

## **Police State Crackdown at Windsor OAS Protests**



Mears/Detroit News

**Rulers mobilize their cops against protesters in Windsor. Capitalist democracy is bourgeois class dictatorship.**

# Down With "Human Rights" Imperialism!

When some 4,000 demonstrators gathered in Windsor, Ontario on June 4 for protests against the Organization of American States (OAS), they were faced with a massive police mobilization. The downtown area was an armed camp with concrete barricades and wire fences sealing off several city blocks around the convention center. As many as 5,000 cops, many in full body armor, lined the streets while police boats patrolled the Detroit River, helicopters buzzed overhead and police snipers sat atop buildings. At least 41 demonstrators, mainly youth, were arrested.

The youthful demonstrators were looking to join a movement against "globalization": sweatshops, poverty in Latin

America and throughout the "Global South," child labor and other evils inherent in the system of imperialism. For their efforts, they were menaced by riot police, assaulted with pepper spray and dragged into custody. Here was an object lesson in the workings of the capitalist state, a machinery of repression to defend the profits and rule of the capitalist class. Here was bourgeois democracy in action as the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

A Trotskyist League/Spartacus Youth Club leaflet distributed in Windsor warned that the anti-OAS protests were politically dominated by the trade-union bureaucracy and their

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## Letter

# FSP Ox Gored

Winnipeg

Comrades,

If as we suspect, your organization aspires to be the gossip columns of the left, then it would seem to us that you should at least get your facts correct before you make statements of slander. In the Spring, 2000 edition of Spartacist Canada you raise some criticisms of the B.C. NDP, some of which we will deal with further down.

The main purpose in this correspondence is to set the record straight on the Freedom Socialist Party and its support of the NDP Socialist Caucus. We believe that it is the responsibility of revolutionary socialists to take their clear anti-capitalist program to where ever leftward moving workers may be open to those ideas. This does not mean that we support or endorse every twist and turn that the workers movement often takes as they develop their socialist consciousness. For instance the workers movements in their vast majority supported the second imperialist world war but we stood opposed.

Regarding the statement of the BC NDP Socialist Caucus of March 1 calling on party members to "rally around Ujjal Dosanjh's government and unite behind the leader." You infer that because the FSP supports the Caucus, we therefore must support everything it publishes. That kind of formal logic is not worthy of any organization that supposedly bases its program on the logic of Marxism.

For the record, let us assure you that those of us in the Freedom Socialist Party who support the Caucus, disassociate ourselves and the FSP from that statement, which was published over the names of the key members of the BC Socialist Caucus. We clearly expressed our opposition at the time of publication and as subsequent events proved we were right as less than a week later those words were tasting very bitter.

Nevertheless, our support of the Caucus and indeed our critical support of the NDP is not based on this or that statement or political position. We base our support of the NDP on its relationship to the class struggle in society. You state in the same article that the roots of the NDP "lie in the super-profits of Canadian imperialism." I suggest you try and convince those oppressed workers and farmers who founded the NDP and its predecessor, the CCF, of that statement.

You also characterize the NDP as a "bourgeois workers party." What exactly is a bourgeois worker? As Trotsky pointed out many times to the ultra-leftists—call it whatever kind of workers party you like, but if it is a workers party it is worthy of our support.

Fortunately, the mass organizations of the class are not the property of the bureaucratic caste that have temporary control of the leadership. It is the responsibility of a revolutionary party to fight alongside the best of the class where ever they are. Not to quip and carp and gossip from outside but to fight for a socialist program inside. This is not a position that is unique to the FSP or Socialist Action but has been a tradition of Trotskyism since its foundation.

Harry Paine

Pan-Canadian Organizer, Freedom Socialist Party

### SC replies:

It's a tad embarrassing to have to explain to no less a personage than the "Pan-Canadian Organizer" of the Seattle-based Freedom Socialist Party (FSP) why the NDP is a bourgeois workers party. Unlike outright capitalist parties like the Liberals, Tories or Canadian Alliance, the social-democratic NDP is linked organically to the working class through the reformist union bureaucracy. Nevertheless, it is thoroughly pro-capitalist in its outlook and program.

The pro-capitalist outlook and program in turn determine the New Democrats' "relation to the class struggle in society": they are *opposed* to the class struggle, and seek to *suppress* it at every turn, to *divert* it into the safe parliamentary channels which support the bourgeois order. When in power, as in B.C. today, they break strikes and enforce bourgeois austerity every bit as aggressively as Liberals or Tories. If Harry Paine insists that this "relation" is why the FSP "critically" supports the NDP come what may, we can only concede the point. You said it, not us.

It was Marx's collaborator, Friedrich Engels, who coined the phrase "bourgeois workers party." Lenin repeatedly emphasized the revolutionary attitude toward such formations. "The fact is," he wrote in *Imperialism and the Split in Socialism* (1916), "that 'bourgeois labour parties,' as a political phenomenon, have already been formed in *all* the foremost capitalist countries, and that unless a determined and relentless struggle is waged all along the line against these parties—or groups, trends, etc., it is all the same—there can be no question of a struggle against imperialism, or of Marxism, or of a socialist labour movement."

The FSP says its main reason for writing to us is that we  
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## SPARTACIST CANADA

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On May 9, one day before her 46th birthday, Mary Van De Water-Quirk, organizer of the Chicago local of the Spartacist League/U.S. for 13 years, died after a four-year battle with bile duct cancer. The length of her tenure as party organizer in a city where the cruel contradictions of racist American capitalist rule are most acutely concentrated, and of her struggle against this form of the disease which normally results in a rapid demise, speak to her tenacity and will.

Mary was recruited to the SL in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1979, receiving her early training from Martha Phillips. Martha, who was murdered while on duty in Moscow after Yeltsin came to power, specialized in turning youth into cadre and, specifically, in imbuing them with the proletarian traditions of James P. Cannon, the founder of American Trotskyism. Mary was a more than able learner. Only three months after joining the Spartacus Youth League, she became its Bay Area organizer. She arrived in Chicago in 1981 and, after a stint as youth organizer, became the SL local organizer in 1983, remaining in that post until forced to leave by the debilitating treatment process.

Her stewardship took place during the difficult political years of Ronald Reagan and of the bourgeoisie's later "death of communism" triumphalism. Yet the Chicago local recruited youth with regularity, shaped them into cadres and transferred them elsewhere where, not unusually, they were able to play important and often leading roles. There is hardly a section of the International Communist League where comrades who apprenticed under her leadership have not served and served well. And all those she trained instantly responded, upon learning of her death, to express their grief and to acknowledge their debt to her.

Mary's talents were at the party's disposal. If needed, she quickly responded, playing a major role in many of the campaigns undertaken by the SL throughout the U.S. She was one of the main organizers of the November 1988 anti-Klan demonstration in Philadelphia and of the Springfield, Illinois anti-Klan demonstration on Martin Luther King Day in 1994. She served essentially as the SL's Midwest organizer and spurred the Chicago local to expand its political terrain through forays that ranged from Texas to Pittsburgh. Many comrades from the Trotskyist League's Toronto local had the opportunity to work with and learn from Mary during regional work or at joint Chicago-Toronto party educationals.

Politically, her focus was on the black question and its importance to the American socialist revolution. To this she brought no small amount of compassion and humanity. The apartment she shared with her husband Kevin Quirk, a member of Local 241 of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU),

was a center for political and social interaction with scores of black transit workers and other trade unionists, a singular experience in America's most segregated city.

