

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES. UNITE!

# The Workers' Advocate

## Supplement



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April 20, 1991

## Military and CIA recruiters, get out of the high schools

*From the March 24 issue of Chicago Workers Voice, paper of the MLP-Chicago. There was also another article against the war and articles against layoffs at Donna's meatpacking, Jim Edgar's state budget cuts for Illinois, and the USPS program of squeezing the postal workers.*

Military recruiters are doing poorly lately. This is no surprise. The Gulf War has shown the reality of the military. It is a war machine. It is an imperialist army. The military's lies of opportunity, of job training, of money for education, are vividly clashing with the reality of dying in a war for the greater greed and glory of U.S. imperialism.

The military is sending its recruiters to the Chicago high schools, such as to Benito Juarez. The recruiters claim they want to help the youth get ahead, but all they want are soldiers to fight for the profits of the oil companies and other capitalists. They want cannon-fodder to use to defend the rich U.S. imperialists from their rivals, to get rid of regimes that don't follow the U.S. baton, and to put down the just struggles of the toilers abroad and at home. When the little bully Hussein grabbed Kuwait, the big imperialist bully Bush sent 500,000 soldiers over to the Middle East to put his friend, the Emir of Kuwait, back in power, thus restoring U.S. domination over the Kuwaiti oil fields.

The history of U.S. imperialism is a history of war. Before the Middle East it was Panama, and before that, tiny little Grenada. And we will never forget Viet Nam where the U.S. carried out massive bombing targeting any building over one story high in North Viet Nam; where they carried out scorched earth tactics against the South Vietnamese people. Not to mention the ongoing role of the U.S. military against the popular movements in El Salvador and other Latin American countries.

CIA recruiters are even going to Benito Juarez. It looks like they can't find native Spanish-speaking and bilingual college students who are willing to do their dirty work and so they are turning to the high schools. It is the CIA that the U.S. government uses for its special secret dirty work, like overthrowing other governments, and secretly aiding repressive and fascist regimes. Assassination plots and coups by the CIA are too numerous to count. For example, there is the CIA role in the coup d'etat in Chile where the

democratically-elected government of Allende was overthrown and the fascist Pinochet put in power. The CIA trained the rightist death squads in El Salvador and other countries; it organized and backed the contras against Nicaragua; the CIA itself mined Nicaragua's harbors. Bush himself is a CIA man; he headed the CIA under President Ford.

During the war in the Middle East the government launched a whole patriotic propaganda campaign to try and line the working people up behind the war drive of the rich. This has been taken to the youth through the schools with yellow ribbon campaigns and write-to-a-soldier campaigns and so forth. The military recruiters are part of this pro-imperialist military campaign, whitewashing the U.S. military as defenders of peace and democracy, and lying about the great benefits for the youth in the military.

Why should the minority students at Benito Juarez, who are oppressed here in the U.S., sign up to fight and die for the U.S. in its wars abroad?

And when the Army is called out against the just rebellions of the people inside the U.S.--as the Army and National Guard were used against the rebellions of the Black people in the late '60's--or when troops are used against striking workers--such as the coal miners and the postal workers in the 1970's--the working class and minority youth in the military will be used to attack the poor in the service of the rich. The U.S. military machine defends the interests of the capitalist class at home and abroad. It is not an army acting in the interests of the workers and the

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oppressed minorities of the U.S. nor does it defend the workers and oppressed of other countries.

Many students at Benito Juarez are the children of immigrants. Their parents came to the U.S. in desperation because of the harsh conditions in their own countries caused by the domination of U.S. imperialism. Why should they sign up and join the military aiding in this oppression abroad?

On the contrary the military and CIA recruiters should be thrown out of the schools! And an anti-imperialist movement should be built up amongst the students. During the movement against the Viet Nam war in the 60's, students organized mass actions against recruiters, forcing them off of, and even banning from, many college campuses and some high schools. ROTC facilities and programs were attacked, and ROTC was discontinued at some

campuses for years. The fight against the lying military recruiters is part of the fight against imperialism and war.

### For education, not imperialism!

The city schools are a disaster, especially in the minority areas. Police roam the corridors. There is no decent education nor job training. The youth should not have to join the imperialist military or ROTC in the hopes of getting a decent and affordable education. Students need to build a movement to defend their interests and against the rich, their wars and their military. In fact it was the struggle of the Mexican community that led to bilingual education and Benito Juarez in the first place. Carry on the anti-imperialist traditions of the Mexican community! Our war is at home! □

## Sham militancy or real struggle

*The April 1 issue of the Workers' Advocate carried the article "Lessons from the anti-war movement/Militancy or no?" The following article was left out for lack of space.*

The war in the Persian Gulf raised the question of how to fight imperialism. Different activists and groups in the anti-war movement had different views on this.

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Most Trotskyist groups had their own version of anti-imperialism. They claimed it meant giving the slogan "defend Iraq" (Spartacist League) or "victory to Iraq" (RWL) or some variant. With these slogans, they meant "military support" for Saddam Hussein's regime, which is a brutal tyranny over the Iraqi toilers.

For these groups, there were only two sides: Bush and Saddam Hussein. Therefore, they held, to oppose Bush, you had to render "military support" to Saddam Hussein.

We, on the contrary, declared from the start that the only true anti-imperialism was to support the toiling masses in Iraq as well as the United States. We stressed opposition to U.S. imperialism, which is both "our own" exploiter and the leading world imperialist policeman. At the same time, we held that Saddam Hussein was a tyrant, and his invasion of Kuwait had nothing to do with anti-imperialism or the interests of the Iraqi people. There was nothing to choose in the squabble between the world bully Bush and the regional bully Hussein. Anti-imperialism required opposing the war machines and oppressive systems of both sides.

We opposed support for either Bush or Saddam, but instead stood for the development of the revolutionary movement in the U.S. as well as in Iraq and the Middle East.

The tragic war has verified that Saddam's anti-popular tyranny had nothing anti-imperialist in it. It was a thin reed to rely on, and a dishonorable stand for anyone claiming to be a friend of the toilers.

And the popular revolts against Hussein have verified that there was indeed a third force in this situation, the toiling masses. Whatever the immediate outcome of the revolts, it has been revealed even to the blind that the Iraqi people hate tyranny.

Furthermore, Bush and the Pentagon didn't welcome the popular revolts against Hussein. Instead they breathed

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# On the views of the Portuguese comrades on the tasks during the collapse of revisionism: Communism develops with the class struggle

The world is changing rapidly. From the collapse of revisionism to the changes in world imperialism, events are breaking up the old alignments, including those of the left-wing. It is a harsh period. But crises, no matter how painful, also have their revolutionary side. There is much in the left traditions of the past which has to be broken up and removed, one way or another.

On January 1, 1990 the *Workers' Advocate* published the editorial *Tasks of workers' communism during the collapse of revisionism*. It aimed to encourage revolutionaries around the world to seek communist answers to the problems of this era. It dealt both with the current problems of work among the masses, such as united front tactics, developing an open face for communism, maintaining contact with the masses even in a time of ebb, and building party organization, as well as the stand to the major world issues, such as the nature of revisionism, the theory of socialism, and the assessment of the world situation.

The Portuguese comrades of the OCPO (Communist Organization—Worker's Policy) have been working to resist the flood of opportunism and renegacy which has followed not just from the world collapse of revisionism, but also from the decline of the Portuguese movement since the revolutionary days of the mid-1970s. The OCPO translated and printed a not-always-accurate summary of *Tasks of workers' communism* in their journal, including the introductory remarks and fragments from the rest of it. Further, the OCPO took the occasion to set forward their own views on the present situation in their major article *Replying to American Communists* dated November 1990. It is good that the OCPO has elaborated its views, and one purpose of *Tasks of workers' communism* was to encourage such statements. So we reprinted *Replying to American Communists* in its entirety in the March 15 issue of the *Supplement*. We intend to discuss a number of the views they set forward, with this article being an introduction.

## What is a thorough break with the opportunism of the past?

A notable feature of OCPO's reply is that they feel that little in the editorial *Tasks of workers' communism* is worthy of consideration. They regard it as merely platitudes, and say that it is simply "an elementary enunciation of Marxist-Leninist principles". [1] Actually, however, they don't take our statements as elementary truths, but they disagree with them. They regard our views as a reflection of what is old and outdated.

Their statement emphasizes the need to create a bold, new departure. They believe that this will follow directly

from sweeping statements about Soviet history. *Replying to American Communists* sets forth the outlines of their approach, which aims to upset anything ready-made from the past. At every step, they justify their views by citing opposite statements from some figure of the past or some trend in the old movement.

Yet, when looked at a bit more closely, it turns out that many of their key declarations and views have not broken from the past at all. And often their assertions about a subject are not even consistent, but mainly express an attitude of despair about the decline of the revolutionary movement.

## Attitude to the collapse of the old regimes

The OCPO talks of breaking with the ready-made answers of the past. Yet the OCPO discusses the collapse of the revisionist regimes, all it can see is disaster. They don't seem to regard the replacement of bureaucratic state-capitalism by western-style capitalism as another step in the evolution of capitalism, but as something else, the final liquidation of some sort of socialist remnants. And they seem to ask, what will happen to the national liberation movement, without the possibility of support from the revisionist countries?

The OCPO concedes that the collapse of the revisionists

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regimes is clearing the way for the class struggle. But they apparently regard this as another pale platitude. They end up ambivalent towards the collapse of East European revisionism. And in their commentary after the events of spring 89, they were especially upset with the Chinese mass movement.

For years, when revolutionaries sought to build an anti-revisionist movement, they faced the objection that world capitalism will crush the mass struggles unless there is support from the revisionists. All too few were those who dared to stand up independently against both world revisionism and Western capital. More typical were those who might criticize revisionism, even severely, but who nevertheless regarded the revisionist regimes as somehow outside of world capitalism. Whatever OCPO's intention, *Replying to American Communists* combines the denunciation of the revisionist countries with shock about having to live in a world without them.

### **An intermediate stage between capitalism and socialism?**

The OCPO believes it has something new and important to say about the nature of the revisionist regimes. The OCPO accepts that these were state-capitalist regimes, but regards this as an old and tired-out view that fails to grasp what is really at stake.

Instead *Replying to American Communists* stresses that these regimes had features separate in some way from capitalism. True, the OCPO officially opposes and polemicalizes against the idea of something intermediate between capitalism and socialism. But their own descriptions of these regimes again and again suggests something intermediate. The OCPO sets forward that they had, over the decades, an "embryonic" system. [2] It oversimplifies their economic systems as one totally without "competition", while apparently regarding competition as the hallmark of capitalism. [3] It cannot see the imperialism of Soviet revisionism, except as embryonic, because of the relative economic weakness of the USSR, ignoring that Tsarist imperialism also had the same peculiarity.

The result is that the OCPO doesn't give a deeper analysis of bureaucratic state-capitalist economy, but repeats some of the old arguments put forward by those regarding it as an intermediate form.

### **Centrism**

The OCPO lays stress on its analysis of "centrism." In the past, OCPO's main criticism of our Party has been our supposed failure to break from centrism.

