

Australasian

SPARTACIST

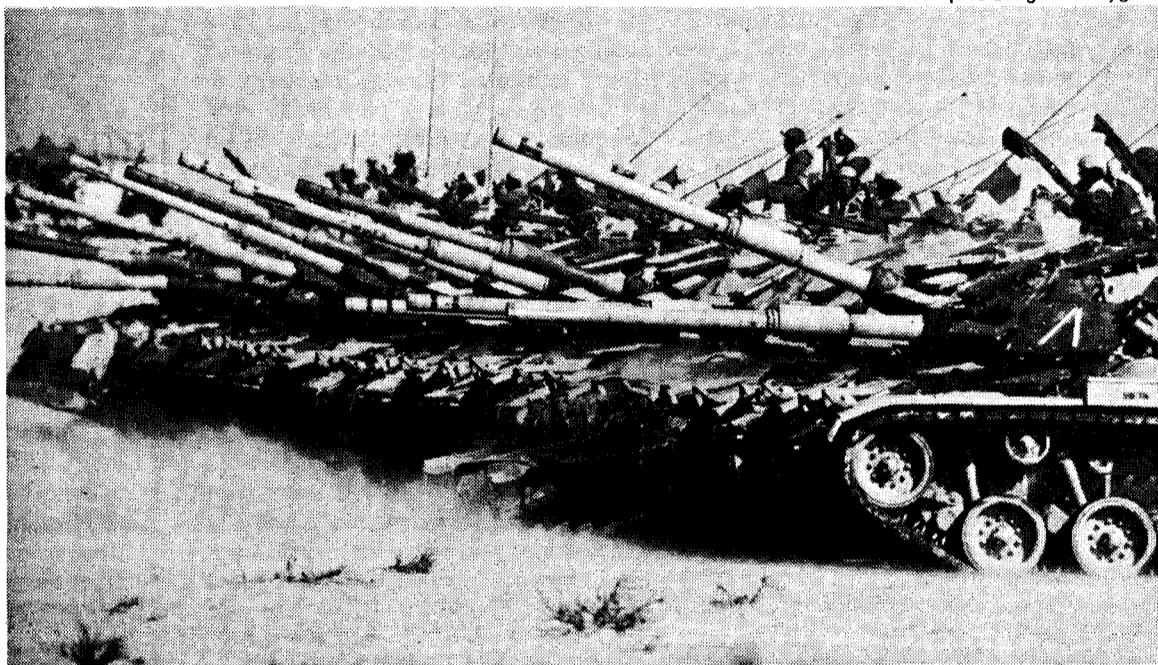


Number 139

SUMMER 1990/1991

50 cents

Defeat U.S. and Australian Imperialism!



Jacques Langevin—Sygma

Pro-Saddam demonstrators (left) burn U.S. flag in Jordan. U.S. M-60 tanks prepare imperialist bloodbath against Iraqi people. Arab working masses can resist imperialist aggression and bring down the sheiks, colonels and dictators. U.S./Australian workers have power to defeat imperialism from within.

Defend Iraq Against Imperialist War Threat!

12 NOVEMBER—As the imperialist forces in the Gulf go on war footing, U.S. chief George Bush is shifting the emphasis from diplomacy and the U.N. trade embargo to ever more loudly beating the drums of war. Bush has just announced the call up of reservists to replace an extra 100,000 U.S. troops that are to be sent from Europe to augment nearly 250,000 troops already stationed in the Gulf. This morning, Bush's junior partner Hawke despatched two more Australian frigates to relieve those sent in August. The frigates have several times fired on unarmed Iraqi freighters attempting to run the naval blockade. The imperialist oil pirates are hurtling headlong toward war with Iraq and it could turn out to be the opening shots of World War III.

"If we have a pretext, a casus belli, we go," one "senior White House aide" confided to the *New York Times* (27 September). Meanwhile a "senior officer" in Britain's 7th Armoured Brigade, deployed in the Gulf last month, "claims that if U.K. forces are attacked with chemical gas by Iraqi troops, they will retaliate with battlefield nuclear weapons" (*London Observer*, 30 September). This is no empty threat: the British 7th is equipped with nuclear artillery shells and nuclear-tipped Lance missiles, and British Tornado strike fighters already deployed can deliver 50-kiloton nuclear bombs.

What's being planned is premeditated mass murder. Former U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff General Michael Dugan

let the cat out of the bag, and got sacked for it, when he bragged that "downtown Baghdad" would be a prime target of the massive bombing campaign to come. This would mean something like 100,000 killed. But not all the blood will be on the other side. A Saudi Arabian officer told the *Wall Street Journal* (19 September): "The Iraqis are real fighters, not like the Americans.... They fought through eight years of heat and dust and blood, and they're tough." The body bags will be coming back in very large numbers. Even optimistic estimates put expected allied casualties at 30,000.

The International Communist League calls for defence of Iraq against the imperialist invasion, which spells devastation and subjugation of the Arab peoples, and for the Iraqi working people to bring down the bloody nationalist strongman Saddam Hussein. In the imperialist countries, the defeat of voracious U.S. and Australian imperialism and their allies on the battlefield can only aid the class struggle against the capitalist system. Break the blockade of Iraq—U.S., Australia out of the Persian Gulf!

Persian Gulf Quagmire: "Easier to Get in Than Out"

Hawke's initial militaristic mood was quickly deflated by widespread popular opposition to the Gulf deployment. To be sure, two frigates don't compare with the massive U.S. deployment. But the Australian force in Vietnam also started in 1962 with less than 100 troops in

"training and advisory" roles. Everyone knows that it's on the cards that the Pentagon will demand ground troops. With its domestic troubles mounting, the Hawke Labor government can hardly relish the prospect. But there is nothing they can do about it. All wings of both the main parties know that the foreign policy of Australian lackey imperialism is founded on securing its existence through the U.S. alliance. Bush wants war, and every lackey must do its bit.

So Hawke and Evans have been anxiously emphasising that a "peaceful solution" is possible, i.e. the blockade alone will force Hussein out of Kuwait. But they also refuse to rule out Australian troops for an attack on Iraq. When former diplomat Malcolm Booker criticised the Australian commitment, and mentioned the obvious fact that the frigates are under U.S. command, Hawke exploded in one of his characteristic abusive outbursts, making the specious claim that Australia shared tactical command! This is as believable as his dogged insistence that the economy is not in recession. The ALP "lefts" had quickly fallen into line behind Hawke's war moves, demanding only that Australian forces be placed under U.N. command. But now Stewart West is blustering that the "left" will "wreck the stability of the government" if it commits troops to a U.S. attack on Iraq. No one takes these paper tigers too literally—but if Hawke sends ground troops it could set off not a party room brawl so much as a social upheaval.

Three months into the Gulf invasion, a White House aide moaned, "It was a lot easier to see how to get into this thing than it is to see how to get out of it" (*New York Times*, 21 October). Some major partners in the anti-Iraq coalition are having doubts. The Soviets and French have put out feelers to Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein, though recent statements by Soviet foreign minister Shevardnadze have threatened Iraq with war. Now even the Saudi hosts of the U.S. forces are getting worried. Last month Saudi war minister Prince Sultan, brother of King Fahd, floated the possibility of a "brotherly" Arab resolution to the conflict with Iraq. A "senior Syrian official" was reported as saying: "We believe the Americans and their Western allies want to attack Iraq soon—but we will not fight the Iraqis. Syrian-American relations have reached their limit" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 November). In Japan, the Kaifu government has abandoned plans to dispatch 2,000 troops in the face of opinion polls running at 75 percent against.

Slaughter in Jerusalem

The region itself is meanwhile a seething cauldron. The massacre in October of 21 Palestinian demonstrators at the Al Aksa Mosque in Jerusalem was the Israeli rulers' response to U.S. requests that they keep a "low profile." The assassination in New York of Meir Kahane, leader of the Israeli fascist party Kac'i, has already led to revenge killings by his

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Abolish the Racist U.S. Death Penalty! Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!

The following article is adapted from Workers Vanguard, no 512, 19 October 1990, newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

On the first day of its autumn term, the United States Supreme Court shut its doors to death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. On October 1 the court denied Jamal's petition for review of his conviction and death sentence. Jamal, 36, had challenged the overtly political basis of his conviction and the exclusion of eleven prospective jurors solely because they are black, a challenge going to the heart of the racist death penalty in the U.S. The court's action clears the way for Pennsylvania governor Robert Casey to sign a warrant of execution.

Jamal, a former Black Panther Party spokesman and supporter of the MOVE organization, was president of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Association of Black Journalists at the time of his 1981 arrest. Jamal became known as the "voice of the voiceless" because he spoke out for the poor and oppressed minorities, first from the streets and then from his radio booth. Because he was an outspoken critic of racist cop terror, he was framed on charges of killing a Philadelphia policeman.

For years, Chief Justice Rehnquist, whose hero is the notorious hanging judge Isaac Parker who sent 164 men to their graves in post-Reconstruction Arkansas, has been the most outspoken proponent of speeding up the assembly line of death. Nearly every day Rehnquist & Co. confirm that in death penalty cases there is no court of "last resort"—just a rubber stamp. The Rehnquist court says that racist application of the death penalty is "irrelevant," and now refuses to hear an appeal about the deliberate exclusion of blacks from the jury that convicted Jamal.

If "Judge Death" Rehnquist is driving the "execution express," Congress is feverishly stoking its engines. In the Senate confirmation hearings for newly appointed Supreme Court Justice Souter they didn't even question his support for capital punishment. And on October 4 the Democratic-controlled House passed by a two-to-one margin an "anti-crime" bill which expanded the list of the federal crimes to carry the death sentence. As frustrated Congressional opponents sarcastically chanted "Kill! Kill! Kill!" Wisconsin Representative David Obey accurately characterized this license to kill by asking, "would it be possible to bring the guillotines directly to the House floor?"

And a macabre front-page article in

the *New York Times* (13 October) decries a shortage of "experienced executioners." "Hangmen are a dying breed," sighs the Delaware deputy attorney general, a serious problem now that 2,400 people are on death row and 23 states are "preparing to join the 15 that have executed prisoners since the Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976." Featured is a picture of Fred Leuchter, the ghoulis "authority" on Nazi gas ovens who claims the Holocaust never happened.

Jamal's case is what the racist death penalty is all about. On death row because of his political views and associations, Jamal's case has won widespread support as the case for all opponents of the death penalty to rally around. Thirty thousand people around the world have signed petitions and written Governor Casey demanding Jamal not be executed, including some 1560 in Australia (not 1800 as mistakenly reported in the last issue). Among them are Victorian Labor MLC George Crawford, the Fireman and Deckhands Union of NSW and the Victorian Branch of the Australian Telecommunications Employees Association. Trade unions representing millions around the world have taken a stand with Jamal and against the state's racist "legal" lynching. Over the past few months an international campaign of demonstrations and rallies initiated by the Partisan Defence Committee brought together trade unionists, socialists, civil rights activists, students and death penalty abolitionists in ten cities around the world to demand that Jamal not die.

Among racist killer cops in America, Philadelphia's are in a league by themselves—from raids on Black Panther Party headquarters to the barbaric 13 May 1985 bombing of MOVE. Backed up by the courts' racists in black robes, they are committed to putting Jamal on a conveyor belt to the electric chair. When over 200 people rallied for Jamal at the Church of the Advocate in his Philadelphia hometown on July 14, Fraternal Order of Police president Richard Costello slanderously branded Jamal's supporters a "misfit terrorist group" and suggested they be jointly executed with him on an "electric couch."

