

Rightist Mobilizations and Imperialist Intrigues

Turmoil in the Balkans

U.S./UN/NATO Forces Out!

DECEMBER 16—Once again the world's attention has been drawn to the Balkans, where the combination of local nationalist enmities and imperialist intrigues has produced bloody slaughter. Elections in Bosnia in September, held under the guns of 50,000 UN and NATO "peacekeeping" forces, predictably confirmed the de facto partition of the country into "ethnically cleansed" Serb, Croat and Muslim regions under the control of hardline nationalist parties which have devoted themselves to killing each other's supporters. In November, immediately after his re-election, U.S. president Clinton announced that the imperialist troops, which had been scheduled to leave Bosnia by year's end, would be staying on for (at least) another 18 months. These will include combat units from Germany, which already has thousands of "non-combat" support forces in Croatia—the first deployment of German military might outside its borders since the defeat of Hitler's Third Reich.

At the same time, both Serbia and Croatia are in the throes of political crises. Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic is confronted by large, student-centered protests in Belgrade led by right-wing nationalist demagogues, now equivocally backed by Washington. In Croatia, the fascistic regime of Franjo Tudjman, who is reportedly dying of cancer, has been shaken by a major railway strike and mass protests against government censorship. But the Croatian bourgeois politicians jockeying to succeed Tudjman are, if anything, even more right-wing than this open admirer of the World War II fascist Ustasha and



Reuters



Milos Vukadinovic

U.S.-backed rightist anti-government protesters in Belgrade carry Serbian chauvinist flag. Opposition leader Vuk Draskovic (above), nationalist reactionary and open admirer of World War II Chetnik mass murderers.

would perpetuate a police state dedicated to a Greater Croatia as a client of German and/or American imperialism. And the fall of Milosevic at the hands of the present opposition would in no way benefit the working people of Serbia but would simply further the interests of revanchist chauvinism and Western imperialism.

Capitalist counterrevolution and the resulting destruction of the Yugoslav bureaucratically deformed workers state has brought the Balkan peoples all-sided communalist massacres, economic immiseration, fascistic terror and intensified repression. The U.S., German, other NATO and UN imperialist "peacekeepers" will not bring peace but only lay the basis for new and perhaps wider wars. Western diplomats are already nervously speculating that next spring will bring a renewal of communalist bloodletting in Bosnia. We say: U.S., German, other NATO and UN forces out of the Balkans!

National antagonisms and economic immiseration can be overcome only through *working-class unity in struggle* against the new exploiters—the imperialists and their local agents. We oppose any political support to the competing counterrevolutionary nationalist cliques in ex-Yugoslavia. What is necessary is the formation of revolutionary Marxist—i.e., Trotskyist—parties capable of breaking the working masses from the nationalist demagogues on all sides in the fight for a socialist federation of the Balkans as part of a Socialist United States of Europe.

Serbian Nationalism Comes Back to Haunt Milosevic

The economic devastation wrought by capitalist counterrevolution throughout East Europe and the former Soviet Union has been compounded in Serbia by the effects of the war and the imperialist embargo, which the U.S. is now threat-

ening to renew in support of the rightist mobilizations against the Milosevic regime. The 650,000 ethnic Serb refugees from Croatia and Bosnia who have flooded into the country, where they are treated like unwanted second cousins, now make up 6 percent of Serbia's population. Industrial production has plummeted by 60 percent since July 1991, when the new Balkan wars began. Real wages for industrial workers are *one-tenth* what they were in Titoist Yugoslavia, while rampant unemployment led to an *eightfold* increase between 1990 and 1994 in the number of people living below the poverty line.

The latest challenge to Milosevic began in mid-November when his regime annulled the outcome of municipal elections which the Zajedno (Together) oppositional bloc won in the capital of Belgrade and a majority of other Serbian cities. As long as the Serbs were winning

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Washington Arms Zedillo's War Against Peasant Guerrillas

U.S. Hands Off Mexico!

In recent months, spokesmen for U.S. imperialism have been flagrantly provocative in pushing for direct military intervention in Mexico. In September, a week after a series of bold raids on police stations and military outposts by the peasant guerrillas of the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR), U.S. ambassador James Jones openly flouted Mexican national sentiment by publicly urging the country's rulers to accept U.S. military and intelligence

aid. Speaking in Mexico City and Cancún, Jones denounced the EPR as a "terrorist" group and repeatedly urged the Mexican government of President Ernesto Zedillo to accept "whatever they need" to crush the insurgents, including CIA "information" and Pentagon military support. A report in the *San Francisco Chronicle* (10 December) noted that this "was the first time in recent years than an American diplomat had broken the Mexican taboo on even speaking of U.S. armed involvement south of the border."

Zedillo immediately ordered a brutal "anti-terrorist" crackdown, subjecting the country to a virtual state of siege. Some 500 peasant and working-class

activists have been detained or tortured since late June. And while a rattled Mexican official replied to Jones' "offer" by insisting that "the Mexican government is exclusively responsible for keeping order within its borders," Washington's neocolonial lackeys in the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) regime conspicuously refused to rule out direct American involvement.

In fact, the U.S. has been quietly providing military assistance to Mexico for decades, including construction of airfields. In recent years, Washington has funneled significant quantities of arms and military equipment to Mexico. Shortly after the outbreak of the Zapatista (EZLN) peasant uprising in Chia-

pas in January 1994, the Pentagon began delivering large quantities of military vehicles, helicopters and weaponry to the Mexican armed forces. Thousands of U.S. troops, Drug Enforcement Agency narcs and CIA agents were deployed in Guatemala for "training exercises" near the border with Chiapas. At the same time, Clinton has massively beefed up militarization of the border with Mexico in order to terrorize immigrants seeking to cross into *el norte*. And Zedillo has agreed to an unprecedented pact to have Mexican soldiers trained at U.S. bases. Meanwhile, the "School of the Americas" (more accurately known as the "School of the

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Italian Spartacist Youth Leaflet

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

The following leaflet was issued on November 20 by our comrades of the Italian Spartacist Youth Group, who have been active in mobilizations in defense of the immigrants threatened with eviction and deportation.

For more than a week, 60 immigrant workers have taken refuge in the Church of St. Bernard in downtown Milano, threatened with eviction by the police and Mayor Formentini and abandoned by the left. In fact, Rifondazione Comunista (RC) and the Party of the Democratic Left (PDS) are busy working overtime to support the anti-working-class and anti-immigrant government of the Ulivo (Olive Tree) coalition in its drive to be admitted to the Maastricht Treaty's "monetary union" and its racist capitalist "Fortress Europe." To achieve this the govern-

ment is bleeding the working class dry and smashing any and all social gains, including the already impoverished and wretched public school system. This eviction comes in the context of the threatened expulsion of 250,000 immigrants who are to be targeted as "illegals" when the minimal protections offered by the apartheid decree of the former Dini government expire. The chief of police is already talking about chartering flights to carry out the deportations.

Evicted from the immigrant hostel on Via Pitteri, the last of the hostels to have been raided by the police, the immigrants are demanding the fundamental right to a decent place to live. But this racist capitalist state, supported by the PDS and RC, has deployed the army along both coasts to drive back into the sea the tens of thou-

sands of people who are fleeing immiseration, war and hunger. The capitalist state offers only oppression, racist terror and police repression. Exploited as low-wage labor, living in constant fear of deportation, immigrants are deprived of all rights and live under the guns of the overseers in the southern fields and under those of the cops in the northern factories. The ruling class uses immigrant workers as scapegoats for the profound crisis of capitalism. We say: *Defend the immigrants evicted from Via Pitteri! Housing, jobs and unionization are rights for immigrants, too! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No to the distinction between "legal" and "illegal" immigrants—anyone who enters the country must be allowed to remain here with full citizenship rights!*

From the demonstrations in defense of the *sans papiers* (undocumented immigrants) in France to those for aboriginal and immigrant rights in Australia, workers and immigrants have mobilized in the streets to defend the rights of all immigrants and minorities. But parties like Rifondazione and the PDS, in order to rule in the interests of the capitalist state, try to prevent any struggle against racist oppression. The RC and PDS were enthusiastic supporters of the Martelli law that imposed border controls and "illegal alien" status. Both parties voted confidence in the Dini government just a few days before it introduced its apartheid anti-immigrant law, and both joined in propping up the popular-front Ulivo government headed by Prime Minister Prodi. Behind its talk of "fighting the right," this class-collaborationist government—which unites Rifondazione, the PDS, the Bank of Italy and the Vatican—has no purpose other than defending the class interests of the Italian bourgeoisie.

The popular-front government is doing what the right was unable to do: cut pensions, health care and education, pass racist laws, and intensify the oppression of women in the home. The Ulivo/RC popular front increases immiseration and attacks the working class and petty bourgeoisie in the name of the left. It drives whole layers of the middle class into the arms of the fascists and of the Northern



Financial Times
Rome protest against anti-Semitism and anti-immigrant racism in 1992 drew 30,000.

League racists, whose "greenshirt" gangs threaten to impose racist "law and order" in the cities. The racist, chauvinist street demonstrations led by the blackshirts of the fascist National Alliance/MSI are becoming ever more ominous and dangerous. *It is urgent that the working class unite with all the intended victims of the fascists—immigrants, Jews, Roma [Gypsies], women and gays—to smash the blackshirt scum before they smash us. Defeat the racist capitalist austerity of the Prodi/PDS/RC government! Break with the class collaboration of the RC and PDS! For class struggle to bring the working class to power!*

What's needed is a party that fights to mobilize the powerful and combative proletariat of Italy in defense of its immigrant class brothers. The working class is the only force that has the social power and the vital interest to fight against the bourgeois state and to eliminate the racist oppression that is intrinsic to capitalism. What's needed are powerful workers mobilizations to defend immigrants from police terror and to smash the racist and fascist scum. For this to happen, there needs to be a struggle against the present leadership of the workers movement, which subordinates the vital interests of the exploited and the oppressed to the profits of their exploiters and oppressors. What's necessary is a multiethnic revolutionary party that fights for the liberation of all the oppressed—women, immigrants, homosexuals, all minorities—through workers revolution. This is what we of the Spartacist Youth Group fight for.

For worker/immigrant/student mobilizations to smash racist terror! Build a multiethnic revolutionary party that is a tribune of all the oppressed! Workers of the world, unite! ■



TROTSKY

Revolutionaries and the British Labour Party

The Spartacist League/Britain's recent call for critical support to the candidate of the Socialist Labour Party is an example of how Leninists seek to polarize mass reformist parties like the British Labour Party, which retains the allegiance of the mass of the workers. Unlike the bulk of the fake-revolutionary left in Britain, which is organically loyal to the Labour Party, Trotskyists seek through common work with Labour's



LENIN

working-class base to take them from their experiences of betrayal to a fight against their pro-capitalist misleaders and for a revolutionary program and party. Writing on the Independent Labour Party, which disaffiliated from Labour in the early 1930s, Leon Trotsky emphasized the dangers for revolutionaries both of ignoring the Labour Party and of politically accommodating to it.

