

# SPARTACIST

CANADA

Summer 1988 No. 71 25¢

## "Peace" Accords Threaten Nicaraguan Revolution

# U.S., Canada: Hands Off Central America!



Workers Vanguard



Ron Poling/CP

**Sandinista troops (left) whipped Reagan's contra army. External Affairs Minister Joe Clark (right, with Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega) wants Canadian "peacekeepers" to help strangle revolution.**

APRIL 20--The cease-fire accord between the radical-nationalist Sandinista government and the U.S.-created contra terrorist army poses grave dangers to the Nicaraguan Revolution. The loser contras, beaten on the battlefield and their arms pipeline cut off, say they were forced to stop the fighting--and that's a very good thing. But in exchange for recognition of its rule, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) has given danger-

ous guarantees to the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie and its imperialist patrons which could spell the rollback of many of the limited social gains achieved by the overthrow of the Somoza tyranny. The Sandinistas are offering to run Nicaragua within the limits set by imperialism, with the U.S. Democrats rather than Ronald Reagan calling the tune. And Washington's Canadian junior partners are ready, *(continued on page 19)*

**Revolutionary Regroupment in France . . . . . 8**

## Letter

# Stalinism and National Oppression in India

[India]  
9-12-87

Dear Comrades,

Thanks for your excellent article "CP Hails Racist Crackdown on Sikhs" (SC, Nov. 1987). Not only are the Stalinists providing suitable cover for racist immigration policies in America, Europe and Australasia, they are the dirtiest apologists of national oppression in the sub-continent. "Extremism," "separatism" and "national solidarity" are the words



No Credit

**Rail strikers in New Delhi. Indian proletariat is key to social liberation of all oppressed.**

in their fashion now. Threats of "Balkanization" have suppressed even the mildest talk about the principle of self-determination. As early as 1975, the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India (Marxist)]—whose Marxism is confined to brackets—declared that the right of self-determination of nations does not apply to India as there is no dominant, oppressing nation. What does it mean but a slavish attempt to beautify capitalism? In a big capitalist country full of numerous ethnic groups and languages, full of regional disparities, national oppression can and does remain even without one national group dominating over all the rest in the whole country. Some ethnic group or groups dominant in a region can and do oppress a minority there. Thus, the Bengalis are not a dominant group in India but they are able to oppress the Gorkha minority in West Bengal. In Punjab, it is the Sikh majority which is oppressed by the non-Sikh majority of India today. Stalinists find it inconvenient to admit such

reality now and vulgarise Marxism—not a new business to them.

Stalinists in India had a different position on national question in 1971. They supported the separatist movement of Awami League at that time. They hailed the armed intervention of India that resulted in the dismemberment of Pakistan and creation of Bangladesh. They encouraged "separatist" movements in Sindh, Beluchistan and NWFP [North-West Frontier Province] of Pakistan too at the time. Now they are opposed not only to the nationalist movements of the Sikhs & Gorkhas, they are also the vehement supporters of Indo-Sri Lanka accord and Rajiv Gandhi's *Innocent People Killing Force* (as the Tamils rightly call the Indian Peace Keeping Force) in Sri Lanka. That seems rather a paradox.

The paradox is explained by the nature of Stalinism. Stalinism in India is now (for all intents and purposes) a true copy of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in U.K. When the ruling class supported the separatist moves in Pakistan in 1970s, Stalinist patriots followed suit. When the ruling class in India is denouncing "separatism" in India and Sri Lanka, what else can the guys do? That is one aspect of the phenomenon. There is another aspect too. Most of the "left," "socialist," "communist" and "revolutionary" organisations are based in West Bengal and led by Bengali petty-bourgeoisie. Therefore, they cannot overcome prejudices of the Bengali intellectuals. They can disregard the national feelings of other nationalities and ignore their interests but that is inconceivable in case of anything involving the Bengalis. So what CPI(M) leaders like Surjeet can easily pronounce about the Sikhs, has to be suppressed in case of Bengalis. They do not say, for example, that there are Bengali extremists in West Bengal who use time-bombs against Hindi and Nepali-speaking minority there. People who read the Stalinist organs will never learn that Bengali extremism (Ananda Marg and its front  
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## SPARTACIST CANADA

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## Racist Killer Cop Walks in Montreal

# “Vengeance for Anthony Griffin!”

November 11, 1987: 19-year-old black youth Anthony Griffin gunned down in cold blood outside a Montreal police station. February 24, 1988: white killer cop Allan Gosset set free by an all-white jury. Anthony's mother left weeping; Gosset, smiling, praised by his superiors, demands his gun back. Two weeks later Manitoba Native leader John Joseph Harper is blown away by trigger-happy Winnipeg cops. It's racist murder and capitalist "justice" stamped Made-in-Canada, the land hailed by KKK scum as "the last bastion of white supremacy."

Voicing their outrage and grief, three times in recent months thousands of angry demonstrators filled Montreal's streets crying "Gosset murderer!" and "We want justice!" The racist capitalist state answered by holding the riot squad at the ready while appointing one whitewash "investigation" after another. They want to head off a social explosion by selling the lie that the cops, their hired guns, can be reformed. But black youth in Toronto's Lawrence Heights, for example, know that more minority cops, "education" programs, review commissions and complaint boards haven't for one second stopped the uniformed racists from terrorizing their community.

Proclaiming that "Vengeance for Anthony Griffin requires mobilizing the social power of labor and all oppressed to smash racist terror and fight for working-class power," the Trotskyist League sold hundreds of the February *Spartacist Canada* in Montreal and Toronto to anti-racist protesters. Our militant contingent at a February 27 Toronto rally was prominently featured on local TV as our chant "Smash cop terror! For labor/black defense!" struck a responsive chord. TL spokesman Oliver Stephens addressed the rally to applause and calls of "Right on!" We print his speech below.

Brothers and sisters,

So once again a killer cop has walked. We of the Trotskyist League say that Gosset should be jailed, the key should be thrown in the St. Lawrence River to keep him there! We share the pain of Anthony's family, we've lost too many people to racist cop terror in this country! It's time for us all to say enough! From Howard Beach to Montreal, from Chicago to Lawrence Heights the racists in and out

of uniform are on the rampage. And they've gotten the green light from Ottawa, from Washington.

The capitalists, what do they say: It's open season on Tamils, on Sikhs, on Central American refugees. It's open season on black people. It's open season for union-busting. And it's the same people in the



SC Photo

**TL contingent in Toronto protest, February 27: "Smash cop terror! For labor/black defense!"**

White House and on Sussex Drive who back to the hilt the apartheid butchers in South Africa, the contra terrorists against Nicaragua, the new Duvaliers in Haiti, the Afghan landlords and mullahs who want to buy and sell women like slaves. What they want to do is to go to war against Russia, and so they're going to war against us right here at home. And so they slaughtered the MOVE people in Philadelphia, they've killed Albert Johnson, they've killed Buddy Evans and now they've killed Anthony Griffin.

But the race terrorists can be stopped! We can turn things around. In Chicago the cops tried to frame up black transit worker Cassandra Seay and her mother Callie Bryant. But union militants mobilized the social power of labor and they smashed that frame-up. Cassandra beat back the cops' attack not by looking to the racist courts, not by looking for public inquiries or complaints commissions—which are set up to whitewash the cops, which we just saw, which are set up to fool the people. It was an outpouring of labor/minority mobilization that won.

(continued on page 4)

## India...

(continued from page 2)

organisations like AMRA BANGALI) is a reality—a force the working class must fight tooth and nail. Whom do such policies serve? That is anybody's guess. With warm greetings,

Fraternally  
Asian Villager

*Spartacist Canada replies:* We appreciated this informative response to our article condemning the Communist Party's despicable contribution to the Canadian state's racist anti-Sikh crackdown. The nationalist logic of "socialism in one country" means backing Kremlin foreign policy and since capitalist India has long been a diplomatic ally of the Soviet Union, that means the Indian Stalinists are the most loyal allies of the Hindu-chauvinist Indian rulers. Thus, as our reader points out, they hail crackdowns on oppressed minorities in India itself as easily as they supported India as a regional gendarme in Bangladesh in the 1970s or in Sri Lanka today.