From his tiny death row cell Jamal continues to speak out in columns printed in papers across America. In the *Philadelphia Tribune*, Jamal responded to Costello's remarks by exposing the nature of Philly's racist cops, who are dedicated to silencing his voice forever:

"Who has instilled terror in whom? People felt chills of remembrance that this threat came from the very people who planned and executed the murderous Mother's Day Massacre of Osage Avenue, when men, women and babies were incinerated in their homes;

the same people who slew African-Americans while handcuffed; the same state force that shot young Stacey Whitted of West Philly to death with utter impunity; the same group that liquidated Winston C.X. Hood, Cornell Warren, Jose Reyes, William Green, on city streets, with utter impunity; the same body that shot 700 people between 1971-1981, killing over 300 of the mostly Black, Puerto Rican and poor white youths, with total, utter impunity."

Mumia Abu-Jamal must not die! We need to organize massive protests, take his case to the Supreme Court of the

masses. The working people are the social force with the power to save this courageous man and stop this deadly killing machine. To join the international campaign to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal, contact the Partisan Defence Committee for petitions, the PDC/US journal, *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*, and to organize video showings of Jamal speaking from death row. Donations are also urgently needed. Write to: Partisan Defence Committee, PO Box Q217 QVB, Sydney NSW 2000.

"From Death Row, This is Mumia Abu-Jamal"

New PDC Video

This powerful video features Jamal speaking from death row. Fundraising showings (\$10 admission) at the venues below. Contact the PDC to organise further showings.

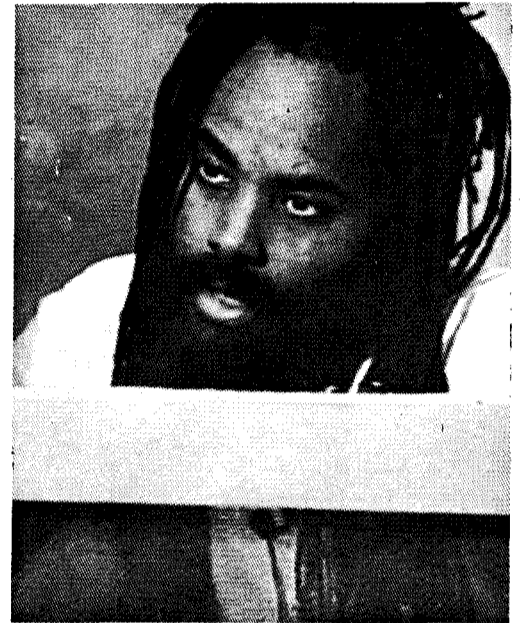
MELBOURNE:

6.45pm Thursday
29 November
Brunswick Community Health Centre
11 Glenlyon Road
Brunswick

SYDNEY:

4.00pm Saturday
15 December
Metropolitan Hotel
Cnr George & Bridge Street

Phone for information Melbourne (03) 654 4315, Sydney (02) 281 2181



Defend Anna Murray!

Anna Murray is young, female and Aboriginal, the mother of two young boys. Like many blacks in apartheid Australia, she and her family have been subject to ongoing police harassment. Her father, Arthur, organised Aboriginal cotton chippers in north western New South Wales during the 1960s, winning improved wages and conditions through bitter struggle. His militancy made his family a particular target in outback towns of NSW.

Anna's brother Eddie died in a police lock-up in Wee Waa, NSW, on 12 June 1981. One hour after being picked up by cops he was found "hanging" in his cell, with his feet touching the floor. Arthur and family have fought relentlessly to bring to justice the "person or persons unknown" (as the coroner's verdict put it) responsible for Eddie's death and have been prominent in the Committee to Defend Black Rights. In response the state pursues a vendetta against them.

When Lloyd Boney, a young Aboriginal man, died in police custody in the small NSW town of Brewarrina on 6 August 1987, the Murrays went to the funeral. There the mourners were attacked by cops and a bloody battle ensued, in which the cops were forced to retreat. A massive cop mobilisation, including the Tactical Response Group, put the town under virtual martial law the next day. Seventeen blacks, including at least one who wasn't even in town that night, were slammed with various charges including riotous assembly. Arthur Murray, along with Sonny Bates, also got the frame-up charge of "conspiracy to commit murder" of a police officer. Anna, who was viciously beaten by cops, was charged with assault. These cases are expected to come to trial next year. Drop

all charges against the Brewarrina 17!

Soon after returning from Brewarrina to her home in Dubbo, Anna Murray was again picked up by cops and beaten. In the police station they tied a noose around her neck, threatening her with the same treatment Eddie got. Bravely, Anna charged the two cops with assault and conspiracy to murder. The cops responded by charging Anna with 16 assault-related charges. Anna was given the wrong date for her trial and turned up a couple of days late. The court had dismissed her charges and she was arrested for failure to appear and locked up for two weeks. She was then notified that the cops had dropped their charges against her.

Anna is intending to charge the cops again, and is running a campaign to raise the necessary funds. Her battle is courageous, particularly given the history of cop harassment of her family. The Muirhead Commission into Aboriginal deaths in custody, announced by the Hawke Labor government after Lloyd Boney's funeral, whitewashed the cops in Eddie Murray's case, as they have done with all the others. The Murray family face the entire might of the state and their armed cops. The key to defending the Murray family and all blacks is action by the organised working class, who have a common enemy—the cops who attack their picket lines and the hated Hawke government which is driving down living conditions.

The Partisan Defence Committee calls on its supporters to defend Anna Murray. Letters of support/donations towards Anna's legal defence can be sent to: The Anna Murray Defence Fund, Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Watch Committee, PO Box 65, Broadway, NSW, 2007. ■

Australasian

SPARTACIST

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Secret Police Vendetta

Tim Anderson Framed, Again

On the night of 25 October the jury returned its verdict on Tim Anderson, university student, teacher at Tranby Aboriginal College in Sydney, former member of the Ananda Marga and victim of an unrelenting, twelve-year-long secret police vendetta. The verdict—guilty of three counts of murder as the “mastermind” of the 1978 Hilton bombing in Sydney—was met with disbelief, then outrage by those in the court, who later held a spontaneous demonstration outside. Anderson was acquitted of another charge of attempting to murder ex-Sri Lankan prime minister J.R. Jayewardene. On 12 November Anderson was sentenced to a minimum of 11 years jail. His lawyers have lodged an appeal on the grounds of “unsafe verdict.” This verdict is positively dangerous for the left and labour movement. Tim Anderson is innocent! Free him now!

The chief perpetrators of this frame-up are the secret police agencies of the capitalist state, in particular the NSW police Special Branch, which exists to spy on and harass radical and working class political activity and organisations. In early 1978 state ALP governments were threatening abolition of the Special Branches following revelations that they and ASIO were illegally spying on tens of thousands of “subversives,” including parliamentarians, judges and trade union leaders. Then Liberal prime minister, Malcolm Fraser, called out 1000 troops to defend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). The Hilton bombing during CHOGM and the ensuing hysteria about “terrorism” dramatically reversed the fortunes of the secret police. The proposed inquiries were scrapped and ASIO emerged with its existence justified, vastly increased funding and new powers that legalised its previously illegal activities. Bob Hogg, then secretary of the Victorian ALP, observed, “the only group seemingly to have gained by that bombing has been ASIO and the Special Branches” and asked, “has any attempt been made to determine whether or not the bombing was a bungled attempt by any section of the security forces to justify their existence” (*Labor Star*, quoted in Anderson, *Free Alister, Dunn and Anderson*, 1985).

For Anderson this is the second time round. In 1978, he, Ross Dunn and Paul Alister, then members of the Ananda Marga, were framed for “conspiracy to murder” would-be fascist fuhrer Robert Cameron. They were convicted on the basis of police “verbals” (false confessions) and the evidence of a police agent provocateur, Richard Seary. During the trial Seary sensationally claimed that Dunn and Alister had “confessed” to the Hilton bombing. Though they were not charged with the bombing at the time, Seary’s claims and the resulting media sensation effectively swung the trial against them. Through an incredible series of trials, appeals, inquests and inquiries which rivalled the witchhunt against Lindy Chamberlain, their defence campaign finally succeeded in demolishing the frame-up and the three were freed and pardoned in 1985 after seven years of wrongful imprisonment. They were later awarded \$100,000 compensation each.

In addition to the sleazy police informers, the “verbals” and so on which characterised the first, this second frame-up has a new and sinister element—the purchase of “evidence” from long-term prisoners in exchange for lenient treatment. The recent case of Sydney man Darren Brennan illustrates the lengths to which the cops will go. In June, Tactical Response Group cops broke into his house, and although he was unarmed, shot him in the face. Unlike Aboriginal David Gundy, shot dead by SWOS cops in 1989, Brennan survived. Not satisfied with nearly blowing away a man against whom they could not even lay charges,



CEFTA photo

Tim Anderson (left), victim of ASIO/Special Branch frame-up. Supporters march outside Central Criminal Court, Sydney 25 October, after Anderson was proclaimed guilty of murder.



News Ltd

the cops then unsuccessfully tried to frame him for “conspiracy to commit armed robbery” using fabricated evidence extracted with threats from an inmate of Long Bay Jail.

The Manufacture of Evidence

Anderson was arrested and charged over the Hilton bombing on 30 May 1989 on “information” provided by Ray Denning, celebrated prison escapee and former prisoners rights activist, who has now turned informer, that Anderson “boasted” to him in jail (on the first day they met!) that he had planted the bomb. Denning’s revelations against Anderson followed his recapture after escaping from Goulburn jail. In return for his “evidence” (which the cops got him to change several times before he got it right) Denning has been granted immunity from prosecution for crimes he committed while on the run, and says he’ll be out in two years. A few days after Anderson was convicted Denning claimed the \$100,000 reward for information leading to the conviction of the Hilton bomber.

The “evidence” of this self-admitted liar was never going to stick. Enter ex-Ananda Marga member, Evan Pederick, who the day after Anderson’s arrest “confessed” that he had planted the bomb, under the influence of Anderson. Ostensibly stricken with remorse, Pederick eagerly cooperated with police at his trial, was convicted and given a 20-year sentence, with a minimum of seven years to serve. His defence never challenged his “confession,” being more concerned with portraying him as a “weak and wishy-washy man” who was “manipulated” by the evil Svengali, Anderson.

Anderson’s lawyers repeatedly tore Pederick’s story to shreds. The charge

against Anderson of attempting to murder then-Indian prime minister Morarji Desai was dropped when it was proved Desai was nowhere near the scene at the time Pederick said he had tried to set off the bomb. The substitute charge of attempting to murder J.R. Jayewardene, mistaking him for Desai, fared no better. The defence proved that Pederick couldn’t have tried to set it off when Jayewardene entered the Hilton because he was inside the hotel having lunch at the time. Anderson’s acquittal of this charge also removes the sole motive attributed to him. Time after time, from the size of the bomb he supposedly made

and which has supposedly wracked him with guilt for eleven years, to the time he placed it, to the bag he carried it in, Pederick had to be supplied with a new story by the cops so it would fit the recorded facts. Even sections of the bourgeois media expressed surprise that at the end of the day the jury believed Pederick.

Workers Movement Must Defend Tim Anderson!

For the security police the Ananda Marga was a convenient scapegoat. In its home base, India, it is a Hindu-fascistic cult with a history of communalism and also anti-communism. In Australia it attracted recruits from the “counter-cultural” milieu of the seventies, interested in Eastern religion, which it combined with social activism overlapping some activities of the left. While it was their demonstrations against the Indian government demanding freedom for their imprisoned guru that put them in the cross-hairs of the secret police, it was a campaign against racist groups that afforded the immediate pretext for the first frame-up.

Since his release in 1985, Anderson has left Ananda Marga and has been an active supporter of political causes including Aboriginal rights, and a courageous campaigner against police “verbals” and for prisoners’ rights. Activities such as his public exposure, at an international legal conference in 1989, of one of the detectives instrumental in the frame-up as a basher and a perjurer have made him a thorn in the side of the cops. The NSW police are widely reviled as corrupt, vicious and inept, which the shootings of David Gundy and Darren Brennan have only served to confirm. The arresting officer in the 1978 frame-up was none other than Detective Roger

Rogerson, now doing time for “conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.” They want to shut Anderson up, avenge their earlier defeat and clean up their image a bit.