The ILP broke away from the Labour Party. That was correct. If the ILP wanted to become the revolutionary lever, it was impossible for the handle of this lever to be left in the hands of the thoroughly opportunist and bourgeois careerists. *Complete and unconditional political and organizational independence of a revolutionary party is the first prerequisite for its success.*

But while breaking away from the Labour Party, it was necessary immediately to turn toward it. Of course, this was not to court its leaders, or to pay them bittersweet compliments, or even to suppress their criminal acts—no, only characterless centrists who imagine themselves revolutionaries seek a road to the masses by *accommodating* themselves to the leaders, by humoring them and reassuring them at every step of their friendship and loyalty. A policy of this sort is a road that leads down to the swamp of opportunism. One must seek a way to the reformist masses not through the favor of their leaders, but against the leaders, because opportunist leaders represent not the masses, but merely their backwardness, their servile instincts and, finally, their confusion....

The Leninist method of the united front and political fraternization with reformists exclude each other. *Temporary practical fighting* agreements with mass organizations even headed by the worst reformists are inevitable and obligatory for a revolutionary party. Lasting political alliances with reformist leaders without a definite program, without concrete duties, without the participation of the masses themselves in militant actions, are the worst type of opportunism.

— Leon Trotsky, "Cardinal Questions Facing the ILP" (January 1934)

WORKERS VANGUARD

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EDITOR: Len Meyers

EDITOR, YOUNG SPARTACUS PAGES: Joe Sol

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No. 658

27 December 1996

Free Geronimo!

DECEMBER 16—A critical hearing started today in a Santa Ana, California courtroom to determine if imprisoned former Black Panther Party leader Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) will finally be granted a new trial. Geronimo has been behind bars for 26 years, framed up by the FBI and Los Angeles Police Department for a murder the state knows he did not commit. The key prosecution witness against Geronimo in the 1972 trial, Julius Butler, will be confronted on the stand with evidence confirming that he was an informant not only for the FBI and LAPD but also for the L.A. district attorney's office. Also to be called is L.A. Superior Court judge Richard Kalustian, who as D.A. at the time colluded with Butler and withheld these facts from the defense and the jury.

Over the years, every element of the state's case against Geronimo has

been proven to be a fabrication in the service of the FBI's COINTEL-PRO operation to "neutralize" fighters against racial oppression. A united-front protest initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and endorsed by a number of trade unions and labor officials will be held in Los Angeles tomorrow to demand: "Free Geronimo Now! Down With FBI COINTEL-PRO/LAPD Frame-Up!" This is part of the needed fight to bring the organized power of labor to bear in the struggle for Geronimo's freedom and against capitalist state repression.

The current hearing is expected to continue throughout the month. Turn out to Orange County Superior Court, Department 35, 700 Civic Center Drive West, Santa Ana. **Fill the courtroom in solidarity with Geronimo!** For further information, call the PDC in Los Angeles at (213) 380-8897 or in New York at (212) 406-4252.

Join the Fight to Defend Chicago Anti-Klan Three!

A critical court date is approaching for three participants in the June 29 Chicago anti-Klan protest who face false charges of assault and battery against police and obstructing police. Charges against six other anti-Klan protesters arrested on June 29 were dropped previously. Earlier this month, a Chicago Circuit Court judge granted the Anti-Klan Three an evidentiary hearing, now scheduled for January 23, based on their motion to drop the charges (see "New Legal Papers Document Cop Vendetta: Defend Chicago Anti-Klan Three—Drop the Charges!" WV No. 657, 6 December). It is especially important for the integrated labor movement and all opponents of racist terror to turn out on January 23 in solidarity with the Anti-Klan Three.

The January 23 hearing will provide an opportunity for the anti-Klan defendants to put the Chicago police and city officials on trial for suppressing news of the KKK's plans to stage its race-hate provocation and for then brutally attacking the anti-Klan protest. The defense motion documents how the anti-racist activists are being persecuted for exercising their First Amendment rights of assembly and protest and in order to justify the cops' vindictive assault on the anti-KKK protest after a violent Klan provocation was decisively routed. As the defense motion pointed out, "Police approached the June 29 demonstration as a 'test run' of their tactical methods of suppressing and controlling political expression in the context of the Democratic Convention" which was held in August.

A wide range of labor, leftist and civil rights organizations and leaders—from the U.S. and Canada to Brazil, France, South Africa and Japan—have written to the Cook County State's Attorney over the past six months to demand that all charges against the anti-Klan demonstrators be dropped. Three recent statements are printed below.

The numerous protest letters and solidarity statements reflect the understanding that those who oppose the KKK's racist terror are acting on behalf of all working people and oppressed. As Earl Silbar, vice president of AFSCME Local 3506 in Chicago, wrote: "The Klan represents violent racism and anti-Semitism. Wherever the Klan holds sway, unions are diminished." Ernst Springer, chairman of the League of Antifascists in Leipzig, Germany, wrote "to protest against people being put on trial for no other reason than that they have done what one would expect every decent human being to do—to stand up against racism and the oppression of minorities."

All out on January 23! Drop the charges against the Anti-Klan Three!

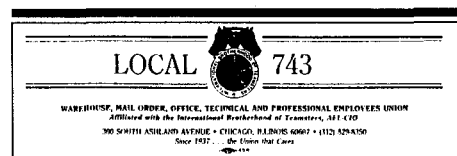


WV Photo

Protesters rally outside Chicago court, December 2, before hearing for Anti-Klan Three. A wide range of labor and civil liberties organizations around the world have demanded dropping of charges.

The Union requests that all charges be dropped against the nine Anti-Klan protesters. The nine Anti-Klan protesters represent freedom and justice for all, regardless of race, color, creed or national origin.

Yours truly,
Leon Harris
Secretary-Treasurer



Chicago, Illinois
27 November 1996

RE: CHARGES
PLACED AGAINST: Mr. Gene Herson
Jeff Lyons
Dennis Glass

Dear Sir:

The case against the above named individuals is scheduled to be heard on Monday, December 2, 1996.

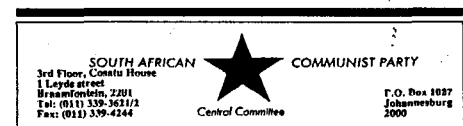
Teamsters Local No. 743, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, represents over 17,000 members living in the Chicagoland area. Our membership consists of various ethnic groups, many of which are minority.

On behalf of our 17,000 members, we respectfully request that all charges against the above individuals be dropped. We do understand and appreciate that laws must be adhered to, but the demonstration in which these charged individuals participated protested a highly sensitive issue (racism).

The Executive Board of Local 743 pleads that understanding and clemency be shown and that the charges against Messrs. Herson, Lyons and Glass be dropped.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Very truly yours,
Chester Glanton
President



Johannesburg, South Africa
3 December 1996

The South African Communist Party is writing this letter to you in regards to the arrests of several trade unionists and anti-racist activists that took place on 29 June 1996 in Chicago.

We are greatly concerned that the police felt it necessary to arrest and

charge these people who were part of an organised protest against the racist and neo-fascist Ku Klux Klan. Given the history of our own country, of which you are no doubt well aware, it is disturbing to us that those who were attempting to show their disapproval of racism and hate-mongering were arrested, charged and now face possible imprisonment. We have learnt, through decades of struggling to free this country, that racism and hate have many different faces and where ordinary people actively oppose this, it is not they who should become victims of law enforcement but rather those who seek to sow fear and division.

On behalf of our membership and all anti-racist South Africans, we call on your office to drop the charges against the nine accused. It is our considered opinion that those people who would preach hate and division are the ones worthy of your office's attention, not those who seek to

bring communities and peoples together in opposition to such.

Sincerely,
Jeremy Cronin
Deputy General Secretary

Send protest statements demanding that the charges against the Anti-Klan Three be dropped to: Richard Devine, State's Attorney of Cook County, Richard J. Daley Center, 55 W. Randolph Street, Chicago, IL 60602. Funds for the defense are urgently needed! Send donations (earmarked "Anti-Klan Protesters") and copies of protest statements to the Partisan Defense Committee. Contact the PDC in Chicago at P.O. Box 802867, Chicago, IL 60602-2867, phone (312) 454-4931; or in New York at P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013-0099, phone (212) 406-4252. ■

Boston Professor Witchhunted for Cuba Tour

We print below a letter by the Partisan Defense Committee in defense of Roxbury professor Tom Reeves, targeted by the U.S. government for taking students to Cuba.

5 December 1996

David Harmon
Chief, Enforcement Division
Office of Foreign Assets Control
U.S. Treasury Department
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Mr. Harmon:

We vehemently protest the persecution of Roxbury Community College professor Tom Reeves, facilitator of the college's Caribbean Focus Program. As part of "The Cuban Reality," an accredited course under the Caribbean Focus Program, a professor, 15 students and a journalist visited Cuba to see the country without Washington's censors and chaperons. Since their return, the Treasury Department, abetted by the college's administration, has subjected Professor Reeves to a McCarthyite witchhunt, demanding he turn over records of the Cuban Field Study Tour, including the names and addresses of the students. For his principled refusal to name names Professor Reeves is now threatened with imprisonment and fines of up to a quarter of a million dollars. We demand: Hands off Professor Reeves!

The hypocrisy of the American government is boundless. For decades the U.S. railed against restrictions on travel imposed by the former USSR and Cuba, while at the same time criminally prosecuting those who traveled to countries in which U.S.-supported capitalist regimes were overthrown—Vietnam, China and especially Cuba. While anti-racist fighters like Assata Shakur and Robert F. Williams were able to find refuge in Cuba from racist KKK and cop terror, the U.S. slammed its doors shut to Central American workers and peasants fleeing the death squad assassins trained at the School of the Americas.

We oppose the isolation of Cuba from the standpoint of the interests of the international working class and we oppose the persecution of those who travel there as an expression of their solidarity. The participants in "The Cuban Reality" course have the right to travel wherever they want. We demand an end to the witchhunt of Professor Reeves and the investigation of his students. U.S. hands off Cuba! End the embargo!

Very truly yours,
Paul Cooperstein
For the Partisan Defense Committee



Oakland, California
20 November 1996

Warehouse Union Local 6, ILWU, who represents 3,300 active members and 2,700 retirees, protests the unjustifiable arrest and jailing of the nine Anti-Klan demonstrators by the Chicago Police.

We are well aware that the Ku Klux Klan activities are designed to promote race terror and race wars. The Klan's intended victims are the Blacks, Latinos, Jews of Chicago and throughout the United States. We are fully aware that the labor movement is on the Klan's hit list.

We are outraged that the City of Chicago should support the Klan who have had a history of race terror and murder.

Union Tops Join in Capitalist Rulers' Witchhunt

Australia: Defend Canberra Anti-Racist Militants!



Reuters photos

MELBOURNE—Tens of thousands of people demonstrated here on December 8 to protest against an escalating wave of racist violence across the country. More than twice as many attacks against Asians were reported in September and October than in the previous two months. Giving open expression to this racist onslaught, in September newly elected Queensland MP (Member of Parliament) Pauline Hanson used her first speech to Parliament for a vicious tirade against Aborigines and Asians.

While more mainstream capitalist politicians have sought to distance themselves from Hanson's vitriolic rantings, the racist offensive has been encouraged and pushed by the capitalist rulers. Since his election in March, right-wing Liberal Party prime minister John Howard and his Conservative Coalition government have launched a frontal assault on trade unions and minorities. Notably, Howard has refused to openly denounce Hanson, a former member of his party. At the same time, the government—aided and abetted by the Laborite leaders of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)—has pursued a racist vendetta against Aborigines and trade unionists involved in a multiracial protest outside Parliament House in the national capital of Canberra in August.

