

## British Troops Out Now!

# Northern Ireland: Imperialist "Peace" Fraud

**Not Orange Against Green But Class Against Class!**

**For an Irish Workers Republic in a  
Socialist Federation of the British Isles!**



Herbie Knott

We publish below a joint statement issued on April 21 by the Spartacist League/Britain and the Dublin Spartacist Group, sections of the International Communist League.

The "historic" agreement signed in Belfast's Stormont Castle on 11 April cannot and will not bring peace to Northern Ireland. This reactionary *imperialist*



AFP  
**Britain's Tony Blair with Clinton, who brokered agreement perpetuating oppression of Northern Ireland's Catholics.**

deal will reinforce the subjugation of the oppressed Catholic minority. It will be enforced by the 18,000-strong British Army and the viciously sectarian Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), who work hand in glove with the fascist Loyalist death squads in the murder of Catholics.

This agreement was imposed by British prime minister Tony Blair and Irish taoiseach (prime minister) Bertie Ahern, and brokered by U.S. president Bill Clinton and his emissary, former Senator George Mitchell. The hypocrisy of their tirades against "terrorism" is exposed not least by U.S. and British imperialism's

starvation embargo of Iraq, which has killed over 600,000 children and a million people overall. Barely a month ago these self-proclaimed imperialist "peace-makers," with the active support of the capitalist Dublin government, were on course for a massive bombing attack against the people of Iraq.

The Spartacist League/Britain and the Dublin Spartacist Group (DSG), sections of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), categorically oppose the reactionary Stormont deal. We have warned from the beginning of the grossly misnamed "peace" process: "Any imperialist 'deal' will be bloody and brutal and will necessarily be at the expense of the oppressed Catholic minority. And it would not do any good for working class Protestants either" (*Workers Hammer* No. 138, November/December 1993). We demand: **British troops out of Northern Ireland now!**

As we wrote in our 1977 document, "Theses on Ireland" (*Spartacist* [English edition] No. 24, Autumn 1977):

"An essential element of our program is the demand for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the British army. British imperialism has brought centuries of exploitation, oppression and bloodshed to the island. No good can come of the British presence: the existing tie between Northern Ireland and the British state can only be oppressive to the Irish Catholic population, an obstacle to a proletarian-class mobilisation and solution....

"At the same time we do not regard the demand as synonymous with or as a concrete application of either the call for Irish self-determination (that is, a unitary state of the whole island) or for an independent Ulster—two solutions which within the framework of capitalism would be anti-democratic, in the first case toward the Protestants and in the second toward the Irish Catholics....

"Thus, the demand for the immediate withdrawal of the British army from Northern Ireland must be linked to and constitute a part of a whole revolutionary program."

There can be no just, equitable resolution to the communal conflict in Northern Ireland short of workers revolution on both sides of the Irish border and both sides of the Irish Sea.

The key to breaking the bloody cycle of imperialist repression and communalist terror is to unite the proletariat—Protestant and Catholic; English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish—across national and religious lines in common struggle against the capitalist class enemy. That requires intransigent proletarian opposition not only to blood-soaked British imperialism and Orange supremacy, to anti-Catholic terror and discrimination, but also to Green nationalism and the clericalist state in the South. The ICL fights to forge Leninist-Trotskyist parties to lead the workers in the revolutionary overthrow of all their oppressors and exploiters and in the establishment of proletarian state power throughout the British Isles. **Not Orange against Green but class against class! For an Irish workers republic in a socialist federation of the British Isles!**

### No to a New Stormont of Orange Supremacy!

The new agreement, whose terms are to be submitted for approval in referendums to be held in both the North and the South next month, proposes a Unionist-dominated assembly in Belfast and an impotent "North-South" body, which is a sop to the Republicans. The proposed Belfast assembly is reminiscent of the old Stormont parliament which lorded it over the Catholics prior to the imposition

of direct rule from Westminster [the British Parliament] in 1972. However, the new assembly will have powers Stormont never had. The Unionists will have effective veto power over the North-South "consultative" body and all matters within Northern Ireland itself, including any change in its constitutional status as an integral part of the "United Kingdom." The referendum in the South is intended to repeal Dublin's historic claim to the Six Counties of the North. Loyalist die-hards such as Ian Paisley and elements within the Orange Order oppose any deal involving Dublin. But as Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble (slated to be First Minister in the new assembly) crowed, the agreement is "good for unionism and bad for republicanism" (*Irish News*, 17 April).

Leaders of Sinn Fein, petty-bourgeois nationalists committed to securing a capitalist united Ireland, entered the negotiations peddling the illusion that the British government, particularly under Labour, would "persuade" the Ulster Unionists to distance themselves from Britain and accept closer links to the South. The British Army has been unable to defeat the Irish Republican Army (IRA) militarily, and Northern Ireland is a net drain on the decaying British economy. Sinn Fein also viewed U.S. imperialism and the Dublin government as their allies and hoped to secure a commitment to British withdrawal and "reform" of the RUC. Contrary to nationalist illusions, the capitalist forces they look to are intent on breaking the IRA and subjugating the Northern Catholic population. But the Green nationalists of the IRA/Sinn Fein also serve to reinforce British imperialism's bloody divide-and-rule policy over the working class, pitting Protestant and Catholic workers against each other.

The Belfast agreement shows the social-imperialist British Labour Party—a bourgeois workers party, as Lenin called it—in its true colours. The Labour government is a capitalist government: viciously anti-working-class, racist to the core and totally committed to the monarchy and British imperialism. We base ourselves on irreconcilable opposition to Labourism; we seek to split Labour,

*continued on page 10*

**Coleman Young:  
From CIO Union Organizer to  
Overseer for Auto Bosses**

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# Yuppie Boston Magazine's Vile Racist Slur

We reprint below an April 18 letter by the Boston Spartacus Youth Club to Boston Magazine condemning the headline of the feature article in its April 1998 issue on Henry Louis Gates Jr., chairman of Harvard University's Department of Afro-American Studies.

## Young Spartacus

To the Editor:

It comes as no surprise that a magazine written for the Back Bay yuppie elite, and named for the city which is synonymous with racial segregation in the Deep North, would run an article about black scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr. with the demeaning title "Head Negro in Charge." This may have been considered quite droll in Newbury Street tanning salons, Cambridge latte bars and State Street brokerage firms, but it is racist garbage pure and simple.

The title of your article is racially derogatory in and of itself. But what becomes clear in the uproar provoked by the headline, and your response to it, is that the magazine's use of "Negro" was a

surrogate for the word n---r. As you concede, the phrase dates back to plantation days. Following the defeat of Reconstruction in 1877, the imposition of "separate but unequal" segregation and the rise of Klan terror to keep blacks "in their place" betrayed the Civil War's promise of black freedom. What we see around us today in American society recalls that era, including the rise of cop terror against the black population and perhaps the most direct legacy of slavery—the racist speedup on death row.

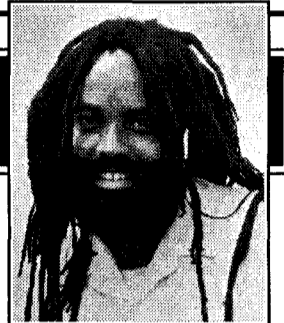
What this article represents is the expanding acceptance in "polite" society of the racist lexicon (and with it pseudo-science like the *Bell Curve*) corresponding to the increasing marginalization of black people. The word n---r is a program: the denial of humanity to black people in order to justify doing anything to them, such as rounding up hundreds of young black men in a racist dragnet in 1989 when Charles Stuart tried to cover up the murder of his wife by telling the all-too-willing cops that she was killed by a black mugger. And as one would expect, its use is increasingly legitimized in Clinton/Gingrich's America.

The Spartacus Youth Club vehemently protests your racist headline. We are not writing because we expect you to clean up your act, nor are we "pc" liberals who believe that speech codes will purge this society of racism. Rather we are Marxists who seek to tackle the root causes of racial oppression. The social conditions imprisoning the impoverished black masses in the ghetto—with their mean streets, rat-infested housing, lousy schools and rampant cop terror—are materially rooted in the whole system of American capitalism.

As black scholars like Professor Gates, a champion of the liberal-led civil rights movement, lecture to an increasingly white sea of faces, it is ever more

clear that the token gains of the civil rights movement have been virtually eliminated. By its very nature this movement, based on a program of liberal-democratic reforms, did not confront the underlying oppression and exploitation of blacks. What is required is a thoroughgoing proletarian socialist revolution. Blacks continue to have enormous potential economic and political power as a strategic component of the American working class. By smashing the color line once and for all through integration into a socialist America, we can forge a society dedicated to an expansion of human freedom and potential. That is the task to which the Spartacus Youth Club is dedicated. ■

## From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal



## Another Casualty in the Longest War

"So the vast majority of the creative Black minds in America who are males are locked up in prisons during their most productive years. In the years when most Euro-American males are present in universities, colleges, and training institutes, gaining the skills that are necessary to ensure that they can run the world the way that they have been running the world, our future leaders, future learners, future advocates, future directors can be found in the jails of America locked away, unable to think, under the daily watchful eye of sick minds who would rather see them dead than learning. Those who show the greatest promise of thinking, self-direction, understanding, comprehension are the least likely to ever get paroled. When they get paroled, they are stigmatized in such a way that they can never get the effectiveness in this society that they need to utilize what they know. They have been essentially removed, not by physical death, but by institutional death."

—Dr. Na'im Akbar, Ph.D., *Chains and Images of Psychological Slavery* (1984)

With dizzying, feverish frequency, African-American youth are being relegated to America's dungeons, at a rate, and in a proportion, that dwarfs other segments of this society.

Long-term readers of this column have doubtless read a numbing list of statistics and numbers on this subject, so the writer will not repeat them here. Suffice it to say that this fact is a deep feature of U.S. public policy, one so bred in the bone that no figure, nor set of figures, no matter how startling, can now check or change that policy. Arguments against the injustice of such a policy tend to fall on deaf ears, and the policy, christened by the blessings of what we call "political reality," hardens into unquestioned custom.

Until, in common consciousness, the very visage of a Black youth, buttressed by the negative projections of the majoritarian media, comes to connote an inherent criminality.

I thought of such things upon the prosecution and conviction of my son Jamal for weapons charges recently. A young man whose father has been in prison since he was a boy, Jamal had more than his share of hard and hellish times, making more than his share of foolish mistakes. As a man he grew to become a person who loved his family passionately.

His weapons possession arrest had to be one that stretches the bounds of coincidence to the point of disbelief. Active since 1995 in his father's defense, Jamal's handsome mustached face appeared on local and national TV, and in newspapers from coast to coast. Yet the cops who stopped him (on an alleged traffic violation) claimed they had no idea who he was. Just a coincidental stop. Just a coincidental search. Just a coincidence that his case would be transferred from a city prosecution to a federal one. One doesn't have to be a rocket scientist to see that Jamal was shadowed, stopped, busted and convicted because of who his father was, and because of his well-publicized efforts to secure a new trial for him.

A bright, articulate, loving father and husband, convicted actually for the unpardonable offense of resistance, he joins too many of his contemporaries in America's latest concentration camps, yet another *casualty* in America's longest war against Black life.

25 March 1998

© 1998 by Mumia Abu-Jamal



TROTSKY

## Revolutionary Consciousness and the Vanguard Party

It is the task of the Leninist vanguard party to bring to the proletariat the consciousness of its historic role in seizing power from the bourgeoisie and ushering in a classless, communist society. Leon Trotsky, co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and leader of the Left Opposition against the Stalinist bureaucracy, stressed this point as he fought to win the German Communist Party back to the



LENIN

program of workers revolution in the early 1930s. The Stalinists' utter bankruptcy in the face of Hitler's march to power led Trotsky to call for a new, Fourth International. Decades of Stalinist betrayal culminated in the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union and a retrogression of proletarian consciousness internationally. This underscores the urgency of the ICL's fight to reforge Trotsky's Fourth International to lead the struggle for new October Revolutions.

The class, taken by itself, is only material for exploitation. The proletariat assumes an independent role only at that moment when from a social class *in itself* it becomes a political class *for itself*. This cannot take place otherwise than through the medium of a party. The party is that historical organ by means of which the class becomes class conscious. To say that "the class stands higher than the party," is to assert that the class in the raw stands higher than the class which is on the road to class consciousness. Not only is this incorrect; it is reactionary. There isn't the slightest need for this smug and shallow theory in order to establish the necessity for a united front.

The progress of a class toward class consciousness, that is, the building of a revolutionary party which leads the proletariat, is a complex and a contradictory process. The class itself is not homogeneous. Its different sections arrive at class consciousness by different paths and at different times. The bourgeoisie participates actively in this process. Within the working class, it creates its own institutions, or utilizes those already existing, in order to oppose certain strata of workers to others. Within the proletariat several parties are active at the same time. Therefore, for the greater part of its historical journey, it remains split politically. The problem of the united front—which arises during certain periods most sharply—originates therein.

The historical interests of the proletariat find their expression in the Communist Party—when its policies are correct. The task of the Communist Party consists in winning over the majority of the proletariat; and only thus is the socialist revolution made possible. The Communist Party cannot fulfill its mission except by preserving, completely and unconditionally, its political and organizational independence apart from all other parties and organizations within and without the working class.

—Leon Trotsky, "What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat" (January 1932)

## WORKERS VANGUARD



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24 April 1998

Mumia Abu-Jamal, a Philadelphia black journalist framed up for his political views, is on death row at Pennsylvania's Greene state prison. Funds for his legal defense are urgently needed! Contributions should be made payable to the Bill of Rights Foundation (earmarked "Mumia Abu-Jamal Legal Defense") and mailed to: Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, 163 Amsterdam Ave., No. 115, New York, NY 10023-5001. To correspond with Mumia, write to: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 1040 E. Roy Furman Hwy., Waynesburg, PA 15370.