In a statement at the conclusion of his committal hearing in February, Anderson said: “It is important that the false Hilton bomb prosecution against me be laid to rest. The lies have to come to an end.” He also protested “against the gross injustice of my being repeatedly and maliciously dragged through the courts over a period of twelve years; and I want also to draw attention to the fact that this has been a politically motivated prosecution from beginning to end.”

This political motivation, to strengthen the secret police agencies, and under the codeword of “terrorism” stage a witch-hunt of radicals and leftists, has been a feature of Cold War II in the eighties, which required ideological regimentation in preparation for war. The Hawke years have featured a range of witchhunts, from the anti-woman witchhunt of Lindy

Chamberlain to the union-busting Royal Commissions which accompanied the government’s destruction of the BLF, whose purpose was to effectively proscribe militant trade unionism. The vendetta against Anderson is a deadly threat to the democratic rights of the left and working class movement, and to all opponents of state repression and defenders of civil liberties. If it succeeds, this will not only “solve” the unsolved Hilton bombing in a manner apparently vindicating the ASIO/Special Branch “terrorism” scare, but could also legitimise their systematic frame-up of political opponents.

Such political frame-ups cannot be defeated merely in the courtroom, but through a political campaign centred on mobilising mass protest in the working class movement. Anderson’s supporters in the Committee to Expose the Frame-up of Tim Anderson have been waging a campaign of leaflets, demonstrations and public meetings. A 7 November CEFTA protest rally at Sydney’s Glebe Town Hall was filled to overflowing. In a statement to the rally a Partisan Defence Committee spokesman concluded by saying:

“This case must be made an issue in the working class movement. The building workers’ unions in NSW are being dragged through the courts right now by the Greiner government. They have a common interest in defending Tim. A few thousand building workers fronting at the court to register their protest at Tim’s conviction would send a serious message to the witchhunters.”

And a defeat for the sinister secret police agencies would in turn be a spur for working class struggle that could turn round the climate of Cold War reaction that has fostered this frame-up. Stop the frame-up of Tim Anderson! Smash ASIO and the Special Branches! ■

Contact the Spartacist League

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Iraq...

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followers, who want the forcible expulsion of all Arabs from Israel and the occupied territories. The Zionist rulers are out to deliberately inflame Arab hostility to the point of a shooting war, which would facilitate driving the Palestinians out. An Israeli scholar, Avi Shlaim, wrote that the immediate consequence of the Jerusalem massacre "is to make war in the Gulf more likely and this would not be unwelcome to the Israeli proponents of 'War Now'" (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 21 October).

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians are looking to get even with Zionist Israel for driving them out of their homeland and resentful at Washington's double standard regarding "aggression." In Jordan, Palestinians form a majority and are itching to fight for Iraq as well as overthrow the mealy-mouthed King of Jordan who butchered their people in 1970. Palestinians in the West Bank staged a pro-Iraq general strike in late September. The expansionist Israeli capitalist state must be destroyed from within. Under an internationalist leadership, the cosmopolitan and combative Palestinian masses can be the spark for class struggle throughout the region and assist in breaking Hebrew-speaking workers from the death grip of Zionism. Defend the Palestinians—Israel out of the Occupied Territories!

Soviet Workers: Smash the Sellout Gorbachev Regime!

The imperialists are exploiting the capitulation and collapse of the Kremlin Stalinist bureaucracy to tighten the military encirclement of the Soviet Union, from eastern Germany to the Persian Gulf. Gorbachev's apparently limitless capitulation to Western imperialism and the accelerating disintegration of the Soviet degenerated workers state has only emboldened the U.S. imperialists in reasserting their role as cops of the world. The Bush White House is in plenty of domestic trouble these days; their aim in the Gulf is to regain by force the world dominance the U.S. held—briefly—at the end of World War II. Having fallen behind Germany and Japan in the economic race, the U.S. is trying to bully them back into line with its huge military apparatus by seizing the world's main oil region and blackmailing them for billions in donations.

But some elements of the Soviet leadership, especially in the military high command, are clearly worried. The chief of the Soviet general staff, General Mikhail Moiseyev, warned: "In case of some military actions, Iran will join the Iraqi side. This would not be simply some kind of conflict; This would be a world war" (*Washington Post*, 28 September). Yet Moiseyev criminally handed the U.S. detailed technical summaries of Iraq's Soviet military equipment as he prepared for a tour of the U.S. and the Pentagon. Today, the homeland of the October Revolution is in deadly danger. The

Gamma—Liaison



Setboun—SIPA



Bloody Saddam Hussein (above) massacred Iraqi Kurds with poison gas (left).

Soviet working class must link the defence and regeneration of the collectivised economy, through the restoration of workers democracy within the USSR, to the struggle against imperialist militarism on a worldwide scale.

Down with Racist Australian Imperialism!

The Australian rulers' willing participation in imperialist war abroad is part of the price they pay for U.S. protection of white Australia against perceived "threats" from Asia. Their "fortress Australia" racism is heightened in times of war mobilisation—witness the recent Navy film broadcast on SBS-TV. Supposedly simulating a "boarding exercise," the video revealed crew members aboard the HMAS *Success* in the Gulf dressed in Arab attire performing a vicious racist parody of Arabs and Muslims. War historian Timothy Hall wrote of the Second World War: "There was hardly a campaign where Australians fought during World War II where criticism was not levelled at them for their behaviour. The charges ranged from looting and drunkenness to theft, rape and, in New Guinea, even sacrilege" (quoted in *Free Palestine*, January-February, 1987).

In previous wars the government has not hesitated to incarcerate "enemy aliens" like Germans, Italians and Japanese-born residents, in concentration camps. From day one the government has fomented anti-Arab

Blood on the walls after Israeli soldiers killed at least 21 Palestinian Arabs, who were defending Jerusalem's Al Aksa mosque against provocation by Zionist fanatics.



Dominique Aubert—Sygma

racism. The ridiculous order to naval personnel not to wear their uniforms in public was clearly designed to fabricate a "security" scare—as if the sailors faced attack from Arab-Australians and opponents of the Gulf war. But it has been the Arab community that has been harassed by ASIO and subjected to threats and attacks, with a spate of firebombings and break-ins at Islamic colleges, Islamic Centres and schools. While the navy excused "our boys" for their "excesses" in the video, no such leniency was displayed to Leading Seaman Terry Jones, who faces a maximum sentence of 12 months in a civilian jail for his courageous refusal to fight in this bloody oil grab. Free Terry Jones! Drop all the charges!

U.S. Imperialist war chief George Bush (left) with his loyal junior partner, Labor prime minister Bob Hawke.



no credit

In France last September seamen held up plans to transport troops and war material to the Gulf. The Bouches-du-Rhone local of the Communist Party-led CGT union federation protested against the "mobilization of nine civilian ships and their crews for the war." The seamen's declaration was indicative of working class opposition to the imperialists' war plans. German seamen aboard the tanker *Western Gallantry* refused to transport U.S. aircraft fuel to the Gulf. In Australia, the militant actions in particular by maritime workers against the Vietnam War in the 60s and in solidarity with the Indonesian independence strug-

gle in the 40s were exemplary demonstrations of class solidarity. After eight years of Labor's union-busting, "award restructuring," and the rest, the working class has no enthusiasm for the Gulf war. The recession is well and truly here and with the economy vulnerable to international trade war, it's hitting home hard, with a wave of retrenchments across the country. Along with imperialist war abroad goes all-sided class war at home. It's time for some hard class struggle to bust the Accord—and for political strike action against the Gulf war!

government, as it did in the two world wars, and the parliamentary "left" are on a tight leash. Early on, they were speaking at marches and signing newspaper ads, but since Hawke cracked the whip over support for the Gulf war effort they have hardly said boo. Instead of the "broadest unity," the fake-left have been reduced to squabbling in their sandbox. For some, the coalitions are not pro-imperialist enough. The CPA and Association for Communist Unity demand they denounce Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, which the Sydney coalition has done. The ALP "lefts" and union bureaucracy above all don't want any social struggle to rock the boat for Hawke. In Melbourne the Nuclear Disarmament Party walked out of the GAC, charging that there were too many "communists."

The diehard Stalinists of the Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) not only refuse to defend Iraq against imperialism, but support a U.N. trade embargo. They condemn the invasion of Kuwait, as if it matters one whit to the working class whether that oil well turned into a state by British colonialism is ruled by Hussein or the filthy rich feudal Emir. A resolution of the recent SPA congress noted that the U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia threatened the USSR's southern borders and expressed "grave concern" that "the USSR Foreign Minister's de facto endorsement of the unilateral military action of the US have encouraged the war preparations of the US leaders" which is "undermining the Soviet Union's policies of peace and resistance to imperialism" (*Guardian*, 10 October). However, the SPA's alternative to U.S. troops is "their replacement by Arab forces." It is the Stalinist program of

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Fake Left—Lost Without Labor

The anti-Gulf war coalitions like the Melbourne Gulf Action Committee (GAC) and the Sydney Bring the Frigates Home Coalition have attracted virtually the whole gamut of the reformist left, plus assorted peaceniks, greenies and Australian Democrats. They want to build a "broad" popular-front "anti-war" movement tailored to attract the churches, the Democrats and greens, but above all a wing of the Labor Party. Thus they refuse to defend Iraq against the bloodbath threatened by imperialism or oppose its blockade to starve the Iraqi people. Despite their loyalty to the ruling class, their would-be popular front has so far been a notable flop. In Sydney where the marches have been largest, they have declined from a crowd of 2000 on 1 September at which ALP politicians spoke, to a few hundred on 20 October when the Laborites were conspicuously absent.

The ALP is running the capitalist

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League/US

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Smash Accord Restructuring!

Hoechst: Spread the Strike to Win!

We reprint below a leaflet dated 11 November issued by the Melbourne Spartacist League.

Workers at the Hoechst chemical plant in the Melbourne suburb of Altona are now in their eleventh week on strike. The strike began over the sacking of AMWU shop steward and union health and safety officer Helmut Gries for revealing to a *60 Minutes* reporter how the company recklessly exposed workers to the carcinogenic chemical dichlorobenzidine (DCB), with those whose urine tests were abnormal told to keep quiet and kept in the dark about their medical condition. When 74 maintenance workers struck in Gries' defence the arrogant Hoechst bosses sacked them all. After escalating company attacks, including a vicious attack on picketers on 18 October by company thugs wielding iron bars and convoys of scab trucks roaring through the picket line, on 8 November some 1700 workers in the Altona petrochemical complex where Hoechst is located walked out in solidarity.

The stakes in this strike go far beyond the safety issue. Hawke is heading the country into a war for Big Oil and the American alliance. Big Oil, in the form of Esso's parent company, Exxon, owns the Altona Petrochemical Company, which supplies the other plants in the complex. The country is in the grip of a deep economic recession and Victoria has been hard hit, with thousands of jobs already gone. Teachers, railworkers, employees of the government-owned enterprises slated for "privatisation" are facing massive job losses at the hands of the Kirner government. In September the car plants shut down for a week. In early November, the day after Vehicle Builders Union bureaucrats rammed through an agreement with Ford to shut down for another week with the workers on half pay, Ford announced it would slash its workforce by a quarter, some 3000 jobs. A determined eight-week strike by Esso oil workers in Sale, Gippsland, sparked by the sale of Esso's plant to Mobil, was joined in solidarity actions by transport workers and oil industry workers in NSW. But the union tops limited the fight to better redundancy, and a couple of hundred jobs have gone down the tubes. It's now clear that Hoechst also plans mass sackings, using the ALP/ACTU's "award restructuring" Accord to force speed-up, increased work hours, less pay and broken union conditions on their remaining workforce.