But what is centrism? At one point *Replying to American Communists* describes it as "look(ing) for an intermediate stage between bolshevism and revisionism". [4] But at other points they themselves describe that "the stalinist regime was placed in an intermediate position, which is distinct from the revolutionary years as well as from the revisionist

decay". (emphasis in the original) [5] This intermediate position was illustrated by the supposed policies of "intransigence towards the internal bourgeois forces, the defense of the USSR's economic and political independence, the interest in the international communist movement, the proclamation of an unswerving fidelity to socialism, to leninism and to the road of October". [6]

According to our research into the Soviet policies of the mid-30s, as well as of Stalin's post-World War II policies, this is simply a false description. The policies put forward trampled on Leninism and socialism in everything but name, developed the party into the bastion of the new bourgeoisie, acted crudely and cynically towards world communism, and so forth.

Moreover, does OCPO regard this centrism as revisionist or not? The OCPO article says "it is of no use to try to evaluate the stalinist regime according to the dilemma 'revolutionary or counterrevolutionary?', 'marxist or revisionist?', since it does not help us to understand its place in the total trajectory of the USSR." [7]

In fact, therefore, the OCPO's own analysis of centrism defines it as some type of intermediate form between communism and revisionism. As we have noted, *Replying to American Communists* evades saying that the centrist policies were revisionist or Marxist. And, for example, when it says the centrist policies expressed a "national bourgeois strategy", it strangely enough seems to regard this as another reason why one shouldn't talk of revisionism. [8] It says "it seems completely out of place to criticize this policy on the basis of proletarian internationalism" because "it was a bourgeois nationalist policy linked to reformist and pacifist mirages." [9]

This is a just confused jumble of views and not a bold new departure.

### **A new standpoint about strategy, tactics and method of work?**

The OCPO statement promises that its answers to Soviet history will provide the basis for "a new standpoint about problems such as the party and the revolution, strategy, tactics and style of work. Marxism cannot ever be what it was before, especially after this vast experience." (emphasis as in the original) [10]

But the article refuses to directly discuss any of the problems of method of work dealt with in *Tasks of workers communism*. When it does touch on these problems, it has little new to say.

Near the end of *Replying to American Communists* it suggests that too much attention to the problem of maintaining links with the masses would result in concessions to popularity and a degeneration towards reformism. [11] This is an old idea that reflects the inability to formulate the actual differences between reformist and communist participation in the struggle.

Another example is that the *Replying* states that "Undoubtedly, Trotsky and the other opposition members ...

rendered accurate criticism of the opportunism in external policy." [12] It also states that Trotsky and other opposition members shared "the same economic and social premises" as Stalin, but this presumably refers to their stand towards internal policy. We ourselves are still examining the debates of the time in the Soviet Union, but it is certainly not true that there was an "accurate" description of what external policy should be. Presumably, *Replying* means that Trotsky and the other opposition members were correct in pointing to the existence of opportunism in external policy, and is not referring to their detailed views of what world communist policy should be. But in any case it appears that *Replying* is not that concerned with the concrete tactical and political problems of the external policy of that time. Here and elsewhere *Replying to American Communists* doesn't really seem to see the need for new answers, or even detailed consideration, of questions of tactics and methods of work, but apparently holds that the real issues are more general and sweeping and shouldn't be reduced to such minor matters.

When it comes to the question of party structure and party life, *Replying to American Communists* criticizes the oppressive and dictatorial structure of the revisionist parties. And indeed the revisionist model was a new and different type party from that of communism, just as communism itself requires a new and different type of party from the social-democratic parties, even from social-democracy as it was back in the days when it was revolutionary. But *Replying* actually provides little but indignation at the tyranny of the revisionist parties. Irony about the revisionist model being new, about complete unity of action, and about the methods of dealing with opportunism does not go too far in providing new ideas to distinguish between the bureaucratic revisionist party of internal tyranny and the communist party of conscious struggle.

### Was there 'passionate revolutionary work' in the past?

The OCPO seems to believe that referring to the "revolutionary work of past" or admitting the existence of a past "revolutionary wave" means failing to break decisively with the wrong ideas of the past. *Replying* discusses the revolutionary wing of the upsurge of the 60s as "basically, a movement criticizing decaying state capitalism according to the values of ascending state capitalism". It talks of it as mainly an external extension of the views of China and Albania. [13]

But denying that there was a real revolutionary movement is not a radical departure from past opportunism. On the contrary, this denial actually undermines the criticism of the opportunism and revisionism that held back and misdirected the old struggles. If there was no revolutionary wave, then the failures and setbacks and disintegration of the old movement was mainly due to this lack of revolutionary content. Without a revolutionary content, without

activists passionately committed to change, without the class struggle having given rise to a new wave of activists, it wouldn't matter what views the movement had, it would have been bound to fail anyway.

In the U.S., as the criticism of revisionism progressed, there were always small groups that denied any value to the past movement on the ground of the theoretical advances gained so painfully. Every few years, these groups denounced everything, including themselves, as worthless trash in the past, and thought that this made them the vanguard of the future. It is painful to see the OCPO adhere to the same practice. And it also tends to create a jumpy atmosphere about theoretical purity in the present, for theoretical mistakes in the present would render the current movement as worthless as the past.

### Is it a break with the past to regard revolution as a platitude?

*Replying to American Communists* regards all references to the revolutionary developments underlying the present difficult conditions as useless optimism, a hiding of the problems of the present, and so forth. This goes so far that it is upset that *Tasks of workers communism*, while referring to the triumphant attitude of the bourgeoisie, also points to the bourgeoisie being a bit worried. [14] It doesn't matter that the bourgeois's own magazines and newspapers reflect this worry. The radical thing, in OCPO's eyes, is to wallow in how all-powerful the bourgeoisie is.

But communist work has to bring alive for the workers the abyss that capitalism is facing, and the progress of history towards revolution. This is also called socialist agitation. It is necessary not just in the days before a revolutionary upsurge, but in the long period of organizing the working class as an independent force during years of right-wing hegemony. In the Second International, there were those who saw revolutionary agitation as simply a religious catechism or a pale platitude. The left-wing considered this a revisionist betrayal of Marxism even though many parties faced long years and years of work before any prospect of deep crisis was apparent. If the underlying factors leading to revolutionary change aren't something alive and living for the communists, how will the communists ever imbue the working class with the desire to build a new society?

### On the methods of theoretical work

Much of *Replying to American Communists* might appear to be a defense of theory against immersion in practice. But on closer examination, the OCPO displays as much impatience with theory as with concern with maintaining contact with the masses.

In the name of avoiding "historical idealism" or considering profound objective factors, they seem to downplay the importance of theory. Again and again one finds *Replying to American Communists* pouring scorn on the idea that the

line of the movement could affect matters.

They are also impatient with our attempts to deal with the theory of socialism, to restudy Marx and Engels on socialism, or to study in detail the course of Soviet history. They are impatient with our slow and plodding approach, which involves the accumulation of a good deal of information, and the constant breaking down of broad generalities into many particular questions. They are even impatient with looking into whether Lenin's and Stalin's views differed on transitional measures to socialism. [15]

Instead the OCPO place their entire hopes on their present conclusions about Soviet history. They don't see the need for a detailed study of Soviet economy or politics or history. Instead they have made use of a method of brilliant guesses and generalizations about Soviet history. They accept as obvious various views about the Soviet Union given by various sources and search for a red interpretation to them. Sometimes they are right; sometimes in our view they are wrong; and sometimes they express cut-and-dried opinions on things which it will take us a good deal more time to answer ourselves one way or another. But they are actually not defending theoretical work so much as a set of answers, and they are impatient with our stress on the theoretical work itself.

### Contradictions

But the riddles of Soviet history can't be solved without deeper work. The method of inspired guesswork can jump ahead rapidly, but it ends up in an impasse. And the method of simply negating what some opportunist or other said lacks serious value. So OCPO's generalities often end up in simply insisting that everything had to take place exactly as it did take place. And sometimes they end up in contradictions which they haven't thought through.

For example, when they wish to show the error of other people's views about what went wrong in the Soviet Union, they say that even posing the question of what went wrong means trivializing the matter. Why, they say, it means replacing materialism by the consideration of the errors of leaders and is just historical idealism. They hold that no question of line could have affected the outcome of the situation in the Soviet Union, and they repeat this in a thousand ways.

Yet they end their statement with a list of issues to look into, such as: How to form a close-knit network of organs of class dictatorship in order to ensure that they will not be replaced by bureaucratic degeneration? How to ensure workers' control over the factories? How to combine the widest democracy with inflexible repression over the counter-revolution? [16] These are all important issues, but they are no more or no less questions of line than the issues which they disparaged earlier as idealism. In fact, often they are the same issues.

They say that the objective conditions doomed the socialist revolution in the Soviet Union, as it also doomed the prospects for socialism elsewhere in the revolutions

throughout this century. But they then also say that this has been the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism and imply that it is not necessary to judge what sort of revolution would be possible in each country, because the conditions should be judged on a world scale. [17]

They condemn what was done in the Soviet Union. But they say nothing else could have been. But what is the value of theory anyway, if it couldn't affect what happened? A revolution might be crushed by the class enemy or by foreign encirclement, that's true. But even if historical work proves that circumstances doomed the Soviet revolution, was it really inevitable that the communist party didn't recognize that the revolution had been defeated? Was it inevitable that the communists degenerate into new capitalist rulers? Even if a proper line couldn't prevent the doom of the revolution, couldn't it have led the communist party to stay among the masses and representing their class interests rather than becoming the party of the counter-revolution? To fail to see this is to close one's eyes to the extent of the historical tragedy.

Our differences with OCPO doesn't center on what year the revolution burned up, but on the method of approach. We ourselves are still examining the different periods of Soviet history and have not yet come to a conclusion about when the revolution came to an end. We shall undoubtedly take OCPO's views into consideration. But we believe that this historical study has to have a firm foundation. We also believe that the necessary communist theoretical work does not reduce itself to Soviet history. And we do not believe that the Communists of the world should divide among themselves based on their exact analysis of Soviet history.

### A common language and the translation of 'Tasks'

One of the difficulties with the OCPO's methods of theoretical work is that it makes it hard to achieve a common language between the communists of different lands. For example, the OCPO repeatedly treats our views simply as a reflection of what it calls the "marxist-leninist trend", by which it is referring to the old anti-revisionist movement that collapsed into Chinese or Albanian revisionism. It doesn't matter that our views are different from those groups, or even that we have been in bitter ideological conflict with these groups. The OCPO still thinks that refuting the views of these groups thus means refuting us. It is notable how often the OCPO, in a reply to us, deals with the views of others, views quite different from ours.

An example of this is the summary of *Tasks* in their journal. We thank them for the attention they have paid to *Tasks of Workers Communism*. But unfortunately the way they prepared their summary would make it hard for the summary's readers to compare the varying frameworks being set forward by OCPO and by *Tasks*.

The description in *Tasks* of issues such as united front work, the task of theoretical work, the need for an open

face of the party, etc. contained enough detail to take stands on some of the differences among the workers' communists on these issues. Although *Tasks* is not a long enough statement to do anything but speak briefly on these questions, it does raise these issues. The OCPO summary however tended to cut down the sections on these issues to just a few sentences expressing some generalities.

On the issue of theoretical questions related to the study of Soviet history, the OCPO's summary cuts out most of the reference to transitional measures. Yet the question of transitional measures is important to studying the differing frameworks in the study of Soviet history.