Like tsarist Russia before the liberating Bolshevik Revolution, India is a "prison-house of peoples," where the struggles of oppressed national and religious minorities could at any moment explode the flimsy veneer of "secular unity." Unlike the Stalinists, truly the "dirtiest apologists for national oppression," we Trotskyists defend national and relig-

ious minorities against Hindu chauvinism. But there can be no just solution to national oppression under capitalism. With its thin stratum of wealthy bourgeois who rule in alliance with the feudal landlords, and with its regional "great power" aspirations, India is the embodiment of combined and uneven development. The Indian bourgeoisie are the inheritors and practitioners of the murderous "divide and rule" schemes of their former British imperialist masters, which led directly to the horrible communal bloodbath of the 1947 Partition.

Key to transcending the cycle of communal bloodshed is the mobilization of the powerful Indian working class, itself often a target of communal terror since it is frequently drawn from local and migrant minorities. As Leon Trotsky wrote on the eve of World War II: "Only the proletariat is capable of advancing a bold, revolutionary agrarian program, of rousing and rallying tens of millions of peasants and leading them in struggle against the native oppressors and British imperialism. The alliance of workers and poor peasants is the only honest, reliable alliance that can assure the final victory of the Indian revolution" ("India Faced With Imperialist War," *Writings* [1939-40]). A proletarian vanguard party must be forged in the struggle for the permanent revolution, and against all national, religious, caste and sex oppression. The proletariat in power alone can guarantee exercise of the democratic right of self-determination, and in a Socialist Federation of South Asia the millions of oppressed throughout the subcontinent will find their emancipation. ■

## Anthony Griffin...

(continued from page 3)

Look, when the cops murdered Anthony Griffin all Montreal labor should have been out on the streets to make sure that Gosset got what he deserved. And Anthony's family should get every penny they can out of this racist capitalist system. What we need, what we so desperately need is the kind of labor/minority mobilization that 5,000-strong stopped the KKK cold in Washington, D.C. in 1982. To stop the Klan then took the revolutionary leadership of our comrades in the Spartacist League/U.S. That's the kind of leadership that we need across North America to win black freedom and to win liberation for all the oppressed. We've got to forge that kind of multiracial party, a fighting workers party that can unite all the oppressed with the power of labor to sweep away the lynch mobs, the racist cops, their buddies in the white sheets, their buddies in the three piece suits—

that can sweep away the whole damn capitalist system through North American socialist revolution. That's how we'll get vengeance for Anthony Griffin! That's how we can honor the memory of all the too many who have fallen in this racist society!

Thank you very much. ■

### Contact the Trotskyist League

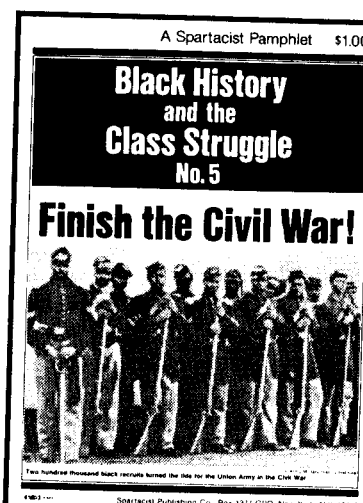
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# Stop the Deportations!

## Full Citizenship Rights for Foreign-Born Workers!

They marched from Montreal to Ottawa, 235 kilometers in eight grueling days, seeking fairness and compassion from a government that doesn't know the meaning of the words. A hundred and sixty poor Turkish immigrants won support for their dignified protest in towns and villages throughout western Quebec, and when they reached Parliament Hill on April 12 they were joined by 1,000 other demonstrators. They sought only the right for themselves, their families and their fellow Turkish-born workers to stay and make a living in this country. And the arrogant Tory rulers told them to go to hell.

The next day a score of Immigration officers raided a coffee shop in Gatineau, Quebec and arrested six of the marchers. Five were bundled onto an Air Canada flight out of the country; the sixth remained behind only because the government couldn't find him a seat on the plane. Aping Margaret Thatcher, new Tory "deportation minister" Barbara McDougall called the action the "rule of law," to which a Turkish protester shot back: "There's a difference between the law and justice." Under racist Canadian capitalism, that's the bitter truth.

About 1,600 Turkish workers remain under threat of deportation. Back in Turkey, whose repressive rulers are Canada's NATO allies, they face possible imprisonment under laws forbidding the "embarrassing" of the Turkish state. Recruited in 1986 by "private agents" as laborers in Montreal's construction and sweatshop garment industries, they have been aggressive in defending their right to stay, from exhaustive legal appeals to hunger strikes and demonstrations. And not just their own right. As one Turkish demonstrator put it: "The issue has always been Turks, [but] there are thousands more refugees in Canada. We want to hear something for them too" (*Globe and Mail*, 11 April).

Indeed, while the treatment of the Turks has been grotesque, the full measure of the racist Canadian state's immigration laws has been meted out to brown-skinned Tamils and Sikhs whose arrival in this country was met with obscene racist hysteria emanating from Ottawa. And in the service of Cold War anti-Sovietism desperate Salvadoran refugees are being deported to José Napoleón Duarte's Canadian-backed death-squad regime even as contra killers from Nicaragua are welcomed with open arms. If you're an anti-Communist murderer or a filthy-rich "entrepreneur" you get in. Otherwise



Peter Jones/Reuter

**Turkish workers and supporters rally on Parliament Hill on April 12 to protest mass deportation order. Defend the Turks!**

you're illegal, and get picked up by the Canadian *la migra*, driven to the airport and deported to destitution, torture and death.

That's the standard practice for the Canadian bourgeoisie. Remember--this same vicious bunch, who gave safe haven to Nazi war criminals after World War II, *turned away* the Jewish refugee ship *St. Louis* in 1939. Forced to return to Germany, most of her helpless occupants perished in Hitler's Holocaust.

The rich white rulers of this land want to get rid of the Turks because they are poor, hardworking people who have given up whatever they had to try and make a decent life for their families in Canada. As against the job-trusting labor misleaders and the NDP who fuel anti-immigrant hysteria with their racist protectionist poison, the Trotskyist League says that the working people who've managed to get into this country have the right to stay here!

The working class must be mobilized in defense of our foreign-born class brothers and sisters. Hands off the Turks! Down with racist immigration laws! Full citizenship rights for foreign-born workers and their families! ■

# BT Says Don't Hail Red Army in Afghanistan

...or anywhere else. Looking down the barrel of Cold War II, the crew of sour ex-members who now make up the "Bolshevik Tendency," formerly External Tendency, fled the international Spartacist tendency. They found our forthright Soviet defensism too hot to handle. As we pointed out in "The 'External Tendency': From Cream Puffs to Food Poisoning" (*Workers Vanguard* No. 349, 2 March 1984): "If the ET were more honest, they would admit that they hated it when we hailed the Soviet Red Army's military intervention in Afghanistan." "Not true!" carped the ET/BT, who at the time were ever so modestly posturing as the sole repository of authentic Spartacism against the supposed "degeneration" of the organization they quit. "We do hail the Red Army's intervention against the barbaric Afghan reactionaries," they said in the May 1984 "Bulletin of the External Tendency of the iSt."

But claiming to stand on the red side in Afghanistan doesn't go down well in the anti-Soviet swamp in which the BT mingles. Not that anyone ever took their purported politics seriously (to wit, the BT was never excluded from any of the pop-front meetings or mobilizations for its proclaimed Soviet defensism, in contrast to the treatment we've been handed). Nonetheless even the pretense of defending the Red Army intervention in Afghanistan has become an obvious encumbrance to the BT's appetites to share the sheets with the rad-libs and social democrats. Now the cards are on the table.