The storming of Parliament House on August 19 showed the class anger seething at the base of Australian society. In the largest demonstration ever held in Canberra, up to 35,000 miners, striking auto workers, heavily Southeast Asian

Trade-union, Aboriginal and youth protesters stormed Canberra's Parliament House, fought off bloody cop attack, August 19.



manufacturing workers and other trade unionists joined Aborigines and students to protest government attacks on welfare and the unions. As we wrote at the time, "In a country dominated for decades by an official policy of 'White Australia' racism, this militant, multiracial outpouring of anger was truly spectacular" ("Workers, Aborigines Storm Australian Parliament," WV No. 650, 30 August).

The ACTU leadership had planned the rally as a vehicle to pressure Parliament to "amend" its anti-union legislation. But the lid came off when the cops attacked Aborigines marching at the head of a contingent of 6,000, many of them members of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU). As the workers rushed in to defend the Aboriginal protesters, the cops were overwhelmed and retreated to the Parliament building, where a two-hour battle ensued. The following day, riot squads from the Australian Federal Police (AFP) again assaulted Aboriginal protesters outside the Parliament. Reporting on the August 19 confrontation, a headline in the *Building Worker* (23 August), a CFMEU publication in Victoria, summed up: "Workers Defend Aboriginal Brothers & Sisters—Police Provoke Workers."

In the wake of the August protests, the government, cops and capitalist media launched a nationwide witchhunt against Aboriginal, trade-union and youth activists. Under the rubric of a special task force code-named "Operation Veneer," the AFP has laid serious criminal charges against at least 13 people. This is on top of the 50 people who were arrested on August 19 and 20 in Canberra. In a November 18 protest letter, the Partisan Defence Committee denounced the witchhunt:

"The nature and target of the charges make clear the government's intent to jail a layer of Aboriginal, union and youth militants. We denounce Operation Veneer as a sinister exercise in domestic police repression targeting those the Howard government deems politically 'undesirable.' It is calculated to intimidate into silence the intended victims of, and those who would protest against, the deeply reactionary political, economic and social agenda of the Howard Conservative Coalition. We demand that all the charges

against the Canberra anti-government protesters be dropped immediately!"

The Spartacist League/Australia distributed a leaflet at the December 8 demonstration calling for defence of the victimised Canberra protesters: "We salute the Aboriginal, unionist and student youth militants who in integrated social struggle defeated this calculated cop provocation. The strength of the union movement must be brought to bear in defence of the militants of 19-20 August." The December demonstration bore no comparison with the militant, union-centred actions last August. No Aboriginal contingents and only a handful of trade-union contingents were present at the Melbourne rally, while a steady stream of popular-frontist, "patriotic" rhetoric—including from Tory (Liberal) politicians—emanated from the platform. SL/A placards counterposed a class-struggle fight against racism, demanding that charges be dropped against the Canberra militants and calling for "Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!" and "For Union/Minority Mobilisations Against Racist Terror!"

ALP/ACTU Tops Line Up Behind Racist Witchhunt

Meanwhile, the traitorous leaders of the ACTU and the Australian Labor Party (ALP) have collaborated with the government witchhunt, fingering militants to the cops and promising their capitalist masters an internal purge of anti-racist trade unionists. Doug Cameron, national secretary of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union (AMWU), wrote in the *Metal Worker* (October 1996): "I have advised the ACTU that if any AMWU official is charged with a serious offence in relation to the rally, and found guilty, then their employment with the AMWU will be terminated." And the CFMEU leadership forced New South Wales organiser Vriduar Vega to resign his union post long before he was charged. Other known union targets of the witchhunt have been told that they are effectively on their own.

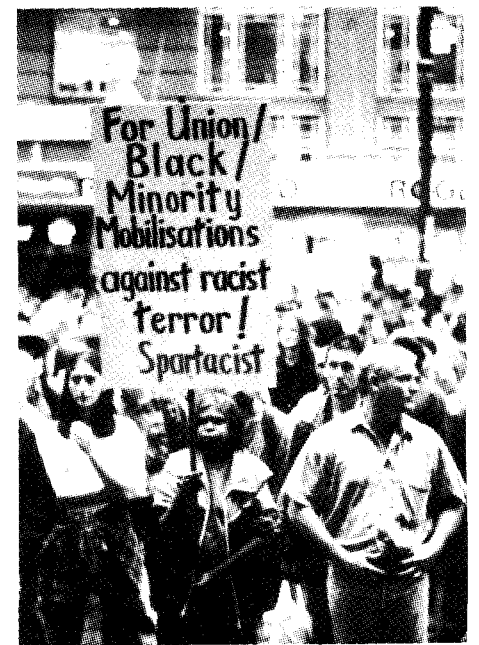
In the present climate of vicious racist reaction, the union bureaucrats are deliberately seeking to cut off the hand that

reached out from the organised working class to the deeply oppressed and marginalised Aboriginal people. The cops have always operated in the knowledge that they have a green light from the government—Liberal or Labor—to harass, intimidate, brutalise and murder Aboriginal people. Already subjected to the highest per capita rate of imprisonment in the world, Aborigines are now facing a dramatic escalation of state repression. By collaborating with Howard's witchhunt, the pro-capitalist union tops are, in effect, pledging to the bosses to do their utmost to prevent the organised workers from ever again defending Aboriginal people from racist state terror.

In purging anti-racist militants from the unions, the ACTU misleaders demonstrate their role as labor lieutenants of capital. Far from representing the interests of the working class, the union bureaucracy is a thin layer which seeks to prop up this decaying capitalist system. Racist attacks against Aborigines and immigrants, particularly Asians, are at the cutting edge of the capitalist rulers' assault on the living standards and union organisations of the entire working class. The multiracial working class has the potential social power and direct class interest to defeat all manifestations of capitalist tyranny and state terror directed against the oppressed. What stands in the way of unleashing the power of the proletariat is backward consciousness—most profoundly the deep racism rooted in this country's history as a European settler colony on Asia's periphery—and the pro-capitalist union bureaucrats and Laborite politicians who act as transmission belts for, and reinforcers of, this backward consciousness.

For a Revolutionary Workers Party!

With the ALP out of government for the first time in 13 years, the reformist and centrist left groups are offering their services as waterboys for the Laborite ACTU bureaucracy. As the union tops join in the bourgeois frenzy about "mob rule" and "violence" over the Canberra protest, the reformists have abandoned any defence of the victimised militants. The Democratic Socialist Party (DSP,



Australasian Spartacist

Spartacist League/Australia calls for class-struggle fight against racist oppression.

formerly associated with Jack Barnes' quirky, reformist Socialist Workers Party in the U.S.) and its youth group Resistance were rebaited by the capitalist media in the immediate aftermath of August 19. Yet not once in the dozen or so issues of its *Green Left Weekly* that have appeared since August has the DSP so much as mentioned Operation Veneer or its victims.

For its part, the right-centrist Workers Power (WP) group in Australia managed to whimper: "Certain union leaders tacitly supported the condemnation of militants in Canberra by carrying out a witchhunt of their memberships" (*Workers Power*, November 1996-January 1997). To describe the union tops' purge as

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Australasian SPARTACIST

Racist ALP Tops Paved the Way for Howard's Anti-Immigrant Assault

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As New Appeal Is Filed Against "Hanging Judge" Sabo

Mumia Abu-Jamal Wins Ruling Against Prison Authorities

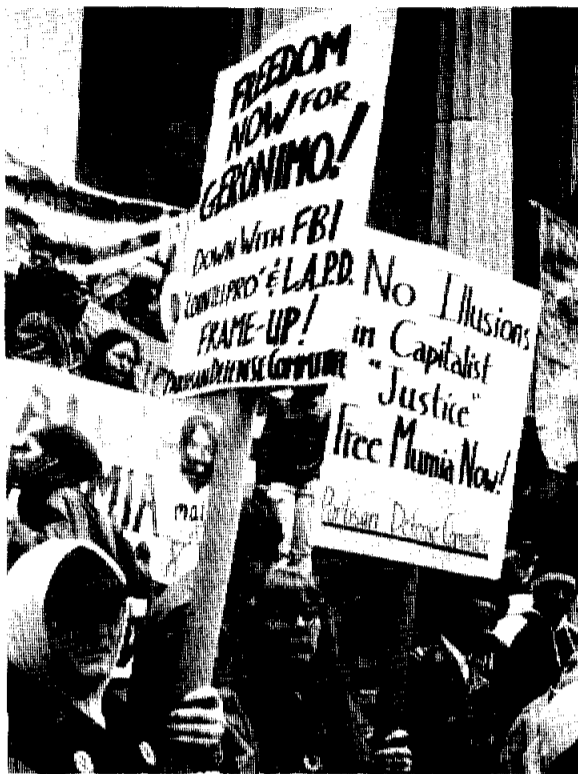
Death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal has recently won a legal victory against Pennsylvania prison authorities in U.S. Federal District Court in Pittsburgh. Last year, Jamal brought a civil suit against the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections for punishing him for his powerful prison writings by blocking his access to media interviews. The suit also charged the authorities with obstructing Jamal's access to legal counsel by intercepting privileged correspondence between him and his attorneys and forwarding copies to the office of Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge. In June, a court magistrate found that prison officials had violated Jamal's rights to free speech and to legal counsel. At the same time, the magistrate allowed that such actions were justifiable if the authorities could claim "a reasonable suspicion" that Jamal was violating prison rules (see "Jamal Wins First Round Against Prison Gag Order," WV No. 648, 5 July).

Now, on December 4, Judge Donetta Ambrose has ruled against a challenge by prison authorities to the June finding, on the basis that officials who intercepted, opened and read Jamal's correspondence with his attorneys "interfered entirely" with the ability of Mumia's lawyers to represent him—just as Ridge was preparing to sign a warrant for Jamal's execution. Ambrose concluded her ruling by citing the state's violation of Jamal's basic constitutional rights:

"The claim made here is one founded not only on the right to access to the courts but also upon plaintiff's right to maintain confidential communications with his attorney, a right that is founded upon the common law, upon the Sixth Amendment and upon the Fourteenth Amendment."

In her ruling, Ambrose also gave the lie to the state's claims that Jamal had deliberately waited until the warrant was signed in June 1995 before filing a petition for "post-conviction relief" (PCRA) to overturn his 1982 frame-up conviction and death sentence on false charges of killing Philadelphia policeman Daniel Faulkner in 1981. This lie was repeatedly thrown at Jamal during the PCRA hearing in the summer of 1995 by "hanging judge" Albert Sabo, who also presided at Jamal's 1982 "trial." Not surprisingly, Sabo ruled against the PCRA petition. Yet Judge Ambrose has now acknowledged that the prison authorities' actions led to a delay in filing the PCRA because of "the unwillingness of counsel and of Plaintiff [Jamal] to communicate freely by mail after having been informed that legal mail had been opened by prison officials." Jamal's defense team will submit Ambrose's ruling to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in support of their appeal of Sabo's ruling last summer denying Mumia's PCRA petition.

Five days after the Pittsburgh ruling, on December 9, Jamal's attorneys in Philadelphia submitted an appeal to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court seeking to over-



Partisan Defense Committee supporters at December 9 Wall Street rally for Mumia. WV Photos

turn the latest atrocity in Sabo's court. On November 1, concluding a hearing ordered by the state Supreme Court, Sabo dismissed dramatic new evidence both of Jamal's innocence and of the long, sordid record of police coercion of witnesses and suppression of evidence in the case. The new evidence was provided by the powerful testimony of eyewitness Veronica Jones, who told the court how she saw two men run from the scene of the shooting, corroborating her initial account to the police in 1981 and that of four other eyewitnesses.