Mary tended to cede the role of political spokesman to others, but her instincts were almost invariably correct. As Leon Trotsky said of Yakov Sverdlov, the quintessential Bolshevik organizer:

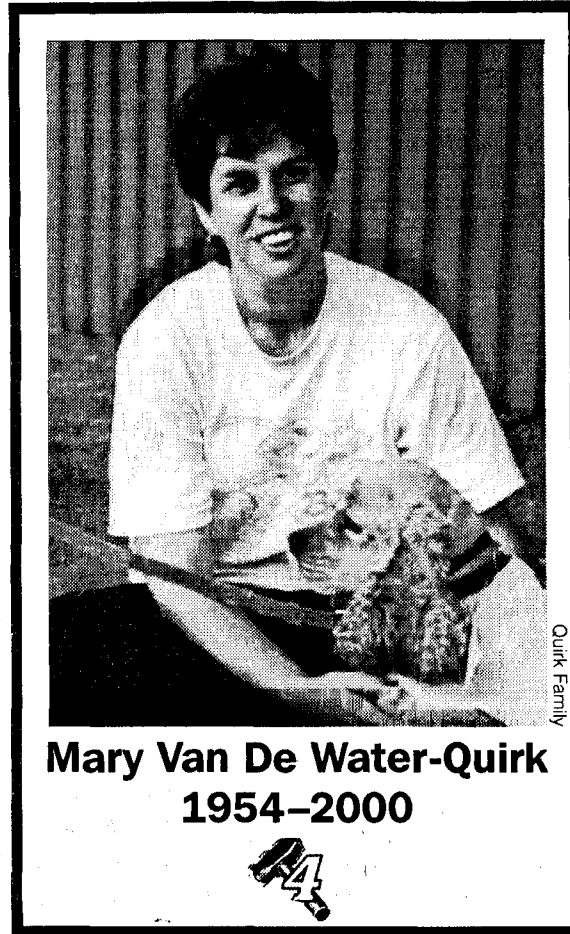
"All questions of the revolution he approached not from above, that is, not from the standpoint of general theoretical considerations, but rather from below, through the direct impulses of life itself as transmitted by the party organism. When new political questions were under discussion, it might have seemed sometimes that Sverdlov—especially if he kept silent, which was not infrequently the case—was wavering or had not yet been able to make up his mind. In reality, in the course of the discussion he was engaged in mentally working out the problem along parallel lines, which might be sketched out as follows: Who is available? Where should he be assigned? How shall we broach the problem and bring it into harmony with our other tasks? And no sooner had the joint political decision been reached, no sooner was it necessary to turn to the organizational side of the problem and the question of personnel than it almost invariably turned out that Sverdlov was already prepared with far-reaching practical propos-

als, based on his encyclopedic memory and personal knowledge of individuals."

—Leon Trotsky, *Portraits, Political and Personal* (Pathfinder Press, 1977)

Precisely because of Mary's aversion to cant and her commitment to truth, she was invariably sought out for her impressions in the aftermath of contentious party conferences. She was capable of fighting fiercely to assure that the local remained on track, especially when the question of the fight against racist oppression was engaged. However intense the fights and however wrongheaded the opposition, comrades were comrades in the Chicago local. In trying times, she was the social and political glue that held the local together.

Even in the last months of her illness, Mary continued to push forward the party's perspectives, most importantly training young comrades and assisting in their committing themselves fully to the cause of world proletarian revolution. She essentially assigned herself the task of overseeing an important addition to the Chicago local's office capacity, a task that is now near completion. Attention to such details was characteristic of Mary, as it was of Cannon. Mary will be greatly missed, most acutely by her sister Karen (also a member of the SL/U.S.), her husband and her father, but by all those who knew her inside the party and out. But more, she will be remembered. She was one hell of a communist, a fighter and a friend.



**Mary Van De Water-Quirk  
1954–2000**



## **For Quebec Independence! Down With National Chauvinism!**

# **Quebec Social Democrats' Non-Alternative**

### **Montreal "Unity of the Left" Conference**

On May 26-27, more than 500 leftists, community activists, youth and trade unionists attended a conference in Montreal called by the left-nationalist Rassemblement pour une Alternative Politique (RAP). Entitled "The Necessity of Unity of the Political Left and Progressive Forces," it was probably the biggest meeting of the "political left" in Quebec in two decades. It occurred amid a rise of working-class discontent against the bourgeois-nationalist Parti Québécois government's austerity attacks, as shown by last summer's nurses strike and by sporadic job actions by city and transit workers, university teaching assistants and many others. Anger has been growing among Québécois youth as well: last February, thousands faced down riot cops at a protest against a government-sponsored "youth summit" in Quebec City.

But far from offering any way forward against PQ-enforced capitalist austerity, this conference predictably sought to rechannel popular discontent back into the shoals of bourgeois nationalism. Blaming the absence of a serious left alternative to the PQ and the federalist Liberal Party on "sectarianism" and lack of "unity," the conference "united" around this lowest of common denominators.

Two comrades from the International Communist League,



SC photo  
Summer 1999 Quebec nurses strike against cutbacks to healthcare showed rising working-class discontent with PQ austerity.

including a spokesman for the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste, attended the conference, distributing our literature and intervening in the floor debates. We challenged the dominant "left" nationalism of the meeting, putting forward our internationalist revolutionary program. Our literature table attracted curiosity and interest: many youth in particular wanted to know more about Trotsky and the Russian October Revolution of 1917, while several people expressed solidarity with our call for imperialist troops out of East Timor, printed on the back page of *Le Bolchévick*, newspaper of the Ligue trotskyste de France. We sold several subscriptions to *LB* and French-language *Spartacist*.

Many attendees were intrigued by our approach to the Quebec national question. We forthrightly oppose the Anglo-chauvinist Canadian rulers and support Quebec independence as a crucial aspect of our defense of all those oppressed under capitalism. At the same time, our support for Quebec's national rights is a lever to help break the grip of the bourgeois-nationalist leaders on the Québécois working class. Our aim is to remove obstacles to socialist revolution and achieve the internationalist unity of the working class across national lines. As we explain in our "Programmatic Theses," published in a bilingual French-English pamphlet, many of which were also distributed at the conference:

"Nationalism and chauvinism are the key strands in the ropes which bind English-speaking and French-speaking workers to their capitalist enemies. The existence of two separate and increasingly divergent nations, one oppressing the other, defines the political landscape in this country, and has terribly undermined working-class struggle. We advocate *independence for Quebec* to help clear the way for united struggle by the working class against capitalist oppression."

### **"Globalization," Nationalism and Reformism**

The conference opened with a presentation by left academic Michel Chossudovsky. Giving an erudite, and entirely fraudulent, justification for the nationalism which was to permeate the whole gathering, Chossudovsky presented his views on the so-called theory of "globalization." According to this, national governments are now supposedly entirely subordinate to "transnational" corporations, international financial markets and the shadowy bureaucracies running the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organization (WTO) or World Bank. In his speech, Chossudovsky said that political power in Quebec and Canada no longer rests in parliament, but in Wall Street and other international markets.

We have dealt extensively with all aspects of the "globalization" theories in our pamphlet "Imperialism, the 'Global Economy' and Labor Reformism." (See also our leaflet on the recent protest against the Organization of American States, reprinted in this issue.) In brief, we live now, and have

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## Sex, Censorship and Bourgeois Hypocrisy

# State Inquisition Targets Women and Youth

On May 3 in Kamloops, B.C., Valerie Hetu received a six-month conditional sentence for "sexual exploitation." Her "crime"? Falling in love with her former foster daughter, Candice Prince, over whom she had been in a "position of authority" when Candice was 16. Despite the fact that Hetu and Prince are now a couple, raising Hetu's ten-year-old son together, the court convicted Hetu on the strength of a single kiss witnessed by her (now ex-) husband. Judge William Sundhu railed like Cotton Mather whipping up the witch trials of 1692, declaring that this fleeting consensual contact, "for the giving and receiving of pleasure," was damning evidence of child sexual abuse!

Indeed, there's more than a whiff of old Salem in the air these days when it comes to sex between older and younger people. In NDP-ruled B.C., this witchhunt is at white heat, especially against female teachers. One teacher in Comox, alleged to have had consensual sex with a student, has been suspended while the RCMP considers criminal charges. Another young woman, now living in Alberta with a former pupil, is also under police investigation.

In a case that drew national attention, a young high school teacher in Sechelt was hauled before the court by B.C.'s sex bloodhounds. Described in the *National Post* (29 May) as a "highly respected math, science and business teacher" who wore "midriff baring outfits to school that showed off a tattoo," a defiant Heather Ingram admitted to having an affair with one of her students, with whom she is now living. The young man's mother told reporters, "Heather is not a criminal and [my son] is not a victim." Nevertheless, Ingram was sentenced to ten months of house arrest, during which she is permitted to leave her home only to go to work, or to see a doctor or her probation officer.

This grotesque career- and life-destroying sexual McCarthyism is part of the bourgeoisie's general offensive for social conformity and reactionary values. Sex, especially the combination of minors and adults, is a particularly effective target for ruling-class reaction, since it touches on explosive popular fears and prejudices. We Trotskyists say that the state has no business interfering in the private lives of the population. As our 1998 *Programmatic Theses* declare, "We oppose laws against 'crimes without victims,' e.g., drugs and prostitution. We particularly oppose efforts to regulate the manifold expressions of human sexuality (including 'age of consent' laws), in which our guiding principle is simply that of effective mutual consent."