Mumia's son, Jamal Hart, has been added to the list of class-war prisoners receiving monthly stipends from the Partisan Defense Committee. These prisoners are men and women who, while encompassing a range of political perspectives and views, have each fought in his or her own way against racist capitalist oppression. Contribute to the PDC's work by becoming a monthly sustainer! Join the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal and all class-war prisoners! Contact the PDC—New York: P.O. Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013-0099, phone (212) 406-4252, e-mail: [75057.3201@compuserve.com](mailto:75057.3201@compuserve.com); Chicago: P.O. Box 802867, Chicago, IL 60680-2867, phone (312) 454-4931; San Francisco Bay Area: P.O. Box 77462, San Francisco, CA 94107-0462, phone (510) 839-0852.

# Coleman Young: From CIO Union Organizer to Overseer for Auto Bosses

When Coleman Young died last November, he was eulogized as the "hope" of black Detroit from the run-down streets of that city's black ghettos to the posh editorial offices of the *New York Times*. Young was the most eminent of a number of black mayors elected in cities across the country in the wake of the ghetto upheavals of the late 1960s, as the bourgeoisie co-opted a layer of former black activists to serve as front men for racist capitalist rule. Like Young, Chicago's Harold Washington, Atlanta's Maynard Jackson and others were placed in office to fire municipal workers, close inner-city hospitals, slash funds to social programs and bolster racist "law and order." As New York City's former black Democratic mayor, David Dinkins, boasted at the time of his election in 1989: "They'll take it from me."

What made Coleman Young different from these other black Democrats was his background as a "red." Unlike the current crop of nationalist demagogues of the Farrakhan ilk and cynical liberal hustlers like Jesse Jackson, Young, part of a vanishing breed of black political figures, got his start as a working-class activist with a base of support among Detroit's black proletariat.

His political career, spanning five decades, took him from the orbit of the

Bolshevik Revolution in favor of a futile, reformist strategy aimed at pressuring a supposedly "progressive" wing of racist U.S. imperialism.

Beginning in the mid-1930s, with its support to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal coalition," the CP embraced the Democratic Party of racism, strikebreaking and imperialist war. Even as he fought to organize trade unions and combat racist oppression in his earlier years, Young was being educated in the Stalinist school of class collaboration, preparation for his future role as a capitalist politician and an overseer for the Big Three auto bosses.

Indeed, it was Young's history as a black and labor activist which helped catapult him into the Detroit mayor's office. The "Motor City" was not only the center of American capitalism's principal industry, but also the bastion of a powerful and combative black proletariat. When Young was elected mayor in 1973, Detroit had experienced years of labor ferment and social struggle—from the 1967 ghetto upheaval to a wave of wild-cat strikes. Young was installed in office precisely in order to put a lid on the city's rebellious black population and to quell the multiracial workforce in auto, as the bosses moved to dismantle and decimate the plants which had once provided a



City of Detroit  
Detroit mayor Coleman Young with banking magnate David Rockefeller and Henry Ford II. Young won office with reputation as labor and anti-racist militant only to oversee decimation of black Detroit in 1970s and '80s.

Industrial Organizations (CIO) arose out of three citywide general strikes in 1934 in Minneapolis, Toledo and San Francisco. The first two were led by the Trotskyists and the A. J. Muste organization with which they fused later that year to form the Workers Party. The third was led by the CP, which quickly became a leading force in the CIO's organizing drive. With its campaign to save the Scottsboro Boys and its organizing of unemployed leagues, black sharecroppers in the South and tenants groups in the Northern ghettos, the CP also won the support of many thousands of black workers around the country.

But the Stalinists channeled these militant fighters straight into the arms of the racist capitalist Democrats. In 1935, Stalin's Communist International promulgated the "People's Front" policy, ordering the mass Communist parties of West Europe to support or enter into capitalist governments with "anti-fascist" or "progressive" bourgeois parties. Implementing this policy in the U.S., the relatively small American CP became a critical prop of FDR's New Deal coalition, whose central purpose was to contain the labor upsurge and ward off the spectre of workers revolution.

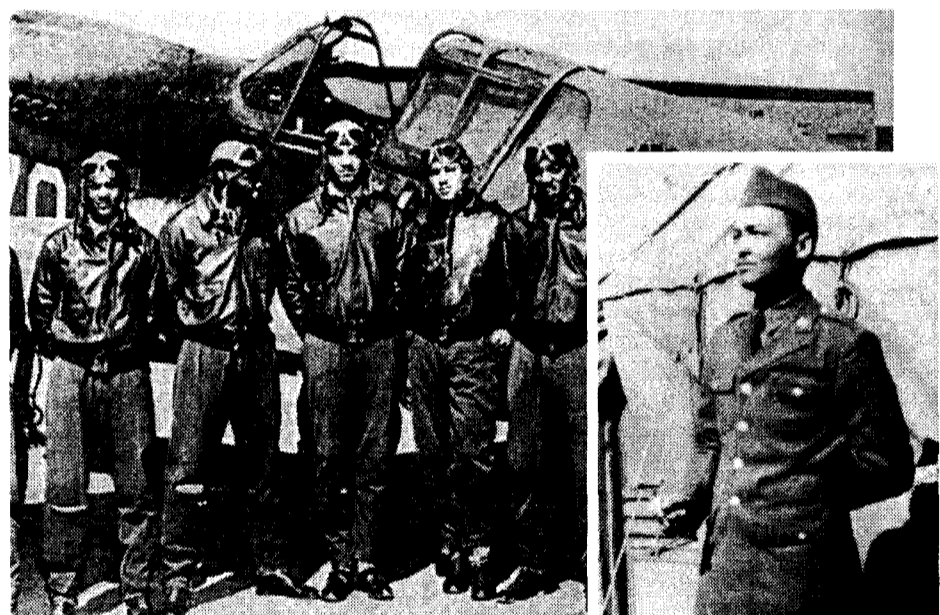
Where the Trotskyists fought to give the burgeoning labor radicalization political expression, calling for a workers party based on revolutionary opposition to the partner parties of capital and the whole profit system, the CP joined forces with social democrats and other pro-capitalist union bureaucrats to tie the CIO to Roosevelt's Democrats. Writing just before his assassination in 1940, Leon Trotsky noted that "the new 'leftist' trade union organization was no sooner founded than it fell into the steel embrace of the imperialist state. The struggle among the tops between the old federation and the new is reducible in large measure to the struggle for the sympathy and support of Roosevelt and his cabinet" ("Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay").

It was in the course of these historic battles—which shaped, and misshaped, the labor movement for decades to come—that Coleman Young served his political apprenticeship. Born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama in 1918, Young was still a small child when his family moved to Detroit to escape from KKK terror, only to find that Michigan was then home to tens of thousands of Klansmen. After being admitted to the University of Michigan but denied financial aid because he was black, Young qualified as an electrical apprentice at Ford's mammoth River Rouge complex in 1937. Here, too, he was subjected to racist discrimination, sent to work instead on the assembly line. Already drawn to radical politics as a teenager, he became an organizer for the nascent United Auto Workers (UAW). He was soon fired after decking one of Harry Bennet's "servicemen"—the notorious thugs hired by Ford's personnel director to keep out the union.

Black CP supporters like Young were key in breaking down the racial barriers to unionizing workers at Ford, which kept the UAW out until 1941 through sheer terror and racist "divide and rule." Young went on to become secretary of the Detroit branch of the National Negro Congress (NNC), a self-styled "united front" organization which aided CIO organizing drives in the heavily black steel and meatpacking industries. However, as we wrote in "How CP's Popular Front Betrayed Black Masses" (*Young Spartacus* No. 26, November 1974), the CP made the NNC and other front groups into "auxiliaries of the Roosevelt machine."

In his autobiography, *Hard Stuff* (1994), Young retailed the popular-frontist lie that "the only ones who gave a damn" about blacks "were the Communists and Franklin D. Roosevelt." In fact, with diehard segregationist Southern Dixiecrats a key component of this "progressive" coalition, Roosevelt's New Deal was racist to the core, excluding the

*continued on page 4*



Washington Post

Young (right) served as bombardier in World War II after being driven out as pilot in all-black Tuskegee Airmen by FBI. He was later jailed for fighting segregation on army bases.

Communist Party (CP) on the eve of World War II to a position of prominence in the capitalist Democratic Party. There was nothing incongruous about this seeming shift in class allegiance. Thousands of militant black workers and intellectuals were drawn to the banner of Communism in the turbulent '30s, seeing in it a revolutionary challenge to the racism and exploitation of American capitalist society. But by then the CP had long since abandoned the revolutionary and internationalist program of the 1917

livelihood for tens of thousands of unionized workers. By the time he left City Hall in 1993, Detroit had been transformed into a crumbling shell, emblem of the Midwest "Rust Bowl" devastated by plant closures and runaway shops.

## FDR's "New Deal": Racist, Anti-Worker

The Great Depression of the 1930s brought with it a marked radicalization of the American proletariat. The mass industrial unions of the Congress of



24 APRIL 1998

**Labor Must Crush The Anti-Negro Terror**

Statement Of National Committee, Socialist Workers Party

**THE MILITANT**

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

**ANTI-UNION DRIVE CLIMAXED BY OUTLAWING OF STRIKES**

**Roosevelt Advocates Work-Or-Fight Draft**

Henry Gives Continues Policy of Submission to White House But Rank and File of Unions Are Losing Faith in Roosevelt

**TODAY**

**TOMORROW**

**COMMUNISTS PLEDGE GOVERNMENT THEIR ALL IN COUNTRY'S DEFENSE**

**Daily Worker**

**JAPAN OPENS WAR ON U.S.**

Japanese Planes U.S. Declaration of War C.P. National Committee Bomb Hawaii Seen Matter of Hours Vows Support in Crisis

1943: Racist rampage in Detroit (far left). Trotskyist SWP called for union action to stop lynch-mob terror, while CP Stalinists opposed struggle for black rights, pushed no-strike pledge in support of U.S. imperialists.

# Coleman Young...

(continued from page 3)

majority of Southern black workers from programs like Social Security and the minimum wage.

## CP: "Negro People, Be Ready to Sacrifice"

After briefly opposing the Roosevelt administration during the period of Stalin's "non-aggression" pact with Nazi Germany between August 1939 and June 1941, the CP came out as among the most ardent defenders of U.S. imperialism, hailing the American bourgeoisie's entry into World War II in December 1941. The CP worked overtime to enforce the AFL and CIO misleaders' no-strike pledge—denouncing United Mine Workers bureaucrat John L. Lewis as "treasonable" when he led a strike in 1943—and demanded that the black masses forsake their struggle for equality in the interests of the "war effort." The racist chauvinism promoted by the Stalinists on behalf of U.S. imperialism knew no bounds: the CP disowned its own members of Japanese origin as they were shipped off to concentration camps and rejoiced over the horrendous A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

The CP cheered when 18 leaders of the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Minneapolis Teamsters were imprisoned under the newly passed "anti-subversive" Smith Act for opposing the imperialist war. While extending unconditional military defense to the Soviet Union—which remained a workers state despite Stalinist degeneration—the Trotskyists advocated *revolutionary defeatism* toward all the imperialist powers, calling, as Lenin did during World War I, to "turn the imperialist war into a civil war." The SWP opposed the no-strike pledge and championed the fight for black freedom, calling for armed black self-defense against racist terror.

In the armed forces as in industry, blacks were rigidly segregated and assigned to menial positions. As the U.S. prepared for war in the fall of 1940, Roosevelt reiterated that the War Department's policy "is not to intermingle colored and white enlisted personnel in the same regimental organizations." Echoing the imperialist rulers, black CP leader Ben Davis grotesquely urged the "Negro people to be ready to sacrifice," lecturing that "We cannot temporarily stop the war until all questions of discrimination are ironed out" (quoted in Philip Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker, 1619-1981* [1981]). The CP's *Daily Worker* vilified Harlem residents as "fifth columnists and pro-fascists" when they exploded in anger in 1943 following the police shooting of a black soldier.

That same year, Detroit was hit by one of the bloodiest racist rampages in American history, as cops gunned down 17 black people and lynch mobs killed eight more. Provoked by fierce competition over scarce housing, white workers who had recently migrated from the South staged racist strikes at Packard and other



1967: U.S. military occupies black Detroit. Over 7,000 were arrested and 43 killed in bloody suppression of ghetto upheaval.

auto plants against the hiring or promotion of black workers. The mass lynchings elicited little more from the UAW tops than a pious call to end racial discrimination and a self-congratulatory pat on the back that the bloodshed had not entered the plants. In contrast, the SWP's *Militant* (3 July 1943) called on the unions to

"take determined and organized action against the instigators and organizers of these lynch mobs. The unions of Detroit could have repulsed this threat to their very existence as they repulsed General Motors in 1937 and Ford in 1941. Detroit would be far different today and the native fascists would be cowering in their holes, demoralized instead of triumphant, had the union leaders called out the veteran flying squadrons to defend the Negro people."

Hundreds of black workers in Detroit joined the SWP during this period, though many of them left in the face of the Cold War witchhunt.

For his part, Young remained wedded to the CP's class-collaborationist politics, though he personally refused to acquiesce to the Stalinists' utter abandonment of the struggle against racism during the war. Drafted in February 1942, Young was assigned to the 370th Infantry Regiment, part of the famed black "Buffalo Division." He joined the famed "Tuskegee Airmen," the segregated unit of black Army pilots, but the FBI targeted him as a "red" to get him washed out as a pilot and shipped off for bombardier training instead. Wherever he was stationed, Young fought to integrate the officer clubs. In 1945, he and 100 other black officers at Indiana's Freeman Air Field were arrested and imprisoned for refusing to accept segregated facilities. Young recalled that their arrest prompted "nearly a full-scale mutiny on the base." Weeks later, Young and the other protesters were released.

