

China

**Defend, Extend Gains of 1949 Revolution!
For Workers Political Revolution to Oust Stalinist Bureaucracy!**

Defeat Imperialist Drive for Counterrevolution!

The following is reprinted from Workers Vanguard (Nos. 814 and 815, 21 November and 5 December), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) was born of the 1949 Revolution which, despite profound bureaucratic deformations, was a social revolution of world-historic significance. Hundreds of millions of peasants rose up and seized the land on which their forebears had been cruelly exploited from time immemorial. The rule of the murderous warlords and bloodsucking money-lenders, of the rapacious landlords and wretched bourgeoisie was destroyed.

The creation of a centrally planned, collectivized economy laid the basis for an enormous leap in social progress and China's advance from abject peasant backwardness. The revolution enabled women to advance by magnitudes over their previous miserable status, symbolized by the barbaric practice of foot-binding. A nation which had been ravaged and divided by foreign powers for a century was unified and freed from imperialist subjugation.

However, the 1949 Revolution was deformed from its inception under the rule of Mao Zedong's Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime, which represented a nationalist bureaucratic caste resting atop a collectivized economy. Unlike the Russian October Revolution of 1917, which was carried out by a class-conscious proletariat guided by the Bolshevik internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky, the Chinese Revolution was the result of peasant guerrilla war led by Mao's Stalinist-nationalist forces. Patterned after the Stalinist bureaucracy that had usurped political power from the proletariat in the USSR, Mao's regime preached the profoundly anti-Marxist notion that socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—could be built in a single country. In practice, "socialism in one country" in China, as in the USSR of Stalin and his heirs, meant opposition to the perspective of workers revolution internationally and accommodation to world imperialism.

In particular, China's alliance with American imperialism *against* the Soviet

Migrant construction workers in Beijing set up barricade to protest unpaid wages in January 2003. Below: Chinese president Hu Jintao (then vice president) visits Wall Street in April 2002.



AP photos

Union, begun under Mao in the early 1970s and continued by his successor, Deng Xiaoping, contributed to the eventual destruction of the USSR through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. This was a historic defeat for the international working class and oppressed peoples throughout the world. The post-Soviet period has seen the increased pressure of world, especially American, imperialism—economic, political and military—on China. Thus the Pentagon has been actively pursuing plans for an effective nuclear first-strike capacity against China's small nuclear arsenal, a strategy openly proclaimed by the Bush gang in Washington.

The International Communist League stands for the unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution. The Chinese working class must sweep away the Stalinist bureaucracy, which has gravely weakened the system of nationalized property internally while conciliating imperialism at the international level. We

stand for a *proletarian political revolution* to place political power in the hands of workers and peasants councils. The urgent task facing the Chinese proletariat is to build a Leninist-Trotskyist party as part of a reformed Fourth International to prepare and lead this political revolution, standing at the head of the toiling masses and directing the spontaneous and localized struggles of the workers toward the seizure of political power.

Is the CCP Restoring Capitalism in China?

Ever since the Deng regime introduced market-oriented economic "reforms" in the early 1980s, an increasingly influential current of Western bourgeois opinion has maintained that the Communist Party itself is gradually restoring capitalism in China while keeping a tight grip on political power. This position was widely and loudly trumpeted late last year when the 16th Congress of the CCP legitimized party membership for capitalist entrepreneurs. "China Turns Its Back on Com-

munist to Join Long March of the Capitalists" was a typical headline in the Western press, in this case that of the *London Guardian* (9 November 2002).

In fact, this congress did not introduce a significant change in either the social composition of the CCP, which after all has 66 million members, or its functional ideology. According to an official survey, of China's two million private business owners 600,000 are party members and have been for some time. The overwhelming majority of these were long-time CCP managerial cadre who took over the small state-owned enterprises they were running when these were privatized over the past several years.

Some groups that falsely claim to be Trotskyist have embraced the now-conventional wisdom in Western bourgeois circles that "capitalist roadism" has decisively triumphed among those governing China. Commenting on the 16th CCP Congress, the British-centered tendency led by Peter Taaffe wrote: "China

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For a China of Workers and Peasants Councils in a Socialist Asia!

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Statement by the Partisan Defense Committee

The following statement was issued by the U.S. Partisan Defense Committee, a legal and social defence organisation associated with the Spartacist League, on 19 October.

On October 8, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court yet again ruled that a court of law is no place for evidence of Mumia Abu-Jamal's innocence. That evidence—centered on the sworn testimony of Arnold Beverly that he, not Jamal, shot and killed police officer Daniel Faulkner on 9 December 1981—blasts through all the cover-ups and lies used by the state to put Jamal on death row for a crime he did not commit.

The testimony of Beverly, who has allowed his confession to be recorded on video, is corroborated not merely by a series of affidavits but as Jamal's attorneys described, "a stack of memoranda approximately the size of a New York City phonebook" written by PDC counsel

Rachel Wolkenstein and Jonathan Piper, another attorney associated with the PDC. Yet it has been ruled out of order by both the Pennsylvania courts where Jamal has sought to overturn his sentence under the state's Post Conviction Relief Act (PCRA), and the federal judiciary which has turned down Jamal's *habeas corpus* appeals and slammed shut the courtroom doors on evidence of Mumia's innocence.

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal is a textbook example of a racist frame-up. A Black Panther Party spokesman at the age of 15, an award-winning journalist and a supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE organization, Jamal was saddled at trial with a lawyer he didn't want—and one who did not want Mumia's case—a judge, Albert Sabo, known as the "king of death row," an overwhelmingly white jury, a prosecutor's office that concealed and fabricated evidence and a parade of witnesses who were coerced by the notorious Philadelphia police into giving lying testimony against Mumia.

Jamal's innocence has been evident from the outset. We have repeatedly exposed the D.A.'s case, which rested on

three legs; eyewitness accounts that were secured through police manipulation, coercion and outright terror; a purported "confession" by Jamal while he was lying near death in the hospital, which didn't surface until two months after the killing; ballistics "evidence" concocted by the police that the bullets that killed Faulkner were fired from Jamal's gun.

This is Texas lynch law justice—up North. Not only did the court bar Beverly's confession but rejected the sworn account of court stenographer Terri Maurer-Carter of a conversation she overheard in the courthouse where Mumia was tried, in which Judge Sabo declared in regard to Jamal's case, "I'm going to help them fry the n---r." As Jamal's legal papers stated: "Judge Sabo's vile racist comment... meant that, in Judge Sabo's courtroom, Mr. Jamal, like Dred Scott before him, was not a citizen with rights guaranteed to him by the Constitution, but rather an inferior being with 'no rights which the white man was bound to respect'."

The court justified its refusal to even consider Maurer-Carter's testimony by claiming the issue of Sabo's bias had already been litigated and ruled upon in Mumia's 1995 PCRA appeal—before the same Judge Sabo, who exonerated himself of any racist animosity and prejudice toward Mumia!

This latest setback appears to terminate Mumia's appeals before the Pennsylvania state courts, leaving only his *habeas corpus* appeals in the federal courts. Those appeals have been on hold pending the recent ruling by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Nearly two years ago federal court judge William Yohn overturned Jamal's death sentence while affirming the conviction, condemning him to a life of prison hell. Jamal's attorneys appealed that decision, seeking to overturn the conviction. The state appealed as well, seeking to reinstate the sentence of death. Still on death row, Mumia remains just a short walk and maybe a few months from the death chamber. Workers, minorities and all opponents of racist capitalist repression must now redouble their efforts to mobilize mass protests centered on the social power of the labor movement to demand: **Free Mumia now!**

Death Penalty—Capitalist Barbarity

Jamal's case throws a spotlight on the barbaric, racist death penalty, a form of institutionalized state terror directly descended in the U.S. from the system of black chattel slavery. In the U.S., where the decaying capitalist system offers no future to millions of inner-city youth, the death penalty, the mass incarceration of black men and the elimination of welfare speak to the bourgeoisie's impulse to

genocide. For more than a decade, Democrats and Republicans did everything in their power to increase the number of victims and speed the pace of state-sanctioned murder. In 1993 the Supreme Court ruled in the Texas *Herrera* case that the execution of an innocent man was not unconstitutional. Such contempt for the lives of the black and Hispanic poor was clearly expressed earlier this year by prosecutor Frank Jung who, when asked by a Missouri Supreme Court judge, "Are you suggesting even if we find Mr. Amrine is actually innocent, he should be executed?" replied, "That's correct, your Honor."

Even as scores of men and women condemned to death have proven their innocence and won their freedom in recent years, numerous states have adopted laws with stringent time restrictions on filing death penalty appeals on newly discovered evidence. These restrictions make it virtually impossible for victims of prosecutorial frame-ups to uncover the evidence to prove their innocence of the killing for which they were sentenced to die. Pennsylvania's law, enacted in 1995 explicitly to cut off Jamal's appeal rights, provided the pretext for the current court ruling barring Beverly's confession as untimely. The federal Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, signed into law by Democratic president Clinton in 1996, was the pretext for federal court judge Yohn also barring Beverly's testimony in Jamal's *habeas corpus* appeal.

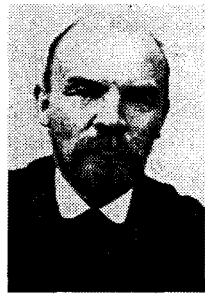
Using these laws, the capitalist rulers send black, Hispanic and working-class men and women to their graves as if it were no more than a question of an overdue library book. In opposing Jamal's motion for a stay of execution during his 1995 appeal the prosecution bared the state's contempt for Mumia, grotesquely declaring, "The carrying out of a valid death sentence cannot constitute irreparable injury for purposes of requesting a stay!"

The entire history of the state's vendetta against Jamal reveals that the courts have in fact spurned any provisions of the law that would allow this outspoken champion of the oppressed to walk out of prison a free man. As Jamal's attorneys explained, his case is governed by the Pennsylvania death penalty statute's exception to the filing deadline, where "interference by government officials" is responsible for the failure to previously raise a claim. As they demonstrated, in actively working to suppress Beverly's confession and other evidence of Jamal's innocence, Jamal's attorneys at the time, Leonard Weinglass and Daniel Williams, "acted in function, if not in fact, as *agents*

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Trotsky and the Soviet Union

While waging a struggle against the parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy that had usurped political power in the USSR, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky stressed the need to defend the Soviet degenerated workers state against imperialism and capitalist counter-revolution. But in the years since Trotsky's death in 1940 many renegade "socialists," capitulating to the anti-communist Cold War, blatantly falsified his views. In particular they wanted to prevent Trotsky's continu-



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TROTSKY

ing authority from winning leftists to the defence of the USSR and the fight for new Bolshevik Revolutions. Among such groups is Socialist Alternative (SA) which supports the 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution that destroyed the USSR and today is strident in its opposition to the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states. SA seeks to justify this program with the fraudulent "theory" that the Stalinist bureaucracy which misruled the USSR was in fact a new capitalist exploiting class and that the ex-USSR, as well as China and Cuba today, are simply "state capitalist" societies. In a veiled reply to our polemic last issue (ASp No. 184, Spring 2003), SA claims that Trotsky "was unclear about the nature of the new bureaucratic rulers [of the USSR]. He left his small following a confused legacy" ("The 'socialist' countries that weren't," Socialist Alternative, October 2003). Nothing could be further from the truth.

Every political tendency that waves its hand hopelessly at the Soviet Union, under the pretext of its "nonproletarian" character, runs the risk of becoming the passive instrument of imperialism. And from our standpoint, of course, the tragic possibility is not excluded that the first workers' state, weakened by its bureaucracy, will fall under the joint blows of its internal and external enemies. But in the event of this worst possible variant, a tremendous significance for the subsequent course of the revolutionary struggle will be borne by the question: *where* are those guilty for the catastrophe? Not the slightest taint of guilt must fall upon the revolutionary internationalists. In the hour of mortal danger, they must remain on the last barricade....

Every day the foreign policies of the Kremlin deal new blows to the world proletariat. Adrift from the masses, the diplomatic functionaries under the leadership of Stalin trample over the most elementary revolutionary feelings of the workers of all countries, first of all, to the greatest detriment of the Soviet Union itself. But in this, there is nothing unexpected. The foreign policies of the bureaucracy supplement the domestic. We fight as much against the one as the other. But we wage our struggle from the standpoint of defending the workers' state.

— Leon Trotsky, "The Class Nature of the Soviet State" (October 1933)

Australasian SPARTACIST

For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia!

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EDITOR: P. Balasubramaniam

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mike Wallace

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Glenn Blackall

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New York City, 23 October 1999: Trade unionists at PDC-initiated anti-Klan mobilisation.

No to the Racist Expulsion of Lila and Alma!

The Islamic Headscarf in French High Schools

We print below a leaflet issued by the *Ligue Trotskyste de France*, section of the *International Communist League*, on 9 October.