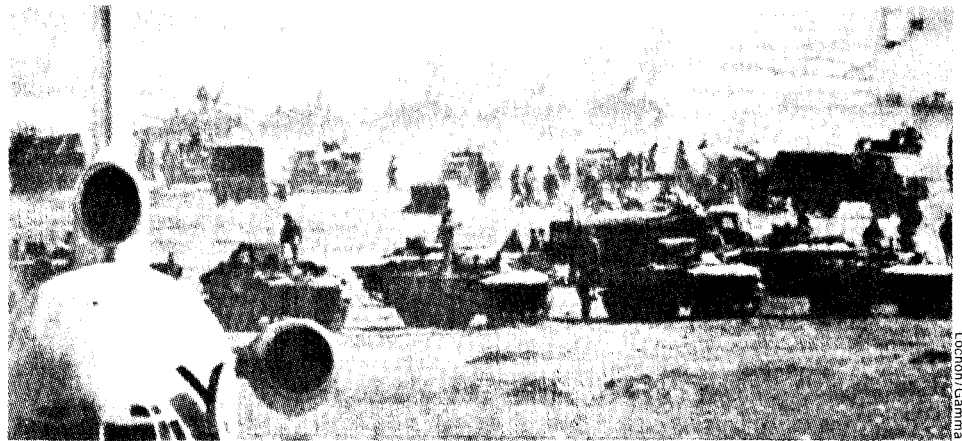
At a March 5 Toronto public forum of the Trotskyist League entitled "Finish Off CIA's Afghan Warriors!" Tom Riley, leading light of the Canadian BT, gave full vent to what has always been their deeply felt position. On the occasion of a meeting

to celebrate International Women's Day, in particular in defense of Afghan women against the inevitable bloodbath that will come if the Soviets pull out, Riley declared: "Trotskyists never hail Stalinist traitors or their state.... The slogan 'Hail Red Army' is not a Trotskyist slogan, because what it tells workers is to trust the Stalinists, put your faith in the Stalinists, hail the Stalinists. It disappears the political treachery of Gorbachev and the other parasites he represents...." So what about the Red Army's heroic struggle to crush Hitlerite Nazism—just "Stalinist treachery"?

What the BT "disappears" is the contradictory character of the Stalinist bureaucracy. The line of "Stalinism is counterrevolutionary through and through and to the core," a more concise and eloquent expression of the BT position, first appeared as a one-sided formulation during the Socialist Workers Party's 1952-53 internal struggle against the pro-Stalinist Cochran-Clarke liquidators (Joseph Hansen repeatedly defended this formulation in internal documents). But who in the USSR could really fit this description? Only a native Russian *Pamyat* fascist, or a CIA "mole" in the KGB. In fact, in the *Transitional Program* Trotsky described the *contradictory* nature of the bureaucracy: "all shades of political thought are to be found among the bureaucracy: from genuine Bolshevism (Ignace Reiss) to complete fascism (F. Butenko)." But Riley & Co. do not want to know these things; they prefer the image of soul-destroying, monolithic Stalinist totalitarianism.

According to Riley: "It's not possible to make a meaningful distinction in the Marxist sense

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1979 Soviet intervention in Afghanistan posed Russian question pointblank. Spartacist tendency stood firm in face of imperialist Cold War frenzy.

# Arias "Peace" Trap Entangles ASA

A dispute over the Arias "peace" hoax in Central America has broken out in the Alliance for Socialist Action (ASA), latest English-Canadian incarnation of those professing loyalty to Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat of the Fourth International (USec). Back in November the ASA's *Socialist Challenge* greeted the Arias plan as "a tactical victory" and "a positive development." The Quebec Mandelites of *Gauche Socialiste*, slated to fuse with the ASA in May, chimed in with the front-page headline "Victory for Peace in Central America," thus pushing the same line as the Mulroney government and even U.S. dragon lady Jeane Kirkpatrick who are out to strangle the Nicaraguan Revolution.

In response, the January-February *Socialist Challenge* carried a "Comment" by Robert Adam and Neil Henderson who at least recognized the obvious: "The Arias plan was devised to prevent socialist revolution from triumphing in Central America..." They called upon the Sandinistas "to renounce this fake peace plan" and, in language not unfamiliar to readers of *Spartacist Canada*, called for "the expropriation of the Nicaraguan capitalists," "the completion of the revolution" and "spreading the revolution throughout Central America."

Returning from several months at a Mandelite "cadre school" in Europe, ASA leader Barry Weisleder reportedly hit the roof over this article. In the next *Socialist Challenge* (dated April) he denounced its authors, claiming the Arias plan "was neither a blunder nor a sell-out by the revolutionary leadership of the Nicaraguan workers' state." Weisleder then snidely dismissed Adam/Henderson's "abstractly correct calls for 'spreading the revolution throughout Central America' (why not the whole world...)." Why not indeed? Except that Weisleder has a fundamentally counterposed perspective which lies through the ballot box, the NDP and the trade union bureaucracy.

Weisleder wants "to unite the broadest sectors of the population in protests against the war." He proudly upholds the "political legacy" of the reformist League for Socialist Action (LSA, predecessors of today's Revolutionary Workers League [RWL]) and its supposed "principled 'U.S. Out Now' position in the movement against the war in Vietnam." In fact the LSA, like its mentors in the U.S. Socialist Workers Party (SWP), stood on the *right wing* of the Vietnam antiwar movement, steadfastly refusing to take a side against imperialism in order to act as a pressure group on their "own" bourgeoisie. Today Weisleder aims to replicate this approach by building a single-issue, lowest-common-denominator popular-front alliance around Central America. He wants to demand of "our government...that it call for an end to imperialist intervention...." This is unadulterated Kautskyism—the line that the imperialists can somehow be pressured into not being imperialist.

Adam/Henderson claim to "stand unconditionally on the side of the workers and peasants of Central America," but the conception behind their call to build "a mass-action oriented movement against imperialism in Central America" is the same as Weisleder's. On February 2 in Toronto these two were among the main promoters of a demonstration (initiated by the ASA together with the Bolshevik Tendency) which disappeared defense of Nicaragua altogether, calling only to "Oppose U.S. Contra



Larry Boyd/Impact Visuals

**Nicaraguan mothers with pictures of their children murdered by Somoza's National Guard, Reagan's contras. "Peace" accord means the killers go free.**

Aid." Held on the eve of a vote in the U.S. Congress, the demo was explicitly designed as part of a campaign to pressure the Democratic Party and to dovetail with the Canadian nationalists' bleat that the main enemy is the U.S. Against all this crawling before the U.S. party of war and the Canadian bourgeoisie, we say that anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home!

Adam/Henderson can't confront the ASA's groveling before the Canadian ruling class because this is the domestic corollary of the Mandelites' capitulation to Cold War anti-Sovietism. Ronald Reagan has openly declared Central America the front line in his campaign to "roll back Communism." Desperately seeking to be as one with the anti-Communists of the NDP, various preachers and assorted bourgeois politicians, the Mandelites and other fake-lefts must avoid any taint of Soviet-defensism. So when the Trotskyist League forthrightly declares "Defense of Cuba, USSR begins in Central America!" they've gone nuts, even organizing goon squads to exclude TL contingents in order to keep "their" demos "anything but red" for Ed.

The Russian question is conspicuously *absent* from  
(continued on page 18)

# Revolutionary Regroupment in France



Le Bolchevik

Paris, January 27: Joint contingent of Ligue Trotskyste and Tribune Communiste in protest called by French CP against fascist Le Pen. Banner reads: "Le Pen—Enough is enough! For worker/immigrant mobilizations to crush the fascists! Full citizenship rights for immigrants!"

## Ligue Trotskyste Fuses with Tribune Communiste

*This article is based on material from Le Bolchévik No. 81, March 1988, the newspaper of our French section, which featured an eight-page supplement on the fusion.*

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, Michèle 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 Solidarność and opposing the PCF's joining the anti-Soviet Mitterrand popular front. But as Tribune Communiste moved toward opposing the class collaborationism inherent in Stalinism, posing the question of Trotskyism, 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 them face to face with the Ligue Trotskyiste 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 Trotskyiste 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—e.g., 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 (especially 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"—e.g., "Browder was a revisionist" or conversely the adulation of the

"good old days" of Togliatti or Thorez. 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 U.S. 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 Solidarność 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 (e.g., the liberation of Afghan women from the medieval confines of illiteracy and the veil),

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The Poland of Luxemburg vs. the Poland of Pilsudski

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## Revolutionary Regroupment...