The battle has been joined at Hoechst, and we need to win this one! A blow can be struck against Big Oil, in whose interests the U.S. is driving towards World War III in the Persian Gulf. We say: break the blockade of Iraq! And at home, you can bet if Hoechst win all the bosses will be emboldened. On the other hand, a victory for the unions at Altona could turn the tide on the Cold War Hawke years of union-busting, austerity and attacks on all the oppressed. It's necessary to defend jobs, wages and conditions by fighting for massive wage hikes to make up for the years of Accord wage-gouging, and for a shorter work-week at no loss in pay to spread the available work around.

Unleash Union Power!

The Hoechst strike is a popular focus for union discontent. Unionists across the city have refused to accept Hoechst deliveries. Maritime unions have refused to handle Hoechst. Union truckies have refused to cross the picket line, and the scab outfit, Fred's International Transport, has been hit with bans. Twice

printers refused to print Hoechst advertisements in the daily papers for scabs to replace the sacked workers (sending the capitalist media moguls into a fit over "freedom of the press").

The key to a quick victory over Hoechst and the petrochemical bosses is unleashing union power. The Altona Petrochemical Company has suggested it could close the complex for several weeks for plant refurbishment and maintenance. Let the workers shut it down, by occupying the plants. Mass picket lines need to be built to defend the occupation, making sure that nothing goes in or out except shift changes and food and other essential provisions for the occupiers. The strike must be spread. Bass Strait oil workers and oil refinery workers can shut down supplies instantly, and put a stop to their companies' restructuring plans in the process. Solidarity actions by the transport unions,

production workers at Hoechst, members of the AWU, joined the strike, and another four weeks to bring out the whole complex. This was the day before an Industrial Relations Court hearing, so that Halfpenny could have something to bargain with. But any deal cooked up in the bosses' courts will be a sellout! Already the Court has issued a return-to-work order on Hoechst workers, under penalty of \$500 a day fines. A "private deal" a month ago between Hoechst and Halfpenny only fell through when Hoechst backed out (*Sunday Age*, 11 November). The petrochemical bosses want to break the unions and are playing to win. They want to starve the workers into submission, and Halfpenny and the THC have been playing right into their hands.

Union leaders have asked for assistance from the German Chemical Workers Federation. Hoechst is a German company, one of the successor firms of

with the tacit endorsement of the THC and ACTU, who seeing the hand of the BLF in the strike, branded the picket line "unauthorised" and called on the company to "protect" those working at the site. This criminal THC/ACTU strike-breaking must be defeated, by respecting and reinforcing the picket line and with solidarity actions against Leighton.

Kirner convened a "private conference" of "the parties to the dispute" (boycotted by Hoechst) on 10 November, signalling a sellout deal in the wind. The chief concern of the Kirner ALP government and its industrial arm in the THC is to keep power, by proving themselves "responsible" administrators of the capitalist state. Remember, Halfpenny was the architect of union-busting restructuring at Williamstown dockyards, and played a key role in the isolation and defeat of the tramway workers. The ALP tops want to stop the Hoechst strike

For Mass Pickets That No One Dares Cross!



Melbourne: workers from nearby plants converge on Hoechst after news of company thug attacks on pickets. Spread the strike to win!

Metal Worker

also targeted for restructuring, are key. And most of the companies in the complex, including Hoechst, have operations interstate, particularly in NSW. Shut them down nationally! ETU powerworkers in the Latrobe Valley are on strike now over restructuring. Many more, like Victorian railworkers, tramway workers who lost their fight for jobs early this year, the car workers and NSW steel workers need to be and want to be.

But so far the strike has been tightly controlled by the Victorian Trades Hall Council, in particular by its "left" secretary John Halfpenny, who while talking tough to the workers has used his power to limit the strike. The union tops have kept the picket line too small to stop the scabs, while Kirner's Socialist Left-dominated Labor government has gradually increased the number of cops at the plant to protect the scabs. In early November 15 AWU members began crossing the picket line under heavy police protection. Raving against supposed "rent-a-mob thugs," police chief Ritchie threatened: "we have access to protective gear, helmets, riot shields and the like." But they'll think twice about implementing such threats if unionists are sitting on top of the bosses' precious plant and equipment and the complex is ringed by thousands of unionists from across the city of Melbourne.

This strike provides an opportunity to build a powerful weapon of struggle—an industrial union of petrochemical workers. But the union tops have played on craft divisions, dragging the strike out. It took five weeks before the 180

the notorious IG Farben empire built on the slave-labour economy attached to the extermination camps of Hitler's Third Reich and manufacturer of the Zyklon B gas used in the gas chambers. Today as the East German deformed workers state is swallowed up by a Fourth Reich, East (and West) German workers are paying the price. The restoration of the "freedom" of capitalist exploitation in East Germany is accompanied by massive unemployment, dismantling of the extensive child-care system, attacks on the right to abortion, rising fascist attacks on minorities, and nationalism, anti-Semitism and anti-Communism. From Australia to Germany workers' lives are counted cheap by the capitalist magnates of industry.

The Victorian ALP is offering a lot of "solidarity" talk (for the social-democratic nationalists it helps that Hoechst is "foreign"). ALP left luminary Joan Coxedge passed the hat around her "parliamentary colleagues" for the strike. Even Premier Kirner appeared once at the picket line. Beware "solidarity" from the ALP, the ACTU and THC, who are responsible for smashing the BLF and using the military against the pilots! The hand of "support" they offer distracts from the fist of "economic restructuring" with which they have attacked workers' wages, conditions and jobs throughout the Hawke years. Contrast Hoechst with the Leighton's 417 St Kilda Road site, where sacked building workers have been picketing for months. They have been subject to a massive cop mobilisation, jailings of strikers and court fines, all

spreading, having no intention of letting it damage the Accord. The Altona petrochemical strike must be taken out of the hands of the Labor traitors. For an elected strike committee to run the strike!

Yet most on the left try to foster illusions in the ALP. Take as an extreme example the political bandits of the Socialist Labour League, who pretend to be Trotskyists and whose paper, *Workers News* (2 November), even calls for a general strike. Their crowning demand is for "Kirner and Halfpenny and the Labor 'lefts' and union leaders to convene emergency conferences of the ALP and ACTU, open to all rank-and-file union members, to expel the Hawke-Keating right wing and form a workers government with a socialist program." But they already are the capitalist government in Victoria! This kind of cloud-cuckoo-land scenario spells a program for defeat and betrayal.

Seldom has it been clearer than today, when they administer over depression and imperialist war preparations, that the ALP are the labour lieutenants for capitalism. The Accord must be smashed and the Labor governments brought down through workers' action. The working class needs a revolutionary party, forged in struggle against the pro-capitalist program of the ALP tops, a leadership prepared to tear up the bosses' rule book and fight the class struggle to win. Only through workers rule can the brutal capitalist system of depression, racism and war be eradicated and a socialist order of justice, equality and freedom be built. ■

Revolutionary Regroupment

The latest issue of *Spartacist Canada*, published by the Trotskyist League of Canada, contains statements and documents of militants who have recently been won to the banner of authentic Leninism as embodied in the Trotskyist program of the International Communist League. The collapse of Stalinist rule has caused a wave of confusion, demoralisation and disintegration among the Communist parties internationally who like the imperialists have long equated "communism" with the rule of the bureaucracy. At the same time it has demonstrated the complete bankruptcy of the various international pretenders to the program of Trotskyism whose politics have, for at least the last decade, been animated by the Third Camp equation of Stalinism with imperialism.

As we noted in May 1989 in declaring the foundation of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist): "The absence of genuinely communist leadership is acutely felt by many and the program of Leninist internationalism can be put forward with great impact." The regroupment of militants from a variety of different backgrounds and political experience stands as powerful confirmation of the impact of this program.

Canadian Trotskyists Split from USec

The article "Militants Split From Mandel's USec" is accompanied by the document "Against United Secretariat Liquidationism—For Trotskyism!" of the Canadian Revolutionary Marxist Tendency (RMT). The RMT is an expelled faction from Socialist Challenge (SC), English-Canadian affiliate of the United Secretariat (USec), an international organisation led by Ernest Mandel which claims to be Trotskyist. This comprehensive document, which formed the basis for the RMT's fusion with the Trotskyist League of Canada, is both a thorough polemical dissection of the USec and an affirmation of the Trotskyist program. The RMT includes the majority, and the most active members, of the Edmonton, Alberta branch of SC, where their irregular newspaper *Socialist Challenge* has been published. When these comrades, who include two founding members of Socialist Challenge, one of whom was a full Central Committee member, joined the USec in Canada they thought they had joined a Trotskyist organisation. Instead they found that

their task was simply to be the "best builders" of other "movements."

The USec, having spent the last decade in the embrace of Cold War anti-Sovietism, has no answers to those militants who want to struggle against capitalist exploitation and oppression. As they began to investigate the political views of other tendencies, including the Spartacists, these comrades came to realise that SC's political adaptations were not born yesterday and increasingly they came to understand the centrality of the Russian question to the USec's

internationalist principles...." In February, Schwartz initiated a petition signed by 21 "members and friends of the Communist Party of Canada" denouncing the sell-out of East Germany. As an alternative, the authors pointed to the massive January 3 protest in East Berlin's Treptow Park as "vivid evidence that the political revolution in the D.D.R. can lead to a genuine worker Democracy based on workers and Soldiers councils."

Yossi Schwartz joined the Communist Party of Israel in 1963. In the 1970s he became a supporter of the international

Spartakist



Spartacist banner at East Berlin anti-fascist demonstration, 30 December 1989: "For the Communism of Lenin, Liebknecht and Luxemburg! For a Leninist-Egalitarian Party!" Spartakist Workers Party of Germany uniquely fought against capitalist reunification.

liquidationism. Their document states: "The past decade has seen an escalating rightward drift of the United Secretariat, which has ever more openly abandoned the defence of the USSR and the deformed workers' states against counter-revolution." They note that not only has the USec refused to retract its support to Polish Solidarność, but it "is apparently willing to expand its line throughout the region. Without the slightest qualification the 'Manifesto of the Fourth International,' submitted by the United Secretariat to the World Congress in 1991, 'unreservedly support[s] the uprisings of workers and peoples in Eastern Europe.' (Two, three, many victories for capitalist restoration!)" The RMT document calls "on all comrades who agree with this document to join us in pursuing the only principled course open to Trotskyists, the course of fusion with the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) and its Canadian section, the Trotskyist League. This is the only road in the fight for Trotskyism!"

Canadian CP in Crisis

Spartacist Canada includes resignations from Yossi Schwartz, a six-year member of the Canadian Communist Party (CPC), and from a member of the Young Communist League. Schwartz distributed the document "A Call to All Communists" to the CPC's recent national convention, at which delegates voted with only mild opposition to abandon even a reference to "Marxism-Leninism," and to single-mindedly focus on "left unity" with the wretchedly right-wing social-democratic New Democratic Party. Schwartz recently became prominent within the Canadian CP for opposing Gorbachev's pro-capitalist "market reforms" and appeasement of imperialism, instead calling for "a revolutionary working-class party based on Leninist

Spartacist tendency (now ICL), but then returned to the Stalinist fold. The victory of the Vietnamese Revolution led him to believe that the Communist Party, despite past betrayals, could be an instrument for successful social revolution. And that unlike the Trotskyists who were small in number, the CP could claim more "influence." But as his resignation explains:

"...history has proven repeatedly, and as has been proven to me through bitter experience in the last years, *program is decisive*."

"Like many other comrades in the party I have felt bitter and betrayed by Gorbachev's repeated sellouts to the imperialists—from the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan to the handing over of the DDR to the Fourth Reich. Once again, I found the only answers and the only program to defend the interests of the working people and oppressed internationally in the revolutionary politics of Trotskyism."