On September 24, two sisters at a high school in Aubervilliers, a Paris suburb, were expelled for wearing the Islamic headscarf, pending a permanent decision by the disciplinary committee which will take place tomorrow. These expulsions come as a national debate is taking place. A government commission (the Stasi Commission) has been set up to study the possibility of banning the Islamic headscarf at school. President Chirac and Prime Minister Raffarin cynically pretend to be interested in the fate of young Muslim girls. No way! They feel so concerned that they are deporting hundreds of Muslims, animists and others daily by charter flights! The government is so determined to fight Islamic fundamentalists that in late August they deported Nasr Eddine Bourached, a spokesman for *sans-papiers* [undocumented immigrants] in Perpignan, to his probable death at the hands of Algerian Islamic fundamentalists! The government is so worried about the fate of Muslims that they fuel the lie that every Muslim is a potential terrorist with *Vigipirate*, a campaign of daily racist terror. The *Ligue Trotskyste de France* says: **Down with Vigipirate! No to the deportation charter flights! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No to the racist expulsions of girls wearing the headscarf! For Alma and Lila to be reinstated at school!**

Right-wing politicians are not the only ones fighting for the racist expulsion of girls who wear the Islamic headscarf at school. *Lutte Ouvrière* (LO) [a left group that claims to be Trotskyist] spearheaded the campaign for Lila and Alma's expulsions in Aubervilliers. According to *Le Monde* (9 October), "Teachers who are members of *Lutte Ouvrière* have argued since the beginning of the school year for immediate sanctions." Whatever their intentions, LO is campaigning for the same thing as the government. LO hails the teachers who fought for Alma and Lila's expulsion: "Well, we approve of the teachers who had the courage to defend that position and we hope that there will be many more in this country. Furthermore, teachers should not need an excuse, should not have to rely on a law. Their vocation as teachers and their conscience should be enough" (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 26 September). In other words, LO calls for teachers to do the job themselves of expelling girls wearing the headscarf, in the middle of a hysterical campaign in France to do just that.

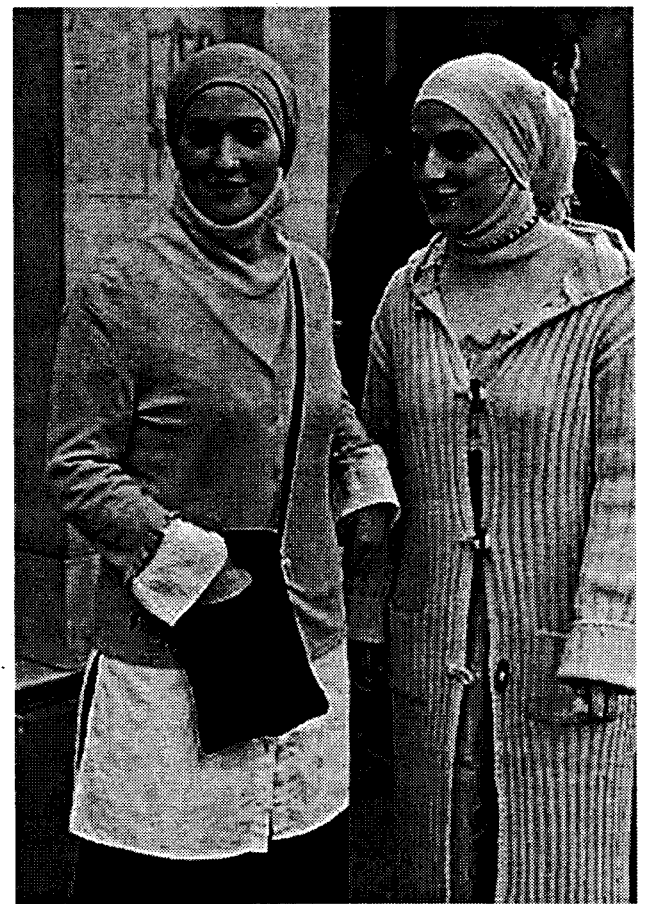
LO is not alone in its campaign to expel the schoolgirls. The *Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire* (LCR) has some internal differences, but at the Aubervilliers high school they differ with LO only on a nuance: the LCR seeks to "avoid as much as possible deprivation of education and expulsion" but "we do not want to exclude the possibility of sanctions if dialogue is not possible" (*Le Monde*, 9 October). The LCR member continued: "The problem is that those two students go much further.... They pursue a logic of activism." An LCR teacher even denounced the JCR (Jeunesse Communiste Révolutionnaire,

youth organization of the LCR) because the JCR has the correct position of opposing the racist expulsions (*Le Monde*, 9 October). Nevertheless, the JCR is "politically subordinate" to the LCR, and the JCR is preparing to campaign in the spring for the electoral slate—and thus for the politics—of the LO/LCR. Whether it is done by Raffarin's racist laws or by teachers who are members of LO and LCR, the result for these schoolgirls is the same: "Get out!"

We defend Alma, Lila and all girls who wear the headscarf against the reactionary bourgeois state and against the teachers and others who seek to expel them. At the same time, as communists, we oppose the Islamic headscarf and the veil which represent a reactionary social program of confining women to the family, the home and a position of subservience (see "Women and Immigration in France," *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 57, Winter 2002-2003). Our opposition to the veil and the headscarf is also part of the reason that we oppose the expulsions. These expulsions can only lead to even greater isolation and oppression for these young women. Their religious beliefs can only be reinforced if they are cut off from public education. We defend secularism and the separation of church and state, but the principle of secularism is deformed by the racist, anti-worker and anti-woman French state when used to attack young Muslims wearing the headscarf. Secularism is based on the idea that the state should not interfere with people's personal beliefs. Alma and Lila's father, a lawyer for the MRAP [an anti-racist group associated with the French Communist Party], aptly evoked the hypocrisy of this campaign when he referred to the "ayatollahs of secularism who have abandoned common sense" (*Le Monde*, 25 September). This man, who opposes the veil and has fought against the expulsion of his daughters, correctly denounced the "double punishment" that risks being inflicted upon them: "the one which they wear on their heads and the one which would deprive them of the humanity that school provides" (*L'Humanité*, 9 October).

LO does not defend the schoolgirls' expulsion on the basis of secularism but rather primarily on the basis of "defending

Lila and Alma Levy, students expelled from high school for wearing headscarves, targets of French government anti-Muslim witchhunt.



women." LO claims that it is necessary to expel girls wearing the headscarf for their own good: "The question is not the 'right' of some girls to wear the veil, but the right of thousands of young girls and young women to rely on the banning of the veil to stand up against the reactionary constraints that their social milieu tries to impose on them" (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 19 September). LO claims that it is possible to turn schools into havens of progressivism. That in no way resolves the oppression of women who are forced to put the veil back on as soon as they leave school. Furthermore, LO's campaign to expel girls from school reinforces the racist segregation which is one of the sources of oppression for these girls.

Confined to the ghettos, youth of immigrant origin in France are denied jobs and a decent future; so they seek an identity in religion. This is the case of Alma and Lila in Aubervilliers. Their father is a Jewish atheist, their mother is from Kabylia [a Berber-speaking region in Algeria], and these sisters do not regularly attend the mosque. This is far from being an exception. In the absence of any perspectives and given the hopelessness in capitalist society, youth are increasingly turning toward Islam. These young women seek refuge in religion as a "heart in a heartless world" (as Karl Marx put it), as an illusory consolation in the great beyond for the very real suffering down here. Contrary to LO and the LCR, who want to make people believe that Alma and Lila pursue a "logic of activism" for Islamic fundamentalism, the reality in France is that many of these girls wear the headscarf in reaction to racist segregation in this soci-

ety. Islam is a religion of the oppressed and of the ghetto. Even Alma and Lila insist that they "would never wear the veil in a country in which it is obligatory" (*Libération*, 22 September).

LO argues that some left groups "call for the 'right' of young Muslim women to wear the veil at school. Sometimes they add the argument that, in the absence of that right, they will not have access to culture and to the knowledge acquired in school. This is actually a concession to reactionary pressure" (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 19 September). The real reactionary pressure in France comes from the bourgeoisie (which, furthermore, uses the imams and pushes them forward in order to control the ghettos), not from young girls wearing the headscarf! LO falsely suggests that those who oppose the racist expulsions necessarily accept the veil. There are in fact groups that do not believe that the veil is a symbol of oppression. For example, *Socialisme Par en Bas* [Socialism from Below—SPEB, affiliated with the British Socialist Workers Party of the late Tony Cliff] says: "The Islamic headscarf represents, above all, a symbol of resistance to religious and racist oppression" (*Islamisme et Révolution*). However—as opposed to the SPEB, LO and the LCR—we in the LTF have always fought fiercely against the veil and Islamic reaction, and we continue to do so. In Afghanistan one can see most clearly who really wanted to fight against the oppression of veiled women.

The only time in centuries that Afghan women were not forced to wear the suffocating *burka* was in the 1980s. That was because in 1979 the Soviet Union intervened in Afghanistan at the request of the government—a petty-bourgeois, modernizing regime that sought to lower the bride price. Under the protection of the Red Army, Afghan women were trained as nurses, teachers and soldiers. This was just the opposite of what the French colonial capitalists did in Algeria, because the Soviet Union was a workers state. Despite the political domination by a parasitic Stalinist caste, the social basis of the USSR was the expropriation of the capitalists and the collectivization of the economy; this was incompatible with the medieval enslavement of women under the *burka*. Lined up against the USSR and the Afghan government were the anti-woman *mujahedin*, those who today once again have the upper hand. The U.S. and French imperialists supported and armed these reactionary fundamentalists, from Masoud to the Taliban and bin Laden, who wanted to force women back into the veil

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1981: LTF protest in defence of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan against Islamic reaction.

China...

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is on the road to complete capitalist restoration, but the ruling clique are attempting to do this gradually and by maintaining their repressive authoritarian grip" (*Socialist*, 22 November 2002). By labeling China's government an "authoritarian" capitalist-restorationist regime, the Taaffeites and their ilk can justify supporting imperialist-backed anti-Communist forces in China in the name of promoting "democracy," just as they supported Boris Yeltsin's "democratic" counterrevolution in the USSR in 1991.

In maintaining that China continues to be a bureaucratically deformed expression of proletarian state power, we do not deny or minimize the growing social weight in China of both the newly fledged capitalist entrepreneurs on the mainland and the old, established offshore Chinese bourgeoisie in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Many a top government and/or party official has a son, younger brother, nephew—or, as in the case of Chinese president Hu Jintao, son-in-law—who's a private businessman.

Nonetheless, the political power of the main body of the Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy continues to be based on the core collectivized elements of China's economy. Furthermore, the economic policies



Chinese astronaut Yang Liwei. This October, China became the third country in the world to launch a man into space.

of the CCP regime are still constrained by fear of social—especially working-class—unrest which could topple it. This came close to happening in 1989 when student-centered protests for political liberalization and against corruption triggered a spontaneous workers revolt that was then suppressed with great bloodshed by regime-loyal army units. (For an extensive account of this incipient proletarian political revolution, see "Ten Years After Tiananmen—China: Fight Capitalist Restoration! For Workers Political Revolution!" *WV* Nos. 714 and 715, 28 May and 11 June 1999.)

A capitalist counterrevolution in China (as in East Europe and the former USSR) would be accompanied by the collapse of Stalinist bonapartism and the political fracturing of the ruling Communist Party. The economic policies of the Beijing Stalinist regime that encourage capitalist enterprise (and the corresponding rightward shifts in the bureaucracy's formal ideological posture) have increasingly strengthened those social forces that will give rise to imperialist-backed, openly counterrevolutionary factions and parties when the CCP can no longer maintain its present monopoly of political power. This can be clearly seen today in the capitalist enclave of Hong Kong, the one part of the PRC where bourgeois oppositional parties exist. Last summer, Hong Kong's Democratic Party organized mass, anti-Communist mobilizations openly supported by the Bush administration in

Washington and its junior partners in London (see "Hong Kong: Expropriate the Bourgeoisie!", *WV* No. 814, 21 November).

Sujian Guo, a right-wing Chinese émigré intellectual in the U.S., published an interesting article in the *Journal of Contemporary China* (August 2003) dissenting from the view that China has already become or is fast becoming capitalist ("The Ownership Reform in China: What Direction and How Far?"). According to a brief biographical sketch, Guo was a "former policy analyst at the Party Central Committee in China." Given his present ideological bias, Guo minimizes the growth of capitalist elements in China's economy and ascribes to the top CCP leaders a continuing belief in socialism, at any rate in the historical long run. But this anti-Communist advocate of "free market" capitalism understands a basic truth which most leftists, including self-described Marxists, do not:

"How to privatize such a huge estate of state ownership *within the framework of the existing political system and structure* is really problematic and technically unworkable. The experience of other former communist countries has shown that there is no single case of making privatization successful with the communist party remaining in power and its political system intact." [emphasis in original]

The leaders of the CCP, too, looked at what had happened in the East European "People's Democracies" and the former USSR in the late 1980s and early 1990s, drew their own lessons and acted accordingly. They also drew some lessons from the 1989 Tiananmen revolt that threatened their own downfall. They were determined there would be no political liberalization even at the academic/intellectual level. The regime of Jiang Zemin, who succeeded Deng when the latter died in 1997, was able to prevent any organized factional opposition in what historically has been a quite fractious ruling Stalinist party. There appears to be no significant dissident movement or milieu on the mainland either to the right or left of the central CCP leadership.

The Latest Illusion of Chinese Stalinism

China's high rate of economic growth in recent years—moreover, amid a generalized world capitalist recession—has produced a certain triumphalist mood among the CCP leadership and cadre and affiliated intelligentsia. One would certainly encounter a very different mood among the millions of workers laid off from state-owned enterprises, impoverished migrants from the countryside and poor peasants barely eking out a living toiling on tiny plots with rudimentary equipment. But among Chinese intellectuals of mainstream political views one increasingly hears the notion that their country has somehow found a middle way between the anarchy of "free market" capitalism and the rigidities of the old-style Stalinist "command economy."