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raised the spectre of internationalism or "export of revolution," the quintessential "Trotskyite" heresy. With imperialism screaming for blood—and the U.S. 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 withdrawal 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 Carrillos. Smaller groupings, with more leftist impulses, like the Turkish TKP-*Iscin*in Sesi 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 détente campaign has dealt such illusions a cruel blow. Not only does Gorbachev project *permanent* "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism, but he is acceding 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 re-examination of Communist history are facilitated as well by the phenomenon of Gorbachev's *glasnost*, which has tended to take the ques-

tion of Trotsky and the Left Opposition (as well as Bukharin and the Rights) out of 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 privileges derive by appeasing



Syigma



Der Spiegel

French Trotskyists (left) call to break with anti-working-class Mitterrand government. At right, Mitterrand with French CP leader Georges Marchais.

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 bourgeoisies. The Communist parties had become bourgeois workers parties, 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 masters, the Moscow Stalinist bureaucracy and the "progressive" bourgeoisies of their own countries, which hate and fear 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 illustrative. 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) toward the devastated European movement after the war also assisted Pablo to emerge as a leader of the postwar FI.

The postwar Trotskyist movement was disoriented as well by new developments. Trotsky had predicted that the war would provoke social convulsion throughout the capitalist world, as the First World War had done, which would necessarily have a profoundly destabilizing effect on the international Stalinist movement. That this prediction was quite correct is shown for example by the 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 re-establish 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,

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Left, Lech Walesa and friends. International Spartacist tendency condemned Polish Solidarność as agent for capitalist rollback—a "union" only the CIA and Western bankers could love.



Gamma

Workers Vanguard

## Revolutionary Regroupment...

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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 govern-



Pathfinder Press

**James P. Cannon, founder of American Trotskyism, speaking in New York, 1948.**

ments." 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" à 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 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 leaderships. 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 Solidarność 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, Michèle Mestre and Mathias 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 '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, reduced 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 prerevolutionary 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 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'état, a counter to the real attempt to take power by the counterrevolutionary forces of Solidarność. 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

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Début février, la Ligue trotskyste de France (LTF), section de la tendance spartaciste internationale (TSI), a tenu sa IXe conférence, conjointe avec le groupe *Tribune communiste*. La conférence a voté la fusion des deux organisations. *Tribune communiste* est issue du "mouvement anti-opportuniste" du Parti communiste français (PCF).

*Le Bolchévik* (journal mensuel de la LTF) a publié le document de *Tribune communiste*, "De l'illusoire transformation du PCF à la voie de Lénine et Trotsky," dans son numéro de mars. Ce texte retrace le parcours de ce groupe et, par-là même, il est riche d'enseignements sur les multiples combats que durent mener ces camarades pour sortir de l'impasse du réformisme stalinien. Ces leçons ne valent pas seulement pour la France. Les groupements prosoviétiques, qui sont apparus à l'intérieur de partis communistes en mouvement vers la social-démocratie ou déjà devenus sociaux-démocrates, ne trouveront une issue, pour sortir de l'impasse où ils se trouvent, que s'ils suivent la voie de *Tribune communiste*.

Cette fusion marque la fin du processus engagé par les camarades de *Tribune communiste* pour se réapproprier le léninisme. La TSI a toujours affirmé que la lutte pour reformer le parti mondial de la révolution passerait par une suite de scissions, de fusions et de regroupements politiques avec des militants révolutionnaires et des cadres venus de diverses organisations réformistes ou centristes.

## Revolutionary Regroupment...

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the PCF in the legislative elections of June 1981, in opposition to the entry of the PCF into 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 accept such class-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* nuclear strike force (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 Ligue Trotskyiste de France 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 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 leaflet, "Stop Solidarność Counterrevolution," 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 Solidarność' 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 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



Islamic cutthroats in Afghanistan shoot school-teachers for teaching young girls to read.

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. 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 Bolchévik 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 of the revolutionary struggle had been broken by Stalinism in 1935: 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, the economist philistines of Lutte Ouvrière, and the Pabloite LCR, which found the pro-Mitterrand, anti-Soviet "Rénovateur" 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 Solidarność, for the Red Army in Afghanistan, in parallel with 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 bu-

reaucracy 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 Solidarność, did not stand up to an analysis of the facts and his-



June 1981: *Le Communiste* refused to join LTF picket against anti-Soviet meeting on Afghanistan and entry of PCF ministers into Mitterrand government.

toric 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 (continued on page 16)

## Revolutionary Regroupment...

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"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, 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 January 27 organized by the PCF.

In their fusion resolution Tribune Communiste declared the international Spartacist tendency to be the continuity of Trotskyism. The fight against Pablo, essentially carried out by the American and British sections and the majority of the French, 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 "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 increas-

ingly 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



Le Bolchevik

June 1987: LTF/Tribune Communiste protest racist segregation at Rouen Flunch cafeteria.

seeking to rediscover a Leninist orientation in effect ran the film of Pabloite liquidationism backward: 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. ■

## BT/Afghanistan...

(continued from page 6)

between an army and the state which controls it, in this case a degenerated workers state. The state is an armed body of men defending a particular set of property forms." But the property forms in the Soviet Union are, despite its Stalinist degeneration, proletarian. Riley's syllogism is hardly original. In arguing against defense of the Soviet Union at the start of World War II, Max Shachtman, leader of the petty-bourgeois opposition within the SWP, wrote: "We have never supported the Kremlin's international policy...but what is war? War is the continuation of politics by other means. Then why should we support the war which is the continuation of the international policy which we did not and do not support?" Trotsky replied: "we are presented here with a rounded-out theory of *defeatism*.... Then why not say it?" Shachtman the doubting soon became Shachtman the confirmed Third Camp

Soviet-defeatist, claiming that the Soviet Union was ruled by a new "bureaucratic collectivist" class. Four years ago, the ET denied being Shachtmanite because they still endorsed "Hail Red Army!" What next for the BT?

The Red Army intervention in Afghanistan was a defense of these property forms against a counter-revolutionary, imperialist-sponsored Islamic insurgency on the Soviet Union's crucial southern flank. Moreover, the Soviet intervention offered the possibility of extending the gains of the October Revolution to the hideously oppressed Afghan peoples. But that was never the intention of the Kremlin, for it goes against the grain of the reactionary dogma of "socialism in one country." *The Stalinists never hailed the Red Army in Afghanistan, only the Trotskyist Spartacist tendency did.*

As comrade Trotsky put it in the 1939-40 fight against Shachtman/Burnham's opposition to the defense of the Soviet Union in the Socialist Workers Party, "in the final analysis, through the interests of the bureaucracy, in a very distorted form the



interests of the workers' state are reflected. These interests we defend—with our own methods" ("From a Scratch to the Danger of Gangrene," *In Defense of Marxism*).

In our 1984 article on the External Tendency, we noted that "These characters logically would fit right in with the Weinsteinites, late of the Socialist Workers Party, behind whom stands the lure of America's 'mainstream' social democrats, the Democratic Socialists." Now the BT has qualitatively accelerated their march on this course. The most chemically pure rendition was translated on "Canadian soil," long dear to Tom Riley. On February 2, the BT hooked up with the Alliance for Socialist Action (the latest incarnation of Canadian Mandelism) to initiate a popular-front demo over Central America around the sole demand "Oppose U.S. Contra Aid!"

A BT letter, complaining that the TL refused to join in peddling this as a "single issue" slogan for a "united front," read like an SWP textbook defense of its "Out Now" slogan during the Vietnam War. The SWP argued that its "antiwar coalitions" were not pop-frontist because they were built on this "single issue" (although it soon became the rallying cry of bourgeois defeatism once the more farsighted elements of the ruling class realized that the U.S. wasn't going to win). The BT wrote: "there were no bourgeois participants in the 2 February demonstration—but your position seems to be that it was 'unprincipled' because there hypothetically *could* have been."

