

SPARTACIST



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Working Class Struggle Must Bring Down Hawke!

High Noon for Reagan's Deputy Sheriff

Labor Prime Minister Hawke and his Treasurer, "Grim Reaper" Keating came to power pledging to their capitalist masters and imperialist overlords in Washington that they would police the working class and mobilise for the anti-Soviet war drive. But after five years, the working class has signalled that it's had enough. The obscene Bicentennial has backfired on Hawke and Unsworth. The population was supposed to be riding high on a wave of patriotic unity with Hawke at the helm. Instead the 19 March NSW state elections saw a landslide defeat of the Unsworth Labor government by Greiner's Liberal/National coalition. Massive swings against the ALP, up to 30 percent, occurred in the working class electorates of the Hunter Valley, Wollongong and the industrial suburbs of Sydney, with Labor losing coalfield seats like Swansea which it has held continuously since Federation. Workers made no distinction between the ALP factions, with the "left" losing the bulk of its parliamentary representation.

The state Labor governments have been front-line enforcers of austerity budget cuts. Unsworth's is the first to fall. And with it, Hawke/Keating's power base in the NSW right-wing ALP machine, keystone of their control of the ALP and ACTU and hence of the whole Accord mechanism, is severely weakened. The Hawke government is in deep trouble, for the naked hostility with which it is viewed by large sections of its own base also means that it is fast exhausting its usefulness to the bourgeoisie.

But the expression of working-class anger was electoral, passive



Hawke with his "mate," US Secretary of State, George Shultz. "Together forever" and on the way down.

and politically inchoate. Hawke is on the ropes — the working class must exercise its enormous social power and bring down his government through hard class struggle. The choices are stark: it's our jobs, our unions and our livelihoods against decaying imperialism's spiral into anti-Soviet war and ultimately barbarism. The deepening estrangement of the working class from its traditional Laborite misleaders can go nowhere without an internationalist revolutionary workers party with a program for the conquest of state power.

The great Polish revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg described the social democracy as a stinking corpse. The ALP, a bourgeois workers party which embodies White Australia populism, is truly that. Historically, the ALP has been capitalism's policeman during periods of war and depression. Under Keating the working class's standard of living has taken the greatest fall since the Depression. Since 1981 the foreign debt has

rocketed from \$24 billion to \$110 billion. The stock exchange collapse hit Australia's vulnerable economy particularly hard. Ex-king of the corporate raiders, Holmes a Court had to be bailed out by the likes of the WA state Labor government. The prospect of all-out trade war between the US and Japan spells economic disaster for Australia, pitting its major trading partner (upon which its post-war prosperity has been built) against its "great and powerful ally." In mid-1986, Keating even announced that Australia is in danger of becoming a banana republic. Senator Button later threatened that Australia was one week off having the IMF come in. As journalist John Pilger put it in his BBC TV series, "The Last Dream," there are only two growth industries in Australia, millionaires and poverty.

PILGER EXPOSES THE "LACKEY COUNTRY"

Hawke declared that his government was "together for-

ever" with Reagan — as the Russians said, "deputy sheriff" for anti-Soviet war in the South Pacific. However, the US is saddled with a lame-duck president and is now the world's biggest debtor nation. Hawke is proud to call Secretary of State George Shultz his "mate," but with Mikhail Gorbachev now the world's most popular leader this is a positive liability. Australian lackey imperialism, as it once did with Britain, hopes that US imperialist power will protect this white enclave from the "Asian hordes." Japan's rise as the major regional industrial and financial power impels it towards a greater military role in the region, eliciting visions for the xenophobic Australian bourgeoisie of World War II and a new "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." The world is becoming a nastier place for the rulers of the "lackey country."

Pilger's "Last Dream" put a spotlight on the alliance with US imperialism. When it was screened in Britain earlier this year the Australian bourgeois media denounced it furiously. (It was shown, censored, in Australia, weeks later.) From Bruce Ruxton, reactionary head of the Returned Services League in Victoria to Sydney Morning Herald columnist Peter Hastings (who remarked that he, along with Kerr and many others, had tramped the CIA circuit) to John Stone and a troupe of aging US hawks there was a chorus of "lies, lies" and "Pilgerisation!" He was denounced for being an expatriate and compared with Wilfred Burchett, who was calumniated by the ruling class as a "traitor," had his passport revoked and was banned from setting foot in Australia — because he reported the Korean and Vietnam wars from the side of Australian imperialism's enemy. Pilger is only a Whitlamite nationalist, but in Cold War II this makes him a "traitor" too! Pilger's folly? He exposed Australian apartheid, portraying the stark racist underpinnings of this white imperialist

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Ligue Trotskyste, Tribune Communiste Fuse

Revolutionary Regroupment in France

see page 4

CIA Lovers Ban Polish Consulate

The recent bans imposed on the Polish consulate in Sydney by the CIA loyalists who run the NSW Labor Council were the latest blow in their anti-communist campaign against Soviet-bloc diplomats, in cahoots with the anti-worker Cold War Hawke government. When the Polish government refused to allow Solidarnosc leader Lech Walesa leave to attend the 14th Congress of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) in Melbourne, the Labor Council directed 12 unions to ban postal deliveries, phone services, garbage collection, electrical, water and sewerage repairs, building maintenance and other services to the consulate from 3 March to the close of the conference on the 19th. These bans were war-like measures in the service of the imperialist anti-Soviet war drive, and all class-conscious workers should fight against them. Defend the USSR, Poland and all the workers states!

The ICFTU, to which the ACTU and other social-democratic trade union federations are affiliated, is a creature of Cold War I and the CIA. This congress was funded by government Bicentennial money and opened by Hawke, the CIA's chosen ALP leader and Reagan's anti-Soviet ally in the region. Hawke sent a personal letter to Polish premier Jaruzelski demanding Walesa be allowed to travel, with a diplomatic figleaf of opposition to the bans as a breach of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. This was merely a Cold War div-

TO OUR READERS

This issue the price of Australasian Spartacist rises to 40¢ a copy, and to \$3.00 for a six-issue subscription (which includes Spartacist, the excellent theoretical journal of the international Spartacist tendency). Our last price rise was in 1980, so this increase, given inflation, is modest and somewhat overdue. Moreover, we can still offer our quality Marxist paper, the organ of Trotskyism in Australia, at a price lower than our fake-left competitors, not to mention the bourgeois press.

Australasian SPARTACIST

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Walesa's Solidarnosc: counter-revolutionary trojan horse for Vatican and CIA, Polish version of NCC/Groupers.

ision of labour, with the dirty work led by Labor Council secretary John McBean and unions run by the National Civic Council (NCC) like the Ironworkers (FIA), which employs local Solidarnosc head Charles Weyman as "ethnic affairs director."

ANTI-COMMUNISM IS ANTI-WORKING CLASS

The ACTU/Labor Council pose as defenders of "trade union

rights." Who are they trying to kid? These traitors led the charge in the Hawke government's smashing of the BLF in 1986. For five years they have policed the working class for Hawke, surrendering workers' conditions, real wages and jobs under the Accord. For example, when FIA militant and Spartacist supporter Neil Florrimell was sacked at Cockatoo Island last September, the FIA tops worked overtime to sell out

the two-week ironworkers' strike in his defence. About the only union actions they have sanctioned are anti-Soviet stunts like these recent bans and those imposed by the 1983 ACTU Congress on mail to the USSR after the US KAL-007 spy provocation. When a Spartacist supporter in the Australian Postal and Telecommunications Union (APTU), Mike Wilkins, attempted to put a motion against these bans at a stop-work meeting at Rushcutters Bay Mail Centre on 17 March, he was gagged by APTU bureaucrats, who had never put the bans to a vote.

LEFTS IN CAMP OF NCC/CIA OVER POLAND

Poland was a shaping event for the reformist left, which jumped bodily into the pro-imperialist camp as cheer squads for Solidarnosc. At its September 1981 congress, Solidarnosc consolidated around a counter-revolutionary program, firmly wedded to the Catholic Church and acting as a company union for the CIA and Western bankers. The

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2KY - Racist Labor Radio

In the 1960s the ALP carried out a purely superficial clean-up job of its image on the race question by finally dropping the White Australia policy from its platform. But all the detestants in the world could make no impression on the decades of accumulated racist dirt issuing out of the core of this party. An example is Sydney radio station 2KY, owned and managed by the NSW Labor Council under its secretary, NSW ALP president and ACTU vice-president John McBean.

In February 2KY's star announcer, Ron Casey, broadcast the latest in a series of gutter-level tirades aimed at Chinese and Indochinese immigrants, Japanese, Aborigines, even ABC TV's new black announcer Trisha Goddard. This time around he took a phone call from a woman, later identified as the wife of his nephew, complaining about an argument between her daughter and a Chinatown restaurateur. Casey frothed at the mouth about Chinese proprietors "ganging up on customers" and suggested getting "a dozen or so of your football mates together and have a night down there together and sort these bastards right out." He "advised" another caller that her unemployed husband could get a job by changing his skin colour and pretending to speak an Asian language, and his remarks were liberally punctuated with vile racist epithets not fit to print.

With the approval of the right-wing NSW ALP machine, Casey has been using the airwaves to incite racial hatred and racist violence. His appeal is to ocker racists and fascistic skinhead types such as National Action, who carry out his program on the streets. ALP boss, Prime Minister Hawke, rewarded him for "services to broadcasting" by award-

ing him the Order of Australia in the Bicentennial Australia Day honours list! An obscene and provocative gesture, but so was the whole Bicentennial celebration of 200 years of racist White Australia.

Casey's racist filth, and especially his Bicentennial "honour," started a furore. A stream of complaints reached the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal, to be added to the backlog against 2KY. Rock star Jimmy Barnes blasted Casey as "the biggest bigot I've never met" in a prominently displayed letter to the Sydney Morning Herald (2 February, 1988). He said, "I was amazed, then disgusted, to learn that Ron Casey had received an award. This bigot is not doing anyone in this country a service when he continues to fan the embers of a white Australia policy," and explained that, "I moved here with my parents from Scotland when I was six. My wife moved here from Thailand when she was five."

For their part McBean and Co made it clear where they stand. They kept Casey on air and scapegoated his technical panel operator, David Betteridge, sacking him for failing to censor "what might be unacceptable remarks." The Public Service Association, joined by some other "left" union bureaucrats, called for Casey's sacking at the Labor Council meeting on 24 March — ie, only after Barrie Unsworth's landslide defeat in the 19 March state elections. For the desperate right-wing NSW ALP machine, campaigning on the slogan "Vote Barrie — He's good value," this foul-mouthed racist seemed to be "good value" not just for 2KY's ratings, but for boosting Labor's flagging electoral fortunes. Unsworth weighed in with his racist crack at Tory leader Nick

Greiner (who is of Hungarian Jewish background), telling him he "should go back where he came from." It all did nothing to stem the mass desertion of the ALP by its working-class base on polling day.

The ALP tops are enemies of the working class's interests. The "left" union bureaucracy is united with the pro-CIA Hawke/McBean/Unsworth right wing in anti-Sovietism and in pushing chauvinist protectionism, which fuels racism.