The rulers' anti-sex witchhunt aims to bolster the institu-



Arnott/Globe and Mail

**Candice Prince (left) and Valerie Hetu after Hetu's conviction for "sexual exploitation." Down with the anti-sex witchhunt!**

tion of the family, in its ideal bourgeois form of heterosexual marriage: one man on one woman for life. "On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based?" asked Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto*. "On capital, on private gain." Along with organized religion, the bourgeois family—with the ownership and inheritance of private property at its heart—is the fundamental instrument of women's oppression, as well as a key vehicle for the ideological regimentation and indoctrination of working-class youth, who must become the next generation of wage slaves and cannon fodder for imperialist war.

Thus, every challenge to the bourgeois family threatens to undermine the capitalist system of private property and wage labor. This is the material basis of the state's intensifying Inquisition against the sexuality of young people and women, and of the reactionary campaigns against abortion, day care, gay rights and pay equity. When private property is abolished, Marx and Engels asserted, "the bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course." The Marxist program of *women's liberation through socialist revolution* rests on the understanding that women's oppression is rooted in capitalism. Only by overthrowing that system of exploitation can the bourgeois institution of the family be abolished and replaced by the socialization of child-rearing and domestic tasks.

### How the Capitalist State "Protects" Children

The capitalist ruling class justifies its "child abuse" dragnet as vital to the "protection of children." In this, as in all else, the bourgeoisie's capacity for hypocrisy is boundless. Certainly, terrible crimes are committed every day against children, women and all the oppressed in this supremely

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## State Inquisition...

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violent capitalist society. However, calls by bourgeois feminists and liberals for tougher laws and more intrusive state intervention to “protect children” are a deadly illusion. The capitalist state exists only to protect bourgeois order—including the oppressive family—and capitalist property.

Whether against striking workers, homeless youth, Native people or young black men, the state carries out this task of repression violently. And wherever the bourgeois state intervenes, there is no “age of consent.” In 1998, on the Tsuu T’ina reserve in Alberta, the RCMP murdered nine-year-old Ty Jacobs and his mother Connie after she refused to surrender him to “child welfare” agents. Meanwhile, in Iraq over the last ten years, hundreds of thousands of children have been starved by UN sanctions. And last year, Canadian and other NATO warplanes were raining death on Serbian civilians in order to enforce imperialist domination.

Probably no individual better personifies the bourgeois state’s combination of hypocrisy and brutality than former Reform MP Jack Ramsey, once the main spokesman of Preston Manning’s “law and order” crusade and a partisan of stiff mandatory prison terms for sex offenders. An ex-RCMP officer, Ramsey was recently convicted of the attempted rape of a young Native girl while stationed at Pelican Narrows in northern Saskatchewan. However, hypocritical cant over “family values” is hardly the exclusive preserve of “social conservatives” or bigoted Evangelicals like Canadian Alliance leadership candidate Stockwell Day. In the spirit of its own Methodist forebears, the New Democratic Party is in the forefront of the anti-sex witchhunt.

It is not a coincidence that the current witchhunt against female teachers is centered in NDP-ruled British Columbia. Late last year, when the federal Liberal government presented a proposal to raise the sexual age of consent to 16 (!) or 18 (!!), then-B.C. attorney-general Ujjal Dosanjh expressed his enthusiastic support. Dosanjh, who also wants to *lower* the age at which youth can be tried in adult court, had demanded a higher age of consent at a premiers conference over two years ago. We say the only principle that matters here is the effective consent of the individuals involved, not their age, number or sex. Down with age of consent laws!

As the current administrator of capitalism in B.C., the NDP government necessarily enforces bourgeois rule by violent and repressive means. The NDP is what Marxists call a bourgeois workers party—rooted in the upper levels of the



SC photo

TL contingent on 1995 Vancouver abortion rights demonstration. Women’s oppression is rooted in capitalism.

labor movement but, like the reformist union bureaucracy which is its main base of support, entirely pro-capitalist in its program and outlook. Sharing the worldview of their Canadian imperialist masters, the New Democrats and union brass act as conduits for all manner of reactionary bourgeois ideology among the working class and oppressed, from protectionism and anti-immigrant racism to Maple Leaf nationalism and anti-Quebec chauvinism. ♦

Militant opposition to the state’s anti-sex witchhunt and defense of its victims is in the direct interest of the labor movement. The enthusiastic collaboration of the union tops and NDP in the rulers’ “family values” crusade directly undermines the unions as defense organizations of the working class. For example, when a B.C. court struck down the law against simple possession of “child pornography,” then-teachers union leader Kit Krieger howled that the ruling “places children—the most vulnerable members of society—at the mercy of pedophiles and those who would profit from pedophilia” (*Vancouver Sun*, 20 January 1999). In essence, in the name of “protecting children,” Krieger *endorsed and promoted* the state persecution of his own members, while giving the go-ahead to snoops and finks within the union. Only a few months later Heather Ingram, ratted out by a fellow teacher in whom she had confided, was enmeshed in the nightmare toils of a criminal “child abuse” prosecution.

### Sex and Censorship

The capitalist ruling class is not content to attempt—through ideological crusades, manufactured hysteria and terroristic repression—to regulate how and with whom the people can have consensual sex. They are equally determined to prevent the populace from reading about sex or viewing depictions of it, especially if it’s sex of the homosexual or intergenerational kind. The Little Sisters bookstore in Vancouver, which sells lesbian erotica, has been the target of Canada Customs harassment, surveillance and seizures for years—provoking a legal battle that is now before the

### Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste

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Supreme Court. Also before the Supreme Court is the case of John Robin Sharpe, who faces years in prison as the Crown appeals an earlier acquittal on charges of producing child pornography. Sharpe's "crime" was to possess entirely fictional stories and fantasy sketches of sex with youths and children, which he created himself for his own pleasure.

Sharpe is a victim of the repressive federal child pornography law, demanded and lauded by feminists like Catherine MacKinnon and LEAF (Legal Education and Action Fund) ostensibly to protect women and children from the "violence" of pornography. Introduced by the Chrétien Liberals in 1994, the act is so sweeping and irrational that even sections of the ruling class find it excessive. Writing on Sharpe's ordeal in Conrad Black's right-wing *National Post* (11 January), columnist Donna Laframboise captured the gist of it:

"There's no law against me writing short stories in which [a 17-year-old] boy and I rob a bank, shoot up heroin, or commit mass murder together. Indeed, I can even write about hacking the boy to pieces with a rusty axe. But let me write about unbuttoning his shirt and having sex with him and I become a criminal.

"Although it's perfectly legal for a 16-year-old girl to have sex with her 17-year-old boyfriend, if that girl sketches the two of them in a sexual embrace, our laws say she has just manufactured child pornography. Should her mother discover the sketch and not immediately destroy it, both the girl and her mother would be in possession of child porn. Should the girl show the sketch to one of her friends, she becomes a distributor of child porn."

The frightening arbitrariness of this legislation is not, as liberals like Laframboise argue, an anti-democratic byproduct of haste, muddled thinking or mere political opportunism. As we wrote in defense of Eli Langer, a Toronto artist who was one of its first victims:

"This Orwellian law is deliberately designed to allow the cops to ensnare *anyone* with the humiliating and fearful accusation of 'child pornography'.... The state persecution of Eli Langer—a self-taught artist and son of prominent University of Toronto academics—makes the real purpose of the anti-sex witchhunt crystal clear: anyone, anytime, anywhere—be afraid."

— "Down With Censorship!", SC No. 96, March/April 1994

And indeed, the politics of fear has scored some reactionary "successes" of late. In Victoria, a printer refused to produce a student newspaper because the front page carried a photo of a woman and her naked child, while the house magazine of fashion giant Benetton, known for its striking and provocative promotional campaigns, was quickly pulled from B.C. store shelves when it appeared with a cover photo of a naked baby urinating!

At the same time, the state-sponsored uproar over "child abuse" and "lurking pedophiles" has generated a paranoid culture medium for informants and watchers-at-keyholes. In Ottawa, child welfare officials seized two children after a photo lab employee reported developing a father's pictures of his four-year-old son playing naked on a couch. Criminal child-pornography charges were filed, and not dropped until three weeks later.

The same sort of terrifying ordeal may be in store for some Ontario families this summer as their children take the Harris Tories' vaunted standardized tests. Teachers marking the 276,000 tests will be on the lookout for "evidence of sexual abuse" in pupils' creative-writing passages, and the

government's Education Quality and Accountability Office has informed them that they are "legally obligated to report suspected child abuse directly to the Children's Aid Society" (*National Post*, 9 May).