In a few places, the OCPO summary seems to have been mistaken. For example, in discussing the tasks of theory, it seems to have *Tasks* present the repudiation of the wrong line of the 7th Congress of the CI as part of the study of Soviet history. Actually, *Tasks* gives it as an example that "the theoretical tasks of the day are by no means restricted to the analysis of Soviet history. Many other issues of strategy and tactics of the revolution must be dealt with, from the nature of revolution in the oppressed countries to the question of united front tactics." Thus, on this point, the OCPO's summary appears to mistakenly attribute to *Tasks* the OCPO's view of the matter.

On the question of the origin of today's workers' communists, the summary has *Tasks* presenting it as springing pretty directly from the 60s and 70s and the anti-revisionist struggle of the time. In fact, *Tasks* says that the origin goes back "ultimately" to struggles against revisionism, and it gives the struggles during the upsurge of the 60s and 70s as an example, not the sole and direct point of origin.

These drawbacks in OCPO's translation were not intentional. But they seem to have something to do with OCPO's preference for broad generalities instead of a close study of the particular features of a situation. They were hasty to attribute our views to carryovers from the old movement and apparently, to some extent, overlooked the views themselves.

## The Journal

*Replying to American Communists* ends by asserting that developing a communist program is the most important thing for the proletariat's reorganization as an international revolutionary force. [18] They believe that this program "can unify once more all the exploited in the world and prepare them for a new assault on the capitalist fortress". [19] And their practical proposal is that an "international journal of communist propaganda would be a positive step" towards this program. [20]

OCPO doesn't clarify what type of journal is proposing, who it thinks would support this journal, or why the declaration of a journal would surmount the practical problems that affect international theoretical cooperation at this time. Nor is *Replying to American Communists* consistent when it declare that our theoretical articles are

precisely where we are resisting progress, and then put forward, as its immediate proposal, that we should be the major pillar of a new international journal dedicated, presumably, to theory.

We are in favor of international communist cooperation, both with respect to theory and for struggle against the bourgeoisie and imperialism. The OCPO's proposal, however, seems impractical to us. Instead we believe that the existing journals should strengthen their cooperation. The *Workers' Advocate*, as well as the journals of the OCPO and various other groups, has attempted to reflect views and controversies in the world movement, and this existing form should be improved.

## Communism must spring anew from the struggles of today

Moreover, OCPO's proposal also one-sidedly separates the development of communist views from the over-all class struggle. It presents that the program itself will solve the problems of the movement. We believe, on the contrary, that the communist movement can and will develop only in conjunction with the class struggle and the ongoing world contradictions of today.

*Tasks of workers' communism* was based on the view that communist activists and movements come from the class struggle. It held that theory and historical work are a burning necessary for a movement that wants to be able to transform the world in a radical way, and not simply be a pressure group. But this theory develops alongside the overcoming of the difficulties of communist work, and our very ability to judge the complexities of yesterday is connected to the experience in revolutionary work which we gain today.

We don't think that our differences with OCPO's framework means that we can or should ignore their particular views. In the next article, we intend to go deeper into some of the issues raised by their article *Replying to American Communists*. □

## Notes:

Below are references to statements from *Replying to American Communists*. The page numbers are to the English translation published in the March 15 issue of the *Supplement*.

- [1] Page 15, col. 1.
- [2] For example, page 17, col. 1.
- [3] For example, page 17, col. 1.
- [4] Page 18, top of col. 2.
- [5] Page 19, bottom of col. 2.
- [6] Page 19, middle of col. 2.
- [7] Page 19, bottom of col. 2.
- [8] Page 22, col. 2.
- [9] Page 22, 2nd paragraph from the bottom of col. 2.
- [10] Page 16, top of col. 1.

- [11] Page 29, last paragraph of col. 2.
- [12] Page 24, col. 2.
- [13] Page 18, middle of col. 2.
- [14] Page 16, col. 1-2.
- [15] Page 24 col. 2 to page 25 col. 1.

- [16] Page 30, col. 1-2.
- [17] Page 28, bottom half of col. 2.
- [18] Page 30, col. 1.
- [19] Page 30, col. 2.
- [20] Page 30, col. 2.

□

## For your reference: Trotskyist "Spartacist League" on MLP's refutation of the "Defend Iraq" slogan

*From the March 15 issue of Workers Vanguard, paper of the Spartacist League of the U.S. A reply begins on page 12.*

### "Anti-imperialists" who denounced defense of Iraq MLP: "Ex"-Stalinists adrift

Part One of Two

Demonstrators at antiwar marches in January were handed an odd leaflet denouncing "Bush's war" and declaring "No more blood for imperialism," while ending with a polemic against the slogan "Defend Iraq." Published by the Marxist-Leninist Party (MLP), this tract is a case study in political schizophrenia. Filled with anti-imperialist phrases, the polemic appears to be directed at the most left-wing antiwar protesters. But what the MLP tells them is that they should *oppose* calls to defend the country which has been devastated by the Pentagon's murder machine.

In contrast, the Spartacist League called to "Defeat U.S. Imperialism—Defend Iraq!" We Trotskyists say that the working people of the world had a side in this war, to stand with the people of Iraq, an oppressed semicolonial nation, against the bloody onslaught of the imperialist powers and their cohorts and flunkys. While denouncing the tyrant Saddam Hussein and calling for the working people of Iraq to work for the overthrow of the bloody Ba'athist regime, we drew a sharp *class* line against imperialism. As one SL sign put it, "Down with Washington's New War—A Defeat for 'Our' Rulers Is a Victory for Us!"

Why are the MLP "Marxist-Leninists" so exercised to

denounce those who sided with Iraq against the U.S. government? First off, this reflects a not-so-veiled effort to ingratiate themselves with the social-patriotic organizers of the "anti-war movement." The MLP's constant practice is to offer left criticisms while being careful not to overstep the bounds of what is acceptable to the organizers of such "popular-front" protests which tie the left to the Democratic Party of U.S. imperialism. The MLP wants to carve out a niche as the left tail of the pop front. But the price of admission to climb on board the bandwagon of the red-white-and-blue "peace" movement is to swear a loyalty oath. And the MLP's opposition to "defend Iraq" did that.

Its tailism was captured in one headline of its leaflet that declared, "Defy the Liberals, Don't Split the Move-ment." Oh sure, the MLP criticized those who called for "UN sanctions" and who declare they "support our troops." No problem, so did the SWP, FIT, RWL and a host of house-broken leftists. But the Democratic Party liberals drew the line at defense of Iraq. They even split from the January 19 D.C. demo organized by the rotten reformist Workers World Party and held an even more right-wing peace crawl the next week because the WWP didn't condemn Iraq. But the MLP did, with gusto.

Far from "defying the liberals," it went further, declaring that those guilty of "cheerleading for the Iraqi side" represent a "current of opinion which...is also a problem for the anti-war movement," and which "undermines building a serious anti-war movement." The "serious anti-war movement" that the MLP was building had as its main slogan "bring the/our troops home now." It was emphatically social-patriotic, talking only of American casualties and waving the stars and stripes all over the place. It also disappeared the minute it was clear that Bush could get the oil without spilling hardly any *American* blood, while making the Tigris and Euphrates run red with *Iraqi* blood. Obviously communists siding with "the enemy" would be

considered "a problem" for such a movement which agreed with Bush's goals and only begged to differ with his methods.

The MLP's broadside against defense of Iraq was based on an article "Should the Anti-War Movement 'Defend Iraq'?" in their newspaper, *Workers' Advocate* (1 December 1990). Therein they criticized the WWP, ISO, Socialist Action and other nameless groups who are falsely equated with Trotskyism and who semi-, hemi-, demi-, sort-of sided with Iraq, usually in the fine print on the inside pages of their papers (since they are congenitally loath to take a stand that would be unpopular with the popular front). The unnamed chief culprit was the genuinely Trotskyist Spartacist League which uniquely and forthrightly defended Iraq against imperialist attack. We took the MLP (and other left groups who flinched at defense of Iraq) to task in our article "Down With the Two War Parties!" in *WW* Vol. 518 (18 January). Now the MLP has come back with a lengthy (seven-page) response in their *Workers' Advocate Supplement* (20 February).

Before responding to their specific arguments, we'd like to say a word about why we are making the effort. In the first place, unlike the general practice on the left, the MLP didn't try to duck the issues but took them on directly, even reprinting the section of our article dealing with their group. As we noted in our article, in contrast to consummate cynics like the ISO or WWP who hide their supposed socialist politics whenever they become inconvenient, the MLP is noteworthy more for its confusionism. And secondly, these "Marxist-Leninists" have been put up against the wall politically by the terminal crisis of Stalinism. After having been some of the zaniest "The East Is Red" Maoists around, then following the lead of the helmsman of the Adriatic, Albania's Enver Hoxha, the MLP is now adrift on a sea of contradictions.

### Leninism vs. Liberal Pacifism

So what arguments does the MLP use to justify its refusal to stand with Iraq against the onslaught of the most powerful imperialist military juggernaut in history? First and foremost, they try to paint calls for military defense of Iraq as "support for the tyranny of the Iraqi regime." This willful equating of military defense and political support is at the heart of the MLP's rationale. But they know full well that the Spartacist League doesn't "cheerlead" for Hussein. In fact, in their *Supplement* article they say the SL carries "hypocrisy to new heights" by being "among the most loudmouthed in demanding support for Hussein's military efforts, while at the same time it also shouts against Hussein."

But, they claim in order to cover their blatant distortion of our position, "this stand is impossible in practice," and accuse the SL of using "verbal tricks" to cover this up. So what are these "Spart tricks"? Well, that "when it talks about support for Hussein's army, it talks of 'defending Iraq' or 'defending Iraq against American imperialism,' but

when it talks of overthrowing the Iraqi regime, it is 'overthrow Hussein.'" Some trick! In fact, the MLP is forced to admit that this stance might be appealing to would-be anti-imperialists: "To overthrow Hussein while defending Iraq might sound reasonable, if one forget[s] that what is meant by defending Iraq is lauding Hussein's military efforts."

What they're referring to is the "military effort" against the 500,000-plus U.S. troops and the warplanes that flew over 100,000 sorties against Iraq in the most concentrated bombing campaign in history. Any Iraqi worker or peasant, soldier, mother, father or youth who burns with anger against the mass murderers who turned their country into a killing field could only despise those leftists who refuse to support a war against the imperialist oppressors.

So why would professed Marxist-Leninists take such a position? The article in the December *Workers' Advocate* lets the cat out of the bag when it says that "the working people and youth instinctively feel" that since the "Iraqi regime is a despicable tyranny," Iraq "has no noble or progressive goals in the war"—and therefore should not be defended. Obviously they are not referring to the workers and youth of the Near East, who demonstrated in the hundreds of thousands in defense of Iraq and for the defeat of U.S. imperialism. Rather they are responding to opinion in the U.S., where the population has had Bush's "Saddam equals Hitler" war propaganda relentlessly pushed down their throats.

When it came down to the duty of revolutionaries in the belly of the imperialist beast to stand for the defeat of their "own" rulers' bloody aggression, as the White House whipped up patriotic war frenzy at home, the MLP shamefully took a dive, bleating like any good pacifist liberal that "this is a criminal war on both sides." This is exactly the kind of thing Lenin was talking about when he insisted:

"...there must be no toleration of the verbal condemnation of imperialism while no real revolutionary struggle is waged for the liberation of the colonies (and dependent nations) from one's own imperialist bourgeoisie."