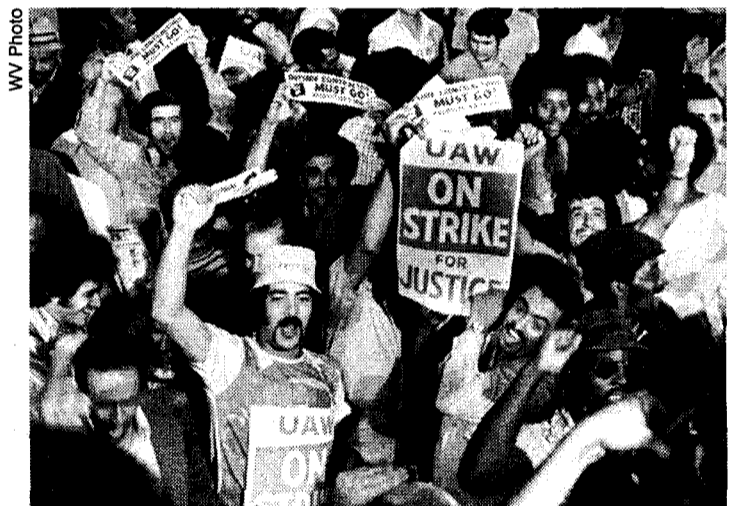
## "You Have Me Mixed Up with a Stool Pigeon"

After the war, Young plunged back into CIO activity. As a result of the wartime migration to Northern industrial centers, Detroit's black population now numbered over 200,000. When 2,000 robed and hooded Klansmen attacked the homes of two black families who had moved into

the Corktown neighborhood near Briggs (Tiger) Stadium, Young and other armed union members succeeded in turning back the racist mob. During this period, he was also involved in the leadership of a militant sanitation strike. The union ringed City Hall with dozens of trucks piled high with garbage, and the drivers then threw the truck keys away and walked off. As mayor, Young later broke the strikes of Detroit sanitation workers.

The war's end brought the greatest strike wave in American history. So ingrained was the CP's support to U.S. imperialism that it initially argued for continuing the no-strike pledge and tried to sabotage the 113-day 1946 GM strike. But the American bourgeoisie was now gearing up for Cold War against the Soviet Union and war against the trade unions at home. As General Electric head C. E. Wilson put it, "The problems of the United States can be captiously

**Ford River Rouge workers join 1976 nationwide auto strike. Detroit was center of black proletarian militancy until Big Three auto bosses gutted industry in league with pro-capitalist UAW tops.**



summed up in two words: Russia abroad, Labor at home." With its ties to the Kremlin bureaucracy and its influential position in the CIO, the CP became the chief target of the witchhunt. The CP's class betrayals during the war had helped lay the basis for its isolation among union militants when the Cold War purge was launched.

Within the labor bureaucracy, social democrats like the UAW's Walter Reuther served as the spearhead of Cold War repression. Reuther had led the fight to ban communists from elected union office as far back as 1941, and supported the breaking of a CP-led strike against North American Aviation in June 1941 (see "How the Reuthers Tamed the UAW," *WV* No. 128, 8 October 1976). Though no less craven in enforcing the no-strike pledge, Reuther garnered support after the war with his call for "wage increases without price increases."

In September 1948, Reuther moved to purge Young and other CP supporters from the Wayne County CIO. Two years later, he seized on the outbreak of the Korean War to drive out of the UAW all those "found guilty" of not supporting U.S. imperialism's onslaught against the North Korean and Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers states. As the witchhunt escalated in Detroit, Communist workers were beaten up, teachers fired and attempts were even made to evict "reds" from public housing. Partic-

ularly in labor/black Detroit, the anti-red hysteria was shot through with racism. The CP supporters who were victimized were preponderantly black. A front-page headline in the *Militant* (17 March 1952) read, "Detroit Witch-Hunt Hearings Create a Lynch Atmosphere," and the article reported: "Even the hangman's rope, symbol of Southern Ku Klux Klan lynch terror, was in evidence in Detroit auto plants."

Reuther & Co. worked hand in hand with the notorious House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). Among their targets was the National Negro Labor Council set up by the CP in 1951, in which Young was active. In 1952, Young was ordered to appear at the Detroit HUAC hearings. Denouncing the racist union-busters, Young turned the hearings into a forum against lynch-ropes terror in the home states of the Southern Congressmen trying to grill him. Refusing to name names, Young declared, "You have me mixed up with a stool pigeon, sir." The tape recording of Young's testimony was played over and over in black working-class Detroit, enhancing his reputation for years.

Today, apologists for the "new" AFL-CIO of John Sweeney hark back to the "progressive" Reuther as their inspiration. In his book, *The Most Dangerous Man In Detroit*, social democrat Nelson Lichtenstein writes, "Reuther was at heart a moralist whose chest still burned with a passion for social justice." In fact, Reuther's "passion" was to clean up the image of racist U.S. imperialism in order to more effectively pursue the drive to destroy the Soviet Union. In his review of Lichtenstein's apologia, labor historian Michael Goldfield debunks the image of Reuther as an advocate of black rights, noting that he "consciously allied himself with the most racist forces in the union," including "the racist and FBI-

linked Association of Catholic Trade Unionists" (*Against the Current*, March/April 1997).

## A City on the Boil

After a number of unsuccessful electoral campaigns, Young won a seat as a Democrat in the state Senate in 1964. But it was the Detroit ghetto upheaval of July 1967 that set the stage for Young's ascent to City Hall. Thousands of National Guardsmen and federal troops were poured into Detroit; as tanks rumbled down the streets, the inner city was turned into a war zone. Young joined his former antagonist Reuther in calling on President Johnson to send in federal troops. By the time the rebellion was suppressed, 43 blacks had been killed, hundreds injured and over 7,000 arrested. Young then joined Reuther in the bourgeoisie's "New Detroit Committee," aimed at saving the Motor City for the Big Three.

The conflagration of July 1967 was the bloodiest, and one of the last, of a series of anti-cop ghetto rebellions—from Harlem in 1964 and Watts in 1965 to Newark and Detroit two years later—that buried the liberal illusions of the civil rights movement. In the South, with its rigid Jim Crow segregation, the civil rights movement led by liberal preachers like Martin Luther King Jr. managed to achieve some token reforms granting black people formal equality before the

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law. But when the movement came North, it collided head-on with the reality that black oppression in America is rooted in the very foundations of American capitalism.

This was palpable in Detroit. The tens of thousands of black workers who had been hired into the auto plants were excluded from the skilled trades and remained trapped in the dirtiest, most arduous and dangerous jobs in the foundries and on the assembly lines. Many thousands more were jobless: in 1961, the unemployment rate for blacks in Detroit was 39 percent, and 78 percent for black youth. Meanwhile, the Reutherite UAW bureaucracy was virtually lily-white and manifestly hostile to any action in defense of the union's growing black membership. As the 1967 explosion made clear, Detroit was a seething cauldron of race and class tensions.

This was reflected in the rapid growth of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW), based on factory formations like the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM). The young black auto workers hired into the plants in the late 1960s scorned the sort of one-sided appeals for "nonviolence" pushed by King, which he accompanied with calls for "as powerful a police force as possible" to be deployed against the rebellious ghetto masses in Watts and elsewhere. Nor was the petty-bourgeois nationalist orientation to lumpen ghetto youth pushed by the Black Panther Party seen as an answer in a city where 60,000 militant blacks worked in the strategic center of American industry. While no less nationalist, the LRBW had some sense of the social power of the black proletariat—and tapped into it. Only weeks after it first appeared, DRUM led a three-day wildcat which shut down Dodge Main and drew 3,000 workers to a rally outside the plant (see "Soul Power or Workers Power? The Rise and Fall of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers," *Marxist Bulletin* No. 5 [Revised], "What Strategy for Black Liberation?").

Joining forces with the racist Big Three management, UAW Secretary Treasurer Emil Mazey vilified DRUM as "black fascists" and a "black peril" more dangerous than the "red peril" of Communism. But the LRBW's nationalist outlook rendered it incapable of taking on the racist, pro-capitalist UAW bureaucracy. Hostile to integrated class struggle, the LRBW actively discouraged white workers from joining wildcat strikes and soon succumbed to its own contradictions, preparing the way for a layer of slicker, more left-talking union bureaucrats and "radical" Democratic Party politicians.

As opposed to the liberal integrationism of King & Co., and the nationalism of the LRBW and Panthers, the Spartacist League fights for the perspective of revolutionary integrationism, the understanding that the historic struggle for black equality can only end in victory if it culminates in the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system and the integration of the black masses into an egalitarian socialist society. In a 1966 founding document of the SL, "Black and Red—Class Struggle Road to Negro Freedom," we wrote:

"From their arrival in this country, the Negro people have been an *integral part* of American class society while at the same time *forcibly segregated* at the bottom of this society....

"The Negro people are an oppressed race-color caste, in the main comprising the most exploited layer of the American working class. Because of the generations of exceptional oppression, degradation and humiliation, Black people as a group have special needs and problems necessitating additional and special forms of struggle. It is this part of the struggle which has begun today, and from which the most active and militant sections of Black people will gain a deep education and experience in the lessons of struggle. Because of their position as both the most oppressed and also the most conscious and experienced section, revolutionary black workers are slated to play an exceptional role in the coming American revolution."



WV Photos



**Spartacists raise class-struggle program at July 1979 protest against auto plant closure. Four months later, 500 mostly black auto workers joined SL-initiated demonstration which defied arrest threat by Young and stopped planned KKK march in downtown Detroit.**

The fight against the special oppression of blacks is inseparable from the struggle to emancipate all of the working people from capitalist exploitation. We fight to forge a multiracial Leninist vanguard party to lead that struggle to victory. For black liberation through socialist revolution!

### The Devastation of Detroit

The 1967 ghetto rebellion and the explosive rise of black working-class militancy shook the racist rulers, leading to one attempt after another to clamp down on struggle until they finally decided to move much of the auto industry out of Detroit entirely. In an attempt to foment further divisions within the workforce, the auto companies set up special recruiting offices in the Near East, bringing over large numbers of Arab workers. But these workers soon demonstrated their own militancy by staging a wildcat protest against the UAW bureaucracy's purchase of Israeli bonds.

At the same time, there was a massive intensification of police repression. Notoriously racist police commissioner John Nichols set up a special "decoy unit" called STRESS which gunned down 21 blacks between 1969 and 1972. In 1972, Nichols personally led a squad of cops into Chrysler's Mack Avenue Stamping

Plant to arrest the leaders of a sitdown strike there.

Amid sharp polarization, the 1973 mayoral election pitted Young against Nichols. While campaigning against STRESS and denouncing racist cop terror, Young joined Nichols in calling for putting more of these armed thugs on the streets. Nonetheless, the CP, a host of other reformist "socialists" and remnants of the LRBW gave open or backhanded support to the black Democrat. Against such opportunists, the SL wrote: "Far from being a working-class victory, the victory of a 'responsible' black 'progressive' fits in nicely with the liberal bourgeoisie's current game plan for siphoning off racial tensions by giving the oppressed minorities the illusion of political power" (WV No. 33, 23 November 1973).

Cynically expressing the outlook of Detroit's capitalist establishment, department store magnate Joseph Hudson remarked: "The black man has the feeling he is about to take power in the city. But he is going to be left with an empty bag." Having won the election, Young oversaw the decimation of Detroit—200,000 auto workers lost their jobs as the Big Three moved their operations to the low-wage, non-union South. In 1974-75, Young laid off city workers by the thou-

sands. Services were slashed, museums closed, school funding cut and the streets flooded with cops. He opposed a proposed ordinance to disband the Detroit "red squad" and busted a 1980 strike by city workers in order to make the Motor City "safe" for the Republican Party convention.

A measure of how far Young's political journey had taken him over the years was expressed in his attempt to ban a march against the KKK in Detroit in 1979. Young threatened to arrest militant auto workers who joined an SL-initiated labor/black mobilization to stop the KKK from coming to Detroit to "celebrate" the fascist massacre of five leftists and union organizers in Greensboro, North Carolina. An SL leaflet declared: "Mayor Coleman Young said we who oppose the Klan have no more rights than the KKK killers, that we should not show our faces on fear of arrest. We say no to Coleman Young...and Coleman Young better think about it." The mobilization went ahead, and as a special WV supplement (16 November 1979) reported: "500 at Detroit Labor/Black Rally Say: The Klan Won't Ride in the Motor City!" Addressing the rally, SL spokesman Don Alexander said:

"You know what Coleman Young is—the awful example of what selling your black political soul to the Democratic Party means. You sort of go morally and politically blind. After a while you can't tell the difference between the guys in white sheets and the guys on the other side."

By the early 1980s, what was once the heart of the black proletariat and the strategic center of American industry was a rusting hulk. As Young's capitalist masters hoped, all this was carried out without any major protest. That is why Coleman Young's death was mourned by mouthpieces for the bourgeoisie like the *New York Times*.

Uniquely on the left, the SL advanced a class-struggle program to defeat the bourgeoisie's savage attacks on the Detroit proletariat. Against the UAW bureaucracy's appeals for government subsidies to salvage Chrysler in 1979; setting the stage for mass layoffs and the gutting of union benefits, we called for workers to seize the plants, auction off the assets and keep the proceeds. Three years later, as Chrysler workers faced further attacks and teachers walked out against Young's demand for an 8 percent pay cut, we called for labor to "Shut Down Detroit!" (WV No. 313, 17 September 1982). Emphasizing the need for a political struggle against the pro-capitalist union tops to break workers and minorities from the Democrats, we declared:

"There is no way out within the capitalist system. What is needed is a workers party to fight for a workers government which will rip the productive wealth of this country out of the hands of the capitalist class."