In their younger days, Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao et al. doubtless subscribed to the Maoist-Stalinist doctrine that China was "building socialism" with its own unaided efforts. They now view that as a product of "dogmatic thinking" and see themselves as hardheaded realists confronting and dealing with the rest of the world as it actually is. Yet Jiang, Hu and their cohorts are driven by delusions of grandeur exceeding the wildest imaginings of Chairman Mao.

The present CCP leaders believe that they can modernize China, transforming it into a great world power—indeed, the global superpower of the 21st century—through ever greater integration into the world capitalist economy. They truly believe they can control and manipulate Citibank, the Deutsche Bank and the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi to help build up China so that in a generation or two it will surpass the United States, Germany and Japan. Believing they are transforming China into a global superpower, they are actually clearing the path for returning China to the pre-revolutionary era of untrammelled imperialist subjugation.

Mao's anti-Soviet alliance with U.S. imperialism, sealed by 1972 meeting in Beijing with war criminal Nixon, helped open door to imperialist penetration of China.



The growth of imperialist belligerence toward China since the collapse of the Soviet Union is evidence enough that the world's bourgeoisies will not countenance the Beijing bureaucracy's great power ambitions. Over the past decade, the Pentagon has redeployed a significant proportion of its military forces to the Pacific Rim region, while pushing ahead with plans for a "theater missile defense." As a result of its incursion into Afghanistan and Central Asia, as well as a renewed military presence in the Philippines and elsewhere, the U.S. has significantly strengthened its military vise around China. In signing on to the U.S.-led "war on terror," Beijing has only encouraged U.S. imperialism in its counterrevolutionary drive. The Chinese leadership has also joined the crusade against North Korea's nuclear weapons program. This is a nationalist betrayal that undermines the Chinese deformed workers state itself; capitalist counterrevolution in North Korea would only embolden the forces of capitalist restoration targeting China.

To be sure, the ruling Chinese Stalinists are not simply supine in the face of U.S. military encirclement: witness their vigorous response to Washington's spy plane provocation two years ago. The CCP regime has also resisted American demands to impose an economic embargo against the North Korean deformed workers state. But the Stalinists' pipe dream that there can be "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism can only lull the vigilance of the Chinese masses and undermine the defense of their workers state.

The alternative to a bloody, imperialist-backed counterrevolution is proletarian political revolution. For the past several years, there have been large-scale and widespread popular protests and labor struggles, especially over the massive layoffs in state-owned industrial enterprises. To date, through a combination of repression and concessions, the regime has managed to contain these at the level of localized economic actions. Nonetheless, at its base China is a *profoundly unstable society*. Sooner or later, the explosive social tensions will shatter the political structure of the ruling bureaucratic caste. And when that happens, the fate of the most populous country on earth will be starkly posed: proletarian political revolution to open the road to socialism or capitalist enslavement and imperialist subjugation.

The outcome of that momentous battle will be of decisive significance for the working masses not only of China but of the entire world. As with the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, the restoration of capitalism in China would further embolden the imperialists to lash out against their own workers and against the semicolonial peoples everywhere. It would also heighten rivalries between the imperialists over who would exploit China, bringing the planet that much closer to a new inter-imperialist world war. This underscores the obligation of the international proletariat to stand in defense of the gains of the Chinese Revolution. On the other hand, a political revolution carried out under the banner of proletarian internationalism would truly shake the world.

A government of workers and peasants councils would expropriate without compensation the hundreds of billions of

dollars in productive wealth owned by Chinese capitalists—mainland and offshore—and by Western and Japanese investors. It would re-establish a centrally planned and managed economy—including a state monopoly of foreign trade—governed not according to the arbitrary "commandism" of a closed-in bureaucratic caste (which produced such disasters as Mao's "Great Leap Forward") but by the widest proletarian democracy.

Such measures would provoke intense imperialist hostility, both militarily and economically (e.g., an economic embargo). But among the workers and oppressed internationally, including in the imperialist heartlands, they would meet with huge sympathy and solidarity.

Imbued with Stalinist preachings of "socialism in one country," even the most leftist Chinese workers may view the prospect for socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries as remote or utopian. But a proletarian political revolution in China would shatter the "death of communism" ideological climate propagated by the bourgeoisie since the destruction of the Soviet Union. It would radicalize the proletariat of Japan, the industrial powerhouse of East Asia. It would spark a fight for the revolutionary reunification of Korea—through political revolution in the beleaguered North and socialist revolution in the South—and reverberate among the masses of South Asia, Indonesia and the Philippines bled white by imperialist austerity. It would revive the working people of Russia who have been ground down by a decade of capitalist immiseration.

Only through the overthrow of capitalist class rule internationally, particularly in the imperialist centers of North America, West Europe and Japan, can the all-round modernization of China be achieved as part of a socialist Asia. It is to provide the necessary leadership for the proletariat in these struggles that the ICL seeks to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International—world party of socialist revolution.

The Core Collectivist Elements of China's Economy

The CCP leadership officially describes China as a "socialist market economy." It is the "socialist" (i.e., collectivist) aspects which are responsible for the *positive* economic developments in China in recent years: the vast expansion of investment in infrastructure (e.g., urban construction, canals, railroads and the giant Three Gorges Dam project), the ability of China to have navigated successfully through the 1997-98 East Asian financial/economic crisis and then a generalized world capitalist recession. And it is the market aspects of China's economy which are responsible for the *negative* developments—the ever-widening gap between rich and poor, the immiseration of a large and growing fraction of the populace, tens of millions of workers laid off from state-owned enterprises, the army of impoverished migrants in the cities who can no longer make a living in the countryside.

In China today, it is the core collectivized elements of the economy which continue to be dominant, though not in a stable, coherent manner due to an ever-shifting interaction between contradictory institutional arrangements and government policies. In 2001, state-owned and partly state-owned enterprises

(shareholding corporations) accounted for 57 percent of the gross value of China's industrial output (*China Statistical Yearbook* [2002]). But this simple statistical figure obscures the *strategic centrality* of state-owned industry. The private (including foreign-owned) sector consists for the most part of factories producing light manufactures by labor-intensive methods. Heavy industry, the high-tech sectors, modern armaments production are overwhelmingly concentrated in state-owned enterprises. It is these enterprises that have enabled China to put a man in space. Far more importantly, it is state-owned industry that has enabled China to build an arsenal of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles to ward off the American imperialists' threat of a nuclear first strike.

All major banks in China are state-owned. Almost the entirety of household savings—estimated at *one trillion dollars*—is deposited in the four main state-owned commercial banks. Government control of the financial system has been key to maintaining and expanding production in state-owned industry and to the overall expansion of the state sector.

Between 1998 and 2001, government spending in China increased from *12 to 20 percent* of the country's gross domestic product. The largest and fastest-growing component of government expenditure has been investment in infrastructure, which increased by *81 percent* over these three years. Moreover, this has been happening at a time when the entire capitalist world—including the wealthiest countries in North America and West Europe—has been pursuing *fiscal austerity*. Total planned expenditure to construct a network of canals for irrigation purposes from the Yangtze River to the Yellow River in the north is \$59 billion. Another \$42 billion is to be spent on expanding the lines of China's state-owned railroad system. By comparison, last year direct foreign investment in China from all sources totaled \$53 billion.

Continued state ownership of the financial system has enabled the Beijing regime up to now to effectively (though not totally) control the flow of money-capital in and out of mainland China. China's currency, the yuan (also called the renminbi) is not freely convertible; it is not traded (legally) in international currency markets. The restricted convertibility of the yuan has kept China insulated from the volatile movements of short-term capital ("hot money") which periodically wreak havoc on the economies of Third World neocolonial countries from Latin America to East Asia.

Furthermore, over the past year the Beijing regime has maintained an increasing undervaluation of the yuan (in "free market" terms), much to the displeasure of American, European and Japanese capitalists. A second-level capitalist-imperialist country like Britain could not have controlled the exchange rate of its currency in world markets as China has done. Within months if not weeks, speculative money-capital would have flooded into the City of London, forcing an upward revaluation of the pound regardless of what the Blair government wanted or did.

It is precisely the core collectivist elements of China's economy described above which the forces of world imperialism want to eliminate and dismantle. Their ultimate goal is to reduce China to a giant sweatshop under neocolonial subjugation. Jonathan Anderson, the China "expert" for the Wall Street investment bank Goldman Sachs, asserts: "The bottom line is that China is becoming a manufacturing hub for the rest of the world in low-end, labour-intensive goods. Contrary to current fears, the rest of the world is becoming a manufacturing hub for China in high-end, capital-intensive goods" (*London Financial Times*, 25 February). The man from Goldman Sachs is here projecting onto China's present economic reality Wall Street's plans for that country's future.

The Beijing bureaucracy's abandonment of the strict state monopoly of foreign trade serves, however, to facilitate Wall Street's plans. Despite its rapid growth in recent years, the Chinese economy is backward relative to even the lesser capitalist-imperialist powers. There is a dramatic amount of new construction currently underway in Beijing, with cranes visible virtually everywhere. But as a comrade who recently visited China told *Workers Vanguard*: "The construction crews are always very large, with not much in the way of earth-moving equipment other than wheelbarrows and picks. Once at the edge of Beijing, I saw about 30 guys working to put up a three-foot brick wall with two horse-drawn carts full of bricks."

While China's exports to the U.S. and other Western countries continue to increase at record levels, these largely consist of low-wage, low-value light manufacture and consumer goods like clothing, toys and household appliances. As Jonathan Anderson points out, China's increase in gross industrial output between 1993 and 2002—from \$480 billion to \$1,300 billion—was nearly completely offset by the increase in its gross purchases of industrial products, i.e., machinery and capital equipment.

Against the economies of the U.S., Japan and West Europe, Chinese industry, with its relatively low productivity of



Ago Leong

Chinese women workers toil in shoe factory in Shenzhen Special Economic Zone.

labor, cannot compete on the world market. What Trotsky wrote in refuting the Stalinist doctrine of "socialism in one country" in the Soviet Union applies with full force to China today:

"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."

—*The Third International After Lenin* (1928)

The main weapon available to a nationally isolated and relatively economically backward workers state against the intervention of cheaper goods is the state monopoly of foreign trade—i.e., the strict control of imports and exports by the government (for a fuller treatment of this question, see "Workers Protests Shake China," Part Two, *WV* No. 782, 31 May 2002). But the ultimate answer to China's economic backwardness and the only road to a socialist—i.e., classless, egalitarian—society lies in world socialist revolution and China's integration into an *internationally planned economy*.

Imperialists' Economic Strategy for Capitalist Restoration

Let us look at the program of further economic "reforms" in China put forward by the representatives and spokesmen for world, centrally American, imperialism. That program was summed up in a report on China a few years ago by the Washington-based World Bank: "The most important recommendation is a change in the role of government from controller and producer to architect of a more self-regulating and self-adjusting type of system."

First and foremost is the "recommendation" that the state-owned banks cut off credit to loss-making state-owned enterprises and impose higher interest rates and stiffer repayment terms on profit-making enterprises. Such a "tight money" policy on the part of China's banks would throw millions more workers onto the streets. And it would permanently dismantle a large part of China's modern, capital-intensive producer goods industry (e.g., machine tools, heavy electrical equipment, agricultural machinery, construction equipment).

At a more fundamental level, Western and Japanese capitalists want to replace China's state-owned banks with their own. Opening up China's financial system to foreign banks would lead to a massive outflow of funds since China's banks cannot offer the higher rates of return available in international money markets. A large fraction of the economic surplus generated in China would be rechanneled into the banks of Wall Street, the City of London, Frankfurt and Tokyo. This money would then be used to purchase corporate and also government securities in the American, European and Japanese imperialist states. The savings of China's workers and rural toilers would literally help to pay for the Pentagon's nuclear missiles aimed at China! As it is, the treacherous Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy—and this is a real

crime against the Chinese people—is now purchasing U.S. Treasury bills with its large foreign-exchange reserves and has promised to purchase more.

In the past few years, the agencies of imperialist finance capital such as the International Monetary Fund have "advised" the Chinese government to reduce its budget deficit by cutting back especially on investment in infrastructure. Such a move toward fiscal austerity would destroy the livelihood of many of the poorest, most downtrodden of China's toilers. Urban construction in Shanghai, Beijing, etc. mainly employs migrants from the countryside. The big interior projects (canal building, laying railway track) employ impoverished peasants and rural villagers. Furthermore, cutting back such projects would *retard and reverse* China's economic development. The extension of the railway system, for example, is absolutely essential to economically link the wealthier coastal provinces with the more backward regions of central and western China.

In recent months the main economic demand made by American, European and Japanese ruling circles on the Chinese government has been to revalue the yuan upward. By increasing the price of China's manufactured goods in world markets, such a move would sharply reduce China's export earnings and volume. Many private as well as state-owned enterprises would be forced to lay off workers, reduce production and in some cases suffer bankruptcy.

Behind the current pressure from the American, West European and Japanese bourgeoisies is a more basic assault on China's state-owned financial system. The imperialists want to force the Beijing regime to make the yuan fully convertible in order to open China to unrestricted financial penetration by the

banks of Wall Street, Frankfurt and Tokyo.