—"The Tasks of the Third International" (July 1919) [*Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 505, Section IV, the sentence begins with the word "Fourthly."—*Sup.*]

And what does the MLP say to the Iraqi masses? Well, "to the working people of Iraq and the Middle East, we say they are right to oppose the U.S. imperialist buildup...." But, pray tell, how are they supposed to do that without defending Iraq? And if this is an "unjust war on both sides," does this mean they call upon Iraqi soldiers to turn their guns around? This would have been quite pleasing to Washington, which hoped that its terror bombing would provoke a rebellion of officers in Iraq who would then fire in the same direction as Washington's troops. In other words, an organization that sought to put the MLP's line into practice in Iraq could only play a quisling role as U.S.

puppets in the face of imperialist attack.

## Defense of oppressed countries against Imperialism

Evidently feeling pressure to defend its neutrality in Washington's bloody war on Iraq, the MLP's polemics have grown increasingly tortured in attempting to square this shameful position with Leninism. Last fall the Spartacist League, in going after pseudo-socialists who refused to defend Iraq ("The Left and the Persian Gulf" Desperately Seeking Imperialist Doves," *WW* No. 510, 21 September 1990), cited a classic quotation from the 1915 pamphlet by Lenin and Zinoviev, *Socialism and War*:

"For example, if tomorrow, Morocco were to declare war on France, or India on Britain, or Persia or China on Russia, and so on, these would be 'just' and 'defensive' wars, *irrespective* of who would be the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressor, slave-holding and predatory 'Great Powers.'"

[Lenin's *Collected Works*, vol. 21, pp. 300-1, in the section "The difference between wars of aggression and of defense".—*Sup.*]

In its December article, the MLP claimed there was no parallel between the "hypothetical wars Lenin was discussing" and Iraq today, because India was a colony, and besides, Hussein wasn't seeking a confrontation with imperialism. After we pointed out that at the time Morocco was ruled by a sultan, Persia by a military dictator, and China by a warlord—all of them reactionaries every bit as bloody as Saddam Hussein—the MLP now comes back with pages of a thoroughly scholastic attempt to prove that Lenin's 1915 position on China, India, Morocco "and so on" was not a *general* position on wars between imperialist countries and countries oppressed by imperialism.

They accuse us of quoting out of context in the service of the SL's "view...that since the U.S. is an imperialist power and Iraq is a Near Eastern country, the war is automatically a just war on the part of Iraq." What the MLP derisively calls a "little set of stereotyped dogmas" is in fact the body of political principles of Bolshevism. They can twist and turn as much as they want, but we can cite any number of other quotes from Lenin making the same point. For example:

"A war *against* imperialist, i.e., oppressing, powers by oppressed (for example, colonial) nations is a genuine national war....'Defense of the fatherland' in a war waged by an oppressed national against a foreign oppressor is not a deception. Socialists are *not* opposed to 'defense of the fatherland' in such a war."

—"A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism" (October 1916) [*Collected Works*, vol. 23, p. 34, near the end of section 1. "The Marxist attitude towards war and 'Defense of the father-

land' "—*Sup.*]

The MLP wants to claim that in *Socialism and War*, Lenin was not speaking of a war against imperialism by the bourgeois rulers but rather a "revival of the revolutionary movement." Not so. Lenin stated explicitly:

"To the extent that the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation struggles against the oppressing one, we are always, in every case, and more resolutely than anyone else, for it, because we are the staunchest and the most consistent enemies of oppression."

—"On the Right of Nations to Self-Determination" (February-May 1914) [*Collected Works*, vol. 20, pp. 411-2, about half way through section 4. "'Practicality' in the National Question"—*Sup.*]

The MLP also implies that Iraq is not an oppressed country. It quotes Lenin's reference to "semi-colonies, as, for example, Persia, Turkey and China," and then concludes: "This meant that their situation was quite different from present-day Iraq." Under Hussein, they say, Iraq seeks "to become a regional bully." Would the MLP like to claim that Turkey was not then acting as a bully toward the subject peoples of the collapsed Ottoman Empire? In his famous "Report of the Commission on the National and Colonial Questions" at the Second Congress of the Comintern (1920), Lenin stated:

"The characteristic feature of imperialism consists in the whole world...is now divided into a large number of oppressed nations and an insignificant number of oppressor nations, which command colossal wealth and powerful armed forces.... The oppressed nations...are either in a state of direct colonial dependence or are semi-colonies such as Persia, Turkey and China, or else, having been defeated by the armies of a big imperialist power, have become greatly dependent on that power by virtue of peace treaties. This idea of distinction, of dividing the nations into oppressor and oppressed, run through all the theses."

[—*Collected Works*, vol. 31, pp. 240-241]

Not relevant to Iraq today, comrades?

Does this mean that the SL "has lost sight of the toiling masses and the revolutionary movements," that we engage in Maoist-style 'cheerleading' for "Third World" bourgeois governments as the MLP claims? On the contrary, the Trotskyists have always fought against any political alliance with the bourgeoisie, both in imperialist and in backward capitalist countries. Trotsky's program of permanent revolution, which was confirmed by the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, explains that the "national" bourgeoisie in nations of belated capitalist development is tied by a thousand threads to the imperialist order, and is therefore *incapable* of carrying through the tasks of bourgeois-democratic revolution. These can only be achieved through the dictatorship of the proletariat, resting on an alliance with the poor peasants, an extension of the revolution to the imperialist metropolises. Part of this

perspective is uncompromising struggle against imperialist attacks on colonial and semicolonial countries (see page 11 [page 11 of the *Workers Vanguard* was entitled "Trotsky on the Sino-Japanese war" and had statements from Trotsky referring to the Japanese aggression against China in the mid-1930s in which he tries to convince other Trotskyists to oppose imperialist aggression in China and the fascist revolt in Spain.—*Supplement*])

It was *Stalin* who used the Menshevik theory of alliance with a "progressive" bourgeoisie in a "two-stage revolution" to subordinate the Chinese Communist Party to Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang, leading to the beheading of the Chinese workers revolution in 1927. Ever since, the Stalinists have pushed the program of class collaboration with the "anti-imperialist, progressive bourgeoisie," from Indonesia to South Africa to Chile, etc., with similarly disastrous results.

### Military Defense vs. Political Support

That the MLP attempts to pass off its capitulationist line as rip-roaring "Marxist-Leninist" politics testifies to the fact that, despite all its "study campaigns," it keeps its members in the dark about some very basic Marxist conceptions. Thus *Workers' Advocate* claims that "in fact the formula of 'military, not political, support' isn't Lenin's. And it isn't Leninist or Marxist or materialist." No doubt most MLPers believe this distinction between military defense and political support is really a "Trotskyist deviation."

Yet Lenin himself insisted on the distinction between military defense and political support. In August 1917, the Bolsheviks blocked militarily with Kerensky's Provisional Government in Russia against the right-wing revolt led by General Kornilov. Lenin wrote at the time:

"We shall fight, we are fighting against Kornilov, just as Kerensky's troops do, but we do not support Kerensky. On the contrary, we expose his weakness. There is the difference. It is a rather subtle difference, but it is highly essential and must not be forgotten."

—"To the Central Committee of the RSDLP" (30 August 1917) [*Collected Works*, vol. 25, p. 286—*Sup.*]

Lenin castigated as petty-bourgeois moralists those who sought to take "revenge" on the SRs and Mensheviks" by refusing to defend them against Kornilov. Far from giving political support to Kerensky, the Bolsheviks' intervention to defeat the Kornilov revolt prepared the overthrow of the tottering bourgeois Provisional Government a few weeks later.

This issue of military defense vs. political support is closely related to the broader question of the united front. When this tactic was adopted by the Communist International in late 1921, the watchword was "march separately,

strike together." In fighting against the common enemy, there must be no mixing of political banners. This was perverted by Stalin into the program of the "popular front" (codified at the Comintern's Seventh Congress in 1935) which, far from preserving the political independence of the proletarian vanguard, instead subordinated it to the bourgeoisie. This is very relevant today, for example to the anti-war protest "movement" which the MLP vows not to "split".

In its polemic against the SL in the *Workers' Advocate Supplement*, the MLP chastises us for being too charitable about its attitude toward the January peace demos (we said it denounced them as reformist), and their point is well taken. Notwithstanding some criticisms of reformist leaders, the MLP insists it "supported the Washington demonstrations" called by the pro-Democratic Party social-pacifists on the basis of liberal slogans. After emphasizing that it "supported" the peace crawls despite their social-patriotic program and leadership, the MLP underlines that it refused to defend Iraq since that would mean "support for Hussein's army." An interesting counterposition, wouldn't you say?

In line with the opportunist view that only those struggles are desirable that are possible, and those that are possible are the ones going on at the given moment, the MLP sneeringly dismisses the SL's call for labor strikes against the war as pie in the sky. "The problem...is that such strikes, even small ones, aren't going to take place at the present time." Not thanks to the MLP, they won't. The MLP's tailism meant that when one of their supporters at the NYC Transport Workers Union was faced with the choice of standing with the bureaucrats when they called on everyone to "support our troops in Saudi Arabia," or sitting down in protest as did supporters of the Committee for a Fighting TWU, he remained standing with the bureaucrats (see "TWU Bureaucrats and Wannabees Stand Up for War," *WV* No. 521, 1 March).

At the most fundamental level, these "Marxist-Leninists" have no conception of the class line. And the MLP is so insistent on refusing to defend Iraq and denounces those who do, because it senses, rightly, that if it admits that one can militarily defend Iraq without politically supporting Hussein, this would call into question its justifications for refusing to defend the Soviet Union against imperialism.

Because we Trotskyists recognize that the Soviet Union, despite the bureaucratic degeneration of the revolution under Stalin and his successors, remains a workers state, we therefore defend it against the forces of internal and external counterrevolution. In contrast, the MLP, like other Maoist-derived "M-Ls," claims that the USSR is "state capitalist" in order *not* to defend the Soviet peoples against the looming threat of bloody capitalist restoration. It all comes back to the Russian question. □

# The experience of the war and the fiasco of "military support" for Saddam Hussein Building an anti-imperialist movement, or putting hopes in Hussein's military?

## Part Two

The mass slaughter of the Persian Gulf war has ended, and its bloody aftermath is upon us. The course of the war and the anti-war movement has put various political trends to a test. What has experience shown?

First and foremost, American imperialism has exposed itself in the eyes of a new generation of activists. American intervention for oil and empire was not a mistake, but the ingrained vice of the whole capitalist establishment. The reformists advocated faith in the Democratic Party, in Congress, and in the United Nations, and one after another all those institutions were shown as participants and organizers of imperialist war. Both capitalist parties were parties of war and imperialism, while the UN showed itself as the overall voice of Western imperialism.

But the experience of the war was just as harsh on those who advocated "military support" for Hussein's regime. A variety of Trotskyist groups, and groups descended from Trotskyism, advocated support for the military efforts of Saddam Hussein in the name of "defending Iraq" or of "victory to Iraq". But events has shown that this had nothing to do with anti-imperialism, building the anti-war movement, or defense of the Iraqi toilers. These groups had a sectarian stand in the anti-war movement, and were more interested in forcing the tyrant Hussein down people's throats than in exposing imperialism. The maneuvers of Hussein verified over and over that his war had nothing to do with the fight against imperialism. And when the masses of Iraqis rose up and attempted to topple Hussein immediately after the war, it embarrassed the advocates of "military support" for the regime.