Mexico: From Morenoism to Trotskyism

On July 1 the Grupo Espartaquista de México fused with the Trotskyist Faction which broke with the Mexican followers of the late Argentine pseudo-Trotskyist Nahuel Moreno, particularly over the Morenoites' support to capitalist reunification of Germany. The article "Trotskyist Fusion in Mexico" details the fight waged by the Trotskyist Faction inside their former organisation, the Partido Obreros Socialista (POS—Socialist Workers Party). When the POS' Argentinian comrades responded to the fall of the Honecker regime and opening of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 by demanding the withdrawal of Warsaw Pact troops from East Germany, two leaders of the Mexican POS, who later formed the Trotskyist Faction, objected. They reasserted the Trotskyist position of unconditional defence of the Soviet Union and deformed workers states against imperialism, and upheld the Trotskyist analysis of the contradictory nature

of the Soviet bureaucracy. The documents of the Faction proceed from the dispute over East Germany to analyse the popular-frontism and rabid anti-Sovietism of the Moreno tendency. (For more information get the *Moreno Truth Kit*, available from Spartacist.)

In a continent dominated by Third World nationalism, which is also a calling card of Morenoism, the fight by the Trotskyist Faction centring on the Russian question placed the struggle for internationalist proletarian communism firmly in the forefront. For the ICL, this fusion and the consolidation of the Grupo Espartaquista de México is an important step forward.

Spartacist Youth Group Founded in Dublin

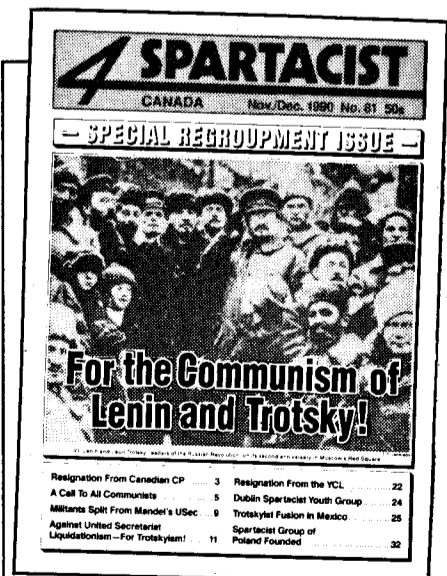
On the weekend of October 6-7, the Dublin Spartacist Youth Group (DSYG) was formed by a small group of students at Trinity College in Ireland. Participating in the founding meeting of the DSYG were representatives of the Spartacist League/Britain and messages of solidarity were sent from ICL sections including Australia. Greetings from the SL/US noted:

"Together with the Glasgow branch of the SL/B, the establishment of a group in Dublin is another step towards building the revolutionary party that can put an end to the rule of British imperialism and regional bourgeois powers in the British Isles. James Connolly and John Maclean were not finished Bolsheviks but their spirit of working class intransigence had better march alongside of us."

The comrades of the DSYG have been active in college groups over past years, participating in a united-front protest which stopped British fascist "historian" David Irving from speaking at Trinity in 1988. Recently the group organised the painting-out of fascist anti-Semitic slogans. They were also part of an ongoing struggle to distribute abortion information, including distributing a leaflet with others calling for free abortion on demand and women's liberation through socialist revolution.

As with the regroupments in Mexico, Canada and Poland, the work of the ICL in Germany was instrumental in convincing the Dublin comrades of the correctness and urgency of Spartacist politics, particularly in counterposition to the rightward-moving centrists of the Irish Workers Group/Workers Power. Where we fought tooth and nail against imperialist reunification, the IWG/WP were soft-core capitalist restorationist, tailing social democracy, calling for Soviet troops out and hailing anti-Stasi riots in which skinheads were prominent. The Dublin comrades rejected the IWG/WP's Stalinophobia for the authentic Trotskyism of the ICL. The DSYG also addressed the imperialist war build-up in the Persian Gulf, a decisive question facing revolutionaries today. The meeting called for trade unions to black ban imperialist war preparations and mobilisation to "stop the refuelling of U.S. warplanes at Shannon!"

The Spartacist League/Australia welcomes these new comrades to the ICL. And we have no doubt that there are many others in crisis-ridden left organisations around the world who don't buy the imperialist lie of the "death of communism," who don't want to ride in the baggage car of counterrevolution, who can see through those masquerading as "the Fourth International." To them we say, join us in the task of reforging the Fourth International established by Leon Trotsky. Join the International Communist League! ■



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Spartacist Group of Poland Founded

We are proud to print below a statement of working agreement between the International Communist League and our comrades of the newly founded Spartakusowska Grupa Polski. The militants of the SGP come to the ICL, having arrived at revolutionary Trotskyism after several years of efforts to rediscover the program of authentic communism. Its cadre include some who were politicized by the events of 1980-81 in Poland but were repulsed by the reactionary clericalism of Solidarność. They were among the founders of the Ruch Młodej Lewicy (RML—Young Left Movement), initially a somewhat heterogeneous grouping which sought to function as a left wing within the youth organization of the Polish United Workers Party (PZPR—the ruling Stalinist party). Seeking the road to proletarian internationalism, our new Polish comrades came into conflict with the Stalinist nationalist perversion of Marxism and with the deeply nationalist pro-Solidarność left. They were excluded from a May Day demonstration in 1988 for carrying banners hailing Lenin, Luxemburg and Liebknecht, revolutionary leaders of the Russian, Polish and German workers. Increasingly attracted to Trotskyism, they were instrumental in seeing that key works by Trotsky like *The Revolution Betrayed* were translated into the Polish language.

Thus, by the time they first came into contact with ICL literature this summer, the comrades who now constitute the SGP had through their own experiences and struggles arrived at a similar political thrust on several key questions. But it was necessary to draw a sharp political line against the pro-Solidarność outfits like the Mandelites and Morenoites who masquerade as Trotskyists. As the Polish comrades noted in a letter to our German section: "In the Trotskyist movement in Poland, we often meet with activists who have a 'Solidarność' pedi-

gree, or in any case put all their hopes in 'Solidarność.' Until now it is difficult for them to shed these illusions. Either they don't know or they deliberately suppress the reality of our true tradition (for 'tactical' reasons). It is increasingly more difficult for us to have a common language with them."

For the ICL, this agreement represents a welcome result of our ongoing propagandistic intervention into the events in Poland from without. It is also a modest vindication of our insistence on reviving the historic revolutionary unity of the German, Polish and Soviet proletariat. The beginnings of political revolution in East Germany (DDR) a year ago allowed

us for the first time to reach out to Polish workers with Trotskyist propaganda in their native language. A statement of "Internationalist Greetings to Our Polish Comrades" (December 1989) by our comrades in Germany, produced through the assistance of a Polish-speaking sympathizer in London, was widely distributed among the thousands of Polish workers in the DDR. Subsequently, a "Letter to Polish Workers" (May 1990) by the Spartacist Workers Party of Germany was distributed in Poland itself, to the combative rail workers in Szczecin as well as the Warsaw congress of the OPZZ trade-union federation. This letter, counterposing the

Trotskyist perspective of proletarian internationalism to escalating Greater German chauvinism and the nationalism of Solidarność, came into the hands of the RML.

Nine years ago our call to "Stop Solidarność Counter-revolution" stood out sharply as a concretization of the Trotskyist insistence that the USSR and the deformed workers states be defended against capitalist restoration. Sundry opportunists sneered that such a principled stance would find no support within the Polish workers movement. The revolutionary regroupment in Poland is therefore particularly satisfying. The adherence of Polish comrades to the ICL, along with fusions of new forces in Canada and Mexico, bears witness to the power of the Leninist program to regroup subjective communists internationally. Forward to the reforging of the Fourth International!

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 513, 2 November 1990.



Workers Vanguard



Bulletin

New York, September 1981: Spartacists opposed power grab by reactionary Solidarność, company union for the CIA and capitalist bankers. Solidarność leader Lech Walesa (right) flaunts money from Western backers.

Agreement for Common Work

Between Young Left Movement of Poland and ICL

1. From October 1917 on, capitalism has sought to crush the world historic achievements of the Russian Revolution. The restoration of capitalism would mean massive immiserization and unemployment of the working people, bringing back all the backwardness and chauvinism of the past, and preparations for a new inter-imperialist war. We Trotskyists stand for unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states against imperialism and internal counterrevolution.

2. In Poland the primary agency for counterrevolution has been Solidarność, aided and abetted by imperialism, the Vatican and social democracy. By the time of its first congress in 1981, Solidarność had consolidated behind a program of social counterrevolution:

support to anti-communist "free trade unions," restoration of capitalism through bourgeois parliamentarism, and liquidation of the planned economy. Had Solidarność been victorious, it would as well have threatened the existence of the other deformed workers states, placing in the hands of the imperialists the main supply and communication routes between the Soviet Union and the DDR, then the front line state confronting NATO. At that time the international Spartacist tendency (iSt, now the ICL) demanded "Stop Solidarność Counter-

revolution" and supported Jaruzelski's preventive military coup, while fighting for a proletarian political revolution to oust the parasitic bureaucracy. The RML [Young Left Movement] agrees with this position. These events were an acid test for all would-be revolutionaries; it is necessary to swim against the stream when the Marxist program stands counterposed to the existing consciousness of the overwhelming bulk of the working class.

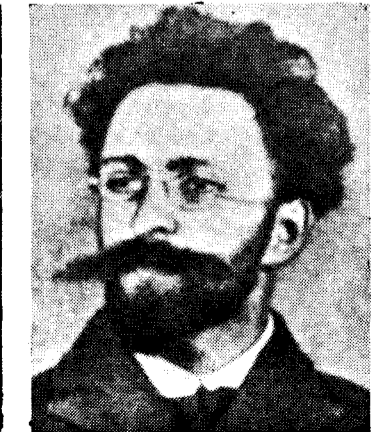
3. We reject the claims of fake-leftists

that counterrevolutionary Solidarność was leading a "proletarian political revolution" in 1981. A genuine proletarian political revolution is premised on the defense of the collectivized property relations. As opposed to workers "self-management," which in reality means the introduction of capitalist property relations through the pitting of workers in different enterprises against each other, we stand for a planned, socialized economy (including the collectivization of agriculture) free of Stalinist bureaucratic parasitism, arbitrariness and national autarky. The basic direction of the economy and society must be decided through workers democracy, that is, rule by workers councils.

4. True to the program of the early Communist International, Trotskyism stands for world socialist revolution. In contrast, Stalin's dogma of "socialism in one country" is a nationalist, anti-socialist lie aimed at conciliating imperialism. The Gorbachev bureaucracy's appeasement of imperialism and its undermining of the collectivized economy, unleashing bloody national and ethnic conflicts, threatens the very existence of the homeland of October. The Polish Stalinists, who mortgaged the economy to the Western bankers and drove the working class into the arms of the CIA and Vatican, are self-evidently politically bankrupt. Those who have paved the way for capitalist restoration cannot lead the struggles to beat it back.

continued on page 8

Panorama



Poland's revolutionary Communist tradition: Rosa Luxemburg and the "Three W's"—Adolf Warski, Henryk Walecki and Wera Kostrzewa of the early Polish Communist Party.

Letter from Polish Comrades

The following letter was addressed to the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany.

Wrocław
29 July 1990

To Comrade Spartacists,

As young people, who during their studies have arrived—thanks to their own efforts and searchings—to Trotskyism, that forgotten tradition and modern revolutionary current of the workers movement, we read with interest your publications. As far as we know, you are the only current which commemorates the anniversary of the deaths of Lenin, Luxemburg, Liebknecht. It so happens that we too have remembered this anniversary in Poland.

So for your interest, on the 1st of May 1988, we were thrown off an official demonstration in Warsaw for having banners, one of which was about "Lenin, Luxemburg, Liebknecht." On the 70th anniversary of the death of R. Luxemburg and K. Liebknecht we have issued a leaflet on the streets of Wrocław in dedication to their memory. We have organized a series of meetings with slides from the German



Young Left Movement in Poland, Spartakist Workers Party in Germany have fought to revive revolutionary internationalist tradition of the "Three L's": Lenin, Liebknecht and Luxemburg.

and Polish press, in which we have documented this forgotten tradition. Thanks to you our access to this tradition became wider.