Privatisation: Appearance and Reality

Over the past two decades a large fraction of state-owned industry—whether measured by number of enterprises, labor force or volume of production—has been privatized. Most small enterprises were simply sold off to individuals, typically the managers who had been running them. The larger enterprises, however, were "privatized" through a shareholding scheme. When, a decade or so ago, China opened its first stock market, much of the Western bourgeois media hailed this as proof positive that "Communist" China had taken a decisive step on the road to capitalism. But what has actually happened?

Of the 1,240 companies listed on China's two main stock exchanges, in some cases the government holds a majority of shares, in others a substantial minority. But even the latter remain effectively government-controlled because the CCP has retained a monopoly of political power. There is no workers democracy in China—but neither is there shareholders' democracy. A disgruntled shareholder brash enough to organize a revolt to oust the incumbent management, typically politically well-connected CCP cadre, would likely find himself in a very bad place very rapidly.

Shareholders in China's corporations do *not* have ownership rights in the Western capitalist sense. They have the right to income from their financial assets and they can sell their shares, if they are smart or lucky enough, for a net gain over the purchase price. But they cannot determine or even influence the management and corporate policies. These are determined by various and often conflicting political as well as economic pressures.

A clear example of this is Golden Summit, a cement-making enterprise in Leshan in the far western province of Sichuan. Formed in the late 1980s, Golden Summit was listed on the Shanghai stock exchange in the early 1990s. It turned out to be quite a profitable operation. In 1997, the company's general manager, Gu Song, also served (in a fairly common arrangement) as deputy secretary of the Leshan CCP. In that dual capacity he arranged for Golden Summit to take over Dadu River Steel, a state-owned enterprise in the city which, however, was losing money. Obviously, this acquisition made no economic sense. Why then was it done? Because the workers at Dadu River Steel had staged violent protests over unpaid wages. So the local CCP leadership utilized the ample cash reserves of Golden Summit to damp down labor unrest in its bailiwick. Thus a managerial decision affecting the company's financial condition was made on political, not economic grounds.

A recent book on China's financial structure by two academic economists in Australia describes the real character of the shareholding corporations:

"The key problem in the case of China's stock markets is that the high ownership concentration actually reflects the continuing dominance of state ownership in many listed companies.... Thus, a market for corporate control is nonexistent for the overwhelming majority of listed companies and it can be concluded that managers face only a limited threat of punishment for poor decision making from either 'insiders' or 'outsiders.' It should also be noted that the influence of the state runs even deeper than their dominant ownership position."

—James Laurenceson and Joseph C.H. Chai, *Financial Reform and Economic Development in China* (2003)

The authors then cite a study showing that "the state's representation on the board of directors of many listed companies far outweighed that which could be justified even on the basis of their sizeable ownership stake."

Furthermore, China's stock and also corporate bond markets still account for a very small fraction of total financial

continued on page 8

SYC Fights to Shut Down Campuses in Nationwide University Strike

We reprint below a leaflet, originally with the heading "All Out for the 16 October Strike! Shut Down the Campuses!" which was distributed to rallies and picket lines in Melbourne and Sydney.

On 16 October university workers are set for a nationwide strike against the Howard government's union-busting attacks. This follows similar action taken by Sydney University academic and general staff, represented by the NTEU and CPSU/PSA, on 7 October in response to government attempts to tie "extra funding" for universities to openly anti-worker, anti-union individual workplace agreements. Other conditions targeted include maternity leave (consistent with the government's anti-woman "family values" crusade) as well as cuts to union resources. In response, we of the Spartacus Youth Club say: **For a solid strike with picket lines that no one dares cross! Shut down the campus! All out on 16 October!**

The attacks on campus not only target workers and academics. Under proposed reforms students would be hit with HECS increases of 30 percent in conjunction with a 50 percent increase in up-front full-fee paying positions at the expense of deferred payment positions, further excluding women, Aborigines and working-class youth from higher education. The restriction of university entry to a privileged few and prevention of students from organising politically is part of the capitalists' attempts to create a compliant youth prepared to act as cannon fodder in imperialist wars. As part of this crusade, the government intends to introduce Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU), which is an affront to the right of students to organise. Although not analogous to trade unions in that they are not organisations of the working class with real social power and include students of

all classes, we defend the student unions against government attack. We say: **No fees! Abolish HECS! For open admissions to open up the universities to the working class and oppressed! For a full living allowance for all! No VSU! For the right of students to organise!**

In contrast to those who promote futile appeals to VCs and capitalist administrations to go against the government they serve, we call for independent mobilisation of the working class in class struggle to defeat the bosses. Linking the struggle of staff and students, we wrote at the time of the 27 August student protests:

"Students of themselves do not have social power. Rather it is the working class with its hands on the levers of production and the ability to strike that has the means to take on the capitalists and fight for free, quality education for all."

—"Free Quality Education for All!
Down With Liberal/ALP Attacks on Education!" *Australasian Spartacist*
No. 184, Spring 2003

To students we say: **Boycott scab classes in solidarity with the workers and join in enforcing the pickets! For staff/student/worker control of the campuses!**

The capitalists' increased repression against the working class and oppressed at home, graphically illustrated by the targeting of the militant CFMEU construction union, comes in the context of recent successes for Australian imperialism, which now stretches its bloody hand of occupation from Iraq to East Timor and the Solomon Islands. The opportunity for the imperialists to carry out these attacks has heightened since capitalist counter-revolution in the Soviet Union. Uniquely on the left we stood for the unconditional military defence of the Soviet degenerated workers state against imperialist attack and internal capitalist restoration and take the same position on the remain-

ing deformed workers states of China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam. We say: **U.S./Australian troops out of Iraq! Australian troops/cops out of the Solomon Islands, East Timor! Not one person, not one cent for the Australian imperialist military! Defend the CFMEU! For the unconditional military defence of China, Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam!**

For effective class struggle it is necessary for the working class to break from the pro-capitalist ALP. Key to this will be a political struggle against the Laborite, nationalist trade-union misleaders. Promoting reform within the capitalist framework these bureaucrats channel disenchantment with the capitalist state back into votes for the ALP. The ALP is a bourgeois workers party. That is, a party with a working-class base but a thoroughly pro-capitalist program and leadership. When the ALP are in government they, no less than the Liberals, administer the state for the bourgeoisie against workers and the oppressed. We note that it was the ALP who introduced racist fees for overseas students, paving the way for HECS, and who in NSW are currently slashing funds to TAFE and earlier this year brutally attacked students striking against the war on Iraq. Similarly, it is the Victorian Bracks government which regularly attacks workers' pickets, such as at BHP Steel last year. Illusions in Laborism are reinforced by groups such as Socialist Alternative, who, in their recent article "Sydney Uni shows how to fight education cuts" uncritically sing praises to "The left-wing ALP students who control the Student Representative Council" (*Socialist Alternative*, October).

The treacherous role of the union misleaders, as well as the fake left, was clearly shown by their actions on the 7 October Sydney University strike. While the Spartacus Youth Club took an active

role on the picket, joining union members in turning away scabs, the union leaders argued against effective blockages of cars coming onto campus, saying such action could see the union sued! By enforcing the capitalists' anti-worker legislation, they undercut the class struggle and encourage defeat! Together with a seller of the International Socialist Organisation's *Socialist Worker*, they outrageously directed scabs turned away at the picket to an alternative entry for "exceptional circumstances"!

Mobilised for strike-breaking on the day was campus Security, which sought to part the pickets and let scabs through. Treacherously, the union leaders consented to their requests! **Picket lines mean don't cross!** This action by security follows a number of arrests of leftists on campus including refugee activist, Ian Rintoul, and Lian Jevey, a member of Socialist Alternative. The Spartacus Youth Club/Spartacist League has similarly been threatened with arrest on campus for distributing our Marxist propaganda and education. Coinciding with the attacks on student unionism, attacks against leftists seek to further regiment youth and suppress dissent. Security guards are not there to protect students but to enforce the rule of the administration, breaking up strikes, demonstrations and occupations. **Security/cops out of the unions! For united-front protests to demand: Hands off leftists!**

The SYC, as part of the common movement of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), is fighting to build a party which is at once revolutionary, internationalist and proletarian and seeks to overthrow the capitalist system and replace it with the liberating dictatorship of the proletariat. **All out on 16 October! For a solid strike! Shut down the campuses! ■**

Mumia...

(continued from page 2)

of government officials insofar as their actions served the interests not of petitioner, but of the District Attorney."

Jamal's current attorneys utilized information provided in Wolkenstein's affidavit (reprinted in the PDC pamphlet *Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!* [September 2001]), stating, "For nine whole years, attorney Weinglass and attorney Williams did more than any prosecutor could ever do to send Petitioner Jamal to his death. They strangled at birth the evidence which shows that he did not kill Police Officer Faulkner and, in the process, jettisoned numerous other decisive claims for relief." Wolkenstein and Piper, in fact, resigned from Jamal's legal team in 1999 precisely over the suppression of the Beverly confession. As she explained in her affidavit, Weinglass' refusal to proceed with Beverly's confession and other evidence "was also my final realization that attorney Weinglass would not carry out the defense demanded by our innocent client."

That Weinglass and Williams played the role of prosecutor was set forth for the world to see in the publication two years ago of Williams' false "inside account" of Jamal's case, *Executing Justice*, published shortly before Beverly's confession was submitted to court. Williams' declaration that Beverly's confession was "lunacy" was the core argument used by prosecutors in fighting to keep this conclusive evi-

dence of Mumia's innocence out of court.

The court didn't merely reject the argument that Weinglass and Williams were acting as agents of the state, but pronounced that it wouldn't even matter if they were. According to this court, five of whose members are former prosecutors, the state's interests are not inimical to those of Jamal (or any other defendant in a criminal case). "The Commonwealth, having the obligation to seek justice, is not a 'beneficiary' of poor defense lawyering"—i.e., they're claiming that incompetent defense doesn't benefit the state and its prosecutors!

Among the judges endorsing this ruling is Ronald Castille, who was District Attorney at the time when his subordinate Jack McMahon made an infamous videotape instructing members of the D.A.'s office on how to exclude blacks from juries. Castille was the D.A. opposing Jamal's first appeal, and was later one of the members of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court who turned down Jamal's appeal of Sabo's denial of his PCRA in 1997. A number of defendants have had their convictions overturned on the basis of this racist jury-rigging—but not Mumia. Castille has blocked every effort by Jamal to determine his role in the production of the McMahon video.

The court's lie that the prosecutors are just impartial truth seekers was shared as well by Weinglass and Williams. Williams' entire book is an articulation of the idea that the capitalist state is some kind of neutral arbiter, expressing and defending the interests of all the people.

But the state is not neutral. It is the instrumentality for organized violence by one class, the capitalist rulers, against the working class and all those at the bottom of this society. In the U.S., this is expressed in the terror and frame-ups carried out by viciously racist, brutal and corrupt police.

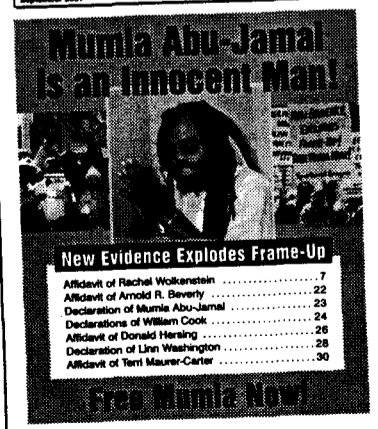
Williams' hatchet job reflects the views of a layer of liberals whose function is to refurbish the credentials of the capitalist "law and order" system by curbing its "excesses" and giving it the appearance of fairness. They ignore the overwhelming evidence that Mumia is innocent and instead speak of his supposed "guilt." Among the latest examples is Dave Lindorff, who writes for *CounterPunch* and the *Nation* and recently authored the book *Killing Time*, and filmmaker Michael Moore, who declares in his recent book, *Dude, Where's My Country?*, that Mumia "probably killed" Faulkner but "that does not mean he should be denied a fair trial or that he should be put to death." It is precisely to appeal to such liberals that the reformist left, most notably Socialist Action and the Workers World Party, subordinated any call for Jamal's freedom to the demand for a "new trial" for Mumia—as if he could get a fair trial in the racist capitalist courts.

The latest ruling against Jamal underscores—again—that for a defiant and outspoken opponent of this racist system like Jamal, there is no justice in the capitalist courts. As we explained in the introduction to the pamphlet *Mumia Abu-Jamal Is an Innocent Man!*: "The

long hidden and suppressed evidence of Mumia's innocence is the truth. But in this capitalist system of injustice, the truth is insufficient to secure Jamal's freedom. What we need is not just more truth but more social power. It is elementary that if labor's power is to be brought to bear in a mighty blow on Jamal's behalf, it must be mobilized independently of the very forces of the capitalist state that have worked for years to frame up and kill this innocent man." **Mobilize now to free Mumia! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■**

Partisan Defence Committee

September 2001 Pamphlet £.50



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New Evidence Explodes Frame-Up

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Why I Left Socialist Alternative and Joined the SYC

By Trevor H.