In the February 20 issue of the *Supplement*, we dealt with some of the arguments of the Trotskyist Spartacist League against our Party's stand of anti-imperialist work in the anti-war movement. In the March 15 and April 12 issues of SL's *Workers Vanguard*, they have replied to us. The March 15 issue deals with the question of "military support" for Hussein, and we have reprinted it in its entirety in this issue of the *Supplement*. We shall show that it verifies completely our description of the Spartacists as people who can see no further than the powers-that-be. Their "anti-imperialism" is an anti-imperialism that has little do with the independent motion of the toilers. And their revolutionary-sounding slogans end up again and again only as play-acting, sectarianism, or "military support" for the crimes of the corrupt world of exploiters, from Saddam Hussein to the revisionist, state-capitalist regimes.

**SL's "military support" for Hussein's regime  
meant opposing his overthrow**

The SL claims, in its article against us, that it had ben "calling for the working people of Iraq to work for the overthrow of the bloody Ba'athist regime." Yet, in the same article, it goes on to ridicule any Iraqi who dared to turn the guns around against the Iraqi regime as a U.S. puppet. Here is what it says.

"And if this [the Persian Gulf war] is an 'unjust war on both sides [as MLP says],' does this mean that they [the MLP] call upon Iraqi soldiers to turn their guns around? This would have been quite pleasing to Washington, which hoped that its terror bombing would provoke a rebellion of officers in Iraq who would then fire in the same direction as Washington's troops. In other words, an organization that sought to put the MLP's line into practice in Iraq could only play a quisling role as U.S. puppets in the face of imperialist attack."

What does it mean to "turn their guns around". This is a poetic description of overthrowing the regime. To denounce turning the guns around, means to denounce overthrowing the regime. It means to pledge political loyalty to Hussein's government.

Did the U.S. government really want the Iraqi masses to overthrow the Ba'ath tyranny?

In fact, SL itself admits that Washington wanted "a rebellion of officers" in Iraq, that is, the continuation of the Ba'ath regime but with a different tyrant at its head. In a separate article in its March 15 issue, SL also admitted that Washington did not want an overthrow of Saddam by the masses, and they quoted an American official saying that "it's far easier to deal with a tame Saddam than with an unknown quantity". (*WV*, p. 15, col. 1)

Nevertheless, knowing full well that Washington doesn't want the Ba'ath regime overthrown, knowing full well that Washington is even tacitly cooperating with Hussein against the masses, the foul-mouthed SL scribblers denounce "turning the guns around" as the activity of U.S. puppets.

Now one can see how the SL uses empty and meaningless words to cover up their opposition to the mass struggle. Oh yes, they are against Hussein. They are for the purest of pure revolutions. Just so long as it doesn't "turn the guns around". Just so long as it doesn't overthrow the regime.

And this venom by SL against "turning the guns around" is no accident, no slip of the pen.

In our previous article, we also noted that SL defended its stand on "defending Iraq" by quoting an article from Trotsky that talked about "the duty to choose between two dictators". (See the *Supplement*, February 20, p. 27, col. 2) Underneath all the rhetoric, SL's stand amounts to support for tyranny.

## Embarrassment over the popular rebellion

When the popular rebellions broke out against Hussein, the various advocates of the "defend Iraq" slogan were embarrassed. Some implied that this might simply be a U.S. plot, or a plot of neighboring regimes. They all took a stand-offish attitude.

The SL recognized that these rebellions were not supported by U.S. imperialism. (This was not a mark of special virtue, since every bourgeois newspaper in the country was trumpeting the Bush administration's worry about these rebellions.) But it was stand-offish anyway. Its main concern was to lecture that, no matter, the "defend Iraq" slogan had been right.

Take the lead article in the March 15 *Workers Vanguard*. It denounces the bloody, savage U.S. imperialist crimes against the Iraqis. But when it gets to the mass rebellions, it merely reports briefly on it without much feeling. It mainly refers to Washington's attitude "as anti-government fighting broke out in Iraq." There are a few sentences about Washington being worried about this "Pandora's box". There is no expression of support, no slogan about the struggle, no passion or fire at all. There was no talk of support for the Iraqi masses, whether "military" or "political" or critical or otherwise.

The March 29 issue just overlooks the whole issue, even though it carries a front page article on the aftermath of the war. As it ignores the rebellion, it naturally also fails to denounce U.S. imperialism for helping the suppression of the rebellion.

The April 12 issue finally carries an article on the rebellions, a somewhat lengthy one. But once again, what SL shows real passion for is--arguing against various Kurds for the "defend Iraq" slogan. It has the tact not to call the Kurds quislings and traitors. But this is only a ruse, because as we have seen, SL stressed that any Iraqi organization that thought about "turning the guns around" would just be a bunch of traitors and puppets.

The SL tells the victims of the Iraqi regime that "the enemy of my enemy is not my friend" is not always a good maxim." It is definitely true that U.S. imperialism is not only a butcher of the Iraqi masses in general, but a cynical oppressor of the Kurds in particular. And it is true that there is confusion among the Iraqi masses about the relationship of Ba'ath tyranny and imperialism. But unfortunately the SL hasn't learned the lesson itself. Or it would realize that this same lesson shows that Hussein was no friend, and the Persian Gulf war was really unjust on both sides.

## What do the Iraqi masses think?

Nevertheless, the rebellions show a lot about the mass temper in Iraq.

In its article against us, the SL gets on its high horse and declares:

"Any Iraqi worker or peasant, soldier, mother, father or youth who burns with anger against the mass murderers who

turned their country into a killing field could only despise those leftists who refuse to support a war against the imperialist aggressors."

But the rebellion tells another story. And in its own article in the April 12 issue, it is the SL which is frantic for fear that Iraqi Kurds will regard it with disgust and loathing for its "defend Iraq" slogan, which they recognize as support for the government of Iraq.

The Persian Gulf war was not a noble war against imperialism. It was fought for sordid gains. Hussein took Iraq into yet another war to establish the Ba'ath regime as a regional power, to get a bit more oil money, etc. And so it is no wonder that the Iraqi workers and peasants have quite another idea about the Hussein regime than the SL.

Undoubtedly there is a just and noble hatred against the U.S. imperialist ravaging of the country and mass murder of Iraqis. But there is also anger at Hussein for his oppression of the masses, his mass murder of Kurds and opponents, and his driving Iraq into one war after another.

## Were there only two sides in this war?

The SL's polemic shouts over and over again that there were only two sides in the war. There was Washington, and there was Hussein. There was the Pentagon, and there were Hussein's armies. Over and over, they assert that anyone who didn't back Hussein's military efforts was helping Washington commit crimes against the Iraqi masses. They become quite emotional and strident and hoarse with their indignation.

But emotionalism isn't the best argument.

There was another side to this struggle. There was the side of the masses. There are the Iraqi workers and peasants, and there are the anti-war activists and progressive people in the U.S. And the interests of the masses was diametrically opposed to both sides in this war.

Despite what the SL liars say, the MLP was not "neutral" or "pacifist" or "liberal" in this war. We fought with enthusiasm and determination against this mass slaughter. We encouraged the only just and progressive side in this war--the side of the masses, and we tirelessly exposed the Democratic Party liberals, the Congress, the UN, and the entire imperialist establishment. We worked to build up an anti-imperialist movement in the U.S., and we supported the interests of the Iraqi toilers and the anti-war protests in the Middle East. We brought anti-imperialist slogans and agitation among the masses, and denounced U.S. imperialism as our chief enemy. But, as the tacit cooperation between Hussein and Washington in oppressing the Iraqi masses shows, it is impossible to be anti-imperialist without opposing the oppressive Ba'ath regime in Iraq as well.

When SL argues that there are only two sides to this struggle, it is not making a revolutionary statement against imperialism. It is echoing, from the flip side, the imperialist propaganda that is blasted at us every day from the newspapers, the TV, and the radio. Washington too agrees that there are only two sides--Bush or Hussein, the Pentagon war machine or Hussein's military.

SL's stand amounts to overlooking the working masses.

It amounts to only believing in the power of the present governments and their oppressive institutions. It amounts to despair in the real possibilities of encouraging an independent mass struggle. It doesn't matter how many slogans about revolution in the future SL gives--when it can't even see the side of the masses in the present Persian Gulf war, it is acting as unenlightened slaves awed by the power of their masters.

### SL's "anti-imperialism" without the people

In order to justify this stand, SL has taken to tearing statements from Lenin out of context, and interpreting them to mean their opposites. For example, the SL has raised repeatedly the following sentence from Lenin:

"For example, if tomorrow, Morocco were to declare war on France, or India on Britain, or Persia or China on Russia, and so on, these would be 'just' and 'defensive' wars, *irrespective* of who would be the first to attack: any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressive, slave-holding and predatory 'Great' Powers."

(Lenin, *Socialism and War*, Collected Works, Vol. 21, pp. 300-301)

How did SL interpret this sentence? They wrote the following:

"When Lenin wrote this, Morocco was ruled by the sultan Mulai Yusuf, Persia by the military dictator Ephraim Khan and China by the warlord Yüan Shih-kai--rulers just as bloody and reactionary as Iraq's Saddam Hussein."

(Cited in the *Supplement*, Feb. 20, p. 28)

SL clearly is implying that Lenin meant that one should give "military support" to notorious oppressors like Mulai Yusuf, or Yüan Shih-kai, or Ephraim Khan. We showed that SL was coming out in support of past oppressors to justify support for today's oppressor.

Lenin was referring to movements against national oppression and imperialist domination, which the Persian Gulf war was not. But we also went into the situation in Morocco, Persia, and China of that time. We showed that Lenin was not referring to struggles led by these notorious oppressors, but to struggles which would be opposed by or strike against the sultan Mulai Yusuf, the military dictator Ephraim Khan, and the warlord Yüan Shih-kai. The SL, for all its socialist talk, was overlooking the class alignments in the oppressed countries, and the actual relation of notorious oppressors to the imperialist domination of the oppressed countries.

How does SL reply to this?

It quotes the same sentence from Lenin again, and it again talks of the reactionary rulers in the oppressed countries. And then SL carefully avoids the question of what stand Mulai Yusuf, Ephraim Khan, and Yüan Shih-kai had to imperialism. It even prefers not to mention them by name, but just to refer to them in general. It has no answer.

So instead SL turns to a general issue. If it can't show that these reactionary rulers were anti-imperialists, it tries to show that there is no alternative to them. It implies that

there is no movement separate from these rulers, or at least that Lenin wasn't referring to such a phantom. It seems that not only is the SL mad at the anti-war movement in the U.S., not only does it declare this movement worthless, but it is revealing the same attitude to the mass anti-imperialist movement in the oppressed countries.

Here is what SL says:

"The MLP wants to claim that in *Socialism and War*, Lenin was not speaking of a war against imperialism by the bourgeois rulers but rather a 'revival of the revolutionary movement.' Not so. Lenin stated explicitly:

"*To the extent* that the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation struggles against the oppressing one, we are always, in every case, and more resolutely than anyone else, for it, because we are the staunchest and the most consistent enemies of oppression." ("On the Right of Nations to Self-Determination", February-May 1914 [*Collected Works*, vol. 20, pp. 411-2, about midway through section 4. "Practicality in the National Question"])

Apparently, SL believes that there are two categories, bourgeois rulers and the movement, and this statement backs support for the bourgeois rulers. And wow, SL thinks, it does it in the "staunchest and most consistent" way. Just like how SL backs Hussein.