### Forge a Revolutionary Workers Party!

A recent issue of the *New York Review of Books* (May 11) that somehow got by Canada Customs and the censors reproduces works by the French artist Balthus, a master of erotically charged images involving children. John Russell, former chief art critic of the *New York Times*, writes of Balthus: "he seems to say, this is what young people are like.... If painting is about truth, and not about received opinions, why should we begrudge them an inch of their underclothes, or even an occasional glimpse of their genitalia?" However, the capitalist rulers care little for truth and, the fact is, the bourgeoisie *does* "begrudge" any concessions to the sexuality of women and young people—in real life, or even in fantasy—as a central means of asserting its control over *everyone's* lives.

In the bleak climate of social reaction ushered in by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the capitalist ruling class no longer sees a reason it should tolerate the liberties of a restive population. Its arbitrary bans and diktats become pettier, more sweeping, more absurd. In Toronto these days, even dancing after 2 a.m. may soon fall under state interdict, as the city moots outlawing the all-night dance parties known as raves. (Raves are already banned on city property. The new police chief, Julian Fantino, calls them a threat to the very fabric of society. So, who's raving here, anyway?)

Starting this fall, all Ontario students will have to sing "O Canada" every morning, and they narrowly escaped having to take an oath of allegiance to the queen as well. And after Heather Ingram left her job in Sechelt, her former school board immediately took the opportunity to propose a strict dress code, presumably fearful lest a flash of tattooed tummy again seduce young scholars from the pleasures of algebra. At least it's some satisfaction that the cops have been unable to lay charges against one phys ed teacher who is alleged to have slept with the whole boys volleyball team, because they can't find anyone to complain.

The ruling class has barred the future to the bulk of a generation for whom it has little productive work. With welfare gutted, the available alternatives for many young people are the streets or prison (in jail, or in the "open custody" of the family). In fact, Canada already jails young people at a far higher rate than the U.S., according to a U.S. Justice Department report released in May. Meanwhile, capitalist economic austerity measures are combined with the hue and cry over "family values" to drive "surplus" women out of the workforce and back into stifling dependence in the family.

We Trotskyists fight to win women, youth and working people to the understanding that their emancipation can only come through smashing the capitalist system and building socialism. For that, revolutionary proletarian leadership and consciousness are key. We need a revolutionary workers party, one based on the politics of the class struggle. Such a party will defend all the oppressed as it leads them, with the proletariat at their head, in class war against the whole system of imperialist capitalism. Down with the anti-sex witchhunt! Workers, women, youth: Fight for socialist revolution! ■

## Windsor OAS Protests...

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Canadian nationalist allies, who sought to channel opposition to capitalist oppression and injustice into campaigns for trade protectionism and the defense of Canadian (capitalist) "democracy." The central point of the speech by Canadian Labour Congress president Ken Georgetti at a pre-demonstration teach-in on June 3 was to call for defense of the Auto Pact system of protectionist tariffs against a recent ruling by the World Trade Organization. "Friends," Georgetti intoned, "our democracy is being threatened every day by these secret meetings."

Members of the TL and SYC set up literature tables in Windsor with signs including: "Down with nationalism, protectionism—The enemy is in Ottawa, Bay Street!" and "For socialist revolution throughout the Americas!" Other TL/SYC signs opposed the anti-Communism and Anglo chauvinism of the union tops and the social-democratic NDP, calling to "Defend China, Cuba against imperialist attack, internal counterrevolution!" and saying "Independence for Quebec—National chauvinism is poison to class struggle!" Nearly 300 copies of *Spartacist Canada*, *Workers Vanguard* and other International Communist League literature as well as a dozen subscriptions were sold in the course of the weekend. We print below the TL/SYC leaflet distributed at the protests.

**Down With "Free Trade" Rape of Latin America!  
Defeat U.S. and Canadian Imperialism  
Through Workers Revolution!**

## Beware Fraud of "Human Rights" Imperialism!

As the Organization of American States (OAS) prepares to meet this weekend, the Canadian Labour Congress, Council of Canadians and others have called protests for "democracy, social justice and fair trade in the Americas." Many of those converging on Windsor are motivated by a desire to fight the brutal exploitation and oppression which are rooted in the capitalist system. But watch out: the central organizers of this protest are trying to sell you a bill of goods.

A key purpose of the OAS gathering is to prepare the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA)—the extension of the NAFTA rape of Mexico by U.S. and Canadian corporations throughout the hemisphere. Under NAFTA, the real wages of Mexican workers have plummeted by 50 percent while unemployment has skyrocketed. Opposition to such grinding imperialist exploitation, and to the capitalist austerity drive at home, requires class struggle against our "own" ruling class. Yet the labor tops and Canadian nationalists, tailed by the reformist left, openly *identify* the interests of Canadian workers with those of the Canadian rulers.

A decade ago, the CLC leadership staged reactionary protectionist rallies against NAFTA, saying "Free trade could cost us Canada," and calling on the government to "Stand up for our Canada." Today, they are calling to "protect Canadian industry and society" from bodies like NAFTA and the World Trade Organization (WTO). In fact, it is the Canadian capitalist government and homegrown Canadian corporations who—together with their senior partners in the

United States—are plundering Latin America. The enemy is here at home: the rulers of Ottawa and Bay Street!

## Down With Chauvinism and Anti-Communism!

The Windsor demonstrations are being built in the "spirit of Seattle," the anti-WTO protests last fall which were centrally organized by the American AFL-CIO union tops. These protests were, as we wrote at the time, "dominated by national chauvinism, racist protectionism and counterrevolutionary attacks on the Chinese deformed workers state." The union misleaders dumped Chinese and other foreign steel in the harbor while railing that China—a country where capitalism was smashed through social revolution in 1949—is a "rogue state" whose workers threaten North American jobs.

An elementary starting point for those who want to struggle against imperialism is the need to defend the existing gains of the working class. The 1949 Chinese Revolution freed the country from imperialist domination and smashed the rule of the local bourgeoisie, landlords and warlords. The destruction of capitalism opened the door to tremendous social progress including literacy, women's rights and the beginnings of industrialization. That's why the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste and the Spartacus Youth Clubs fight for the unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state—as well as those in Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea—against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. At the same time, we fight for a proletarian political revolution to oust the parasitic Stalinist rulers of these countries, whose nationalism and bureaucratic rule pave the way for bloody capitalist counterrevolution and the return of untrammelled imperialist exploitation.

Of course, not everyone who demonstrated in Seattle, Washington and now Windsor shares the unvarnished chauvinism and anti-Communism of the top labor bureaucracy. But there is a widespread belief, including among radical youth, that transnational institutions like the WTO dominate the world today, stripping countries like Canada and the U.S. of their independence. In a typical statement last fall, a coalition of Canadian and American environmental and student groups decried the WTO as "so mighty, it could make the next vote you cast for government meaningless." But bourgeois "democracy" has always been a fraud, amounting, in the words of Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin, to "decid[ing] once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament."

All the talk of "globalization" threatening Canadian sovereignty, industry, jobs, social programs, etc. serves to amnesty this ruling class, and to tie the working class to the supposed "national interests" of Canadian capitalism. In reality, world capitalism is dominated by industrial monopolies and big banks who are represented by different states whose interests are in sharp conflict. This is the global system of imperialism, which Lenin identified nearly a century ago as the "highest stage of capitalism." The imperialist powers like the U.S., Canada, Germany and Japan constantly struggle to improve their competitive position by increasing the rate of exploitation of the workers at home, plundering the neocolonial world and seizing markets at the expense of rivals.

Particularly since the destruction of the Soviet Union through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92 there has been a sharp escalation of interimperialist rivalries, pointing to trade war and ultimately shooting wars. It was these rivalries—not the demonstrations in the streets—which led to the collapse of the Seattle WTO talks. The growth of interimpe-





SC photo

**TL fights for opposition to Canadian bourgeoisie on June 1999 Toronto protest against Balkans war.**

rialist conflict is also shown in the move by the U.S. imperialists and their Canadian junior partners to solidify their own zone of exploitation through the FTAA, and in the sharp rise of bourgeois militarism worldwide.

**Beware False Friends**

It's good that many students and youth who want to fight exploitation are looking to the trade unions—the basic defense organizations of the working class—as allies. But the power of the labor movement to wage class struggle against the capitalist exploiters is chained by the union bureaucracy, a privileged stratum which serves as agents of the bourgeoisie inside the workers movement. These union tops, together with their political allies in the social-democratic NDP, seek to manipulate liberal student youth—whose concern for global poverty is mixed with illusions in the “democratic” nature of the Canadian and American states—for their own reactionary ends of trade protectionism and anti-Communism.