Hypothetically?! Opposition to U.S. contra aid is the on-again, off-again position of a hefty chunk of the war-mongering Democratic Party in the U.S. itself. But in Canada this line sells at really bargain basement prices. Indeed, Tory prime minister Brian Mulroney could have marched under this banner. He opposes "U.S. contra aid" as well (as has the bourgeoisie of virtually every other imperialist country from the get-go). Where Reagan boosts the loser contras, the Canadian imperialists propose instead to send "peacekeeping" troops to Central America to hold the line against "Communism." The key to fighting the imperialist war moves is to *defend Nicaragua* by united *working-class* action.

But that would be beyond the pale, because it would mean facing the question of revolution. Ingratiating themselves with the Mandelite surrogates of Canadian social democracy, the BT wasn't about to oppose their "own" ruling class. Indeed, even the BT's own placards, chants and speech at the demo contained not so much as a hint of Soviet defensism in Nicaragua. Nor, for that matter, will one find any call for defense of the Soviet Union today in their articles in 1917 on Central America, Poland and Gorbachev—and that takes conscious effort!

Thus it was no surprise when, at an April 9 TL forum on Nicaragua, Riley rose to assert that "the key question in Nicaragua today in our view is *not* defense of the Soviet Union, that's not the central question that's posed there today, but rather the defense of the *Nicaraguan* Revolution. Gorbachev

is *betraying* the Nicaraguan Revolution."

Of course BT still *claims*, at times, to stand for defense of the USSR against counterrevolution. So too did Shachtman in 1939 when he wrote, "if the imperialists assail the Soviet Union with the aim of crushing the last conquest of the October Revolution...we will support the Soviet Union unconditionally." But at that very time with the imperialists raising an anti-Soviet hue and cry when the USSR went into "poor little democratic" Finland, Shachtman refused to defend Russia *in the concrete*. For him then, as for the BT now, defense of the USSR was never "the central question," and thus never to be fought for where it counts.

Today defense of the USSR is indeed posed point-blank in Nicaragua, as it is in Afghanistan. Reagan emphasized from the start the link between imperialist "rollback" in Central America and "rollback"



**Red Army smashed Nazis in World War II.**

internationally, from Managua to Havana and on to Moscow. If the imperialists succeed in crushing the Nicaraguan Revolution, it will not only be a terrible defeat for the Nicaraguan masses; it will advance by a big step the imperialists' crusade to overthrow the Soviet workers state itself, Stalinist betrayals notwithstanding. In BTer Riley's own inimitable words, "Nicaragua is not unconnected to the Russian question"—it's just that BT, fed by Cold War social democracy, is worse than indifferent to the fate of the gains of the October Revolution.

So the BT is preparing to set up its tent in the Third Camp. In light of their whole trajectory, this was quite predictable. But some questions remain. Why does the BT continue to claim in its press that it upholds long-standing principles of the Spartacist tendency in flat contradiction to its political appetites and sought-for political allies? And why does it have a nasty tendency to create provocative incidents in our presence and then howl about it? Or as we headlined in *Workers Vanguard*, "Garbage Doesn't Walk By Itself, What Makes BT Run?"

--Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 449,  
25 March

## ASA...

(continued from page 7)

the ASA dissidents' article. Yet as American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon said, this "has been the decisive criterion separating the genuine revolutionary tendency from all shades and degrees of waverers, backsliders and capitulators to the pressure of the bourgeois world...." In 1979 when the



Spartacist tendency says: "Defense of Cuba, USSR begins in Central America!"

international Spartacist tendency declared "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" one wing of the USec openly endorsed the Cold War "containment" line of "Soviet troops out" while the majority condemned the Soviet intervention, soon calling for withdrawal. When the iSt said "Stop Solidarność Counterrevolution!" the USec inscribed on its banner "Solidarity with Solidarity," endorsing the "union" so beloved of Reagan and the pope. In Canada Weisleder & Co. actually helped stage an anti-Soviet provocation, trying to march into the CP's 1983 Toronto May Day march with a pro-Solidarność banner. As the Cold War has heated up the USec has moved steadily to the right, straight into the orbit of NATO-loyal social democrats like French president Mitterrand.

Ever since the political destruction of the Fourth International, Mandel & Co. have latched on to a multiplicity of "vanguards": the European Stalinists, Algerian nationalists, Cuba, students, Mao's Red Guards, the anti-Soviet "Eurocommunists," the Sandinistas, even Khomeini's "Iranian Revolution" and Mitterrand. The axis around which they gyrate is rejection of the need for a Trotskyist vanguard party with a program to lead the working class to victory over capitalism. Just last year Alain Krivine, leader of the USec's French section and doyen of many Canadian Mandelites, offered to dissolve his Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire in a presidential campaign for ex-Communist Party anti-Soviet "renovator" Pierre Juquin. ("The LCR Wants to Die

to Be Born Again Better," was the headline of *Libération* [6 March 1987].) Declaring that "Trotskyism is decidedly a word that I don't like," Krivine sounds like American SWP leader Jack Barnes who opines that "Trotskyism as such doesn't have much value as a term."

Some 15 years ago, dozens of would-be leftists split from the SWP's satellite Canadian LSA to form, along with others including Barry Weisleder, the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG). But unable to generalize their leftist impulses into programmatic firmness, and hitching their futures to Mandel's USec, most of the RMGers ended up out of ostensible Marxist politics or back in the arms of today's RWL. Weisleder himself may be unable to stomach Barnes' open renunciation of Trotskyism and general eccentricity, but a decade and a half of Mandelism has brought him full circle, back to endorsing the "political legacy" of the LSA he once denounced. So today it's a bit easy to sound like a left critic in the ASA, while in no way breaking decisively on the key programmatic questions.

There were, however, some in the old RMG who found it impossible to maintain a political halfway house between reformism and revolution. Drawing out the lessons of the fight against the LSA's reformism, they formed the Bolshevik-Leninist Tendency, waged a rounded programmatic fight against USec revisionism, and went on to fuse with the iSt, leading to the founding of the Trotskyist League of Canada in 1975. These comrades were won to our program of intransigent defense of the gains of the October Revolution, our irreconcilable opposition to the popular front and our commitment to building revolutionary Trotskyist parties as genuine tribunes of the oppressed. That's the program which alone points the way forward for militants truly seeking to become Marxist revolutionaries. ■

**Finish Off CIA's Afghan Warriors!**

**Jesse Jackson, Racism and the Democratic Party**

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## Central America...

(continued from page 1)

as always, to move in and help draw the line against Communism.

The agreement signed March 23 in the Nicaraguan border town of Sapoá provides for a 60-day truce, during which the contras are to regroup (with their weapons) in several zones; the release (in stages) of all contra prisoners, as well as former National Guardsmen of the Somoza dictatorship; contra participation in a "national dialogue"; and negotiations toward a definitive cease-fire. The pact guarantees amnesty and full political rights for the counterrevolution. In return, the contras formally accept the legitimacy of the FSLN government and President Daniel Ortega. This is a setback for the Reagan gang, but they are already vindictively retaliating by tightening the trade embargo to cut off a trickle of coffee imports to the U.S.

As we warned of the Arias plan (Esquipulas II) "peace" accords last August, this deal is an attempt to achieve at the bargaining table what the imperialists and the contras were unable to win by force of arms or through economic strangulation of Nicaragua: reversing the spread of revolution in Central America. Already all aid to the Salvadoran leftist insurgents has been banned; *La Prensa*, the U.S.-financed voice of the internal contras, has been reopened; Archbishop Obando y Bravo, the contra Cardinal, has established himself as the rallying point for "national reconciliation." Now the Somozaist butchers are being let loose and contra chiefs would be allowed to organize "peacefully," though they're dragging their feet on completing the deal.

