

Soviet Pullout: Set-Up for U.S. Attack

Defend Cuba!

The collapse of Stalinism in the Soviet Union has sharpened the voracious appetites of U.S. imperialism around the globe and now directly jeopardizes the Cuban Revolution. Begging for some paltry crumbs of U.S. "aid," Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev has given Washington a green light to drown defiant Cuba in blood. The announced pullout of Soviet troops and cutoff of Soviet aid to Cuba is a betrayal and a set-up for an American attack. As we already warned in our statement, "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" (WV No. 533, 30 August): "Cuba, in particular, is in Bush's cross hairs, and its defense is more than ever a duty of all opponents of Yankee imperialism."

After meeting in the Kremlin with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, on September 11 Gorbachev announced at a joint press conference that Moscow would in the "near future" withdraw its military contingent from the Caribbean island and end subsidies to Cuba. This far-reaching step was announced without any warning to, much less consultation with, Havana. After the U.S. brought the world to the brink of nuclear Armageddon with the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962, several thousand Soviet soldiers and military technicians had remained in Cuba as a trip wire for

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WV Photo

New York City, September 13—Spartacist League holds demonstration in solidarity with Cuba outside Cuban Mission to the UN after Gorbachev's treacherous announcement withdrawing Soviet backing.

Serbia-Croatia War

Ripping Apart Yugoslavia



AP

Federal army convoy moves through Belgrade on the way to Croatia.

"Soon we may long for communism."
—barkeeper in a village on
the Serbia-Croatia border

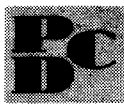
SEPTEMBER 22—The first war in Europe since the Soviet Red Army smashed the Nazi German Wehrmacht is raging in the Balkans. Hundreds have been killed, almost 150,000 driven from their homes, and entire regions devastated in a war between Croatia and Serbia, a war that could mark the bloody end of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav federal army, bolstered by tens of thousands of Serbian reservists and volunteers, has now launched a full-scale offensive against the ultra-rightist Croatian nationalist regime of Franjo Tudjman.

Since the fighting broke out last spring, the Croatian nationalists—hopelessly outgunned—have appealed for and sought to provoke Western imperialist military intervention on their behalf. In a desperate last-ditch maneuver, in mid-September the Tudjman regime cut off food, water and electricity to federal army garrisons which had not been previously involved in the fighting. The army responded with punishing attacks

throughout Croatia. Warplanes bombed and strafed the Croatian capital of Zagreb and other cities. Naval warships bombarded and blockaded the Adriatic seaports of Split and Sibenek. The Dalmatian coast was cut off from the rest of Croatia. A federal army tank column, supported by Serbian militias, is approaching within 30 miles of Zagreb.

It would take a large-scale imperialist military intervention to restore conditions in Croatia to what they were even a few weeks ago. From the outset of the Yugoslav crisis, Germany has put itself forward as the big-power protector of traditionally Catholic Croatia and Slovenia, which before World War I were provinces in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Kohl government has pressured the European Common Market to recognize the independence of the right-wing nationalist regimes in Zagreb and Ljubljana and threatened to do so itself. In recent weeks Bonn, backed by Paris, has been pushing for sending a European "peace-keeping" force—estimated at 20,000 to 50,000 troops (but no Germans)—into

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Partisan Defense Committee

CLASS-STRUGGLE DEFENSE NOTES

Remember the Attica Rebellion

"We are men! We are not beasts and we do not intend to be beaten or driven as such." This was the declaration of the courageous inmates of Attica prison on 9 September 1971. Four days later, 29 of them lay dead, cut down in a hail of bullets. For millions around the world, the Attica uprising became the symbol of rebellion against brutal repression. Now, 20 years later, Attica remains the symbol of racist state murder—the domestic My Lai massacre. The image of hundreds of black men, lined up naked in the prison yard after the slaughter, as at a slave auction, is forever seared into our memory.

The first issue of *Workers Vanguard* (October 1971) headlined on its front page, "Massacre at Attica." We pointed the finger of guilt at the state authorities who ordered the killing, first and foremost New York governor Nelson Rockefeller: "Rockefeller cut down the Attica

prisoners in the manner of his father and grandfather before him—ruthlessly and to protect the system from which his profits spring. From the murder of the Ludlow miners to the present, this family has carried the policies of the armed fist over the entire globe." From the White House, Richard Nixon immediately endorsed this coldblooded killing.

Roots of the Rebellion

In 1971, in the context of the "black power" movement and radical protests against the war in Vietnam, the Attica rebellion reflected intense struggles taking place outside the prison walls. For the capitalist ruling class, Attica had to be crushed with particular vengeance because the rebels had begun to see their struggle in political and even revolutionary terms. Attica inmates were heavily black and Hispanic, with many identifying with the Black Panther Party



September 1971—Attica prisoners defiantly raise fists in D Yard. Three days later, Governor Rockefeller ordered bloody massacre.

and the Puerto Rican Young Lords; others, following Malcolm X, had joined the Nation of Islam (Black Muslims) while in jail.

The bitter anger that was about to explode was glimpsed two weeks before, on 21 August 1971, when word spread through the cells that Black Panther George Jackson had been murdered in San Quentin prison in California. The official explanation for his death was patently false. The next morning over 800 Attica prisoners marched solemnly into breakfast wearing black armbands, sat down and refused to eat, maintaining absolute silence. This powerful statement shook prison officials to the core.

Attica was a time bomb waiting to explode. Over 2,200 inmates were stuffed into a penitentiary built for a maximum of 1,600. Inmates were locked in cells 14 to 16 hours per day, permitted one shower per week, one roll of toilet paper and bar of soap a month. Black and Hispanic inmates were routinely beaten by racist guards. The men were paid slave wages of between 20 cents and one dollar per day.

Prisoners were infuriated by censorship of reading matter. Inmates who subscribed to newspapers found all references to prison conditions snipped out. When Puerto Rican prisoners requested books in Spanish, they received comic books from Mexico. Incoming and outgoing mail was heavily censored. In his documentary book on Attica, *A Time to Die* (1975), columnist Tom Wicker quoted from a letter written by imprisoned leftist Sam Melville, who would die in the cop assault. In his shorthand style, Melville captured the mood:

"I can't tell you what a change has come over t brothers in Attica. So much more awareness & growing, consciousness of themselves as potential revolutionaries, reading, questioning, rapping all t time. Still bigotry & racism, black, white & brown, but one can tell it beginning to crumble in t knowledge so many are gaining that we must build solidarity against our common oppressor...."

In the early morning of September 9, the prisoners erupted, seizing most of the institution and taking 39 hostages. For the next four days, the Attica Brothers controlled D Yard in a multiracial struggle against the most degrading conditions of an inhumane society. Of course the prison officials and the ruling-class press sought to portray this as a "riot" and especially a "race riot." But in fact, even the cover-up *Official Report of the New York State Commission on Attica*, headed by Arthur Liman, who later headed the Congressional non-investigation of the Iran-contra affair, quoted one of the prisoners saying on the bullhorn, "This is not a race riot. We are all in this together. There are no white inmates, no black inmates, no Puerto Rican inmates. There are only inmates."

The prisoners demanded to be treated as human beings, calling for the minimum wage for prison work, an end to censorship and restrictions on political activity, religious freedom, rehabilitation and education, and decent medical treatment. The Attica Brothers expressed solidarity with the Vietnamese and others fighting U.S. imperialism. Their initial manifesto asked for "speedy and safe transportation to a 'non-imperialistic' country." They demanded amnesty, but instead they got death at the hands of the state.

An integrated security squad of 300 prisoners maintained order and discipline in D Yard, and prisoners trained as nurses established medical facilities, while a political committee drafted demands. The prisoners demanded outside observers, and a team including William Kunstler, Black Panther leader Bobby Seale, *New York Times* journalist Tom Wicker and others arrived at the jail. As the days wore on, the observers played for time, becoming increasingly alarmed that a state massacre was being prepared. But Rockefeller demanded the revolt be crushed. The "revolutionary tactics of militants" and the "outside

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TROTSKY

Spartacist League: 25 Years

This month marks 25 years since the founding conference of the Spartacist League of the U.S. in September 1966. The SL/U.S. issued out of the struggle waged by the Revolutionary Tendency, bureaucratically expelled from the Socialist Workers Party three years earlier. The RT fought for a revolutionary Trotskyist perspective, particularly against the rapidly degenerating SWP's capitulation to liberalism and black nationalism in the Southern civil rights movement and to Castroism

in Cuba. Our political continuity goes back to the erstwhile Trotskyist SWP of James P. Cannon, the International Left Opposition and the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky. Our extension as the international Spartacist tendency, now the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), is both a vindication of, and a necessary corollary to our internationalist perspective. As Stalinism collapses and the traitorous pretenders to Trotskyism embrace capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, we stand by the principles of Bolshevism which are the only foundation upon which an authentically Trotskyist Fourth International can be reforged. The excerpts below are taken from the Declaration of Principles of the SL/U.S. adopted at the 1966 conference.

The Spartacist League of the U.S. is a revolutionary organization which, as part of the international revolutionary movement, is committed to the task of building the party which will lead the working class to the victory of the socialist revolution in the United States.

Only the proletariat, through the seizure of political power and the destruction of capitalism in all countries, can lay the basis for the elimination of exploitation and the resolution of the contradiction between the growth of the productive forces of the world economy and national-state barriers. Capitalism has long since outlived its progressive historical role of creating a modern industrial economy. Now in order to maintain their rule, the national capitalist classes must intensify national and racial divisions, through imperialism oppress the colonial peoples and impoverish the masses of the entire world, engage in continual wars for the maintenance and redivision of the world markets in order to prop up the falling rate of profit, and attempt to smash the revolutionary struggle of the workers wherever it breaks out. In its final frenzied effort to maintain its class rule, the bourgeoisie will not hesitate to plunge humanity into a nuclear holocaust or totalitarian oppression of unprecedented ferocity. The United States of America is today the keystone of the entire international capitalist order....

History has shown that the self-emancipation of the working class, and therewith the oppressed of all the earth, balances on the question of leadership. The economic preconditions for socialism have long since been reached. But the contradictions of capitalism in its epoch of imperialist decay produce not only wars, but also revolutionary opportunities. The success or failure of the working class to achieve victory in these historic opportunities depends upon the organization and scientific consciousness of the struggling masses, i.e., on *revolutionary leadership*. Only a revolutionary leadership—the indispensable weapon of the working people—has proved to have the strategy and determination to lead the working masses to victory. The responsibility for the defeats suffered by the working class and the abortion of previous revolutionary opportunities lies at the door of treacherous Social-Democratic and Stalinist misleaders. But the revolutionary will of the proletariat *will* triumph! The crisis of leadership *will* be solved! It is to the solution of the crisis of proletarian leadership that the Spartacist League directs its work.

—"Declaration of Principles of the Spartacist League" (September 1966)



LENIN

WORKERS VANGUARD

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No. 535

27 September 1991

The Heritage of the Bolshevik Revolution Belongs to the Workers of the World

Stop the Closing of the Lenin Museum!

As the counterrevolution seeks to eradicate the legacy of the October Revolution, Moscow mayor Gavril Popov has ordered the closing of the Lenin Museum. But this vile campaign to spit on the heritage of Bolshevism is meeting opposition. On Saturday, September 14, some 300 protesters gathered in a cold rain at the building off Red Square. A week later, a larger crowd of demonstrators formed a human chain around the museum. They were there to prevent the 20-room gallery from being shut down and to stop the exhibits of Lenin's life's work from being removed and defiled. Supporters of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) have been present at these demonstrations with our placards and literature.

Later the demonstrators filed across Red Square to the Lenin mausoleum, where hundreds filed past the tomb. Those who would bring back the tsar (or, like Yeltsin, aspire to become one), want to trample on Lenin's grave, seeking to remove his corpse and rebury it in Leningrad, the cradle of the revolution which the counterrevolutionaries again call by its tsarist name of St. Petersburg. Ironically, while Stalin built the mausoleum to turn Lenin into an icon and to bury Leninism, today the counterrevolutionaries seek to tear it down as part of their wholesale assault on the revolution Lenin's Bolsheviks led.

Those who have come forward to defend the Lenin Museum include a broad range, from genuine communists and Red Army veterans who fought against Hitler to the Russian nationalist



Spartacist Photos
Rally defending Moscow's Lenin Museum, September 14. Sign says, "Gorbachev Betrayed Lenin, But I Have Not!" Banner at right reads, "Hands Off Lenin and Socialism!"



"patriot" wing of the disintegrating Stalinist bureaucracy. The Moscow Workers Council, which issued out of a conference last July, appealed "to the world workers movement to begin a campaign of solidarity in defense of the memory of the leader of proletarian revolution." The International Communist League has responded to the threat to close down the Lenin Museum. Protest letters have been sent to Mayor Popov from the Prometheus Research Library (see below) and the Partisan Defense Committee. We encourage WV readers to do likewise.

The ICL supporters in the Saturday demonstrations, which are planned to continue, carried signs proclaiming: "Down with the Gorbachev-Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution! Defend the Lenin Museum!" "Return to the Road of Lenin and Trotsky" "Socialism in One Country Is a Lie—Build a Trotskyist Party!" "Nationalism: Spearhead of Counterrevolution! For Proletarian Internationalism to Defend the Soviet Union" "Leninist Party Must Be Tribune of the People! Down with Great Russian Chauvinism, Anti-Semitism!" On the two Saturdays, over 1,500 pieces of Spartacist literature were sold, including the Russian language *Bulletin* and special supplement.

We reprint below a report from our correspondent in Moscow:

The demonstration last Saturday (September 14), the vigil outside Lenin's tomb Thursday night (September 19) and yesterday's Saturday demonstration (September 21) represent the first and only public expressions of communist opposition to Gorbachev's and Yeltsin's counter coup.

We participated in the first demonstration with sales of our new supplement in Russian, the Russian-language pamphlet and *The Revolution Betrayed*. Four comrades participated in the chain that girded the museum. The impact of our supplement was dramatic and palpable. As soon as we began selling we encountered intense interest and gratitude from older workers and members of the former Communist Party who have been left without an organization or any means to function. For many of them, it was their first acquaintance with the ICL. Against the backdrop of three weeks of agonizing silence and betrayal, during which so many communists felt themselves utterly betrayed and alone, there appeared our *Bulletin Spartakovtsev*

supplement with its headline: "Bankruptcy of Stalinism Opens Floodgates of Counterrevolution. Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" (translated from WV No: 533, 30 August).

A typical response was a heart-felt "Molodtsi!" (Well done!). "You see, the International has come to help us." "You are absolutely right!" Many bought multiple copies—up to ten at a time. For the most part, these were older workers, in their 50s and 60s.

But not everyone was happy to see us. Precisely because of our impact, there soon appeared rabid anti-Trotskyist Zionist-baiting from various so-called "patriots." The demonstration was organized by, among others, the Moscow Workers Council, most prominently Victor Anpilov, former editor of *Molnyia*. Also prominent were remnants of the OFT (United Front of Toilers), Unity, and individuals from Marxist Platform and Communist Initiative. This was a turnout of the "patriot" crowd. But it wasn't just them. Although they were in the majority, there was a minority of workers in their 30s and 40s stirred into action. But the patriots do not have a way to go forward for these people, they are bankrupt.

It was precisely because we were young, armed with a revolutionary pro-

gram and press by which to attract support, that some of these stooges felt driven to dog our salesmen with the vilest garbage: "Gestapo" and so on. One worker who stood by us on the chain defended us from both the panicked Stalinists and Yeltsinite passers-by: "You see what the Stalinists have hidden from us for so long, that Trotsky was Lenin's comrade and a brilliant revolutionary."

We spoke there of the need to organize defense of the many people who are now under the threat of witchhunt repression. Anpilov was talking about the need to organize a new party. One of our Soviet comrades pointed out how Anpilov and the other organizers had once again made no effort to bring out the working class. "If they had made a few calls to start the chain going, the turnout would be counted not in hundreds, but thousands. But they only mobilize when they need something from the workers themselves. They did nothing after the July congress."

Sure enough, on September 21, as soon as we formed up our contingent, set up our signs and began selling, we were blocked by a "daisy chain" of a couple of little old lady Stalinists with locked elbows and tightly clamped jaws, hissing, "No Trotskyites." We did not allow them to exclude us, and put up a

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The following protest was sent by the Prometheus Research Library, central archives of the Spartacist League/U.S. Central Committee.

September 17, 1991

Gavril Popov
Mayor's Office
Moscow, USSR

Dear Mr. Popov:

Our library vehemently protests the decision of your office to close the V.I. Lenin Museum. This blatant attempt to expunge the memory of the October Revolution and its leaders from the consciousness of the Soviet working people fully reveals the class hatred which infuses the restored capitalism you espouse.

You would prefer that Soviet history be collapsed into "Russian" history and for Russian history to be identified only with the Tsar, the anti-Semitic Black Hundreds and the backward superstitions of the Orthodox Church. But the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution is equally a part of Russian and Soviet history; the collectivized property which it established will not so easily be taken from the Soviet working people. The memory and record of the October Revolution belongs to the international working class.

We demand that the Lenin Museum be kept open and that all the archives of the Soviet Communist Party and Soviet Union be preserved for posterity.

Very truly yours,
Diana B. Kartsen, for the
Prometheus Research Library
cc: Soviet Embassy, Washington, D.C.

Defeat Yeltsin-Gorbachev Counterrevolution!

Lenin-Trotsky Fund Needs Your Dollars!

The resources of the International Communist League are sparse, our current tasks mammoth. We have just printed 70,000 copies of the Russian translation of "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" (pictured at right). We are now reprinting the first Russian-language *Spartacist Bulletin*, "What is Trotskyism," of which 25,000 have already been sold throughout the Soviet Union. Pro-socialist Soviet workers are thirsting for Trotskyist literature, but economic realities dictate that we must heavily subsidize our publications to keep them affordable. Printing costs, travel and other expenses mean that an internationalist intervention in the Soviet Union costs money. Help forge the Trotskyist



nucleus needed to lead the Soviet working people in struggle against counterrevolution.