Actually, Lenin is discussing national movements, and the cases where the bourgeoisie was leading a national movement in which class differentiation hasn't taken place. The statement doesn't directly speak to the question of who is in the government. Indeed such a national movement, even if the bourgeoisie is leading it, may well be opposed by various reactionary sultans, military dictators, and warlords. Nor does the statement contrast military and political support, but we will deal with the issue of military versus political support in a later section of this article.

### The movement of the oppressed

For the time being, we shall restrict ourselves to a single point. SL is denying that the anti-imperialist struggle is based on the popular movement of the masses, and contrasting it to the struggle of rulers. Leninist communism, on the contrary, is based on the struggle of the oppressed masses. SL states that "we can cite any number of other quotes from Lenin" making their point. But we shall show that in every single work of Lenin's cited in SL's article, SL is hiding the fact that Lenin is talking about the movement. It would have been better if SL had read a single important work through to the conclusion and pondered it, rather than simply tear isolated sentences at random from one work after another.

First of all, let us consider the "Right of Nations to Self-Determination" from which the above sentence comes from. This work clarifies over and over again that it is referring to mass national movements. For example, consider this general description of the national struggle:

"The conclusion that follows from all these critical

remarks of Marx's is clear: the working class should be the last to make a fetish of the national question, since the development of capitalism does not necessarily awaken *all* nations to independent life. But to brush aside the mass national movements once they have started, and to refuse to support what is progressive in them means, in effect, pandering to nationalistic prejudices, that is, recognizing 'one's own nation' as a model nation (or, we would add, one possessing the exclusive privilege of forming a state)." (From Section 8 "The Utopian Karl Marx and the Practical Rosa Luxemburg", underlining added)

Or again, consider the opening passages in this work where Lenin sets the theme he is dealing with:

"...This is not the first time that national movements have arisen in Russia, nor are they peculiar to that country alone. Throughout the world, the period of the final victory of capitalism over feudalism has been linked up with national movements."

(From the third paragraph of Section 1 "What is meant by the self-determination of Nations?")

Well, what about the work *Socialism and War* itself? It refers to the development of a mass movement, and talks of this development as being the key to whether a war is a just war. It states:

"In China, Persia, India and other dependent countries...we have seen during the past decades a policy of rousing tens and hundreds of millions of people to a national life, of their liberation from the reactionary 'Great Powers' oppression. A war waged on such a historical basis can even today be a bourgeois-progressive war of national liberation."

(From the section "War is the continuation of politics by other (i.e.: violent) means" )

Here we see a concept opposite to SL's rhetoric. SL defends wars by reactionary tyrants who have been sitting on the workers and peasants, on the grounds that they may awake the masses. Lenin, on the contrary, argues that only if there has been a policy of awakening the masses can the war be a just one.

What about Lenin's *Report of the Commission on the National and Colonial Questions* at the Second Congress of the CI? SL cites it as a trump card, because it refers to the division of the world into oppressed and oppressor nations. It hasn't even entered SL's sectarian head that recognition of this division is important in order to support revolutionary and anti-imperialist movements. No, SL handles it as if it were a mere geographical concept, having nothing to do with mass movements.

However, it turns out that in Lenin's report and the discussion at Second Congress, the focus was placed on the national movements and their nature. This discussion is entirely alien to the support of tyrants sitting on the movement, such as Hussein, and it would have been considered a monstrosity at that Congress. So, consider Lenin's remarks:

"Third, I should like especially to emphasize the question of the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. This is a question that has given

rise to certain differences. We have discussed whether it would be right or wrong, in principle and in theory to state the Communist International and the Communist parties must support the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. [Mind you, they are debating whether to support this movement--it didn't enter their minds to debate whether to support the sultan Mulai Yusuf and other tyrants SL puts forward as similar to Hussein--*Supplement*.] As a result of our discussion, we have arrived at the unanimous decision to speak of the national-revolutionary movement rather than of the 'bourgeois-democratic' movement. It is beyond doubt that any national movement can only be a bourgeois-democratic movement, since the overwhelming mass of the population in the backward countries consists of peasants who represent bourgeois-capitalist relationships. ... However, the objections have been raised that, if we speak of the bourgeois-democratic movement, we shall be obliterating all distinctions between the reformist and the revolutionary movements. Yet that distinction has been very clearly revealed of late in the backward and colonial countries, ..."

The SL also tries to garner support from Lenin's letter about what was to be done during the attempt by General Kornilov to stage a right-wing military coup against the Kerensky government in Russia in 1917. Here SL switches over to an illustration from an imperialist country, as Russia was still imperialist under the Provisional Government of 1917. It is an example with little to do with Iraq, since Russia at that time was in the midst of a revolutionary movement, with the Provisional Government being blown this way and that, while the Ba'ath regime has an iron rule repressing all the political life in the country. And, by the way, even in this situation Lenin refused to issue the "defend Russia" slogan against the other imperialist powers in World War I, while SL is advocating the "defend Iraq" slogan.

Nevertheless, it is a most interesting and important example, which our Party discussed in 1985 with respect to united front tactics. (See the May 1, 1985 issue of the *Supplement*, pp. 31-32, "The Bolsheviks in the fight against the Kornilov revolt", which was a section of the article "Some Notes on the Seventh World Congress of the CI".) We shall deal with this example again later on, but for now let us note two things.

First of all, the SL is giving the very line that Lenin denounced in his letter to the Central Committee cited by SL. Lenin stated definitively "Even now we must not support Kerensky's government. This is unprincipled." (*To the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.*, Collected Works, vol. 25, p. 285, emphasis in the original) Lenin held that the form of the struggle against Kerensky must change, and that the Bolsheviks should fight Kornilov, as Kerensky was posturing about and as Kerensky's troops were actually doing. But nevertheless "there is a rather subtle difference" between this and supporting Kerensky.

And secondly, Lenin emphasized that the question was not phrases about the Provisional Government, but dealing with the revolutionary mass movement. Even in presenting

demands on the Provisional Government, the basic thing was that "We must present these demands not only to Kerensky, and *not so much* to Kerensky, as to the workers, soldiers and peasants who have been *carried away* by the course of the struggle against Kornilov." Carried away by what? By phrases which meant essentially what SL's "military support" means.

And finally, SL uses one more quote. This too concerns the movement in imperialist countries, rather than directly discussing the oppressed countries. SL cites Lenin's article "The Tasks of the Third International/Ramsay MacDonald on the Third International" saying that mere verbal condemnation of imperialism cannot be accepted, but a real revolutionary struggle must be waged for the liberation of the colonies.

But how does Lenin distinguish a merely verbal struggle

## **Sham militancy or real struggle**

Continued from page two

easier with every setback to these movements, and even gave Hussein some room to suppress them.

### **An anti-Imperialism without the people**

But how have the advocates of "military support to Hussein" reacted?

So far we only have their initial views. They have been annoyed with the struggle against tyranny and hinted that the revolts against Hussein are simply a creation of imperialism or other regimes.

A flagrant example is the March 1 issue of RWL's *Fighting Worker*. It is headlined "Avenge Iraq!" Perhaps, the reader may think, RWL has seen the light and wants to avenge the Iraqi masses for the crimes of both U.S. imperialism and Hussein's tyranny? Not at all. They are still rendering their "military support" to Hussein's regime. They go so far as to denounce the Iraqi soldiers who refused to die to the last man for Hussein and instead surrendered en masse. And they praise the Republican Guard, the elite troops of the regime which are now engaged in massacring the people.

Is this because RWL didn't yet know about the popular uprising?

Not at all.

It had already broken out. And RWL wasn't pleased.

RWL still doesn't look to the masses in Iraq, but instead blames the world for the fiasco of its "defend Iraq" slogan. Why, according to them, if only the regimes in Egypt or Syria or elsewhere had been overthrown. But for that matter, what about revolution in Iraq? Well, RWL wouldn't mind—provided every Iraqi revolutionary first dies on the front lines in Kuwait.

With their stand of "military support" for Hussein, the RWL also ends up denouncing the anti-war movement. It writes: "The antiwar movement in the US was of little help once the war began." Just like the Trotskyist Spartacists,

from a real struggle? Does he call for support for the sultan Mulai Yusuf and other tyrants who were in league with imperialism, as SL claims he does? Not at all. He calls for, among other things, support for the revolutionary movement in the colonies. He says that a party which "does not systematically assist the *revolutionary* work which has already begun everywhere in the colonies, and does not send arms and literature to the revolutionary parties in the colonies, is a party of scoundrels and traitors." (*Collected Works*, vol. 29, pp. 505-6) Imagine what he would think of those who rendered "military support" not to the revolutionary parties in the colonies, but the sultan Mulai Yusuf!

*In the next installment we shall deal with SL's contrast of "military" versus "political" support, more on the movement in the U.S., and other issues.* □

who also "defend Iraq", they identify the anti-war movement with the liberal politicians and their reformist hangers-on. They don't see any value in the fervent struggle of masses of activists. All this was of "little help."

It might be said, with more accuracy, that RWL was of little help to the anti-war movement.

RWL'S style of "anti-imperialism" has nothing to do with the real struggles among the oppressed. They have disassociated themselves from the mass of activists in the U.S. as well as from the rebellious Iraqi toilers. All they see is the existing regimes and powers-that-be.

### **Real anti-Imperialism is based on the toilers**

True anti-imperialist work didn't consist in speculating on the victory of Hussein's bayonets, nor in damning the anti-war movement in the U.S.

Anti-imperialism means supporting the toiling masses in Iraq and the Middle East. It encourages their movements, both by openly discussing their shortcomings and by supporting their struggles against local tyrants and exploiters and against the world superpower, U.S. imperialism.

Anti-imperialism means working to build up the anti-war movement in the U.S. It means not damning the movement, but encouraging the new generation of activists coming into the anti-war struggle.

Anti-imperialism means real work, and not relying on a single magic formula, even if it were a correct formula. It means actually taking the anti-war movement to the working class neighborhoods and factories. It means doing patient work to show the real nature of the imperialist institutions to the masses.

The stand of "military support to Hussein" was an anti-imperialism without the masses, and even against the masses. It is no anti-imperialism at all, but just the whining of a slave who is too oppressed to even imagine a class struggle for liberation. □

# The Workers' Advocate

## Supplement



50¢

Vol. 7 #8

VOICE OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY, USA

October 20, 1991

## What sources are available for the study of Soviet history?

For some time our Party has been studying the history of the October Revolution and its aftermath. In this issue of *the Workers' Advocate Supplement* we are printing a general bibliography of primarily English-language source materials on this history.

This is a bibliography in progress, and it is in no way a complete, final or comprehensive compilation. As work on a given topic progresses, new titles have been migrating onto the list while some earlier listings may fall by the wayside. Of the works listed here, some are in current use, others have been referred to only to verify their existence and potential usefulness, and a few remain untouched. In the interest of expedience, no effort has been made to reverify the entries for the present publication, nor even to clean up inconsistencies in bibliographic style. Finally, it should be noted that the present bibliography focuses mainly on the period of the First Five Year Plan and mainly on factual background; works relevant to other periods and to a series of ideological questions are represented sparsely and inconsistently.

These limitations notwithstanding, it seemed reasonable to publish this bibliography as it now stands, blemishes and all, for the benefit of friends and enemies who may be drawn to this subject. One motive in this is to encourage independent study in the interests of informed debate. Yet another is to give some indication of the orientation of our research.