And now Brian Mulroney is talking of sending Canadian "peacekeeping" troops to Nicaragua to "supervise" a truce—that is, to back up the contras, capitalists and landowners and ensure the country is once again "safe" for capitalist exploitation. We say the embattled Nicaraguan workers and peasants had better hold on to their guns. To defend the Nicaraguan Revolution, it must be *completed* and *extended*. And in North America what's needed is forthright, militant opposition to the counterrevolutionary plans of our "own" capitalist class. U.S. and Canadian imperialism, bloody hands off Central America!

### COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY "PEACEKEEPERS," MERCHANTS OF DEATH

Supporting the call for Canadian "peacekeepers," Colombia's foreign minister commented that "Canada is one of those states which could act with moral authority" (*Globe and Mail*, 29 March). In other words, Canada's facade as a "neutral mediator" is a useful cover for counterrevolutionary intervention when sending the 82nd Airborne into Nicaragua would be politically unacceptable. When Washington gets in trouble they can always call in Canadian "mediators" and "peacekeepers" to police the imperialist status quo like they do from Cyprus to the Sinai peninsula.

Fresh from shipping 22,000 Canadian soldiers to "keep the peace" in Korea by crushing social revolution, Diefenbaker, and after him Pearson and Trudeau, backed to the hilt the French and U.S. imperialists' rape of Vietnam. After the 1954 Geneva Accords, Ottawa agreed to serve as U.S. and French agents on the "peacekeeping" International Commissions for Supervision and Control for Indochina. There Canada supplied political, economic and military intelligence to their American patrons,



Tomelin/Department of National Defence

**Canadian imperialist troops "draw the line against Communism" during the Korean War. Defend Nicaragua—No to Canadian "peacekeepers"!**

while giving millions in "humanitarian" aid to the South Vietnamese puppet regime and raking in \$1 million a day supplying the U.S. war machine with, among other things, napalm.

But after 30 years of courageous struggle the Vietnamese workers and peasants handed the U.S. and its lackeys a humiliating battlefield defeat. The imperialists *lost* in Vietnam, and they don't want to lose again in Central America. So the Canadian jackal ruling class is getting the call to help hold the line against Communism. And not only in Central America. There's also talk of sending Canadian "peacekeepers" to Afghanistan as the Soviets pull out, there to run point for Islamic butchers who shoot schoolteachers and keep women as chattel slaves.

Meanwhile the huge Canadian arms industry keeps on making a killing out of killing. While the contra terrorists have been up to their eyeballs in Canadian munitions dropped from aircraft bought in Canada, the Honduran army flies back and forth in Canadian-built military transports. The murderous Guatemalan regime buys Israeli rifles with millions in Canadian aid dollars, and the Salvadoran army brings death from above in helicopter gunships powered by engines from Pratt and Whitney in Montreal.

And now word has leaked that "Growing numbers of Nicaraguan contras are obtaining refugee status  
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## Central America...

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in Canada, despite official assurances..." (*Globe and Mail*, 12 April). Soon you too could have a certified pathological contra killer living next door. Meanwhile desperate Salvadoran refugees face deportation to the death-squad terror of the Canadian-backed Duarte regime, and Guatemalans are brutally murdered after being denied Canadian asylum.

From the Mulroney government to the Liberals and social-democratic NDP, Ottawa is united behind the Arias plan, Sapoá accords and other imperialist-



Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega (left) at "peace" talks with contra terrorists.

brokered schemes aimed at rolling back the gains of the revolution. Yet the bulk of the so-called left in this country *endorses* these schemes, and *whitewashes* Canada's capitalist rulers as nice, clean, good-guy imperialists, unlike the American eagle to the south. The Communist Party's *Canadian Tribune* (21 March) says: "The Canadian government should be pressed to tell its friends in the U.S. ...to permit the peace process to take hold." A Canadian Action for Nicaragua leaflet pleads: "Tell your M.P. to contact Joe Clark and Brian Mulroney now and press them to support the Central American peace process." Well, that's just what Clark and Mulroney are doing, "peace"-keeping troops and all. The policy of pressuring the Canadian imperialists to "support the peace process" is *treachery*, a road to bloody defeat for the Nicaraguan masses.

### NO "ROLLBACK" OF THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION!

Through seven years of contra war and economic sanctions which have bled the country dry, the Nicaraguan working people have valiantly defended their revolution. It is understandable that they have greeted the promise of peace with relief. Even so, many found the amnesty for the Somozaist killers hard to take: "These people were able to bomb their own hometowns," one woman complained (*Christian*

*Science Monitor*, 29 March). Moreover, to allow pathological killers like contra comandantes Attila and Hitler, Mercenario and El Buitre (Vulture) to walk the streets is deadly dangerous. A contra relative made clear their murderous intent, threatening that organizers of the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS) "are the first ones whose heads we are going to cut off" (quoted in *Barricada*, 30 March).

The political guarantees to the bourgeoisie also mean that they will demand their property back. The same issue of the FSLN's *Barricada* quotes union leaders saying, "that would be like returning Coca-Cola to Mr. Adolfo Calero Portocarrero, who is responsible for the murder of so many thousands of Nicaraguans." Yet the Coca-Cola plant is a fitting symbol of the halfway revolution the Sandinistas had begun: the property of this contra leader and CIA agent was not expropriated, only "intervened" (placed under government receivership) because Calero had left the country. So if he returns.... As for lands seized from leaders of the businessmen's association COSEP, the government could simply pay the compensation promised.

For the past eight-plus years, it has been clear to the imperialist rulers and the Nicaraguan masses that the fate of the revolution was hanging in the balance. Yet the Spartacist tendency has been unique on the left internationally in insisting that the class character of the Nicaraguan Revolution still had not been determined. When the FSLN entered Managua on 19 July 1979, the state machinery of the dynasty which had ruled the country since the first Somoza was installed by the U.S. Marines 45 years earlier lay in ruins. But contrary to the Reaganauts' talk of "Sandino-Communism," the guerrillas in power did *not* establish a proletarian state based on collectivized property.

Instead, the Sandinista regime proclaimed its holy trinity of "mixed economy, political pluralism and non-alignment." Like Castro's guerrillas in Cuba initially, the bonapartist petty-bourgeois government was not committed to defending either socialist or capitalist property forms. In Cuba, U.S. imperialist intransigence, the flight of the local bourgeoisie to Miami and the absence of a prole-

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tariat fighting for power meant that a bureaucratically deformed workers state was consolidated. But Nicaragua has not had its "second revolution." On the contrary, we may now be seeing the re-establishment of a Nicaraguan capitalist state.

To be sure, for the past seven years, Reagan has done his best to smash the Sandinistas. But in the aftermath of their humiliating defeat in Vietnam, U.S. rulers are hesitant to commit themselves to another Third World military adventure. Meanwhile, key sections of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie have remained in place. Now, following the Reaganauts' Iran/Contragate debacle and with the demise of the contras, the Democratic Party has taken control of U.S. policy toward Central America. Having no better alternative, they want to take Ortega up on his offers to sell out. From Ottawa to West Europe, other imperialist rulers and social democrats have welcomed the change in U.S. tactics. And the Sapoá accords may signal the victory of their line of a "peaceful counterrevolution."

But this "peaceful counterrevolution" would be anything but peaceful. That's one of the reasons why the Americans would like Canadian (or some other) "peacekeeping" surrogates in place. To begin with, there are hundreds of thousands of guns in the hands of the Nicaraguan people. This has been the ultimate obstacle to a contra victory, even giving pause to the Pentagon war machine. For the FSLN to administer a capitalist state means *disarming the masses*. In spite of war weariness, that will not be easy. Certainly, workers at the Coca-Cola plant facing the return of Calero, or peasants working lands seized from COSEP leaders, will not readily give up the guns needed to defend their conquests. And already opposition trade unions have led a bitter strike by construction workers (declared illegal), as well as walkouts by auto mechanics, dock workers and sugar plantation workers.