I had always been disgusted with the injustices and inequalities inherent in the capitalist world and wished to become involved in social struggle to change the rotten system but lacked the knowledge and program on how to do so. I probably would have orientated towards anarchist and green politics were it not for my Year 11 modern history class's study of the Russian Revolution. It was there that I was introduced to the answer to all of capitalism's evils—revolutionary Marxism. After learning of the October Revolution our study turned to the Cuban Revolution and the victory of the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants over U.S. and Australian imperialism. I saw in all real gains for the working class worth defending. Upon entering university in the build-up to the imperialist rape of Iraq, I joined Socialist Alternative but soon found myself at odds with their anti-communism and reformism. When asked by a leading member how I became interested in socialist politics I mentioned the gains of the 1959 Cuban Revolution, and was met with an angry response.

Taken in by their militant posturing on the eve of the Iraq war, I was unaware of their Laborite reformism and counter-revolutionary past. I was initially confronted with their participation in the class-collaborationist Victorian Peace Network (VPN) which provided a platform for the bourgeois Greens and the ALP. I soon also learnt that while the ALP was supporting the war on Afghanistan and the incarceration of refugees in the 2001 federal election Socialist Alternative had called for a vote to them. Joining them on anti-war marches I was further confronted by their failure to take a side in the conflict, pushing the pacifist slogan of "No War" in an attempt not to alienate the liberal crowd. In contrast the Spartacist League called for the military defence of neocolonial Iraq through class struggle against the rulers at home.

Of course, genuinely fighting for class struggle at home is alien to these reformists who, tied to the Australian bourgeoisie through their support to the Labor Party, divert opposition away from their own ruling class. A clear example of this is their article "U.S. imperialism: our worst enemy" (*Socialist Alternative*, April 2003). When I confronted a leading SA member on this, stating the basic Marxist principle that the main enemy is at home, I was told it was an "editorial mistake" and that the "Spartacists must have gotten in (my) ear."

At this point I was being contacted by the Spartacist League weekly and had begun learning of the revolutionary tendency which had fought consistently for the defence of the USSR in contrast to their reformist opponents. The International Socialist Organisation (ISO), from which SA had not yet undergone their cliquist split, capitulated to their own bourgeoisie in hailing and participating

in capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet degenerated workers state. The Spartacist League showed me that the counterrevolutionary appetite of SA had not abated and instead that they were at the forefront in calling for the destruction of the remaining deformed workers states of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba. In the Spartacists I found everything that was lacking in Socialist Alternative: a revolutionary proletarian program, Leninist organisational norms and practices, and sound Marxist theory.

The Class Nature of States and Unconditional Military Defence

As it became apparent to leading members of Socialist Alternative that I was moving to the left of them and was seen attending a Spartacist class on North Korea's right to nuclear weapons, I was given numerous lectures on the theory of "state capitalism." This "theory," I was told, proved that there had been a counterrevolution in the USSR in 1928 and the Stalinist bureaucracy had assumed the position of a new ruling class exploiting the proletariat. Trotsky's line

as the forms of property that have been created by the October Revolution are not overthrown, the proletariat remains the ruling class." [emphasis in original] — "The Class Nature of the Soviet State" (1933)

Confused? NO! Within this article Trotsky explains in a concrete Marxist analysis that while the Stalinist bureaucracy was able to consolidate a *political* counterrevolution, the *social* gains of October still remained to be defended. He makes clear that the bureaucracy cannot be considered an exploiting capitalist class as it holds no unique property forms, nor stocks or bonds. Trotsky foresaw two possible outcomes for the Soviet Union, either proletarian political revolution, cleaning up the bureaucracy and returning to the goals of October; or capitalist counterrevolution, throwing the conditions of the working class back dramatically. Unfortunately, Trotsky was proved correct in the negative. Capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union in 1991–92, actively supported and hailed by Socialist Alternative, was clearly a disaster for the working class. Unemployment, virtually non-existent in the USSR,

vanguard party and democratic centralism. Lenin explained that under capitalism, the working class's consciousness is primarily shaped by the bourgeoisie. He noted that it is the role of the vanguard party, composed of de-classed intellectuals and the most advanced layers of the working class, to bring revolutionary consciousness to the workers, as they are unable to arrive at these conclusions by themselves.

In Lenin's classic 1902 pamphlet, *What Is To Be Done?*, he says:

"...consciousness could only be brought to them [the working class] from without. The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness, i.e., it may itself realise the necessity of combining in unions, for fighting against the employers and for striving to compel the government to pass necessary labour legislation, etc."

However, Socialist Alternative deceptively claims that in the 1905 revolution, Lenin disowned the conception of revolutionary consciousness arriving from outside the working class (*Socialist Alternative*, April 2003). Why? Because



Sydney: SL/SYC contingent at 16 February march against Iraq war called for Australian troops out of East Timor and Persian Gulf (left). During Iraq war Socialist Alternative's "editorial mistake" diverted opposition away from the Australian ruling class.

socialist alternative

U.S. imperialism: our worst enemy



of unconditional military defence was confused, they said, and came from his psychological inability to accept that the revolution he had participated in had been overthrown. At first confused at how the bureaucracy had managed a counterrevolution to become a new exploiting class without any change in property relations or significant social struggle, I came to the conclusion that what I had heard from the supposedly "confused" analysis of Trotsky and the Spartacists was a helluva lot more dialectical and plausible and sought to study it further. Everything I found confirmed this and caused me to discover the leaders of Socialist Alternative as a group of anti-communists with an undying hatred for any place where capitalism has been overthrown. Speaking on the class nature of the former Soviet state, the Spartacists directed me to Trotsky where he states:

"The frightful difficulties of socialist construction in an isolated and backward country coupled with the false policies of the leadership... have led to the result that the bureaucracy has expropriated the proletariat politically in order to guard its social conquests with its own methods. The anatomy of society is determined by its economic relations. So long

now exists on a huge scale, while reactionary forces such as anti-Semitism and women's oppression are on the rise. Without a military counterweight, the imperialists of the world are able to run roughshod in a way unheard of during the existence of the Soviet Union. With the destruction of the USSR, the capitalists in the imperialist centres no longer feel the need to keep even the minor concessions they were forced to make during the Cold War and reforms once considered democratic rights are being clawed back.

This is not merely an abstract lesson in history and a question that can be ignored. Capitalism still has not been restored in the remaining deformed workers states of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba, something SA would desperately like to see happen. If you cannot defend gains made and defend states where capitalism has been overthrown, how can you wage any effective fight against capitalism? Socialist Alternative doesn't want to. The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), of which the Spartacus Youth Club is part, has been unique in their consistent, principled defence of the deformed workers states and its link to the needs of the international proletariat.

The Leninist Vanguard Party

It is no mere accident, but rather a consistent program that sees Socialist Alternative and other reformist organisations constantly reinforce illusions in their "own" bourgeoisie and call for votes to their Labor/social-democratic parties even when they are openly pushing anti-working class, pro-imperialist politics. The adoption of this program then leads them to reject the Leninist conception of the

they don't want to introduce socialism to workers but rather adapt to, and push existing bourgeois consciousness. For example when I was with SA at a stall in the lead-up to the Iraq war, we were told by the leadership to hand out leaflets from the Walk Against the War Coalition which argued for marching against war together with capitalist politicians. All this not to alienate or offend pacifist bourgeois-liberal opinion, in contrast to independent proletarian class struggle.

It is this orientation to bourgeois public opinion that saw SA and the rest of the reformist left march in step with the ALP in the September 1999 demonstrations screaming for Australian imperialist troops into East Timor. Uniquely on the left the Spartacists condemned these chauvinist marches and sought instead to present a program to the working class for struggle *against* the capitalists at home; for Australian/UN troops out and for independence to East Timor.

That someone such as myself with obvious political differences can join their party is closer to the Kautskyan conception of "the party of the whole class," i.e., including anyone for "socialism" regardless of their conception on how to get there, rather than a Leninist party operating on democratic-centralist norms.

For a Revolutionary Workers Party

I joined the SYC in order to effectively defend existing gains and fight for socialist revolution in class struggle *against* the capitalists. The SYC as part of the ICL is fighting to build a party that is proletarian, international and revolutionary on the road to world communism. *Join us! Reforge the Fourth International!* ■

Spartacist League of Australia

E-mail: spartacist@bigpond.com Web site: www.icl-fi.org

Melbourne

GPO Box 2339

Melbourne Vic 3001

Phone: (03) 9654 4315

Sydney

GPO Box 3473

Sydney NSW 2001

Phone: (02) 9281 2181

International Communist League

Box 7429 GPO, New York, NY 10116, USA

China...

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assets, which remain overwhelmingly concentrated in the state-owned banks. Thus shareholding corporations depend on bank loans for the bulk of their external financing. In short, the companies listed on the two major stock exchanges typically have the same management and similar financial arrangements as they did when they were wholly state-owned enterprises.

Someone might reasonably ask: that may be true today, but will it still be true tomorrow? The answer to that question will be determined by *political conflict*, not a change in this or that regulation governing China's stock market.

Last summer foreign investors were allowed for the first time to purchase (within strict limits) the main class of shares (denominated in yuan) in China's stock markets. A single foreign investor can own no more than 10 percent of the market capital of a company, all foreign investors combined no more than 20 percent. The first financial outfit to take advantage of this opportunity was the big Swiss investment bank UBS which bought, among other companies, shares in Baoshan Iron and Steel, China's largest steel maker.

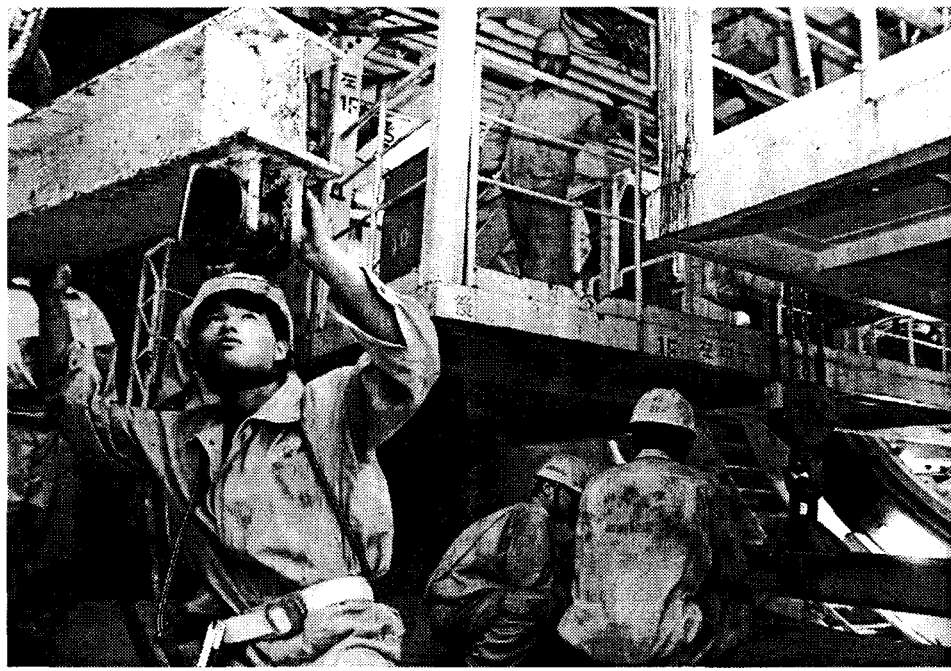
What would happen if UBS and other foreign banks were disappointed with the return on their investment in Baoshan? They probably would simply sell their shares, perhaps at a loss. But let us say that instead a group of Western banks bribed Chinese economic officials to support the ouster of Baoshan's incumbent management and replace them with new managers favored by these banks. Such an attempt by Western financiers to effectively take over China's largest steel maker would be a direct challenge to the political authority of the CCP regime. To maintain its authority, the Chinese government would have to prosecute the corrupted officials and take some kind of punitive measures against the foreign banks. If not, many managers of state-owned enterprises and banks would become paid agents of imperialist financiers and industrialists, the government would begin to lose its ability to carry out its own economic policies and the CCP would begin to disintegrate into an orgy of factionalism such as took place in the Soviet Communist Party during the Gorbachev era (1985-91).

But the factional disintegration of the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy would also open up the political situation to the intervention of social forces *from below*, centrally the working class. One would likely see the formation of independent trade unions and factory committees, of left-wing groups and parties. In the end, Western, Japanese and offshore Chinese capitalists could find their present foothold in the People's Republic of China

destroyed by a proletarian political revolution.

China's Financial System

The main structural change that has taken place in China's economy over the past two decades is the way in which state-owned enterprises are financed. Under the old centralized planning system, enterprises whose costs for whatever reason exceeded their normal revenue received non-repayable grants from the



Construction workers building Shanghai tunnel. Combative Chinese proletariat must be mobilised in struggle to defend and extend gains of Chinese Revolution.

industrial ministry overseeing them. Likewise, non-repayable grants were used to finance the expansion of enterprise production through retooling, the construction of a new department, etc.

When "market socialism" was introduced in the early 1980s, enterprises were supposed to become profit-maximizing and financially self-sufficient. External financing would be provided by loans from state-owned commercial banks, which were supposed to be repaid with interest. We do not know if Deng and the other initial architects of the "reform" program actually expected the system to work according to the new economic doctrine and corresponding policy guidelines. Predictably, the system did *not* work. Had all enterprises which did not and could not repay their bank loans been closed down, China would long since have become a complete economic disaster area. But that was not allowed to happen. Instead, in a totally unplanned, inadequate and haphazard way, "non-performing" bank loans were substituted for direct government financing.