Make donations payable/send to: Spartacist, Box 1377 GPO, New York, New York 10116. Earmark: "Lenin-Trotsky Fund" (or simply "L-T Fund").

Stalinophobes Go Stalinophilic?—No!

BT Writes Off the Soviet Union

For almost a decade now the self-proclaimed "Bolshevik Tendency" has been screeching about Spartacist "Stalinophilia." This has served as an all-purpose alibi for the absence of political backbone of this disparate collection of disgruntled ex-members, the majority of whom quit our organization in the early 1980s when the question of defense of the Soviet Union against the intensified imperialist Cold War crusade was posed sharp and hard.

Flinching in the face of our call to "Stop Solidarność Counterrevolution!" the BTs whined that our statement of military support for a possible Soviet

are devoted to the singular object of reviling our organization. But in their current denunciations of the International Communist League (ICL) for not supporting the coup in the Soviet Union, there is more than this method in the BT's madness.

Behind the veneer of its after-the-fact support to the coup, the BT has found in the flop engineered by the "gang of eight that couldn't shoot straight" their long-awaited opportunity to wash their hands of the Soviet Union—something they have yearned to do for years. At our Toronto forum, BT leading light Tom Riley announced that "the defeat of the

know what's going to happen out of these next six to nine months." While the BT throws up its hands, we of the ICL are taking to the Soviet workers a program to forge an authentically Trotskyist party and defeat the ascendant counterrevolutionary forces.

The "Perestroika Coup"

Certainly any serious opponent of capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR would have looked long and hard to determine if there was a basis for giving military support to the coup against Yeltsin's open counterrevolutionaries. But what was there to "militarily" sup-

certainly have been against Yeltsin, but critical of the coup—which wouldn't stop Yeltsin, and was therefore doomed to failure."

A Soviet worker from an outlying area sent our comrades in Moscow a leaflet, written in the first hours after hearing of the state of emergency, in which he appealed for the working class to see the coup "as a basis for the unification of the workers movement for the struggle against liberal-bourgeois hypocritical defenders of the restoration of capitalism in the USSR." One can certainly appreciate the sentiment. He wanted to seize on the "emergency committee" to mobilize the workers against counterrevolution, but there was nothing to grab hold of. In its press conference, the coup committee vowed to continue the market reforms, pledged to uphold Gorbachev's sellouts to imperialism, and ordered the workers to stay at home.

The BT, on the other hand, retrospectively and in full knowledge of the coup leaders' pro-perestroika policies, denounces us for not taking a stand with this bunch of stumblebums, and claims we said "we've got no side in this." They cynically ignore our explicit position that what was needed was for Moscow workers to clean out the counterrevolutionary rabble of yuppies, fascists, priests and other Russian nationalists in front of Yeltsin's headquarters. The BT calls for support to Yanayev, Pavlov & Co....without even a nod to mobilizing the proletariat! While the botched coup and the ascendancy of Yeltsin have opened the floodgates for capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR, the Soviet proletariat has yet to be heard from. The question of which class shall rule is urgently posed, but it is not one that has already been determined.

Phobias and Philias of the BT

So what really lies behind the BT's call for military support to the coup, a position which can only be described as Stalinophilic? To be sure, this is not the only example of this affliction that one could find among the disparate elements who make up this outfit. To this day,

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Bolshevik Tendency retrospectively supports botched "perestroika coup" by loser "gang of eight" (left). BT leader Howard Keylor (far right).



WV Photo

intervention in Poland was evidence of our "pro-Stalinist" degeneration. Similarly they couldn't stomach our slogan "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" although it took them close to ten years to own up to it. But then they gave full vent to what was always their position, proclaiming that "Trotskyists never hail Stalinist traitors or their state." To provide a fig leaf to cover this crassly Stalinophobic line, they called for "military victory" to the Red Army...just at the moment when Gorbachev was pulling all Soviet forces out of Afghanistan!

So, you can imagine our comrades' disbelief when confronted by BTers screaming that we have capitulated to "Third Camp" anti-Sovietism because we did not give "military support" to the impotent coup by a handful of reluctant Gorbachevites in the Kremlin bureaucracy. At a September 11 public meeting by our comrades of the Trotskyist League of Canada, titled "Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution in USSR!", BTers argued that the coup was an attempt by "a section of the rapidly disintegrating Stalinist bureaucracy...to strike against the principal forces of capitalist restoration." Some "strike"! Funny that the coup plotters didn't touch a hair on Yeltsin's head...or his phone link to Bush's bunker at Kennebunkport.

For years the BT has reviled us for our support to Soviet forces which actually stood militarily in defense of the gains of the October Revolution, like the Red Army in Afghanistan. Then they ranted about the need to completely smash "all wings of the bureaucracy." Now they're attacking us for not being "prepared to bloc with the Stalinists militarily." What gives?

Since they came together to form a "tendency," the BT has been driven by a hostile obsession with the organization that they quit. In this pursuit, it's been any stick to beat the dog. Thus while they loudly proclaim our complete "degeneracy" and "irrelevance," much of their time, attention and publications

coup, and in the aftermath of the coup, represent a qualitative transformation... this is an embryonic bourgeois state power that is attempting to consolidate itself."

And on September 21, more than a month after the coup/countercoup, the BT distributed a statement definitively declaring, "Counterrevolution Triumphs in USSR." The failure of the putsch, they say, means that "the major organized obstacle to the consolidation of a bourgeois state has been effectively removed." Thus they simply write off the Soviet working class as a force against capitalist restoration. The BT claims the Gorbachevite coup leaders (dolloped up as "hardliners") were protecting "state ownership of the means of production"—the coup committee's explicit statements to the contrary notwithstanding. And with Yeltsin's power grab, it declares that the Soviet military are henceforth "bodies of armed men" dedicated to the objectives of Western capitalists and their internal allies." Thus they write off every soldier and officer of the Soviet army as a repressive agent of capital.

At a public forum of the Spartacist Workers Party in Berlin, BTers likewise declared that the workers state in the Soviet Union had fallen and had been replaced by a new "weak" bourgeois state. But while there has been a pro-imperialist counter coup at the top, beheading the Stalinist bureaucracy, the counterrevolution has a long way to go in dismantling the many-millions-strong state apparatus bound up with collectivized property, and creating a bourgeois state—including a dependable military to enforce the interests of capital.

Even the CIA is less sanguine about the victory of counterrevolution in the Soviet Union than the BT. Testifying before Congress last week, former Deputy Director of Central Intelligence Bobby Inman referred to this as "the Kerensky period" in reverse. "I think the failed coup was like 1917—replacing the czars—1918 still in front of us. We don't

port? The coup leaders, all of them Gorbachev appointees, didn't even have the military behind them, and they certainly weren't about to mobilize the working class against counterrevolution. As we wrote (WV No. 533, 30 August):

"The coup was not so much by the military, which largely stayed out of the fray, but by top administrative and party hacks of the central apparat whose bureaucratic fiefdoms were threatened. Their avowed program was martial law to keep the USSR from breaking apart, which comes down to perestroika minus glasnost: the introduction of the market but not so fast, and shut up."

Our attitude was summed up in the statement: "Any class-conscious Soviet worker who saw the urgent need to halt the capitalist-restorationist forces would

Spartakist



КРАСНАЯ ЗВЕЗДА
5 January 1990

Митинг в Трентов-парке

БЕРЛИН, 4 января. (ТАСС). Свыше 250 тысяч берлинцев и жителей других городов страны собрались в столичном Трентов-парке на митинг протеста против участия в последние время в выборах неофашистских и фашистских элементов. Он прошел по призыву СКП-ПДС. Комитет борьбы антифашистского движения «Сопротивление и Общество германско-советской дружбы». В манифестации приняли участие представители всех ведущих партий, политических группировок и общественных организаций страны. Присутствовали делегаты Национальной народной армии ГДР и советской Западной группы войск. Помощью для манифестации послужило издание освещенных митингом советскими военными-освободителями в Берлинском Трентов-парке, а также подобным актом в Антверпене, совершившимся в других городах республики. По данным народной полиции, в стране действует около тысячи чл. правых экстремистов. В угрозы расправы в отношении граждан, прежде всего коммунистов, беспорядки на улицах, нападки на стены домов, витрины магазинов: «Русские — кони!», «Евреи — кони!», «Коммунисты — кони!», «Германский рейх».

250,000-strong anti-fascist mass demonstration initiated by German Spartakists at East Berlin's Treptow Park in January 1990 was featured in Soviet Army newspaper Red Star. BT calls this "a fiasco."

Cheerleaders for Yeltsin's Counterrevolution

The counterrevolutionary tide sweeping the Soviet Union, spearheaded by Boris Yeltsin's pro-imperialist countercoup last month, poses a definitive test for organizations claiming to speak on behalf of the struggle for socialist revolution. Openly capitalist-restorationist forces led by Yeltsin and Gorbachev, now ascendant in Russia and other Soviet republics, are seeking to tear away every vestige of the greatest victory ever achieved by the international proletariat, the October Revolution of 1917.

The Left Opposition and the Fourth International of Leon Trotsky waged a life-and-death struggle against the Stalinist bureaucratic caste, whose usurpation of political power from the Soviet proletariat and capitulation to imperialism undermined the first workers state and created the present catastrophic situation. In doing so, the Trotskyists were the best and most consistent defenders of the gains of October. *Uncompromising, unconditional Soviet defensism* has always been the basis for the Trotskyist call for a proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy. In his germinal 1933 article laying out the perspective of political revolution, Trotsky warned of the "tragic possibility" of the counterrevolution now taking place:

"But in the event of this worst possible variant, a tremendous significance for the subsequent course of the revolutionary struggle will be borne by the question: *where* are those guilty for the catastrophe? Not the slightest taint of guilt must fall upon the revolutionary internationalists. In the hour of mortal danger, they must remain on the last barricade."

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

We of the International Communist League today continue the struggle for

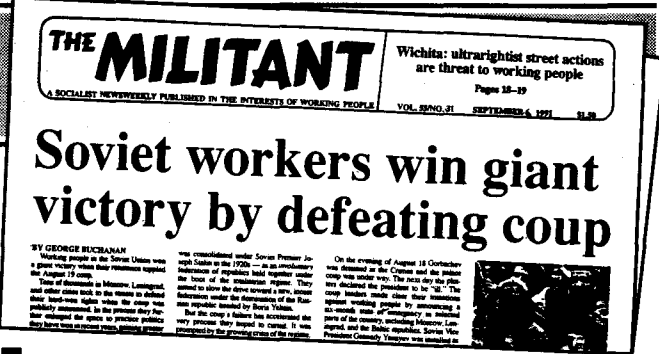
Trotsky's Fourth International. *Workers Vanguard's* statement following the pathetic Stalinist "coup" attempt and pro-capitalist countercoup was headlined: "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" (WV No. 533, 30 August). Pointing to the yuppies,

ist restoration, calling for independent workers committees in the factories to take control of production and fight privatization, for committees of soldiers and officers to resist the use of the Soviet army as an instrument against the working class, for workers militias to

tion. Jack Barnes' Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which after years of being the reformist right wing of the centrist United Secretariat (USec) finally dumped Trotskyism outright a few years ago, cheered on the front page of the *Militant* (6 September): "Soviet Workers Win Giant Victory by Defeating Coup." As for the USec, its French-language organ echoed the imperialist gloating over the "second Russian Revolution" with the headline, "Three Days That Shook the USSR," a grotesque parody on the title of John Reed's history of the 1917 Bolshevik uprising. An article by Catherine Verla stated baldly: "It was necessary to unhesitatingly oppose the coup and, on these grounds, to fight at Yeltsin's side" (*Inprecor*, 29 August). This same reactionary line is being pushed by two American pro-USec satellites which are offshoots of the SWP, Socialist Action and the Fourth Internationalist Tendency (FIT).

For the last three decades our Spartacist tendency has denounced the impostors who masquerade as Trotskyists while abandoning every principled position Trotsky stood for and above all the fight for an independent Trotskyist vanguard. We have polemically combatted those who sought popularity in becoming the "left" tail of bourgeois "popular fronts," from Allende in Chile to Mitterrand in France. We exposed those who hail anti-Soviet nationalists from Khomeini in Iran to Walesa in Poland. We warned that their cowardly flinches and treacherous opportunism, their renunciation in deeds of revolutionary Trotskyism, went against every historic interest of the working class. Now they

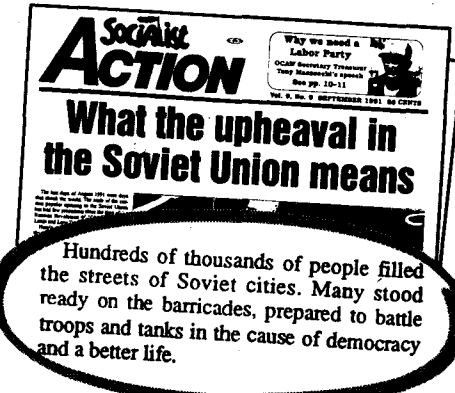
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—September 1991



—September 1991



Socialist Workers Party (top) and its offshoots, Fourth Internationalist Tendency (above left) and Socialist Action, hail "democratic" capitalist counterrevolution in Soviet Union. All falsely claim Soviet working masses were on the barricades for Yeltsin.

speculators, fascists and priests who flocked to Yeltsin's "White House" in Moscow to present themselves as the shock troops for social counterrevolution during the two days of the feeble putsch by Yanayev & Co., we wrote: "a call on Moscow workers to clean out this counterrevolutionary rabble in order. Yet the coup plotters not only did not mobilize the workers, they ordered everybody to stay at work and at home."

In the face of the ascendancy of the counterrevolutionary forces, we laid out a program of struggle against capital-

crush anti-Semitic pogromists and anti-Communist lynch mobs and to ward off communalist butchery by revanchist nationalists. We immediately translated this article into Russian, and it is now being distributed among class-conscious Soviet workers with the aim of forging a Leninist-Trotskyist nucleus capable of leading a struggle by the Soviet working people to victory over the counterrevolution.

In contrast, in the "hour of mortal danger," a herd of pseudo-Trotskyists were on the first barricade of counterrevolu-

Who Was on Yeltsin's Barricades?

"Soviet Workers Win Giant Victory by Defeating Coup," headlined the Socialist Workers Party's *Militant* as it lined up behind Yeltsin-Bush counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. The Fourth Internationalist Tendency likewise cheered "Masses Resist Soviet Coup!" And Socialist Action proclaimed: "The scale of the current popular uprising in the Soviet Union has had few precedents since the time of the Russian Revolution of 1917, led by V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky."

But were the Soviet workers out on the barricades for capitalist restoration? To be sure, the demagogue Yeltsin won 60 percent of the vote for president of the Russian republic last spring. His imperialist backers certainly hoped that with this "popular mandate," as soon as would-be Tsar Boris leapt atop a tank to call for a general strike to back his pro-capitalist countercoup, workers would leave the factories in droves, just as millions of Polish workers had followed the lead of Lech Walesa in 1980-81. But despite imperialist hopes and the extraterrestrial daydreams of the SWP, FIT and SA, this was not the case.

From the start, Western bourgeois



Outside Yeltsin's "White House": Russian nationalists, black marketeers, yuppies, priests, fascists.

commentators expressed bitter disappointment at the lack of Soviet working-class support for capitalist counterrevolution. The Yeltsinite rallies on August 20 in Moscow, Leningrad and other Soviet cities were sizable, though no more so than numerous other recent demonstrations in the Soviet Union. As for the fabled

barricades outside Yeltsin's "White House," a spectrum of eyewitnesses, many of them pro-Yeltsin, uniformly attest that they never attracted more than several thousand hard-bitten pro-capitalist activists, with virtually no workers among them.

Shortly after the coup/countercoup, CBS News' 60 Minutes (25 August)

interviewed pro-Yeltsin Russian reporter Artiam Borovik. Speaking from a factory floor, Borovik said: "The majority of the workers here supported the attempted coup. They're actually afraid of more perestroika. So far it's only brought them more misery." As for the activists who manned the barricades: "They were mainly young ones, like myself, students, intellectuals, professionals."

The British Workers Power group elaborated on this in an eyewitness account by a supporter of its League for a Revolutionary Communist International, which supported Yeltsin's countercoup:

"At the same time the 'heroic struggle of the masses of Moscow' to defend the Russian parliament is largely a myth. Firstly, the few thousand people who manned the barricades outside the parliament itself were not, for the most part, the most audacious workers and students of Moscow."

"Rather they were in the majority small businessmen, speculators and owners of ['free enterprise'] co-operatives, the traditional base of the [Russian nationalist] 'Democratic Russia' demonstrations, plus a few hundred young enthusiasts. While there have been reports of strike action and mass mobilisations

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Yugoslavia...

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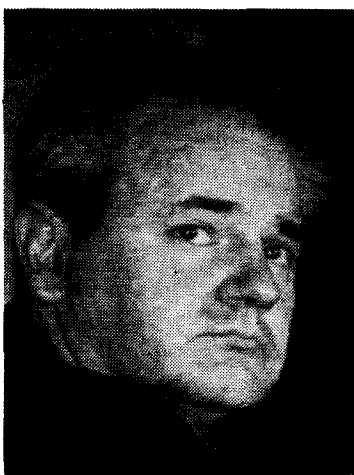
Yugoslavia. For the moment such a move has been blocked by British opposition, but imperialist military intervention cannot be ruled out.