These accounts proved that Jamal, who was sitting on the ground bleeding severely from a near-fatal gunshot wound inflicted by Faulkner when police ruled against the PCRA petition. Yet Judge Ambrose has now acknowledged that the prison authorities' actions led to a delay in filing the PCRA because of "the unwillingness of counsel and of Plaintiff [Jamal] to communicate freely by mail after having been informed that legal mail had been opened by prison officials." Jamal's defense team will submit Ambrose's ruling to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in support of their appeal of Sabo's ruling last summer denying Mumia's PCRA petition.

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The appeal points out:

"Had Jamal been provided a true opportunity to present a defense at the 1982 trial, the evidence thus would have shown that:

"(1) the only two eyewitnesses to identify Jamal as the 'shooter' both received undisclosed favors from police and the prosecution in return for their testimony; (2) five eyewitnesses saw someone flee the scene, and two of these witnesses initially said the fleeing person was the shooter."

The appeal also restates other key evidence documenting the frame-up of Mumia, from the cops' contrived story of Mumia's "confession" to the lack of any ballistic evidence linking Mumia to Faulkner's shooting.

The same day as Jamal's lawyers filed the new appeal in Philadelphia, some 500 people joined in a protest on Wall Street in New York City to mark the 15th anniversary of Mumia's arrest. The reformist organizers of the protest, notably Workers World Party and Refuse & Resist, focused on demands for a new trial. But the entire history of Mumia's frame-up argues against reliance in the capitalist courts. Even the recent ruling by Judge Ambrose points to the fact that the courts, the prison authorities, the governor and the prosecution are joined by a thousand ties in a system of racist injustice. As a Partisan Defense Committee sign at the protest read, "No Illusions in Capitalist

'Justice'—Free Mumia Now!"

The gross interference by prison officials and the governor's office in Mumia's defense efforts—even as Jamal was attempting to challenge the death sentence hanging over him—is only one of countless examples of how the racist "justice" system has targeted Mumia for death. From the time he was a young leader of the Philadelphia Black Panther Party in the 1960s, Mumia was subjected to daily cop surveillance as part of the FBI's "Counter-Intelligence Program" (COINTELPRO), which sought to "neutralize" the Panthers and other radical activists. The state's vendetta continued when Jamal was a widely known journalist who exposed the racist reality of daily life in Philly, and later he became a supporter of the MOVE organization. It culminated in Mumia's being falsely charged and sent to death row in 1982.

As Marxists, we place our confidence in the power of the working class and the oppressed. The wave of international protests for Mumia in the summer of 1995, which helped stay the executioner's hand at the time, gave a glimpse of the kind of militant struggle that must take place to free Mumia. As part of our fight to sweep away this capitalist system of racist repression and injustice, we demand: Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■

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Spartacist League/Britain Calls for Vote to SLP Candidate

WORKERS HAMMER Supplement
 Workers Hammer is the newspaper of the Spartacist League
 8 December 1985

Vote Ken Capstick!

We struggle for support for Ken Capstick of the Communist Party (CP) in Barnsley East. The areas on which he is campaigning are not to unemployment, but to the wages of workers and services provided to the poor. It is not a matter of "getting a hearing" from the masses, but of winning the masses to the CP. The CP is the only party in Britain which has a revolutionary programme and leadership. It is the only party which has the courage to stand up to the capitalist class and its agents. The CP is the only party which has the courage to stand up to the imperialist war drive and the nuclear arms race. The CP is the only party which has the courage to stand up to the capitalist class and its agents. The CP is the only party which has the courage to stand up to the imperialist war drive and the nuclear arms race.

LONDON—The Socialist Labour Party (SLP), formed earlier this year when miners' leader Arthur Scargill split from Tony Blair's "New Labour" Party, stood Ken Capstick as its candidate in the December 12 parliamentary by-election in Barnsley East. Predictably, New Labour easily recaptured this safe seat in a former mining area of Yorkshire, thus ending Conservative prime minister John Major's parliamentary majority and possibly hastening a general election. But the desultory turnout of just over one-third of the electorate indicates general working-class disaffection with the union-hating Blairites. The SLP won just over 5 percent of the vote, consistent with what SLP candidate Brenda Nixon got last February in nearby Hemsworth, another Labour stronghold. The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) affiliated to David North's "International Committee" managed to get a derisory 89 votes in their campaign marked by open hatred for the trade unions.

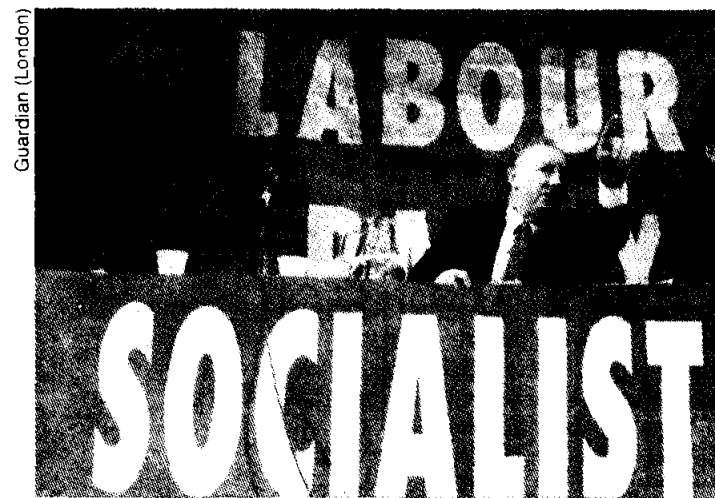
In a December 8 leaflet (reprinted below) distributed in the Barnsley area, the Spartacist League/Britain called for a vote to the SLP candidate, as we did earlier in Hemsworth. Although the SLP's politics amount simply to "old Labour" reformism, the formation of Scargill's party represents a challenge to Labour's decades-long political stranglehold on the British workers movement. Breaking this stranglehold is a key strategic task in forging a revolutionary workers party, which must be built in opposition to Labourite reformism, "old" as well as "new."

Thus our leaflet not only called for support to Capstick, but counterposed to

the SLP's reformism a revolutionary programme and the need for a Trotskyist vanguard party. In doing this, we implemented the tactic of critical support proposed by Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin in 1920 as a means for a small communist vanguard to "get a hearing" from the masses. Critical support is an application of the tactic of the united front: by proposing urgent united action around concrete issues in defence of the working class, the young Communist parties sought to win the mass of workers who retained allegiance to the reformist social-democratic parties, proving in struggle the superiority of the communist programme and leadership. In Britain today, we seek to exacerbate the contradictions between the aspirations and interests of the working-class base of the Labour Party and its pro-capitalist leaders.

SL/B comrades actively campaigned for Capstick alongside SLP members in Barnsley East, going door-to-door with SLP election material. We also intervened in SLP election meetings, where we distributed our leaflet and sold our newspaper, *Workers Hammer*, presenting our revolutionary programme. Notably, our comrades in Barnsley East saw no sign of the fake-revolutionary "entrists" inside the SLP—neither supporters of the semi-liquidated Communist Party of Great Britain nor of the completely liquidated former "Bolshevik" Tendency—who are busily engaged in internecine manoeuvring for internal influence. We did, however, run into one hapless supporter of the right-centrist Workers Power (WP), who appeared outside an

British miners' leader Arthur Scargill at founding conference of Socialist Labour Party.



SLP election rally trying desperately to keep quiet about WP's wretched line of supporting New Labour against the SLP.

Our exposure of the retrograde positions of the Northite SEP and its Healyite predecessor drew howls of outrage from these scab "socialists," who distributed an "Open Letter to Ken Capstick" seeking to justify their support to counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarność and their instigation of an anti-Communist witch-hunt against Scargill and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) on the eve of the 1984-85 miners strike. Fittingly enough, in the "Open Letter," SEP candidate Julie Hyland warns Capstick of "legal steps," threatening to sue him in the same capitalist courts which Mrs. Thatcher's government used to devastate the NUM. Hyland also appeared at a Northite-sponsored "meet the candidates" meeting at Barnsley College alongside spokesmen for all the capitalist parties

in the by-election—the Tories, Liberal Democrats and the ultra-nationalist UK Independence Party. Blending right in, Hyland grotesquely peppered her speech with references to the trade unions as "prison camps" for workers!

The spectacle of a polite "debate" with these parties was obscene, particularly in this area. Hatred for the Tories' decimation of the coal industry, where most working people here once earned their living, runs so deep that, as the *London Guardian* noted, houses displaying a Tory poster in the window tend to get bricks thrown at them. An SL/B supporter spoke from the floor to expose the SEP's pretensions to "socialism" as a fraud, blasting the Healyite-instigated vendetta against the NUM and the SEP's current hostility to the trade unions. Our comrade also noted how the SEP echoes the lies of the Tories and New Labour in blaming the NUM for the

On Northite SEP and "Bolshevik" Tendency in Britain:

How Others See Them

Buying into the imperialist refrain that "communism is dead," many self-proclaimed revolutionary organizations are rapidly ditching any pretense to Leninism. Here we reprint two pieces, initially published in the Communist Party of Great Britain's *Weekly Worker* (28 November), which offer the views of other leftist organizations on the liquidationist antics of two groups who have made much of themselves as the continuators of orthodox Trotskyism—David North's "International Committee of the Fourth International" (IC) and the so-called International Bolshevik Tendency (IBT).

The first article, titled "IBT Opportunism," is signed by the New Zealand Communist Workers Group which, for specialists in centrism, is affiliated to the Liaison Committee of Militants for a Revolutionary Communist International (LCMRCI), a split from the centrist tendency headed by the British Workers Power group. Much of the IBT's leadership consists of elements who individually fled our organization in the early 1980s in the face of the escalating imperialist anti-Soviet war drive. They nonetheless claimed to be the true repository of the principles and program of Spartacism, i.e., revolutionary Trotskyism.

Although this posture was manifestly fraudulent, it is evidently one that the IBT does not seek to maintain in the current climate of post-Soviet reaction. In the past few years, they have more openly flown their own political colors, which are generally attuned to the petty-bourgeois intellectual milieu they inhabit. In Canada, this was demonstrated in their Anglo-chauvinist call for a "no" vote in a referendum on Quebec independence. In New York City last winter,

a prominent BTer joined many of his fellow employees at the liberal-chic *Village Voice* in crossing picket lines of striking building workers.

In Britain, the IBT recently liquidated into Arthur Scargill's left-reformist Socialist Labour Party. The LCMRCI piece nicely captures the IBT's opportunism in this regard. However, it might be more accurate to accuse Scargill—who has stood to the left of the IBT on such crucial questions as the picket line and

Soviet-defensism—of opportunism for letting them join his party.

The second article we reprint here comes from the "Trotskyist Unity Group and Scottish Trotskyist Unity Group" (TUG), an "external faction" of the Northite IC and its erstwhile International Communist Party (ICP) in Britain. The TUG's assessment of the ICP's transformation into the "Socialist Equality Party" is quite apt. However, its call to "return and build upon the international tradition of the ICFI between 1985 and 1987" is evidence of an advanced case of delusion.