Bank loans to loss-making as well as profit-making enterprises are routinely rolled over or even increased without any realistic expectation of repayment. Consequently, all major Chinese banks

are technically "insolvent," with "non-performing loans" exceeding income-generating assets. This situation has persisted for many years, since the government finances the banks which, in turn, finance the enterprises.

Thus in 1998-99 the central bank gave \$200 billion to the main commercial banks in exchange for an equivalent amount of their "non-performing loans." This enterprise debt was then shifted to government-owned Asset Management

disastrous economic consequences, not least crippling the government's ability to finance its own expenditures. Thus the agreement by which China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) two years ago postponed "liberalization" of the financial sector until 2006. Only then is China supposed to allow foreign banks to compete on an equal footing with state banks. But what will actually happen three years hence will not be automatically determined by the schedule stipulated in the WTO agreement. It will be determined by social conflict within China and between China and the forces of capitalist imperialism. In recent months, economic conflicts between especially American imperialism and the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state have come to the fore.

The Battle over the Yuan

China's currency, the yuan (or the renminbi), is not convertible on what bourgeois economists call the capital account of international transactions. Capitalist entrepreneurs in China as well as managers of state-owned enterprises can acquire foreign currency in exchange for yuan (after prior approval from the central bank) only to pay for imports and other trade-related expenses. Foreign currency acquired by mainland Chinese nationals is required to be transferred to the central bank in exchange for yuan.

In recent years, there has predictably been an increasing volume of illegal currency movements in and out of China, mainly by and through Hong Kong financiers. There is no accurate estimate of the magnitude of these illegal monetary flows, but they have not yet reached the point of seriously affecting the Chinese economy or the regime's economic policies.

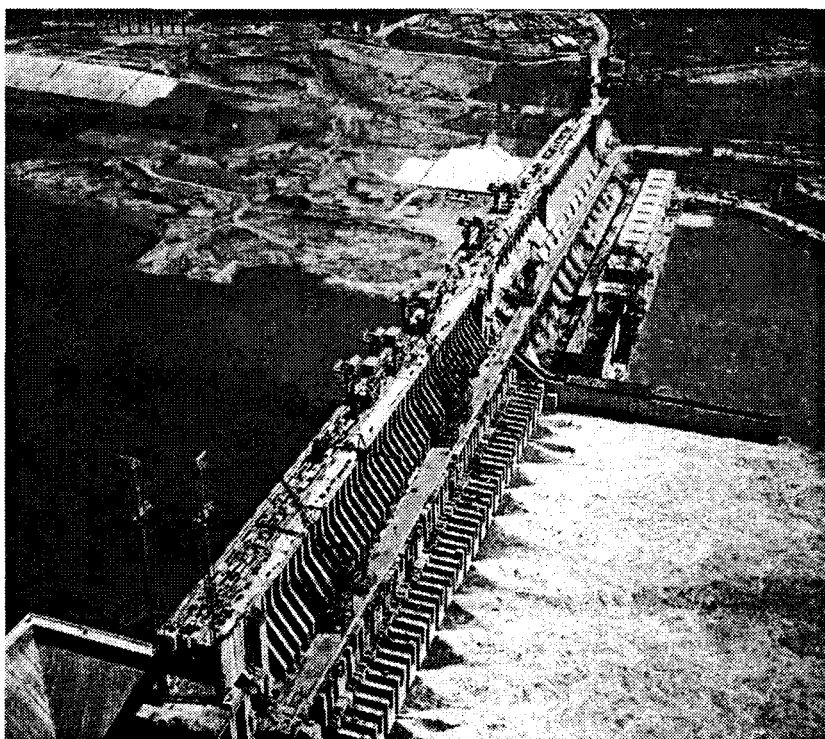
For a decade or so, China has pegged the yuan to the dollar. Since the dollar depreciated this year against the euro, the Japanese yen and most other currencies, the price of China's manufactured exports fell sharply on the world market. Most experts in the field estimate that if the yuan were freely traded, it would appreciate from 20 to 40 percent against the dollar.

Some big American (as well as European and Japanese) capitalist outfits also benefit from the current undervaluation of the yuan. Over half of Chinese manufactured exports are produced in foreign-owned factories or joint ventures. Dell computer and Motorola are among the top ten exporting companies in China. On the other side of the Pacific, the giant discount retailer Wal-Mart absorbs 10 percent of China's commodity exports to the U.S.

However, the main body of American manufacturing capitalists believe (and not without good cause) that they are being damaged by China's "unfair" trade practices. Last spring Franklin Vargo, vice president of the National Association of Manufacturers, told a Congressional committee: "We must press China to end the manipulation of its currency and allow the yuan-dollar exchange rate to be determined by the market" (*Business Week*, 7 July). A bloc of mainly Democratic and some Republican Senators and Congressmen is pushing legislation to impose additional tariffs on Chinese imports to "offset" the undervaluation of the yuan. Moreover, all of the heavy guns of international finance capital—the heads of the U.S. and European Union central banks, the directors of the International Monetary Fund—have pummeled the Beijing regime to revalue its currency.

But on this issue the Chinese leadership has given no ground. Last month, Chinese president Hu Jintao declared: "Keeping the exchange rate of the renminbi stable serves China's economic performance and conforms to the requirements of the economic development in the Asia Pacific region and the whole world."

As a diplomatic sop to the imperialists, Hu promised to set up a group to "study" making China's currency convertible in the future. How far in the future? The *Far*



Three Gorges dam is example of vast expansion of investment in state-owned infrastructure.

Eastern Economic Review (29 May), a well-informed journal based in Hong Kong, wrote in this regard: "The renminbi is not freely convertible on the capital account, and most analysts don't expect this to change for some years. The fear is that opening the country's capital account too soon will lead to huge outflows because of a lack of confidence in the banking system."

But even if Beijing policymakers project maintaining the existing exchange rate and international monetary arrangements for some years, they may *not* be able to do so. The capitalist enclave of Hong Kong is an ever-widening breach through which illegal currency transactions flow in both directions. The expropriation of Hong Kong's financiers and other sections of its bourgeoisie is vitally necessary to protect China's economy from the destructive onslaught of the Wall Street, Frankfurt and Tokyo banks.

The Agrarian Question Comes to the Fore, Again

Discussions of China's economy and its supposed "transition to capitalism" in the Western bourgeois media and academia usually focus on industry and finance. However, 700 million of China's 1.3 billion people are still engaged in agriculture. The main social motor force for the 1949 Revolution was a massive peasant uprising against the landlord class, many of whose members received their just deserts at the hands of those whom they had brutally oppressed and exploited. All agricultural land was nationalized.

One of the first economic "reforms" of the Deng regime was the decollectivization of agriculture, with peasant families being given their own small plots on the basis of long-term leases. However, land was not reprivatized and restrictions were imposed on the transfer of leaseholds. Even so, competition among peasant smallholders necessarily resulted in ever-widening economic differentiation in the rural villages. A class of rich farmers emerged who, through semi-legal or illegal arrangements, have been able to exploit the labor of their poorer neighbors. Nonetheless, the basic structure of China's agrarian economy is fundamentally and manifestly different from that of India, for example, where over a hundred million landless agricultural laborers toil on the large estates of wealthy landlords.

However, the current structure of China's agrarian economy cannot long be maintained given its membership in the WTO. State-owned industrial enterprises can to a degree be buffered from increased import competition by additional government financing via the banks. But there is no way that China's peasant smallholders can compete with the capital-intensive, scientifically managed agribusiness of the U.S. and other major food-exporting countries. While the Beijing regime has duly reduced tariffs and quotas on agricultural produce, it has also resorted to ad hoc protectionist devices. Last year, new "safety regulations" were applied to imports of genetically modified grain. This year, shipments of soybeans from the U.S., Brazil and Argentina were halted on the grounds that they were "contaminated" by a fungus (one which, however, is also common to soybeans grown in China).

Nonetheless, the basic line of the regime's agrarian policy is *not* to protect the multitude of peasant smallholders. It is rather to move toward large-scale, de facto *privately owned* farms. Thus a CCP Central Committee plenum held in October adopted a resolution further easing restrictions on the transfer of agricultural land. An American journalist covering the meeting reported: "China is worried about competition in the World Trade Organization from foreign foodstuffs, and the emergence of big farms would increase agricultural efficiency, an agronomist said" (*Washington Post*, 15 October).

However, the resolutions and intentions of the CCP leadership in this regard,

as in others, will not automatically and necessarily be translated into economic reality. The 1949 Revolution remains a living memory in the Chinese countryside. Poor peasants know that their grandparents meted out a rough plebeian justice to the brutal landlords and grasping village moneylenders. China's would-be landlords of today could well suffer a similar fate. In fact, over the last decade China has seen many large-scale peasant protests and riots, especially against increased taxation and corruption.

Yet China does have to move from peasant smallholding to modern, large-scale mechanized farming. The question is how. A government based on workers and peasants councils would not only prohibit or restrict the hiring of labor and leasing of additional land by rich farmers but would also promote the recollectivization of agriculture. This does not mean reverting to the agricultural communes of the Mao era, which were basically an aggregate of backward peasant holdings. For the mass of Chinese peasants to give up their own holdings in



Melbourne, March 2002: Spartacist-led protest against army stall at RMIT campus called for defence of China and other deformed workers states.

favor of collective farms, they must be convinced that this will result in a higher standard of living for themselves and their families. Thus a government based on workers and peasants councils would offer reduced taxes and cheaper credits to peasants who joined collectives.

A rational collectivization and modernization of Chinese agriculture would signify a profound transformation of the society. The introduction of modern technology in the countryside—from combines to chemical fertilizers to the whole complex of scientific farming—would require a qualitatively higher industrial base than now exists. In turn, an increase in agricultural productivity would raise the need for a huge expansion of industrial jobs in urban areas to absorb the vast surplus of labor no longer needed in the countryside. Clearly, this would involve a lengthy process, particularly given the limited size and relatively low level of productivity of China's industrial base. Both the tempo and, in the final analysis, the very realizability of this perspective hinge on the aid that China would receive from a socialist Japan or a socialist America, underlining again the need for international proletarian revolution.

The Spectre of a Workers Revolt

In early 2000, a large state-owned molybdenum mine in Yangjiazhangzi—a town in the depressed old industrial region of northeast China—was closed down. A few parts of the mine which were deemed profitable were privatized, mainly taken over by cronies of the incumbent managers. A protest at the enterprise headquarters by the laid-off miners over the paltry severance pay quickly escalated into a full-fledged workers revolt. Some 20,000 miners and their families took to the streets, setting up barricades, burning cars, smashing the windows of government offices and setting oil drums ablaze.

The authorities moved cautiously, for fear the workers might use the stock of dynamite in the mine to defend them-

selves. For two days, the workers battled the People's Armed Police, a paramilitary force created in the mid 1980s specifically to put down growing social unrest. Finally, army units were brought in, firing live ammunition over the protesters' heads, and quelled the rebellion. Two years later, workers also in north-east China unleashed the country's largest revolt since the 1989 Tiananmen upheaval that marked an incipient political revolution.

In its own way, the Beijing Stalinist bureaucracy recognizes that it is sitting atop a volcano of social unrest. Last year, Jiang Zemin declared that "expanding employment and promoting re-employment isn't only a major economic problem, it's also a major political problem." Yet Jiang and his cohorts have failed—and failed miserably—in achieving their own stated policy goal.

Labor minister Zhang Zuojing reported last year that of the 26 million workers laid off from state-owned enterprises since 1998, only 17 million have been re-employed. And the situation in this

is far from anti-capitalist in its outlook, observed: "The vibrant private sectors of the coastal economy are notoriously lax at paying taxes." Alternatively, to substantially reduce government expenditure would entail throwing many more millions of workers into the street and cutting their meager social benefits (e.g., pensions). At that point policy differences within the CCP leadership, intersecting growing social tensions, could begin to fracture the bureaucracy.

During the past year, the Jiang regime has been succeeded by a so-called "fourth generation" of CCP leaders represented by Hu Jintao as president and Wen Jiabao as prime minister. Like Deng before him, Jiang has retained ultimate authority by remaining head of the CCP's Central Military Commission, that is, de facto commander of China's armed forces. The ideological stance of the "fourth generation" leaders indicates the conflicting social pressures upon them. On the one hand, they have been more openly pro-capitalist (legitimizing party membership for entrepreneurs, proposing to enshrine "property rights" in the constitution).

At the same time, the new CCP leadership has adopted a more "populist" political style than the gray, technocratic Jiang regime. Thus, shortly before becoming premier, Wen Jiabao went down a coal mine shaft in bitter cold to celebrate the Lunar New Year with the miners working there. More recently, *China Daily* (30 October) trumpeted Wen's personal intervention to help a migrant construction worker collect unpaid back wages, commenting that this "attests to the fact that the new, in-touch-with-people leadership has taken hold when it comes to dealing with the underprivileged in the country."

These "populist" gestures have been accompanied by promises to narrow the gap between rich and poor and between the relatively wealthy coastal provinces and the more impoverished regions of central and western China. If this is not just empty rhetoric but signals differences in the regime over economic policies and priorities, resulting factionalism could open up the political situation. In that event the decisive factors will be the political consciousness of the Chinese working class and other toilers and the ability of revolutionary Marxists (i.e., Leninist-Trotskyists) to intervene to change and elevate that consciousness.

For Workers Democracy!