Rock star Jimmy Barnes slammed racist radio announcer Ron Casey, promulgator of White Australia policy.

Workers need a revolutionary party, which will be built against the pro-capitalist Labor traitors or not at all. As for Casey, for once we can agree with TV Channel 7's Newsworld anchorman, Clive Robertson, who remarked on his program that one dark night in some deserted underground carpark Casey would get his comeuppance. ■

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

Free Mordechai Vanunu!

On Saturday morning, 13 February, nearly 40 people demonstrated outside the Israeli Consulate-General in Sydney, demanding: "Freedom for Mordechai Vanunu!" This heroic Israeli nuclear technician was facing the death penalty for exposing Zionist Israel's manufacture at its top-secret Dimona reactor of a nuclear arsenal of 100-200 bombs, much larger than hitherto suspected. The Zionist madmen have in their sights not just Arab capitals but the Soviet workers state. Israel is a tripwire for World War III! At the end of Vanunu's long, secret show trial he was found guilty of "treason" and "espionage" and on 27 March sentenced to an outrageous 18 years in prison. Vanunu served all humanity by telling the truth about the Zionists' deadly dangerous nuclear war plans. He must not be left to rot in an Israeli prison hellhole. Working people internationally must demand with renewed force: Freedom for Mordechai Vanunu!

The spirited picket, called by the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand, was addressed by the Reverend John McKnight, a close friend and supporter of Vanunu:

"Mordechai Vanunu is a great person, a person who's stood up against the odds with full knowledge of the risks and he's suffering because of his commitment to world peace."

McKnight described Vanunu's treatment by the Zionist state — kept in solitary confinement in a cell three metres by two, denied communication with the outside world, not even allowed to talk to his judges. He contrasted this treatment with that of Nazi butcher John Demjanjuk, known as "Ivan the Terrible," whose trial in a nearby court is broadcast nightly on Israeli television. Meanwhile the Zionist storm-troopers are carrying out their

"Iron Fist" policy of bloody terror against Palestinian protesters in Gaza and the West Bank.

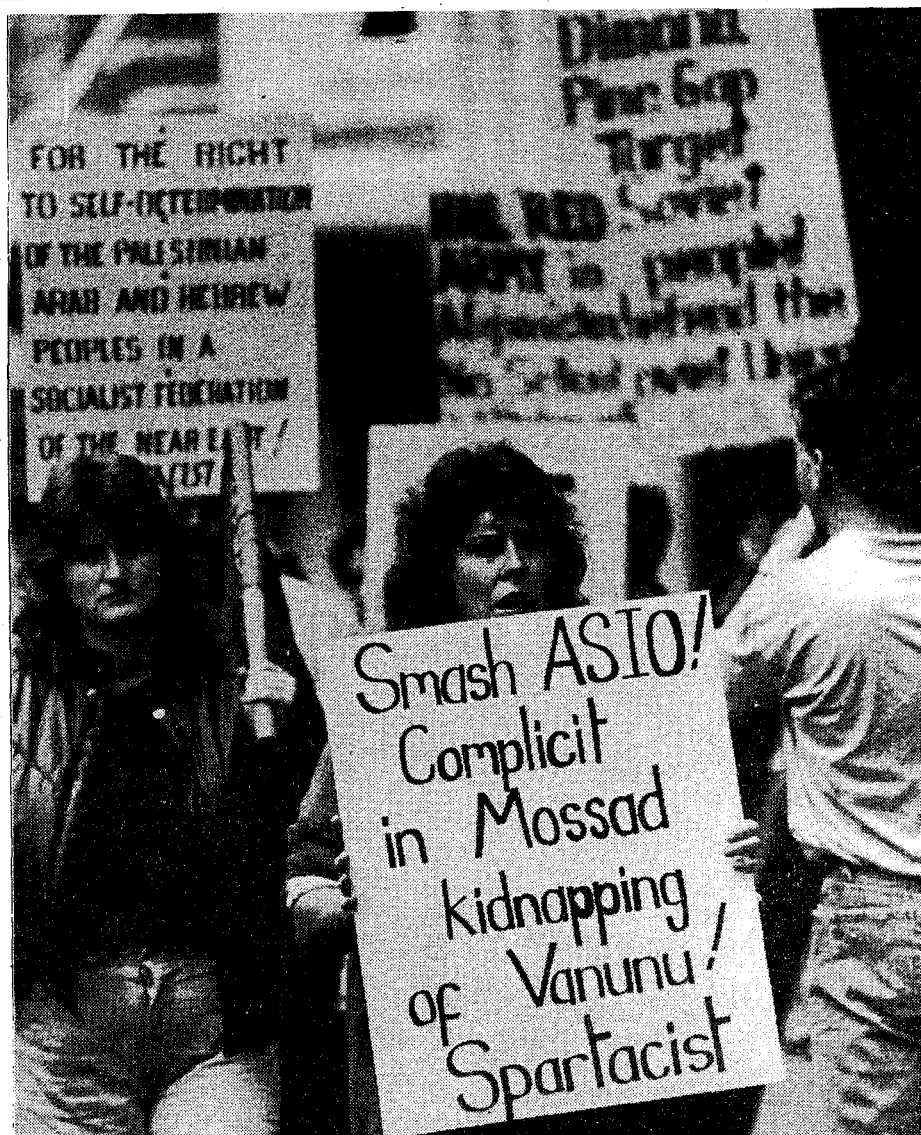
SL supporters carried placards demanding: "Smash ASIO! Complicit in Mossad kidnapping of Vanunu!" and "Dimona, Pine Gap Target Soviet People! Defend the Soviet Union!" emphasising the reactionary role of Australian imperialism. Other placards included "Defend the Palestinians! Israel out of the Occupied Territories!" and "For Trotskyist parties throughout the Near East!"

This rally was part of growing world-wide support for Vanunu and gained significant labour endorsement. A letter from Jim Donovan, President of the Sydney branch of the Waterside Workers' Federation, was read to the rally:

"It is with great pleasure that I send greetings and endorsement of this very important rally for the release of Mordechai Vanunu from the clutches of the Israeli Secret Police and Courts. He must be released unconditionally and I demand that it be done immediately."

The rally also announced that telegrams of protest had been sent to the Israeli Embassy and Consulate by Dave Goodger on behalf of the New South Wales State Council of the Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union, and by Australian Labor Party MPs Lewis Kent and Joan Coxedge, who is also President of the Victorian ALP Anti-Uranium Committee.

Australia, like Israel, is a regional vassal of US imperialism. Among Australia's plans for building its military capacities for its part in the anti-Soviet war drive is the possibility of developing nuclear capacity. Will the Australian mini-imperialists decide to have their own Dimona? After all, in 1974 the rabid pro-Zionist Hawke said, "If I were Israeli Prime Minister, I wouldn't give a damn about world morality



— I would use the atom bomb to protect my own" (Blanche d'Alpuget, Robert J Hawke, A Biography). As Spartacist spokesman, Neil Flormirell, said addressing the rally:

"The truth has got to be spoken, and in this country ruled by a bourgeoisie who share the same racist enclave values as that of Israel and South Africa, we know that the Hawke government is up to its neck in anti-Soviet war preparations alongside the Zionist rulers and US imperialists."

These values of Australian imperialism are also shared by the social-democratic fake left, who have ignored the Vanunu case and, with the exception of long-time centrist Bill Keats, did not bother to show up for this important rally. The Northite Socialist Labour League demonstrated sectarianism in addition to Labor-loyal nationalism, when its leader Nick Beams announced that the SLL would not attend the rally

because it was organised by the Spartacist League!

Against Keats' praise of "progressive" PLO nationalism, Flormirell said:

"The Zionist fortress-state must be exploded from within through revolutionary class struggle. If the entire region is not to be consumed in a Zionist-engineered nuclear holocaust, the Hebrew-speaking workers of Israel must be shaken out of their chauvinism to champion the just national rights of the Palestinian Arab people. It is only joining forces in revolutionary class struggle to sweep away their own rulers and oppressors as well as the sheiks and colonels of the Arab East that can pave the way for a Socialist Federation of the Near East." ■

Send donations to: Mordechai Vanunu Trust Fund, 120 Darlinghurst Road, Darlinghurst, 2010.

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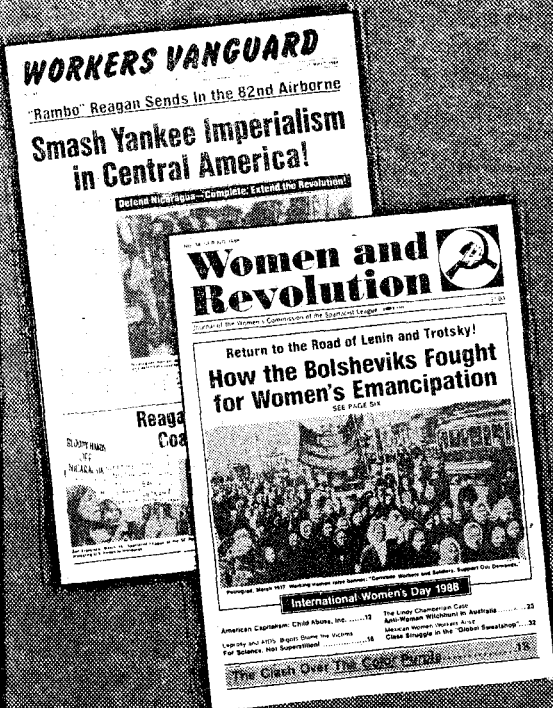
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Revolutionary Regroupment in France

In early February the Ligue Trotskyste de France (LTF), section of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt), held its ninth conference jointly with the Tribune Communiste group. The conference voted the fusion of the two organizations. Tribune Communiste was a product of the "anti-opportunist" milieu around the French Communist Party (PCF). These comrades' long-standing impulse to defend the gains of the October Revolution opened the road to their break with Stalinism — which undermines the defense of these gains — in favor of the program of Trotsky's Fourth International, upheld today uniquely by the iSt.

The lessons of their struggle to return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky have international significance. Tribune Communiste had its origins in the current headed by Michel Pablo which in the early 1950s abandoned Trotskyism, advocating "deep entry" into the mass reformist Stalinist and social-democratic parties. Pablo's most consistent followers Michele Mestre and Matthias Corvin broke organizationally with Pablo to enter the camp of the PCF where they remained as a submerged "loyal opposition" for a quarter century, publishing *Le Communiste*. The comrades of Tribune Communiste began to break out from this "unconditional" support for the CP in 1979-81 — standing fast in support of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, opposing Polish Solidarnosc and opposing the PCF's joining the anti-Soviet Mitterrand popular front. But while these positions represented an impulse to oppose the class-collaborationism inherent in Stalinism, they found that over Afghanistan, Poland and Mitterrand, all the major ostensibly Trotskyist organizations in France except the LTF were firmly and fulsomely in the anti-Soviet popular front.