The rapidly escalating Yugoslav civil war is threatening to spill over into Bosnia, the most ethnically mixed of Yugoslavia's republics. Its largest ethnic group is Slavic Muslims, who consider themselves neither Serbs nor Croats and were recognized as a separate nationality by Tito. In recent days Croatian and Muslim militias have obstructed federal army units, predominantly Serbian, from moving into Croatia. The extension of the war to Bosnia would mean a communalist bloodbath on a massive scale. One Slavic Muslim predicts: "What happened in Lebanon in 15 years will happen in 15 days in Bosnia."

Under the ferocious pressure of Western imperialism and heavily in debt to Wall Street and Frankfurt, the Yugoslav Stalinist bureaucracy has splintered and disintegrated along national lines. Neither the leadership of the federal army and still less Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic are fighting to preserve Yugoslavia on the basis of a socialized economy. The Yugoslav federal army—the last bastion of Titoism—risks being turned into an instrument of Great Serbian nationalism. While a Slovene, Admiral Stane Brovet, is still deputy defense minister, non-Serbian officers have been purged from positions of command or have resigned. In the ranks there have been large-scale desertions by Slovene, Croat, Albanian and Macedonian conscripts.

As we go to press, there is another declared truce—which may soon go the way of earlier short-lived "cease-fires." A swirl of confusion surrounds the current objectives of the Yugoslav military, particularly seen from afar. The imperialist press acts as if they are about to go in and clean out Zagreb. In reality, faced with openly fascist Croatian forces, the federal army's reaction has been a nationalist response, allying with Serbian fascists and seeking to seize control of Serbian enclaves in Croatia. Indeed, in the squalid warfare which is ripping Yugoslavia apart, on no side is there any evidence of mobilization on a proletarian, class axis. Yet that is what is urgently necessary.

The war is enormously intensifying national hatreds and strengthening reactionary forces on all sides. Class-conscious workers throughout Yugoslavia must fight the forces of fratricidal nationalism, and aim to overthrow both the fascist regime of Franjo Tudjman in Croatia and the Great Serbian chauvinist regime of Slobodan Milosevic. Officers and soldiers in the federal army who stand for socialism must oppose both the drive for a Greater Serbia and those who would transform Yugoslavia and its constituent republics into neocolonies of the (German-dominated) West European Common Market. Only the struggle for a Socialist Federation of the Balkans within a Socialist United States of Europe can save Yugoslavia



Der Spiegel

Serbian nationalist strongman Slobodan Milosevic unleashed brutal repression against Albanian population of Kosovo.

from becoming once again an arena of nationalist genocide and imperialist subjugation.

Heirs of the Croatian Ustashi and Serbian Chetniks

Last year anti-Communist nationalists gained political power in Slovenia and Croatia, the two northernmost, and wealthier, republics. The enfeebled Stalinist bureaucracies in these republics totally dissolved, with most of the remnants going over to the avowedly capitalist-restorationist and secessionist regimes. Croatia's new president, Franjo Tudjman, was a former general in the Yugoslav army and history professor who gained notoriety as an apologist for the wartime clerical-fascist Ustasha

cent of the republic's population. These regions are the old Croatian military frontier, originally populated by Serbs in the 15th century who continued to resist when the medieval Serbian kingdom was overrun by the Ottoman Turks. The Serbian communities in Croatia have good reason to fear for their well-being and very lives under the new nationalist regime in Zagreb. The genocidal massacres of the Ustashi are a living memory in these regions. The Ustasha fascists—whose atrocities appalled even German Wehrmacht officers—collected the eyeballs of the victims and cut babies out of wombs of pregnant Serbian women.

It was from the Serbian-populated villages of Croatia as well as from ethnically Serbian Montenegro that the Com-

man Milosevic and, significantly, call themselves Chetniks:

"Mr. Milosevic prefers to patronise the operations of the 'Chetnik' forces, controlled by Vojislav Seselj, known as 'the Duke.' In spite of his far-right views, 'the Duke' is widely suspected of being an agent of Serbia's communist-run secret police force. He recently won a by-election in Belgrade under a campaign which included promises to 'cut the Croats' throats with rusty knives'."

—Independent [London],
7 August

"The Duke" Seselj, of course, has his counterparts in the Croatian National Guard, many of whom see themselves fighting a holy war against the heretics of the Eastern Orthodox church. A Franciscan monk in a National Guard command center in Sinj proclaimed: "For 300 years the Franciscans have been leading Croatia in the fight for Christendom, because when Croatia defends itself it also protects the West and Christendom." *Le Monde* (13 September) reports that the Croatian Interior Ministry is recruiting German and French mercenaries to a "Black Legion." Members of this "anti-terrorist" unit openly boast that they are latter-day Nazis—"national-socialist and proud of it"—and flaunt the portrait of Ustasha leader Ante Pavelic, executed for war crimes, in their HQ. "They think the Ustashi are back when they see us," said one of the black-clad fascists.

With enormous condescension, the Western media is now portraying the Balkan peoples, like the Serbs and Croats, as semi-barbaric tribes engaged in an age-old blood feud. Yet Serbs and Croats lived together amicably for four and a half decades. Intermarriage between these two South Slav peoples was more common than between blacks and whites in the United States or between Europeans and North African Arabs in France. And in the towns and cities of interpenetrated regions like the Kajna and Slavonia, there are not only extreme Croatian and Serbian nationalists but also many who deeply oppose the nationalist fratricide which is tearing their communities and families apart.

However, Serbs and Croats have not suddenly been infected by intense nationalist hatreds as if by a plague of unknown origin. What is happening in Yugoslavia and the rest of East Europe



Zika Zivanovic

Albanian coal miners in Kosovo. Workers of Yugoslavia must fight the forces of all-sided fratricidal nationalism.

regime, which under German protection massacred hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews and Roma (gypsies). Tudjman is notorious for his chauvinism, remarking, "Thank God my wife is neither a Serb nor a Jew." One of the first acts of his government was to change the name of the Square for the Victims of Fascism in Zagreb to the Square of the Croatian Giants! Similarly, the new government of Slovenia amnestied all wartime collaborators of the Nazi German and Italian fascist forces.

There are 600,000 Serbs living in eastern and southern Croatia—some 12 per-

cent of the republic's population. These regions are the old Croatian military frontier, originally populated by Serbs in the 15th century who continued to resist when the medieval Serbian kingdom was overrun by the Ottoman Turks. The Serbian communities in Croatia have good reason to fear for their well-being and very lives under the new nationalist regime in Zagreb. The genocidal massacres of the Ustashi are a living memory in these regions. The Ustasha fascists—whose atrocities appalled even German Wehrmacht officers—collected the eyeballs of the victims and cut babies out of wombs of pregnant Serbian women. It was from the Serbian-populated villages of Croatia as well as from ethnically Serbian Montenegro that the Com-



AP

Croatia's fascist president Franjo Tudjman with his militiamen (left). Serbian irregulars (right) call themselves Chetniks after the anti-Communist monarchists in World War II.



Der Spiegel

is the end product of four decades of Stalinist bureaucratic rule and its ultimate collapse. While Tito's partisans fought against fratricidal nationalism, his policy of "market socialism" and enterprise "self-management" widened the economic differences and thus increased political tensions between the more advanced republics of Slovenia and Croatia and the poorer southern regions. Meanwhile, over the past few decades Yugoslavia has become ever more indebted to the imperialist banks.

Under orders from Western finance capital, two years ago the government of federal prime minister Ante Markovic imposed a savage austerity program on working people throughout Yugoslavia. Last April 750,000 Serbian workers staged a one-day general strike to protest their intolerable economic conditions. A perceptive article on Milosevic in the *New York Times Magazine* (1 September) noted: "Social unrest also cannot be ruled out in Serbia, where tens of thousands of workers have gone months without a paycheck, and where unemployment is rising." To head off and divert working-class struggle against the effects of imperialist debt peonage, both Milosevic and Tudjman are inciting nationalist hatreds and communalist warfare.

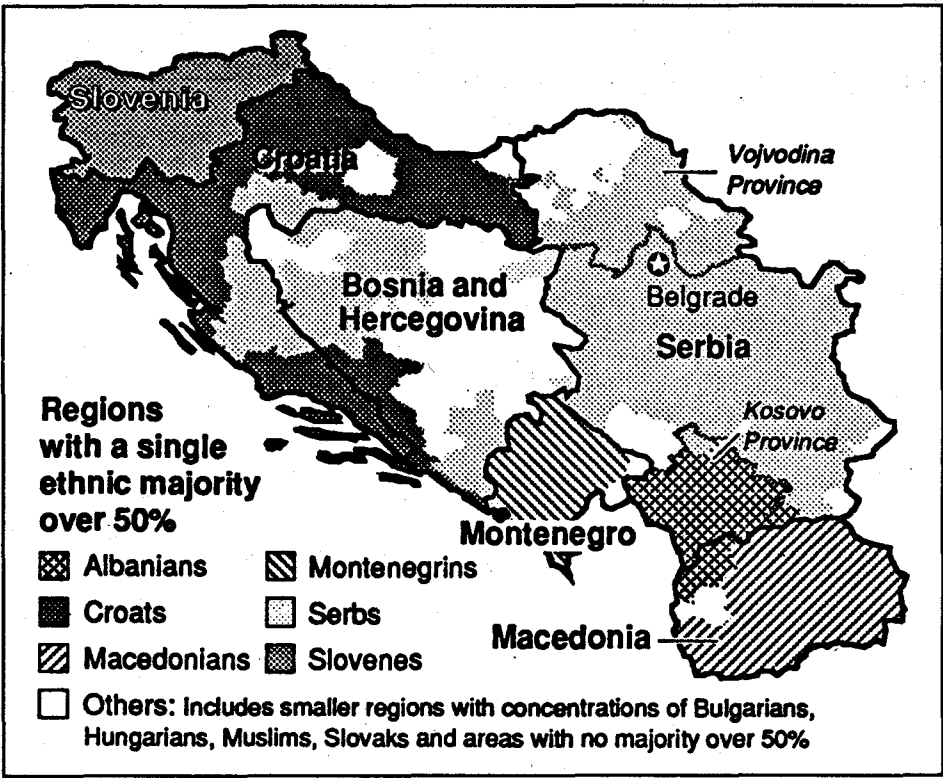
Milosevic's Drive for Greater Serbia

The Western bourgeois media commonly and falsely describe Milosevic's Serbia as the last "hard-line Communist" regime in East Europe. As former head of Belgrade's central bank, Milosevic linked the Yugoslav dinar to the German deutschmark, and he now calls for a "market economy" with "a completely free flow of labour, goods and capital" (*Review of International Affairs*, 20 June). This economic program is indistinguishable from that of federal prime minister Markovic, the darling of Wall Street and Frankfurt, who likewise advocates "developing market mechanisms and creating conditions for the free flow of goods, capital, labour and know-how."

The difference between Markovic and Milosevic is *not* that the former wants to establish capitalism in Yugoslavia while the latter wants to preserve "socialism." The federal prime minister, who has practically no real power, would like to transform Yugoslavia as a whole into a neocolony of the West European Common Market. The Belgrade strongman, the son of a Serbian Orthodox priest, wants to forge a Greater Serbia on the ruins of the Yugoslav federal state created by Tito's Communist partisans. Serbia's foreign minister, Vladimir Yovanovic, complains that the borders of Yugoslavia's republics "were drawn after the Second World War by the then ruling Communists in an arbitrary fashion" (*New York Times*, 31 August).

Milosevic's drive to create a Greater Serbia began a few years ago with the subjugation of the autonomous region of Kosovo, 90 percent of whose population are Albanians. The Kosovo Communist Party was dissolved and popular resistance to Serbian overlordship was brutally suppressed. The Milosevic regime also strong-armed the autonomous region of Vojvodina, with its large Hungarian minority, into submission to Serbian authorities. Milosevic has now agreed to the secession of Slovenia (which has no Serbian minority) and to accept an independent Croatia as long as it gives up the Serbian-populated regions. That is what the present war is about.

The war is changing the political and national character of the Yugoslav federal army. When the civilian Stalinist bureaucracy splintered last year along national lines, the army was left as the only pan-Yugoslav institution with any power. Titoist sentiment remained strong within the officer corps. Although the officer corps has always been predominantly Serbian, it was established policy



for all Yugoslav nationalities to be represented in the highest command positions. But now non-Serbian officers are being purged. The head of the air force was recently forced to resign and was replaced by a Serb. Non-Serbian colonels and majors have been removed from command of key battalions. The president of Bosnia, Alija Izetbegovic, a Slavic Muslim, recently exclaimed: "We must find out if the army is Yugoslav or Serbian. Of the five generals commanding units in Bosnia, all five are now Serbs."

In reaction to the "Serbianization" of the army command, the governments of Bosnia and Macedonia have demanded that conscripts from these republics not be stationed outside their borders. The Macedonians have also destroyed the call-up lists for next year's draftees. Slavic Muslim reservists in Bosnia have refused to obey a mobilization order sending them to the embattled regions of Croatia. At the same time, Serbian nationalists in Bosnia are recruiting volunteers for the army. Officers and soldiers who stand for socialism must fight against making the Yugoslav army an instrument of Great Serbian nationalism, a path that can lead only to communalist massacres and counter-massacres.

Western Imperialism and the Breakup of Yugoslavia

Over the past few years Washington and the West European powers did not favor the breakup of Yugoslavia but rather its transformation into a capitalist economy and loose confederation. Hence, the imperialists' strong support for the federal prime minister Markovic, who has precisely this program. However, the Slovenia secession crisis in late June/early July and the escalating Croatia-Serbia border war demonstrated that Markovic's line was unworkable. With Germany taking the lead, the imperialists now consider the secession of Slovenia and Croatia as a kind of second-best solution. But Milosevic's efforts to incorporate large chunks of Croatia in a Greater Serbia are disrupting the plans of Washington and especially Berlin to pull off an easy "peacekeeping" intervention.

Furthermore, this conflict could easily expand into a general Balkan war if the militarily far weaker Croats seek allies against Serbia. Such allies would not be hard to find. Bulgaria and Greece have claims on Macedonia, Albania on Kosovo and Hungary on Vojvodina. There is already gunfire along the Albania-Kosovo border. Hungary's right-wing nationalist president, Jozsef Antall, is talking about defending the 400,000 ethnic Magyars in northern Yugoslavia. And for 300 years the Bulgarians have looked to Russia as their main great-power ally in Balkan conflicts. The bloody breakup of Yugoslavia—with Roman Catholic Croats fighting Eastern

Orthodox Serbs fighting Slavic and Albanian Muslims—could have major repercussions from Rome to Ankara to Moscow.

That is what the Western imperialists are worried about. And they see Milosevic as the archvillain on the Yugoslav scene, the main disturber of the peace. As Serbian forces have gained on the ground, the imperialist attitude toward the Belgrade strongman has become more hostile and threatening. A 14 August *New York Times* editorial, titled "Serbia vs. the New World Order," warned:

"Aggressors must not be allowed to profit from their conquests. That's the principle President Bush soundly invoked to mobilize the world against Saddam Hussein's seizure of Kuwait. The lesson seems to have been entirely lost on Slobodan Milosevic...."

Since then there have been increasingly strident calls, especially by the Germans,

for a European "peacekeeping" force, i.e., an imperialist expeditionary army, to protect Croatia. The British have opposed this, arguing that such a force would become bogged down in an interminable Balkan war. Behind the division in the Common Market over the Yugoslav crisis are interimperialist rivalries.

Before World War I, Croatia and Slovenia were part of the German-Austrian sphere of influence in the Balkans. After Germany lost the war, a new Yugoslav state—ruled by Serbia's King Alexander—was created by the Treaty of Versailles and was a British client during the interwar years. When the heir apparent to the Serbian throne was born in London during World War II, Winston Churchill made his birthplace part of Yugoslav territory for a day! (The Yugoslav royalist constitution required that the monarch be born in the ancestral homeland.) Thus the current British objections to military intervention against Serbia may well be designed to spike German moves to regain its sphere of influence in the Balkans.

Foiled on the European scene, the rulers of the Fourth Reich are now pressing for the United Nations to take up the Croatian cause. This means enlisting American imperialism in a war against Serbia. In the event of such direct imperialist military intervention, whether under the banner of the Common Market, the UN or some other fig leaf, revolutionary socialists would defend the Serbian forces and those units of the Yugoslav army fighting with them. The aim of Western military intervention would be to transform all regions of Yugoslavia into neocolonies ruled by puppets of Bush and/or Kohl.