In the Trotskyist movement in Poland, we often meet with activists who have a "Solidarność" pedigree, or in any case put all their hopes in "Solidarność." Until now it is difficult for them to shed these illusions. Either they don't know or they deliberately

suppress the reality of our true tradition (for "tactical" reasons). It is increasingly more difficult for us to have a common language with them.

We are hearing proposals to suppress your position, which they consider as "discrediting the Trotskyist movement" (!). Discussion is cut short at the very moment that it should have started.

The threat to the workers states by

German imperialism against which you are warning is in Poland used to fuel nationalistic hysteria. Our aim is to oppose it with an internationalist stand calling for a common defense of the gains of workers revolution on this and the other side of the Oder. We express full support to your struggle.

With internationalist greetings,
AJ, RK

Poland...

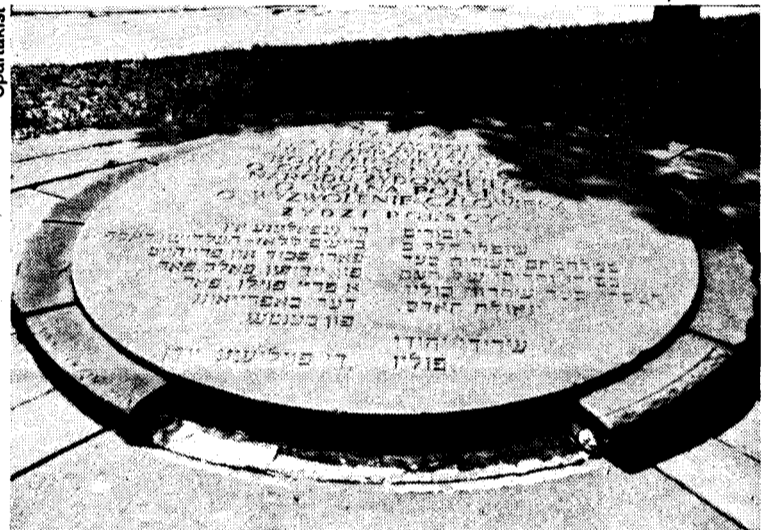
(continued from page 7)

- Posed pointblank is the need to build an authentic Trotskyist vanguard party in Poland, part of a reforged Fourth International. But we reject the idea of a "family of Trotskyism"; genuine Trotskyism has nothing in common with such pro-Solidarność purveyors of anti-Sovietism as the followers of Nahuel Moreno and the United Secretariat [USec] of Ernest Mandel, who in 1983 hailed the Solidarność leadership as the "best socialists in the world." The RML, a group known for honoring the communist leaders Lenin, Luxemburg and Liebknecht, came to recognize that Trotskyism represented the continuation of the revolutionary traditions of the "3 L's." The RML first came into contact with the program of the ICL while it was engaged in discussions with the Morenoites. Particularly decisive in winning it to

the program of the ICL were (a) agreement over the character of Solidarność and (b) the RML's support to the "Trotskyist Platform" published by the Trotskyist Faction of the Mexican POS, which subsequently fused with the Grupo Espartaquista de México.

- A Trotskyist party must be a tribune of the people, championing all victims of oppression. The drive to restore capitalism revives and intensifies all the "old crap" of the prewar social order, from reactionary clericalism to Pilsudskiite nationalism and anti-Semitism. As Rosa Luxemburg wrote in 1905: "The clergy, no less than the capitalist class, lives on the backs of the people, profits from the degradation, the ignorance and the oppression of the people." The Catholic hierarchy, conciliated by the Stalinists, has long exercised decisive influence over Solidarność. Clerical reaction particularly targets women. Smash the attacks on abortion rights! For free abortion on demand! For free 24-hour child-care facilities! For the strict separation

Warsaw monument to 1943 Ghetto uprising, erected by Jewish survivors in 1946.



Spartakist



Top: Polish railway workers in Szczecin strike in May against Solidarność regime's capitalist "shock treatment." Bottom: women peddling vegetables to survive.



Le Bolchévik

of church and state! Down with the conservative Stalinist dogma that glorifies the institution of the family, the main social institution oppressing women. Only the achievement of a genuine socialist society, based on material abundance and egalitarianism, can truly liberate women.

- We honor the 600,000 soldiers of the Red Army who died liberating Poland from the Nazis. But today the forces of capitalist restoration have fueled the growth of virulent anti-Semitism, from skinhead Nazis in Germany to the KPN [Confederation for an Independent Poland] vermin here to the Great Russian chauvinists of Pamyat. For workers united fronts to smash the fascists! Workers in Poland: smash chauvinist attacks on Jewish people, Ukrainians, Gypsies, homosexuals! Honor the heroic fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising of 1943! Defend leftists and former members of the PZPR [Polish United Workers Party] against anti-communist witchhunts! For class struggle against attempts to dismantle social gains of the collectivized economy: for factory occupations and strikes against privatizations and plant shutdowns!

- In East Germany what began as a political revolution turned into a capitalist counterrevolution. This defeat for the workers movement has whetted the appetites of the Fourth Reich of German imperialism for a renewed "Drang nach Osten [drive to the East]." Our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany [SpAD] uniquely fought against capitalist reunification and fight today against anti-Polish and anti-immigrant

chauvinism, as an essential part of the struggle for socialist revolution. Polish communists must fight relentlessly against Pilsudskiite nationalism, which subjects the workers to the dictates of the IMF while spewing out anti-Russian and anti-German chauvinism. Only proletarian internationalism offers a way forward—For the revolutionary unity of Russian, Polish and German workers! For a socialist united states of Europe!

- Reformists and centrists, forsaking the principle of defense of the deformed workers states against counterrevolution, assist in infecting the working masses with the poison of national chauvinism. Thus, such organizations as USec, the Morenoites and Workers Power backed both the Polish nationalists of Solidarność, while in Germany tailing after such groups as the PDS, SPD and/or the United Left, which supported revanchist capitalist reunification. Adapting to conflicting appetites of different national bourgeoisies, the fake-Trotskyists are an obstacle to the construction of an international vanguard party.

- Polish Trotskyists must seek to reclaim the best traditions of the Polish workers movement, forged in the struggle against national chauvinism. This is exemplified by Rosa Luxemburg, a Polish Jewish communist and leader of the revolutionary German proletariat. Reviling Luxemburg for her internationalism, Stalin never trusted and finally liquidated the Polish CP, which was the first to come to the defense of comrade Trotsky by asserting in 1923 that "the name of Comrade Trotsky is

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Soviet Union...

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that have been pumped into the Soviet economy for years. Therefore price increases for consumer goods will be less than would otherwise be the case. This is a lie! Once enterprises are in private hands, they will charge all that the market can bear. Soviet working people will lose all possibility of controlling the cost of living. Furthermore, millions of Soviet workers will be thrown onto the street as unprofitable and unsalable enterprises close down while others radically slash their labor force. This is exactly what's already happening in Poland.

The privatization of housing is intended to bring an immediate windfall to those members of the elite who have nice apartments. But it will be disastrous for Soviet working people especially with the acute shortage of available housing in the USSR. Soviet army officers and their families, scheduled to be withdrawn from East Germany, recently demonstrated against the move to settle them in a tent city in the northern Caucasus! Under privatization, rents for the small number of vacant housing units will be out of sight. Young working-class families could never afford their own apartment or house. These will become the exclusive property of the new class of moneyed capitalists and the managerial elite.

The 500-day plan promises Soviet citizens a kind of "people's capitalism," stating that "property in the hands of each individual is a guarantee of the stability of society" (*Financial Times* [London], 6 September). But property is not going to be in the hands of each individual. Far from it. You can't have capitalists without capital. Even Russia's petty entrepreneurs with their fruit stands and TV repair shops don't have the money to buy up steel mills and coal mines. Who does? Insofar as they are Russians, Armenians, etc., the new owners will come from the ranks of the bureaucratic elite who have access to state loans and Western banks.

Many of the most profitable enterprises will be sold in whole or in part to Western multinationals. Gorbachev economic adviser Nikolai Petrakov, a principal author of the 500-day plan, wants to



Novoye Russkoye Slovo



Ogonyok



AFP

Threat of counterrevolution: demonstrators in Leningrad, September 3, with signs saying "Enough Experiments—It's Time for Capitalism." "Free market" mayors Anatoly Sobchak of Leningrad and Gravit Popov of Moscow.

"create a situation in which our Western partners can bypass the system of rationing and centralized allocations, buy the raw material and equipment they need in our internal market, and transfer their part of the profits to the West" (*Problems of Economics*, March 1990). If Gorbachev and Yeltsin have their way, the wealth produced over decades by Soviet workers will be sold off at fire-sale prices to Wall Street raiders, Frankfurt bankers and the Japanese *zaibatsu*.

The mounting economic chaos and collapse of the authority of the Gorbachev regime and central government has created a *political vacuum*. Into this vacuum have poured all kinds of right-wing forces from Russian Reaganites to tsarists to fascists and other reactionary nationalists. Anti-Semitism is on the rise, and Soviet Jews live in fear of pogroms. There is talk of a military coup to restore order. Everyone knows the Soviet Union cannot continue to exist as before.

Today, Trotskyism—the continuators of the Bolshevik Revolution—is the only political tendency with a program which can preserve the Soviet Union as a collectivized economy and multinational state. Soviet workers must sweep away the Gorbachevs, Yeltsins and Popovs, and establish a government of democratically elected workers soviets (councils) such as took power in October 1917.

Many Soviet workers now identify centralized planning and management as

such with Stalinism and bureaucratic commandism. This is false. The central direction of the economy by a government of soviets is the *only way* that the working class can *democratically* determine the allocation of society's resources and ensure the fair and egalitarian distribution of wealth that is produced. At the same time, central planning can be effective in stimulating dedicated and creative effort only when the mass of workers govern society in order to build a socialist future for themselves and their children.

Behind the Bread Shortages

When the Gorbachev/Ryzhkov regime proposed to triple the price of bread last summer, a delegate to the Supreme Soviet from Tadzhikistan angrily declared: "Bread is socialism." The sudden disappearance of bread from Moscow's state-run "Gastronom" shops is the most striking proof of the economic collapse. Yet Soviet officials have been predicting a record harvest. What happened?

Union does not have a large pool of impoverished, migrant farm workers. To bring in the harvest it is therefore necessary to mobilize urban workers temporarily released from their factory and office jobs. But with the dismantling of centralized management under perestroika, enterprise managers no longer release their workers for this purpose.

The manager of a collective farm in the "Virgin Lands" of Kazakhstan, Zhazit Kudaikulov, exclaimed:

"During the period of stagnation [the Brezhnev era] we gathered the wheat well. The townspeople helped us, the government and the regional Communist Party people helped us, and now they don't. I don't know why. It's *perestroika*."

— *Philadelphia Inquirer*,
7 September

But this is only part of the cause of the bread shortage and not the most important part. After all, the grain harvest is estimated at about the same level as last year. But the farmers are not delivering as much to the state procurement agencies. Even Gorbachev complained: "Many state and collective farms are unjustifiably curtailing sales to the state, violating contract discipline." Instead they are using the grain as fodder for livestock whose sale is much more profitable. A kilo of beef in Moscow's central (private) market costs 20 rubles, 50 percent higher than a year and a half ago and equivalent to a day's pay for the average industrial worker!

Soviet farmers are withholding grain to force up the procurement price. Last spring an American newsletter specializing in the East European economies wrote:

"The withholding by Soviet farmers of large amounts of grain means that the regime is forced to import more Western grain and

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Soviet Union...

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strain its external finances instead of utilizing what is already available within the country. To induce the farmers to sell the grain, procurement prices will have to rise sharply. However, with the regime unwilling to pass on higher cost of grain to Soviet households, food subsidies will have to rise well beyond what was originally contemplated for 1990...."