As the Tribune Communiste group sought to break from the Pabloite liquidationist dead end, their political trajectory brought



In June 1987, after racist exclusion of North Africans and blacks at the "Flunch" cafe in Rouen, Tribune Communiste approached the LTF to organize a protest picket in Paris. Following this united front action, discussions began that led to fusion.

them face to face with the Ligue Trotskyste and the iSt. Increasingly known in France as "the Trotskyists who defend the Soviet Union" over Poland and Afghanistan, the LTF was also the only group which opposed from the beginning Mitterrand and his program of anti-worker austerity in the service of the NATO war drive. After breaking with *Le Communiste*, over the next several years Tribune Communiste passed through a number of loose "committees" seeking to pull together the "anti-opportunists" in the CP milieu. But this attempt to act as an external pressure group on the fringe of the PCF was no more successful than Pablo-style "deep entrism." Frustrated with the "circle spirit," they found that the LTF was having some modest success in recruiting militants directly from the CP youth. Entering into political discussions with the Ligue Trotskyste as well as united-front

action against racist discrimination, they have in the course of examining the roots of Stalinism come to an understanding of the authentic program of Leninism and Trotskyism. We welcome them to the international Spartacist tendency, in which they will play a leading role, not only in its French section.

"EUROCOMMUNISM" AND "ANTI-OPPORTUNISM"

Oppositional groupings espousing a more or less traditional pro-Moscow Stalinist outlook emerged in and around many West European Communist Parties in the 1970s, in response to "Eurocommunism." The Eurocommunists sought to distance themselves from Moscow and outline a posture of "national Communism" to reassure their own rulers that they would be "responsible" partners in hoped-for new popular front governmental coalitions — eg, the attempts to reach an accommodation with the Catholic Church in Italy or even with the king of Spain! Thus from the beginning the Eurocommunists' anti-Sovietism, designed to prove to their "own" bourgeoisies — and to Washington — that they could be entrusted with ministerial portfolios, was intertwined with the appetite for class collaboration at home.

That "left" or "pro-Moscow" currents arose in response within the European CPs is not new or surprising. The bureaucratic Stalinist parties are no stranger to cliques and factions adopting a "critical" stance in response to rightist turns, often animated by the fact that yesterday's opportunism frequently looks pretty indefensible today. So there has been no lack of left critics (es-

pecially after the fact) of particularly gross capitulations, who however accept the framework of the inviolability of "the Party" and locate their dissatisfactions in questions of "personalities" — eg, "Browder [CPUSA leader of the 1930s/40s] was a revisionist" or conversely the adulation of the "good old days" of Togliatti or Thorez [long-time Italian and French CP leaders]. To break from Stalinist reformism toward the road of Lenin requires the shattering of the false identification of the Russian Revolution and Communism with the Stalinist "gravediggers of revolution" who physically exterminated the Old Bolsheviks and transformed the Communist International from a world revolutionary party to a reformist prop of the bourgeois order.

At the same time, the growth of Eurocommunism within the traditionally Moscow-loyal CPs prompted considerable restlessness in "left" or so-called "hard" Stalinist milieus. The prostration of the CPs before bourgeois opinion represented an opening for propagandistic intervention by Trotskyists. The intensified anti-Soviet pressure inaugurated by US imperialism's hypocritical "human rights" crusade (the attempt to overcome America's humiliating defeat at the hands of the Vietnamese workers and peasants through a "moral" and military rearmament against Russia) led to the once-"loyal" pro-Moscow CPs openly bleeding for pro-Western "dissidents" like Sakharov, while being shamefaced or worse in response to the aggressive international campaign of the social democrats in support of clerical-reactionary Solidarnosc in Poland. With the imperialist rulers' anti-Soviet crusade heated to fever pitch by the Russian intervention in Afghanistan, the left CPers' "peaceful coexistence" with the sellout leaders of their own parties became markedly unstable.

The Soviet Union was forced to intervene in Afghanistan for defensive reasons centered on safeguarding its own borders, but the presence of Soviet troops on "foreign soil," and the necessary democratic and socially progressive measures undertaken from the top down by the Moscow-allied Kabul regime (eg the liberation of Afghan women from the medieval confines of illiteracy and the veil), raised the spectre of internationalism or "export of revolution," the quintessential "Trotskyite" heresy. With imperialism screaming for blood — and the US embracing the chance for a proxy war on the Soviet border by arming and financing the Afghan cutthroats to kill Russian soldiers — the Eurocommunists' anti-Sovietism led them into open support to imperialism. They reasserted their loyalty to "democracy" by demanding the with-



Presidium of the First Congress of the Third International of Lenin and Trotsky, 1919.

drawal of the Red Army, prompting the formation of even more significant oppositional tendencies, particularly in the Spanish and Italian parties. The role of Afghanistan in these polarizations is underlined by the sobriquets applied to the left currents by their proponents and detractors: "Afganos" in Spain, "Kabulisti" in Italy and "Tankies" in Britain.

Yet these critics were unable to wage an effective fight against the Eurocommunist traitors because they adhered to the same Stalinist class collaborationist, popular-frontist politics as the Berlinguers and Carillos. Smaller groupings, with more leftist impulses, like the Turkish TKP-Isçinî Sesî and their British associates of The Leninist, also continued in practice to accept the minimum/maximum "two-stage revolution" framework which is a hallmark of Menshevism and Stalinism, while clinging to the illusion of reforming the "world communist movement."

At bottom, such tendencies believed that in this period of renewed Cold War, loyalty to the Soviet Union was going to be able to stop "the Party" from engaging in class collaboration and capitulating to social democracy. Gorbachev's detente campaign has dealt such illusions a cruel blow. Not only does Gorbachev



Revolutionary Trotskyists of the LTF never called for a vote to Mitterrand! Mitterrand with PCF leader Georges Marchais (right).

the realm of demonology. No longer can Trotsky's fight against the Stalinist usurpers be simply dismissed with slanders about "Mikado agents" and "anti-socialist saboteurs"; thus, even Stalin's successors in the Kremlin bureaucracy acknowledge at last that Trotsky was a historical figure of the Communist movement who waged a fight over policy and program.

The Stalinist bureaucratic caste seeks to defend their position sitting atop the collectivized economy from which their privi-



reformist props for capitalist rule, fundamentally little different from the social-democratic parties which balance between their proletarian base and the dictates of their bourgeois masters. The CPs, however, have an additional contradiction: they must try to serve two counterposed masters: the Moscow Stalinist bureaucracy and the "progressive" bourgeoisie of their own countries, which hates and fears the Soviet Union. Their leadership has thus spent decades seeking to resolve each contradiction on the side of reformism; Eurocommunism is an inevitable product of Stalinism.

The Tribune Communiste comrades found that a revolutionary proletarian alternative to reformism cannot be built within the political framework of Stalinism, which gutted the Communist International of its internationalist content long before its formal liquidation in 1943. This is the basic Marxist perspective encapsulated in the title of the resolution adopted at Tribune Communiste's pre-fusion conference: "From the Illusory Transformation of the PCF to the Road of Lenin and Trotsky."

THE HERITAGE OF LE COMMUNISTE

Shared pro-Sovietism did not make the various oppositional tendencies any less nationally heterogeneous than the "world Communist movement" of which they claimed to be part. Lacking a program for world socialist revolution, each such grouping was and remains a prisoner of its specific national terrain.

Tribune Communiste issued from the Le Communiste group, whose history is indeed illus-

trative. For Le Communiste originated as a by-product of the Pabloite revision of Trotskyism which destroyed the Fourth International (FI) as the world party of socialist revolution. As Tribune Communiste grappled with its own history in the course of its break from Stalinism, they were confronted with Pabloism, the attempt to find a substitute for the proletariat organized by its conscious vanguard under the banner of Trotskyism in resolving the crisis of revolutionary leadership. The LTF-Tribune Communiste fusion thus based itself on the article "Genesis of Pabloism" (Spartacist No 21, Fall 1972) as well as the documents of the first four Congresses of the Communist International.

Following the Second World War, the Trotskyist movement was thrown into a profound political crisis. The Fourth International was founded in 1938 in the urgent attempt, as the alignments for World War II took shape, to resolve the "crisis of leadership" which had left the international proletariat defenseless before fascism and imperialist carnage. But the small Trotskyist forces were in effect militarily defeated. The physical obliteration of the Left Opposition in Russia by the Moscow Trial blood purges was completed by the assassination of Trotsky in Mexico by a Stalinist agent in 1940. Large numbers of Trotskyist cadre in Europe and Asia were wiped out by fascist terror, by the war and by Stalinist repression. The younger generation of European Trotskyist militants, including its most promising young leaders, was decimated, facilitating the ascendancy of Michel Pablo, whose major characteristic was his impressionism. The political passivity of the American SWP (which was a relatively strong party due to the roots of James Cannon and other American Trotskyist leaders in the early CP and a subsequent close working collaboration with Trotsky, and which as an American organization was spared the brunt of the carnage in Europe) towards the devastated European movement after the war also assisted Pablo to emerge as a leader of the post-war FI.

The post-war Trotskyist movement was disoriented as well by new developments. Trotsky had predicted that the war would provoke social convulsions throughout the capitalist world, as the first World War had done, which would necessarily have a profoundly

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25 June 1981, Le Communiste group refused LTF invitation to participate in a protest picket against an anti-Soviet meeting on Afghanistan and against the entry of PCF ministers into the Mitterrand government.

project permanent "peaceful co-existence" with imperialism, but he has acceded to the imperialists' demands to pull the Red Army out of Afghanistan! These oppositional tendencies, which coalesced in support of the Soviet intervention, have necessarily been thrown into disarray now that they can no longer claim that their leftist impulses find support in the Soviet bureaucracy or a section of it. If they do not want to solidarize with the horrifying prospect of abandoning the Afghan peoples to be massacred by Islamic reaction, they must confront the historical roots of "peaceful coexistence" in the Stalinist political counterrevolution in Russia. The objective possibilities for such a fundamental reexamination of Communist history are facilitated as well by the phenomenon of Gorbachev's "glasnost," which has tended to take the question of Trotsky and the Left Opposition (as well as Bukharin and the "Rights") out of

leges derive by appeasing and conciliating imperialism rather than promoting international revolution. Stalin's Comintern, as a transmission belt for this policy of international class collaboration, became essentially similar to the social democrats of the Second International, who rallied to their "own" bourgeoisies in 1914. The catastrophe of 1933, when Hitler's fascists came to power unopposed by the powerful German workers movement, was not just an "error" or a defeat, even a defeat of enormous proportions which paved the way directly for world war; it was a crime, generalized and underscored by the Stalin-Laval pact and the adoption at the Comintern's Seventh World Congress of the "People's Front" line which sanctified consistent class collaboration in the name of an "alliance" with the "progressive" imperialist bourgeoisie. The Communist Parties had become bourgeois workers parties,



Michel Pablo (left), Michele Mestre in 1948 (right).