Flag-waving nationalism fuels bigotry, notably against the nationally oppressed Québécois. The NDP today backs Ottawa's chauvinist “Clarity Bill,” a law which aims to all but outlaw Quebec's right to self-determination. The subjugation of Quebec in an English-dominated Canada has divided the working class and undermined its struggles against capitalism. Marxists call for independence for Quebec in order to remove the roadblocks to class struggle and make clear to the workers of both English Canada and Quebec that their enemies are the own respective capitalists, not each other.

We particularly warn against illusions in those labor misleaders who parade as “leftists” or “militants.” Take Canadian Auto Workers leader Buzz Hargrove: his answer to the WTO's recent ruling against the Auto Pact tariff system was to join with the Big Three auto companies in a campaign against Asian imports. This protectionist crusade for “Canadian jobs” fuels anti-Asian racism and

ties the workers to the interests of their “own” capitalist exploiters.

A year ago, it was “left” NDP MP Svend Robinson who took center stage in backing the brutal NATO assault against Serbia. Meanwhile Hargrove was among the first to demand imperialist ground troops be sent in. A few months later, leaders of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers were demanding that Canada take the lead in sending an imperialist occupation force to East Timor. In stark contrast, we Trotskyists denounced the lie that the North American and other NATO powers—the biggest exploiters of working people on the planet—could be a force for “human rights.” We called to “Defeat U.S./Canadian Imperialism Through Workers Revolution! Defend Serbia!” and opposed the Australian-led intervention in East Timor. Today we demand that all U.S./Canadian/NATO/UN troops get out of the Balkans and East Timor.

**For a Revolutionary Party!**

Echoing the rhetoric about the “spirit of Seattle” are a host of opportunist “socialist” outfits, who act as waterboys for the labor bureaucrats and social democrats. From the Communist Party (CP) to Socialist Action, the International Socialists (I.S.) and more, these reformists overtly join or acquiesce to the labor tops' reactionary campaigns for economic nationalism and anti-Communism. The CP openly flies the flag of Maple Leaf chauvinism, warning of a supposed “threat to Canadian sovereignty” from bodies like the WTO and NAFTA. Socialist Action tries to dragoon would-be radical youth into building the thoroughly pro-capitalist NDP.

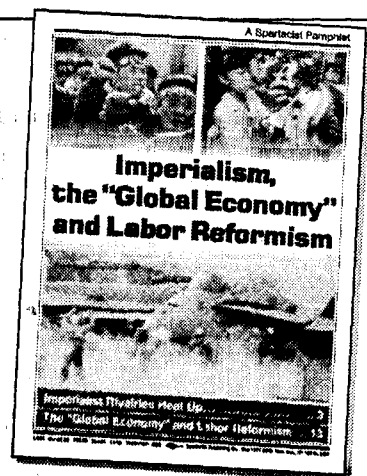
Most criminally, the bulk of the fake-left stood with the imperialists and their labor lieutenants in backing every and any counterrevolutionary movement aimed at destroying the former Soviet Union and the deformed workers states in East Europe. Particularly enthusiastic in this regard was the I.S., who cheered that “Communism has collapsed... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing” (Socialist Worker [Britain], 31 August 1991). Today the I.S. again lines up with the imperialists over China. When U.S. warships plied the Taiwan Strait in a provocation against Beijing, the I.S.

*(continued on page 10)*

This pamphlet assesses recent changes in the world economy in a historical perspective, from the origins of modern imperialism in the late 19th century through the capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe and the former USSR and its aftermath. Reformist ideologues of “globalization” seek to obscure the role of the capitalist nation-state and the danger of interimperialist war which is inherent in capitalism, while amnestying the refusal of the labor bureaucracies to wage class struggle against their respective bourgeoisies.

Exploitation, poverty and social degradation can be eliminated only through proletarian revolutions in the imperialist centers as well as the neocolonial countries, laying the basis for an international planned socialist economy.

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## Windsor OAS Protests...

(continued from page 9)

aimed their guns in the same direction as the Pentagon, proclaiming: "We would oppose any Chinese invasion of Taiwan as an act of imperialist aggression" (*Socialist Review*, April 1996). So it's no accident that these Cold War "socialists" fulsomely hailed the union bureaucracy's mobilization in Seattle, which they ludicrously called a "victory against capitalism."

Some groups protesting the OAS do seek to oppose the national chauvinism pushed by the labor tops and the reformist left. The anarchist Resist Corporate Rule network, for example, denounces the "reformist/nationalistic agendas that dominate campaigns against global capitalism" (RCR Mission Statement). But effectively challenging these "agendas" requires a revolutionary program for proletarian socialist revolution. Instead all these anarchists have to offer is

vague rhetoric about "solidarity" and "freedom." They have no program for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. Nowhere do they so much as mention the working class, let alone look to it as the only force in this society which can eradicate the poverty, racism and war endemic to capitalism.

Due to its central role in capitalist production, the proletariat as a class uniquely has the power to sweep away the capitalist system and lay the foundations of a socialist society. This requires a revolutionary workers party to render the proletariat conscious of its historic tasks and lead it in struggle against the exploiters. It also means defending the gains of the social revolutions in China and Cuba, as part of the fight for the socialist conquest of power by the proletariat worldwide. World socialist revolution will lay the material basis to end the poverty and social oppression that imperialism inflicts on millions around the world. That is the purpose of the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste and Spartacus Youth Clubs. Join us! ■

## Quebec...

(continued from page 4)

for about 100 years, under a world system of imperialism—"the highest stage of capitalism," as Lenin called it. Bodies like the IMF or WTO are *temporary* alliances among competing imperialist countries, which will collapse at the first serious clash of interests. In this context, nationalism, even (or especially) when presented as a defense against "global capitalism," is a call to defend one's "own" bourgeois ruling class, and ultimately a rallying cry for imperialist war.

Chossudovsky tried to put a left gloss on this "globalization" crock. The official "left" and trade-union leaders, he said, are all accomplices of the global exploiters, and he correctly pointed out that the oppression and plundering of peoples and countries around the world is supported and often directly carried out by the social democrats—e.g., the European governments who joined with the U.S. and Canada to bomb Serbia last year. But Chossudovsky's "alternative" is to build "parallel powers" and "broad social alliances" to achieve "sovereignty."

The idea that "popular sovereignty" can exist as a "parallel power" beside the capitalist state is a grossly utopian, reactionary illusion. Such a fantasy rests on and *reinforces* the liberal-bourgeois falsehood that the imperialist ruling classes can be restrained from plunder and oppression by mass, democratic pressure. But capitalism is not swayed in fundamental things by "popular opposition," and reacts to any challenge to its class rule through the organized violence of its state: police, jails, courts and army. There can be no "popular sovereignty" until the working class, at the head of all the oppressed, destroys the capitalist state and establishes its own class rule, the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only then can we start building a society free of exploitation and oppression.

### The Dead End of Nationalist Social Democracy

If Chossudovsky's diatribe showed how reformism and nationalism go hand in hand in "global" politics, Michel Chartrand, also a featured speaker at the conference, peddled the same mix on the domestic plane. Chartrand, 82, is an ex-union leader known for his irreverent speeches against "the monopolies." Typical of the Quebec union leaders of the 1960s and '70s, his rhetoric is simply militant-sounding nationalist reformism. The left talk of these union bureaucrats in that period was a response to growing militancy among the Québécois working class, and was designed to co-opt that militancy back into support for capitalism. By the mid-'70s, the union tops led the working class straight into the arms of the PQ, by claiming that René Lévesque & Co., unlike the Liberals, upheld the "national interests" of the Québécois people.

In the year 2000, Chartrand is something of an anachronism—the other "leftist" union tops of the time moved on to bigger things (e.g., government ministries and corporate posts). But he still represents the same fundamental dead end which has ensnared Quebec workers for several decades. Chartrand, today the figurehead for the RAP, denounced all those who did not consider themselves nationalist as "abnormal," and stumped for his central plank of a "citizenship income." This project for a guaranteed minimum income is a warmed-over reformist and utopian scheme aimed at making capitalism seem a little less brutal

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for the poor.

While the RAP has its beefs with the PQ *today*, as Lucien Bouchard & Co. throw away even the threadbare pretense of being “friends of labor,” its “solution” is the creation of a Quebec nationalist social-democratic party. Centering his speech around a historical review of social programs in Canada and Quebec, Chartrand praised the old Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and New Democratic Party for their supposed vanguard role in implementing health and unemployment insurance. He himself had attempted to build a Quebec wing of the NDP in the early 1960s, only to lead a nationalist breakaway in 1963.