This task remains all the more urgent today, in the face of all-sided attacks on the working class and the ghetto and barrio masses—the devastation of welfare and other social programs, the massive cut in real wages, the ongoing assault on union rights, the enormous increase in police terror and the racist speedup on death row. We fight for a multiracial vanguard party—like Lenin's Bolsheviks, a tribune of all the oppressed—to lead the fight for a socialist future. ■

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# PRF/IG: Pabloite Desertion from the LTF

## The Struggle for a French Section of the ICL

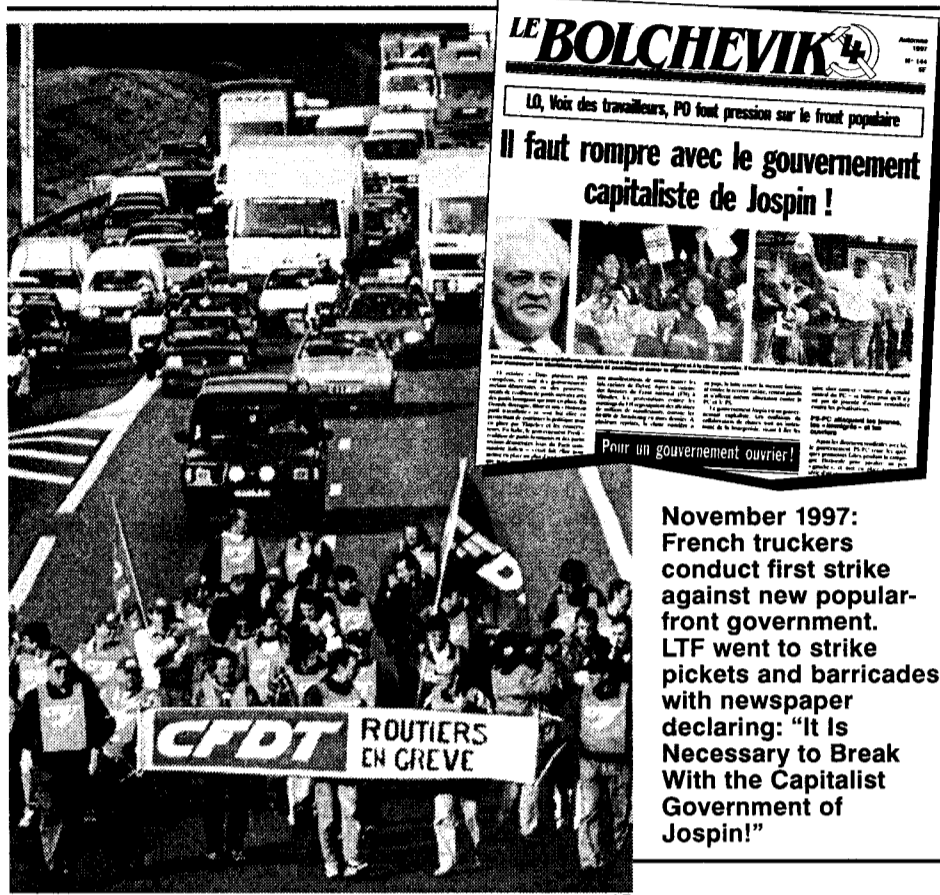
The following article is translated and adapted from *Le Bolchévik* (No. 145, Spring 1998), newspaper of the Ligue Trotskyste de France.

### LE BOLCHEVIK

On January 26, the Central Committee of the Ligue Trotskyste de France (LTF), French section of the International Communist League, expelled two members for violation of our Leninist party discipline. These two ex-members, D. and Z., who six weeks earlier had declared themselves as the "Permanent Revolution Faction" (PRF), refused to speak with a Control Commission established to investigate their flagrant collaboration with a hostile political opponent organization, the "Internationalist Group" (IG). The IG consists of a handful of renegades from Trotskyism who deserted our ranks in 1996. Their *líder máximo*, Jan Norden, was for many years the editor of our American newspaper, *Workers Vanguard*.

Impelled by the pressures of this period of post-Soviet reaction, Norden and his small coterie defected from our international tendency, in the search for and accommodating to social forces other than the proletariat and vehicles other than a Leninist vanguard party to advance the cause of the struggle for human emancipation. And it was precisely over the party question, the question of revolutionary leadership, that the IG's newfound adherents in our French section went into political opposition. The election of the Jospin popular-front government was what drove them from revolutionary Trotskyism to centrist accommodation to the capitalist order.

This political flight began during last November's truckers strike, in the crucible of class struggle against the popular-front government of Socialist Party (PS) prime minister Lionel Jospin and Communist Party (PCF) transport minister Jean-Claude Gayssot. The embryonic PRF went into opposition against directives from the ICL International Secretariat (I.S.) to mobilize the entire LTF and its youth group, Jeunesse Spartaciste (JS), to get out to the truckers' barricades, using our Marxist newspaper to introduce ourselves to the strikers as *the only left group in France which did*



AP

not vote for this racist, strikebreaking popular-front government.

The future PRF opposed selling subscriptions to our paper to strikers, incredibly accusing the I.S. of inculcating "routinism" and "abstentionism"! Instead, they proposed issuing an utterly economist leaflet calling on the workers—from completely outside the industry—to adopt more militant strike tactics. This leaflet was to say *nothing* about the necessity of forging a revolutionary leadership against the treacherous, reformist misleaders of the unions and of the PCF and PS in the popular-front government. Nor would it have a word about our centrist opponents, most of whom issued leaflets qualitatively similar to what the PRF wanted the LTF to publish.

Meanwhile, the I.S. and others in the ICL—including, in particular, LTF youth—were fighting against a right-centrist bloc in the LTF leadership which wanted to abstain from active intervention in this important strike. Thus the "left-centrist" PRF argued to "intervene"

in the truckers strike on the purely trade-unionist basis of strike tactics, while the right-centrists wanted to ignore the strike altogether. Both capitulated to the opportunist left groups which try to conceal the fact that the popular-front government was as determined as the Gaullists to carry out austerity measures against the French working class. The common denominator between both expressions of centrism is that both regarded our Trotskyist program as irrelevant.

A few weeks later, on December 19, D. and Z. declared themselves the Permanent Revolution Faction. The weight of their first factional declaration—some 35 pages—was the unmistakable paw print of the windbag Norden. Unreservedly defending every one of the IG's positions, this factional document, manifestly written from afar, made not the slightest effort to explain how and why they had become totally converted. Yet not long before, Z. had given several presentations in the LTF against the IG, including one exposing the IG's fraternal comrades in the Brazilian LQB (Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil, previously known as Luta Metalúrgica [LM]).

The ICL broke off fraternal relations with LM/LQB in June 1996 after months of intense discussion and joint work on site in Brazil. Despite the LQB's formal pretensions to revolutionary Trotskyism, their ingrained trade-union opportunism made them an obstacle to building a revolutionary party (see "A Break in Fraternal Relations with Luta Metalúrgica, WV No. 648, 5 July 1996). The LQB sought to control a cop-infested union from the top while having no communist fraction at the base. When the ICL learned of this and of the presence of cops in the union, we pushed LM to fight for the principle that cops are not part of the workers movement and do not belong in the union. This forced a split within the unprincipled union leadership bloc brokered by LM/LQB. Their one-time ally, pro-cop thug Artur Fernandes, sued LQB member and union president Geraldo Ribeiro, an ex-cop. The LQB and its

equally squalid competitors dragged the union through the capitalist courts while the IG ran an international campaign of "solidarity"—a cover-up for their class treason in Brazil.

Following Lenin's exhortation that anyone who takes anybody else's word for something is a fool, the LTF looks forward to soon publishing the documents from the factional struggle for the edification and sanitation of the workers movement. Pending publication of the full documentation, we urge readers to order our "Internationalist Group Truth Kit," which exposes these shamefaced defectors from Trotskyism as nothing but apologists for the Stalinist bureaucrats who sold out the Soviet degenerated workers state and the deformed workers states of East Europe and for the trade-union opportunism of their fraternal comrades in Brazil.

Although it was evident that the PRF in the LTF was controlled by Norden's IG, we chose not to take organizational measures against the PRF earlier for our own reasons: to fully thrash out the political issues in dispute in order to strengthen the party. Our party has not been immune to the pressures bearing down on the entire left in this period, particularly since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Internal political struggle is the means by which a revolutionary party maintains its programmatic integrity against the disintegrative pressures of bourgeois society. Thus this internal challenge was seized upon as an opportunity to programmatically strengthen the French section of the ICL against the pressures of popular-frontism and national narrowness so fervently represented by the Permanent Revolution Faction.

At the same time, the right to factional struggle, which our international organization cherishes, is a right for *disciplined members*. As the PRF was repeatedly warned, they could fight the ICL's program from inside the party or from outside the party, but not both simultaneously. The LTF's organizational rules specifically spell out: "Political collaboration with non-members of the LTF must be formally authorized by the LTF body having jurisdiction." After dozens of documents, several plenary meetings and a national conference of the LTF on January 17-18, the anti-Trotskyist politics of the PRF had been fully exposed: they had not managed to recruit *a single supporter* in the LTF or internationally, and our organization came out of this fight considerably strengthened.

The recent Third International Conference of the International Communist League passed a motion endorsing the LTF's expulsion of the Permanent Revolution Faction:

"We note that the immediate protest on the Internet by supporters of the Internationalist Group serves as confirmation of the organizational collaboration between the erstwhile French minority and the IG.

"The documents of the LTF majority and majority motions passed at the LTF's 17th National Conference document the Permanent Revolution Faction's flight from revolutionary Trotskyism, to which their organizational disloyalty was a corollary. The Permanent Revolution Faction's misidentification of working-class combativity with revolutionary consciousness negated the need for a revolutionary party. This was the Permanent Revolution Faction's bridge to the Jospin

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popular front and to the Internationalist Group. As a caricature of the LTF's most rotten impulses and accommodation to alien political forces, the faction served to illuminate the LTF's longstanding disorientation and accommodation to the PCF wing of the popular front. This glorification of French national chauvinist traditions is the rotten legacy of the French Trotskyist movement's Pabloite liquidation and capitulation to the popular front—a history which the French section of the ICL stands in opposition to. The factional struggle served as a useful device to politically and organizationally cohere a French section. The test now for the LTF is to turn outward, intervene against our opponents with our revolutionary program and recruit."

### Pabloites of the Second Mobilization

Trotsky noted in *The Lessons of October* (1924) that sudden changes in the world situation always provoke disorientation and confusion within the revolutionary party, especially within its leadership. At the onset of the U.S.-led Cold War II, prevailing public opinion regarded the Soviet Union as the "evil empire." One should have expected political opposition within our international at that point. Instead, those now constituting the "International Bolshevik Tendency" (IBT), currently in the process of disintegration, quit individually or were expelled for petty crimes against the party or the proletariat, while of course proclaiming that they stood on the revolutionary program and heritage of the Spartacist League. Then in 1991-92, there was capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union—the final defeat of the only successful proletarian revolution—and an onslaught of bourgeois triumphalism over the alleged "death of communism," accompanied by huge splits and regroupments on the left. One would have expected political opposition within the ICL at that point, too. Instead, four individuals who became the Internationalist Group engineered their own expulsions...while claiming to stand on the revolutionary traditions and heritage of the ICL.

Neither grouping waged any struggle inside the ICL as a declared faction to openly fight out any political or programmatic issues. Now the IBT of Bill Logan has made a marriage proposal to the IG of Norden on the basis of shared lies of bureaucratic abuse (see "Willful Blindness," 1917 No. 20, 1998). This puts their allegedly divergent worldviews—the IBT's Stalinophobia and the IG's Stalinophilia—at the level of a clique fight in a college faculty. After all, how much can any alleged principles matter in the groves of academia? Moreover, the Russian question is considered passé by the reformist and centrist swamp in which the IG swims—so much so that the supposed irrelevance of the Russian question was a guiding "principle" of delegates to a recent Trotskyoid "regroupment" conference in South Africa attended by...the IBT's Logan.

Like Michel Pablo before him, who abandoned the very reason for the Fourth International's existence by denying the need for revolutionary Trotskyist leadership and asserting that the Stalinist parties were capable of "roughly outlining a revolutionary orientation," Norden adapted to the very forces which led capitalist counterrevolution in the former deformed workers states. Having abandoned the Trotskyist program and a proletarian compass, he is capable of leading his pathetic followers anywhere—including across the class line by suing unions in Brazil—just as Logan's IBT crosses picket lines in New York City.

As the LTF majority wrote in its Perspectives and Tasks document: "The IG can be characterized as a post-Soviet BT. We must note that in a 35-page document they are silent on the Russian question, and in particular on the central task for Trotskyists, the fight for the revolutionary defense of the Chinese deformed workers state. Since it doesn't matter, why mention it and why fight? In other words, this document is the exit visa from Trotskyism for D. and Z."

With the PRF, we finally had an

opportunity in the LTF to pursue the political issues which Norden fled from fighting out in the ICL, and we were able to thrash out the full panoply of post-Soviet Pabloism, or what we've termed "Pabloism of the second mobilization." Reflecting their contempt for internationalism, the PRF complained that more than 15 responses to their factional document had poured in from comrades around the world within 24 hours after the International Secretariat had translated and circulated their document to all members of our international. As Trotsky wrote, "By its very nature opportunism is nationalistic, since it rests on the local and temporary needs of the proletariat and not on its historic tasks.... International unity is not a decorative facade for us, but the very axis of our theoretical views and our policy."