From Illusory Reform of the CP to Trotskyism

Continued from page five

destabilizing effect on the international Stalinist movement. That this prediction was quite correct is shown for example by Red Army's initial collapse in the face of Hitler's invasion, as well as by the turbulent social conditions in Western Europe at the war's end. In Italy and Greece, naked treachery by the Stalinists was required to militarily and politically disarm the leftist Resistance forces and hand power back to the capitalist class, while in France the Stalinists had to work overtime as proponents of capitalist "national reconstruction" in order to reestablish a stable bourgeois regime. Nonetheless, the Stalinists were successful in deflecting revolutionary struggle and emerged seemingly stronger than before in a number of Western European countries notably Italy and France, based on their resistance to the Nazis.

An additional, unexpected development was the expansion of Stalinist-ruled states in Eastern Europe. With the military victory of the Red Army over the Nazis and their puppet regimes, the former rulers ran madly for the nearest American headquarters, leaving behind a power vacuum which the Soviet Army quickly filled, setting up "coalition governments." Faced with the intransigence of American imperialism at the onset of the Cold War, the Stalinists found themselves forced to set up deformed workers states. A different process occurred in Yugoslavia (and in China), where peasant-based revolutions took place under Stalinist leadership. Confronted with the restabilization and expansion of Stalinist-ruled states, the impressionistic current associated with Pablo came to believe that Stalinism could play an "objectively revolutionary" role.

Pabloite revisionism emerged as an attempt to make the FI more "effective" by accommodating it to the existing leaderships of the working class. Michel Pablo, leader of the International Secretariat of the FI, called for a policy of "entrism sui generis" (entrism of its own kind) in which the Trotskyists would enter the mass Stalinist and social-democratic parties with the perspective of staying there for a long period to pressure the reformists to the left. Pablo rationalized this political liquidation theoretically, projecting first "centuries of deformed workers states," then, in his 1951 document "Where Are We Going?," the imminence of a Third World War which would force the Stalinists into "roughly outlining a revolutionary orientation."

The essence of the Pabloite perspective was its objectivism, a "new world reality" in which the tide of revolution is irreversible. Not the Leninist proletarian party, but rather a "blunted instrument" is seen as sufficient for the socialist revolution. This method was not confined to the evaluation of Stalinism; the

European Pabloists engaged in deep entrism in the mass reformist parties (both Stalinist and social-democratic) of Western Europe during the 1950s and 1960s, only to shift over to more "mod" targets thereafter: "Algerian socialism" a la Ben Bella, the Cuban Revolution and the petty-bourgeois adventurist efforts to replay Cuba elsewhere in Latin America, infatuation with Vietnamese Stalinism after the American escalation of the war

'In Defense of Communism,' Mestre wrote: 'to the credit of the Trotskyist movement it should be admitted that the error was facilitated by the opportunist course of alliance with the democratic bourgeoisie followed (from 1933 on) by the Communist Party of the USSR as well as by other communist parties.' 'Socialism in one country; the liquidation of the soviets; the liquidation of the party, re-

world. Conversely, all the apologists for Stalinism share the conception that the bureaucracy is the sole guardian of collectivized property forms, since any popular revolt, even centered on the proletariat, inevitably leads to capitalist counterrevolution. The logic underlying the Stalinist vision is deeply pessimistic and in fact pro-capitalist: a working class which has experienced a Stalinist regime will, according to them, inevitably prefer bourgeois democracy! The social democrats, who aspire to play the role of spearhead of counterrevolution with a "democratic" face in the deformed workers states, have never thought any differently.

It was this Stalinist cornerstone that the comrades who had formed *Tribune Communiste* a year earlier confronted in 1981, the year of the Polish crisis and the coming to power of the Mitterrand popular front. In December 1981, two initiators of *Tribune Communiste* — the comrades Emile Fabrol, then a member of the *Le Communiste* leadership, and Yannick — correctly gave military support to Jaruzelski's counter-coup d'etat — a counter to the real attempt to take power by the counterrevolutionary forces of Solidarnosc. But at the same time, they fought, with others, against the position of also giving political support to the Polish bureaucracy. They wrote of the state of siege, "these measures will not settle anything basic as long as the lines are not called into question: political line of capitulating to nationalist, petty bourgeois and reactionary forces, economic line consisting of ever increasing subordination of the economy to imperialist capitalist countries."

At the same time, they were among those who convinced the editorial board majority of *Le Communiste* to refuse, for the first time, to vote for the PCF in the legislative elections of June 1981, in opposition to the entry of the PCF in an anti-working class, anti-Soviet popular front. Their factional opponents called for "a vote in principle for the party of the working class."

This was the intersection of the Russian question and the popular front — to build such class

Pathfinder



Paris, 27 January: LTF/Tribune Communiste contingent in PCF-called protest against the fascist Le Pen.

propelled the growth of the student "New Left," the elitist "Red University" radicalism, and so on — endless efforts to find an elusive "new mass vanguard" as a substitute for the Leninist struggle to break the working class programmatically from its traditional reformist leadership. The essential method of Pabloism is "let the other guys do it," with the candidates for the "other guys" changing rapidly as the impressionists scramble to tail after whatever seems to be "moving." Thus in recent years, Ernest Mandel & Co became "Eurotrotskyists" tailing the most right-wing sectors of the Western Stalinist parties and the social-democrats directly, attempting to broker a lash-up of the "far left" that could act as a pressure group on the popular front. In the service of Cold War social democracy they today hail clerical-nationalist Solidarnosc and call for the withdrawal of the Red Army from Afghanistan in the face of the CIA-backed Islamic reactionaries.

In the France of 1954, Michele Mestre and Matthias Corvin, former leaders of the French section of the FI and associated with Pablo, took Pabloism to its logical conclusion by founding *Le Communiste*. They broke openly with Trotskyism and began a quarter-century of semi-clandestine "opposition" as the would-be left conscience of the PCF. As the comrades of *Tribune Communiste* wrote:

"As 'Le Communiste' left, it discovered a 'fundamental error' in the Fourth International, namely that the parties of the Third International had never betrayed the cause of proletarian revolution. In her pamphlet entitled

deduced to the role of a tool of the bureaucracy; the execution of virtually all of the 1917 Bolshevik Central Committee; the decapitation of the Red Army; the defeat of the German proletariat; the crushing of the Chinese revolution; the defeat in Spain — all that was reduced to the level of a mere opportunist course which one can undertake to correct."

— "From the Illusory Transformation of the PCF..."

What the founding charter of *Le Communiste* termed the "defense of the USSR" was in reality the defense of the Soviet bureaucracy. A "process of regeneration" was substituted for proletarian political revolution and *Le Communiste* naturally hailed both Khrushchev's 20th Congress speech and the crushing of the Hungarian Revolution later that same year.

Ironically, Mestre herself, in spite of these apologies for Stalinism, was never admitted to membership in the PCF, a party which *Le Communiste* continued to hold was "the party of the working class" even in the face of the PCF's betrayal of a pre-revolutionary situation in May 1968.

THE CORNERSTONE OF STALINISM

Against more than 60 years of defeats and betrayals for which Stalinism is responsible, Trotskyism represents the expression of a scientifically grounded historical optimism: the party, bearer of the revolutionary program expressing the historic interests of the working class, can win the proletariat away from its treacherous traditional leaders to undertake the socialist transformation of the



James P Cannon, founding leader of American Trotskyism.

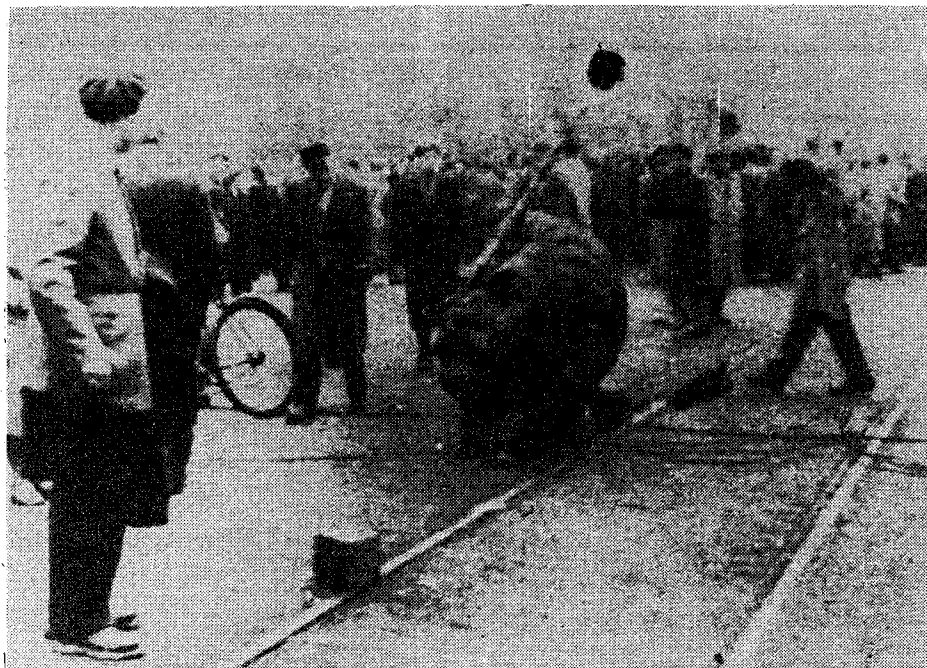
AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

collaborationist alliances the bourgeoisie demands of its labor lieutenants two key guarantees: not to touch capitalist property relations and to support "national defense." As the PCF's support to the Laval-Stalin pact of 1935 (in which Stalin "fully approved" the need for French imperialism's military preparations) was integral to the formation of the popular front, so the PCF support to the anti-Soviet force de frappe (and a joint declaration with the Socialist Party calling for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, in June 1981) was a necessary precondition for its participation in the Mitterrand government.

The positions of the comrades of Tribune Communiste were principled, yet partial, and not yet generalized. But the Stalinist methodology which had frozen Le Communiste in its sterile and deeply opportunist apologies for betrayal had begun to break down.

THE CONFRONTATION WITH TROTSKYISM

The LTF was alone among the "far left" groups in France in opposing a vote to the "Socialist" Cold Warrior Mitterrand. In the fall of 1980, the LTF raised the possibility of savagely critical support to Marchais of the PCF. The Cold War offensive by the social democracy had pushed the



Hungary, 1956: beginning of proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy.

leaflet, "Stop Solidarnosc counter-revolution," in front of a meeting with Walesa hosted by the pro-PCF CGT trade-union federation. "I agree with you about Poland, but I have my orders," complained one of them.

Similarly in January 1982, during the wave of anti-Communist hysteria following the blocking of Solidarnosc' attempted coup, the LTF proposed to the UEC, the Stalinist student organization, at the Paris campus of Tolbiac, a jointly defended debate on the topic "How Should the Social

In fact, the PCF is no place for a communist and there is an alternative — the revolutionary program with which Lenin and Trotsky led the Russian Revolution."

— Le Bolchevik No 27, September 1981.

We didn't know it at the time, but the comrades of Tribune Communiste were even then beginning to break with the philistine notion that "the working class has the leadership it deserves."