In East Europe and the former Soviet Union in the 1980s and early '90s, many workers as well as most of the intelligentsia succumbed to the illusion that the introduction of Western-style capitalism would rapidly produce Western-style living standards. But Chinese workers and the urban poor have already experienced a large dose of Western (and Japanese) capitalism in the form of hundreds of billions of dollars in foreign investment and joint ventures. They've also experienced

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Available in Chinese

<p>Revolution vs. Counterrevolution in Germany, 1989-90 Chinese Miners Revolt Against "Market Reforms" \$1.25 (24 pages)</p>	<p>"Market Socialism" and the Legacy of Mao Whither China? \$1.50 (24 pages)</p>
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China...

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the growing presence of Chinese capitalist exploiters, both mainland-derived and offshore. And what those experiences amount to is a massive increase in unemployment, economic insecurity, social inequality and income differentials.

All evidence indicates there is deep and widespread popular hostility to those capitalist elements that currently exist in China. A public opinion survey conducted early this year by People's University found that only 5 percent of respondents thought that the newly rich had acquired their wealth by legitimate means. The proposal floated at the CCP's 16th Congress last year to incorporate "property rights" in the constitution has provoked something of a popular backlash. In the past few years, there has been a rash of murders of wealthy tycoons.

If Chinese workers are unlikely to have illusions in Western-style capitalism, the question of Western-style "democracy" is another matter. When the political situation in China opens up, anti-Communist counterrevolutionary groups and parties will doubtless hide their advocacy of "free market" economics while pushing for "democracy," i.e., a parliamentary government elected on the basis of one man, one vote. Typical of such types is Han Dongfang, a pro-imperialist "dissident" who publishes the journal *China Labour Bulletin* in Hong Kong and is a darling of right-wing Congressmen and the anti-Communist AFL-CIO bureaucracy in the U.S.

Parliamentary government is in fact a political form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. In such a system the working class is politically reduced to atomized individuals. The bourgeoisie can effectively manipulate the electorate—in which the vote of a factory worker counts the same as that of a factory manager or technocrat—through its control of the media, the education system and the other institutions shaping public opinion. In all capitalist "democracies," government officials, elected and unelected, are bought and paid for by the banks and large corporations.

As Lenin explained in his classic polemic against social democracy, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (November 1918):

"Even in the most democratic bourgeois state the oppressed people at every step encounter the crying contradiction between the formal equality proclaimed by the 'democracy' of the capitalists and the thousands of real limitations and subterfuges which turn the proletarians into wage-slaves...."

"Under bourgeois democracy the capitalists, by thousands of tricks—which are the more artful and effective the more 'pure' democracy is developed—drive the people away from administrative work, from freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, etc.... The working people are barred from participation in bourgeois parliaments (they never decide important questions under bourgeois democracy, which are decided by the stock exchange and the banks) by thousands of obstacles, and the workers know and feel, see and realise perfectly well that the bourgeois

parliaments are institutions alien to them." [emphasis in original]

Under bourgeois democracy, workers merely have the illusion of some control or power over the government. But under a workers state, the question of workers democracy is not one of abstraction or illusion, but at bottom a question of power. In a workers state like China, the dictatorship of the proletariat is deformed by Stalinist misrule—the proletariat as a class is deprived of political power, which is instead monopolized by an anti-working-class bureaucratic caste whose policies ultimately threaten the very existence of the workers state. The working class and rural toilers can exercise real political power only through a dictatorship of the proletariat ruled by their own class-based governing institutions, the soviets (the Russian term for councils), which would be open to all parties defending the collectivized foundations of the workers state. In the same work quoted above, Lenin explained:

"The Soviets are the direct organisation of the working and exploited people themselves, which helps them to organise and administer their own state in every possible way. And in this it is the vanguard of the working and exploited people, the urban proletariat, that enjoys the advantage of being best united by the large enterprises; it is easier for it than for all others to elect and exercise control over those elected. The Soviet form of organisation automatically helps to unite all the working and exploited people around their vanguard, the proletariat. The old bourgeois apparatus—the bureaucracy, the privileges of wealth, of bourgeois education, of social connections, etc. (these real privileges are the more varied the more highly bourgeois democracy is developed)—all this disappears under the Soviet form of organisation.... "Proletarian democracy is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy; Soviet power is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic." [emphasis in original]

The alternatives facing China are proletarian political revolution or bloody capitalist counterrevolution. It must be noted that under no circumstance will capitalist restoration produce any form of bourgeois democracy. The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state and the deformed workers states of East Europe offer a glimpse of what capitalism has in store for China's workers—fratricidal warfare, poverty and unemployment, all-around social devastation (see "Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union," *WV* Nos. 809 and 810, 12 and 26 September).

It is no accident that, around the time of Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary coup in 1991, many Yeltsinite "democrats" argued that a "Russian Pinochet" would be needed to administer nascent capitalist rule in the former Soviet Union. Economist Gavriil Popov, a key Yeltsin ally and chief ideologue of the "Democratic Platform" of the Soviet CP, who was elected mayor of Moscow in 1991, frankly acknowledged that the introduction of capitalism would not be compatible with bourgeois democracy:

"Now we must create a society with a variety of different forms of ownership, including private property; and this will be a society of economic inequality.



Peter Turnley

May 1989: Contingent from Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation arriving in Tiananmen Square. Entry of proletariat into mass student protests heralded incipient political revolution.

There will be contradictions between the policies leading to denationalization, privatization, and inequality on the one hand and, on the other, the populist character of the forces that were set in motion in order to achieve those aims. The masses long for fairness and economic equality. And the further the process of transformation goes, the more acute and more glaring will be the gap between those aspirations and economic realities."

—"Dangers for Democracy," *New York Review of Books*, 16 August 1990

Even in the former USSR, which was a global industrial and military power, the capitalist political regimes in the various constituent republics range from semi-bonapartist "parliamentary" rule to outright dictatorship. A capitalist China would subject its masses to even more immense social dislocation and far greater poverty.

Moreover, where the old Russian bourgeoisie was destroyed as a class, the Chinese bourgeoisie was simply driven offshore by the revolution and today remains ready to reclaim its lost holdings and wreak revenge, above all against the combative proletariat. Capitalist restoration could bring with it a revival of the imperialist-sponsored warlordism that marked pre-revolutionary China, leading to the subjugation and dismemberment of the country at the hands of Western and Japanese imperialism while inflicting massive destruction on North Korea and Vietnam.

To achieve soviet democracy in capitalist countries requires a proletarian social revolution that expropriates the bourgeoisie and overturns the capitalist profit system. In contrast, in China it requires a proletarian political revolution to oust the ruling bureaucracy and to place political power in the hands of workers, soldiers and peasants councils. Such a political revolution is premised on the unconditional defense of the collectivized economy which is the social foundation of the workers state. Its program was encapsulated by Trotsky in his

classic analysis of Stalin's Russia, *The Revolution Betrayed* (1936):

"It is not a question of substituting one ruling clique for another, but of changing the very methods of administering the economy and guiding the culture of the country. Bureaucratic autocracy must give place to Soviet democracy. A restoration of the right of criticism, and a genuine freedom of elections, are necessary conditions for the further development of the country. This assumes a revival of freedom of Soviet parties, beginning with the party of Bolsheviks, and a resurrection of the trade unions. The bringing of democracy into industry means a radical revision of plans in the interests of the toilers.... 'Bourgeois norms of distribution' will be confined within the limits of strict necessity, and, in step with the growth of social wealth, will give way to socialist equality.... The youth will receive the opportunity to breathe freely, criticize, make mistakes, and grow up. Science and art will be freed of their chains. And, finally, foreign policy will return to the traditions of revolutionary internationalism."

The fight for workers democracy is intimately linked to the struggle for the extension of revolution. Karl Marx once wrote that with scarcity, want is generalized, "and with want the struggle for necessities begins again, and that means that all the old crap must revive." The material basis for bureaucratism lies with scarcity—the bureaucracy deems itself the arbiter of how scarce resources are used and distributed. Historical necessity once again forces the question of revolutionary internationalism. Without a socialist America, a socialist Europe, a socialist Japan, the working people of China will not be able to eliminate scarcity and want. Indeed, the fate of the Chinese proletariat—the fate of working people and the oppressed throughout the world—will be decided in the struggle for international socialist revolution.

The International Communist League is committed to bringing this revolutionary Marxist program—the only program which can defend China against the powerful forces of imperialist-backed counterrevolution—to the workers and rural toilers of China today. ■

Headscarf...

(continued from page 3)

and kill as many Soviet soldiers as possible.

At the time, LO condemned the Soviet intervention, saying that Afghanistan was like Vietnam. They wrongly equated the rape of Vietnam by the French—followed by the American—imperialists with the progressive intervention of the Red Army in Afghanistan (*Lutte de Classe*, 7 July 1980). As for the LCR, they wrote in 1988 that the fall of the Afghan government "would in any case represent a lesser evil than the perpetuation of the Soviet entanglement in Afghanistan" (*Inprecor*, 11 April 1988). We, on the other hand, declared: "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan! Extend the gains of October 1917 to the Afghan peoples!" And we fought against the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989. The fruit of this betrayal by the Soviets in Afghanistan is the horror that exists there today. Those who now shed

crocodile tears for the fate of Afghan women and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the world do not want to admit it, but at bottom the cause is the fall of the Soviet Union. In the 1980s, LO and the LCR refused to oppose the worst Islamic scum in Afghanistan, and today they complain about Islamic fundamentalists in France! But these two positions are linked in a very concrete way: then, as today, they sided with their own French bourgeoisie.

In order to liberate women, not only from the veil but from every form of oppression, it is necessary to fight for workers revolution which is the only way to do away with the material basis for oppression. To achieve that, it is necessary to build a revolutionary workers party. Such a party would fight in the interests of all workers and thus against racist terror and the oppression of women. That is the party we seek to build. For women's liberation through socialist revolution! ■

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Aboriginal Rights...

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and children recently mouthed by some elements in the white ruling class. Such platitudes from the racist exploiters are the most revolting hypocrisy! This is the same ruling class who used brutal violence and repression to force Aboriginal children into being domestic or agricultural slaves of the squatters last century and who denies recognition, let alone redress, for the Stolen Generations. This is the ruling class which presides over one of the highest infant death rates in the world for Aboriginal children and which imprisons refugee children in desolate hell-hole camps from Baxter to Nauru.

Aboriginal women, particularly those in poverty-stricken communities, are triply oppressed by race, gender and class. Capitalist Australia is an extremely misogynist society where the anti-woman cult of "mateship" is glorified. A survey in 1988 found that 20 percent of the general population condoned wife-beating. Aboriginal women in particular are subject to the harshest conditions of capitalist rule. They are systematically shut out of employment, having to bring up children in the broiling outback heat often without a semblance of decent education, health or child care, housing, electricity or even running water. And with the fabric of Aboriginal communities torn asunder by colonial dispossession and brutalised by daily state terror, indigenous women confront high rates of violent assault, rape and murder. It is within this context that many Aboriginal people have made heartfelt appeals within their communities for an end to the endemic violence and abuse. But the feigned "concern" for indigenous women and children coming from the capitalist rulers is purely aimed at vilifying Aborigines as "violent" and providing an excuse for even more racist state repression.

Given the ongoing state terror it is understandable that many Aboriginal women refuse to call authorities when confronted with violent abuse of children or themselves because to do so places them, their men or children in the crosshairs of the state. While it is well known that detention can often be a death sentence for black men, it is not so well known that indigenous children are today removed from their families at six times the rate of non-indigenous children, or that nearly one-third of the NSW female prison population is Aboriginal! *Indeed the great instigator of violence against indigenous women is the capitalist state itself.*

The brutality of police and prison in black lives is bitterly captured in a story from the women's peace protest outside the Pine Gap spy base 20 years ago. In November 1983 protesters were dragged *en masse* to Alice Springs' police lock-up. The next morning, a delegation of local Aboriginal women thanked the mainly white city women for filling up the prison. No Aboriginal woman had been raped by cops or screws in the jail, they said, for the first night in living memory.

Break with Laborism!

The road to liberation for indigenous women, for all Aboriginal peoples and all the oppressed lies in the struggle to mobilise the social power of the multi-racial working class *against* the capitalist rulers and their state. While the history of working-class defence of indigenous peoples in Australia is all too slender, such events when they occur reverberate powerfully, including throughout the Asian region. The spectacular storming of parliament in Canberra, August 1996 by militant Aborigines, unionists and youth is one example. This action, at a 35,000-strong demonstration protesting against the Howard government's attacks on welfare and union rights, was sparked when cops attacked an Aboriginal contingent at the head of a march of Aborigines and

unionists, and the building workers, miners and others rushed to defend the Aboriginal protesters.

In Brisbane on 8 August this year, the Queensland Council of Unions held a small but significant protest against the Beattie ALP state government's insulting offer of \$4,000 or \$2,000 to Aboriginal workers whose wages were "held in trust" by governments and looted for decades. The protest called for full reparation to all workers fighting to reclaim stolen wages, which even the Queensland government admits amounts to at least \$500 million in that state alone!