The whole of Trotsky's writings is a testament to his relentless struggle to build a Fourth International and forge, against centrist adaptations to bourgeois rule, the necessary subjective factor in history: a revolutionary, internationalist Leninist vanguard party. The necessity of continual struggle against the pressures of bourgeois society is incomprehensible to megalomaniacs like Jan Norden who believe first and foremost in their own infallibility. While a member of the ICL,



N.A. Kasatkin



VAAP

**Left: early Russian Marxist study circle. Center: Petrograd's Putilov works, a key base of proletarian support for Bolsheviks. Spartacist pamphlet describes Lenin's fight for a vanguard party representing the fusion of revolutionary intellectuals with advanced workers, the necessary instrument in developing proletarian class consciousness.**

Norden repeatedly tried to insist on "one-man rule" (for a Leninist newspaper that's supposed to serve as the *collective organizer* of the party!) and once even appealed for "plenipotentiary powers" on international assignment, to be free of the collective leadership Norden correctly perceived as an impediment to pursuit of his impressionistic appetites. "One-man rule," "plenipotentiary powers"—this kind of personal prestige politics is very typical of Stalinist and Pabloite organizations, but utterly alien to genuine Leninists. Among the dozens of documents written by comrades in every section of the international against the minority in the French section, comrade Peter M. from Australia perhaps best captured the PRF and IG's political pathology:

"The Islamic Commission at the forthcoming international conference of the ICL (and our work directed towards China and Southeast Asia) is part of our fight for, and determination to build, sections in the 'Third World'; a struggle to reforge the Fourth International. The cowardly exit of the 'IGlets' from our party came centrally over their opposition to our fight for Trotskyism in Brazil (following the pathetic necrophilic overtures towards the Stalinist-turned-social-democrat has-beens in Germany). It is not we who are 'turning away' from the struggles of the working class, but the Nordenites who would substitute the chase after ex-Stalinists who spearheaded the fight against proletarian political revolution in East Germany, the 'struggle' for trade-union sinecures in Brazil, and an economist path of 'spurring on' French workers' strikes while burying the fight for revolutionary leadership in the service of the popular-front government.

"The opposition to the supposedly 'new I.S.' expresses hostility to the fights waged by our international leadership in the various sections to steel our ranks

against the pressures of this period. It is also a trawling operation for any weak, worn-out or petty-bourgeois elements who have ever had their feet trodden on, or nose put out of joint, by these necessary political fights. The fight against this anti-Trotskyist faction will strengthen our French section. Ongoing political struggle is also necessary in the Australian section to build a Leninist organization capable of our great tasks."

### Factional Struggle and Party Leadership

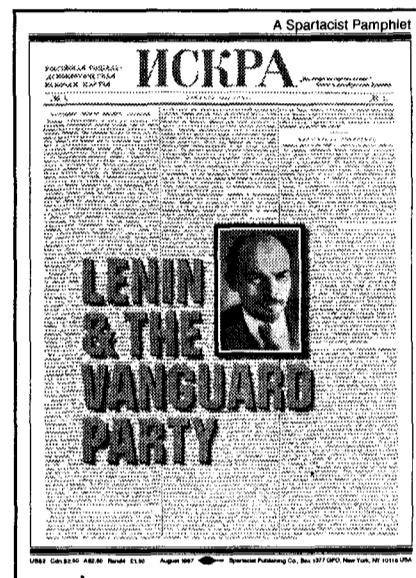
Unique among left organizations, the ICL codifies the right to declared factional struggle in its organizational rules. This is the result of our experience as a bureaucratically abused minority in the right-centrist American Socialist Workers Party in 1961-64. Having been on the short end of a very nasty organization as a revolutionary minority, we were keenly sensitive to the questions of the democratic side of democratic-centralism, which ultimately means factional democracy—the right to combine in an organized way in order to oppose the existing leadership of the party based on an assumption that the present program is incorrect, that the party has departed from a revolutionary program and therefore requires a new program and a corresponding new leadership.

The PRF had full factional rights

dence. (For the PRF, that meant the two of them could write each other letters, or sit in a room by themselves, as they had found no supporters anywhere in the entire ICL.)

Discussions at LTF meetings were organized according to our democratic-centralist norms: equal time for presentations on the issues in debate by both majority and minority factions. The whole purpose of this was to ensure that what emerged from this struggle was *maximum political clarity* and that the waters were not muddied in any way by secondary organizational grievances. At the same time, the minority was held politically accountable. Several times the majority was forced to codify in motions the minority's brazen flaunting of its failure to adhere to our organizational rules regarding contact with hostile political opponent organizations. This was noted several times for the record while we continued to move on to clarify the political issues in dispute.

In addition to scrupulously upholding the democratic rights of the minority, the majority faction responded with a great deal of factional zeal and *humor*. This enraged the minority, which saw nothing funny about their unexplained 180-degree turnaround in political views, or our suggestion that a PRF member de-



within the LTF. They were granted time to make their opening debut in a meeting of the LTF's youth group, the JS. (Our youth group is not a front group but a politically subordinate and organizationally independent youth organization. Thus, disputes within the party are also brought into the youth group for discussion.) All members of the LTF and JS were expected to read the minority's material and had the right to meet and discuss with them and decide for themselves. A majority caucus was formed in opposition to the minority. Except for the two members of the PRF, every member of the LTF and the JS, after having read the documentation on which the majority faction was based, joined the majority caucus. The declared minority and majority faction each had the right to private factional meetings and correspon-

bate himself, as we had several tapes of this renegade giving presentations in LTF meetings against the Internationalist Group! But most of all, the PRF was distinctly reluctant to *fight*. Thus the I.S. Secretary wrote a letter to the PRF suggesting that they tour the sections of our international to try and win supporters—an offer the PRF *declined*.

Similarly, majority faction comrades challenged the PRF to win over the majority on the key question of Norden's infamous January 1995 speech at Berlin's Humboldt University. In this speech, embraced by the PRF, Norden junked Trotskyism, groveled before Stalinist hacks and disappeared the role of the ICL as the revolutionary leadership for the incipient workers political revolution against the Stalinist-led counterrevolution

*continued on page 8*

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(continued from page 7)

in the DDR (East Germany) in 1989-90. Comrades offered to build a stage and invite some elderly people from the neighborhood to sit in as surrogate SED (former DDR Stalinist ruling party) "youth" while our own comrades would listen to the PRF read Norden's Humboldt speech out loud and then engage in democratic discussion afterward. The PRF refused, stating we couldn't be convinced. One must wonder then, if they had no confidence in their ability to convince anyone in the party of the correctness of their views, why did they form a faction in the first place?

But what really drove the PRF wild was a little redecoration of our Paris office. Comrades from the majority honored Trotsky and hung a poster of him as head of the Red Army on our office wall. We also honored the memory of Cuban general Ochoa, who defeated the racist apartheid army in Angola only to be criminally executed in 1989 by the Stalinist Castro in Cuba—an execution Norden attempted to excuse. But the majority also allocated a wall of the office to illustrate the despicable "heroes" of the minority faction. That wall included: Stalin, the gravedigger of the October Revolution, who IG honcho Norden gratuitously hailed as commander in chief of the Red Army (indeed the Red Army smashed Hitlerite fascism *despite* Stalin); Erich Honecker, whose SED led the counterrev-



AP

**Leon Trotsky denouncing assassination attempt shortly before his murder by Stalinist agent in 1940.**

olution in the DDR; and lesser lights orbiting the Stalinist firmament, like Norden and Negrete themselves. Apoplectic, the minority faction squealed, "What next, dunce caps?" *Et voilà*, an able youth immediately affixed a dunce cap on the head of Stalin, the PRF's "commander in chief."

While eschewing humor—which requires an appreciation of contradiction sorely lacked by the IG and PRF—this ersatz faction's real unseriousness toward fighting to change the party program or the party leadership is underscored by the fact that these marionettes, like their puppet master Norden, did not even bother to *appeal* their expulsions. They knew full well that they could have appealed not only to the French section, but to the imminent International Conference of the ICL. This exposes their "faction" for what it was—not a struggle to change the party's program or leadership, but oppositional camouflage for shamefaced defectors from Trotskyism. (Or, to borrow a favorite phrase from the IG, the PRF was just an oven mitt for two renegades eager to "pull their hands out of boiling water.") The PRF was glad to be freed from the program and organization which held them back from the popular-frontist political milieu they seek to swim in.

As James P. Cannon, the founder of American Trotskyism, wrote:

"Trotsky once wrote that a revolutionist is tested under all kinds of circumstances and in all kinds of actions, from strikes and street fights up to the revolutionary



M.S. Nappelbaum

**Lenin (at left) during First Congress of the Communist International, March 1919. The ICL fights to build a democratic-centralist international based on program of early Comintern and Trotsky's Fourth International.**

struggle for power, but that the most important test of all is his attitude toward the disputes within his own party."

**The Crisis of Revolutionary Leadership**

In "Stalinism and Bolshevism" (1936), Trotsky observed:

"Reactionary epochs like ours not only disintegrate and weaken the working class and its vanguard but also lower the general ideological level of the movement and throw political thinking back to stages long since passed through. In these conditions, the task of the vanguard is above all not to let itself be carried along by the backward flow: it must swim against the current. If an unfavorable relation of forces prevents it from holding the positions that it has won, it must at least retain its ideological positions, because in them is expressed the dearly purchased experience of the past. Fools will consider this policy 'sectarian.' Actually it is the only means of preparing for a new tremendous surge forward with the coming historical tide."

The IG and PRF consistently misidentify the *will* of the workers to struggle with the *revolutionary consciousness* needed to *triumph* over the capitalist rulers, which must be brought to the workers from without. Thus, the IG and PRF adapt to the lower level of consciousness engendered by the destruction of the Soviet Union and ensuing bourgeois triumphalism. In contrast, the ICL fights to win militant workers to understand the broader context of their struggles: that the post-Soviet world is very much like the pre-1914 period, with interimperialist hostilities threatening a new world war, posing once again urgent revolutionary tasks for the proletariat internationally.

Trotsky never maintained that the mass of workers (as opposed to their leaderships) always and everywhere were "spontaneously" desirous of "red revolution" and that therefore the problem was "reduced" to its leadership. The Trotskyist movement never utilized the concept of the crisis of proletarian leadership to absolve itself of responsibility for combatting the backward consciousness of the workers, whether in the form of parliamentary reformism or national chauvinism and racism. It is precisely here that the opportunist character of Norden and his PRF supporters and their abandonment of Leninism are most obvious.

The Bolshevik Revolution and the formation of the Communist International led to a qualitative elevation in the political consciousness of the working class and leftist intelligentsia throughout the world. But in no country today can we say, as Trotsky said about the workers of Spain in the 1930s, that the political level of the proletariat is above that of the Russian proletariat on the eve of the February Revolution. Indeed, there is no longer any significant current of advanced workers and leftist intellectuals who consider themselves communists in the Leninist sense. This condition does not at all rule out mass, militant struggles by the workers and other oppressed layers, or even revolutionary upheavals in countries where the bourgeois political order is currently fragile and the

existing regime widely hated (e.g., Mexico and Indonesia). But whether in the imperialist centers or in unstable Third World countries, we have to fight to overcome the historical retrogression in the political consciousness of the working class and the left. To deny this, as does the IG/PRF, is to capitulate to it and liquidate the role of the party.

As stated in the "Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program" adopted by the ICL at its Third International Conference:

"Trotsky's assertion in the 1938 Transitional Program that 'The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of leadership of the proletariat' predates the present deep regression of proletarian consciousness. The reality of this post-Soviet period adds a new dimension to Trotsky's observation. The only way in which this regression can be overcome and the working class can become a class *for* itself, i.e., fighting for socialist revolution, is to reforge an international Leninist-Trotskyist party as the leadership of the working class."

**The Popular Front: Not a Tactic but the Greatest Crime**

During the strike wave of December 1995, when the right-wing Juppé government was in power, the ex-comrades of the PRF played an important role in fighting a centrist obstacle in the LTF Central Committee which then wanted to abstain or tail our fake-Trotskyist opponents in the strike wave. In 1995, a fight led by the I.S. was waged for the LTF to make an intervention as a fighting propaganda group, centered on the question of revolutionary leadership. But in 1997, with the Jospin popular front in power, D.'s maximum program was militant economism, which her bloc partner Z. tried to belatedly camouflage by tacking on more programmatic points. This, and their insistence that, with Jospin in power, now was the time to concentrate North Africans in France—even as thousands of foreigners are being deported by the racist popular front—indicates deep-going and profound disorientation on the popular front. At bottom, they have a position of pressuring the popular front

rather than mobilizing the proletariat for its revolutionary overthrow.

Even before the formal declaration of faction by the minority on December 19, the political outlines of a fight for a Leninist-Trotskyist party vs. centrist tailism were clear. Thus, a motion adopted on November 9 by the LTF said:

"The documents of D. and Z. define our revolutionary program as calls to spread the strike, elected strike committees, i.e., on primarily union tactics. This is in contradiction to Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?*, which makes the point that to approach the working class purely on the basis of trade-union militancy (i.e., 'seeking to lend the economic struggle a political character') has the effect, whatever one's intention, of reinforcing the authority of the existing reformist leadership. The role of Marxists is to bring revolutionary consciousness to the working class in complete opposition to the existing reformist leadership and *their centrist tails*. Our job is to politically motivate the need for a *conscious* break from the reformist leadership. The conception that this break will come automatically through more militant union struggle is 'spontaneism,' which is an adaptation to the existing consciousness of the working class, which is bourgeois consciousness—for which the reformist bureaucracy is the transmission belt.