Over the years, elements among the Quebec left have repeatedly tried to build a social-democratic party, either as a wing of the NDP or as an independent formation. They have failed each and every time. Why? Labor reformism means acting as a prop for one’s own national bourgeoisie, but since the emergence of a distinct class of Québécois capitalists beginning in the 1960s, there have been increasingly *divergent* anglophone and francophone bourgeoisies in this country. The New Democrats, rooted in the labor bureaucracy of English Canada, have always been thoroughly hostile to Quebec’s national rights, so whenever they got something going in Quebec it would soon break away in the direction of Quebec nationalism. Yet these splits all died pretty quickly as independent organizations, as they ended up embracing the bourgeois nationalists one way or another in the name of “national solidarity” against Anglo oppression. Thanks to the inestimable assistance of the nationalist labor tops, the Québécois bourgeoisie has not needed a social-democratic intermediary to tie the working class to the capitalist system.

This hasn’t, however, dampened the enthusiasm of the latest round of reformist Québécois left groups, most of which were represented at the conference. The second day featured a series of round table discussions, including one on “The unity of the political left” with presentations by the RAP, Parti Communiste du Québec (Quebec wing of the Canadian CP) and Parti de la Démocratie Socialiste (PDS), among others.

The CP’s presentation consisted of a call for left unity and reformist talk of “no social peace without social justice.” In its prostration to the mantra of “unity,” the CP failed to mention its position *against* Quebec independence and for “renewing” the Canadian constitution. The CP’s particular appetite is toward *Canadian* nationalism, which is necessarily Anglo-chauvinist—but, speaking to a largely Québécois nationalist audience, their spokesman simply chose to ignore the question. Although its particular brand of nationalism is at variance with that of the other groups, the CP is just as committed to the elusive dream of a “broad” social-democratic party in Quebec—and was no more “communist” than anyone else on that panel.

The PDS, a competitor of the RAP for the prize of being the main Québécois nationalist social-democratic formation, also addressed the conference. While the RAP pushes its “citizenship income,” the PDS wants more money for social programs and public services, and to “freeze interest and payments on the public debt.” It throws in some rhetoric against NAFTA and “military alliances,” and talks of defense of Native people. At the same time, PDS head Paul Rose argues that independence and social emancipation are “inseparable,” and criticizes the PQ for doing “everything it

can to separate and counterpose them” (*L’aut’journal*, February 2000).

This premise that Quebec independence must result in “social emancipation” is shared by Gauche Socialiste (GS), Quebec adherent of the decomposing fake-Trotskyist “United Secretariat of the Fourth International” (USec). In their various incarnations over the years, the Quebec USec supporters have tailed an endless series of “left” (and not so left) nationalist formations. Today GS is completely buried within the PDS, for whom it provides both foot soldiers and ideologues. In a 40-plus-page December-January internet posting titled “The State of Canada and Quebec in the Year 2000—A Militant Solidarity to Be Rebuilt,” PDS and GS leader Marc Bonhomme writes:


“The Canadian bourgeoisie still has a bone stuck in its throat: the economic, demographic, territorial and political ability of the Québécois people to break up the Canadian state, to open a monumental breach in the bourgeois apparatus, toward the social and national liberation of the working and popular classes in Canada.”

To present independence *per se* as doing fundamental damage to bourgeois class rule is to whitewash the *Quebec* bourgeoisie, whose role as “masters in their own house” in a future independent Quebec is precisely prefigured by today’s anti-labor PQ government. Indeed, just like the openly pro-capitalist trade-union misleaders, GS ends up prettifying the PQ as a “lesser evil.” Thus Bonhomme portrays the PQ’s independence project as a “political opening to the left” and even praises former party leader Jacques Parizeau’s “resolutely leftist, populist discourse”!

While fighting against the national oppression of Quebec and supporting independence, a genuine revolutionary alternative would fight tooth and nail against the bourgeois nationalists and their leftist tails. In his intervention during the final session of the conference, the TL/LT spokesman emphasized our fight against nationalism and chauvinism within the working class, our opposition to pro-capitalist social democracy and our fight for a revolutionary workers party to overthrow the capitalist system. Against the current, umpteenth attempt at creating a new social-democratic obstacle, what is required is a binational, multiracial Leninist vanguard party which fights for new October Revolutions throughout North America and around the world. This is the kind of party we in the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste seek to build. ■

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## FSP...

(continued from page 2)

have slandered them. For the life of us, we can't see how. The FSP does support the so-called Socialist Caucus of the B.C. NDP. The Socialist Caucus did publish a 1 March "Call for Unity and Action," which opens by urging the social-democratic faithful to rally round the wretchedly right-wing NDP government of premier Ujjal Dosanjh. Harry Paine seems stung by our reasonable inference that they support the Dosanjh government. Since the FSP has now denied responsibility for the "Call" in writing, we are pleased to publicize this semi-retraction in what Paine chooses to call our "gossip columns." Otherwise, it might have remained totally unknown to "leftward moving workers" or anyone else outside the narrow circle of the Socialist Caucus.

Paine neglects to mention that the "Call for Unity and Action" was signed by one Marcel Hatch, who for over a decade was his predecessor in the post of FSP "Pan-Canadian" poobah. We have since learned that Hatch left the FSP, about the time the "Call" appeared, to join Socialist Action (SA), the FSP's partners in the Socialist Caucus menage. Who knew? And regardless, the FSP is aggressively courting SA (now including Mr. Hatch and his signa-

ture), hoping to unite their organizations. The April-June *Freedom Socialist* quotes the U.S. FSP National Secretary, who pledges to work with SA "in a comradely and respectful manner," offering "your forces here and elsewhere our assistance." So where's the beef, FSP? Either Hatch and his signature were, and still are, your responsibility, or they soon may be again.

Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky all taught us that exposing and combating fakers like the FSP and SA is an elementary duty for proletarian revolutionaries. Guided by revolutionary Marxism and the logic of the class struggle, we tell the truth to working people and the oppressed. That is the real "tradition of Trotskyism," a tradition we uphold. Fake Trotskyists like the FSP and SA—trained up to be grumpy house radicals for the NDP social democrats—have never even made its nodding acquaintance.

Finally, we have a question for Harry Paine. His letter notes the opposition of the Trotskyists to their own ruling classes during World War II. Opposition to the military adventures of one's own imperialists is certainly a hallmark of Trotskyism. So: does the FSP endorse the loud support of Socialist Action, in the person of its main spokesman in the Ontario NDP Socialist Caucus, for Canada's participation in the Australian-led imperialist invasion of East Timor? ■

## China...

(continued from page 16)

Labor Ministry reports more than **120,000 labor disputes last year—14 times more** than 1992—from petitions to strikes (*Japan Times*, 25 April). A senior police official in the central province of Anhui reports that it is now common to see "workers collectively besieging enterprise leaders, hurling abuse at them, and even detaining them under duress." In December, a thousand miners fought with police and blocked a railway line in northern China to protest not having been paid in months. Around the same time, 2,000 retired steel workers in the southwestern city of Chongqing (Chungking) closed off the main road to the steel mill to protest cuts in pensions. In the vast rural hinterland, the immiseration of the poor peasantry, as a result of the decollectivization of agriculture in the late 1970s, and the growing class divide with the creation of a class of rich farmers have led to rampant attacks on tax collectors and other officials.

In its article on the Yangjiazhangzi revolt, the *Washington Post* wrote that it was "severe for a disturbance in a Chinese city but was indicative of unrest bedeviling the Communist Party" and observed that "in the countryside, however, authorities appear more willing to order security services to smash protests and fire on demonstrators." This is a stark indication of the fragility of the bureaucratic caste in the face of an aroused proletariat, which has already shown its potential to win over entire sections of the conscript army of the deformed workers state in struggle against the Stalinist regime. When the working people entered into the student demonstrations centered on Tiananmen Square in May-June 1989, marking an incipient political revolution, both officers and ranks of numerous People's Liberation Army regiments refused orders to suppress the protests, forcing the regime to bring in other units to crush the workers' uprising.

The bureaucracy which is paving the way for capitalist counterrevolution is simultaneously preparing the ground for a new revolutionary proletarian explosion—not a *social* revolution which would overturn the economic foundations of society as in 1949 but a *political* revolution to oust the parasitic ruling oligarchy and to place political power in the hands of workers, soldiers and peasants councils (soviets). The urgent task facing the Chinese proletariat is to build a Leninist-Trotskyist party as part of a reforged Trotskyist Fourth International, to prepare and lead this political revolution, standing at the head of the masses and directing the spontaneous and localized workers' struggles toward the seizure of political power.