Genuine communists—Trotskyists—must mobilize the working class and socialist-minded officers and soldiers in the army to fight the forces of fratricidal nationalism, which directly or indirectly serve the interests of Western imperialism in bleeding the peoples of Yugoslavia. ■

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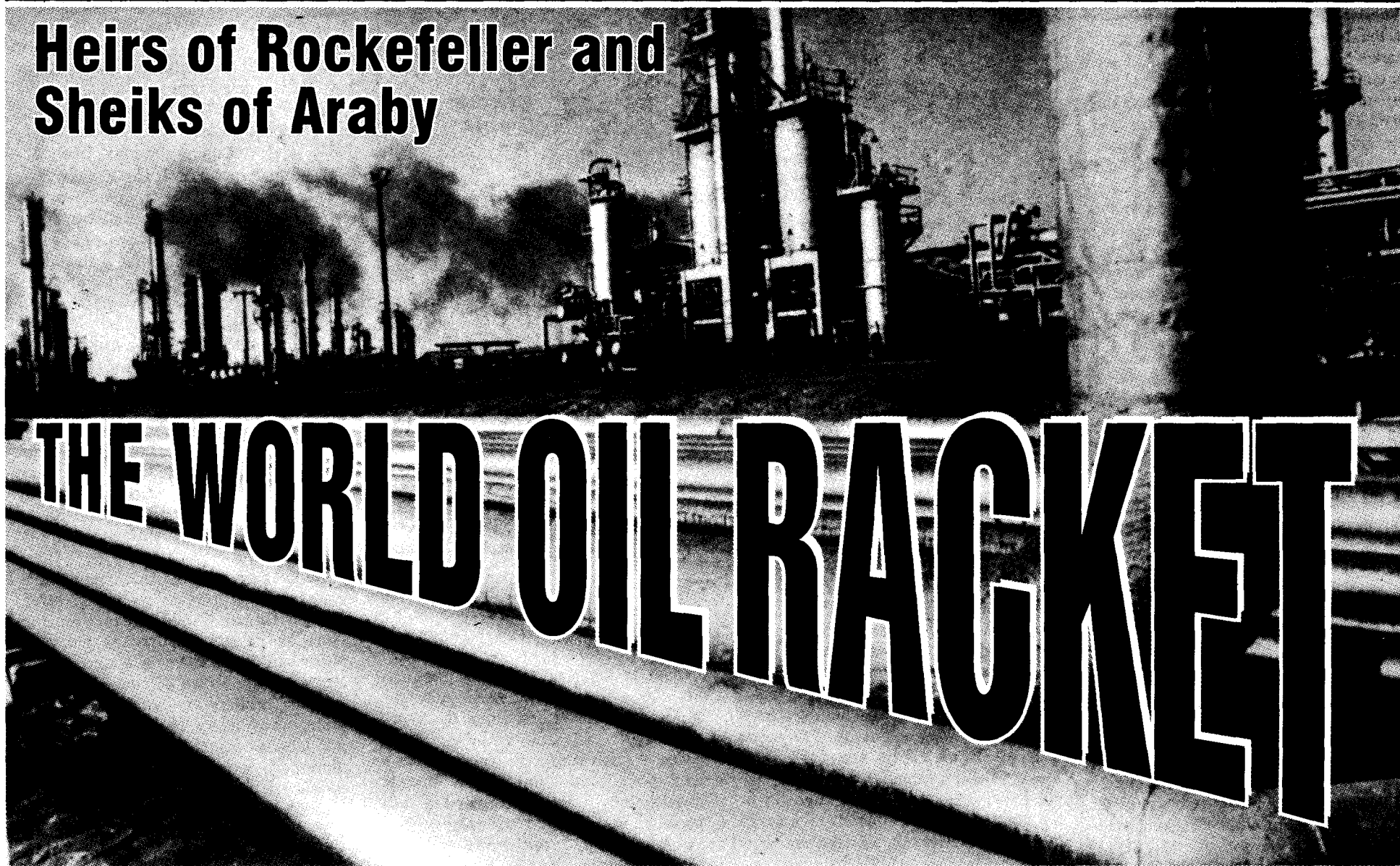
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"If Kuwait's main product was broccoli, would the U.S. go to war?" was a meant-to-be satiric slogan seen at protests against the Persian Gulf War last fall and winter. It took no great insight to see this was a war about oil. But about oil in what way? Youthful protesters were sold the line that Bush went to war to preserve the allegedly oil-wasteful lifestyle of the American people. Baghdad would not have been bombed, according to reformists, pacifists and ecology radicals, if only people in this country did not go traipsing around in their RVs, run their air conditioners too cool in summer and heaters too hot in winter. The Iraqi people were supposedly victims of American energy gluttony.

For example, David Moberg, economics specialist of the social-democratic *In These Times*, maintained that "if the industrialized nations were less hooked on oil, the conquest of Kuwait might have received about the same amount of big-power attention that Indonesia's comparable but far bloodier invasion of East Timor received 15 years ago: none." Elsewhere, Moberg denounced the "Reagan-Bush decade" as a "time of short-sighted indulgence and refusal to plan for an energy-efficient future." He called for higher gasoline taxes and insisted, "In the longer term, replacing oil with another portable fuel is essential for energy security, the environment and coming to grips with the ultimate shrinkage of world oil supplies" (*In These Times*, 15-28 August 1990).

Left-wing oil expert Michael Tanzer, writing in the academic Marxist, erstwhile Castroist/Maoist *Monthly Review* (April 1991), presents a similar analysis:

"In the last twenty years, U.S. oil production has dropped significantly and imports have climbed sharply.... The virtually complete failure in the last two decades either to reduce demand sharply by energy conservation or to expand such renewable energy resources as solar power has heightened the dependence of the U.S. economy on oil."

Thus in their own way these self-styled leftists reinforce Bush's claim that Saddam Hussein's seizure of the oil-rich emirate of Kuwait posed a genuine threat to the American economy.

This position is explicitly stated by veteran bourgeois publicist Daniel Yergin in *The Prize* (1990), an 800-

page history of the world oil industry. The introduction is straight U.S. war propaganda:

"If successful, Iraq would become the world's leading oil power, and it would dominate both the Arab world and Persian Gulf, where the bulk of the planet's oil reserves is concentrated. Its new strength and wealth and control of oil would force the rest of the world to pay court to the ambitions of Saddam Hussein."

This claim that Iraq—with or without Kuwait as its 19th province—could dominate the world oil market is an imperialist Big Lie pure and simple. It is a lie intended to mask the U.S. rulers' military grab of the Persian Gulf oil fields.

The U.S. blockade suddenly and totally removed from the world oil market the five million barrels a day (mb/d) contributed by Iraq and Kuwait, more than 7 percent of the global total. Yet within four months, world oil output was greater than when Hussein's tanks rolled into Kuwait City last year. Saudi Arabia alone increased its production by 55 percent, raking in enormous windfall profits from the price panic. Just a few weeks before Bush ordered the destruction of Iraq, the *Petroleum Economist* (January 1991), a leading industry journal, wrote: "More oil was produced last year than in any year since 1979, despite the Gulf

conflict.... We could be headed for a glut."

If the U.S. did not go to war to protect its more-than-ample foreign oil supplies, why did it? For one thing, to recapture the billions of petrodollars which the al-Sabah family invests every year in Wall Street. Hussein intended to use Kuwait's oil revenues to build up Iraq, instead of funding the Pentagon budget and Fortune 500 corporations. More significantly, American imperialism wanted to reinforce its control over the Persian Gulf oil fields as an economic weapon against its increasingly powerful capitalist rivals—the German Fourth Reich and Japan, Inc. Finally, the destruction of Iraq was carried out for its own sake: a demonstration to the rest of the world—especially to the disintegrating Stalinist bureaucracy of the Soviet Union—that America's rulers will use their arsenal of mega-death against defenseless civilian populations.

Against the Mystification of Oil Economics

It is commonly assumed that the board of directors of, say, Greenpeace and of Exxon are fundamentally antagonistic to each other. Yet, each in their own way, they both propagate the false notion that consumption is outgrowing oil supplies

and it is economically expensive to produce more. The ecology activists use this argument to push a utopian program of economic primitivism; the heirs of Rockefeller to justify extortionate prices and the imperialist rape of backward oil-producing countries.

The view that oil consumption will soon overtake supply is not at all new. Quite the contrary. Yergin recounts that a century ago, in the 1890s, "The conventional wisdom remained that oil was a phenomenon of the Eastern United States, and pessimism continued to be the order of the day when it came to new supplies." Yet ever since the first wells struck oil in western Pennsylvania in the 1860s, major new fields have been discovered and developed practically every decade: the Russian Caucasus (Baku) in the 1870s and a few years later Sumatra and Borneo (then the Dutch East Indies); Texas/Oklahoma, Romania and Persia (Iran) in the first decades of this century; Iraq, Venezuela and the Arabian peninsula in the 1920s-30s; Libya and Nigeria in the 1950s-60s; northern Alaska and the North Sea in the '70s.

A careful and critical reading of *The Prize* will enable one to grasp the economic essentials of the world oil industry. But Yergin himself does not spell out these essentials, nor does he appear to understand them. The underlying pattern is so lost in the mass of material it is hard to see the forest for the trees. Furthermore, Yergin's conclusions often contradict his own empirical analysis.

The basic economic fact of oil is that it is much, much cheaper to extract, transport and refine than the principal alternative, coal. This was true in the 1860s when kerosene made from what was then called rock oil displaced kerosene distilled from coal (known as "town gas"). It is even more true today. It costs about 50 cents to extract and transport a barrel of petroleum from the main Persian Gulf fields. It would cost around \$40 to manufacture a barrel of synthetic fuel from coal or oil shale. So the potential market price of oil is 80 times its cost of production in the main producing regions.

Unlike coal, petroleum deposits are highly geographically concentrated. About two dozen mammoth fields—known in the industry as "elephants"—supply most



Noel Quidu

American imperialism launched Desert Slaughter so U.S. could turn Persian Gulf oil spigot on or off. Imperialist allies/rivals Germany and Japan were indirect target of Washington's war.

of the world's oil. Thus the world oil market has been subject to monopolistic control, from Rockefeller's Standard Oil in the late 19th century to the OPEC/Seven Sisters cartel in our own day. However, the monopoly profits are so exorbitant that the cartel partners frequently cheat on one another, independent operators are always trying to squeeze in, and governments of consuming countries often seek to undercut the high rigged prices.

The oil monopolists therefore confront what in their view is the chronic problem of reducing oversupply. In the early 1920s Henri Deterding, the head of Royal Dutch/Shell, complained to Standard Oil chief Walter Teagle (known as "the Boss") that the world was "suffering from over-production, over-refining, over-transporting, and—last but not least—over-retailing." The same thing could have been written by John D. Rockefeller half a century earlier and by Saudi Arabia's oil minister, Zaki Yamani, half a century later.

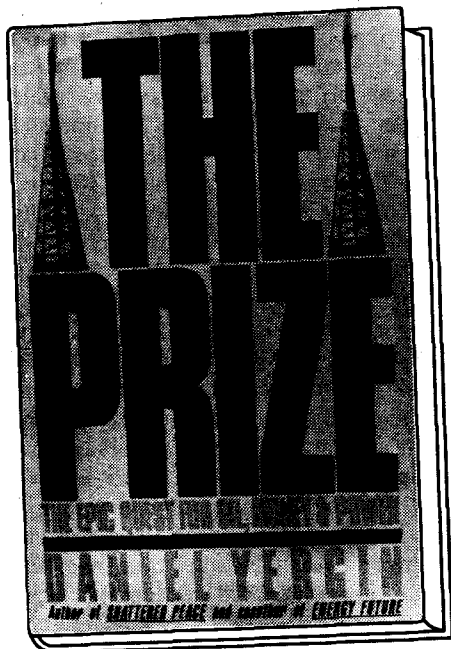
The subtitle of Yergin's work, "The Epic Quest for Oil, Money & Power," is misleading. The quest for money in this particular industry usually involves an epic struggle to *reduce* the supply of oil. In the early 1930s the discovery of the huge East Texas field (the Black Giant) under conditions of the Great Depression sent oil prices through the floor. State governor Ross Sterling—founder and former chairman of Humble Oil, a Standard subsidiary—sent thousands of National Guardsmen and Texas Rangers into East Texas to shut off the wells!

Rockefeller's heirs have been doing the same thing ever since, if not quite so flagrantly. At one point in the 1960s, a company geologist told Howard Page, who was running Standard of New Jersey operations in Saudi Arabia, that he was certain oil could be found in neighboring Oman. Page replied he would drill in Oman only if he was certain *no* oil would be found there. That way the money could be used as a tax write-off instead of adding to global oversupply and pushing down prices.

The development of new fields, especially when government-sponsored, is usually an attempt to get under the rigged world market price, not to secure more oil as such. This was demonstrated by the British government's acquisition of Anglo-Persian on the eve of World War I and by the initial penetration of Standard into the Near East in the 1920s. For years Marcus Samuel of Royal Dutch/Shell—the main distributor in the Eastern Hemisphere—had lobbied the British navy to switch its battleships from coal to oil. But when it finally did so in 1912, instead of buying its oil from Shell, the British government acquired a majority stake in a fledgling operation which had just struck oil in Persia. In this way the British treasury saved money by cutting out the monopolistic middleman and buying at cost from the producer.

In the early 1920s, Standard boss Teagle maneuvered Washington into pressuring the British to allow the Americans into the development of new fields in Iraq, then a de facto British colony under the guise of a League of Nations mandate. When the negotiations began Teagle demanded that all participants in the Iraqi concession get their oil *at cost*. Even the British puppet ruler, King Faisal, refused to give his country's oil away and scotched the deal. A few years later it was renegotiated on terms slightly less unfavorable to Iraq's quasi-colonial regime. The basic point is that Standard could have bought all the Iraqi oil it wanted from Royal Dutch/Shell and Anglo-Persian at the going world market price. Its only interest in investing directly in Iraq was to get the oil a lot cheaper than that.

The cost-price relationship has always been the key to oil economics and oil



Daniel Yergin's book pushes U.S. war propaganda in 800-page history of oil industry.

politics. In fact, it is technologically feasible for a major industrial country to run on synthetic fuel. But it is grossly uneconomical to do so. This was shown by the experience of Nazi Germany.

During the 1920s the German chemical giant I.G. Farben pioneered the manufacture of synthetic fuel through the hydrogenation of coal. When Hitler came to power in 1933, he sponsored a major effort, organized through I.G. Farben, to switch the German economy to synthetic fuel. In 1940, the first year of World War II, almost half of Germany's oil and 95 percent of the Luftwaffe's aviation gasoline came from the hydrogenation of coal. Germany's synthetic fuel output continued to expand during the war until too many plants were put out of operation by American and British bombing.

However, the production of synthetic fuel absorbed a huge fraction of wartime Germany's material and labor resources, even with the massive use of slave labor. I.G. Farben set up one of its synthetic oil plants adjacent to the Auschwitz concentration camp. The Italian Jewish chemist and writer Primo Levi, in his *Survival in Auschwitz*, has left us a first-hand account of this marvel of German capital. But even the totalitarian mobilization of labor could not make up for the high cost of synthetic fuels. By contrast, the U.S. increased its oil production by 30 percent during the war using a small fraction of its capital and labor force.

Is There an Arab Oil Weapon?

In the postwar period major industrial countries with an abundance of coal, such as Britain, West Germany and Japan, switched to imported oil as their primary source of energy because it was far cheaper. At the same time, Western imperialist domination and military intervention in the Near East was now justified in the name of protecting the

"free world's" vital oil supplies against potentially hostile Arab regimes backed by the Soviet Union.

On the other side, Arab nationalists viewed a cutoff of oil exports as their ultimate weapon against Western imperialism—a kind of economic H-bomb. In the 1950s the quintessential Arab nationalist, Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser, wrote:

"The great factories, producing every kind of goods; all the instruments of land, sea and air communications; all the weapons of war, from the mechanical bird above the clouds to the submarine beneath the waves—without oil, all would turn back to naked metal, covered with rust, incapable of motion or use."

And Nasser went on:

"...the average daily production per well is 11 barrels in the United States, 230 barrels in Venezuela, and 4,000 barrels in the Arab area. Have I made clear how great is the importance of this element of strength?"

—*Egypt's Liberation: Philosophy of the Revolution* (1955)

However, the various Near East oil crises of 40 years (with the partial exception of 1973) have had little effect on the industrialized West, given the enormous global *excess capacity* in both production and distribution.

In 1951 the National Front regime of Mohammed Mossadeq in Iran expropriated Anglo-Iranian, the majority shareholder of which was the British government. The oil companies and Western governments imposed a total embargo on Iran, which then accounted for one-third of oil production in the Near East. Between 1950 and 1952 Iran's oil output dropped from 650,000 barrels a day to a mere dribble of 20,000. Yet in this same period global oil production increased by two million barrels a day, more than *three times* Iran's pre-nationalization output.

A few years later came the Suez crisis. Almost all oil from the Persian Gulf fields went by tanker through the Suez Canal in Egypt. When Nasser nationalized the canal in 1956, the British, French and Israelis invaded his country. In response, Nasser scuttled ships in the canal, putting the vital waterway out of operation for over a year. Yet West Europe's oil was easily supplied from the Western Hemisphere, while Persian Gulf petroleum was shipped around southern Africa or diverted to the American West Coast. The main effect of the Suez crisis on world oil economics was to encourage the development of supertankers, which were both a more economical means of transport and less vulnerable to political action by Near East regimes.

Another attempt to use the "oil weapon" was made immediately after Israel's victory in the 1967 "Six-Day War," when the Arab states declared an oil boycott of the Western world. The boycott was a spectacular failure. The Arab shortfall was quickly made up by increased American, Venezuelan and

Iranian production. Within a few months Nasser himself was imploring the Saudis, Libyans and others to resume their oil exports so they could donate their petrodollars to the nearly bankrupt Egyptian state treasury.

The Rise and Decline of OPEC

The Prize narrates these episodes quite adequately. However, Yergin, like many others, maintains that the world oil market underwent a fundamental change in 1970. That was the year that oil production peaked in the United States, while Alaskan oil (in any case very expensive) was not yet on stream. Yergin argues: "While, of course, the recoverable reserves in the Middle East were huge, available production capacity was much more closely attuned to actual demand."

However, in the Persian Gulf region it is precisely recoverable reserves which are the true measure of excess capacity. Saudi Arabia and Iran are not like northern Alaska and the North Sea. Their reserves can be brought into production in a short period of time, with relatively little additional investment and at constant cost. In 1970 King Faisal told American ambassador James Akins he would double Saudi Arabia's oil production—from 10 to 20 mb/d—if Washington abandoned its support for Israel.



Arab nationalist leader Gamal Abdel Nasser (left) learned the "oil weapon" had little firepower.