"The leaflet outlined by D. and Z. would be simply a more militant version of the leaflet of VdT [Voix des Travailleurs, a split from the reformist Lutte Ouvrière (LO)] which 'criticized' the existing leadership of the strike and even poses the question of a general strike. D. and Z. are looking for a *shortcut* to reach the workers and throw the revolutionary program overboard as if it were excess baggage. That is why D.'s proposed leaflet makes no mention of any polemics against our opponents, most notably our centrist opponents who are most vulnerable and dangerous now in the crucible of struggle and with the popular front in power.

"Seeking to intervene in the truckers strike with an economic militancy line would have to be an adaptation to our centrist opponents who voted for this popular-front government.

"The twin policies of 'left' and 'right' centrism are in continuity with the policies which paralyzed the section at the beginning of the strike wave of December '95. The leadership at first ignored the strikes, then intervened with the line 'For a May '68 which goes all the way,' a version of militant economism, and the LTF was unable to write any propaganda on the necessity of revolutionary leadership. Then there was an obstruction to distributing the propaganda produced by the I.S. which was titled: 'Smash Vigipirate! Unite "immigrants," women, youth behind the power of the working class! For a new, revolutionary leadership! For a workers government to sweep away the whole rotten capitalist system!'"

The clearest measure of a revolutionary party is its attitude toward its centrist and reformist opponents. The need to politically combat opponents derives from the Marxist premise that the false consciousness of the proletariat can and must be changed to a higher class consciousness of its revolutionary tasks. This means combatting reformist illusions which tie the working class to its "own" bourgeoisie. The centrists are more dangerous because they couch their accommodation to the reformists, and therefore to the existing capitalist order, in pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric. Therefore, the logic of avoiding political combat with our centrist opponents represents the

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abandonment of a revolutionary perspective. It means becoming the left tail of parliamentary electoralist reformism.

As discussed at the Third International Conference of the ICL, the pressures on our various international sections are different: in Australia it's the pressure of the Labor Party in opposition; all the problems of our British section mainly reduce themselves to a difficulty in dealing with the Labour Party; in Mexico it's the pressure of bourgeois nationalism; in Germany comrades feel the pressure from the social democrats of the SPD and PDS and from anarchoid *autonomen*; in the U.S. the pressures are the backwardness of the proletariat and the arrogance of the most vicious military power in the world. Throughout the entire history of French Trotskyism, the pressure has been one of accommodation and capitulation to popular-frontism. All these pressures are deforming in different ways in different sections. Our task is to render the cadres conscious of the political pressures so these pressures can be fought and the party can intervene effectively in the fight to build the party that will lead the proletariat in struggle for new October Revolutions around the globe.

The factional struggle with the PRF illuminated historic problems of the LTF and thus enabled the party to understand and begin to break from what had been a nearly continuous history of blunting our program to accommodate centrist and reformist opponents. During "Cold War II"—an imperialist crusade against the Soviet Union which raged white-hot in Mitterrand's France—every fake Trotskyist from Ernest Mandel and French Mandelite Alain Krivine to reformist Pierre Lambert and LO spokesman Arlette Laguiller enthusiastically joined in the anti-Sovietism of their own capitalist rulers. The LTF stood at its post as staunch Soviet defensists, opposing imperialism and capitalist restoration. But there was a persistent tendency to capitulate to the PCF wing of the popular front because of the Stalinists' supposed "pro-Sovietism."

Let's be clear: when we talk about accommodating to the PCF wing of the French popular front, we are talking about an accommodation to social democracy. The policy of all the parties in the Stalinized Communist International officially became reformism—that is to say, Menshevism, social democracy—with the declaration on the "People's Front" at the Comintern's Seventh Congress in August 1935. *The pro-Soviet adjective is a Stalinist myth*: they were pro-Stalin. The ostensible pro-Sovietism of the French Communist Party was intended purely to deceive the proletariat, while the actual practice of the PCF tied the proletariat to capitalism.

In contrast to this understanding, the PRF and the IG glorify the existing consciousness of the French working class and its present misleadership in what the IG calls "the classical European country of revolution." Against this, the LTF majority wrote:

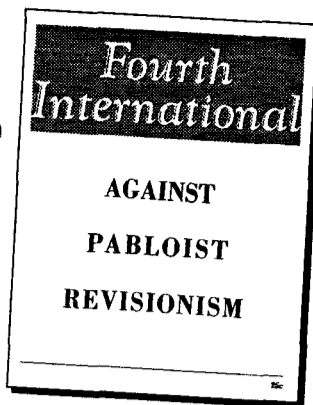
"Our song is not the 'Marseillaise' but the 'Internationale.' Regarding the France whose praises they sing, they have forgotten the colonial empire. The 'classical country of the revolution,' as they call it, massacred Algerians at Sétif on 8 May 1945, as it was celebrating the so-called Liberation. It took Africa with fire and blood, and continues to plunder this continent through the IMF. It terrorizes immigrants and their children. It shut its borders to Algeria (among others) with the Vigipirate plan. It keeps in check its present-day colonies (the latest repression that we know about came down on high-school students fighting for better study conditions). In the country of the 'rights of man' (that myth of the bourgeoisie), political refugees have no right to engage in politics, under threat of losing their residency cards. Immigrant parents whose children have been killed have no right to demonstrate, under threat of losing their residency cards on a charge of disturbing the peace. That's what bourgeois democracy is."

Never in all their voluminous documents on France do the IG/PRF mention the necessity to split the reformist



Pathfinder

The ICL upholds the fight waged by SWP leader James P. Cannon in early 1950s against the revisionists led by Michel Pablo, whose program of liquidating the Trotskyist party is voiced today by Norden's IG.



parties. In fact, in its factional declaration the PRF *alibied* the role of the PCF and PS in the popular front, asserting that: "Mass workers organizations are subordinated to the class-collaborationist program through the popular front." This statement of the PRF is simply wrong. The PCF and the PS are not victims of a thing called the popular front that subordinates them to a class-collaborationist program. Class collaboration is the program and practice of all *bourgeois* workers parties. A parliamentary government based on reformist workers parties, such as Tony Blair's Labour government in Britain today, is also a capitalist government.

A popular front is a coalition between reformist workers parties and bourgeois formations. The importance of the inclusion of even the most modest non-proletarian political formation (what Trotsky called "the shadow of the bourgeoisie") is to act as a *guarantor* of the program of the popular front—a *capitalist government*. This is the alibi used by "Labor," "Socialist" or "Communist" parties to justify their refusal to follow their nominal programs to their own followers. The contradiction implicit in such parties between subordination to the interests of the capitalist system and their pretense of expressing the workers' interests is thereby suppressed. In the process of building a Leninist-Trotskyist party in France, the PCF and PS must be split along political lines.

Comrade Petersen of the ICL's German section captured the symbiotic capitulation by the IG to the Stalinist bureaucrats who sold out the deformed workers states and to the Stalinist and social-democratic union and party tops who sell out trade-union struggles:

"Norden maintains today that the Stalinists did not lead the counterrevolution. One must ask oneself: what is the difference between 'sold out the DDR' and 'led the counterrevolution'? Let's take the example of the IG Metall bureaucracy during the metal workers strike in 1984. The strike lasts six weeks, they mobilize only 35,000 workers. Millions want to participate. And then the final agreement reached is that the 35-hour week will be realized in seven years—or in eight. That is called a sellout. I mean, what did they do? What did the IG Metall bureaucracy do with the strike? They betrayed the strike. Was the IG Metall bureaucracy also a 'semi-willing victim' [as Norden sees the former ruling Stalinist bureaucrats]? Or did they *betray* the strike?"

The "welfare state" presently under attack in Europe long represented a sort of "tribute" that the capitalist class paid to the Soviet Union. In other words, the capitalists recognized that they had to cut into their own profits and provide the working class with some kind of "safety net" lest a new October Revolution be brought to *their* doors. For decades, the reformist parties were supposed to deliver reforms and based their authority on their capacity to successfully do so. Now they have been called on to govern in many European countries in order to themselves proceed to dismantle the workers' gains. This is why reformism, despite its *apparent* strengthening (at the electoral level), is in reality entering a crisis. This implies an opening to undermine parliamentary reformism and its centrist apologists among the most conscious workers and radicalized intellectuals, *provided* we

intervene as Leninists on the basis of our revolutionary program.

But instead, in its 35-page founding document, the PRF does not even manage to characterize the popular front as racist! In fact, the PRF began to germinate when the popular front came to power. The popular front's electoral victory aroused real illusions even among North African immigrants. A provocation against our North African party comrades some time before had led us to particularly protect these comrades, with their agreement. But in the PRF's eyes, these protective measures were an "abandonment of the perspective of regrouping North African cadres in exile to forge the nucleus of a Trotskyist party around an exile journal"! Here their dishonesty is flagrant. The PRF defines itself as "Trotskyist militants of the former colonial countries," who therefore could in no way capitulate to French chauvinism. They saw themselves not as internationalist communists but as "experts" on their own country of origin, and in a parochial fashion oriented particularly to the demoralized elements of the exile milieu, having little or no interest in winning the second-generation "immigrant" youth.

In opposition to this sectoralism—which mirrors the divisions fostered within the working class by the capitalist rulers—we revolutionary Marxists understand the need to fight racism and national chauvinism and defend the rights of immigrants, as the most vulnerable section of the proletariat, as a *class* question. In the course of the class struggle and as economic need demands, modern capitalism, i.e., imperialism—which extends into all parts of the planet—draws new sources of cheap labor into the lowest layers of the proletariat. These new proletarians are principally immigrants from poorer and less-developed regions of the world—workers with few rights who are deemed more dispensable in times of economic contraction. Thus capitalism creates different strata among the workers in an ongoing fashion, while simultaneously bringing together the workers of many different lands. Abetted by aristocracy-of-labor opportunists, the capitalists everywhere try to poison class consciousness and solidarity among the workers by fomenting religious, national and ethnic divisions. The proletarian vanguard is thus confronted with the necessary task of struggling for the unity and integrity of the working class against chauvinism and racism.

As the majority faction's Perspectives and Tasks document, adopted at the LTF's 17th National Conference, states: "The LTF, section of the ICL, reaffirms its internationalist commitment to fight for revolutions, whose fates are inextricably linked, on both sides of the Mediterranean. We seek to recruit among the second-generation youth, including those who left Algeria as exiles these past few years."

### The PRF Against Permanent Revolution

The IG and the PRF talk (a little) about the theory of permanent revolution—i.e., the necessity for a *workers* revolution in economically backward countries oppressed by imperialism and its extension, in order to solve the agrar-

ian question and free these countries from the imperialist yoke. But their class betrayal in Brazil shows that this is only empty rhetoric for them.

Similarly in Mexico, they liquidate the proletariat into a mass of petty-bourgeois sectors behind the bourgeois PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution), pompously rebaptizing it a "popular front." In fact, the Mexican proletariat was historically—and still is—directly subordinated to its own bourgeoisie through "anti-Yankee" bourgeois nationalism, without the intermediary of a workers party as is the case in most European countries. This is the truth the IG wants to hide because of their orientation to anti-Yankee nationalism.

To cover their tracks, the IG/PRF make a big fuss over an erroneous characterization about the Mexican countryside, where we inaccurately spoke of "feudal" remnants in describing the backwardness and oppression there. It would have been more accurate to describe the terrible backwardness of the agrarian masses in Mexico as the heritage of Spanish mercantile capitalism, rather than as "feudal remnants." Trotsky in *The Permanent Revolution* used the term "modern feudalism" to, for example, describe China in the late 1920s. But the reality is that remnants of early capitalism, no longer found in countries like the U.S. or France, do exist alongside the most modern forms of concentrated industrial capitalist exploitation.

This multifaceted reality of capitalist oppression is what the IG/PRF denies, characterizing everything from Mexico to Jospin-Gayssot's France as a "popular front." But if you want to seriously struggle for power you must study the particular forms taken by capitalist oppression. As Trotsky wrote in his preface to the German edition of *The Permanent Revolution*, "In reality, the national peculiarities represent an original combination of the basic features of the world process. This originality can be of decisive significance for revolutionary strategy over a span of many years."

The essence of permanent revolution is the fight for proletarian socialist revolution against bourgeois nationalism in countries of combined and uneven development. The prettification of the bourgeois-nationalist PRD as a "popular front," implying that it has a proletarian component for the IG to capitulate to, betrays the IG's real program of scrapping the application of the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution.

In countries of belated capitalist development, the national bourgeoisie is too weak and too subordinated to imperialism to lead or support a fight to achieve basic democratic tasks like agrarian revolution or genuine national independence. On the contrary, earlier forms of oppression and exploitation are maintained and reinforced by the capitalists and their imperialist masters. In these countries, the tasks previously associated with the victory of bourgeois-democratic revolutions in the advanced capitalist countries can be resolved only through the victory of socialist revolution, as the proletariat emerges as the head of the nation, rallying behind it the most oppressed sections of the peasantry. The indispensable instrument for victory is a revolutionary proletarian party forged through an intransigent struggle to break the working class and toiling masses from illusions in bourgeois nationalism.

As the LTF majority proclaimed in the title of one of its documents, "We Are Still the Party of the Russian Revolution." Against defectors from Trotskyism like the IG/PRF, the ICL is based on "the necessity, as the continuity of the Bolshevik Party, to build the world party of socialist revolution, a reformed Fourth International, with sections struggling to raise the level of consciousness of the proletariat to its historic tasks. For us the Russian question is the party question—a party fighting for the independence of the proletariat, to mobilize it on the basis of its historic interests for the conquest of power." ■

# Ireland...

(continued from page 1)

winning its working-class base away from the pro-capitalist misleaders to a revolutionary programme and party. As opposed to reformists like the Socialist Party (SP) and Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and centrists like Workers Power (WP)—who all march in lockstep behind Labour—the SL/B refused to extend an iota of support to Blair's Labour Party in the election.