Evidently, the supposedly halcyon days of the IC began after David North seized the reins of power from deposed "founder-leader" Gerry Healy in 1985. Picking up where Healy left off (fingering Iraqi leftists to the Saddam Hussein regime, instigating an anti-Communist witchhunt against Scargill, running a British daily newspaper, *Newsline*, financed by murderous military regimes), the "international tradition" of North's ICFI includes a global campaign to assist the capitalist courts in framing up and jailing American Socialist Workers Party supporter Mark Curtis. Meanwhile, the Northites continued to support any and every counter-revolutionary movement aimed at the destruction of the former Soviet degenerated workers state.

Some 30 years ago, we characterized the IC as "political bandits"—people who would say or do anything to advance their own perceived opportunist advantage, including mouthing quite "orthodox" statements when that suited their



Healy's WRP, forerunners of Northite SEP, instigated anti-Communist witch-hunt against Scargill, miners union on eve of 1984-85 strike.

devastation of the coalfields.

Veterans of the heroic year-long miners strike make up much of the SLP's base of support in the bleak former mining villages of South Yorkshire. These militant workers cannot stomach Blair's open denunciation of the unions and New Labour's abandonment of even a pretence of "socialism." One ex-miner who was active in Capstick's campaign explained why he had broken with the Labour Party after years of membership: "Because I'm a socialist, I've always been a socialist." Almost all the SLP activists our comrades encountered bought copies of *Workers Hammer* or subscriptions.

In its campaign bullhounding, the SLP promoted the "socialism of Keir Hardie and Aneurin Bevan," reformist Labour leaders of the pre-World War I and post-World War II eras, respectively. But as an SL/B supporter said in response to Scargill at an SLP election rally, this parliamentary "socialism" never touched a hair on the head of British capitalism. Replying to our comrade, Scargill haughtily dismissed the experience of the 1917 Russian Revolution and Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party, denouncing vanguard parties as "elitist." Instead, Scargill harks back to the piecemeal bourgeois nationalisations carried out by Labour in the late 1940s—within the framework of the continued existence of British imperialism! As we noted in our coverage of the Hemsworth by-election last February (*WV* No. 638, 2 February):

"The reformist program of Scargill's SLP, which tacitly accepts the framework of capitalist parliamentarism, offers no way forward for the working class. We call for abolition of the anachronisms of the monarchy, the established churches and the House of Lords, leading—as the relationship of forces permits—to confrontations over the institution of the House of Commons and the City of London financiers and capitalists it represents. What is needed is a sweeping social revolution culminating with the workers in power, opening a new line of historical development."

Vote Ken Capstick!

We strongly urge support to Ken Capstick of the Socialist Labour Party (SLP) in Barnsley East. The issues on which he



Spartacist League/Britain fought for class-struggle solidarity with heroic 1984-85 miners strike against union-busting Thatcher government.

is campaigning—an end to unemployment, by introducing a four-day working week with no loss in pay, renationalisation of industries and services privatised in the past 16 years, and rebuilding public services—address felt needs of working people. Significantly, he is standing in opposition to Blair's New Labour as did Brenda Nixon in Hemsworth, for whom we also campaigned.

The East Barnsley constituency has been devastated by pit closures and unemployment. During the heroic strike of 1984-85 the Barnsley miners were solid to the end. Today there is anger and bitterness against the Tory government, but also against the Labour bureaucracy's treachery and betrayal. Tony Blair has made it quite clear that New Labour in government will continue the Tories' assault on workers, racial minorities and the poor. Blair has made doubly clear his commitment to the interests of the capitalist rulers by seeking to sever the Labour Party's links to the unions.

The demands raised by Ken Capstick are supportable, but cannot be achieved short of a struggle for the revolutionary

overthrow of British capitalism. The SLP split from the Labour Party offers an opportunity to break the stranglehold of Labourism over the workers movement and an opening for Marxists to intervene to demonstrate the need for an authentic workers party—one imbued with the understanding that the only guarantee of the welfare of the working class and oppressed is through the destruction of a system based on the exploitation of the workers.

Ken Capstick, former Yorkshire NUM vice president, is known for defending the union against the full force of the capitalist state which repeatedly tried to *destroy the NUM*. Neil Kinnock and other right-wing Labour leaders connived with the state, including MI5, and the capitalist media to frame up Arthur Scargill. In 1991 Ken Capstick moved a resolution at the NUM conference recording the union's "profound disgust" at Kinnock's active participation in this vile smear campaign.

During the 1984-85 strike, the same Labour leaders sabotaged the miners struggle, supporting Thatcher's call for a

scab ballot and violence-baiting the miners for defending their picket lines against scabs and cop violence. But it wasn't only the Labour and union leaders who stabbed the miners in the back.

At the 1983 Blackpool TUC conference, Arthur Scargill was unanimously condemned by the capitalist press, the Tories, and the TUC and Labour right wing for telling a simple truth—that Polish Solidarność, a Spencerite company "union," supported by Reagan and Thatcher, was anti-socialist. The political bandits of Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party (who supported Solidarność counterrevolution) instigated this anti-union, anti-communist witchhunt by running to Fleet Street and colluding with the bosses against the NUM on the eve of the strike. We noted that: "The Blackpool conference and the attacks on Scargill could not have made clearer the connection between imperialist anti-Soviet war fever and the bosses' offensive to shackle the unions at home" (*Spartacist Britain* No. 52, September 1983).

No worker should vote for the scab "socialists" of the "Socialist Equality Party" (SEP) who are the direct and immediate heirs of Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP). Where Blair seeks to shackle the unions, this peculiar "equality" party, known until recently as the International Communist Party (ICP), opposes the very existence of trade unions. The SEP declares that: "The trade unions are not workers organisations in any meaningful sense" (*International Worker*, 30 November). The SEP is a cynical and sinister outfit whose political track record chimes with whatever the imperialist bourgeoisie is pushing.

A year ago the ICP denounced concrete international union actions in support of the Liverpool dockers as a "fraud." While many union members are justifiably angry with the TGWU misleaders who have left them high and dry, Liverpool dockers fighting against casualisation, and any worker who has experienced non-union conditions, knows very well that a union, even with a bad leadership, is a hell of a lot better than no union at all.

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purpose. Following the demise of the Soviet Union, North proclaimed his "international" to be the heir to genuine Leninism and the *only* leadership of the world proletariat. Obviously that didn't get them much, so now they're dumping any mention of "communism." This was put quite baldly by longtime British Northite leader Dave Hyland, who is cited in the London *Independent* (25 November) as providing the following rationale for changing their name from the International Communist Party: "Mr. Hyland believes the tag of Communism led people to confuse them with the Marxist-Leninist regimes of the old eastern bloc."

In addition to the generally quite true characterizations made by the "external Leninist faction" on the IC's latest gambit, we offer one more observation: in the recent U.S. elections, North's SEP ran on a platform whose first plank was *opposition* to affirmative action—hardly a vehicle for "equality," much less "socialism."

nist of directions. One example of that is the International Bolshevik Tendency's liquidation into the British SLP.

The IBT is an international grouping with a small nucleus in New Zealand, North America, Germany and recently England. They originated in the early 1980s as the External Tendency of the Spartacists. They share with their mother organisation the same sectarian method towards anti-imperialist struggles and workers' resistance against Stalinist dictatorships. They actively supported the bureaucratic *coups d'état* in Poland (1981) and Russia (1991) and they refused to give critical but unconditional support to the Irish anti-British resistance.

Immediately after Arthur Scargill's call for a Socialist Labour Party they decided to enter the SLP and dissolve themselves inside it, and called on the rest of the left to do the same.

In a letter sent to the "friends" of the IBT in Britain they announced their decision to "liquidate our separate organisation" into the SLP. "The SLP is not a labour party of the counter-revolutionary, pro-imperialist type. On the contrary, its militants have split away from just such a party with the aim of building something qualitatively better. We share this aspiration and are therefore dissolving our separate organisation in order to help them do so. We call on all subjective socialists and communists who agree with the necessity for a new, genuinely socialist and revolutionary workers' party to do the same and join the SLP."

What happened to the group which often criticised the rest of the left for

adapting to reformism? Now they are asking the left to not only conciliate but to dissolve itself into a new left reformist formation with the aim of building an eclectic amalgam.

The IBT demanded that all centrists and Stalinists liquidate into the SLP as the way of creating a revolutionary party. This would not be the result of joint work with all kind of self-proclaimed communists and socialists.

As Trotsky argued, in the case of Marxists inside the U.S. Labor Party, it is necessary to build a revolutionary nucleus as a pole of attraction to force splits, and to attract militant workers to revolutionary politics. We are in favour of Marxists working inside the SLP with the clear aim of trying to avoid the creation [of] a Labour Party mark II. That means that revolutionaries should organise themselves as a clear opposition with a clear programme. When Workers Power attacked the SLP as a "bureaucratically run Stalinist" and "reformist sect" whose candidates should not be voted for anywhere, they made a sectarian and pro-Labour mistake. Nevertheless, the ex-IBT comrades are making another big mistake because they simply decided to accommodate to reformist policies and structures.

Inside the SLP the ex-IBT comrades are not organising any opposition. The SLP left is trying to unite against reformism and bureaucracy. The ex-IBT comrades are opposed to the left grouping within the SLP, the Revolutionary Platform. Their main aim is to present themselves as very loyal members of the SLP apparatus and to try to conquer

positions inside it.

Trotsky adopted the policy of entryism in 1933-34, when the social democratic parties, after Hitler's victory in Germany, were generating leftwing tendencies. His aim was to try to intervene in them and to assist them in going in a revolutionary direction. Entryism meant that it was necessary to have a clear revolutionary line and not to adapt to the apparatus.

This tactic was transformed into a strategy by Michel Pablo, the leader of the Fourth International since the late 1940s. Pablo proposed the deep entryism of the Fourth International sections into the Stalinist parties with the aim of pushing them in a revolutionary direction. For Trotsky entryism was a relatively short-term tactic with the aim of establishing a left faction inside reformism. For Pablo entryism became liquidationism.

The IBT considers that Pabloism destroyed the Fourth International. Nevertheless, they are proposing an even deeper entryism.

The policies of the former British IBT are completely endorsed in the last *1917*, the journal of the IBT, which is mostly dedicated to the British SLP. The IBT heavily attacked all the rest of the left for being "centrist" and for adopting a sectarian attitude towards the SLP. How do they characterise the SLP? They say that it is a progressive left split from Labour, but they refrain from criticising Scargill or the SLP as left reformist or even centrist. While the IBT have an aggressive attitude towards the rest of the British left, it has a soft attitude to a party which

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**weekly
worker**

28 November 1996

IBT Opportunism

Communist Workers Group,
New Zealand LCMRCI

Trotsky used to say that sectarians are opportunists who are afraid of themselves. The most sectarian groups are capable of moving in the most opportu-

Barnsley By-Election...

(continued from page 7)

Arthur Scargill stands in contrast to union-haters like Kinnock, Blair and the SEP. We Spartacists have defended the miners union, and its president, against state attacks and witchhunts before, during and since the 1984-85 miners battle. At the same time we have always stated our revolutionary opposition to Arthur Scargill's politics, which amount to "old" Labour reformism. "Old" Labour politics have never touched a hair on the head of British imperialism and have betrayed workers in struggle. The defeat of the miners paved the way for Thatcher's union-busting and job-slashing offensive. We called for a fighting Triple Alliance of rail, coal and dockers unions striking together to shut down the country. This would have involved a frontal assault on the capitalist system, which requires a revolutionary party. But as we said at the time all Scargill had was the Labour Party, which was stabbing the NUM in the back.