Since the destruction of the Soviet Union, the international proletariat has been thrown back economically and politically by the bourgeois onslaught and triumphalism over the so-called "death of communism." Proletarian political revolution in China—premised on defense of the planned, collectivized economy which is the social foundation of the workers state—would have a tremendous impact in reversing this assault, reverberating among the proletariat from Indonesia and South Korea to Japan—the industrial powerhouse of Asia—and North America. It would revive the working people of Russia who have been ground down by nearly a decade of capitalist counterrevolution. At the same time, a revolutionary China of workers and peasants councils would face virulently hostile imperialist reaction. The International Communist League fights to reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution, to lead the overthrow of capitalist class rule internationally, smashing the imperialist system and laying the material basis for the development of China in a socialist Asia.

### China on the Brink

Some of the Yangjiazhangzi miners understand that their layoffs and looming impoverishment stem from the "market reforms" imposed by the Beijing regime, which are under-

mining the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution. That revolution liberated the country from capitalist exploitation and imperialist subjugation, ushering in a planned, collectivized economy which guaranteed workers lifetime employment and social benefits—the “iron rice bowl.” State enterprises provide workers not only with a livelihood but with housing, medical care and schooling for their families. Thus the privatization, closure or retrenchment of state-owned factories, mines and other enterprises threatens workers with utter destitution. “We miners have been working here for China, for the Communist Party, since the revolution,” said one worker. “And now suddenly my part of the mine is private.” These workers understand that such state property belongs to the working people. Who gave the managers the right to sell it off?

It is crucial to understand that the 1949 Revolution was deformed from its inception under the rule of Mao Zedong’s bureaucracy, patterned after the Stalinist bureaucracy in the USSR which usurped power in a political counterrevolution in 1924. Mao’s regime excluded the proletariat from political power and based itself on Stalin’s nationalist dogma of building “socialism in a single country.” That meant accommodation to world imperialism and opposition to the struggle for socialist revolution in other countries. This nationalist perspective is expressed today in the Stalinist regime’s embrace of the offshore Chinese bourgeoisie in the name of forging a “greater China.”

The Stalinist bureaucracy is not a possessing class but a parasitic *caste*: resting on the proletarian property forms, the bureaucracy simultaneously acts as a transmission belt for the pressures of the capitalist world market on the deformed workers state. In response to those imperialist pressures, which have sharply increased following capitalist restoration in the former Soviet Union, the bureaucracy has expanded the “market reforms” initiated by Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s. Recently, the pace of privatization and retrenchment of state-owned enterprises has accelerated in anticipation of entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO), a move which if implemented would open China to a greater degree of import competition from Western and Japanese multinationals and also to foreign investment in certain industries. We fight against imperialist penetration of the Chinese deformed workers state and defend the state monopoly of foreign trade.

Writing of the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy in *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937), Leon Trotsky noted: “It continues to preserve state property only to the extent that it fears the proletariat.” Faced with boiling anger at the base, the Beijing bureaucracy has trod warily, imprisoning or even executing some officials for blatant corruption and occasionally reversing some of its own proposed “free market” measures. An article in the *New York Times* (16 April) on a joint venture between Volkswagen and the Shanghai municipal government complained:

“China continues to shelter many of its industries from true competition, in turn perpetuating too many factories and poor management. Though the government warns that China’s state-owned companies must prepare for global competition, most sectors of the economy remain stuck in their socialist past.”

The U.S. and the other major capitalist powers are intent on a capitalist counterrevolution which would entail the suppression of the Chinese proletariat in blood and the smashing of the Communist Party-dominated state apparatus. To that



Reuters

**Tiananmen Square, Beijing, May 1989: Chinese workers defended student protesters, opposed Deng’s pro-capitalist reforms.**

end, while pursuing “constructive engagement” with the Beijing regime with the aim of furthering economic penetration, Washington brandishes its military might against China and sponsors a range of forces—from the CIA’s “Free Tibet” crowd to pro-imperialist “dissidents”—aimed at fomenting counterrevolution from within. The U.S. is proposing a “theater missile defense” in East Asia which would target the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states in the first instance, and has maintained capitalist Taiwan over the past 50 years as a bulwark against China.

The Trotskyist ICL fights for the unconditional military defense of China and the other deformed workers states—North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. As stated in the ICL’s “Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program” (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998):

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

### **Beware Imperialism’s Labor Front Men!**

A key role in U.S. imperialism’s counterrevolutionary drive is played by the AFL-CIO labor bureaucracy, whose anti-Communist operations against militant unions in Latin America, South Korea and elsewhere earned it the epithet “AFL-CIA” throughout the Third World. This goes hand in hand with the labor tops’ class collaboration at home, where they act as the capitalists’ political police inside the unions.

At every step, the pro-capitalist Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) union bureaucracy, together with their political arm,

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## China...

(continued from page 13)

the social-democratic NDP, have joined in these anti-Communist crusades. In East Europe and the former USSR, these "labor lieutenants" of imperialism promoted and helped organize "free trade unions" as battering rams for capitalist restoration. In the early 1980s, the AFL-CIO and CLC bureaucracies acted as a conduit to fund Polish Solidarność, a phony "union" which spearheaded capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe. Later, in the Soviet Union, AFL-CIO operatives sought to channel working-class discontent over Mikhail Gorbachev's market-oriented *perestroika* "reforms" into support to anti-Communist demagogue Boris Yeltsin. Yeltsin's pro-imperialist coup in August 1991 culminated over the following months, in the absence of mass working-class resistance, in capitalist counterrevolution.

Capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet degenerated workers state and the deformed workers states of East Europe, prepared by decades of Stalinist misrule, has brought mass unemployment, falling life expectancy, increasing immiseration and social degradation. It has also emboldened the imperialist exploiters in attacking the working people and minorities in the U.S., Canada and other capitalist countries. It is in the direct class interest of the proletariat in North America and internationally to oppose the imperialists' drive to reconquer China for capitalist exploitation.

The American labor tops are trying to repeat in China the scenario played out in East Europe and the ex-USSR. A key agency in this regard is the American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACILS). According to one of its Washington paymasters, the National Endowment for Democracy, in China the ACILS has "helped labor groups and underground activists educate workers about their rights"—i.e., organizing counterrevolutionary "free trade unions." Meanwhile, the AFL-CIO tops are in the vanguard of protectionist and anti-Communist opposition to China's entry into the WTO, joining with liberal Democrats, right-wing Republicans and incipient clerical-fascist Pat Buchanan.

It won't be easy for the "AFL-CIA" to sell American "free enterprise" to Chinese workers. Many workers in East Europe and the former Soviet Union bought the lie peddled by the likes of Yeltsin and Solidarność leader Lech Walesa that "free market" capitalism would bring unparalleled prosperity and living standards comparable to West Europe and North America. But many Chinese workers have *already experienced the miseries of "free market" exploitation*, slaving in large plants owned by Western and Japanese firms and offshore Chinese businessmen or in sweatshop operations often run by native-born exploiters, where conditions are generally far worse than those in state-owned enterprises.

A major concentration of privately owned factories producing textiles, clothing and other light manufactures is located in the Pearl River delta in Guangdong province opposite Hong Kong. Workers in the "Special Economic Zones" (SEZs), mainly young women from the countryside, slave in these factories 12 hours a day, seven days a week. Their salary is often withheld for the first six months and forfeited altogether if they leave before a year! China's laws stipulate that overtime is limited to 36 hours a week and

must be paid at a rate 50 percent higher than regular time. But the bosses in these factories openly flout the country's labor laws, bribing government officials for this privilege. Such conditions are only a small taste of what the Chinese masses would face under capitalist rule, which would qualitatively extend and deepen the exploitation and immiseration now being experienced by workers in the SEZs.

It is telling that even anti-Communist "dissidents" feel compelled to criticize "free market" capitalism in order to gain a sympathetic hearing from Chinese workers. A prime example is Han Dong-fang, a Hong Kong-based "labor organizer" with a regular program on the CIA-funded Radio Free Asia. Han denounces the Clinton administration *from the right* for "de-linking trade from human rights issues." Yet this bellicose anti-Communist hypocritically pays lip service to the intense hostility among Chinese workers to privatizing the economy, writing that he does not believe "large-scale and rapid privatisation is the only way forward for the reform process" (*China Labour Bulletin*, September/October 1997).