In November 1982, Tribune Communiste broke with Le Communiste. In the next four years it passed through a number of loose "committees" federating a number of local "anti-opportunist" groups. Le Communiste encouraged the multiplication of such local groups — as a purely literary, external pressure group on the PCF. The "anti-opportunist" current, which Tribune Communiste correctly notes was a "hybrid concept" in between "revolutionary" and "opportunist," was incapable of Leninist functioning.)

They ended up in the "United Communist Regroupment" (RCU) which proposed to go back to the traditions of the Communist International without any analysis of how or why the International had been destroyed! In September 1986 they were expelled from the RCU for the heresy of proposing to actually recruit militants out of the PCF. Tribune Communiste was frustrated with the "anti-opportunist" "circle spirit"; they wanted to intervene into reality armed with a program. They began to notice that it was the LTF with its forthright declaration that "the PCF is no place for a communist!" which was having some modest success in recruiting militants from the PCF. It was indicative of their break from the sclerosis of the whole Le Communiste tradition that shortly before entering into political discussions with the LTF, they proposed a united front action in Paris in the context of a campaign initiated by the LTF against the racist discrimination practiced by the "Flunch" cafeteria in Rouen.

REFORGE THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL!

These comrades described their quandary after being expelled from the RCU as follows: "At first, it seemed to us that we had to rethink everything, which, given our forces, could make one

despair. For us, the continuity the revolutionary struggle been broken by Stalinism in 19... there was a gap of fifty years of experience of the workers movement to be bridged."

In their evolution to the left, they were repulsed by the pro-social democratic anti-Sovietism of the entire fake-Trotskyist left: the gangsters of Lambert's PCI (Parti Communiste Internationaliste), the economist philistines of Lutte Ouvriere and the Pabloite LCR (Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire), which found the pro-Mitterrand, anti-Soviet "Renovateur" Pierre Juquin (who led a recent rightist split out of the PCF) more to its taste. Indeed, more than once, the comrades of Tribune Communiste found themselves intervening against the popular front, against Solidarnosc, for the Red Army in Afghanistan in parallel to the LTF against the pseudo-Trotskyists.

When they began discussing with the LTF in the summer of 1987, two central questions remained to be resolved. The first was the nature of the bureaucracy as shown particularly over the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. As they write: "We conceived the question of revitalizing the soviets in the USSR and the deformed workers states abstractly and inconsistently. Our view that the intervention of Soviet troops [in Hungary] against the workers councils was an act in defense of the gains of October; that the workers councils were a kind of Solidarnosc, did not stand up to an analysis of the facts and historic documents. Hungary 1956 was in fact an attempt to build a real dictatorship of the proletariat based on workers democracy and the power of the soviets. We would have been on the same side of the barricades as the insurgents."

The second was the question of "Trotskyism." They had accepted the declaration by Mestre of the Fourth International's "bankruptcy" and comrade Fabrol in particular had been taught by Corvin that Trotsky's analyses — the Revolution Betrayed, for example — were even correct, but now irrelevant. The real question was the continuing grip of the dogma of the PCF as "the party of the working class" and the heritage of the decades of Stalinist slander.

As late as October 1987 they put out a petition which was their last attempt at trying to influence and pressure PCF militants as PCF militants, a petition calling on the PCF not to withdraw in the second round of the upcoming presidential elections in favor of Mitterrand. But a vote to the PCF would not have been and is not even a deformed expression of opposition to the popular front and the PCF candidate had just "debated" the fascist Le Pen on television!

However, these comrades were won to the need for programmatic clarity and the conception that, as Trotsky said, "In politics the 'label' is also the 'banner,'" breaking with the essentially Pabloite notion that generalizes the surreptitious smuggling in of "Trotskyist ideas." On the eve of the fusion they participated in a joint contingent with the LTF,

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CIA-backed mullahs execute school teachers; Red Army must win in Afghanistan!

PCF into a "ghetto" of electoral isolation: for defensive reasons Marchais' hypocritical posture of independence from the bourgeoisie involved "self-criticism" of the popular fronts of 1936, 1945 and the 1972 Union of the Left ("three times is enough"). The LTF recognized in the Leninist tactic of critical support a means of exacerbating the contradictions in the PCF's campaign, setting the base of the party against the top. But in December 1980, the PCF mayor of the town of Vitry led a spectacular commando raid on a housing project inhabited by black African workers in defense of a racist quota for "his" municipality. The PCF not only defended but highlighted this revolting chauvinism in order to refurbish its patriotic credentials. The PCF's racist campaign thus rendered critical support impossible.

At the same time, the iSt's Soviet defensist line was becoming increasingly known within the ranks of the PCF. Sales of French Spartacist with the headline "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" at the 1980 May Day march were booming as one older worker exclaimed "I didn't know the Trotskyists defended the Soviet Union." In October 1981 a Stalinist security squad was given the job of moving away LTF militants distributing a

Gains in Poland Be Defended?" after the UEC had been the victim of social-democratic gangsterism. The LTF went ahead with the meeting, with a standing invitation to the UEC — if the UEC bureaucrats didn't dare show up, some of its members did, among them a future member of Tribune Communiste. Anti-communists launched a savage physical assault on the meeting, but the LTF not only successfully defended itself, it ran an aggressive campaign for its right to organize on the campus.

The LTF also sought to polarize what appeared to be, seen from the outside, a heterogeneous "anti-opportunist" milieu, and wrote:

"Whatever criticisms it makes, Le Communiste is trying to keep PCF militants inside the rotten reformist corpse of the 'Party' by avoiding any serious confrontation with the real causes of the PCF's reformism. In effect, they say that the working class cannot hope for anything better than its current treacherous leadership. They eliminate the French — and German, Polish and Russian — working classes as agents of revolutionary change by advising them to make do with what they have.

Deputy Sheriff ...

Continued from page one

enclave. And he raised the taboo subject of Pine Gap, correctly describing it as "the eavesdropping capital of the world." Furthermore he revealed for the first time the involvement of British intelligence agencies alongside the CIA in the 1975 political crisis. Whitlam's threat to release the names of CIA chiefs running Pine Gap led directly to his sacking by Sir John Kerr, the Queen's viceroy whom the CIA described as "our man."

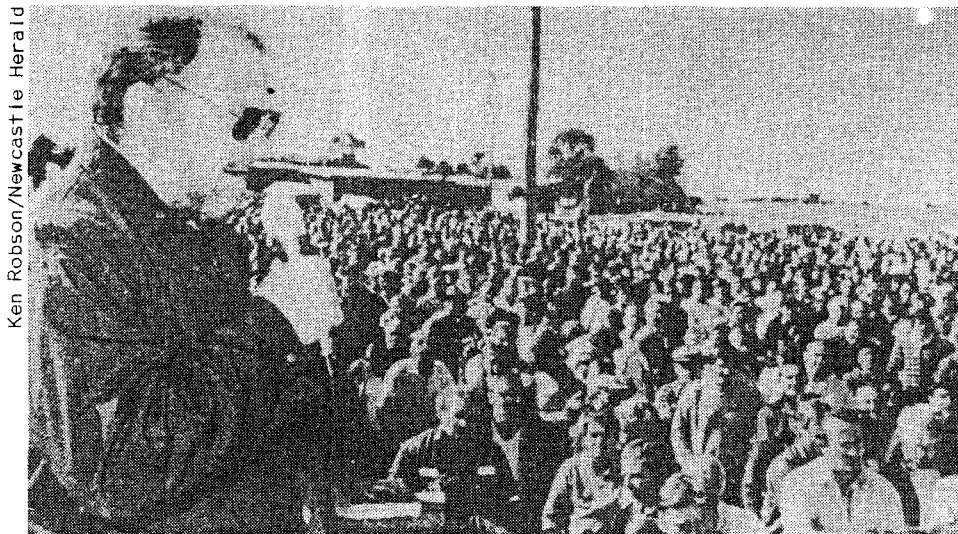
US BASES OUT!

These bases remain a burning question. Pine Gap and over a dozen other military installations in Australia are key components of US nuclear first-strike capacity aimed against the Soviet Union and Vietnam. They perform functions ranging from pin-pointing nuclear targets to relaying orders to fire to US nuclear submarines. Pine Gap taps conversations from Moscow to Peking to Hanoi to Canberra. It was a chief relay station during the 1983 KAL-007 war provocation against the Soviet Union (in which 269 people were sent to their deaths by Reagan) and again in the 1986 US terrorist bombing strike against Libya. These are war bases. Hawke knew all along what Whitlam learned the hard way. As former US Assistant Secretary of State, William Bundy, said during the Vietnam War: "You are with us come what may. Australia by its subservience has sacrificed the right to be informed." Part of Hawke's trouble is that while he is Reagan's man, he's boss of the party which backed him down over MX missile tests in 1985.

The Australian ruling class are worried about "another Vietnam" in the Philippines and the loss of the strategic US bases at Clark and Subic Bay, which Hayden has offered troops to defend. With the region increasingly unstable from South Korea to Suharto's Indonesia, the Australian bourgeoisie and its government are worried that declining US imperialism may abandon their lackey. The victorious Vietnamese revolution defeated US and Australian imperialism, and in doing so deeply polarised White Australia. The Whitlam era was conditioned by this losing war. The 1975 constitutional coup saw an eruption of intense working class anger verging on a general strike, the last major social struggle in this

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Sellout Miners Federation leader John Maitland in Branxton, 4 August. NSW Labor was routed in Hunter Valley coal mining electorates.

country. The role of Whitlam and especially then ACTU president Hawke was to quell working-class anger and to redirect it into the "safe" channels of bourgeois parliamentarism.

ALP - PARTY OF WHITE AUSTRALIAN IMPERIALISM

Back in 1983 the Spartacist League said "No vote to Labor's program of Cold War, racism and social contract!" and put forward a transitional program for a class-struggle workers party based in the trade unions to fight for a workers government. This is directly counterposed to the fake lefts who responded to the cracks in the Hawke regime by redoubling their calls for a "return to traditional Labor principles," seeking to direct the anger of the working class right back into the Labor Party by attempting to evoke the misty memory of the working class for the non-existent times when Labor was for the working man, and maybe even socialism. Labor, Whitlamesque or Hawkish, has always been the party of White Australia par excellence. The highest principle of the ALP is to tie the working class to the racist, capitalist state to defend this imperialist enclave. As even the snotty Financial Review editorialised (11 November 1987):

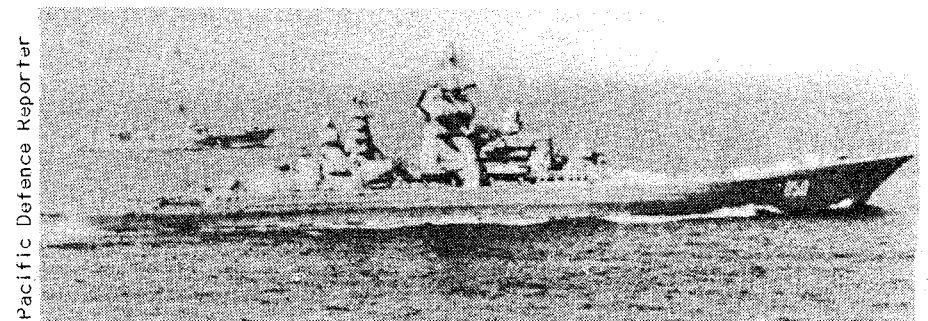
"We are told that the Labor Party has 'sold out' its socialist principles but it was only ever committed to a socialist Australia for a few hours in 1931 when, at a NSW ALP Conference, the Left slipped through a motion calling for 'socialism in our time' while the Lang faction was taking liquid refreshments. The motion was rescinded next morning."