British nationalism has always been a hallmark of Labourism (New or "old"). While the SLP opposes the European

Union as a bosses' club, and makes statements against "narrow nationalism," they in fact push little-England protectionism. Where this leads was illustrated in 1992 when Scargill ended up alongside arch-racists like Winston Churchill junior in a class-collaborationist campaign to "save British coal." This policy of protectionism means opposing foreign imports, inevitably pitting workers in different countries against each other. It also fuels racism and leads to trade wars, which in turn lead to shooting wars. Only a party which fights for international working-class solidarity across national lines can fight for the interests of the working class, above all that means fighting against our own imperialist rulers.

The election statement of the "Socialist Equality Party" barely mentions the British Army's presence in Northern Ireland. They write as if the imperialist troops are merely an "interesting" phenomenon, as if the British working class has no special responsibility to oppose the imperialist machinations of its own bourgeoisie. The role of the British Army is the brutal subjugation of the oppressed Catholic population. For any socialist organisation worthy of the name it is obligatory to call for immediate, unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland.

Scargill's SLP does call for troops out,

Even as Labour leader Neil Kinnock (left) knifed miners strike, miners' leader Arthur Scargill refused to break with him.



although they accept the framework of the imperialist "peace" process, which is premised on the British troops remaining in place. The SLP election leaflet does not address racist terror, anti-immigrant hysteria and anti-Traveller bigotry; the SLP's constitution even bars recent immigrants from membership. We fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants, and for trade union/minority mobilisations against racist terror.

Defensive struggles against capitalist austerity are taking place across Europe. What's needed are Leninist vanguard par-

ties to fight for working-class power. Abolish the survivals of feudalism—the monarchy, the House of Lords and the established churches! For the right of self-determination for Scotland and Wales! British troops out of Northern Ireland now! For a federation of workers republics in the British Isles! We fight to complete the task begun by Lenin and Trotsky when they led the working class to victory in Russia in October 1917—to pursue the class struggle to a victorious conclusion, with state power embodied in workers councils throughout the world. ■

Others See Them...

(continued from page 7)

hasn't broken with Labourism.

Scargill is against making an electoral alliance with any force to his left, despite the fact that Militant Labour has many more members and they expressed their willingness to do that. His constitution forbids the affiliation of any left group. His aim is to try to recruit left Labour MPs, trade union bureaucrats and entire unions.

The SLP's structure is not a democratic centralist one. The branches don't meet regularly with the aim of discussing daily policies, to elaborate collectively the party's line or to discuss how to intervene in conflicts. Several oppositionists have been expelled or witchhunted.

Revolutionaries inside the SLP should fight for a more democratic regime; for a revolutionary opposition; for putting the party into the streets and in places where the SLP wants to stand in elections; for making electoral blocs with left Labourites and unions, with ML and the significant Scottish Socialist Alliance. The IBT is not promoting most of these ideas in its journal.

Like Pablo, the IBT is promoting the creation of left reformist machines in which the far left has to dissolve itself. After around 15 years of existence the IBT remains a tiny sectarian grouping. Today, they are moving in an opportunist direction in a desperate bid to overcome their isolation. As opportunists, they will no longer have to live in fear of themselves.

Fight the Liquidation of the ICP

Edited statement by the Trotskyist Unity Group and Scottish Trotskyist Unity Group (external Leninist faction of the ICFI)

The transformation of the Australian Socialist Labour League and British International Communist Party (ICP) into the Socialist Equality Party represents the political capitulation of the International Committee of the Fourth International to the example set by the American Workers League when it became the Socialist Equality Party.

The U.S. SEP uses the mythical imagery of the American Revolution (see *International Worker* No. 223, 2 November) in order to portray history not as the class struggle but rather as a transhistorical or timeless struggle for equality. Hence, because the bourgeoisie has failed to realise this original moral quest for equality this principle has to be taken up by the working class in the struggle for socialism. However, this emphasis upon inequality is used to justify an ethical appeal to the working class. We can see this in the statement of the British SEP:

"Our party appeals to the humanitarian ideals and egalitarian traditions of the working class: the principle of solidarity with all workers in struggle, the readiness to fight for the common good, the confidence in a better future and determination to make it a reality" (*International Worker* No. 224, 16 November).

This ethical appeal adapts to the spontaneous alienated consciousness of the proletariat in a situation of the crisis of capitalism. Following the example of the U.S. SEP, the British SEP describes capitalist society in terms of the distribution of wealth from poor to rich, and the structures of class oppression are held to express privilege and wealth which are blamed for inequality, rather than the extraction of abstract surplus labour from the proletariat.

So contemporary history becomes the timeless quest for equality, and on this idealist basis the necessity of class struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat is glossed over. Instead, there is an ambiguous call for a democratically controlled economy in order to realise the humanitarian ideals of the proletariat.

The statement formally acknowledges the international role of transnational corporations as the structural basis of exploitation, but this is eclectically connected to an analysis which moralises about the selfish individualism of the

bourgeoisie and its betrayal of the principle of equality as the content of exploitation. This expresses a retreat into utopian socialism and away from scientific socialism by the British SEP, the International Committee of the Fourth International and the U.S. SEP.

The statement formally acknowledges that there is no parliamentary road to socialism and outlines the counterrevolutionary and nationalist role of the Labour Party, but it makes no mention of the need for revolutionary struggle by the proletariat and instead calls for a democratically organised workers' government. The demands of the British SEP for full employment, improved living standards, decent housing, high quality education and comprehensive childcare represent the explicit codification of the collapse of the old ICP into left reformism. For the demands are linked to a cautious and ambiguous evolutionary call for the workers' government to "strive to extend the democratic control of the working class over the economy." As with Militant Labour, nationalisation and planning are equated with socialism, and the struggle to overthrow capitalism is thereby repudiated.

The previous strong emphasis upon proletarian internationalism is now reduced to a moral appeal to extend socialist equality worldwide. This call is actually connected to a nationalist-oriented British road to socialism, in which the democratic workers' government will carry out a socialist foreign policy.

In terms of the British ICP we can locate the Gulf War, Ireland, the bureaucratic liquidation of the Glasgow branch, the poll tax, and the absence of democratic centralism as being key elements in their opportunist and nationalist de-

generation. In order to return to and build upon the international tradition of the ICFI between 1985 and 1987 in its struggle versus the advanced nationalist degeneration of the Workers Revolutionary Party, it is necessary for the ICFI to repudiate the programme and perspectives of the various SEPs.

The TUG offers a united front to all those within the ICFI who want to struggle against this opportunism, and to this end the TUG and the Scottish TUG has now decided to become the external Leninist faction of the ICFI in order to facilitate this necessary political struggle.

It is no coincidence that both the majority of the WRP and the newly created British SEP are liquidating at this moment. This is because they are adapting to the political confusion which exists within the working class in the onset of counterrevolutionary developments in the recent period. These include the longstanding character of the Tory government and the demise of Stalinism and its replacement by bourgeois regimes.

This rejection of scientific practice is also a rejection of a dialectical philosophical approach and its role in analysing political practice. In this instance the WRP majority and the British SEP seem unable to comprehend why their previous revolutionary theory has been transformed into its opposite of a most rapid descent into the opportunism of anti-scientific ethical socialism.

The TUG international conference has come to the conclusion that the present period is characterised by splits, fissures and liquidationism, which poses the need for scientific socialism to rebuild the Fourth International. ■

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WORKERS HAMMER

SLP split: fracture in Labour monolith
Blair kicks unions in the teeth



Towards a revolutionary workers party!

Mexico...

(continued from page 1)

Assassins") at Fort Benning, Georgia has been training Latin American military officers, including a relatively small minority of Mexicans, for decades in torture, execution and "neutralization" of leftists.

More recently, the Clinton administration authorized a shipment of \$37 million in arms, including 53 UH-1H ("Huey") helicopter gunships and four troop transport planes, to Mexico to fight "drug trafficking." While in the U.S., the "war on drugs" has meant savage cop terror in the ghettos, throughout Latin America it has been used as a pretext for death squad terror aimed at crushing all resistance to starvation austerity and union-busting. Even a *New York Times* (25 November) editorial conceded that U.S. "drug aid" to Colombia "was being used to fight guerrillas, and was going to units ranked among the worst human rights abusers." At a meeting in Mexico City earlier this month, Clinton "drug czar" General Barry McCaffrey vowed, "We're going to do training, evidence, intelligence, equipment. We're going to do real stuff" (*New York Times*, 12 December). McCaffrey has effusively praised Mexican "cooperation" and proclaimed himself a "public servant" not only of Clinton but of the Mexican president! Coming from a *yanqui* military leader, such talk is truly sinister.

Immediately in the wake of the inflammatory remarks by Clinton's ambassador came the furor over the publication of a new book by former U.S. secretary of defense Caspar Weinberger. *The Next War* depicts a "fictional" account of a U.S. invasion of Mexico in the year 2003, after the country has been made "ungovernable" by the rise to power of a left-nationalist party—pointedly similar to Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas' oppositional Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD)—supported by guerrilla movements. Complete with invasion maps and images of U.S. Apache choppers gunning down insurgents, Weinberger maps out a



Mexican president Zedillo with U.S. Imperialist patron Clinton. U.S.-supplied helicopters deployed in Chiapas, Mexico to crush Zapatista peasant insurgents.



Núñez/Cuartoscuro

"successful" invasion by U.S. military forces. The book is motivated as a warning to present-day U.S. imperialist leaders to get ready for such "contingencies."

The provocative speeches and writings by American leaders hit hard in a country where intense national feelings against U.S. imperialism go back to before the Mexican-American War of 1846-48. The U.S. annexed Texas in 1845, invaded Mexico City in 1847, and essentially stole the territories that once made up most of northern Mexico in 1848. At the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution in 1910 which toppled the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, 40 percent of U.S. foreign investment was in Mexico and U.S. bankers, mining, oil, and railroad companies virtually ran the economy. U.S. Marines invaded Veracruz in 1914 and troops moved into Mexico again in 1916. The U.S. gave military aid to various "revolutionary" armies provided they pledged to defend Washington's interests and crush plebeian revolts like those led by Francisco (Pancho) Villa in the north and Emiliano Zapata in the south.

Today, U.S. imperialism's increasingly aggressive military posture toward Mex-

ico is a reflection of growing concern over the crumbling authority of the PRI regime in the face not only of peasant insurgencies but widespread urban discontent. The imposition of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994 and the resulting peso crash a year later have battered the middle class and driven wide layers of the working class and urban and rural poor to desperation. In a 1991 joint statement against the NAFTA proposal by the Mexican, Canadian and U.S. sections of the International Communist League, we warned: "The American ruling class wants to pick up the Mexican economy in one huge buyout—at bargain basement prices" ("Stop U.S. 'Free-Trade' Rape of Mexico," *WV* No. 530, 5 July 1991).

That is, indeed, what has been happening. The U.S.-engineered peso "bailout" effectively put the Mexican economy into receivership to Wall Street. Zedillo has massively escalated the "privatization" of Mexican industry begun by his predecessor Salinas, agreeing to sell off huge chunks of the state-owned oil company, Pemex, viewed by Mexicans as a "national treasure" since its nationalization in the 1930s. Zedillo has also begun to sell off another industry which once symbolized imperialist domination of the country, the railroads.