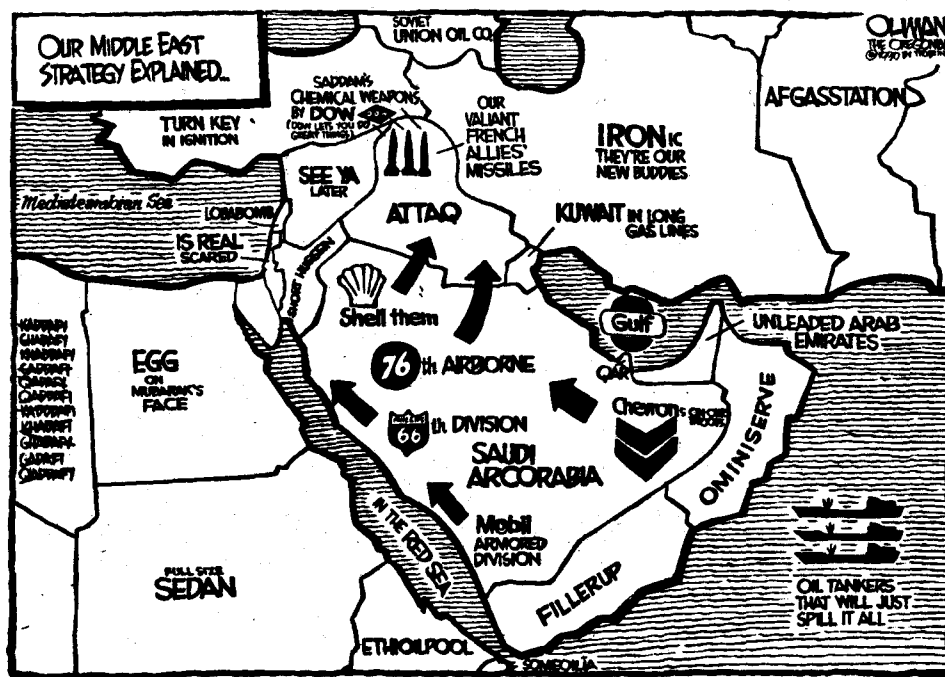
The oil-price explosion of the 1970s had nothing to do with a physical shortage of the gooey hydrocarbon relative to demand. It was created through the collusion of the sheiks of Arab and the shah of Iran with the heirs of Rockefeller and J. P. Morgan. At the same time, the U.S. ruling class promoted racist propaganda blaming the Japanese and Arabs for America's economic decline.

Following the October 1973 war with Israel, the Arab oil states announced a boycott of the U.S. and Netherlands, and a progressive cutback in total output. This action had a quite limited effect—partly because the shah stepped up Iran's production—and the boycott/cutback was abandoned after a few months. But the Persian Gulf producers then decreed a *fourfold* increase in the so-called posted price—from \$2.50 to \$10 a barrel—charged to the international oil companies which extracted and marketed their petroleum.

Genuine shock waves were felt from the American Midwest to the West German Ruhr to the factory districts of Tokyo and Osaka. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which had little to show for its previous 14 years of existence, suddenly became a household term and was blamed for every economic ill in the world.

However, the oil-price explosion was *temporarily* effective only because OPEC had the collaboration and support of powerful forces in the imperialist countries, especially the United States.

continued on page 10



Oil Racket...

(continued from page 9)

The most immediate and obvious of these forces were the major international oil companies, derisively dubbed the "Seven Sisters" in the 1950s by Italian oilman Enrico Mattei, who tried to break through the Anglo-American cartel by doing direct deals with Iran and Libya. The Seven Sisters now passed along the higher posted prices to consumers and then added a markup of their own. Furthermore, they priced their substantial amounts of *non-OPEC* oil at the same far higher prices. In 1973—the year of the first "oil shock"—Exxon's profits leaped by 59 percent!

Secondly, the oil-price boom benefited the politically potent Texas-based independents (the real-life J.R. Ewings) who

1988, Saddam Hussein began to pressure Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to raise oil prices to help him rebuild the shattered Iraqi economy. This intra-OPEC dispute culminated in Hussein's attempted annexation of Kuwait and the subsequent devastation of Iraq by American imperialism. The Gulf War underscored the U.S. rulers' longstanding commitment to preserve the sheikdoms of Arabia.

The Saudi Monarchy and Wall Street

During World War II, U.S. president Franklin Roosevelt entertained Ibn Saud aboard an American ship in the Suez Canal, assuring him of Washington's lasting friendship. A few years later Roosevelt's successor, Harry Truman, wrote to the Saudi monarch: "No threat to your Kingdom could occur which would not be a matter of immediate concern to the

During the 1970s, the other major Third World oil producers used their billions of petrodollars *and more* to build up their armies, finance industrialization and support bloated and corrupt state bureaucracies. By the early '80s Iraq and Iran had squandered their petrodollar windfalls, while Venezuela and Mexico were running balance-of-trade deficits and mortgaging their future oil revenues to Wall Street and the City of London.

By contrast, Saudi Arabia's balance-of-trade surplus multiplied from \$5 billion in 1973 to \$80 billion in 1981. By the mid-'80s the kingdom's income from its financial assets abroad (interest, dividends and capital gains) was half as great as its oil revenues. King Fahd and his relatives now hold an estimated \$200 billion in financial assets in the West and Japan, an amount equal to four times the annual gross national product of South Africa!

Saudi Arabia's unique importance for American capitalism is that it combines vast oil resources with a sparse population and primitive political and social structure. Spending for air-conditioned limousines and London call girls can absorb only a minute fraction of Arabia's oil revenue. The Saudi dynasty does not want to build up its army too much for fear of a nationalist military coup such as that which toppled Iraq's King Faisal in 1958. It has long been understood and planned that the American armed forces would intervene on the side of Saudi Arabia in any serious military confrontation with a hostile neighboring state (Iran, Iraq or Egypt).

King Fahd and family do not want to modernize the Arabian economy, rightly fearing that an industrial working class and technical intelligentsia would become a powerful force for social radicalism. The *entire proletariat* in Saudi Arabia (and Kuwait and the other oil sheikdoms) are *foreign workers*, who can be expelled at will, as *one million* Yemenis were during the recent Gulf War. The wealthiest country in the Arab world is thus deliberately kept socially backward and economically limited by its own rulers and their imperialist protectors.

Saudi Arabia's petrodollars are recycled into bank deposits, short-term government bonds and top-grade corporate securities in the imperialist centers. In 1974 the Federal Reserve Bank of New York made a special arrangement so that the Saudi Arabia Monetary Authority could buy U.S. Treasury bills and certificates without going through the usual competitive auction. In the late '70s about half of Saudi financial assets were held in the U.S., much of these going to finance the yawning federal budget deficit.

The London-based *International Currency Review* (Summer 1982) ran an article on "The Washington-Riyadh financial axis" which pointed out that "a powerful US motive has always been to transfer a substantial proportion of the burden involved in financing excess Federal sector spending to willing 'captive'

petro-rich national agencies." The article lashed out at Washington's "appeasement of the oil cartel through facilitating the linked creation of unprecedented volumes of petro-liquidity to finance the monopoly's rigged oil prices."

To use the term "appeasement" in this connection is quite wrong. The Saudi monarchy is a junior partner, and in many respects a creature of Wall Street, not its enemy or even rival. From the standpoint of world capitalism, the Saudi monarchy and other Arabian sheikdoms are merely conduits to *recycle* the superprofits extorted by the Anglo-American oil cartel from consumers around the globe into the multinational corporations and imperialist state treasuries. The greatest source of wealth in the Arab world is thus used to exploit and terrorize the Arab peoples. Saudi Arabia's petrodollars literally paid for the Pentagon's B-1 bombers and Tomahawk missiles which massacred over 100,000 Iraqi men, women and children.

Oil in a Socialist World Order

While the Arabian sheikdoms conspicuously squander their oil revenues or invest them in Wall Street, Arab nationalist demagogues like Iraq's Saddam Hussein claim to use their oil wealth in the interests of the Arab masses. This is a lie. The overthrow of King Faisal in 1958 ignited a genuine popular revolution, with the working class, centrally the Kurdish oil workers, organized around the then-powerful Iraqi Communist Party. However, the Iraqi revolution was betrayed by the Stalinists, eventually leading to the establishment of Saddam Hussein's nationalist Ba'ath regime.

The Baghdad Ba'athists (like the shah of Iran) carried out a certain degree of industrialization and modernization, while providing creature comforts for a new middle class based on the state bureaucracy. But Iraq's oil revenue was also spent on consolidating a state apparatus of mass terror against worker militants, leftists and Kurds, and building up a large army whose main achievement was the nearly decade-long border war with Iran. Under Hussein, Iraq's petrodollars (and Iran's) literally paid for the death of a million Iraqi and Iranian youth in this senseless slaughter.

The Persian Gulf oil fields can bring benefits to the Arab workers and peasants only through a social revolution which overthrows the sheiks of the Arab peninsula, the nationalist despots in Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo, the bloody Shi'ite theocracy in Iran and the racist and expansionist state of Zionist Israel. Only within the framework of a socialist federation of the Near East, as an integral part of a world socialist order, can the vast petroleum deposits of the region be used in the interest of the Arab peoples and of all humanity.

The Persian Gulf fields would provide the rest of the world—poor, backward countries like India as well as the advanced industrial societies—with cheap, plentiful oil. In turn, a socialist North America, Europe and Japan would help transform the Near East countries into modern industrial societies. For example, hundreds of thousands of Arab, Persian and Kurdish youth—many of them young women liberated from the veil of Islam—would freely receive the finest technical and scientific education available in the world.

The ecology activists are right in one important respect: the massive burning of hydrocarbons—whether oil or coal—is in the long term bad for the earth's atmosphere. The answer, however, is not to save oil by cutting the living standards of North American and European working people. A planned socialist economy would carry out the scientific research required to develop safer, more efficient sources of energy (including nuclear and solar energy). But there is one absolutely necessary *precondition* for an energy-efficient future. The heirs of Rockefeller and sheiks of Araby must be swept into the dustbin of history. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD



Liberals' hero Franklin Roosevelt met Saudi despot Ibn Saud aboard U.S. ship in the Suez Canal during World War II. FDR promised lasting support for barbaric Saudi monarchy.

for decades had lobbied Washington with some success for "protection" against cheap Near Eastern oil. (The independents claimed and still claim that such protectionism would reduce U.S. "dependence" on the Arabs. In reality, the faster the U.S. depletes its own oil reserves the greater its future dependence on foreign supplies.) Last but certainly not least among the beneficiaries of OPEC were the big banks of Wall Street and the City of London, a bit later Frankfurt and Tokyo, who received billions of petrodollar deposits from the Arabian sheikdoms.

While significant interests in Wall Street and Texas benefited from the oil-price boom, higher energy costs were generally seen as a severe blow to American economic health and global power. Coming at the same time as U.S. imperialism's defeat in Vietnam, the OPEC "oil shock" contributed to a mood of pessimism within the American bourgeoisie. The message that the American people would have to tighten their belts to cope with permanently higher energy costs was a key ideological theme of the hapless Carter administration. In 1980 the prestigious journal *Foreign Affairs* ran an article titled "Oil and the Decline of the West."

Yet by then it was already clear that the oil-price boom would soon go bust. With oil selling for 30-plus times the cost of production in the Persian Gulf, it became profitable to develop extremely high-cost fields such as northern Alaska, the North Sea and the southern Gulf of Mexico. Additionally, the Soviet Union intensified its extraction of oil and natural gas from the frozen tundra of Siberia. Thus the late '70s saw an enormous expansion of oil capacity outside the Near East. OPEC's share of the world market *declined* from 53 percent in 1973 to 38 percent by 1981.

Amid rapidly growing oversupply, the world capitalist depression of 1981-82 slashed demand, and oil prices plummeted in world markets. In 1983 OPEC bowed to the inevitable and announced a cut in official posted prices. Throughout the rest of the '80s the cartel was further weakened as two of its major members—Iraq and Iran—pumped oil like crazy to finance their mutual slaughter in an eight-year-long border war.

When the war ended in a stalemate in

United States." After the 1956 Suez crisis, Truman's successor, Dwight Eisenhower, proposed to build up King Saud, Ibn Saud's son, as a counterweight to Nasser in the Arab world.

Why is Washington committed to preserving and strengthening this prefeudal monarchy whose barbaric practices—continued chattel slavery and the hideous oppression of women, exemplified by the execution of a princess for adultery and the arrest of women for driving cars—sometimes even scandalizes American public opinion? Yergin repeats the conventional wisdom: because Saudi Arabia has by far the greatest concentration of recoverable petroleum reserves on the planet. But all of the Persian Gulf states—including Ba'athist Iraq and Khomeinist Iran, despite their declared hostility to the U.S.—have to and do sell their oil on the world market dominated by the Seven Sisters.

The Saudi monarchy differs fundamentally from the other major OPEC producers not because it exports more oil but because it reinvests its petrodollars on Wall Street and other world capital markets. Indeed, the Saudi monarchy, Kuwaiti emirate and other Arabian sheikdoms are the only consistently significant exporters of money-capital in the so-called Third World.



Iraqi workers demonstrate in Baghdad in 1958 overthrow of British-imposed monarchy. The new nationalist rulers soon cracked down on militant oil workers and Kurdish minority. Internationalist workers revolutions will place the world's resources at the service of all humanity.

Remember Attica...

(continued from page 2)

forces" must not be tolerated, he said, because "they pose a serious threat to the ability of free government to preserve order."

The bloodbath began at 9:43 a.m. on September 13. After a helicopter dropped CS gas, a 1,000-member assault force moved in with orders to "shoot to kill." Prisoners were mowed down as they had their hands over their heads, following the orders from the helicopter to surrender. Nine minutes later it was over. Twenty-nine inmates and ten hostages were shot to death and many more were wounded in the assault by the combined forces of prison guards, state troopers, sheriff's deputies and National Guard. The utter falsity of the excuse for moving in—that the guard/hostages were having their throats slashed—became obvious when the medical examiner reported the hostages were killed with shotgun blasts, shotguns the prisoners did not have.

A savage campaign of repression followed. Hundreds of black prisoners, bloodied and choking from tear gas, were ordered to strip, lie face down in the mud and crawl into A Yard. They were lined up and forced to run a gauntlet of crazed, sadistic guards. One of the leaders of the Attica revolt, Frank "Big Black" Smith, told how the guards "lay me on a table, and they beat me in my testicles. And they burned me with cigarettes and dropped hot shells on me.... They broke glass up in the middle of the hallway and they made people run through the gauntlet. They had police on each side with the clubs they call nigger sticks and they was beating people."

Fifteen months later, 62 Attica Brothers were charged in 42 indictments with

1,300 crimes. In 1976, after the prosecutions suffered setbacks in the courts, then-governor Carey cut his losses and granted pardons and commutations. The State Commission on Attica described the police assault as "the bloodiest one-day encounter between Americans since the Civil War," outside of the Indian massacres of the late 19th century. Attica was followed in the Reagan years by the bloody cop massacre of Philly MOVE, on 13 May 1985, when police dropped a bomb on a black commune, murdering eleven people including five children, and turning an entire neighborhood to cinders. This, too, was part of the racist U.S. capitalist onslaught against perceived "black revolutionaries."

We Will Not Forget Attica

Two decades after Attica, the prisons are more overcrowded and conditions more brutal. With no solution for the rampant crime bred by the poverty of this racist capitalist state, the bourgeoisie's only answer is more cops, more jails and tougher sentences. In Bush's "New World Order," racist cop terror is endemic. Democrats and Republicans alike agree on extending the death penalty, and the U.S. Supreme Court has given prison officials carte blanche to do just about whatever they wish. At the high-tech torture chambers of Marion, Illinois, inmates are confined to their cells *23 hours a day*, denied access to the library and subjected to constant surveillance, sensory deprivation and repeated brutality by guards. Imprisoned former Black Panthers Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) in California and Mumia Abu-Jamal on Pennsylvania's death row are fighting for their freedom and their very lives.

The real criminals of Attica—the racist authorities whose hands dripped with blood—were never brought to justice. This requires a revolutionary workers

government. The Attica inmates' manifesto, "To the People of America," set forth demands "that will bring closer to reality the demise of these prison institutions." But prisons are a vital component of the capitalist state. As we wrote, "the critical revolutionary role can be played not by the unemployed and prison population alone—however great their oppression and combativeness—but by their class brothers in the industrial working class."

Like Sacco and Vanzetti, the Rosenbergs, George Jackson and countless others murdered by the state for challenging the racist status quo, the memory of the Attica Brothers will inspire present and future generations in the class struggle.

In 1974 the surviving Attica Brothers and families filed a federal civil rights class action lawsuit against Rockefeller and state prison officials. After nearly two decades of state efforts to block the suit, it is finally coming to court. Trial begins on September 30 in U.S. District Court in Buffalo. To support the lawsuit, send tax-deductible contributions to: NCBL/Attica Justice, 13 Gay Street, New York, NY 10014.

* * *

Attica holds a special place in the history of the Partisan Defense Committee and Spartacist League. Present-day PDC staff members Valerie West, Richard Dundy and Rachel Wolkenstein were founding members of the Attica Defense Committee in Buffalo. Richard recalled how they responded as soon as they heard of the rebellion at the nearby state prison: "When the Attica inmates took over D Yard, we joined with the Buffalo Marxist Collective, Youth Against War and Fascism, and other organizations and others to go to Attica, where we held solidarity demonstrations outside the prison walls. We called for a mass protest demonstration in Lafayette Square in

downtown Buffalo the evening after the takeover—a demo at which the Buffalo cops brutally attacked demonstrators. A few days after the massacre, Valerie went to New York City to work with the National Lawyers Guild to organize a broader defense effort."

It was urgently necessary to get medical help to attend to the surviving prisoners. Dundy, then a medical student, got a doctor from SUNY Buffalo to travel to Attica to give injured inmates the first real medical care they had received. The law students documented the brutal assault on the prisoners, in preparation for their defense. This included gathering proof that the prison authorities deliberately went after particular inmates known as leaders, such as Sam Melville and L.D. Barkley. This documentation served as the initial groundwork for the civil suit which is only now coming to trial. Among the lawyers who worked on the case were Dennis Cunningham, Michael Ratner, Elliot Wilk, Michael Deutsch.

