was renamed in September 1984) is reprinting below the document "In defence of the revolutionary programme" which appeared in that first issue as one of three programmatic statements issued by the TF in the process of being won to the authentic Trotskyist politics of the Spartacist tendency. As a document in the struggle to forge a revolutionary party on the basis of Marxist principle and programme, it retains its validity today notwithstanding the enormous political changes in the world since that time.

The London Spartacist Group had been established in late 1975 by the iSt, with a perspective of revolutionary regroupment through polemically engaging with the myriad of ostensibly Trotskyist organisations in Britain. Central to this perspective was the fight against Pabloism, the revisionist current which had programmatically destroyed Trotsky's Fourth International (FI) in 1951-53. Pabloism was characterised by a renunciation of the need for revolutionary leadership of the working class, ie Trotskyist parties, and an adaptation to the existing social-democratic, Stalinist and petty-bourgeois nationalist leaderships. The Spartacist tendency's struggle to reforge the Fourth International by drawing hard programmatic lines went against the grain of the British fake-Trotskyist milieu which operated as pressure groups on the Labour Party, particularly by tailing the Labour "lefts". As Leninists, our strategic perspective was to split Labour, a bourgeois workers party, winning its working-class base to revolutionary communism. Our comrades fought for political clarity as seen in the discussion in 1976 on the Irish question, dealing with the national question in cases involving geographically interpenetrated peoples, which is codified in "Theses on Ireland", printed in *Spartacist* [English edition] no 24, Autumn 1977.

The founding of the Spartacist League/Britain represented a significant extension to the iSt in our struggle to reforge the Fourth International, not least because of the existence in Britain of Gerry Healy's Socialist Labour League (SLL), (later known as the

Workers Revolutionary Party—WRP), which falsely laid claim to Trotskyist orthodoxy and to the fight against Pabloism. Politically confronting and defeating the Healyites was a key task of our organisation.

The iSt originated as the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) that was expelled in December 1963 from the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the United States. The RT was formed in opposition to the SWP's abandonment of the fight for a Trotskyist party in Cuba, expressed by the majority's uncritical embrace of the petty-bourgeois guerrillas led by Castro and Che Guevara. Against this the RT insisted that the Cuban regime is qualitatively similar to the one that emerged in the Soviet Union after the Stalinist bureaucracy usurped political power in 1924 and was consolidated over the next several years. The RT and its successor, the Spartacist League, were unique in maintaining that Cuba was a bureaucratically deformed workers state and required a *proletarian political revolution* to sweep away the Castro bureaucracy, establishing organs of workers democracy and installing a revolutionary internationalist regime.

The SWP's line on the Cuban Rev-

olution mirrored the wave of revisionism a decade earlier in the Fourth International. Founded under Trotsky's leadership in 1938, the FI had been profoundly disoriented by the post-WWII overturns of capitalism under Stalinist leadership. Mao Zedong's peasant-based People's Liberation Army seized power from the collapsing bourgeois Guomindang of Chiang Kai-shek in 1949, leading to the establishment of a deformed workers state. Similar peasant-based social overturns led by Stalinist forces triumphed in Yugoslavia, North Korea and North Vietnam (extended to the South in 1975 after the defeat of US imperialism by the Vietnamese workers and peasants). Capitalism was overturned in several states in Eastern and Central Europe under Soviet occupation following the Second World War. While different processes took place in each of these various countries, what they all had in common was the absence of the working class contending for state power. The result was the creation of *bureaucratically deformed workers states*.

Michel Pablo, then head of the FI, responded to the postwar social overturns by repudiating the central importance of a conscious revolutionary leadership. Pablo asserted that "The

objective process is in the final analysis the sole determining factor" and relegated the role of Trotskyism to liquidating into or at best being pressure groups on various Stalinist or social-democratic parties. This revisionism led to the destruction of the Fourth International in 1951-53 (see "Genesis of Pabloism", *Spartacist* [English edition] no 21, Fall 1972).

The Pabloite revisionists were fought by the SWP and its leader, James P Cannon, albeit belatedly, partially, and essentially on the SWP's national terrain. In 1953, the SWP and other anti-Pabloite forces internationally—centrally the SLL and the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI)—split from Pablo and shortly thereafter founded the International Committee (IC). But with the Cuban Revolution the SWP embraced Pablo's revisionism and carried out a "reunification" with his supporters. The RT opposed this reunification with the International Secretariat of Pablo and Ernest Mandel that was to result in the United Secretariat (USec). The British section of the IC—Healy's SLL—also opposed reunification.

The founding cadres of the Spartacist tendency were impressed from a distance by the SLL's formal orthodoxy, represented for example by its powerful 1961 document, *The World Prospect for Socialism* and initially stood in political solidarity with the IC. Our comrades were unaware at that time of Healy's methods and his grossly opportunist adaptation to the Labour Party "lefts" which belied his professed "anti-Pabloite" credentials. However when our comrades argued at a 1966 London conference sponsored by Healy that "Up to now, we have not done very well, in our opinion, in smashing the Pabloites", Healy expelled them over a trivial organisational matter. Soon afterwards the Healyites embraced Mao's Red Guards during the "Cultural Revolution"—a violent intra-bureaucratic struggle among the Chinese Stalinists—and championed the classless concept of an "Arab revolution". The Healyites' political banditry found full flower in, among other things, their conciliation of oil-rich Arab despots, their despicable hailing in 1979 of the execution of 21 Iraqi Communist Party members by the Ba'athist regime and their anti-communist provocations against Arthur Scargill on the eve of the 1984-85 miners strike. Healy's organisation imploded spectacularly in late 1985 not long after that strike ended.

The SWP in the US spiraled into outright reformism in late 1965 when it jettisoned any remnants of a proletarian class fight against the Vietnam War in favour of seeking a bloc with pacifists and Democratic Party liberals in a classless "peace" movement. This organisation long ago explicitly

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April 1978, first issue of *Spartacist Britain* which became *Workers Hammer* in 1984