While defending peasant-based guerrilla groups like the EZLN and the EPR against state repression, we warn that their petty-bourgeois nationalist programs are only meant to pressure the capitalist government into "democratic" reforms and gain a few more crumbs off their table. Thus, both groups look to the

bourgeois-populist PRD, which supports not only NAFTA but also the military's war against "terrorists." Guerrilla struggle based on the atomized, parochial and petty-bourgeois peasantry is incapable of effecting a social revolution in Mexico. Petty-bourgeois guerrilla movements were able to come to power and carry out a social overturn in places like Cuba and Vietnam—resulting in bureaucratically deformed workers states—only in the absence of a politically active proletariat and because the Soviet Union existed as a bulwark against imperialism (see "Cuba and Marxist Theory," *Marxist Bulletin* No. 8). In Mexico today, with its huge, combative proletariat, such movements do not have the free play to posture against, much less smash, the capitalist state. The power to defeat the starvation assault of the Mexican ruling class and the U.S. imperialist overlords lies with the industrial proletariat mobilized behind a revolutionary party armed with the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution and standing at the head of the poor peasantry and all the oppressed. A victorious socialist revolution would have to immediately seek its extension throughout Latin America and into the U.S. imperialist heartland, particularly through the human bridge forged by millions of Mexican and Central American immigrants.

Here in the "belly of the beast," the U.S. working class must oppose Washington's imperialist adventures down the line, as part of the struggle against its own capitalist exploiters. *Down with the racist war on immigrants—Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! U.S. hands off Mexico!* ■



Mexican troops imposed state of siege in Oaxaca and other areas as part of brutal "anti-terrorist" crackdown against EPR guerrillas.

Australia...

(continued from page 4)

"tacit" is a lie and a whitewash, providing a cover for the ALP/ACTU tops. Could these nameless "certain union leaders" be the same ones that WP is pleading with to lead a general strike against Howard's anti-union legislation?

Marxists understand that a general strike is a prelude to a struggle for power, inevitably posing the question, "Which class shall rule?" To call on the ACTU misleaders to lead a general strike at the very moment they are purging trade unionists who defended Aborigines is transparently absurd, sowing the worst illusions in these political police for the capitalist class. In the same issue of its press, WP decries what it politely chooses to call "the debate about race, immigration and freedom of speech" for supposedly "diverting attention away" from the anti-union laws. This underscores that WP's insistent call for an ACTU-led general strike is militant-sounding verbi-

age designed to disguise its Laborite and economist adaption to the existing leadership and consciousness of the working class.

In contrast, as the December 7 SL/A leaflet concluded:

"The unity in struggle of workers and minorities on 19 August gave a taste of the sort of power a revolutionary leadership would harness to bring down racist Australian capitalism. What is needed is a political fight to break working people and minorities from the ALP/ACTU traitors, ousting the pro-capitalist bureaucracy from the workers movement. The Spartacist League/Australia fights to build a Trotskyist vanguard party, a tribune of the people combating all manifestations of racial and sexual oppression, to lead the working class and behind them all the oppressed masses in a socialist revolution which will sweep away the racist capitalist system and establish workers rule."

The SL/A fights for a revolutionary workers party—forged through splitting the ALP's working-class base from its reformist misleaders—to lead the struggle for a workers republic of Australia as part of a socialist Asia. ■

International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

Correspondence for:	Address to:
Spartacist League of Australia	Spartacist League, GPO Box 3473 Sydney, NSW, 2001, Australia
Spartacist League/Britain	Spartacist Publications, PO Box 1041 London NW5 3EU, England
Trotskyist League of Canada/ Ligue trotskyste du Canada	Trotskyist League, Box 7198, Station A Toronto, Ontario, M5W 1X8, Canada
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Balkans...

(continued from page 1)

the war in Croatia and Bosnia, Milosevic was able to maintain tight control. But with his project of a Greater Serbia in shambles, Milosevic's former right-wing nationalist allies have turned against him and his old enemies have become bolder and stronger. A Belgrade student active in the protests exclaimed, "Milosevic betrayed the Serbian people."

Slobodan Milosevic, like Romania's Ion Iliescu, was a leading Stalinist apparatchik who placed himself at the head of the capitalist counterrevolution by embracing "little power" nationalism in alliance with traditional rightists. His vile chauvinism and cynical maneuvers have done much to discredit the idea of communism in Serbia. At the same time, Sloba's many enemies, both within and without Serbia, appeal to anti-Communist demagoguery in attacking the Serbian strongman. A chant heard frequently in the marches is, "Down with the red bandits!" And the London *Financial Times* (7 November) misinforms its readers: "The Serb president is discarding his nationalist colours in a calculated alliance with Marxist-Leninists."

Washington and the Western media have portrayed the opposition as "peaceful" and "democratic," ranging, according to the *New York Times*, "from nationalists to social democrats." This is an utter whitewash. While the odd pro-imperialist liberal may be involved in the protests, the core of the movement, as even a *Times* (10 December) report indicated, consists of fascists and hardline chauvinists who "embrace fierce Serb nationalism."

Its two principal leaders are Zoran Djindjic and Vuk Draskovic. When the protests began, the supposedly "peaceful" Djindjic called for "uprisings, strikes, violence," while Draskovic's wife Danica urges protesters to throw bombs at Milosevic's house and rails, "We need weapons and hand grenades" (*Der Spiegel*, 2 December). A one-time liberal, Djindjic opted to espouse the cause of Serbian nationalism in 1993. In the recent Bosnian elections, this latter-day darling of U.S. imperialism campaigned for the party of Radovan Karadzic—branded in the West as the Balkans' chief "war criminal"—who is an arch-chauvinist opponent of Milosevic. Djindjic states: "If we want to build a popular movement, we must use nationalism to do it."

As for Draskovic, his Serbian Renewal Party has always openly identified with the royalist Chetniks who specialized in massacring defenseless Croatian and Bosnian Muslim villagers and fought against Tito's Communist Partisans in World War II. A letter to the *New York Times* (15 December) points out that in the 1980s "Draskovic was a best-selling author of anti-Muslim hate propaganda" and is today "founder and head of the Serbian Guard, a fascist militia group reported to have committed atrocities in Croatia and Bosnia." When Yugoslavia was breaking up in 1991, Draskovic campaigned for a referendum to restore the Serbian monarchy. A year later, unveiling

a monument to Chetnik leader Draza Mihailovic, he rhapsodized how that mass murderer, executed by the Partisans in 1946, had healed "the broken wings of the nation."

This is what U.S. imperialism embraces as a "democratic" opposition to Milosevic! Having secured the Serbian strongman's support for the imperialist "peace" imposed in Bosnia, Washington is now intent on punishing him for refusing to kowtow to its dictates in the early 1990s. And the U.S. is making little effort to hide its sponsorship of the fascist-infested protest movement. When a Congressional "fact finding" team visited Bosnia last month, they made a stop in Belgrade to join in one of the marches and stage a show of support from a window of the opposition headquarters. When Milosevic briefly pulled the plug on the opposition's B-92 radio station, the Voice of America immediately moved in to air its broadcasts.

While playing up the protests in Serbia, the West has effectively buried any news of protests against the fascist Tudjman regime in Croatia. Last month, 100,000 people gathered in Zagreb's main square to protest a government shutdown of the country's last independent radio station and, more broadly, Tudjman's refusal to accept the results of municipal elections won by his opponents. In a political climate long permeated by reactionary nationalism, the demonstrators defied the autocratic, pro-Ustasha Tudjman regime. A few days later, workers in the Croatian State Railway went on strike, halting 80 percent of the country's rail traffic for over a week. While the railway union's demands were strictly economic and its leaders not connected with any political opposition, a strike of this magnitude necessarily challenges and weakens the right-wing government. Earlier this spring, there was also a brief but successful national strike by railway workers in Slovenia.

Meanwhile, in Serbia the rightist opposition and its imperialist patrons have expressed vocal disappointment over their failure to mobilize the workers as cannon fodder for their designs. The *Wall Street Journal* (13 December) even raised the need for a "general strike." (The last time we recall this mouthpiece for finance capital supporting "workers action" was when it called for "soviets" in Poland in 1981 to catapult CIA-backed Solidarność into power.) The urgent appeals of the Zajedno leaders to industrial workers to engage in strikes and protests on their behalf have to date gone conspicuously unanswered. One Belgrade factory worker explained: "None of us have any great sympathy for the students. When we held strikes earlier in the year, all these university students didn't give us any support."

Throughout the spring and summer and into the fall, there was in fact a series of strikes in Serbia against the cataclysmic austerity imposed by Milosevic and exacerbated by the imperialist boycott. In August, workers at the Red Flag Yugo car factory in Kragujevac staged a successful two-month walkout to win payment of back wages and other union demands. Another strike in an arms plant there in

U.S. troops in Bosnia, part of NATO occupation force: enforcers of imperialist "peace" which will lead to more war, communalist bloodshed.



October protested government victimization of union militants. An action by public transport workers in Belgrade around the same time was brought to an end when the union president was dragged off to jail.

If the Serbian proletariat were to spring into political action today, far from supporting the current opposition, it would be in the workers' class interests to root out the fascist nests at Belgrade University and other campuses which are the backbone of the imperialist-backed protests. In unity with the workers of the other ex-Yugoslav republics, the Serbian working class must sweep away Milosevic and all the reactionary nationalist regimes which currently hold sway in the Balkans. What is sorely missing is an internationalist Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard forged in bitter opposition to all imperialist intervention and to all the competing chauvinist gangs in the region.

The Balkan Wars and Imperialist Hypocrisy

Milosevic himself is largely responsible for unleashing the chauvinist flood tide which is now directed against his regime. The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was born out of World War II when Tito's Communist Partisans successfully battled the occupying Nazi German Wehrmacht as well as the Croatian fascist Ustasha and Serbian royalist Chetniks. Emerging from the war with immense popular and moral authority, Tito and his comrades socialized the economy—albeit in a bureaucratically controlled and deformed manner—in the name of the "brotherhood and unity" of the working people of Yugoslavia. However, the inherent economic limitations and distortions of Yugoslav Stalinism with its program of "market socialism in one country"—and a poor Balkan country at that—generated increasing tensions between the various constituent national republics and regions.

After Tito's death in 1980, the Yugoslav bureaucracy fractured along national lines. In the late 1980s, Milosevic, who took over the Serbian League of Communists, trampled on Tito's carefully balanced national arrangements, beginning with a violent attack on the Albanian population of Kosovo. Milosevic's drive for a "Greater Serbia," in turn, reinforced anti-Communist nationalism in Croatia and Slovenia, the wealthier, traditionally Roman Catholic northernmost republics

of Yugoslavia which were formerly part of the German sphere of influence. Imperialism used nationalism and bloody communalism as the battering ram to destroy the Yugoslav deformed workers state.

In early 1991, instigated by the reunified German Fourth Reich, newly elected right-wing nationalist governments in Croatia and Slovenia declared secession from the federated state. The Serbs were not only the largest nationality in pre-1991 Yugoslavia but also the most geographically dispersed. With the breakup of Yugoslavia, these large Serb communities confronted hostile nationalist regimes in Zagreb and Sarajevo. Fear of becoming an oppressed minority, combined with chauvinist sentiment for a Greater Serbia, ignited a new series of Balkan wars, beginning in the Serb region of Croatia and spreading into the three-sided communalist bloodletting in Bosnia. The Serbs—making up a third of Bosnia's population—were a largely peasant population which owned over 60 percent of the land in the republic, while the Bosnian Muslims were a predominantly urbanized people. Thus when the war began the well-armed Serb forces were able to take over much of the countryside and lay siege to Sarajevo and the other cities where the Muslims were concentrated.