We gave critical support to Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour Party (SLP)—recognising that its opposition to Blair represented a crack in Labour's political hold over the workers movement—while opposing the SLP's "old Labour" reformism. While calling for withdrawal of British troops, the SLP accepts the framework of the imperialist "peace" process, which means at bottom placing confidence in the British state to reach a just solution.

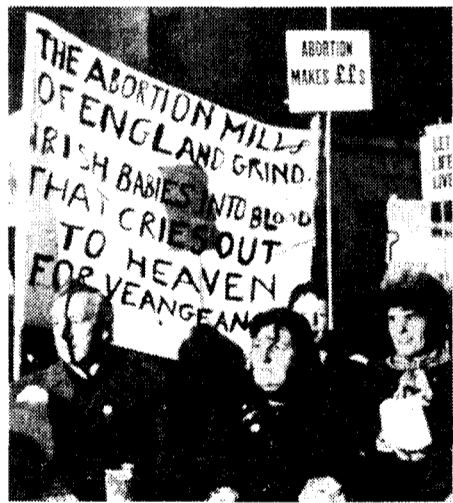
When IRA prisoner Bobby Sands died on hunger strike in British imperialism's H-Block prison in 1981, we denounced Tory prime minister Margaret Thatcher and the Labour lackeys—"left" and right—who supported her as "Westminster Butchers" (*Spartacist Britain* No. 32, May 1981). We declared:

"The British labour movement today bears the brunt of endless vicious attacks by a government seeking to make them pay for the decrepitude of British capitalism. And this is the same government that has unleashed the troops on the population of Northern Ireland. To the labour movement of Britain we say: Black [boycott] all military transport to Northern Ireland! Demand troops out now! Throw out your misleaders who uphold imperialist repression in Ireland just as they betray your own struggles at home!"

This is no less the case today under Blair. From the time of Karl Marx it has been clear that the struggle of the British workers against the capitalist rulers can only go forward on the basis of firm opposition to imperialist oppression in Ireland.

## No to Forcible Reunification!

Successive Dublin governments, often including the wretched Irish Labour Party, have backed British Army repression in Northern Ireland. The DSG fights for the revolutionary overthrow of the



no credit

## Clericalist Irish Republic is viciously anti-women.

clericalist state in the South. We oppose this capitalist state's vicious oppression of workers. In the face of state repression and Youth Defence clerical-fascist terror against abortion rights for women, we call for *free abortion on demand*. As a tribune of the people, we call for defence of Travellers against hideous oppression and attacks by police and vigilante mobs.

If endorsed, as is expected, the Stormont agreement will be taken by the governments in London, Dublin and Belfast as a mandate for intensified repression. Ominously, RUC Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan has called for increased "security" and "vigilance" in the wake of the deal and "security sources" in the South have warned that the police "response to the peace-breakers will be unprecedented and decisive" (*Irish World*, 17 April). These threats are directed against nation-



Workers Hammer

## 1981 London protest shortly after hunger-strike death of IRA prisoner Bobby Sands. SL/B contingent advanced revolutionary perspective against British imperialist butchers.

alist groups, leftists, militant workers and anyone deemed to be an opponent of British imperialism, the Orange statelet and the capitalist state in the South. Meanwhile, mass Loyalist mobilisations in the North have grown dramatically since the "peace" process began. Last July, Catholic Garvaghy Road in Portadown was subjected to a massive assault by the British Army and RUC as they cleared the way for a thousand Orangemen to march, flaunting their bloody Union Jacks.

The latest agreement is designed to replace the 1986 Anglo-Irish Accord, a Cold War, pro-NATO deal which granted the Southern state the pretence of a "say" in the running of the North and tried to cajole the Unionists into "power-sharing." In return, Ireland was to provide a base for NATO's war drive against the Soviet Union. That deal saw 100,000 outraged Loyalists marching through Belfast, a big crackdown on the IRA and more British troops in Northern Ireland. The "model" for Northern Ireland today is meant to be the disastrous U.S.-sponsored Near East "peace process" which followed in the wake of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union and which has meant increased Zionist terror against the Palestinian people, buttressed by United Nations forces which include Irish troops. We say: Irish/UN troops out of Lebanon! Israel out of the Occupied Territories!

In the South, the referendum to be held in May involves removing Articles 2 and 3 of the constitution, outlining Dublin's claim to the Six Counties. We recognise that in revising these articles Bertie Ahern is stitching up a deal with British imperialism and Ulster Unionism to break the back of the IRA and to cow the Northern Catholics into submission. At the same time, we do not uphold the irredentist nationalist claim of the Dublin bourgeoisie to rule the whole island.

Prior to 1922, revolutionaries opposed partition, striving to cement revolutionary unity in the struggle for independence of all Ireland from British imperialism. However, since partition, which resulted in the consolidation of the bourgeois, clericalist republic in the South and the hardening of communal lines in the North, it is necessary to oppose the forcible reunification of Ireland. The oppressed Catholic minority in the North is geographically interpenetrated with the Protestants, who represent a *distinct community*. As we wrote in "Theses on Ireland":

"In the case of interpenetrated peoples sharing a common territory, we oppose the exercise of self-determination by one nation where this flatly conflicts with the same right for another nation.... Under capitalism this would simply be a formula for reversing the terms of oppression, for forcible population transfers and expulsions and ultimately genocide. It is a 'solution' repeatedly demonstrated in history, for example in the cases of India/Pakistan, Israel/Palestine and Cyprus....

"Though not yet a nation, the Protestants are certainly not a part of the Irish nation and are distinct from the Scottish and English nations. Presently their separate existence is defined in large part as against the Irish Catholic nation and at the ideological level is expressed in religious terms."

Our call for an Irish workers republic

within a socialist federation of the British Isles leaves open what form a democratic resolution of the Protestant question will take under proletarian rule. As proletarian internationalists, we seek to *undercut* legitimate Protestant fears of their being oppressed in an enlarged clericalist state of Ireland—an outcome they would violently resist. Such fears serve to compact the Protestant working class behind Orange demagogues who fuel anti-Catholic Loyalist terror. Within the framework of imperialism, the door is open to a "Bosnian solution" predicated on undoubtedly bloody forced population transfers.

Disillusion with the outcome of the negotiations has fuelled sentiment in the ranks of Sinn Fein and the IRA to renew the armed struggle. Yet the "armed struggle" and "negotiations" are two sides of the same coin, designed to *pressure* the imperialist oppressors. Terrorism as a method of struggle is antithetical to the task of mobilising the proletariat against its imperialist oppressors, of imbuing it with the consciousness of its historic task in sweeping away the murderous capitalist system. Nonetheless, when the IRA strikes a blow against the forces of British imperialism or fascist Loyalist killers, we defend the perpetrators of such acts against the capitalist state. But we take a fundamentally different attitude to indiscriminate terror, such as the Shankill bombing in Belfast or bombings in British cities. From a proletarian perspective, these are criminal acts which only serve to deepen hatred between Catholic and Protestant, English and Irish workers, expressing the genocidal logic of nationalism.

We fight for *programmatically based, anti-sectarian workers militias to combat Orange and Green terror*. Such militias, integrating Protestant and Catholic workers, would necessarily have to be organised on an internationalist basis, requiring the leadership of cadre of a Leninist vanguard party.

## For an Internationalist Proletarian Vanguard Party!

Notwithstanding their occasional "revolutionary" flourishes, that the various reformist and centrist groups in Britain *capitulate* to British imperialism is clear from their unflinching loyalty to the Labour Party. Both the SP, which spent decades buried inside the Labour Party, and Tony Cliff's British SWP refuse to raise the elementary demand for the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland (which is raised, in the fine print, in the Irish Cliffite press—some "international"!). The Cliffites *cheered* when an earlier Labour government sent the troops in in 1969, lying that this would provide the oppressed Catholics with a "breathing space"! Today the SWP's *Socialist Worker* (18 April) appeals to Blair to carry out his imperialist "peace" deal, whining that the "only way to secure real peace in the future is if the British government stands up to Paisley and confronts the Orangemen."

Particularly given their acceptance of the imperialist presence in the North, the economist "unite and fight" rhetoric pushed by the SWP and the SP is simply a capitulation to the Labourite trade-

union bureaucracy and the prejudices of the most backward sections of the working class—i.e., to British imperialism and Orange reaction. The SP are outright apologists for Billy Hutchinson, spokesman for the Progressive Unionist Party, a front for the fascist Ulster Volunteer Force death squads. In January, both the SP and SWP supported and participated in a Belfast "peace" demonstration sponsored by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions that was in fact an anti-Catholic, pro-Unionist, pro-imperialist mobilisation embracing Hutchinson and British Northern Ireland secretary Mo Mowlam. The SP openly justified attempts to exclude placards protesting Loyalist murders of Catholics, shamelessly calling them "one-sided slogans and sectarian undertones." The Irish *Socialist Worker* (7-20 February) cheered, "ICTU Rallies in the North Show the Way."

For their part, the equally Labour-loyal centrists of Workers Power, while calling for the withdrawal of British troops, tail behind Green nationalism. *Workers Power* (April 1996) argued:

"We recognise that a progressive solution requires that the working class come to the head of the national struggle. But that does not prevent us from solidary with those who are fighting for independence under the banner of petty-bourgeois nationalism—i.e. a capitalist united Ireland."

In other words, WP want to yoke the working class into pulling the ox-cart of petty-bourgeois nationalism and the Southern bourgeoisie. Far from combatting the communal divisions within the working class, WP's line can only result in deepening them. Its support to the forcible reunification of Ireland is a recipe for drowning the proletariat in communal slaughter.

Intervening at an 18 April SP public meeting in Belfast which featured Irish SP parliamentarian Joe Higgins, a DSG spokesman denounced Higgins' stated intent of meeting with the Orange Order. Our comrade noted that this anti-Catholic outfit "was used throughout its history to smash unity of the working class in struggle—in Belfast in 1907, 1912 and especially in 1919 in the crucially important engineering strike. This strike of mainly Protestant workers was led by a Catholic; the defeat of this strike was sealed in blood. The result of this defeat of the working class in struggle laid the basis for the reactionary partition."

The Orange Order worked hand in hand with the British imperialists and the trade-union bureaucracy to smash the 1919 Belfast engineers strike. They were aided in this by the Green nationalists. In its aftermath, Catholic and Protestant shop stewards and strikers were driven out of the shipyards and tens of thousands of Catholics were forced to flee from their homes. Likewise, the mass unemployment marches in the 1930s, which also cut across the sectarian divisions, were countered with massive sectarian mobilisations intended to wipe out the fragile proletarian unity.

The struggle to unite Catholic and Protestant workers around their common class interests will not be an easy one. But there will be no class unity on an economist basis, which accepts the oppression of the Catholic minority, nor without uncompromising combat against the nationalism both of the oppressed and the oppressor. Both the Loyalist chauvinists and the Green nationalists will attempt to sabotage, as they have in the past, any possibility of joint proletarian struggle. On the other hand, through the intervention of a revolutionary-internationalist vanguard, even transitory instances of working-class solidarity can provide the basis for altering the course of the conflict toward a class determination and proletarian revolution.

In any case, there can be no other road to peace and social and national justice in Northern Ireland. The ICL commits itself to the urgent task of forging the revolutionary leadership needed to lead the proletariat in transcending the bitter sectarian hatreds which divide it and struggling in common for socialist revolution and an egalitarian, classless society. ■

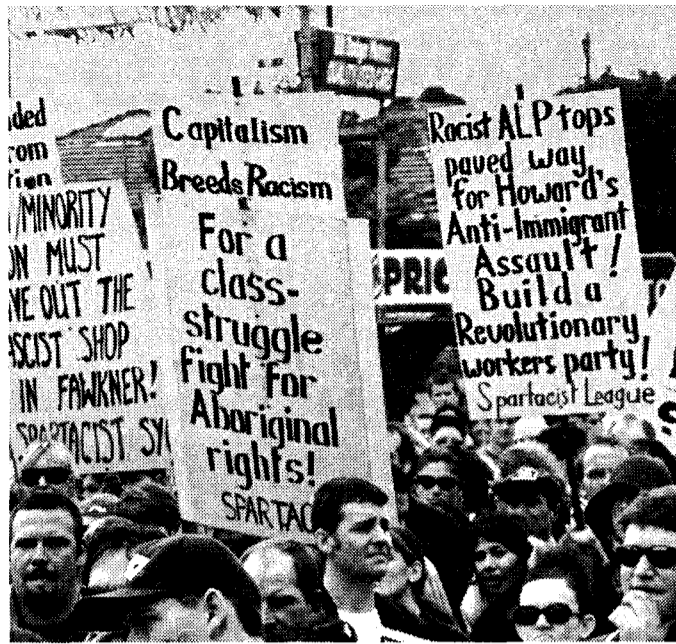
# Australia...

(continued from page 12)

locked out 170 workers while an army of private security thugs invaded Webb Dock in Melbourne. Having kept MUA members at other firms working, on 16 February Coombs called off the Melbourne strike, bowing to an order by the government's arbitration board, the Industrial Relations Commission.

For the past two weeks, Patrick scabs have been loading and unloading ships. That the company has moved almost no cargo on or off the wharves is largely due to the courage and determination of MUA picketers and their supporters. But instead of building mass, militant picket lines, the bureaucrats insist that the MUA pickets are merely "peaceful demonstrations," ordering picketers to sit down in the road to be dragged away by the cops and actually aiding the cops in opening up the lines to let busloads of scabs through. Criminally, the MUA leadership has kept the rest of the union—including the strategic tugboat crews and linesmen—working, even as another major stevedoring company, P&O, is gearing up to go after the MUA.