At the time, Richard, Valerie and Rachel were radical students. The next year they joined the Spartacist youth group. They were attracted in part by the Spartacist League's class-struggle defense policies, based on a Marxist understanding of the class nature of the state and the non-sectarian tradition embodied in the old Wobbly slogan, "An injury to one is an injury to all." They went on to become founding members of the Partisan Defense Committee.

* * *

We encourage WV readers to continue to support and build the PDC. Become a monthly sustaining contributor. Send a donation of \$5 or more and receive a subscription to *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*. For a single copy send \$1 to: Partisan Defense Committee, P.O. Box 99, Canal St. Sta., New York, NY 10013. ■

Canada...

(continued from page 16)

the union was "letting the government off a very sharp hook." Presented with a contract offer widely seen as worse than the first one, but saddled with a leadership complicit in the NDP/CLC strikebreaking, the 8,600 workers voted narrowly to go back in. Transit workers won't soon forget who whipped them back to work for the Bay Street bankers.

Labor Shows Its Power

Last year the media were surprised when the NDP swept the Ontario elections (so were the NDP leaders). Today they are surprised when strike fever sweeps the country. It's beginning to dawn on Canada's rulers and the people who do their bidding that workers are fed up with taking it for years. In a 17 September article titled "Bitter Strikes

Mark End of Decade of Labor Peace," *Toronto Star* columnist Carol Goar wrote:

"For nine years, Canada had been as free of strikes and lockouts as a modern industrial nation with a strong union movement can be.... Then, three weeks ago, something snapped. Workers who had accepted modest wage settlements through the '80s, watching their real income shrink in the face of inflation and rising taxes, decided they had had enough.... And now labor economists are predicting that other unions, emboldened by this show of defiance, will flex their muscles."

Currently rating *12 percent* approval in the opinion polls, Mulroney's Tories keep setting new records for most unpopular government of all time. They've hit the working class and poor with blow after blow. Strikebreaking legislation was used *40 times* in the 1980s. Unemployment is officially 11 percent, as a continuing capitalist depression has combined with the effects of the U.S./Canada free-trade pact to eliminate *one out of every seven manufacturing jobs* in Canada over the last 18 months, most of them gone for good. Welfare and social services have been slashed, and early this year Mulroney's despised Goods and Services Tax added 7 percent to the price of just about everything. Meanwhile, "sin taxes" mean skyrocketing prices for gas, tobacco and booze: a pack of smokes in Toronto corner stores often costs \$7 or more.

Until now, near-universal opposition to the Tories has mainly been channeled toward right-wing reaction and national chauvinism, fueling a rise in racism and pitting English Canadian workers against their French-speaking-class brothers and sisters in Quebec. The far-right Reform Party of Preston Manning leads the polls in the prairie provinces, winning broad support around a platform of anti-French bigotry, anti-immigrant racism and a populist crusade against taxation. For decades, the labor tops and NDP have helped foster English Canadian chauvin-

ism, refusing to recognize Quebec's right to national self-determination and wrapping themselves in the Maple Leaf flag with calls for anti-American and anti-Japanese protectionism.

Meanwhile the nationalist leaders of the Quebec labor movement (which was once the most militant in all North America, waging a semi-insurrectionary general strike in 1972) have channeled workers' combativity into support for their "own" nationalist bosses, represented by the Parti Québécois and Bloc Québécois. The PQ envision themselves getting rich as the northern branch of the Rockefellers' Citibank, selling hydro power to New York while keeping "their" workers in line. The summer of 1990 saw nationalist reaction in Quebec whipped up in mob violence against Mohawk Indians at Oka and Châteauguay. This year pogromist gangs in Montreal's impoverished French-speaking East End attacked black African refugees with baseball bats, rocks and beer bottles, driving them from their homes.

The wave of Canada-wide strikes began to break down the national and racial divisions fostered by the bosses, showing that militant labor struggle can unite workers and the oppressed against their common enemies. English Canadian, Québécois and immigrant workers stood shoulder to shoulder on mass pickets in Ottawa and its sister city of Hull across the river in Quebec. Tens of thousands of women, black and Asian PSAC members were among the best and most militant of the strikers.

Ballyhooing the so-called "death of Communism" abroad, the ruling class is trying to dig a grave for the unions at home. This fall's wave of labor strikes threatened to throw a wrench into their plans. But, just as the NDP social democrats and sellout union bureaucrats push anti-Communism abroad, and back imperialist slaughter like the Persian Gulf massacre of Iraq, so too they came to the rescue of their capi-

talist masters at home.

For the working class to run society requires forging a leadership that has the program and the determination to wage a *fight for power* in North America. That means ousting the pro-capitalist misleaders of labor and forging a new class-struggle leadership for all the oppressed: English-speaking, Québécois, immigrant—Canadian, American, Mexican. As the Trotskyist League of Canada wrote in its leaflet distributed to striking federal government and transit workers:

"Like any major, hard-fought labor battle, today's strikes are going straight up against the bosses' state with its strike-breaking governments, courts and cops. At bottom what is posed is the political question: which class shall rule, the capitalists or the workers? The problem isn't just Mulroney and his particular gang of fat cats—it's the whole, rotten capitalist system....

"We need to build a *revolutionary workers party*—one which unlike the NDP social democrats doesn't respect the 'property' values of the bourgeoisie. A party which says to all the exploited and oppressed: we make it, we build it, it ought to be ours, *so let's take it*. And when we control the wealth then we can start to undertake the socialist reorganization of this society." ■

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Traitors...

(continued from page 5)

have openly shown themselves for what they are: not Trotskyists but traitors to the October Revolution.

Painting Counterrevolution as "Victory"

Having lost the popular-frontist influence they assiduously cultivated during the "antiwar" movement of the late '60s and early '70s, the American SWP's eclectic brand of reformism has grown increasingly bizarre over the years. The same issue of the *Militant* which hailed Yeltsin's counter-coup also announced that "World capitalism has suffered a historic defeat in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union," and carried a talk by Barnes under the heading, "Why U.S. Imperialism Lost the Cold War"! One has to ask, what planet do these people live on? The Barnesites simultaneously proclaim themselves to be North America's "Fidelistas" while pushing those forces in the Soviet Union who are out to strangle the Cuban Revolution as a favor to Washington.

Even as it unabashedly and uncritically reported how Yeltsinite mobs were tearing down statues of Lenin and Feliks Dzerzhinsky, the *Militant* (13 September) tried to paint it as some sort of proletarian uprising: "Key to the defeat of the August 19 coup was the action of tens of thousands of workers in Moscow, Leningrad, and elsewhere who defied the government's tanks, defended the democratic rights they had won in recent years, and in the process widened the space to advance their interests through demonstrations, debates, and political organization." The FIT likewise praised the "Soviet masses" for stopping the coup, and Socialist Action transformed the anti-Communist mobs of pro-capitalist yuppies into a "popular uprising" (see "Who Was on Yeltsin's Barricades," page 5).

In justifying their support to Solidarność counterrevolution a decade ago, the line of these outfits was that "ten million Polish workers can't be wrong." Today Solidarność in power is subjecting its former working-class base to vicious capitalist austerity. Even when the mass of workers is temporarily deluded into supporting counterrevolutionary forces, it is necessary for the communist vanguard to swim against the stream and defend the historic interests of the international proletariat as a whole. Moreover, in this case it's utter sophistry to claim that revolutionary-minded workers flocked to Yeltsin's



Spartacists opposed Solidarność counterrevolution in September 1981 NYC picket.

counterrevolution. If anything, the overwhelming mass of Soviet workers—despite political confusion, cynicism and illusions in Western-style capitalist "prosperity"—exhibited far more class consciousness by refusing to heed Yeltsin's appeals than these cynical liars.

Indeed, the U.S. Sec's *Inprecor* (29 August) not only acknowledged the lack of working-class support for Yeltsin's counterrevolution, but chided the Soviet workers for their absence:

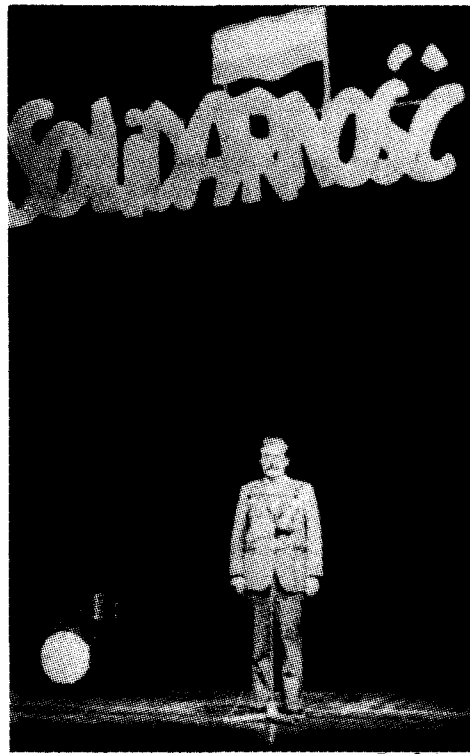
"The next months will see the accelerated introduction of market reforms. The fact that the power play was defeated without the mobilization of the workers certainly strengthens Yeltsin's and the liberals' autonomy on this level; for the moment, they are less dependent on workers and popular support, and they will soon have their own repressive forces and their own loyal bureaucracies."

So the Soviet workers should have backed the rabidly restorationist Yeltsin in order that he would less readily attack them! This takes the meaning ofchutzpah to new heights! Did the Polish workers' earlier support for Walesa, which the U.S. Sec so fulsomely enthused over, hamstring the "shock treatment" of capitalist austerity he is now meting out?

Mandel & Co. have no more in common with Bolshevism and its Trotskyist continuity than did Stalin and his heirs with Leninism. Neither rooted in the working class for a prolonged period nor anchored to a revolutionary program, when buffeted by Reagan's Cold War drive they were pushed ever more into the arms of anti-Soviet social democracy, whose hallmark since 1917 has been hostility to the October Revolution. They joined the imperialist hue and cry over the 1979 Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and cheered Solidarność bid for counterrevolution in Poland two years later. They hailed anti-Communist

nationalist mass murderers who collaborated with the Nazi genocide of the Jews, like the Croatian Ustashi and Estonian Forest Brothers.

These handmaidens of social democracy have become full-blown social democrats themselves. Thronging to the counterrevolutionary barricades outside Yeltsin's White House, they have offered



Der Spiegel

capitalist market economy, though more gradually and under centralized control. But the bureaucracy has now utterly collapsed. And, in any case, Yeltsin had already broken from it to become the spokesman for the incipient bourgeoisie—the "yuppsies," black marketeers and a political spectrum ranging from would-be Western "democrats" to the fascists of Pamyat.

But the bottom line for these Stalinophobic proponents of counterrevolution, as it has been since the time of Karl Kautsky's diatribes against the October Revolution, is to back capitalist "democracy" against the dictatorship of the proletariat, whether under Lenin and Trotsky or disastrously deformed by Stalinism. Socialist Action leader Jeff Mackler declared in an August 28 Bay Area radio interview: "The essence of socialist politics is democracy." That was the "essence" of Kautsky's attack on the dictatorship of the proletariat under Lenin and Trotsky. As Lenin replied in *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (1918): "It is natural for a liberal to speak of 'democracy' in general; but a Marxist will never forget to ask: 'for what class?'" Mackler



Social-democratic traitors to Trotskyism proclaimed "Solidarity with Solidarity," adopting Polish Solidarność logo to identify with Walesa's clerical-nationalist anti-Communist movement.

themselves up as foot soldiers in Bush's "New World Order." Not even a pretense of Trotskyism is left to any of them.

Capitalist "Democracy" vs. the Workers State

Insofar as these cheerleaders for counterrevolution in the Soviet Union attempt to provide any kind of "theoretical" fig leaf, it is that the Stalinist bureaucracy is the chief, indeed the only, instrument for counterrevolution. The view, summed up in the phrase "Stalinism is counterrevolutionary through and through," has historically been used to justify de facto abandonment of the Trotskyist position of defense of the Soviet Union. Today it is being used to justify support to the counterrevolution. Thus, trying to buttress its outlandish claim that the victory of the Yeltsinites was a defeat for imperialism, *Socialist Action* (September 1991) claims that with the botched coup by the "gang of eight": "It will be extremely difficult now for the bureaucracy and its allies to organize a new, effective, instrument to carry through the restoration of capitalism."

In the first place, as Trotsky pointed out time and again, the bureaucracy was not a homogenous class but a brittle, contradictory layer resting atop proletarian property forms, from which it derived its privileged position, and potentially including both restorationist and revolutionary elements. In the absence of a proletarian challenge and under sharp pressure from imperialism, it was the restorationist wing of the Stalinist bureaucracy which blossomed under Gorbachev. The coup plotters were themselves committed to introducing a

apparently knows what class he is working for—the bourgeoisie. In the radio interview he flatly declared, "I agree with the bans on the Communist Party." So does the SWP. Shades of McCarthyism!

In Britain, the Workers Power group, subject to the hegemonic influence of Neil Kinnock's Labour Party, offers a crystallized expression of bourgeois "democratic" counterrevolution. *Workers Power* (September 1991) scarcely attempts to prettify the Yeltsinite forces, and even offers a candid eyewitness account of the social dregs that manned Yeltsin's barricades. Nevertheless it adamantly insists:

"No matter what the socially counter-revolutionary nature of Yeltsin's programme, no matter how many spivs and racketeers joined the barricades to defend the Russian parliament, it would be revolutionary suicide to back the coup-mongers and support the crushing of democratic rights.... "It is far better that the fledgling workers' organisations of the USSR learn to swim against the stream of bureaucratic restorationism than be huddled in the 'breathing space' of the prison cells."

Better to be subjected to capitalist exploitation, to hunger and homelessness, to brutal oppression of women and Great Russian chauvinist pogroms, says Workers Power, than for the Stalinist degenerated workers state to survive a day longer. Of course, the "workers organizations" they have in mind are those led by fascist-connected pro-capitalist "free trade unionists" like the notorious Yuri Butchenko whom Workers Power toured through Britain last year.

WP not only put themselves in Yeltsin's camp, they attack him for not

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Sam Marcy: Last Hurrah for Stalinism

While a slew of social-democratic slimeballs jumped aboard the bandwagon of capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, Sam Marcy's Workers World Party (WWP) declared: "Say No to Yeltsin-Big Business Takeover of the USSR" (*Workers World* Special Edition, 31 August). Of course, two years ago Marcy's WWP also hailed the "market socialist" Peking bureaucracy's Tiananmen Square massacre, which drowned an incipient workers political revolution in blood. With even the Communist Party's old war-horse Gus Hall (who, like Marcy, also vacations in Pyongyang) under siege by a Gorbachevite majority in his ranks, the Marcyites are a lonely holdout among the U.S. left, still clinging to their anachronistic niche as sycophants for the few Stalinist bureaucracies left.

With the fate of the homeland of the October Revolution at stake, Marcy's WWP placed all its hopes in the "gang of eight" enfeebled former Gorbachev lieutenants to "bring a halt to counter-revolution." A 21 August statement on the coup said they were "withholding full comment on the program and methods" of the coup leaders. Thus WWP ducked the fact that these supposedly stalwart fighters against counterrevolution promised to continue pro-capitalist "reforms" and to uphold every one of Gorbachev's capitulations to U.S. imperialism. But Marcy, having consulted his "historical materialist" Ouija board, proclaimed that such promises were just a clever ruse to fool the imperialists: "The fact of the matter is that the Emergency Committee was attempting to return to the course of socialist construction" (*Workers World*, 5 September).

WWP eventually chided Yanayev & Co. for believing that they could reassure the imperialists with their promises. But



Sam Marcy (center) rubs elbows with Stalinist "Great Leader" Kim Il Sung (second from right) on 1990 visit to North Korea.

the Marcyites' real beef was the ludicrous charge that they were "Blanquists" for failing to "mobilize the masses on a socialist basis." Louis-Auguste Blanqui was a French utopian communist, whose voluntarist theories denied the need to organize the working class to seize power, and thus led to adventurist acts. Marx considered Blanqui a great revolutionary, and Blanquists were among the leaders of the 1871 Paris Commune, the first workers insurrection, where, as Lenin said, they fought bravely and "acted contrary to their doctrines." But Marcy's hoped-for saviors of the Russian Revolution *opposed* any working-class mobilization and didn't mention the word socialism. Blanqui was a rebel who wanted to turn the world upside down; the "gang of eight" were a section of the old, bankrupt bureaucratic ruling caste that has led the USSR straight to disaster. "Blanquists"?—the bumbling bureaucrats who attempted the half-hearted coup were more like the AFL-CIO tops trying to organize a strike!

For the Marcyites, "defense" of the workers states equals defense of the "hardline" bureaucrats (wherever any can still be found). But after the botched coup, it is clearer than ever before that there can be no going backward to the bad old days of Stalin when repression was the "answer" to every threat from any direction. In the wake of the Yeltsinite counterrevolution, the only defense of socialized property in the USSR lies in the hands of the Soviet working class.

Since breaking with Trotskyism by supporting the Kremlin bureaucracy's crushing of the 1956 Hungarian workers political revolution, the Marcyites have hailed the Stalinist bureaucracies as the vanguard in a "global class war," even as the Stalinists sought to appease and accommodate imperialism. Like them, the Marcyites place all their hopes in pressuring the imperialists into "peaceful coexistence." Where we organized an urgent demonstration of solidarity with Cuba under the banner of "Soviet Pull-out: Set-Up for U.S. Attack! Defend

Cuba!"—which the Marcyites chose not to attend—WWP initiated a "coalition" including various pro-Yeltsin outfits for a September 18 rally at the UN to plead with that U.S.-dominated "den of thieves" to "break the U.S. blockade against Cuba." Fat chance.