But American imperialism refused to accept a Greater Serbia established in defiance of U.S. will, and the German Fourth Reich was pushing for a Greater Croatia. The Western powers imposed an economic embargo against Serbia—sanctioned by the UN—in order to force Milosevic to abandon his support to the Croatian and Bosnian Serbs. At the same time, Washington and Bonn moved to build up the military capacity of the Croatian regime and Bosnian Muslims.

In August 1995, the Croatian army launched a successful blitzkrieg against the Serb-populated Krajina region. Some 200,000 Serbs were driven from their homes in the largest single act of "ethnic cleansing" in the four-year-long Balkan bloodbath. This was followed, in tandem with massive NATO air strikes against Bosnian Serb positions, by a joint Croat/Muslim offensive against the Serbs in eastern and central Bosnia. And this time, unlike in 1991, the Serbian army commanded by Milosevic did not intervene. The imperialist-backed Croat/Muslim offensive—carried out with



All-sided nationalist reaction in former Yugoslavia (from left): Muslim fundamentalist supporters of Sarajevo regime, Croatian soldiers giving fascist salute,

Milosevic's acquiescence—is what laid the basis for the U.S.-sponsored Dayton Accords in November 1995 which divided Bosnia in half between the so-called "Croat-Muslim Federation" and the "Republika Srpska" (Serbian Republic).

Throughout the communalist slaughter, Western imperialist spokesmen and their intellectual hangers-on have adopted a posture of moral superiority to the supposedly violence-crazed and bloodthirsty Balkan peoples driven by "ancient feuds." Here we have the mass murderers of Hiroshima, Vietnam and Auschwitz expressing sympathetic concern over a particularly violent divorce—one, moreover, which they helped instigate. In his press conference announcing that U.S. troops would remain in Bosnia, Clinton shed crocodile tears over the "nearly four years of horrible bloodshed, the bloodiest conflict Europe has seen since World War II."

The Western imperialists, especially the British, took the same "isn't it terrible" line during the Balkan wars of 1910-1913. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, brainchild of the ruthless American steel magnate, even dispatched a "commission of inquiry" to the Balkans at the time, staffed by "pacifist" politicians who sanctimoniously concluded that "all this horror will not cease to exist as long as Europe continues to ignore it" (quoted in "Last Chance for Bosnia?" *New York Review of Books*, 19 December). Yet a year later the European imperialist rulers sent millions of British, French, Russian and German youth to kill one another in a war sparked when a Serbian nationalist assassinated an Austrian archduke in Sarajevo.

During the American Civil War, the British ruling class, had they been able to, would also have liked to stop "all that bloodshed" among the ex-colonials in North America. Whereas in the American Civil War there were real social issues at stake—centrally, the abolition of black chattel slavery in the South—the current Balkan wars involve nothing but the self-interest of competing national capitalist cliques. Of course, what motivated Britain's call for an end to the fighting during the U.S. Civil War was its barely veiled support for the weaker Southern Confederacy.

Likewise today, the hypocritical public postures of the various imperialist powers are determined by their different appetites in the Balkans. Reflecting the interests of British ruling circles, earlier this month British Independent Television News reported:

"Though they won't say so openly, British IFOR [Bosnia NATO force] commanders are concerned that the Americans have just begun in earnest their train-and-equip program, benefiting the mainly Muslim Bosnian government army to the tune of \$400 million. There's some bewilderment that the U.S.A. is peacekeeping with one hand, but with the other it's giving arms to the side with the greatest reason for wanting to go back to war, the Muslims."

British military men, whose forebears conquered and subjugated or exterminated millions of colonial slaves in black Africa, the Indian subcontinent, North America and elsewhere as they perfected the art of "divide and rule," are rather ill-suited to preach peace to the American imperialists who are bent on showing the world that they're now the top dog in the Balkans.

In fact, Britain (as well as France) has historically been an imperialist patron of Serbia. The heir to the Serbian throne—today promoted by Draskovic—was born in London, in a hospital room that was temporarily declared Serbian territory so as not to endanger the crown

prince's royal claims. Britain's desire for a more even-handed policy toward the various conflicting nationalist regimes in ex-Yugoslavia clashes with U.S. imperialism's desire to punish the Serbs by arming the Sarajevo Muslim regime of Alija Izetbegovic, while German imperialism is primarily interested in reinforcing its influence in Croatia and Slovenia. Today, Washington apparently sees that its best interests lie in a weak government in Belgrade and political disarray in Serbia at large.

As one Washington official put it: "A change of Government would create

the Croatian state. When the NATO forces leave, if not sooner, the communalist bloodletting will in all likelihood erupt again, this time with hundreds of millions of dollars worth of new arms from the various imperialist powers. As we wrote last year when NATO warplanes were bombing the Bosnian Serbs in the name of "peace":

"Any imperialist-engineered 'peace plan' will necessarily perpetuate national oppression and injustices, laying the basis for new wars when the internal and international balance of forces change. These wars will not only involve the peoples of the region but also the Western powers



Emergency action organized by Spartacist League outside United Nations in New York City, September 1995, to protest U.S./NATO terror bombing of Bosnian Serbs.

uncertainties, but would not necessarily be a bad thing" (*New York Times*, 4 December). At a recent meeting of NATO in Brussels, U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher declared his intention to emphasize to Milosevic "the importance of not using force in connection with these demonstrations, but to find a way to recognize and accept the election results."

U.S. imperialism's current hostility to Serbia, too, has a historical context. Toward the end of World War II, Washington was intent on creating a "Greater Croatia" which would have included the Bosnian province whose eternal independence all the imperialists now hypocritically proclaim. In March 1943, New York's Cardinal Spellman, effectively acting as an emissary for President Franklin D. Roosevelt, visited Mussolini's Italy to meet with the Pope, and also with a representative of the Ustasha. Spellman made clear to the Ustasha, as reported in *Richard West's Tito and the Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia* (1994), that "President Roosevelt wanted an independent Croatia stretching as far as the River Drina, that is, including all Bosnia-Herzegovina." "The interview also helps to explain," remarks West, "why the Ustasha leaders escaped all punishment for their crimes."

For a Socialist Federation of the Balkans!

Misha Glenny, a knowledgeable student of Balkan affairs of liberal disposition, writes:

"The Bosnian issue has, for now, been solved. The country has been partitioned into three parts.... Notwithstanding the protests of its architects to the contrary, the Dayton Agreement sets the final seal on the principal aim of those who started and prosecuted these wars: the permanent transfer of populations, with national groups established on their own territories."

— *New York Review of Books* (19 September)

But the present de facto partition of Bosnia is not a durable solution to nationalist bloodletting in this former Yugoslav republic or elsewhere in the Balkans. During the elections, Izetbegovic repeatedly threatened to "abolish" the Bosnian Serb republic, and the Muslim forces have been far and away the most aggressive in seeking to reclaim land from the Serbs. At the same time, a strong faction of Croatian nationalists openly advocates formally annexing their part of Bosnia to

and Russia, whose conflicting interests have historically made the Balkans the powder keg of Europe."

— "Down With U.S./UN/NATO Attack on Bosnian Serbs!" (*WV* No. 628, 8 September 1995)

To provide an ideological cover for NATO intervention, Western imperialist propaganda has prettified the Bosnian Muslim leaders as adherents of a "multi-ethnic, secular, democratic" Bosnia. American liberals and West European social democrats, in particular, depicted the war in Bosnia as a contest between the democratic Muslim good guys and the Serbian fascist bad guys while generally disappearing the Croats. The September elections totally exposed the liberal and leftist apologists for the Bosnian Muslim regime. The campaign rallies of the dominant Muslim party, Izetbegovic's Party of Democratic Action, began with prayers by an imam and were guarded by soldiers wearing green headbands with slogans from the Koran. Izetbegovic's thugs routinely beat up and otherwise terrorized members even of the more moderate Muslim party led by former Bosnian foreign minister Haris Silajdzic.

Another diplomatic fiction belied by reality is the "Croat-Muslim Federation" cobbled together by the Americans and Germans in 1994. The 20 percent of Bosnia controlled by Croatian forces has been functionally integrated into Croatia.

Bosnian Croats carry Croatian passports and use the Croatian dinar as their currency. The major city of Mostar in eastern Bosnia is divided by the Neretva River into two sectors: one Croat, the other Muslim.

As proletarian internationalists, we have opposed all of the competing nationalist forces in the wars that have raged in the former Yugoslavia, while militarily defending the Bosnian Serbs against repeated imperialist attacks. We have opposed all forms of imperialist intervention, including under the UN flag, and called for an end to the economic embargo of Serbia.

In contrast, most of the centrist and reformist left has lined up behind one communalist force or another and, at least tacitly, behind imperialist intervention. Thus both the right-centrist British Workers Power group and the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat of the late Ernest Mandel boosted "Workers Aid to Bosnia," which promoted the Sarajevo regime and served as a stalking horse for NATO/UN intervention on the Bosnian Muslim side. In the U.S., Gus Hall's Communist Party and Sam Marcy's Stalinoid Workers World Party—both of which have a grotesque track record of promoting the "red-brown coalition" of ex-Stalinist chauvinists and fascists in Russia—have acted as boosters for the Serbian Milosevic regime.

Meanwhile, the U.S. International Socialist Organization (ISO), affiliated to Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party in Britain, enthuses about the reactionary, imperialist-backed opposition to Milosevic, arguing that "November's demonstrations, whatever their outcome, point to the only real solution for the Balkan crisis" (*Socialist Worker*, 6 December). Despite its fig-leaf claim of opposing imperialist intervention, the ISO in fact criticizes the imperialists for not intervening more strongly: "Opposition parties have called on the West to take a tough line, but have come away disappointed by 'lukewarm statements of concern'."

The only real solution to the Balkans crisis lies in socialist revolution to sweep away all the reactionary regimes. In both Serbia and Croatia, workers have become war-weary and disillusioned with the nationalist demagogues who rule over them or aspire to rule over them. They are desperately trying to resist further economic immiseration through trade-union action, the only means of progressive class struggle now available to them. The situation is crying out for the need to form revolutionary workers parties based on the genuinely communist principles of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Christian Rakovsky and Dimitar Blagoev. Only such revolutionary parties, bound together by the principles of proletarian internationalism, can lead the struggle against local nationalist butchers and their imperialist godfathers who have once again turned the Balkans into a charnel house. For a socialist federation of the Balkans, part of a Socialist United States of Europe! ■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE/U.S. LOCAL DIRECTORY

National Office

Box 1377 GPO
New York, NY 10116
(212) 732-7860

Boston

Box 390840, Central Sta.
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 666-9453

Chicago

Box 6441, Main PO
Chicago, IL 60680
(312) 454-4930

Los Angeles

Box 29574
Los Feliz Sta.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 380-8239

New York

Box 3381
Church St. Sta.
New York, NY 10008
(212) 267-1025

Oakland

Box 29497
Oakland, CA 94604
(510) 839-0851

San Francisco

Box 77494
San Francisco, CA 94107
(415) 777-9367

Washington, D.C.

Box 75073
Washington, D.C. 20013
(202) 872-8240

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA/LIGUE TROTSKYSTE DU CANADA

Toronto

Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, ON M5W 1X8
(416) 593-4138

Montréal

C.P. Les Atriums
B.P. 32066
Montréal, QC H2L 4V5

Vancouver

Box 2717, Main P.O.
Vancouver, BC V6B 3X2
(604) 687-0353

NOTICE

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