A solid national strike that shuts down the docks by mobilising not only trade unionists but youth, immigrants and Aborigines is clearly necessary. Heavily based on exports of bulk materials, the Australian economy is highly dependent on the ports, giving dock workers exceptional social power. But, particularly in



**Spartacist contingent at 1997 Melbourne anti-fascist protest. Unlike Labor-loyal fake to split ALP and win working-class base to revolutionary program.**

the bosses' anti-union laws, MUA and ACTU leaders cry that it is "illegal" for pickets to stop scabs. They also push to *strengthen* the Arbitration system, which for a century has directly tied the unions to the capitalist state and mandates the compulsory settlement of labour disputes in special, supposedly "neutral" courts. The ACTU tops police the workers on behalf of the bosses, helping transform the unions from fighting organisations of labour into auxiliary instruments of the capitalist state for shackling the proletariat.

The union tops' role in this regard was made clear during the February strike at Webb Dock, when the MUA leadership launched a violence-baiting tirade against "political agitators" and banned militant workers from the picket line. In notes for a meeting of the local Trades Hall Council, MUA leaders grotesquely slandered Trotskyists: "Keep control over trots/made people/spies etc." The Labor Party, MUA and ACTU tops are doing everything they can to sacrifice the waterfront workers' struggle in the pursuit of an ALP victory in the federal elections. A Labor government, no less than the Liberal/National Coalition, would be a *capitalist* government committed to enforcing the dictates of the racist exploiters. This is clear not only from the record of the Hawke and Keating governments, but is evident today in Britain, France and Italy, where bourgeois workers parties—either in their own name or in coalition with capitalist parties—are carrying out savage attacks on the working class.

The workers movement has never won a decisive gain by relying on the bosses' laws, courts and Parliament. The strength of the working class lies in its numbers, organisation and discipline, and above all in the fact that through its labour it uniquely makes the wheels of profit turn in capitalist society. We fight for the proletariat to take power through a socialist revolution, replacing the capitalist state with a workers state that expropriates the bourgeoisie.

This was the political consciousness which the American Trotskyists under James P. Cannon brought to bear in leading the 1934 Minneapolis general strike and the successful fight to organise over-

the-road truckers, forging the Teamsters as a powerful industrial union. As Cannon explained in *The History of American Trotskyism* (1944):

"The modern labor movement must be politically directed because it is confronted by the government at every turn. Our people were prepared for that since they were political people, inspired by political conceptions. The policy of the class struggle guided our comrades; they couldn't be deceived and outmaneuvered, as so many strike leaders of that period were, by this mechanism of sabotage and destruction known as the National Labor Board and all its auxiliary setups...."

"Therefore they prepared everything from the point of view of class war. They knew that power, not diplomacy, would decide the issue."

## Build a Revolutionary Workers Party!

The stepped-up attacks on the unions and racial minorities are a direct by-product of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state and the sharpening of imperialist rivalries. This was seen last October in the U.S. government's outrageous threat to embargo Japanese ships, which in turn was linked to a campaign by U.S. and Japanese shipping companies to cripple the Japanese dockers unions. This only underscores the need for an *internationalist* leadership of the working class, which understands that the main enemy is our "own" capitalist rulers.

While the MUA has a record of carrying out acts of often heroic international solidarity over the years, including protest strikes against the imperialist war in Vietnam, the union leadership has also long carried the torch for Australia's "national interest," i.e., the interest of the capitalist ruling class. At a strike rally at the Fremantle docks on 8 April, one union sign called for "Aussie ships, Aussie cargos." This nationalist line is also promoted by the so-called Communist Party of Australia (CPA—formerly the Socialist Party of Australia), who have long acted as auxiliaries to the chauvinist Laborite bureaucracy. Thus the CPA's *Guardian* featured a photo of a placard reading "Soldiers for wars not for wharves" at the very time Australian troops were being sent to aid the U.S. imperialists' drive to slaughter Iraqi men, women and children.

Chauvinist protectionism is *poison* to workers struggles, fueling xenophobic "White Australia" racism. This was seen in Sydney and Fremantle, as some strikers grotesquely hurled racist epithets at dark-skinned security guards. There is no place in the labour movement for such bigotry. The racist chauvinism fostered by the ALP and the ACTU tops is counterposed to the urgent need to link up with the tens of millions of workers in Indonesia, Thailand, South Korea and throughout the Asian Pacific Rim who are battling imperialist austerity dictates. Whatever their race or ethnic background, the strikebreaking thugs deployed against the MUA are brothers to the cops and prison guards who kill Aboriginal people in custody, lock up immi-

grant workers in hell-hole detention centres and harass black and immigrant youth on the streets.

As elsewhere around the world, the Australian capitalist rulers use such racist attacks as a wedge to destroy trade-union rights and social welfare programs in their drive to jack up the rate of exploitation. The workers' cause can only go forward in tandem with the struggle against all forms of bigotry and oppression: this was exemplified at the mass Canberra protest in August 1996, when militant unionists came to the defence of Aborigines against racist cop attacks.

We fight for a Leninist vanguard party which would serve as a tribune of the people, championing full citizenship rights for all immigrants and placing the trade unions in the forefront of the defence of Aborigines against the racist onslaught. Combatting the profound anti-woman bigotry that permeates every level of this misogynist society, a class-struggle leadership would mobilise trade unionists to defend abortion rights. Against the retrograde craft-union divisions which have historically meant the exclusion of minorities and women, a revolutionary party would fight for industrial unions and union-run programs to recruit among the oppressed.

The various reformist "socialist" groups which are wedded to Laborism and other forms of class collaboration cannot even conceive of unchaining the power of the working class, because that requires *breaking* the political stranglehold of the "labour lieutenants of capital." Both the International Socialist Organisation (ISO) and the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) offer themselves as tactical advisers to the union tops. The ISO, inveterate supporter of the ALP, hails the call by the Victoria union brass for "solidarity" with the MUA through a one-day protest strike...more than two weeks from now. The DSP calls on the ACTU to launch an "industrial campaign"...as long as it doesn't "inconvenience" the "community" too much. Not surprisingly, the DSP has no problem in calling for votes to the *bourgeois* Democrats!

Unlike these opportunists, the Spartacist League seeks to *split* the Labor Party, winning its working-class base to a revolutionary program to unite all the oppressed behind the proletariat in the struggle for socialist revolution to expropriate the capitalist exploiters. As the *Australasian Spartacist* article on the waterfront struggle stated:

"By sowing racist division at home and dividing Australian workers from their class brothers and sisters in Asia, the ALP and union tops serve to line up the working class behind the capitalists, including in imperialist wars for markets and spheres of influence. It is the job of a revolutionary vanguard party to introduce communist, i.e., class consciousness, countering the backwardness fostered by the union bureaucracy and by bourgeois society in general. We Trotskyists fight for a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia."

**Victory to the MUA! Smash the union-busters! Those who labour must rule! ■**

**Spartacist League of Australia Forum**

**Capitalist Rulers Wage War on Waterfront Workers**

**Victory to the MUA! Bust the Union-Busters!**

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**SYDNEY**

the face of a government-orchestrated union-busting effort, militancy alone is not enough to win this fight. The ALP-loyal union bureaucrats push the lie that there can be a "partnership" between labour and capital. What is required is a leadership armed with the Marxist understanding that the capitalist state—with its cops and courts—is the *enemy* of the working class and the oppressed.

Before the Howard government opened fire on the MUA it prepared its legal arsenal. The Workplace Relations Law makes secondary boycotts and virtually every other key union weapon illegal. It's now even a crime to give money to a strike deemed "illegal"! This anti-union law was drawn up with the help of Cheryl Kernot, a former bourgeois Democrat who is now a star in the ALP. Bowing to

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## War on the Waterfront



Sydney: Dock workers face cop attack on picket lines as they fight to defeat union-busting assault.

Financial Times

# Smash Bosses' Union-Busting Offensive in Australia!

SYDNEY, April 20—From Melbourne and Sydney on Australia's eastern coast to the Indian Ocean port of Fremantle, the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) is fighting a battle for its very existence. Backed up by the full power of the capitalist state and the right-wing Liberal/National coalition government of Prime Minister John Howard, the waterfront bosses are carrying out long-prepared plans to destroy one of the country's most powerful and militant unions.

Late on the night of 7 April, Patrick Stevedores sacked their entire unionised workforce at ports around the country. In a coordinated military operation, hundreds of black-uniformed security guards with attack dogs swarmed onto the docks. One unionist reported: "They jumped into the forklift cabins, grabbed the drivers and said turn the lifts off, you've been sacked." A Queensland dock called it "a military-style junta." Within hours, some 2,000 MUA members had been thrown out of work, their jobs taken by scabs.

The next day, construction workers in Sydney—many of them Maoris and Pacific Islanders—walked off the job in solidarity. As picket lines including MUA members, their wives and other supporters went up at the ports, the government deployed armies of baton-wielding riot cops. On 15 April, Patrick was forced to suspend its operations in Newcastle, citing "fears for the safety of its new non-union workforce" (Reuters, 15 April). Two days ago in Melbourne, the country's largest container port, a mobilisation of hundreds of cops failed to clear some 3,000 MUA members and supporters who occupied rail lines and roadways to keep trucks and trains from the Patrick docks. Today, a thousand building workers joined the picket line in Melbourne, while 70 truckers tied up rush hour traffic by parking their rigs along a main road. Now

the Victoria Supreme Court has issued a draconian strikebreaking injunction barring any pickets within 200 metres of the key Melbourne docks, while the cops are preparing two prison facilities to hold arrested picketers.

The outpouring of support for the MUA indicates a widespread sense that a defeat for this union, in what is the last closed-shop industry in the country, would greatly embolden the capitalist rulers' drive against all unions. But the evident determination to defeat the union-busters is being sapped from within by the pro-capitalist Australian Labor Party (ALP) and trade-union misleaders. With federal elections likely later this year, the *Australian* (13 April) reports that the ALP tops are directing the unions to "limit disruptive and violent industrial action as far as possible for fear of alienating voters."

The Australian Congress of Trade Unions (ACTU) has now vowed to defy the court injunction. *That is absolutely necessary.* But ACTU president Jennie George earlier declared that the union misleaders would not be "provoked" into an "all-out war" (*Australian*, 13 April). And the MUA leadership has worked to keep this crucial battle within the strait-jacket of the bosses' anti-union laws—many of them introduced by ALP governments—and appeals to the capitalist courts.

The attack on the MUA is only the latest in a series of attempts by the shipping bosses and capitalist governments around the world—from Liverpool to Manila—to "rationalise" the industry. Thus, a defeat here would lead to escalated attacks on dock workers everywhere, particularly in Japan where the shipping companies are intent on smashing union controls over shifts and working conditions. Railing that "the MUA accounts for 25 per cent of all worldwide dock disputes" and has a "working-class

mystique that in Britain once surrounded the miners," the London *Financial Times* (17 April) clamoured to "resolve" the dispute "on terms that remove the MUA's closed shop and leave Australia more competitive."

The capitalists' screaming for the blood of the MUA should be a clarion call for genuine international labour solidarity action. But union bureaucrats from Tokyo to San Francisco have offered nothing more than token protests at Australian consulates to plead with the strikebreaking Howard government. And the London-based International Transport Federation (ITF) has used legalistic excuses to refuse to mobilise real union power, such as "blacking"—refusing to handle—struck cargo from Australia.

As the showdown with the waterfront bosses loomed, MUA leader John Coombs promised defeat in advance, wailing, "When governments attack us they inevitably win" (*Australian*, 26 March). *This strike can be won.* But that requires a political struggle against the class-collaborationism of the ALP/ACTU tops. As the Spartacist League of Australia wrote in the current issue of *Australasian Spartacist* (No. 163, Autumn 1998), which has been well-received by strikers from Melbourne to Perth: "The first step to victory is to understand exactly what the MUA is up against: the capitalists and what revolutionary Marxist Friedrich Engels termed their 'executive committee'—the state." We stressed:

"To take on and defeat this government-orchestrated union-busting requires a serious, politically organised *class-struggle* fight. The class-collaborationist union tops are joined at the hip to the ALP who necessarily rule for the bosses. Fighting under these misleaders is like fighting with both hands tied behind your back: workers need a class-struggle leadership imbued with the understanding that the interests of workers and capitalists are irreconcilably counterposed. A revolu-

tionary workers party, able to lead all of capitalism's exploited and oppressed, is the crucial instrument for victory not only in this struggle, but in the battle to do away with the profit system once and for all."

### ALP, ACTU Tops Push "Partnership" with Capital

Howard came to power in 1996 vowing to crush the MUA and to intensify racist repression. Now he hopes to impose a stinging defeat on the union to kick off a racist re-election campaign which is also aimed at furthering the government's attack on Aboriginal land rights. Howard's attacks were prepared by the ALP governments of Bob Hawke and Paul Keating, which oversaw the loss of thousands of jobs on the wharves and carried out the destruction of the airline pilots union and the militant Builders Labourers Federation. This went hand in hand with the escalation of racist attacks against immigrants and Aborigines.

Everyone knew that a showdown between the waterfront workers and the Howard government was coming. For nearly a year, the government and maritime bosses have staged one anti-union provocation after another in the name of "waterfront reform." A brazen attempt to use scabs on the Cairns docks in Queensland last September was turned back by the union. Then in December, details emerged of a sinister plan to train former Australian military and police personnel in the Arabian port of Dubai to work the waterfront. The scab mercenaries were hired by the "Fynwest" outfit, which is run by two former Special Air Service commandos. In the face of a threatened ITF boycott, the government of the United Arab Emirates pulled the plug on the scheme, cancelling the Australians' visas.

On 28 January, the Patrick bosses

*continued on page 11*