Moreover, when we appeared at the UN demo with our "Defend Cuba!" banner and signs proclaiming "Cuba in Peril—High Time for Socialist Democracy!" the Marcyites started muttering "CIA." Workers democracy is no less anathema to the Marcy cult than it is to the Stalinists they tail. And for the same reason: it stands in the way of their chasing after "progressive" capitalists. At El Salvador solidarity demos in Washington in the early '80s, the Marcyites gooned for the Democratic Party to exclude our banners for "Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftists!" In defense of workers democracy we took down their exclusionary "daisy chain." For all their repulsive enthusing over the Tiananmen Square massacre and North Korean "Great Leader" Kim Il Sung's *juche* ("self-reliance"), the Marcyites' real home is in the Democratic Party of U.S. imperialism.

For these last defenders of Stalinism, pushing "unity" with Democrats like Jesse Jackson and sucking up to the virulently chauvinist trade union bureaucracy has always come first. WWP's "United Labor Action" was an official endorser of "Solidarity Day II" in Washington, as the "AFL-CIA" leadership celebrated Yeltsin's counterrevolution and anti-Communist "free trade unions." With their Stalinist heroes rapidly "market reforming" themselves out of existence and the Democrats dead in the water for '92, the Marcyites might well be facing their own last hurrah. ■

being anti-Communist enough. WP concedes, "The measures to deprive the Stalinists of all the levers of economic and political power are an essential stage, a prerequisite to turn to the next stage—the task of rapidly dismantling the instruments of central planning." But they "put no trust in Yeltsin...to carry out the destruction of the Stalinist dictatorship." No, they call for a *workers' witchhunt*, for "workers' action to drive out the party and KGB spies in the workplace." And Workers Power's German affiliate, the Arbeitermacht group, calls (unnecessarily) for the SPD—bloodhounds for the butchers of Luxemburg and Liebknecht, and architects of the German bourgeoisie's *Ostpolitik* aimed at subverting and smashing the Soviet Union—to organize demonstrations to support the Russian counterrevolution.

For a Fourth International Trotsky Would Call His Own!

One self-styled Trotskyist grouplet that tried to maintain the usual centrist posture—one foot in the camp of counterrevolution and another in the camp of revolution—was the British Revolutionary Internationalist League (affiliated to Peter Sollenberger's fragmented Revolutionary Workers League in the U.S.). The *Revolutionary Internationalist* (11 September) carried an article headlined, "Defend Collectivised Property! Build Workers' Councils in the USSR!" The RIL acknowledged that in the wake of the botched coup, "All the forces pushing for capitalist restoration have been enormously strengthened." Yet, echoing Workers Power, they attack our call on Moscow workers to clean out the counterrevolutionary rabble outside the Russian parliament. They add:

"For Trotskyists there should have been no more talk of critical support for, or for united fronts with the Yeltsinites than with the coup leaders. Where strikes occurred in response to Yeltsin's

initial (never-repeated) call, Trotskyists should have participated, but fighting to turn them against both wings of the bureaucracy."

The RIL wants to "fight" capitalist restoration but doesn't want the workers to crush the shock troops of restoration. They oppose a "united front" with Yeltsin, but call on Soviet workers to observe Yeltsin's strike call—with the ludicrous aim of turning it against Yeltsin! They claim to oppose "Yeltsin and the restorationist wing of the bureaucracy," but attack the Spartacists for opposing *Solidarność* counterrevolution in Poland.

The "gang of eight" was incapable of sweeping away Yeltsin in its pathetic excuse for a putsch because, as we wrote, it was a "perestroika coup." But both imperialism and the forces of internal counterrevolution were aligned on Yeltsin's side. The coup plotters were not only irresolute but didn't want to unleash the forces that could have defeated the more extreme counterrevolutionaries, for that could have led to a civil war if the Yeltsinites really fought back. And in an armed struggle pitting outright restorationists against recalcitrant elements of the bureaucracy, defense of the collectivized economy would have been placed on the agenda whatever the Stalinists' intentions. Trotskyists would have entered a military bloc with "the Thermidorian section of the bureaucracy against open attack by capitalist counter-revolution," as Trotsky postulated in the 1938 Transitional Program. This precisely was our policy toward Jaruzelski in 1981. But the RIL, beholden to social-democratic "anti-Stalinism," can't stomach being in a bloc with Stalinists even in defense of a workers state.

Leon Trotsky went to his death—at the hands of a Stalinist assassin—an intransigent defender of the Soviet workers state. His last political struggle was waged over this question, against

the Soviet-defeatist Burnham/Shachtman opposition in 1939-40 in the then-Trotskyist American SWP. As Trotsky wrote in his April 1940 "Letter to the Workers of the USSR" so eloquently: "Those who are incapable of defending conquests already gained can never fight for new ones." Should the homeland of October succumb to the counterrevolutionary tide, workers around the world will pay for it in blood for years to come. The need has never been more urgent for reorganizing a Fourth International that Trotsky would have recognized as his own. Defeat Yeltsin/Gorbachev counter-revolution! For a Trotskyist party in the Soviet Union, built in the struggle to reforge the Fourth International! ■

Barricades...

(continued from page 5)

in other parts of the USSR, in Moscow at least the working class played little part in the resistance to the coup."

—Workers Power, September 1991

The observer goes on to describe how leaflets, posted by Boris Kagarlit'sky's pro-capitalist "Socialist Party" and the Green Party, which opposed the coup "but also criticised Yeltsin...were immediately ripped down by the Yeltsinites. This indicates the tensions within the anti-coup camp and the anti-democratic character of many of Yeltsin's supporters." It sure does!

Workers Power were not the only "leftists" to shamefacedly admit that the Yeltsin barricades were manned by utterly reactionary elements. A member of the Green Party interviewed by the United Secretariat's *Inprecor* (29 August) added:

"During the power play, the mobilization was not very significant, and the people had extremely divergent views. The majority of the population seemed relatively indifferent. In Moscow no factory

went on strike. There were miners strikes in the provinces, but they were not really massive. There were very few workers in front of the 'White House,' the Russian Parliament, during the construction of the barricades. The great majority of those who participated in these actions were youth and members of Democratic Russia, etc.; but some leftist militants also participated....

"We distributed and pasted up our leaflets on the barricades, but the reception was generally rather negative because most of the activists were partisans of Yeltsin."

This did not deter the USec from standing with Yeltsin.

Another "socialist" outfit to join the barricades for counterrevolution outside Yeltsin's headquarters was the Moscow Socialist Workers Union, affiliated to Cliff Slaughter's Workers Revolutionary Party in Britain. Alexei Gusev, a spokesman for the group, described how "people were surprised to see a red flag" at the barricades. And while claiming, "The working class took part in the resistance; they were the real fighters in front of the White House," Gusev admits "the working class as an organized force...remained passive," and adds, "At a factory where we distributed leaflets some workers told us they didn't want to follow Yeltsin decrees" (*Workers Press*, 31 August).

If Gusev's "red flag" and leaflets were not ripped up as well by the Yeltsinites at the "White House," it is perhaps because these "reds" not only supported Yeltsin's counterrevolution but, in the words of WP's observer, "refused to carry any slogans or any positions in defence of planning against Yeltsin."

In their own words, these "leftist" apologists for capitalist counterrevolution confirm the urgency of our call on Moscow workers to sweep away the "counterrevolutionary rabble" manning Yeltsin's barricades, including the handful of latter-day Mensheviks like Workers Power and the WRP. ■

Cuba...

(continued from page 1)

a Soviet military response in case of Yankee invasion.

Denouncing Gorbachev's stab in the back, on September 13 the Spartacist League held an urgent solidarity demonstration to "Defend Cuba!" outside Cuba's mission to the UN in New York. Spartacist supporters carried placards demanding "U.S. Killer Cops off the World, Keep Your Bloody Hands Off Cuba!" "U.S. Out of Guantánamo!" "Vietnam Was a Victory—Two, Three, Many Defeats for U.S. Imperialism!" and "Cuba in Peril—High Time for Socialist Democracy." The Trotskyist SL has from the outset ardently defended Cuba against imperialism, fighting for international workers revolution: other placards carried at the demonstration read, "Stalin's 'Socialism in One Country' Undermines Defense of All Workers States" and "For Socialist Revolution Throughout the Americas!"

"The American ruling class and its depraved *gusano* henchmen want to bring back gangster-ridden capitalism to Havana," said a Spartacist spokesman, adding: "The revolution lifted the Cuban

with Cuba, yet most of these reformists just lined up with Yeltsin's countercoup in Moscow, which set the stage for the Soviet abandonment of Cuba!

For over 30 years, Washington has tried to roll back the Cuban Revolution—through invasion, assassination, and a decades-long economic blockade intended to starve the Cuban people into submission. On the heels of its invasion of Panama and the hideous slaughter of the Iraqi people, the U.S. is out to impose its "New World Order" on Cuba, 90 miles off the coast of Florida. While U.S. rulers from Democrat Kennedy to Republican Bush have railed against Havana "exporting revolution," in reality the Castro regime, following the Stalinist line of building "socialism in one country," counseled the Chilean and Nicaraguan masses not to embark on the road of a "second Cuba." But all attempts to appease vindictive U.S. imperialism are doomed to failure.

With each Soviet capitulation to imperialist blackmail, from rollback in East Europe to support for the Persian Gulf slaughter, the imperialists up their demands. U.S. rulers are still smarting over their Bay of Pigs fiasco, in April 1961, when Cuban workers militias mobilized to crush Kennedy's CIA invasion. Coun-



Leifer/Time

Members of Cuban militia in Havana.

era in a hemisphere held in debt bondage to the imperialist banks—this is the "democracy" that godfather Bush praises.

Cuba's "Zero Option"

While the size of the soon-to-go Soviet brigade is small compared to the battle-hardened Cuban armed forces of almost 200,000, and almost that many again in the reserve Territorial Militias, their "symbolic" value was that if the United States invaded the island, they would have to kill Soviet soldiers. When Khrushchev provided Cuba with substantial military aid in 1962 to combat CIA-sponsored guerrillas in the Escambray mountains and placed Soviet nuclear weapons and bombers on Cuban soil, the U.S. imposed a naval blockade on the island and threatened to seize Soviet ships. Khrushchev backed down and removed the missiles, but the brigade stayed and the USSR sent substantial economic and military aid to Cuba.

Up to now over three-quarters of Cuba's imports (including most of its oil) have come from the Soviet Union. While CIA estimates of a \$5 billion annual Soviet "subsidy" are surely exaggerated, the combined effect of guaranteed Soviet-bloc purchases of Cuba's sugar crop at 40 cents a pound (while the "free market" price hovered around 8 cents), and stable oil supplies at well below world market prices (one-third the OPEC price per barrel in the late 1970s), set the basis for economic planning and development providing the Cuban working people with a higher standard of living and social services far superior to those available to working people elsewhere in Latin America.

But Soviet oil prices were raised during the '80s, and then last year deliveries to Cuba were sharply cut back while the price paid by Moscow for Cuban sugar was lowered to 25 cents a pound (the same as paid by the U.S. and the European Common Market to their suppliers under quota agreements). This summer—at the G-7 summit in London in July and at the Bush-Gorbachev summit in Moscow—the U.S. insistently demanded the Soviets abandon Cuba as the price for a few dollars in aid (i.e., capitalist penetration of the Soviet Union). When Gorbachev finally came across, even the *New York Times* (12 September) called his action "groveling." Now Russian threats to impose world market prices on Cuban exports and to require that Cuba pay hard currency for imports spell disaster.

In response to the growing isolation of Cuba, Castro has been digging in his heels. For the past 18 months Cuba has been shifting production and consumption patterns to adjust for reduced imports. Termed a "special period in peacetime," it is preparation to resist all-out economic war: bicycles instead of bus and taxi transport, oxen instead of tractors to pull plows and carts. There have been drills to rehearse a "zero option," with drastic electricity cuts anticipating a cutoff of all oil imports.

As a result of the collapse of the Soviet bloc, Cuba is scrambling to find ways to earn hard currency and to import

needed machinery, spare parts, medicines and oil. In the last few years, Cuba has been trying to turn away from its almost singular reliance on sugar exports by developing a tourist industry as a necessary evil to obtain crucial hard currency. (One result is "tourism apartheid," with the socially destabilizing effects of a dollar economy on the impoverished island, and revived prostitution.) Cuba is also utilizing its advanced medical services to export high-tech medical equipment and vaccines. A nuclear power system being built with the help of a thousand Soviet technicians was scheduled to come on line in early 1993, providing 30 percent of current energy needs, but its fate is now uncertain.

For Socialist Revolution Throughout the Americas!

In response to Gorbachev's pullout announcement, the Cuban Communist Party daily *Granma* (14 September) published a front-page editorial complaining of Moscow's unilateral "fait accompli":

"It fills us with dismay and indignation to think that we are moving towards a world order in which small Third World countries, such as Cuba, whose social systems are not to the liking of the United States, will be forced either to submit or be obliterated...a new age of barbarism, built upon the technological supremacy and the lust for world domination of the United States."

While vainly seeking to link withdrawal of the Soviet brigade with closure of the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo in eastern Cuba, and saying that "Cuba is willing to contribute to finding negotiated political settlements to regional conflicts"—as in Angola, where Cuban troops have been withdrawn after 15 years of fighting the South African apartheid army—the statement vowed: "Cuba will never agree to be handed over or sold to the United States. It will never return to slavery, and will struggle to the death to resist this."

But as the Castro regime batters down the hatches, it has taken on a real bunker mentality. Symbolic of a tightening of bureaucratic control was the 1989 prosecution and judicial murder of General Arnaldo Ochoa and his associates on charges of drug trafficking in a televised kangaroo court comparable to the infamous Moscow Trials of the 1930s (see "Stalinist Show Trial in Cuba: The Execution of General Ochoa," WV No. 500, 20 April 1990). This farce enormously damaged revolutionary morale, grievously undermining the defense of Cuba.

Compared to most Stalinist regimes, Castro's Cuba, directly under Yankee guns, has sought to counter imperialist pressure on it by supporting guerrilla struggles, sending doctors and teachers to Sandinista Nicaragua, etc. In addition to the more than 400,000 Cuban men and women who fought and taught in Angola, ten times that number reportedly volunteered to go. As a result, internationalist appeals have a real resonance in Cuba. But Castro's various international efforts (some of them not so savory, like his support to the bloody Mengistu regime in Ethiopia) have always been subordinated to a strategy of seeking "peaceful coexistence" with



Staff/Picture Group

Castro and Gorbachev in Havana, 1989.

working people from the degradation, racism and grinding poverty they suffered under the Batista dictatorship, the U.S. sugar barons and the Mafia syndicate. Today the Cuban population has medical care and education superior to that in U.S. cities. If the capitalist bloodsuckers return, all that the Cuban people have built in the last three decades will be wiped out. It is our duty, the duty of all opponents of Yankee imperialism, to make clear their stand in solidarity with Cuba in this crucial hour."

In contrast, a host of self-proclaimed socialists claim to stand in solidarity

terrevolution against Cuba is a pathological obsession of U.S. imperialism, which views the Caribbean, indeed all of Latin America, as its "backyard."

In the wake of Gorbachev's announcement, Bush's ranting threats against Fidel Castro have come almost daily. At the United Nations the U.S. president declared Cuba the "lone holdout in an otherwise democratic hemisphere." Salvadoran death squads, Nicaraguan contras on the loose, butcher Pinochet still running the Chilean army, while millions of Latin American children starve and hundreds of thousands suffer from chol-

ceed in silencing the Trotskyists 50 years ago and we're not about to stop now!" Anpilov became even more purple and stormed off when he saw our signs denouncing Great Russian chauvinism and anti-Semitism.

The question of nationalism and anti-Semitism was a key divide. It made people around us choose hard, and demonstrated the difference between our politics and all the old crap of the "patriots."

After the rally ended, there was a procession to lay flowers at Lenin's tomb. It must be noted this had something of a religious quality, itself a legacy of Stalinist conciliation, with a hushed, eerie atmosphere, and one woman genuflecting at the tomb. Some people couldn't contain themselves and started speeches right at the steps of the tomb, denouncing Gorbachev's treachery.

After a concluding moment of silence, the crowd joined together in singing the *Internationale*. Out of the silence of Red Square mingled the Russian, English and German voices of the demonstrators, fists went up with the final refrain. An older woman heard an American comrade singing in English and was so touched that comrades from abroad had come to defend Lenin that she kissed her. The Russians didn't want this rally to end—they went through all three verses of the *Internationale*. ■

Museum...

(continued from page 3)

fierce argument about just who was sabotaging defense of the Lenin Museum. We said we were proud that our party had a program for the defense of the Soviet Union. They finally gave up and moved away.

The front of the Lenin Museum for the next three hours was like a political bazaar with all of Moscow reviewing the demonstration. At the demonstration, we had to sharply rebuke some members of the Moscow "Unity" group, who claim to be socialists yet *still* want to conciliate Pamyat. We said, "Well, Pamyat are fascists, and it's the duty of any workers organization to smash them!"

The next attempt at exclusion came from some big hulk who presented himself as a leader of Unity and a rally organizer, demanding to know who invited us. One of our Soviet comrades had a good answer for him: "The fact that the Lenin Museum is in danger is all the invitation we need." Finally, Anpilov himself came up with a pack of rabid OFT types at his elbows. He demanded that our sign calling for the formation of a Trotskyist party must come down. After some back and forth, one of the comrades said, "Look, Stalin didn't suc-

imperialism and regional bourgeoisies.

The Cuban Revolution inspired a generation of radical youth throughout the Americas. Young New Leftists went to cut cane in Cuba on Venceremos Brigades. When Fidel Castro came to Harlem's Hotel Teresa in 1960, the black community came out to greet him. Robert F. Williams received refuge in Cuba when he was being sought for organizing armed self-defense of black people against racist terror in North Carolina. Former Black Panther Assata Shakur received political asylum in Cuba. But the Castro regime did not pursue an internationalist strategy of promoting revolution in the imperialist heartland.