The winding down of the contra war has led to an escalation of the class struggle internally. The workers' actions were provoked by the Sandinista government's IMF-style austerity policy decreed in mid-February. Combined with the introduction of a new currency unit to cut inflation, paying world market prices to companies producing for export, and increasing the price of gasoline by 500 percent, they eliminated virtually all subsidies of food and other basic products. This has led to a big wage cut while the staple foods of rice and beans virtually disappeared from the markets. In response there have been mobilizations by the unions and CDS block committees to uncover hoarded food held by black marketeers.

While the Sandinistas' attempts to pave the way for a reconsolidated dictatorship of the bourgeoisie have divided the working class, they have united the bourgeoisie...against them. In the 1984 elections and as recently as last summer, the capitalist parties were divided between out-and-out contra supporters and those who did not openly seek to reverse the 1979 revolution. But now that Ortega & Co. have agreed to "reintegrate" the counterrevolution, the *entire* bourgeois (and reformist) opposition has

joined in presenting a declaration of 14 parties demanding constitutional reforms challenging the FSLN's "party monopoly of the state." Their first target is the Sandinista Army, the linchpin of the present regime.

### FOR PERMANENT REVOLUTION!

As nationalists, the Sandinistas have always sought a "patriotic" or, as the Stalinists called it, a "national bourgeoisie" that would break with imperialism. But as Leon Trotsky pointed out in formu-



March 19, Toronto: TL proclaims "Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home!"

lating the perspective of permanent revolution, in the imperialist epoch there is no independent "national" bourgeoisie in the backward capitalist countries. Their rulers are too closely bound to the imperialist overlords, and too fearful of the huge mass of proletarians and impoverished peasants, to carry out the tasks of even the bourgeois-democratic revolution. To achieve an agrarian revolution, democracy and national independence requires—as in Russia 1917—workers revolution led by a Bolshevik party.

The petty-bourgeois FSLN, however, preaches "national reconciliation." Now the Ortega brothers (president Daniel and defense minister Humberto) are talking of Nicaragua following the "Mexican model." That would likely produce splits in the FSLN. (Already the head of the militant CDS, Leticia Herrera, has been ousted.) And Sandinista militants should recall that the consolidation of a post-revolution capitalist state in Mexico was done over the dead bodies of Zapata and Villa, along with thousands of peasant and proletarian fighters. But even reputed Sandinista hardliners like Interior Minister Tomás Borge are only looking for a beefed-up version of the present regime, and they have shown through their repression of strikes that they are no partisans of the workers. To defend the Nicaraguan Revolution it must be completed by  
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## Central America...

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expropriating the bourgeoisie and extended throughout Central America and beyond.

In a peasant country like Nicaragua where industry consists of a few plants like FANATEX and Coca-Cola, recovering from the imperialist-imposed dire economic conditions might well require giving wide latitude to petty producers and small traders,



Michael Creagan

Gamma/Liaison

**NDP Cold Warriors: Party leader Ed Broadbent (left), UN ambassador Stephen Lewis (right).**

and even some concessions to a few capitalist producers willing to follow the rules—something akin to Lenin's New Economic Policy—rather than the Sandinistas' failed attempt to impose planning on a capitalist economy. But the indispensable condition is working-class state power—with the firm leadership of a party committed to communism. Forging such a Leninist-Trotskyist party is the key to rescuing the Nicaraguan Revolution from the mortal dangers it faces.

A socialist revolution would have to be internationalist from the start, spreading throughout the region, from strategic Panama to the militant Salvadoran workers and Mexico with its heavy industry. And with U.S. imperialism breathing down its neck, the revolution must extend above all into the imperialist heartland of North America (where, contrary to the nationalists' claims, every move by the Reagan regime pointing to imperialist intervention in Nicaragua has met with mass opposition). Here as well, class-struggle workers parties must be built in struggle against the reformists—who tag along at the end of the Jesse Jackson Democratic Party "rainbow coalition" in the U.S., or trail behind the nationalist NDP tops here in Canada.

**SMASH ANTI-SOVIET WAR DRIVE—  
THE ENEMY IS AT HOME!**

The struggles in Central America must be seen in the context of the imperialists' global anti-Soviet war drive—and Ed Broadbent & Co. are only too

happy to parade their Cold War credentials. They've always shared Reagan's aim of "stopping Communism" in Central America; they just disagreed with his tactics. Four years ago, Broadbent supported the foreign policy of U.S. Democrat Walter Mondale, who wanted to quarantine Nicaragua. Now that the Democrats call the shots around Central America, the NDP tops are 100 percent united with the Mulroney government in support of Arias-style capitalist "rollback."

Meanwhile Stephen Lewis rants from his UN pulpit against the Soviets' just intervention in Afghanistan. NDP honchos and their allies in the union bureaucracy proclaim "solidarity with Solidarność," the Polish company "union" for the CIA and bankers. Standing up for the "true north, strong and free," these pro-capitalist sellouts promise *more* "defense" spending than the Tories, and have now pushed even their paper resolutions for withdrawal from NATO into the never-never-land of the government after next. From Poland to Central Asia, from the Arctic to Central America, the NDP social democrats push imperialist anti-Sovietism.

The idea that Nicaragua is "a base for Soviet and Cuban efforts to penetrate the rest of the Central American isthmus" (Kissinger Commission report) is a Reaganite fantasy, but Soviet aid has indeed been vital to the survival of the Nicaraguan Revolution. Lately, however, Gorbachev has been threatening to cut off Sandinista Nicaragua in return for "détente" with the U.S. At the December summit in Washington, the Kremlin leader offered to eliminate heavy weapons deliveries to Managua as a *quid pro quo* for the U.S. stopping military aid to the contras.

Speaking to a group of U.S. Senators, Gorbachev recently remarked that the USSR "does not have any special interest in Central America" (*Clarín* [Buenos Aires], 13 March). But the Soviet Union does have an interest in stopping the imperialists' export of counterrevolution there and everywhere. For if they "score" in Nicaragua, it will only embolden the Cold Warriors in going after Afghanistan, Cuba, Vietnam, Poland, and ultimately the USSR. However much Stalin and his successors have dreamt of "peaceful coexistence" with the imperialists, the latter have never given up their dream of overturning the October Revolution.

The "solidarity" milieu tries to duck the key "Russian question" in order to tail after the NDP tops. Likewise they hail the Sapoá accords, which endanger the Nicaraguan Revolution, and preach faith in our "own" capitalists for a "peaceful, democratic" solution. We Trotskyists proclaim that the best defense of Nicaragua is revolutionary struggle here. We warn: Canadian "peacekeepers" would keep the peace of the graveyard. Not the treacherous policy of "pressuring" the blood-soaked imperialists in Ottawa and Washington, but the fight for North American socialist revolution! Defend, complete, extend the Nicaraguan Revolution! Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home!

--Adapted from Workers Vanguard No. 450, 8 April

## Abortion...

(continued from page 24)

needed surgery because of budget cuts, the Socreds have launched a \$20 million "pro-family" anti-abortion campaign. According to Vander Zalm those suffering "the pressure of an unwanted pregnancy" should "have a faith in Jesus Christ!"

The Vander Zalm Socreds, with their base in the Lower Mainland Bible Belt and Surrey "Klan country," are whipping up dangerous forces of reaction. Vander Zalm's call for the deportation of Sikh refugees last summer further fueled the KKK race terrorists. Today they leaflet Vancouver high schools, and the beatings and the terrorizing of East Indians have sharply escalated. Moral Majority terrorists, taking their cue from Socred plans to quarantine AIDS sufferers, have twice bombed a Vancouver restaurant that caters to gays, and brutal assaults on gay men have become horrifyingly routine. In February when prominent federal NDP MP Svend Robinson declared his homosexuality, his Vancouver office was violently attacked.

The Socreds cut their teeth going after the B.C. labor movement, the most militant in English-speaking North America. But in the face of the union-busting onslaught last year the trade union tops called a one-day general strike, then rolled over and died. Today B.C. Federation of Labour president Ken Georgetti declares: "I am not a good militant.... I catch myself at least once a week starting to think, 'fight, fight, fight.' I have to stop doing that" (*Vancouver Sun*, 2 February).