Few topics in the annals of history have inspired such broad speculation and interpretation with so narrow a factual basis as have the October Revolution and the subsequent history of the Soviet Union. Only in limited measure can the blame for this be laid at the barred doorstep of Soviet party and state archives. (Indeed, now that those doors are opening, it should not be expected that anything like a breath of fresh air is going to be wafting forth. If Western Sovietology evinces an impressive disregard for fact, this is only because Russian Sovietology has not yet had its fair say.)

This is said with the dubious achievements of mainstream bourgeois Sovietology in mind. Yet, when one turns to the left, the record is no more than marginally better. Witness, for example, the labors of generations of trotskyites burdened by the necessity of taking their Comrade T's schemas as gospel. For another, we have the example of

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# Down with the Coup! Support Haitian Workers!

*From Boston Worker, voice of the MLP-Boston:*

On Monday, September 30 a military junta took power in Haiti, overthrowing the elected government. This coup is a sign of a sharpening class struggle between a small wealthy ruling class and the desperately poor worker and peasant majority. The military in Haiti was part of the dictatorial regime of the hated Duvalier family that ruled Haiti for decades until Baby Doc Duvalier was chased out of the country by an uprising in 1986. Father Aristide was a populist priest who was overwhelmingly elected President last December with the support of the poor. But Father Aristide was not a revolutionary. While he favored some reforms of benefit to the poor, he did not direct the energy of the masses toward breaking the stranglehold of the exploiters and reactionaries have on society. The power of the military was not broken, neither were the paramilitary Duvalierist gangs known as the Ton Ton Macoutes. Instead Aristide hoped to "marry" the army to the people. He toned down his more radical demands in hopes of placating the wealthy and the Bush Administration in the US. But the wealthy classes and their military henchmen bided their time and now they have struck back without mercy against Aristide and the Haitian masses.

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The Haitian people however have not bowed down to these new dictators. Despite the most brutal massacres by the army, the poor in Haitian cities have mounted protests and fought the police and army in the streets. Even a week after the coup, the army cannot claim total control of the country. Haitian immigrants in the US have come out in the streets by the tens of thousands in Boston, New York, Washington and Miami to protest the coup.

Meanwhile President Aristide has been forced into exile and has called on the Haitian people to practice non-violence in the face of the coup. He has appealed to the Organization of American States, the UN and George Bush to help restore him to power. Unfortunately President Aristide's advice is a dead end for the Haitian people. Peacefully submitting to the coup will only give the military time to consolidate their power.

On the other hand the OAS, the UN and the US government in whom Father Aristide has put his faith are a pack of wolves. The US government is an imperialist government which trained the Haitian military and for years helped US corporations and wealthy Haitians grow fat off the labor and poverty of the Haitian people. The OAS and UN are both organizations of capitalist and imperialist governments and are both dominated by the US which is presently the dominant world power.

### Bush's real intentions

When Aristide was first elected, Bush was extremely hostile to him and to his appeals for aid. If today Bush is talking about restoring Aristide as President, it is because he does not think the military can control the Haitian people alone. If Aristide is restored to power by US or OAS military or diplomatic action Aristide will be beholden to Bush. Aristide will have his wings clipped. The military and the Ton Ton Macoutes will be kept intact as a club against the masses. The Haitian masses will be kept in poverty and the power of wealth will run rampant over the people. At the same time if the military and the Haitian businessmen prove capable of stabilizing the situation without Aristide, Bush will happily drop even verbal condemnation of the coup. Such are the real intentions of Bush and the imperialists who pretend to suddenly be concerned about democracy in Haiti.

### The Haitian people will be their own liberators!

Only the Haitian masses can break the chains of exploitation and bring real democracy to Haiti. The Haitian masses need to rely on their own strength, to build a revolutionary movement which can unleash the energy of the workers and poor and truly sweep away the coup and all the Duvalierist institutions from the army to the Ton Ton Macoutes. Here in the US all workers should join the

Haitian immigrants in building a solidarity movement with the struggle in Haiti. Denounce the coup! Denounce Bush's

efforts to use the coup to control Haiti! Haitian and American workers, unite against our common exploiters! □

## Racist police infect the country

### Even the medical examiner called it murder

The slaying of 21-year-old Federico Pereira was so brutal that even a New York City medical examiner had to rule it homicide. But who were the murderers that handcuffed, kicked, choked and beat him to death on February 5?

They were five of New York's "finest," outstanding members of the racist goon squad known as the New York City Police Department.

The fact of the medical examiner's ruling did not, however, stand in the way of allowing them to continue in their "duties." Four of the bloodstained cops have already had charges against them dropped by the courts. The fifth is expected to go free also.

But the people of Federico's community are not accepting his murder, and the exoneration of the cops, in silence. They are organizing to protest the racism of the police and courts. □

### New Orleans cops "investigate" their own crimes

Imagine having white killers doing the investigation of the murder of their black victims! Imagine a news media so racist and eager to protect the killers, it concocts a lurid tale claiming the 16-year-old victim was a "terrorist"! But this is not a story of South Africa. It is the everyday story of the New Orleans police and news media.

On August 24, Cory Horton and three friends were driving in a rented van when they were pulled over by the ever-present police. The cops claimed the van was reported stolen. Witnesses say that, in the course of interrogation, the police pulled Cory from the van. Throwing him to the ground, one of the cops put his boot on Cory's neck. Witnesses also claim Cory was unarmed and made no motion for a gun. From six to nine shots split the air, and Cory was dead from a bullet in his head.

Cory was not the only victim of police brutality. Sixteen-year-old Althia Smith was shown later in a film on CNN struggling with cops. Witnesses say she too was pulled from the van and flung to the ground. Pregnant, she suffered a miscarriage two days later at Charity Hospital.

A storm of protest swept the community in the days that followed. On August 31, a crowd of 300 people rallied to protest the atrocities. They were also angered by the city's response of keeping the four cops involved on the payroll and assigning two of them to investigate the murder. On September 1, over 600 people marched and rallied at the intersection where the killing took place. □

### What is the deadliest gang ever to hit the streets of Los Angeles

Here's the slogan it used in 1988 to get new recruits: "Join the largest gang in the country, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department." Like the L.A. Police Department, the County Sheriff's Department is a giant racist gang abusing the masses. It is right now facing a series of lawsuits and an investigation by Amnesty International for its racist murders and beatings.

One thing that has come to light about the Sheriff's Department is that it is riddled with smaller racist gangs. The Vikings of the Lynwood Sheriff's Station, the Pirates of Firestone Station, the Wayside Whities of the Wayside Honor Rancho Jail, The Insane Deputy Gang at Pritchess Honor Rancho Jail, and the Cavemen of the East L.A. Sheriff's station.

Like street gangs, the deputy gangs are tattooed with their symbol. The Vikings tattoo their legs with the head of a Norse warrior, presumably signifying for them blond, blue-eyed Aryan purity. Meanwhile, the East L.A. Cavemen tattoo their legs with the head of a caveman with flies buzzing around it. Each fly signifies someone they have brutalized.

According to David Lynn, a private investigator who has been following deputy gangs for two years, "The Vikings was the original, all-white crew, but later did include Latinos if they went along with the group's M.O. [modus operandi, or method of operation]—which is basically to beat up on minorities. It has grown from white supremacists to include Latinos who are willing to beat and brutalize their own people."

Sheriff's officials do not deny the existence of the gangs. But they cover up their acts of brutality by claiming they are "social groups" or "sports clubs." The department refused to investigate complaints against the deputies. And when deputies were caught in acts of racist brutality, they were transferred, not taken off the streets or prosecuted.

Right now there is a lawsuit charging that at least 70 individuals have been abused by the Vikings in 40 separate incidents within a 100-day period in early 1990. Another lawsuit charges brutality in another 20 incidents in the Lynwood area. □

### Notice:

There was no separate Sept. issue of the Supplement; it is combined with this Oct. issue. □

## “Lambs of Christ” snap at North Dakota’s only abortion clinic Wolves in sheep’s clothing

*Excerpted from a report sent in by a comrade:*

The Fargo Women’s Health Organization is the only clinic which performs legal abortions in the entire state of North Dakota, as well as serving women from western Minnesota and northeastern South Dakota. For months, the clinic has been under constant and massive assault from the “Lambs of Christ”, a right-wing, fundamentalist group, led by Rev. Norman J. Weslin. This group has ties with the Wichita, Kansas anti-abortion crazies, and imports demonstrators from all over the country.

On May 31, the Lambs stormed the Fargo clinic and barricaded themselves inside using pipes, clips and 200-lb. metal boxes. 16 Lambs were arrested for criminal trespassing and resisting arrest. But this grandstand play was only the culmination of months of previous harassment, and more than 100 Lambs have been arrested in subsequent attacks over the summer. Those released routinely break sentencing restrictions, or won’t stay at least 500 feet away from the clinic.

Now the Lambs are planning something really big. They are boasting about a massive assault campaign to last until

Christmas. Spokesman Chet Gallagher warned, “The body of Christ in Wichita, Kansas will come to pay a visit to Fargo, North Dakota. We will never stop rescuing babies.” In addition to weekly “rescue rallies,” the Lambs are organizing youth rallies to train their children in guerilla tactics, called “Teens Rescuing Unborn Tiny Humans.” They say they will launch the teens in a major action in October.

However, the Fargo community is gearing up to meet this vicious campaign. Fargo citizens are enraged at the anti-people violence of this group and disgusted by their tactics. Even local pro-lifers are not able to swallow the Lambs’ exploitation of their own children. Pro-choice demonstrations and clinic defenses against the Lambs have been taking place regularly. These are steadily gaining in numbers, and more are planned for fall. Meanwhile clinic workers are determined to keep the clinic open and conduct business as usual.

The Fargo Women’s Health Organization is a small, brave clinic fighting to survive in an isolated, conservative area which needs its services desperately. Pro-choice activists must support this clinic and rally to its defense. □

## More demonstrations against “Cracker Barrel” bigotry

*Excerpted from the October 12 issue of Detroit Workers’ Voice, paper of the MLP-Detroit:*

On October 6, a militant demonstration of 175 gay rights activists confronted over 100 riot police in front of the newly opened Cracker Barrel restaurant in Belleville, Michigan. This was the second demonstration in a week against this Cracker Barrel Restaurant and its national policy of firing and barring from employment anyone suspected of being homosexual. The protest was successful in exposing the restaurant’s bigotry and in shutting them down for close to two hours during their Sunday brunch.

### Police defend bigotry of Cracker Barrel

From the start Cracker Barrel has taken a position of trying to crush any protests in Belleville. And the police

has shown enthusiasm to carry this out and defend their reactionary policy. Close to 12 different police departments have co-ordinated their efforts to try to intimidate the protesters with over 100 of their goons in riot gear.

At the demonstration on October 6 the police, without warning, attacked the protesters, pushing them off the street and into a gully. As the demonstrators resisted, the police poked and hit people with their clubs. The cops then lined up along the edge of the curb to prevent the protesters from moving back onto the street. The activists denounced the police at length for their brutality and for the fact that they had no badges or name plates on [or had covered them with black tape].

Despite this attack, and the arrest of six people, the demonstration was able to retake the street. Its militant picket continued shouting slogans against both Cracker Barrel and the goons who defend them. □

# Against the economic squeeze

## Auto workers defend organizing drive

Some 700 auto workers blocked a road for an hour September 24 in support of an organizing drive at Colonel's Inc. in Owosso, Michigan. The boisterous protest denounced Colonel's lockout of 37 union activists and the hiring of replacement scabs. Colonel's also spread two truckloads of manure where workers had been picketing the bumper-making plant and had ordered a truck equipped with a snow plow to drive through the picket line.