Karl Marx pointed out a century and a half ago that unless communist society is extended internationally to the most advanced industrialized nations, an isolated workers state would be condemned to "want made general"—collectivized poverty. If the nationalist line of "socialism in one country" (a self-justification for the Stalin bureaucracy's attempt to protect its privileges by "renouncing" world revolution) brought the Soviet Union to bankruptcy, as Leon Trotsky warned it would, how much more absurd it is to think that Cuba can go it alone in building "socialism in one island" in the jaws of the imperialist monster.

Anti-imperialist rhetoric and hunkering down won't be enough to defend the Cuban deformed workers state from the Yankee onslaught—whether a tightened embargo, a naval blockade or invasion.

Spartacists at protest outside United Nations, September 18.



Today it is urgently necessary for all opponents of imperialism to mount an *international* defense of Cuba, through revolutionary struggle at home.

Workers Democracy to Defend Cuba

The Spartacist League from its inception as a tendency called for the defense of the Cuban deformed workers state while fighting for revolutionary workers democracy as opposed to the narrow bureaucratic rule of Castro's Stalinist regime. The first issue of *Spartacist* (February-March 1964) declared, "Defend the Cuban Revolution!" Even earlier, as the Revolutionary Tendency in the Socialist Workers Party, we fought

against the SWP leadership's praise of the Castro regime as "unconscious Trotskyists." The RT submitted a draft resolution to the SWP's 1963 convention noting Castro's suppression of the Cuban workers' and peasants' democratic rights, the imposition of Stalinist hacks on the labor movement and the proclamation of a one-party system, alongside the enormous social and economic accomplishments of the revolution:

"Thus Trotskyists are at once the most militant and unconditional defenders against imperialism of both the Cuban Revolution and of the deformed workers' state which has issued therefrom. But Trotskyists cannot give confidence and political support, however critical, to a governing regime hostile to the most elementary principles and practices of

workers' democracy, even if our tactical approach is not as toward a *hardened* bureaucratic caste."

After 30 years in power, the Stalinist bureaucracy has hardened greatly, as shown lately by the Ochoa affair. Proletarian political revolution is necessary to replace the narrow rule of the Castroite elite with a deepgoing workers democracy in defense of the revolution.

Millions of Cubans are rightly proud of their revolution and defiantly say "socialism or death." Castro does not stay in power through bloody repression, but as a young student working two weeks as a volunteer in the fields told *Time* magazine, "We need a change, but from inside our system. We need to talk about our mistakes and find solutions inside socialism." The reporter noted, "these aren't assembly-line thinkers; they genuinely care about the gains of the revolution."

Genuine workers democracy not only would mobilize the Cuban masses in defense of their revolutionary gains, but is a necessary prerequisite to effectively run a planned economy. The best defense of Cuba is workers revolutions from the U.S. to Mexico and throughout Central and South America. We seek to mobilize the workers movement against the imperialist economic blockade of Cuba, to demand that the U.S. get out of Guantánamo, to defend the Cuban Revolution. U.S. hands off Cuba! For Trotskyist parties to fight for socialist revolution throughout the Americas! ■

BT...

(continued from page 4)

BT leader Howard Keylor upholds the Stalinist lie that the Soviet-allied imperialists in World War II were fighting a "democratic" war against fascism. And BT heavy Fred Ferguson still supports the Soviet military suppression of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution! But the BT's genuflections before the Kremlin coup aren't serious, just a convenient way for them to drop the baggage of Soviet defensism.

In and of itself, the collapse of the Kremlin Stalinists does not signal that the Soviet degenerated workers state has been destroyed. With its position that the failure of the coup equals the victory of counterrevolution, the BT apes the Stalinists' lie which identifies the existence of the workers state with the continued rule of the parasitical, nationalist bureaucracy. Trotsky caught the methodological convergence between the ideology of the Stalinist bureaucracy and "Third Camp" anti-Sovietism in a polemic against Max Shachtman:

"Shachtman revises not only the present policy of the Fourth International but also the past. Since we are against Stalin we must therefore be against the USSR too. Stalin has long held this opinion. Shachtman has arrived at it only recently. From his rejection of the Kremlin's politics flows complete and indivisible defeatism."

—"From a Scratch to the Danger of Gangrene" (January 1940)

From the BT's cynical call for military support to the coup comes complete and indivisible defeatism over the capacity and will of the Soviet proletariat to be mobilized against counterrevolution.

The Hannah Arendt School of "Anti-Stalinism"

Another telling example of what the BT's reference to the "Stalinists' state" amounts to was in East Germany (the former DDR). There the ICL called for workers political revolution to quest the disintegrating Stalinist regime, for a "red Germany of workers councils," and then, as the imperialist drive to annex the East German deformed workers state escalated, we fought tooth and nail against capitalist reunification. We mobilized our tendency internationally following the mass protests which brought down the Honecker regime, circulating Trot-

skyist propaganda throughout the country calling for "No Sellout of the DDR—Workers and Soldiers Councils Now!" But in an article on "Robertsonites in Wonderland" in their paper *1917* (Third Quarter 1991), the BT pronounces our intervention a "disaster" which was predicated on our belief in an "imaginary political revolution" in the DDR.

For the BT, you see, once the Stalinist repressive apparatus fell apart in October 1989, it was nothing but counterrevolution on the march. For them there was no political revolution in the DDR and no possibility of one. In their recounting, the mass demonstrations in November and December of 1989 where the desire to fight for genuine communism was expressed in banners and slogans by members of the SED (the Stalinist party in East Germany) like "Return to Lenin!" "No Sellout of the DDR!" and "For Communist Ideals! No Privileges!" don't merit a mention. On the contrary, the BT's views were captured in an article entitled "A Glimpse Inside the 'Monolith'" (*1917*, Summer 1990), a sneering account of one BTer's visit to a branch of the SED which scoffs at "the appalling political level" and writes off the SED members as "chickens with their heads cut off."

One need look no further than the headline of this piece to find the echo of those "political theorists," exemplified by Hannah Arendt, who with the onset of Cold War I argued that Stalinist totalitarianism had reduced the workers of the Soviet bloc to mindless, soulless slaves who were forever incapable of struggle. Arendt and her ilk, as self-proclaimed "partisans" of workers struggle, took their place on the front lines for the imperialist "liberation" of the workers of these countries, particularly as expressed through the agency of Cold War social democracy. Here also we find perfect symmetry in the arguments of the BT, who revile our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD) for their "phobia regarding the social democracy."

The German BTs reviled the Spartakists' initiation of the 250,000-strong united-front demonstration that protested the fascist desecration of the Treptow Park memorial to Soviet soldiers who fell in battle liberating East Germany from Hitler's Nazis. Under the heading of the "SpAD's Debacle at Treptow," they condemn our inter-

vention as evidence of our supposed "capitulation" to the Stalinists of the SED/PDS. But what really rankled them was that we didn't issue "an invitation to the SDP/SPD to participate in the mass demonstration against the fascists."

The BT described such a call as "indispensable" to break workers in the DDR from their illusions in the Social Democrats. Leaving aside the fact that the SPD's "base" in the DDR extended little beyond some preachers and lawyers with little influence among the working class, the German Social Democrats were the "indispensable" tool for the imperialists' drive to annex the DDR. In the pro-capitalist demonstrations in Leipzig the SPD marched alongside skinheads under the banner of "Germany, One Fatherland." It was hard to tell the difference between the Social Democrats and the fascists as they all shouted "Reds out!" against counterdemonstrators.

Trotskyism vs. Anti-Sovietism

While they are eager to proclaim the victory of counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, the BT is appalled that we call Helmut Kohl's reunified Germany the "Fourth Reich." Despite the fact that Kohl's regime is the self-designated successor state to the Third Reich where virtually the entire state apparatus and the rest of the leading personnel of the ruling class was taken over through Konrad Adenauer's renazification program, the BT says that our use of the term the "Fourth Reich" is "hysterical" propaganda. We can assure the BT that the working class of East Germany and the neighboring countries to the east of Kohl's new Reich don't share their touching faith in the democratic credentials of German imperialism.

And what about their declarations of siding with the Kremlin coup leaders? The BT claimed to give "military support to the Soviets and their allies" against the CIA's *mujahedin* cutthroats in Afghanistan. After Gorbachev had treacherously withdrawn the Soviet troops, the Partisan Defense Committee offered "to organize an international brigade to fight to the death" on the side of social freedom in Afghanistan. Ridiculing this proposal as "bizarre" and a "cynical publicity stunt," the gutless wonders of the BT rejected fighting under the military discipline of Stalinists as "physically hazardous!"

The BT denounced us for saying that

the Soviet troops in East Germany stood as a bulwark against NATO imperialism. Disappearing the class divide between the Red Army and the Bundeswehr, they, like the Social Democrats, presented the Soviet armed forces in the DDR as an "occupation" army there to preserve the "continued rule of corrupt Stalinist parasites over the working class." As the U.S. imperialists made preparations for war in the Persian Gulf, the BT reviled us as "would-be deputies" of the Kremlin for our early call on the Soviet Union to rescind its arms embargo of Iraq. (This demand was raised in a 9 August 1990 letter addressed to the Soviet embassy, not to General Snetkov, as the BT has since proclaimed. A copy was sent to Snetkov, the commander of Soviet forces in East Germany. Seemingly a small point, but the BT's small lies are the foundation stones of their big lies, so we want to set the record straight.)

With the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the sellout of the DDR, the arms embargo against their former Iraqi clients, the efforts of the bankrupt Kremlin Stalinists to appease imperialism opened the door to the counterrevolutionary tide that is now sweeping the Soviet Union. In each instance the BT attacked us for concretely standing for the military defense of the gains of the October Revolution.

In the face of the imperialists' drive to destroy the DDR, the BT was horrified at our call to "Defend the gains of our workers state!" They wrote that the working people could never regard a deformed workers state as "theirs." This is completely antithetical to Trotsky's attitude. As he wrote in "The Soviet Economy in Danger" (October 1932):

"We accept the workers' state as it is and we assert, 'This is our state.' Despite its heritage of backwardness, despite starvation and sluggishness, despite the bureaucratic mistakes and even abominations, the workers of the entire world must defend tooth and nail their future socialist fatherland which this state represents."

Today we urgently seek to mobilize the Soviet proletariat and the working class internationally against the forces of capitalist counterrevolution that are assiduously dismantling every gain of the world's first workers state. The BT, which has other fish to fry in alien class milieus, offers its belated sympathies to the corpse of the Kremlin Stalinists and writes off the Soviet Union as a lost cause. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

NDP, Union Tops Knife Mass Labor Struggle

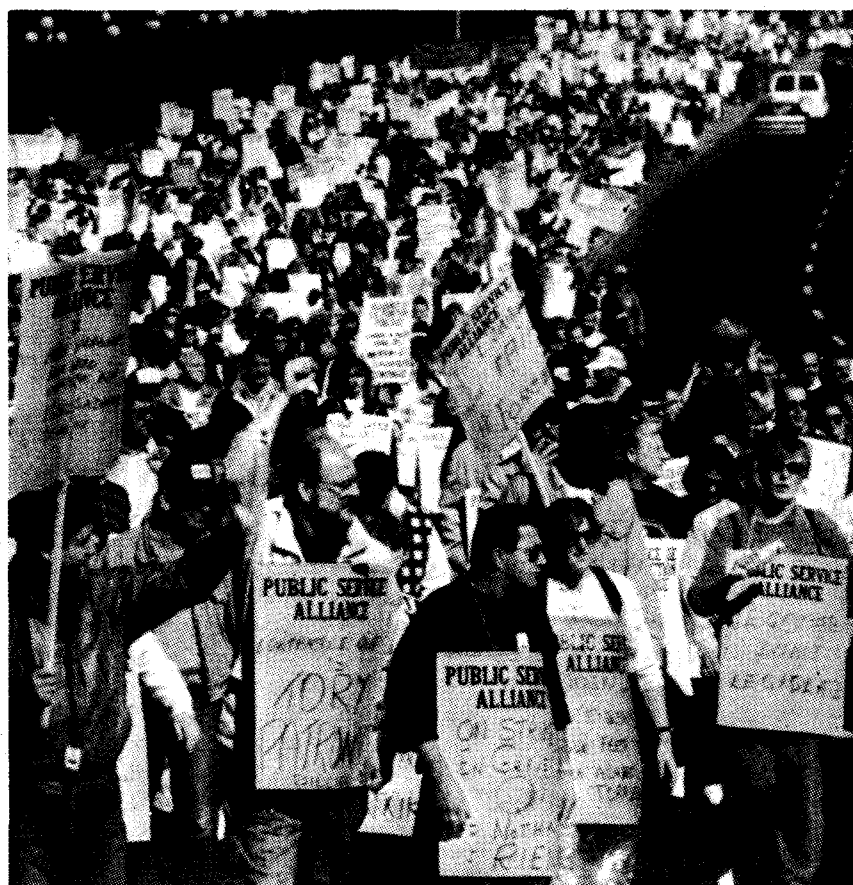
Strike Wave Rocks Canada

TORONTO—A wave of public-sector strike action swept across Canada in early September, bringing large sections of the economy to a halt and winning widespread solidarity among trade unionists and the general population. It was the largest public workers strike in Canada's history, a show of labor power which could have brought down the hated Conservative government of Brian Mulroney, with its wage freeze for public workers, double-digit unemployment and gouging taxation. But faced with this possibility the union tops and their allies in the New Democratic Party consciously knifed the militant labor action, sabotaging, isolating and finally scuttling the strikes.

It began at the end of August when members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), without a contract for more than two years, began a series of rotating walkouts. Militant pickets confronted scabs from Halifax to British Columbia, while the giant Montreal and Toronto locals defied national instructions to "rotate back" to work and stayed on the lines. Montreal CUPW sent out flying squads to shut down scab mail depots, stood down the cops with street barricades near the main downtown post office, and demanded an all-out cross-Canada strike and defiance of any government back-to-work legislation.

Scores of workers were fired or suspended, and many unionists, including the president of the Toronto local, remain fired. But on September 5 national union leaders ordered everyone to return to work, with nothing resolved, to await the deliberations of a government-appointed mediator. They did this in full knowledge that CUPW was about to be joined on the picket lines by tens of thousands of other workers coast to coast.

Four days later 110,000 federal government workers in the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), furious at



Tessier/Ponopresse

a Tory-imposed wage freeze, launched an unprecedented national strike. Building picket lines which grew more militant by the day, they tied up government operations throughout the country. Longshoremen, grain handlers, air traffic controllers and other unionists refused to cross the lines, leaving ships sitting empty in the Vancouver port, grain unloaded in Thunder Bay and flights canceled in and out of Toronto airport. Far from being hostile to the PSAC strikers, who were mostly white-collar office workers making \$25,000 a year or less, tens of thousands of people throughout Canada leaned on their horns in response to picket signs saying

"Honk If You Hate Mulroney."

Then on September 12, transit workers in Toronto hit the bricks, tying up the country's financial center with a strike that shut down the second-largest transit system in North America.

Less than a week after PSAC began its national strike, a worried Tory government introduced back-to-work legislation imposing their wage-freeze diktat and threatening the union with fines of \$100,000 a day for defiance. In response, 1,500 strikers staged a 5 a.m. mass picket of Toronto airport September 16. In Ottawa, 20,000 strikers and other unionists rallied in protest on Parliament Hill. "Down with Mulroney!" they chanted,



Spartacist Canada

Ottawa, September 16—20,000 strikers and union supporters rally on Parliament Hill, protesting Mulroney's attempt to impose wage freeze on public workers.

"Lyin' Brian's got to go!" PSAC president Daryl Bean spoke of defying the legislation and going to jail, "if that's what it takes" to beat the government attacks.

The Trotskyist League of Canada (section of the International Communist League) distributed a leaflet to thousands of strikers in Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver and elsewhere that day which pointed the way forward: "The only 'illegal' strike is one that loses—let's win this one. To do that all of labor must stand behind PSAC in defying the government's back-to-work order through co-ordinated strike action from coast to coast!"

But PSAC members were stabbed in the back by their own leaders, and above all by the NDP social democrats and the bureaucrats of the Canadian Labour Congress. For nine days workers threw Mulroney's threats back in his face. But the Tories didn't need legislation or troops—NDP House leader Nelson Riis and the backstabbing CLC tops shut down the strikes for them, all in the interest of capitalist "order"...and the election chances of the NDP, which expects to win provincial majorities in British Columbia and Saskatchewan this fall. PSAC leaders claimed a "major victory," as the government now says it will "negotiate." The members, many bitter and angry, went back.

Simultaneously, the Ontario provincial government, run by the same NDP, invoked Article 39 of the Labour Relations Act for the first time in history to force a new vote by Toronto transit strikers. Provincial premier Bob Rae threatened to use back-to-work legislation if the ranks voted "no" a second time. The *Toronto Star* noted that Rae was "stuck between a rock and a hard place" and

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Executioner's Ax Hangs Over Warren McCleskey

As we go to press on Tuesday, September 24, black prisoner Warren McCleskey is facing imminent execution in the electric chair, the victim of a vindictive racist vendetta by the state of Georgia. We reprint the urgent protest sent by the Partisan Defense Committee this morning:

We are writing to protest the scheduled execution of Warren McCleskey. The death penalty is barbaric and an outrage against justice and decency. We demand this "legal" murder not be carried out and his sentence be commuted. The U.S. Supreme Court has made

Warren McCleskey's name indelibly synonymous with the race and class bias inherent in the death penalty. The Court used his 1987 appeal to give its seal of approval to the death penalty's racist application. Just months ago that same Court maliciously denied a second habeas corpus petition which set forth newly discovered evidence. The Court used this latest decision to drastically limit the use of federal habeas corpus to challenge a state court conviction and death sentence, no matter how meritorious the challenge.

We insist the execution be halted and death sentence commuted.



Karas/Atlanta Journal and Constitution
Warren McCleskey has courageously fought the racist death penalty.