The NDP tops agree. No fight--just loyal parliamentarism. When in power in 1975, the B.C. NDP imposed the most massive strikebreaking law in provincial history. Now they don't even oppose the Thatcher-inspired plan to "privatize" some \$10 billion worth of government programs and services. Their abortion position is "pro-choice" on paper but NDP practice was shown in Manitoba where the NDP government ordered three jackboot raids on the Winnipeg Morgentaler Clinic. The NDP is a *political obstacle* to any kind of militant struggle against Vander Zalm & Co.

As we wrote in June 1987: "There's more than a whiff of fascistic bonapartism about the Socreds who are out to break the back of organized labor in the province" ("One-Day Strike Shuts Down B.C.," SC No. 68). The labor bureaucracy's dangerous prostration before savage union-busting has given the Socreds the green light for their assaults on women, gays and the poor. Labor must mobilize to defend a woman's right to abortion and stop the Moral Majority and Klan terrorists cold! A revolutionary leadership is needed to break the stranglehold of the labor traitors and the NDP Cold War strikebreakers. Fighting the bigotry, anti-woman chauvinism and racism which are rampant in the social-democratic B.C. labor movement, even among militant workers, means forging a revolutionary workers party committed to irreconcilable struggle against the whole rotting capitalist system.■

## All Honor to Dr. Morgentaler!

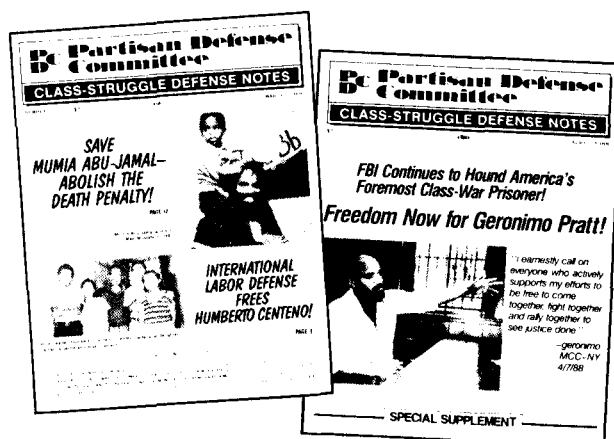
The Partisan Defense Committee (PDC) sent the following letter to Dr. Henry Morgentaler following his January 28 Supreme Court victory. The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal defense organization in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

"We congratulate you on your recent victory against Canada's repressive anti-abortion laws. Your courageous stand is an inspiration to all defenders of democratic rights.

"We know the bible-thumping bigots who have hounded you for 13 years will not rest. With the ink barely dry on the Court's decision the anti-abortion fanatics are planning a new legislative assault on this elementary democratic right. Not just women, but labor, blacks and all basic democratic rights are the targets of the Moral Majority bigots and abortion clinic bombers. Like his Reaganite friends to the South, British Columbia's labor-hating Premier William Vander Zalm denies medical benefits for abortions. In the U.S. 'pro-life' phonies are the loudest voices for the racist speedup on death row, with its grisly executions of mere children.

"Any further attacks on you must be met by the power of labor, leading all oppressed minorities to smash once and for all, these forces of bigotry, superstition and obscurantism."

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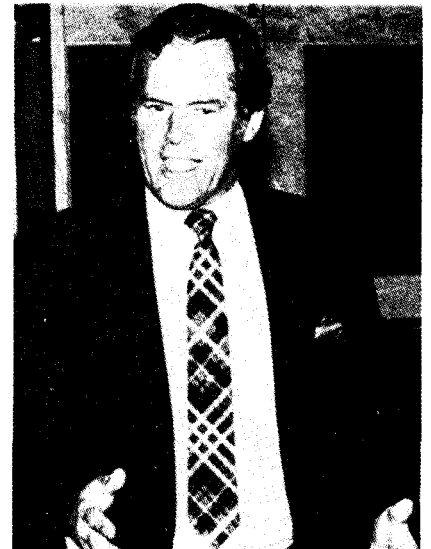
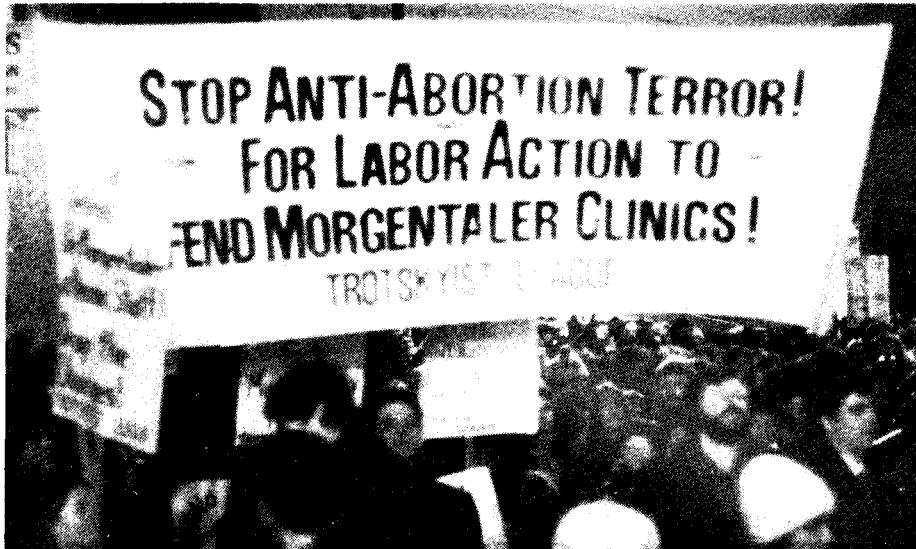


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## Vander Zalm Bigots Unleashed in B.C.

# Free Abortion on Demand!



SC Photo

Vaughan/CP

**Trotskyist League marching for defense of abortion rights against Moral Majority reaction, today spearheaded by rabid B.C. Socred premier William Vander Zalm (right).**

Since 1970, in the face of vicious state persecution, filthy anti-Semitism and Moral Majority terror, Dr. Henry Morgentaler has fought Canada's reactionary abortion laws. On January 28 Morgentaler scored an important victory when the Supreme Court of Canada struck down the anti-abortion laws as "unconstitutional" and threw out all the charges against him. This Polish-born Jewish doctor, a survivor of the Auschwitz death camp, has in many ways come to symbolize the battle against the all-sided social reaction of Cold War II. We salute his courage and his eagerness to continue battling for women's right to abortion.

Within days of the court decision, however, the anti-abortion fanatics unleashed a new storm of bigotry. In some areas abortions became even harder to obtain than before, as many hospitals disbanded their now-illegal "abortion committees" and simply stopped providing the procedure. Now the Tories are plotting new laws to again restrict abortion rights, including possible re-criminalization. Down with all restrictions on abortion rights! Free abortion on demand!

At the head of the anti-abortion frenzy stands B.C. premier William Vander Zalm, a racist, anti-woman, anti-gay, anti-worker pig. "We will be

funding no abortions" Vander Zalm said. Then he cruelly taunted rape and incest victims who might seek abortion costs under the Criminal Injury Compensation Act as "cheaters"! This bloodthirsty lunatic raved about "abortions requiring dismemberment of a baby without so much as a baby aspirin for the victim--the parts to be incinerated, compacted or removed like filth from a garbage bag." Vander Zalm would drive desperate women to the backstreet abortion, the coathanger and death.

B.C. has the highest level of public approval for abortion rights and the highest per capita abortion rate in Canada. Furthermore even far-right Socreds at times need access to abortions. Thus the leader's fanaticism provoked an open revolt in his own party that runs from the cabinet on down.

The Socreds are having a falling-out over abortion, but they are firmly united in their broader war on women, minorities, the aged, the poor and the sick. The brutal message is: drop dead. Old people are now to pay 85 percent of the cost of residential care, another \$60 out of their already starvation-level monthly pensions. Grotesquely, with more than 200,000 on welfare and while hundreds of seriously ill children can't get urgently

*(continued on page 23)*