Reduced to their essentials, the program of the fake lefts is the same as that of Hawke, and they have been an essential part of the Cold War "consensus." This syphilitic chain of Laborism runs through the left Laborite union

leaders like Maitland of the Miners Federation, to the ALP's "far left" tail. For instance, in the election, the Socialist Labour League had the absurd, yet still totally Labor-loyal line: Vote Unsworth! Expel Unsworth! All the fake left found their own particular ways of supporting Labor, from the rad-lib nationalists of the Socialist Workers Party who supported independent candidates with second preference to Labor, to the Communist Party who openly called for a return of the Unsworth government.

FOR A WORKERS STATE!

The strategic mining industry perhaps best exemplifies the crisis



Hawke is Reagan's deputy sheriff in South Pacific — HMAS Canberra shadows Soviet nuclear-powered battlecruiser, Frunze.

which the working class must resolve. Reeling from the downturn in the international coal market, miners have faced one attack after another on their jobs and conditions, with 3000 jobs gone in the last year and 7000 more in jeopardy. Their "left" leadership has offered them sellouts and reliance on the Hawke government, and despite wildcats and strike demands from the membership has sent them back to work empty-handed time after time. It's the same story around the country. The working class demonstrates a will to fight and they're sold out by their treacherous misleaders who are tied to Hawke's union-busting government. One disgruntled Hunter Valley miner, who refused to vote Labor for the first time in 40 years said of Hawke: "He hobnobs with people like Alan Bond and they're our enemy as far as I am concerned. Around here people believe that if you lay down with dogs you get up with fleas" (Australian, 26-27 March).

The widespread working class discontent must be transformed into class struggle against the government and the bosses. What is necessary is the construction of a revolutionary workers party, built through splitting the ALP base from its misleaders in the houses of parliament and the trade unions, winning the working class to an internationalist program that defends the gains of the Vietnamese and Russian Revolutions. Some class struggle now would turn around the social reaction which has been a domestic component of Hawke's drive to war. Splitting the Labor Party means a political struggle to break the working class not only from its pro-capitalist tops but from the ugly philistine racism, sexism and parochialism they inculcate in the image of the craven Australian bourgeoisie.

Against the treachery of the Laborite tops, a revolutionary leadership would fight for jobs for all, for a sliding scale of wages and hours — to share the work around with no loss in pay and maintain living standards. Fighting industrial unions must be forged as weapons of struggle. Strikes must be defended by mass picket lines which nobody dares cross. The Arbitration system which subordinates the unions to the state must be smashed. Against the racist protectionist schemes promoted by the trade

union bureaucrats, which serve to tie the worker to the interests of his master, a revolutionary leadership would fight for international solidarity with the working masses from Japan to South Korea to South Africa. Against the irrational "boom and bust" nature of the capitalist system, a revolutionary leadership would fight for a workers government to expropriate the banks, the factories, the mines and carry out the socialist reconstruction of society. ■

Revolutionary Regroupment ...

Continued from page seven

marching with the LTF under the slogans of "Worker/Immigrant Mobilizations to Smash the Fascists" and "Full Citizenship Rights for Immigrants" in the anti-fascist demonstration of 27 January organized by the PCF.

Spartacist Forums

Afghanistan: Gorbachev's Sellout Withdrawal Would Mean Bloodbath!

Canberra

Thursday, 14 April,
6.30pm
Canberra Workers
Club, Mtg Rm 1
Childers St
Canberra

Melbourne

Thursday, 5 May,
7.30pm,
YWCA
Rm 9,
489 Elizabeth St,
Melbourne

Sydney

Saturday, 7 May,
7.00pm,
YWCA
Rm 3, 2nd Fl.
5 Wentworth Ave,
Sydney.

Melbourne Class Series

Trotskyism Versus Stalinism

14 April: Permanent Revolution
28 April: Socialism in One Country and the "Third Period"
12 May: The Popular Front
9 June: The Struggle For the Fourth International

1pm, Meeting Room, Union Building, La Trobe University
For more information phone Spartacist League on (03) 654 4315.

In their fusion resolution Tribune Communiste declared the iSt to be the continuity of Trotskyism. The combat, essentially carried out by the American, British and the majority of the French sections against Pablo, resulting in the 1953 split, although partial, belated and thereby weakened, was a necessary one, one which defended the Trotskyist program against liquidationism. It made possible the continuity of Trotskyism today represented by our tendency, which arose as an opposition within the American SWP to that party's embrace, a decade after the ascendancy of Pabloist revisionism in Europe, of Pabloist objectivism expressed in uncritical adulation of a "new world reality" as represented by Castro's revolution in Cuba. Rejecting the demoralization and historical pessimism that Pabloism made into a revisionist political system, the international Spartacist tendency today fights to reforge the world party of socialist revolution on the basis of the authentic internationalist program of Lenin and Trotsky.

The regroupment with Tribune Communiste takes place on the firm foundation of the defense of the gains of the October Revolution against the increasingly discredited stream of Cold War II anti-Sovietism. Therefore, it could have a powerful impact on those left Stalinists like The Leninist in Britain who despite their political disorientation on other questions, retain an impulse to defend the Soviet Union against their own NATO-loving bourgeoisie and its servile Labourite agents within the workers movement. Tribune Communiste's struggle to come to grips with its history in the course of seeking to rediscover a Leninist orientation in effect ran the film of Pabloite liquidationism backwards: from Stalinism to Pabloism and back to authentic Trotskyism. As a consequence, not only have valuable cadre been won for the struggle to reforge the Fourth International, but our international tendency carries on that struggle with deepened experience and understanding. ■

CIA Lovers...

Continued from page two

sinister NCC and the "Grouper" red-hunters of the 1950s are its Australian counterparts, their common denominator being organised Catholic reaction in the working class — and the CIA connection.

Pro-Solidarnosc leftists were in somewhat of a quandary over these bans. The Socialist Labour League's problem is that they are in an anti-Soviet bloc with the same Hawke/McBean right wing they want the ALP to expel, so Workers News' article (18 March) on the ICFTU congress simply doesn't mention the bans. Others were less embarrassed about the CIA/Grouper company that Solidarnosc keeps. The Solidarity clot, sympathisers of Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat, admits the Labor Council's "motivation has clearly been anti-communism" yet says the bans "deserve support" (International Solidarity no 1, March-April 1988). So what if McBean and the NCC "beat an anti-communist

drum," they shrug, let's not leave them on their own. Demonstrating outside the congress was the Defend the Unions Committee, a typical Melbourne playground for fake leftists like Paul White, Alison Thorne and Socialist Action, who are cheerleaders for Laborite "lefts" like Irene Bolger and Bill Hartley. Their signs read, "ICFTU is linked to the CIA" and then pathetically they appealed to it to defend the BLF, as they did in 1986, in the name of "human rights."

BANKRUPT STALINISM

Not all the bureaucrats fell in step with the bans. The Sydney wharfies' executive passed a motion opposing them. "A number of unions are not supporting the campaign whipped up by the right-wing unions for Walesa," said Tom McDonald, national secretary of the Building Workers Industrial Union and also of the pro-Moscow Stalinist Association of Communist Unity. "Walesa is active in seeking to destabilise and undermine Socialist Poland" (Financial Review, 4 March). But militant workers won't forgive or forget the scab-herding role of McDonald and the BWIU tops in league with the Cold War FIA/McBean forces and the capitalist state in smashing the BLF — the logic of Stalinist class collaboration.

The bankruptcy of Stalinism is exemplified in Poland where bureaucratic mismanagement and conciliation of reaction produced in 1980-81 a mass clerical-nationalist movement. While Jaruzelski's military crackdown spiked Solidarnosc's attempted coup, the Polish Stalinists' repressive measures cannot deal with its legacy. Solidarnosc can only be defeated through political struggle to build a Trotskyist vanguard party and win the Polish working class back to the revolutionary communist traditions of Rosa Luxemburg. For political revolution to oust the bureaucracy, based on unconditional defence of the workers states against imperialism and capitalist restoration! At home, this means driving the friends of Solidarnosc and the CIA out of the workers movement. Break with the ACTU/ALP traitors — for a revolutionary workers party! Down with anti-communist bans! ■

Gorbachev's Afghan Sellout...

Continued from page twelve

Literaturnaya Gazeta (17 February) waxes lyrical about how "the soldiers will go back to their mothers." But pulling out of Afghanistan will not bring peace to the Soviet Union's southern border. Emboldened, the US-backed mujahedin will do everything in their power to extend Islamic counterrevolution to Soviet Central Asia, with all kinds of provocations and cross-border raids.

So there is significant opposition in Russia to surrendering Afghanistan. The above-quoted Literaturnaya Gazeta article also hints at high-level divisions over the question: "A few of our citizens, basing themselves on statism, patriotism, an understanding of the agonies, of all the problems

seizing us, 'catch out' their own state." Speculation abounds that key sections of the top Soviet leadership including former foreign minister Andrei Gromyko (known as "Mister Nyet"), KGB head Viktor Chebrikov and "hard-line officers" in the military are opposed to a Soviet withdrawal. Anatoly Dobrynin, a prominent spokesman on international relations, while expressing support for withdrawal, warns that "We are not prepared to withdraw at any cost" (Washington Post, 21 February).

Indeed, there is clearly significant opposition at all levels of Soviet society to pulling out. The regime has been pushing withdrawal as a popular demand, yet a recent poll in Moscow found only 53 percent in favor. A survey of Soviet youth — the age group who would end up going to Afghanistan — found that almost half opposed pulling out until a stable, neutral government could be left behind, and fully two out of three people were concerned that "the Western powers want to establish control over Afghanistan in order to use it as a base against the Soviet Union." One veteran of the Afghan war, Aleksandr Simonov, warns:

"The CIA would be a great threat. And if they deployed missiles there, I think that would be the end of everything....

"I don't think they [Soviet troops] should be pulled out,



Soviet forces in Afghanistan display war materiel, including land mines, captured from CIA-backed Islamic fanatics.

because then the throat-cutting will really begin. There will be a sea of blood and fights all over the country between different Afghan groups."

— New York Times Magazine, 14 February

Likewise, Victor Hirschfeld, a retired Soviet military commander, predicts, "if a bloodbath occurs after Soviet troops are brought home, people will blame him [Gorbachev]."