Han and his ilk posture as defenders of the economic interests of the Chinese workers, condemning the official All-China Federation of Trade Unions for failing to defend the workers. Indeed, this adjunct of the Stalinist bureaucracy does not defend the interests of Chinese workers. But what Han stands for is the smashing of the Chinese deformed workers state and the introduction of brutal capitalist exploitation throughout the country.

### Forge a Leninist-Trotskyist Party!

A proletarian political revolution will begin under the banner of struggles against social inequality and political oppression, as in 1989. The struggle for freedom of the trade unions—based on the defense of socialized property—as well as for the right of assembly and freedom of the press, will unfold as part of the fight for soviet democracy, for the formation of workers councils opposing the bureaucratic parasites and suppressing counterrevolutionary elements. The central question is that of revolutionary leadership, which can only be resolved by forging a Leninist-Trotskyist party to bring revolutionary socialist consciousness to the working class. Such a party would combat Han chauvinism and imbue the proletariat with the understanding that it must fight for the interests of all the oppressed—from women to homosexuals to the poor peasantry and migrant workers.

Workers in the state sector, currently in the forefront of the labor struggles, constitute a majority of the Chinese proletariat. But two-thirds of the population still lives in the countryside as peasant smallholders or is otherwise engaged in the agricultural economy. The working class cannot wrest political power from the bureaucracy without the sympathy and support of the peasant masses, especially the rural youth who make up a majority of China's conscript army.

The drive toward capitalist restoration has led to increasing immiseration of both rural toilers and the urban industrial proletariat. Bankrupted peasants and youth who cannot find a livelihood in the rural areas have flooded into cities looking for work—a vast army of migrant labor estimated at up to 130 million people! Lacking official household registration (*hukou*), migrants are not entitled to the housing, medical care and schooling for their children available to legal urban residents. Most migrants are men who leave their wives and children in the villages and try to eke out a living

in the cities by taking the most menial jobs.

These developments have acted to create a major division within the working class as many urban workers are contemptuous of the rural migrants and also fearful that they will take their jobs because the migrants are desperate enough to work for next to nothing. Meanwhile, millions of migrants are rounded up and forcibly removed to their villages every year. The unity of the working class demands the defense of these migrant workers. The fight to win for these workers the same legal rights and benefits as longtime urban residents could serve as an initial step in the crucially necessary task of linking the urban-centered proletariat and the peasant masses in struggle against mounting depredations.

In the countryside, there has emerged a class of rich farmers—i.e., petty capitalists who hire labor and lease additional land from their neighbors and have expanded into non-agricultural businesses—who are a bridge to the capitalist world market and a dangerous force for counterrevolution within Chinese society. The Beijing government itself calculates that up to ten million peasants will lose their livelihoods if China enters the WTO due to increased imports of grain and other produce, mainly from North America. The capitalists must be driven out of the SEZs and off the land. This poses the question of forming workers and peasants councils to oust the parasitic bureaucracy. Such councils would recollectivize agriculture, providing cheap credit and farm equipment to peasants who form cooperatives, and reinforce the state monopoly of foreign trade, a vital means of defending industrial workers and rural toilers against the predations of world imperialism. Defend and extend the planned, collectivized economy! Expropriate without compensation the bloodsucking imperialist and offshore Chinese bourgeoisies!

Some Chinese opponents of “market reforms” uphold Mao’s “socialism” as an alternative to the present regime. But the Maoist perversion of socialism was national eco-

nomie autarky and primitive egalitarianism, in which the masses were equal because all were equally poor. Writing in the mid-19th century, Karl Marx explained that in the absence of an international socialist society based on the highest level of technological and industrial development, “only want will be generalized, and with want the struggle for necessities begins again, and all the old crap must revive.” Flatly repudiating Marx, the Stalinists preached the idiocy that socialism could be built in a single country if only imperialist military intervention were thwarted. Refuting this in his 1928 work *The Third International After Lenin*, Trotsky wrote:

“The capitalist world shows us by its export and import figures that it has other instruments of persuasion than those of military intervention. To the extent that productivity of labor and the productivity of a social system as a whole are measured on the market by the correlation of prices, it is not so much military intervention as the intervention of cheaper capitalist commodities that constitutes perhaps the greatest immediate menace to Soviet economy. This alone shows that it is by no means merely a question of an isolated economic victory over ‘one’s own’ bourgeoisie.”

In practice, “socialism in one country” meant opposition to the perspective of workers revolution internationally. Thus, like Stalin, Mao sought alliances with various “anti-imperialist” Third World bourgeois-nationalist regimes and then with the imperialists themselves. This was exemplified by the criminal alliance of Mao’s China with U.S. imperialism against the Soviet degenerated workers state, forged as the U.S. rained bombs on the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants in the early 1970s. In “China on the Brink” (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 53, Summer 1997), we noted: “China’s alliance with the U.S., initiated by Mao and Zhou Enlai, helped set the stage for Deng’s ‘open door’ to imperialist exploitation in the next period. Today, Mao’s heirs don’t even give lip service to the goals of socialism, instead openly offering themselves as compradors (agents) of imperialism.”

Opposing workers democracy and international extension of the revolution, both the Soviet and Chinese Stalinists increasingly opted for capitalist market measures to spur productivity. The road of the Stalinist bureaucracy would return the Chinese masses to the prerevolutionary days of impoverishment and imperialist subjugation. The modernization of China—providing the basis for a decent life of all its inhabitants on the basis of access to the advanced technology and productive resources, now concentrated in North America, West Europe and Japan—requires proletarian socialist revolution in the imperialist centers, laying the basis for an *internationally planned, socialist economy*. That is the task of the ICL as it fights to reforge Trotsky’s Fourth International.

—Adapted from Workers Vanguard No. 735, 5 May

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# Chinese Miners Revolt Against "Market Reforms"

When reports of an uprising in late February by laid-off Chinese miners in the town of Yangjiazhangzi surfaced in April, the capitalist media internationally expressed alarm over mounting labor struggles in China. An editorial in the *New York Times* (7 April), mouthpiece of the U.S. bourgeoisie, cynically acknowledged that "the current phase of selling off state factories and mines is creating hardships for many longtime employees" and lectured Beijing that it "should heed the message from Yangjiazhangzi." The imperialist rulers rightly see the resistance of the Chinese proletariat to the ravages of "market reforms" as the chief obstacle to their schemes for the capitalist reconquest of the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state.

The scale of that working-class resistance was evident in the revolt by some 20,000 workers and their families in Yangjiazhangzi, located 250 miles northeast of Beijing. The upheaval began when workers at a huge state-owned molybdenum mine which had been shut down in November massed at the enterprise headquarters, demanding to speak to plant managers about their paltry severance pay—\$68 for every year of service in the mines. The managers failed to show up, and a speech by the town's mayor only infuriated the workers more. Miners and their families took to the streets, setting up barricades, burning cars, smashing the windows of government buildings and setting oil drums ablaze.

Authorities moved cautiously lest the workers decide to use the stock of dynamite in the mine to defend themselves. For two days, the workers battled the People's Armed Police, a force created in the mid-1980s specifically to put down growing social unrest. Finally, army units were brought in, firing live ammunition over protesters' heads and quelling the rebellion.

Sixty-eight dollars can barely support a family of three for a month even in this economically depressed region, yet workers also have to pay for their own pension benefits and health insurance out of that money. A man who worked in the mine for 35 years along with his wife estimates that their severance pay will last about ten months. "After that, what am I going

to do? How are we going to eat?"

Last year, Chinese premier Zhu Rongji pointed to the mine as a prime example of a money-losing enterprise that would have to be shut down. But the mine is "unprofitable" only by the measure of a capitalist market. Molybdenum is a valuable metal used to toughen steel, and the mine's managers have been enriching themselves by taking over parts of the mine or piecing off other parts to their cronies. One worker bitterly recounted: "They have sold parts of the mine to their friends. They have sold all the mine's trucks. But we haven't seen this money.... They eat it and drink it away" (*Washington Post*, 5 April).

The deepening of "free market" measures is setting the stage for a monumental clash between the Stalinist bureaucracy and the proletarian and peasant masses. The Chinese

(continued on page 12)



Fred Scott

**Chinese proletariat must defeat drive toward capitalist restoration which threatens to destroy gains of 1949 Revolution.**

**Defend China Against Imperialism, Capitalist Counterrevolution!  
For Proletarian Political Revolution to Oust Stalinist Bureaucracy!**