— *PlanEcon Report*,
21 April

But now the Gorbachev/Yeltsin 500-day program calls for slashing food subsidies and allowing an explosion in the price of bread and other foodstuffs.

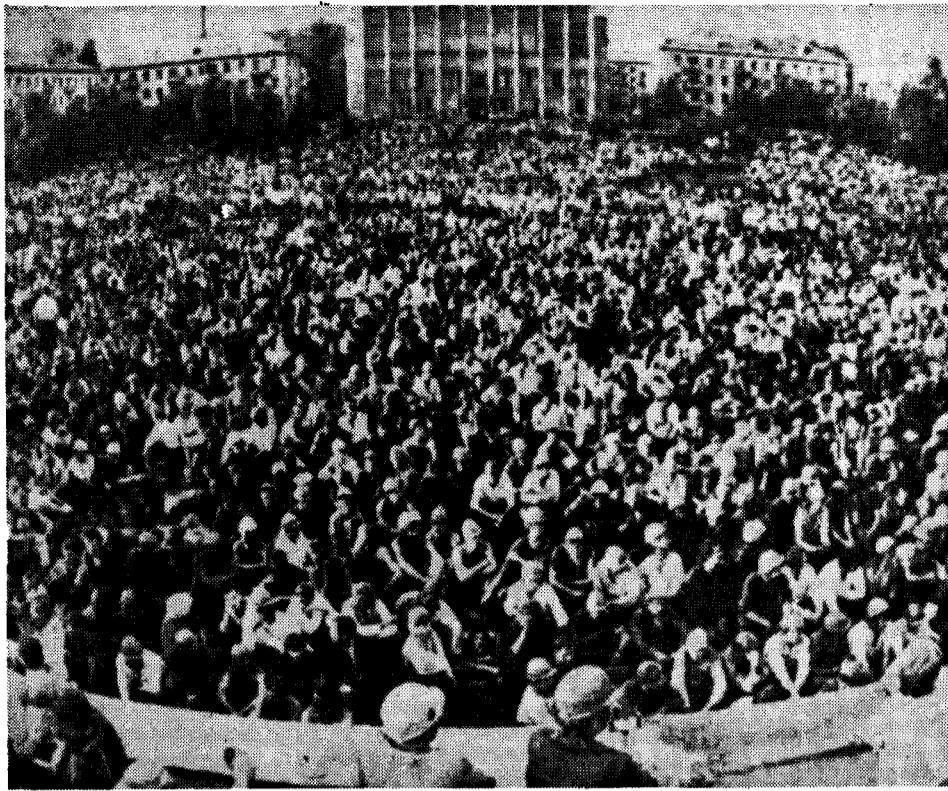
The bread shortage today is hauntingly reminiscent of the peasants' grain strike of 1928 which marked the terminal crisis of the New Economic Policy (NEP). The ideologues of perestroika, or at least those who do not call for the outright restoration of capitalism, have held up NEP as their economic model. As early as 1923 Trotsky pointed to the fundamental contradiction and instability of NEP. Unless Soviet industry expanded fast enough to provide the peasants with cheaper and abundant manufactured goods, Trotsky predicted the peasants would cut back the supply of grain to state procurement agencies in order to extract higher prices. This is precisely what happened in 1928. On the brink of economic disaster, Stalin reacted by pushing through the collectivization of agriculture in a brutal and bureaucratic way.

During the 1920s, the main internal social force for capitalist counterrevolution was the wealthier peasants (kulaks). Today, this role falls to sections of the bureaucracy and intelligentsia, in many cases the privileged children of Stalin's apparatchiks. Thus the grain strike is but one aspect of the general sabotage of the collectivized economy by self-seeking managers and officials.

Only Proletarian Political Revolution Can Save the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union today is threatened with bloody fratricidal strife amid economic disintegration. Practically every national republic has proclaimed its independence or economic sovereignty. The government of the Ukraine—the second largest republic—wants to issue its own currency as well as raise its own army. Officials in the oil-producing regions of Siberia are demanding the lion's share of export earnings from the sale of oil. The London *Independent* (31 August) wrote of the "danger that the Soviet Union will disintegrate into a set of competing republics separated by customs barriers, by Mickey Mouse currencies and by ethnic animosities, waging trade wars against each other."

Only the Soviet working class has the social power and interest to preserve and reconstruct the Soviet Union on a social-



Der Spiegel

Striking miners in Siberia last year elected strike committees that established dual power in coal regions. Worker protests continue as signs say: "We demand social justice!" "We demand raising miners' standard of living!"

ist basis with justice and equality for all nationalities. To achieve this it is necessary to organize the working class behind a genuinely all-Soviet, internationalist communist party modeled on the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky.

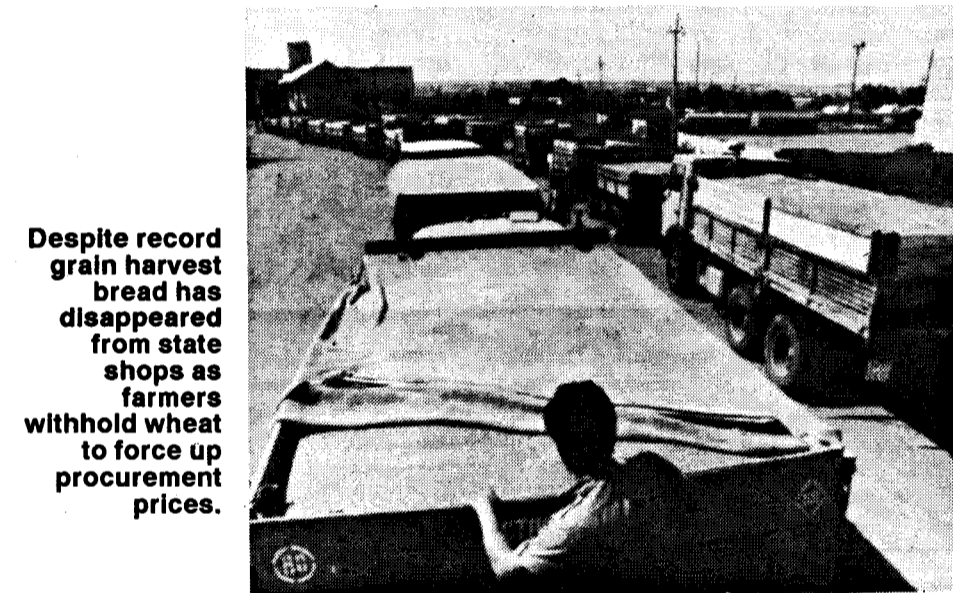
Today, however, the Soviet working class is being politically exploited by contending groups within the bureaucracy and petty-bourgeois intelligentsia.

are used, a policy resulting in falling living standards and bloodshed is against popular interests," and he called for "returning the nation to 1985," the year Gorbachev came to power.

But the Soviet Union cannot be returned to the condition of 1985, nor would this be desirable. In its last years the Brezhnev regime tried to create the illusion of rising living standards by in-



Ogonyok



Der Spiegel

Despite record grain harvest bread has disappeared from state shops as farmers withhold wheat to force up procurement prices.

Out of hatred for the old-line Stalinist apparatchiks—oppressive, parasitic, corrupt—many worker activists support the advocates of Western-style "democracy" and a "regulated market economy." Other workers, who blame perestroika for everything that has gone wrong, rally behind the conservative Stalinist apparatchiks who have made common cause with reactionary Russian nationalists. At a meeting of the Russian Communist Party, an oil worker from Tyumen, Siberia exclaimed, "No matter what slogans

creasing money wages faster than output while freezing prices in state shops. Some of the excess rubles spilled into the growing underground, private markets. Most of it went into savings accounts or was stuffed into mattresses. In 1985, it was estimated that Soviet households had unspendable rubles equal to 80 percent of their annual income. Thus the present condition of suppressed hyperinflation, made worse by perestroika, is rooted in the sclerotic Stalinism of the Brezhnev regime.

The fundamental cause of the political and economic disintegration of the Soviet Union is the powerful and unrelenting pressure of world imperialism. To match the U.S. military buildup under Carter and then Reagan without cutting living standards, the Brezhnev regime reduced investment in new plant and equipment. As a result, labor productivity steadily declined in the country's ever more aged and technically obsolete factories. In an important sense Gorbachev's perestroika was a reactionary response to the objective crisis of the Soviet economy after decades of bureaucratic mismanagement in the name of building "socialism in one country." But these halfway measures only made things worse.

Now the parasitic Kremlin bureaucracy is capitulating to Western imperialism at all levels. Gorbachev and Yeltsin want to sell off the Soviet Union's industrial and mineral wealth to Wall Street and Frankfurt while supporting U.S. imperialism in waging war against the Arab peoples of the Near East. The Soviet working class must link the defense and regeneration of the collectivized economy within the USSR to the perspective of socialist revolutions worldwide.

Capitalist development itself has brought into being an international division of labor. Thus the struggle to secure for the Soviet masses the good things of life—both material and cultural—presupposes participation in the world economy. And this means the replacement of the imperialist-dominated world market—deformed by monopolies and national protectionism—by an international socialist economy, through proletarian revolution throughout the capitalist world. ■

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International Communist League contingents at demonstrations in New York City, Paris and Sydney, demand "Break the Blockade of Iraq!" and denounce Soviet complicity with U.S. invasion.

Iraq...

(continued from page 4)

"peaceful coexistence," whose logic Gorbachev is playing out, that undermines the defence of the USSR.

Break the Blockade of Bougainville!

The "peace" coalitions contrast Hawke's despatch of warships to the Gulf to Australia's failure to "stand up" to Indonesia over East Timor. Their demand, "Blockade South Africa, not Iraq" expresses their confidence in the progressive mission of Australian imperialism, which right now is strangling the small island of Bougainville. Since the 18 May declaration of independence by the Bougainville Revolutionary Army, which has controlled the island since PNG forces were withdrawn in March, the Namaliu government of PNG with the full support of Hawke has imposed a total blockade in an attempt to starve the rebellious island into submission. The blockade of all consumer goods, basic food supplies, medicines, power and communications has already repor-

tedly led to deaths of children, mothers and emergency cases. Even the Red Cross are denied access to the island.

Just as they sent \$50 million in military aid and "advisers" to run a dirty and unsuccessful war against the BRA, now they are prepared to starve to death 120,000 people to ensure the "unity" of their brutally exploited neo-colony. Beyond that is the more direct "option" of outright military intervention if things get too far out of hand. It is urgent that the Australian workers movement act in solidarity with the Bougainvilleans against racist Australian imperialism and its Port Moresby overseers. The murderous blockade must be broken immediately and the people of Bougainville guaranteed their right to self-determination.

For Class War Against Imperialist War!

The International Socialist Organisation (ISO) are anti-Soviet opportunists who can be had very cheaply. They dropped their slogan for "Victory to Iraq" like a hot potato the moment they found "it served to create obstacles to our ability to influence those opposed to the Western war effort" (*Socialist*,

September). ISO talks in their paper about defeating imperialism and even that "the main enemy is at home," but they'd never let that disrupt "unity" with the likes of the "Bring the Frigates Home" crowd, whose leaflet declares: "We believe democracy will lie in ruins the day patriotism and loyalty come to mean silence and blind obedience."