Contrary to the Western media and propagandists, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was generally welcomed by the population at large. This was especially so in Soviet Central Asia, which well within living memory had been a wretchedly backward, mullah-ridden society like Afghanistan. In the early days of the war one young student and reservist in Soviet Tadzhikistan explained, "most of them were glad to go to help — it's a very backward country and we are neighbors, after all" (New York Times, 11 April 1980). And today, eight

years later, the New York Times (12 February) reports: "Several Central Asian men who had served in Afghanistan, when asked their strongest personal impressions of the war, said without hesitation that they were shocked by how poorly the Afghans lived compared with their Soviet neighbors." One of the few Soviet cities to erect a monument to a martyred veteran of the Afghan war is Dushanbe, in Tadzhikistan.

In order to bring the Turkic peoples of Soviet Central Asia into the 20th century — liberating women from the veil, teaching girls as well as boys to read and write, introducing modern medicine — during the 1920s the Red Army had to fight a savage war against Islamic fundamentalists, the Basmachi, similar to the Afghan mujahedin. Today, the Gorbachev regime not only repudiates social revolution in Afghanistan but actually blames the civil war there on the left-nationalist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) for seeking to modernize their country! Thus, Aleksandr Prokhanov, an apologist for selling out Afghanistan to the CIA-backed Islamic fanatics, argues:

"Mistakes in the political line, incorrect formulas for directives, the spreading of socialism in such an 'un-Afghan,' 'un-Islamic' form that offended tradition, flowing over into violence and repression.

"... the political course of the

Kabul government has repeatedly changed. State events were preceded by mullahs' prayers. The flag ceased to be red and included a green Islamic fragment. The country's star and sickle disappeared. The party stopped speaking of constructing a socialist society.... And most important — the declaration of a policy of national reconciliation....

"All this taken together permits one to say: the original aims proclaimed by the PDPA have not been achieved.... If this is the case, the presence of Soviet forces in the country loses its meaning. A departure is inevitable and logical."

— Literaturnaya Gazeta, 17 February

In fact, it was the abandonment of a revolutionary social program which has weakened the PDPA regime. And at every step — cutting back on land reform, toning down the campaign for women's rights, restoring Islam as the state religion — the PDPA's

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Gorbachev's Afghan Sellout

Continued from page nine

policies were dictated by the Kremlin, which has held the reins of power in Kabul. More importantly, a social revolution in this profoundly backward country could only be introduced from without, through the agency of the Red Army. That is why a Soviet withdrawal, whatever policies the PDPA pursues, is necessarily a betrayal of the cause of social progress for the Afghan peoples. The prospect of a "future traditional Islamic, nonaligned Afghanistan" which Prokhanov holds out means a return to the dark night of medievalism.

In his attempt to prepare the Soviet population for pulling out of Afghanistan, Gorbachev has called the Afghan war a "bleeding wound," echoing imperialist propaganda that this was "Russia's Vietnam." For years the Americans have been hoping that the Soviet Union would get bogged down in a losing war in Afghanistan like the US war in Indochina. The comparison is spurious: America was defeated on the battlefield by the Vietnamese workers and peasants in a social revolution, whereas the Soviet bureaucracy never really tried to win in Afghanistan because it refused to implement a social revolution. One bourgeois commentator recently recognized that "The Soviet army has never committed itself fully in Afghanistan" (London Independent, 2 March).

Furthermore, the Soviet Union shares a 1,000-mile border with Afghanistan. A US-backed and fanatically anti-Communist regime in Kabul poses a direct threat to Soviet security. By contrast, the Vietnam War was an ideologically motivated anti-Communist adventure on the other side of the globe.

The difference between America's losing colonial war in Vietnam and the Soviet Union's progressive intervention in Afghanistan is captured well in the responses of their respective veterans. Large numbers of Vietnam vets came back from that filthy, racist war emotional basket cases, many angered and indeed radicalized by their experience into becoming opponents of US imperialism. Soviet veterans, in contrast, are demanding official recognition for carrying out their "internationalist duty" and deeply resent any comparison between their just war and the imperialist war in Vietnam. By all accounts, it is the veterans of the Soviet war in Afghanistan, who saw with their own eyes what a mullah victory would mean, who are in the forefront of opposition to a Red Army withdrawal.

Afghan war songs, once forbidden, are now being released on records. The secretary of a club of Afghan veterans told the West German magazine *Der Spiegel* (7 March): "Our sacrifices were not for nothing. We have after all brought there the achievements of the civilized world." One of his comrades echoed these sentiments: "The people there could at least live in peace for a while, had bread, could educate their children. What will be there tomorrow only Allah knows." Kim Selikhov,

a Soviet journalist who has covered the Afghan war, writes:

"I know many internationalist fighting men who, after completing their time in Afghanistan, ask to go to the front line again as volunteers. Those who serve here are primarily children of workers and peasants."

— *Literaturnaya Gazeta*,
14 October 1987

"The time has come," Selikhov demands, "to erect a monument in Moscow to the Soviet internationalists who have died valiantly in foreign lands at various times in our history."

Soviet veterans of the Afghan war justly view themselves as fighters for revolutionary internationalism. But the Kremlin bureaucrats abuse and betray these ideals. To truly build a monument to Soviet internationalism in Moscow, it is necessary to oust the Stalinist usurpers and return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky.

— Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 449, 25 March 1988

Fake Left in Cold War Vice ...

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deadline has since been buried under an avalanche of ever more humiliating "conditions" and ultimatums by the Americans and their Pakistani clients, finally forcing the Soviets to postpone the beginning of the withdrawal. But the Kremlin remains adamant about pulling out, agreement or no.

From the outset, all wings of the imperialist rulers loved the Afghan war. Here the Democrats were the hardliners, seeing an opportunity to get Russian soldiers killed on the cheap without danger of getting sucked into "another Vietnam" as in Central America. From "Socialist" Mitterrand's France to Tory Thatcher's Britain to Hawke's Labor government, the US' imperialist allies enthusiastically echoed Washington's declaration of Cold War II over Afghanistan, parroted by their lackeys on the left and in the labour bureaucracy. We Trotskyists, however, loudly proclaimed, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!", pointing out that the Soviet intervention provided a lifeline for the Afghan masses out of medieval misery and into the 20th century. Today we warn emphatically of the terrible consequences which withdrawal will have on the Afghan peoples and the Soviet workers state. Red Army — Mop up the mullah-led insurgency! Extend the social gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples!

Now even the most stalwart imperialist backers of the mujahedin are predicting a bloodbath. US officials describe Gulbaddin Hekmatyar, one of the main fundamentalist chiefs and recipient of \$200 million in CIA aid since 1979 as "scary ... vicious ... a fascist." Meanwhile the mullahs' Pakistani godfathers have been aggressively acquiring nuclear weapons capability, effectively bankrolled by the US as a quid pro quo for providing a staging ground for the Afghan counterrevolutionaries.

In the face of the Cold War frenzy over Afghanistan, the

international Spartacist tendency took a clear stand:

"There can be no question that for revolutionaries our side in this conflict is with the Red Army. In fact, although uncalled for militarily, a natural response on the part of the world's young leftists would be an enthusiastic desire to join an international brigade to fight the reactionary CIA-connected rebels."

— "Hail Red Army!"
Spartacist No 27-28,
Winter 1979-80

This was an elementary position for any leftist, let alone a Trotskyist. But the Spartacist tendency was unique. Why?

Because over Afghanistan there was no middle ground. When the imperialists declared Cold War II, you had to choose which side you were on. Many of the fake-Trotskyists had already enlisted as foot soldiers in Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" crusade. And as the Soviets fought CIA-backed mullahs, these "anti-imperialists" joined the imperialist hue and cry over Afghanistan. In different ways — some squirming, some cheering — they took their side: with Islamic reaction and their "own" bourgeoisie. The bottom line was anti-Sovietism.

LEFT APOLOGISTS FOR CIA'S AFGHAN WARRIORS

Within Ernest Mandel's "United Secretariat of the Fourth International," one wing (led by Tariq Ali) openly endorsed the Cold War "containment" line of "Soviet troops out." Jack Barnes'

is no mythical "third camp": calling for Soviet withdrawal is supporting the CIA's mullah-led warriors.

For anyone claiming to follow the program of Leon Trotsky's Fourth International, unconditional defence of the Soviet Union against imperialism is ABC. But where the Mandelites squirmed, the late Argentine adventurer Nahuel Moreno flaunted the absurdity of trying to combine opposition to the Soviet intervention with any pretence of Trotskyism. First Moreno's followers denounced the Soviets' "criminal action against the Afghan people" and rhapsodised about the "possibility of extending the Iranian revolution within the borders of the USSR" (see "Morenoites Call for Counterrevolution in USSR," *Workers Vanguard* No 249, 8 February 1980). The CIA was putting its money on precisely this "option." But in a 1985 resolution, after luridly denouncing Soviet "barbarism," "massacres," "economic pillage" and "genocidal war" against the Afghan people and calling for Soviet withdrawal, they then call on the Red Army to carry out a social revolution by "expropriating the landlords and laying the political basis for the emergence of a workers state in Afghanistan" (*El Socialista* [Nicaragua], May 1985).

For years the Morenoites denounced Soviet intervention in Afghanistan as a "counterrevolutionary operation in the service of democratic stability and imperialism." But now that the Kremlin

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The international Spartacist tendency stood out internationally in hailing Red Army against Islamic reaction in Afghanistan.

American Socialist Workers Party supported the Soviet-backed People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) regime but denied that the Soviet intervention was an issue. And the Mandelite USec majority condemned the Soviet intervention, while drawing back at calling for withdrawal.

As the imperialists turned on the heat in the coming months, the Barnesites, fearing they sounded too much like the "Sperts," decided Soviet intervention was an issue and condemned it. And the Mandelites began squealing for Soviet troops out. A recent recap of the USec's positions on Afghanistan laments that "many people still confuse calling clearly for withdrawal of the Soviet troops with an attitude of support for the Mujahideen" (*International Viewpoint*, 6 April 1987). Why this "confusion"? Because in bloody Afghanistan there

has agreed to withdrawal, they have the chutzpah to denounce Moscow for the "great global agreement between imperialism and the counterrevolutionary soviet bureaucracy ... to prevent revolutionary processes in those hot spots" such as Afghanistan and Nicaragua (*Working Class Opposition* [USA], November 1987). The Australian Socialist Labour League (SLL) is pushing a similar line. Having demanded a Soviet withdrawal for years, they now sound openly "third camp," denouncing Gorbachev's proposed withdrawal as "collaborating with US imperialism against the revolutionary struggle of the working class and the oppressed masses on a world scale" (*Workers News*, 11 March). The tiny Communist League, which split from the SLL in early 1986, announced then that they were "discussing" their position on Afghanistan. Until recently they were pursuing unity

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

with the international Morenoite tendency: one anti-Soviet cess-pool after another.