Standing in the way of unleashing the power of the integrated working class in



Andrew Meares

August 2000: Racist cops terrorise Aboriginal community in Sydney suburb Redfern.

defence of themselves and all the oppressed, is the current pro-capitalist Laborite leadership in the unions and the racist backward consciousness it transmits to, and reinforces within, the proletariat. Following the 1996 storming of parliament, the traitorous ALP/ACTU leadership collaborated with a vicious state witchhunt, fingering militants to the cops and carrying out an internal purge of the anti-racist unionists. This was a pledge by key union bureaucrats to prevent the organised workers ever again defending Aboriginal people from racist state terror. Today, while unions have protested the Queensland government's refusal to hand back stolen wages to Aboriginal workers, they have not mobilised union power in the necessary strike action to win the back pay for the workers and their families. Instead, Queensland CFMEU leaders for example have told Aboriginal people to look to the thieving state's own Industrial Relations Commission.

Acting as the labour lieutenants of capital, the pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy demobilises the union ranks, preaches submission to the bosses' courts and channels proletarian struggles into the dead end of ALP parliamentarism. An internationalist revolutionary workers party—a tribune of the people—must be built by splitting the working-class base of the ALP from the nationalist leadership.

But this is not the perspective of the various reformist and centrist left groups. A case in point is the centrist Workers Power (WP) group. While building illusions in the bourgeois state, for example through their *ritual* call to vote for the racist ALP (which in power administers the capitalist state), they simultaneously push rhetoric opposing national, sexual and racial oppression. This is highlighted with regard to the Aboriginal struggle, where in one breath WP calls for the implementation of the recommendations of the Hawke/Keating ALP's whitewash Royal Commission into Deaths in Custody, and in the next declare that Aborigines have "the right to be free of the police and judicial oppression." WP also calls for Aborigines to have "the right to administer justice within the communities, because whitefellas' justice in the indigenous communities is nothing more than the business of keeping people in place while the theft [of lands and

resources] goes on" (*The Socialist Solution to Market Madness*, May 2001).

While we defend whatever political autonomy Aboriginal people (with a land base) can wrest from governments, including the right to govern their land and control its resources we also understand that as long as the capitalist exploiters hold state power, any "justice" will necessarily be subordinate to the white racist ruling class and its state. This capitalist state—which at its core consists of the police, courts, military and prisons—was created and is reinforced and perfected daily for the very purpose of enforcing capitalist class rule over the exploited and oppressed masses.

more than two centuries of injustice and oppression."

—*For a Workers Republic of Australia, Part of a Socialist Asia!*, October 1998

Racist Australian Imperialists Groove on Aboriginal Dispossession

The publication in 2002 of *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, by right-wing ideologue, Keith Windschuttle, sparked just outrage. Windschuttle seeks to disappear the attempted genocide of the Aboriginal peoples. Henry Reynolds, an historian who has meticulously documented the more than two hundred years of dispossession of Aboriginal peoples, noted in one *Sydney Morning Herald* review (23-24 August 2003), that Windschuttle's "critique" is an attempt to resurrect the concept of *terra nullius*, the lie that Australia was "vacant property" at the time of British landing. Such lies are designed in the first instance to ridicule and stymie any future Aboriginal land rights claims.

The political climate over the Aboriginal question has shifted to the right. The ruling-class ideological offensive comes on top of their hoax of "reconciliation," the notion, pushed especially by the ALP, that Aborigines should forgive and forget, resigning themselves to an existence of racist oppression while the ruling class absolves itself of its crimes (see *Australasian Spartacist* No. 171, Winter 2000). Now seizing on the criminal World Trade Center attack and Bali bombing to whip up national chauvinism, bourgeois ideologues increasingly glorify Australian capitalism's "triumph" at the expense of the indigenous peoples.

This campaign is part of the government's efforts to whip up White Australian "national pride." Such patriotic jingoism serves to prepare attacks against the multiracial working class at home while ideologically girding the population to support predatory military expeditions abroad. Today as George Bush rides roughshod over the world, the Australian imperialist military are part of the bloody U.S.-led occupation of Iraq and head up colonial interventions themselves in East Timor and the Solomon Islands. And in doing so they dish out to the peoples of East Timor and their other Pacific neocolonies like Papua New Guinea and Fiji the same hideous oppression meted out to Aboriginal peoples at home.

What is desperately necessary is a fight within the workers movement to combine

WP's verbiage notwithstanding, the bottom line is that, in pushing for implementing the findings of the bourgeois court's Royal Commission, they sow illusions in and tie Aborigines and workers to the main force for Aboriginal oppression—the capitalist state. And while WP fatuously declares that the "police must be held to account for every death" they don't breathe a word that the Royal Commission into Deaths in Custody *endorsed* the police and coroner verdicts of "suicide" and "death by natural causes" in all 99 cases it reviewed. In other words all the killer cops walked! It was the SL that warned from the start that the Royal Commission would result in a whitewash.

It is no accident then that WP, who also "call on the labour movement to support every demand of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders," don't address the

1993: SL-led union/Aboriginal action broke racist ban at Student Prince Hotel in Sydney. We fight to mobilise social power of integrated working class to champion rights of Aboriginal peoples.

Special Supplement 5c

Australasian SPARTACIST

Unionists, Aborigines, Students Mobilise:

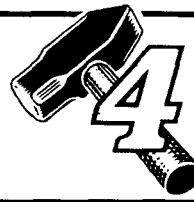
Racist Ban Defeated at Student Prince Hotel!

pro-capitalist union bureaucrats who are the key obstacle to proletarian-centred struggle for indigenous rights.

In contrast to WP, genuine communists fight to combat illusions that the capitalist state can act on behalf of the oppressed and fight to expose the role of the Labor traitors within the workers movement. This is key to preparing and training the proletariat for the workers revolution that alone can free itself, Aboriginal people and all the downtrodden from racist capitalist state terror while opening the road to the eradication of poverty, the liberation of women and the ending of racial oppression. As we explained in our programmatic statement:

"Only the destruction of capitalism can hold out the possibility of voluntary integration, on the basis of full equality, for those Aboriginal people who desire it, and the fullest possible autonomy for those who do not, and make it possible to address the special needs created by

class-struggle opposition to union-busting attacks with the struggle against racist oppression at home and imperialist marauding abroad. We say: Smash the union-busting attacks on the CFMEU! U.S./Australia out of Iraq! Australian troops/cops out of East Timor, PNG and the Solomon Islands! Asylum rights for refugees! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! For a class-struggle fight for Aboriginal rights! What is needed is the building of a Leninist party that can direct the many streams of opposition to capitalist injustice into a mighty force for socialist revolution that will sweep away racist bourgeois rule. We of the SL, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), fight for a communist world in which the diversity of human cultures will not be an excuse for contempt and violence, but a source of enrichment. ■



Racist Campaign Escalates Against Aborigines

For a Class-Struggle Fight for Aboriginal Rights!

In this racist hellhole, where desperate refugees are incarcerated for years in concentration camps if they are not pushed back out to sea in leaky boats, the brutal capitalist oppression of the Aboriginal population continues to intensify. Aboriginal people are systematically denied decent health, education, housing and employment and are imprisoned at a rate 15 times the national average. Today the life expectancy for Aborigines is some 20 years less than other Australians.

It is truly sick then that the White Australia capitalist exploiters are now on a heightened ideological offensive to brand blacks as deserving of their own oppression. For this purpose the bourgeoisie and the right-wing Howard government are seizing on the existence of domestic violence and other problems within communities like alcoholism—problems that exist throughout society but which are exacerbated by racist oppression and enforced marginalisation. West Australian Labor premier, Geoff Gallop, told Aboriginal parents and elders to stop making excuses for Aboriginal juvenile crime railing that historical considerations should not be blamed for current problems (*Sunday Times*, 21 November). Meanwhile a spate of additional anti-drinking bans has been foisted on Aboriginal communities. These new laws have been met with just opposition from angry residents, for example in the far northern Cape York town of Aurukun. The laws are patronising, racist constrictions of democratic rights. And like the broader anti-Aboriginal ideological campaign, they provide convenient pretexts for even greater police harassment.

Indigenous youth in country towns face night curfews by local councils and mandatory detention by state governments. Fuelled by legal violence, extra-legal terror is also on the rise. In the north Queensland town of Mossman, Ku Klux Klan gangs have attacked Aborigines in their homes, while Aboriginal residents of Townsville have received repeated death threats. Not surprisingly Darwin and Townsville, the military staging grounds for Australian imperialism's occupation forces abroad, are particular hotbeds of redneck racism.

Down With the Witchhunt of Geoff Clark!

The anti-Aboriginal ideological offensive also serves to justify government attacks on Aboriginal organisations. The ruling class is on a warpath against these organisations because they want to crush even the most minimal pretence of an independent Aboriginal voice. The fact that many of these organisations were created by the Hawke and Keating ALP governments to coopt outspoken Aboriginal leaders and make Aborigines complicit in their own subjugation is not enough for today's federal Coalition and state ALP governments. The main target has been the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), the

government's leading indigenous body. ATSIC has been stripped of its spending power and its leaders, despite their loyal service to the Howard government, have been witchhunted.

In August, Phillip Ruddock, the then federal minister for immigration and indigenous affairs, suspended the elected chairman of ATSIC, Geoff Clark, for "misbehaviour." Ruddock, who is widely hated for spearheading the racist internment of refugees, used as his pretext Clark's recent conviction on charges of "behaving in a riotous manner" and "obstructing police" over an incident last

Warrnambool races. On that day Clark was hosting people from his community in a marquee rather than the tin shed normally reserved for Aborigines. Soon however Clark and his friends would run smack bang into the vicious social reality of White Australia.

On leaving the races they went to the Grand Hotel where the racist publican closed his hotel down rather than serve Aborigines. The group then moved on to the Criterion Hotel where another racist publican again confronted them and cops were quickly called to remove some of Clark's friends. When Clark protested

University (see "Racist Ban Defeated at Student Prince Hotel," *Australasian Spartacist* supplement, 2 June 1993). This small but powerful action gives a taste of the struggle that a mass revolutionary party would wage to mobilise the power of the working class in defence of Aboriginal people and all the oppressed.

The potential for politically advanced workers to be won to such a fight is linked to the fact that the increasing levels of degradation of Aborigines are part of all-sided capitalist attacks on the working class and the poor. Union busting, such as attempted against the CFMEU today, goes hand-in-hand with speed-ups and other attacks on working conditions resulting in escalating numbers of workers killed on the job. On 16 October, a 16-year-old Sydney plumber's apprentice, Joel Exner, died after his boss failed to supply him with a safety harness.

Indeed since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union a decade ago, capitalist governments worldwide have been slashing public health care and education, eroding the living standards of the working class and effectively throwing "unprofitable" sections of the population overboard. In Australia, this is coupled with virulent racism to scapegoat indigenous peoples, Asian and Arab minorities and refugees in a divide-and-conquer tactic aimed at deflecting the anger of the working class away from the attacks of the bosses.

The fight for an uncompromising working-class defence of Aboriginal peoples is thus an important part of the struggle to politically arm the proletariat into a force that can take on the capitalist rulers and win. Proletarian-centred actions would fight to enforce equal access to public and private amenities. They would demand jobs for all and equal wages; and for massive health, housing and education programs to begin to address the marginalisation and oppression of the Aboriginal people in remote areas, in the wretched fringes and inner-city ghettos. The SL supports any attempts by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders to claw back some of the land which has been stolen from them. However, elementary justice—not only for Aboriginal people, but for all the exploited and oppressed—demands not some limited, ultimately reversible concessions from the bosses but the expropriation of industry, mining and agriculture from the greedy exploiters through proletarian revolution.

Bourgeois Reaction and Aboriginal Women

The capitalist media have been triumphantly lauding Aboriginal "leaders" like Noel Pearson and Mick Dodson who have obscenely called on the racist government to "help" Aboriginal people stop doing harm to themselves. Their statements have embellished the cynical platitudes of concern for Aboriginal women

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Christine Howes

Brisbane, August 2002: Protest against Beattie state Labor government's insulting "offer" to Aboriginal workers and families who had wages stolen from them over decades.

year at the Criterion Hotel in the Victorian coastal town of Warrnambool. In fact Clark carried out the courageous and decent act of defending Aborigines—including women and elders—against a racist publican, notorious for refusing to serve blacks, and police wielding capicum spray guns. While Clark's conviction for "riotous behaviour" has been overturned in a court appeal, the other conviction and a \$750 fine stands and he has been banned from the hotel.

Clark is also the subject of recently revived murky rape allegations, dating back decades. While we are not in a position to judge his guilt or innocence in this case, his conviction stemming from the Warrnambool incident was a racist outrage which underlines the bourgeoisie's impulse to drive all Aboriginal people back to the desperate poverty-ridden fringes of outback towns.

Clark's convictions stem from events on 1 May 2002 when Aboriginal people had, for the first time, been admitted to the members enclosure of the

and called on his friends to "Stand firm and stand your ground" he and others were set upon by police and attacked with capicum spray causing Clark to be taken to hospital. The cold hard facts are that Geoff Clark was targeted by the cops and courts of Bracks' state ALP government and then suspended from ATSIC by the federal Tory minister because he stood against the barbaric enforced denial of Aboriginal people to equal access to amenities. Overturn the remaining conviction! Down with the racist suspension of Geoff Clark!

What is needed is the broadest action of trade unionists, Aborigines and anti-racist youth to protest the witchhunt of Clark and combat the racist exclusion that Aboriginal people face. In the early 1990s, the Spartacist League brought trade unionists, including Maori building workers and members of local Aboriginal communities together with students to break a racist exclusion which had prevented Aborigines from drinking at the Student Prince Hotel near Sydney