The protests have brought several other left grouplets out of their holes in search of a cosy spot in the popular front, among them the remnants of Phil Sandford's Communist League. These ex-Healyites have come out of hibernation with a new name, Socialist Alternative, and a new international, the rabidly anti-Soviet International Workers League (Fourth International), the followers of the late Argentine fake-Trotskyist Nahuel Moreno. They too swear they're for the "defence and victory of Iraq," but spend their time trying to build the wretched social-patriotic coalition. Their prize acquisition is George Petersen, a down-and-out Laborite who was finally expelled from the ALP in 1988 after 12 years on the backbenches of the reactionary Wran-Unsworth governments. He's just as much a Laborite as ever, witness his praise in the Morenoites' journal for the tepid NZ New Labour Party.

imperialists crow about the "death of communism" in Eastern Europe, they will soon be haunted by another well-known spectre, namely the revolutions which are born of war. The Spartacist League has intervened in the anti-Gulf war protests with contingents built on class-struggle, anti-imperialist politics. Against opposition from the reformists, a Spartacist speaker told the 20 October Melbourne rally:

"A victory for the Western imperialist forces would mean increased colonial domination of the region, strengthening the colonial chains that bind the Arab masses. And it would mean strengthening the Australian capitalist rulers against the workers and oppressed in this country. We must wish for the military defeat of our "own" capitalist rulers. Break the blockade of Iraq! "The same capitalist rulers, and their ALP servants, who are participating in this imperialist oil grab, are waging war against the working class and oppressed of Australia. Union-busting, anti-immigrant racism and barbaric oppression of the Aboriginal people—this is what Australian "democracy" is all about. It is necessary to break with the ALP, and build a revolutionary workers party, part of an international party of socialist revolution." ■

Poland...

(continued from page 8)

insolubly connected with the victory of the Soviet Revolution, with the Red Army, with communism."

11. While today Walesa and Jaruzelski obscenely whip up Polish nationalism by celebrating the defeat of the Red Army outside Warsaw in 1920, we reaffirm the policy of the early Polish CP, which not only rose to the defense of the Russian Revolution but recognized that the Polish proletariat was a bridge to extend westward the revolution to the borders of Germany, with its powerful proletariat. The subsequent defeat of the German revolution of 1923 was a major impetus for the consolidation of the Stalinist bureaucracy with its false ideology of "socialism in one country."

12. The RML agrees with the iSt position on Afghanistan, hailing the Red Army intervention, which posed the extension of the gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples and particularly to the oppressed women of Afghanistan. Gorbachev's withdrawal was a sellout, greatly encouraging the imperialists in their drive to overthrow the Soviet workers state. We reject the anti-Soviet demand raised by fake-leftists to withdraw the Warsaw Pact troops from East Europe—Soviet troops have constituted the first line of defense of the workers states against NATO imperialism. Out of the ranks of Soviet soldiers and officers will come many fighters for Trotskyism.

13. The comrades of the RML constitute themselves as the Spartakowska Grupa Polski (SGP). The SGP and the ICL look forward to an early fusion, where the SGP will become part of a democratic-centralist International. In the interim, in matters of mutual concern regarding Poland, both parties to this agreement will consult.

14. The SGP needs to develop a systematic public face, recruiting cadre and intervening in various struggles and movements with ICL propaganda. A Leninist-Trotskyist party in Poland will be built from above through splits and fusions of ostensibly revolutionary organizations. Cadre can be won from among left Stalinists, as well as ostensible Trotskyists.

15. The ICL will assist the comrades in Poland in developing a systematic educational program to better acquaint them with the specific positions of ICL sections on various problems and events in the world. Fuller political integration will be enhanced by travel and mutual exchanges of visits with other ICL sections. In particular, it is envisaged that comrades from Poland participate in the SpAD's election campaign, as well as helping to translate election materials and fundamental ICL documents into the Polish language. The establishment of an ICL group in Poland represents a real step in our capacity to bring the program of Trotskyism to the East European and Soviet proletariats.

For revolutionaries there is no anti-war movement independent of an anti-capitalist movement. Reformists and liberals propound the myth that there is some sort of general movement that can embrace all political trends devoid of any class basis. The fake-left are wedded to the lie that it was the anti-war movement that ended the Vietnam War, when in reality it was the heroic Vietnamese working people's defeat of U.S. and Australian imperialism. The bourgeois defeatism of the ALP was aimed at derailing class struggle at home and cutting the imperialists' losses abroad.

There could be no more irrefutable proof of Lenin's famous statement that imperialism breeds war than the current adventure in the Gulf. And while the

Correction

The article "Break the Blockade of Iraq" in the last issue of *Australasian Spartacist* stated that "the British drew the frontiers and designated rulers throughout the region, installing loyal tribal leaders as monarchs as T.E. Lawrence did with Ibn Saud."

In fact, the British through Lawrence backed Ibn Saud's chief rival in Arabia, the Hashemite Sharif Hussein of Mecca, in his rebellion against the Turks during World War I.

Only in the mid 1920s, after Hussein had become disillusioned with the British/French mandate system, did the British withdraw this support, opening the way for Ibn Saud to overthrow the Hashemites and go on to found the state of Saudi Arabia.

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For a Socialist Planned Economy Based on Workers Democracy!

Soviet Workers: Smash Yeltsin/Gorbachev 500-Day Plan!

The following article is reprinted from *Workers Vanguard*, No. 510, 21 September 1990, fortnightly paper of the Spartacist League/U.S. The plan eventually put forward by Gorbachev and adopted by the Supreme Soviet in October maintained all the essential elements of the Shatalin plan except for the 500-day timetable.

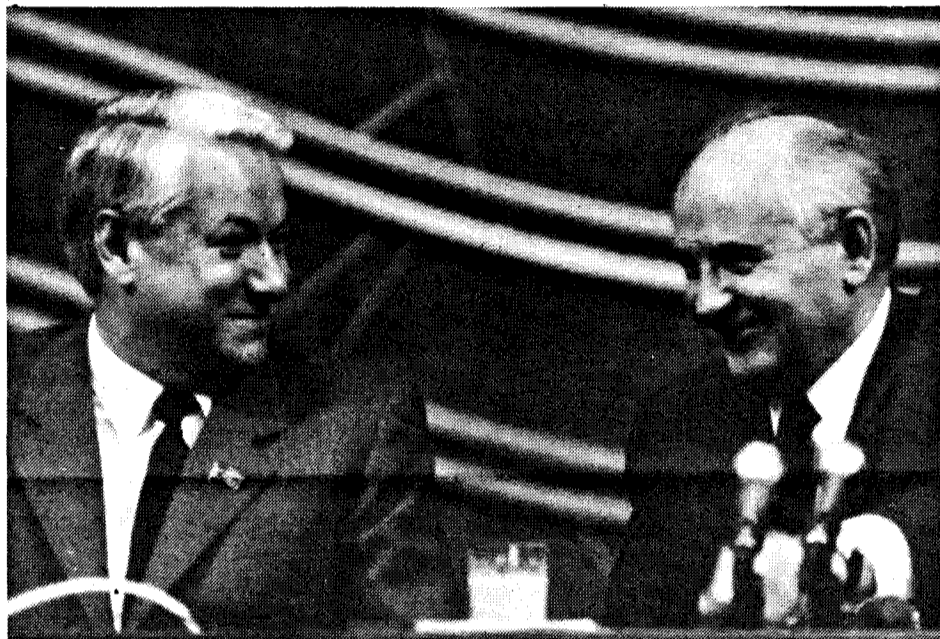
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Simultaneously with the biggest wheat harvest in Soviet history, bread has disappeared from Moscow's state shops. Smokers riot for cigarettes. Now the traditional celebration of the Bolshevik Revolution on November 7 is to be canceled. George Bush envisions the Soviet Union becoming a junior partner in the imperialist "new world order." But this would spell the death of the Soviet Union as a workers state, albeit ruled by a corrupt and nationalistic bureaucracy. And indeed, the dominant political forces in Russia are openly driving toward the restoration of capitalism—which means the prospect of civil war, sooner rather than later. The social gains of the Bolshevik Revolution—the greatest victory for the international working class in history—are in mortal danger!

In late August it was announced that the president of the Russian republic, Boris Yeltsin, and Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev had agreed on a program to establish a full-fledged market economy in 500 days. Housing would be privatized, agricultural land sold to peasant smallholders and at least 70 percent of industrial enterprises denationalized. Real power of economic decision-making would be transferred from the central government to the governments of the various republics. This means the effective breakup of the Soviet Union. Yeltsin—a former Gorbachev lieutenant turned pseudo-populist demagogue—wants to drop "Socialist" from the USSR and rename the country the Union of Sovereign Soviet Republics.

The main author of the 500-day plan is Gorbachev economic adviser Stanislav Shatalin, who, when asked if his plan would lead to higher living standards and an efficient economy, replied, "In God we trust." Gorbachev himself waffled, proposing to combine the Shatalin plan with a more "moderate" program devised by Soviet prime minister Nikolai Ryzhkov. Ryzhkov was the main figure behind the aborted move to triple the price of bread this past summer and double consumer prices by New Year's 1991. But this was not enough for the extreme "free marketeers," who have been screaming for Ryzhkov's political head.

To put pressure on Gorbachev, the Yeltsin-dominated parliament of the



Novosti
Boris Yeltsin and Mikhail Gorbachev plan for restoration of capitalism as perestroika fuels economic chaos, growing inequality. Below angry crowd surrounds empty cigarette-vendor stand in Moscow.



Der Spiegel

Russian republic endorsed the "500 days to capitalism" program. And now the Soviet president has more or less come out for it, while calling for a popular referendum on the sale of land. Fighting for his political life, Ryzhkov went on television and denounced the Shatalin plan as leading to "chaos" and mass unemployment. This situation is fast polarizing. Last Sunday, 50,000 right-wingers demonstrated in Moscow calling for the resignation not only of Ryzhkov but also Gorbachev. Yet workers are resisting the effects of perestroika. The official trade

unions have organized strikes against the "free market" city government of Moscow.

The Terminal Crisis of Soviet Stalinism

The all-sided crisis besetting the Soviet Union has its roots in the bureaucratic degeneration under J.V. Stalin during the 1920s. Under the nationalist slogan of "socialism in one country," the Kremlin bureaucracy renounced and opposed the Leninist program of world proletarian revolution. In the 1930s Trotsky

predicted that unless the Soviet working class ousted the Stalinist bureaucracy, the latter, far from building socialism, would create the conditions for capitalist counterrevolution.

The "liberal" Stalinist Gorbachev and his apologists claimed that perestroika (restructuring) meant the renewal and modernization of socialism. From the outset we warned that these market-oriented "reforms" were designed to increase the privileges of the petty-bourgeois bureaucrats and intellectuals at the expense of the working class and would lay the basis for capitalist restoration. Now it is no longer a question of laying the basis but of posing capitalist restoration outright.

In a broadcast interview on September 10 with Pacifica Radio's KPFA news commentator James Cleve, Spartacist League spokesman Joseph Seymour pointed out, "The program of what you call the radical 'free marketeers' like Yeltsin, who among other things praised Reagan in his autobiography for supposedly restoring the health of the American economy, will lead to the massive immiseration of the Soviet working people for the benefit of what is hoped to be a new class of capitalists and their Soviet yuppie hangers-on."

It is clear that the mass of Soviet working people are hostile to a capitalist market economy *as such*. "Free market" ideologue Gavril Popov, currently mayor of Moscow, states that the "masses long for fairness and economic equality." He worries about the rise of "left-wing populism" provoked by "the policies leading to denationalization, privatization and inequality." The most despised class of people in the Soviet Union are the petty capitalist entrepreneurs, the so-called "cooperativists." Even the *Wall Street Journal* (10 August) admits: "The reputation of the cooperatives plummeted, and today they are widely criticized as speculators out to make a fast buck at the expense of the nation."

Yet it is also incontestable that Yeltsin is very popular among Russian working people. Polls show he is now far more highly regarded than Gorbachev. How does one account for this contradiction? Yeltsin has *masked* his support for "free market" economics with demagogic attacks on the privileges of the bureaucracy and calls for increasing consumer goods by cutting back military spending and industrial investment. But now the mask has fallen as Yeltsin's slippery demagoguery has been tacked onto a program of open capitalist restoration.

Advocates for the 500-day plan claim the sale of housing, land and factories will soak up much of the excess rubles

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