Most of the pseudo-Trotskyist left, however, has taken refuge in empty "factual" reporting about the prospect of the Soviet withdrawal they longed for, with a deafening silence about the mass slaughter which will accompany it. This is the case for both the American SWP and the Mandeliste USec majority. But some in this anti-Soviet swamp have no compunctions whatever. Sean Matgamna's group, buried deep in the NATO-loyal British Labour Party, denounces the Soviet intervention as a "war of colonial conquest," and even while admitting that "Muslim fundamentalism is very strong" and dismissing illusions in a "neutralist" coalition government, Matgamna rants: "Despite all this, the USSR can be driven out. It deserves to be driven out!" (*Socialist Organiser*, 14 January). This Stalinophobe positively welcomes the impending bloodbath by the Islamic reactionaries.

Jim Percy's Australian SWP (which fell out with Barnes, broke their ties with the USec and became rabid anti-Trotskyists) has continued to support the mythical "Afghan people's revolution" whilst pretending the Russian Question doesn't exist. Today, they have taken to calling the mullahs "contras," and are fulsome supporters of Gorbachev's proposed withdrawal on the road to "international peace" through concessions to Reagan. The prospect of a bloodbath in Afghanistan (or indeed in Kampuchea where they favour a Vietnamese withdrawal) is irrelevant to these rabid Australian nationalists.

AFGANOS, KABULISTI AND TANKIES: WHAT NOW?

The left-Stalinist milieu has seen a symmetrically opposite development. A decade ago, most of the West European CPs sharply divided between Moscow-loyal Stalinists and so-called Euro-communists who sought to integrate themselves into mainstream social democracy. When the Red Army crossed the Afghan border, the "Euros" joined with their own bourgeoisies in anti-Soviet vituperation. What had been a seething cauldron erupted in open factional warfare, as those Stalinists — variously labeled "afganos" (in Spain), "kabulisti" (in Italy) and "tankies" (in Britain) — who wanted to maintain at least some semblance of opposition to NATO imperialism came out in support of the Soviet tanks moving into Afghanistan. It was a knee-jerk reaction: educated in the Stalinist school of class collaboration, they could go no further than pressure groups for the Moscow bureaucracy aimed at pulling their recalcitrant, pro-NATO leaderships into line.

But now the Kremlin has effectively disowned their struggle and denounced all they stood for as "Trotskyite heresy." With Gorbachev's renewed "detente" offensive aimed at conciliating US imperialism, many of these left-Stalinists are at a loss. Do they simply repudiate the last ten years of struggle against the pro-NATO compromisers who opposed the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan from the outset, or do they look in the mirror and see



1979 Soviet intervention in Afghanistan posed Russian Question pointblank. We stood firm while the fake-Trotskyists sang Washington's tune.

there the ogre of "Trotskyite heresy"? Some in this "anti-opportunist" milieu were already driven to develop broader criticisms of the Stalinist bureaucracy, particularly when the flowering of a mass-based counterrevolutionary movement in Poland exposed the criminal incapacity of the Stalinist regime there. In France the Tribune Communiste group made a clean break from Stalinism and last month fused with the French section of the iSt.

In Britain, a group in and around the Communist Party affiliated to the so-called "Leninist" wing of the Turkish Communist Party in exile ran a headline demanding, "Afghanistan: no sell-out!" (*Leninist*, 10 February). In recent months the *Leninist* not only has expressed its opposition to Gorbachev's INF missile deal with Reagan, but has come out with a call for a political revolution against the Soviet bureaucracy, even identifying the decisive degeneration of the Soviet Union and the consolidation of bureaucratic power with Stalin's pronouncement of "socialism in one country" in 1924. However; despite these rather exceptional declarations, the *Leninist* still carries with it much of the political baggage of Stalinism. Against Gorbachev's Afghanistan policy, they argue:

"The Soviet Union has no right to horse trade the Afghan revolution. It is a living revolution, not a piece of real estate. The Afghan revolution was not facilitated by the presence of the Soviet Army. The revolution was the work of Afghan revolutionaries organised in the *Khalqi* wing of the PDPA. A proletarian dictatorship was established through local daring and initiative."

Viewing the Afghan war through the nationalist prism of Stalinism, albeit of a Third Worldist variety, the *Leninist* is forced to conjure up a dictatorship of the proletariat in a country where there is no proletariat to speak of. And they ordain as a proletarian revolution a putsch by a group of reform-minded petty-bourgeois nationalists, primarily junior officers in the Afghan Army, of the *Khalqi* wing of the PDPA. In fact, Afghanistan is not even a nation but a feudal-derived state com-

prising a mosaic of nationalities, ethnic and tribal groupings. Much of the rural population has never lived under the effective rule of any central state power. Now even the US imperialists are worried that the various factions of the *mujahedin* will slaughter one another (and reportedly they have already begun to do so). If Soviet Central Asia is taken as a model, the various peoples of Afghanistan would enjoy more national rights in a Soviet-bloc satellite than under an "Islamic republic."

In its previous issue, the *Leninist* (21 January) denounces as an example of "big power chauvinism" a statement by *Izvestia* that the Red Army went into Afghanistan to wipe out a hostile regime on its border. From the standpoint of proletarian internationalism, the Red Army has not only the right but the duty to defend its borders against CIA-backed reactionary insurgencies. When Pilsudski's Poland, acting as cat's paw for the French imperialists, invaded Soviet Russia in 1920, Lenin argued for transforming the Red Army's defensive campaign into a military offensive aimed at revolutionary war — and Poland was a modern, industrialised nation-state. While Trotsky opposed waging a revolutionary war on Poland at this time, he did so on tactical grounds, not as a matter of principle.

RETURN TO THE ROAD OF LENIN AND TROTSKY!

From the standpoint of the Soviet bureaucracy, which seeks to defend its privileged position atop the collectivised economy through futile attempts at placating hostile world imperialism, Gorbachev & Co now see sending troops into Afghanistan as an inadvertent adventure. But from the standpoint of Bolshevik internationalism, defence of the Soviet Union required intervention against the imperialist-bankrolled anti-Communist uprising on its border and raised the real possibility of bringing social revolution to this hideously backward country on the bayonets of the Red Army. To be sure, a Leninist government in the Kremlin would have announced its revolutionary mission from the outset rather than seeking to conciliate the

feudalist opposition. As we pointed out some years ago:

"... instead of capitulating to the mullah reaction, by limiting land reform and literacy campaigns, the Soviets should be pouring the money in there on a massive scale: land to the tiller and cheap credit, health programs, etc. But that means social revolution, a tremendous leap from feudalist backwardness to proletarian dictatorship on the backs of the Soviet Red Army. And that does not square with the Kremlin's policies of detente and 'two-stage' revolution. Reformism abroad, by conciliating the forces of reaction, undermines defense of the Soviet Union."

-- "Reagan, Begin & Hitler,"
Workers Vanguard No 308,
25 June 1982

The counterpart of the Stalinist-nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country" on the international plane is the "popular front," class collaboration tying the workers and oppressed to their exploiters as a bulwark against revolution. Now the counterrevolutionary repercussions of Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan will be felt internationally, from South African blacks fighting apartheid slavery to the Nicaraguan masses pitted against CIA contra terror.

In his statement giving the timetable for pulling out of Afghanistan Gorbachev promised, "When the Afghan knot is untied, it will have the most profound impact on other regional conflicts.... Behind the political settlement in Afghanistan already looms a question: which conflict will be settled next? And it is certain that more is to follow." So now there is increasing pressure on the Vietnamese to pull out of Kampuchea in an attempt at a rapprochement with the US-allied Peking Stalinists. Now a leading Soviet journal (*Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 17 February) proclaims that "international cooperation" over "national reconciliation" with the CIA's *mujahedin* in Afghanistan is a model for "liquidating regional conflicts," for example by "the revolutionary government of Nicaragua" in dealing with the CIA's *contras*. And now the Soviets are pressuring the ANC to make a deal with Pretoria that, according to the *Los Angeles Times* (5 February), "would give the white minority an effective veto within a majority-rule government."

From the strangulation of the Spanish Revolution in the 1930s, which paved the way to Hitler's Operation Barbarossa, to Gorbachev's acquiescence to the "Reagan doctrine" of global counterrevolution, the Stalinist bureaucracy's nationalist perspective serves only to endanger the Soviet degenerated workers state. To restore the Soviet state and the Red Army to their revolutionary and internationalist mission requires a proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist usurpers of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party. Today that means the struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International, as the continuity of the revolutionary Communist International.

— Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 449, 25 March 1988



Gorbachev's Afghan Sellout: Some Russians Say Nyet

Faced with a massive imperialist military buildup and domestic economic stagnation, the response of the Gorbachev regime has been to introduce market-oriented reforms at home while seeking to accommodate the rapacious imperialist warmongers abroad. The Kremlin's desire to get out of Afghanistan is in fact the international extension of perestroika, Gorbachev's policy of economic "restructuring" labeled "new thinking." Now the 1979 Red Army intervention is called a "mistake" of the "old way of thinking under Brezhnev." To be sure, it was the first time since World War II that the USSR has committed troops outside the borders of the Soviet bloc. But this was in response to the growing aggressiveness of US imperialism, seeking to recover from its humiliating Vietnam debacle. In addition to Washington's arming of the Afghan counterrevolutionary mujahedin, 1979 was the year that NATO voted to deploy first-strike



Moscow club of Afghan war veterans with decorated veteran of World War II. Soviet soldiers are demanding official recognition for their internationalist duty in Afghanistan.

Pershing 2 missiles in Europe, only six minutes flying time from Moscow.

The stodgy Brezhnev was hardly the global class warrior he is now made out to be. The con-

servative bureaucrats in the Kremlin simply wanted to make secure an unstable, strategically placed client state. Though this objectively opened up the possibility of a social revolution

through the Sovietization of Afghanistan, almost from the outset the Kremlin tried to limit the scale of social reforms in order to conciliate the feudal opposition. Committed to its nationalist dogma of building "socialism in one country," the bureaucracy maintained a shamefaced silence about the Afghan war. Far from being a measure of the war's unpopularity at home, as the bourgeois press claimed, this refusal to acknowledge what many Soviet citizens rightly saw as their internationalist role in Afghanistan was deeply resented by the population at large. Popular demands were not for withdrawal, but for official recognition of the sacrifice of the sons of the Soviet Union who fell fighting in the internationalist cause.

Now that the Gorbachev regime has decided to pull out, it is actually encouraging war-weariness at home, which certainly exists. A lead article in *Continued on page nine*

Afghanistan: Soviet Pullout Would Mean Bloodbath

Fake-Lefts Caught in Cold War Vice

The nuclear nuts in Washington are gloating over the prospect of achieving at the bargaining table in Geneva what they couldn't win in more than eight years on the battlefields of Afghanistan: the withdrawal of Soviet troops sent in to combat a bloodthirsty CIA-sponsored feudal insurgency. In a dramatic February 8 announcement on Soviet TV, Mikhail Gorbachev confirmed his intention to pull the Red Army out, if an agreement was reached with the US and Pakistan at the Geneva talks by March 15. Gorbachev's *Continued on page ten*



Afghan women march through Kabul (left); Reagan's Afghan cutthroats pose over downed Soviet pilot. Victory of Islamic reactionaries would mean re-enslavement of women, mass slaughter in Kabul.