Despite Colonel's blatant attempt to drive workers away from the union organizing effort, the National Labor Relations Board has yet to do a thing. The workers have decided to take up more militant action. As one worker put it, "There comes a time when you've got to bypass the NLRB." □

## Rally to keep GM plant open

More than 300 GM workers rallied in the parking lot of the GM plant in Van Nuys, California August 31. They protested the planned shutdown of the assembly line and the layoff of 3,500 workers next year. The workers have repeatedly given up concessions to GM to keep the plant open. But each time GM has come back demanding more. Not helping out the auto millionaires, but struggle against them—that's the only way for the workers to defend themselves. □

## Textile workers organize

Workers at the Toluca Garment Company held a three-day strike in support of an organizing drive in Toluca, Illinois. The bosses tried to buy anti-union support by giving raises to a handful of workers, but this outraged most workers and led to a spontaneous walkout. This spirited action forced the company to allow the holding of a union election.

Meanwhile, in Rockwood, Tennessee, workers had failed to win union representation two years ago at Rockwood Sportswear. However, this year their drive was so successful, the company agreed to recognize the union without even holding an election. □

## Teachers strike across the country

With the opening of the school year, thousands of teachers went on strike in 13 states. There are 19 strikes in Pennsylvania alone. There are also major strikes in Rhode Island, New Jersey, Michigan and Illinois. As well, Chicago teachers are poised to go on strike at the end of September. Everywhere teachers are being pressed by state budget crises and demands for wage freezes, other cutbacks, and

layoffs. □

## Los Angeles teachers want action against cutbacks

The public schools are being devastated in California. The Los Angeles schools in particular are facing bigger class sizes, teacher layoffs, cutbacks, etc.

A special union meeting for substitute teachers was called by the Substitute Division of the United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) on August 24. Almost 300 teachers flooded into the meeting. There was an atmosphere of anger and many speakers denounced the do-nothing policy of the UTLA leadership.

The UTLA leaders can spout as many fine words as one likes, but they advise the teachers to sit on their hands and rely on lobbying the legislature. They break up labor solidarity by replacing the struggle against cutbacks with the demand that other workers should be squeezed instead of teachers. And when 1,200 teachers were laid off last year, they shrugged because, in the words of the UTLA bulletin of August 20 this year, "we were prohibited, by state code, from defending (them)".

But last month the Los Angeles Board of Education voted to eliminate another 800 teaching positions, and to increase class size by three in elementary school. This outraged the teachers who flooded to the UTLA meeting. They greeted UTLA top officials with cat-calls and boos. Even the UTLA officials split, with lower-level ones denouncing the policy of the UTLA top leaders. A top UTLA leader fled the meeting, whining that it "was unprofessional and unethical to attack union leaders like that". The union is upset, and UTLA's leadership is trying to spread the idea that there are "groups that want to split the union" and that are troublemakers, divisive, etc.

The Teachers Action Network (TAN) took part in this meeting. Later it put out the first issue, September-October 1991, of *Teacher Action*, its new newsletter.

TAN was originally formed from teachers opposed to the Gulf War, but it now deals with the cutbacks. It calls for action and criticizes the UTLA leaders, and it officially stands for "solidarity between teachers, parents, students, and classified workers as the best means of reforming public education." (From "What Is TAN?" in *Teacher Action*). At the same time, it is not clear on what type of movement it wants, what it can expect from the current union, or how what's happening to the teachers fits into the broader picture. Yet its existence is another sign of the growing discontent and of the existence of teachers who want a mass struggle. □

## Student protests

On September 3, thousands of high school students in

Dallas, Texas were joined by teachers and parents in protesting the layoff of 300 teachers.

The students walked out of their classrooms en masse and marched to the school district headquarters. Police clad in riot gear confronted them. Six students were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct—the “crime” of defending their right to a decent education.

In Chicago, on the opening day of classes, over 100

parents and students from the Chicago Metro high school picketed the board of education offices. Chicago Metro was one of six schools closed as a result of brutal budget cuts which included teacher layoffs and a wage freeze for school employees.

Meanwhile, President Bush gave a speech telling parents to “blame themselves” for falling SAT scores and the crisis in the schools. □

## Health care: cutbacks for the poor, to pay for more cream for the rich

*The following articles are from a recent issue of Boston Worker, voice of the MLP-Boston:*

### No to the wage and hiring freeze at Beth Israel

The Beth Israel (BI) Hospital administration has just announced a three-month wage increase deferment. Each employee will not receive his or her raise for three months after the yearly review. This will average out to 20 hours of pay being cut from each worker. Also, the range of raises has been cut from 0 to 10% down to 0 or 4%, another cut. Health insurance rates are being raised on January 1, both weekly costs and co-payments. On top of all this, there is now a six-month hiring freeze, leaving 140 jobs unfilled, which will mean more work for everyone.

The reason given for the cuts is the severe cutbacks in government health care spending, in Medicare, Medicaid and the state funds for the uninsured. BI gets over 50% of its funding from the government, and these cuts are hitting hospitals very hard. The federal and state governments are spending billions to help out the S&L bankers, to help the oil corporation interests in the Middle East, to pay off Wall Street bond speculators and to cut the tax rates for the rich. To pay for all this, health care is on the chopping block.

Just as the government is taking care of the rich, the BI administration is taking care of its own. BI President Rabkin just got a nice raise from \$357,000 to \$463,000 a year, a cool 30% hike! (*Boston Herald*, August 31) Health care for the workers is cut back, health care workers are under attack, but health care corporate executives are the highest paid of all executives, averaging \$1.2 million a year. (*Boston Globe*) Like any other industry under capitalism, the workers are being squeezed for the profits, interests and fortunes of the wealthy few.

The cuts at BI are part of the growing cutbacks throughout the health care industry. The cuts in Medicare are bound to continue as Republicans and Democrats hand over the projected \$500 billion to the S&L bankers. Concessions and speedup are the order of the day in every

hospital. The spokesmen for the wealthy, from Bush to Rabkin, say we should tighten our belts, make sacrifices, and sooner or later the economy will turn around. But we say no, the rich must pay. Hospital workers need to get organized and link up with all workers facing health care cuts. It is time to organize struggle to protect our pay and benefits, our medical coverage and our jobs. □

### Healthcare profiteering continues

So who isn't suffering from the government cuts in health care? Why are health care costs skyrocketing?

In Boston, here are a few examples of people employed in hospitals—the CEOs [chief executive officers]—who aren't being forced to ‘tighten their belts’:

- J. Scott Abercrombie, University Hospital,  
got a raise of \$109,799, now makes \$390,326
- Mitchell Rabkin, Beth Israel,  
got a raise of \$96,207, now makes \$463,707
- Elaine Ullan, Faulkner Hospital,  
got a raise of \$88,082, now makes \$248,478
- J. Robert Buchanan, Massachusetts General,  
got a \$62,105 raise, now makes \$337,155.

Nor is there any crisis in health care on the stock market. A mutual fund called Select Health Care just came out as the top money-maker for ten-year mutual funds. It is made up of stocks in pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies and also invests in medical technology and hospital supplies and services. In ten years it has run up a total return of 760.6% (*Boston Globe*, 7/12/91)

Second quarter returns are in for the major pharmaceutical companies: Warner Lambert's profits went up 14.9%, Schering-Plough's up 16.2%, Maritron Merrel Dow, up 24.6% and Baxter International, a leading hospital supply company, up 28.2% (*New York Times*, 7/18/91)

If you are a hospital CEO or a big investor in the drug and hospital supply companies, you're doing alright with the ‘crisis in health care’! Clearly, the capitalist system of delivering health care is a boon for the rich and a disaster for the rest of us! □

## CIA agents, out of the classroom!

Students and faculty at Seattle University, a Catholic school, were up in arms in July over the teaching appointment of a CIA agent, Thomas Lauer. They formed a group called "Seattle CIA off Campus Coalition". The faculty senate itself voted against Lauer. And in mid-September the administration gave up, and dropped the CIA agent from the staff.

Provost John Eshelman said: "Very simply, we continued to assess the situation and came to the conclusion that the potential difficult situation for Dr. Lauer and the disruption to the educational process here were just greater than the value of having Dr. Lauer here for a few courses." Translated, the administration sees nothing wrong with having

students indoctrinated by the CIA, but the prospect of campus protest made it a "potentially difficult situation." As Eshelman admitted: "There were indications there would be protest demonstrations".

But CIA agents continue to teach at other schools under the CIA's officer-in-residence program. It began in 1985 with the purpose of getting the CIA more accepted by students and the academic world. Lauer, and presumably the other agents, are paid by the CIA for their time at the colleges. Thus their "teaching" is a paid CIA assignment. At least 11 other CIA agents are known to be involved, and this does not include clandestine CIA contacts with schools, which are far more extensive than this. □

## Gus Hall looks to the heavens for salvation

*A comrade from Chicago sends us the following wry comment:*

Gus Hall [of the 'Communist' Party, USA, which defended all the revisionist, state-capitalist regimes as "socialist"] made one of his rare public appearances, here in Chicago last week. Since *The Workers' Advocate* has been carrying a lot of news and analysis on the collapse of the revisionist regimes of Eastern Europe, I thought you might be interested in what the leader of the CPUSA has to say. I got this from some friends who went. They said that most of his speech was in his paper, *People's Weekly World*. You may want to check it out.

Briefly, there's two crises in the world: the crisis of capitalism and the crisis of socialism. The crisis of socialism doesn't have anything to do with the crisis of capitalism. Capitalism is a doomed system. The crisis of socialism stems from bad management.

His speech was peppered with many gems, like that we should look to North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba as the last bastions of this socialism. He came across as a demoralized man looking for hope where he can find it. But in his desperate search for hope, planet Earth isn't sufficient. Here's a gem that didn't make it into the paper. Gus Hall lectured his audience on some lessons from astronomy. Astronomers tell us that there must be trillions of inhabited

worlds in the universe. He is certain that on none of them do they allow capitalism to exist. Earth is an oddball planet. He fully expects the rest of the universe to form an inter-planetary brigade to straighten us out.

And all this time, Gus Hall's been a closet Trekki. Have we been wrong calling him a revisionist when he's been handing us Star Trek Socialism? But Capt. Gus, aren't you forgetting the *Prime Directive* — noninterference in a planet's natural development!?! Perhaps he expects the Communists from the Red Planet to be just like "our" imperialism, to spout pretty principles, then interfere, dominate, bully and terrorize anyway.

I heard this tale [from friends who went to hear Gus Hall] in a fitting setting. While Gus drifts off into outer space, content to wait for an Interplanetary Red Brigade to save him, a couple hundred of us were out in front of the American Women's Health Center, confronting a bunch of anti-choice fanatics. We're looking to the class struggle, right here on planet Earth, to settle our scores with our age old oppressors. This is our hope.

Best regards,  
M., Chicago

P.S. If you're not interested in this bit, I was thinking of sending it to the *National Inquirer*. □

# The economic situation, and the mass movement, in the Dominican Republic

*Comrade Ernesto from New York visited the Dominican Republic earlier this year. Below are his observations and views, edited for publication.*

The condition of the masses has worsened. The prices of basic consumer goods—food, clothing, shoes, utilities, etc.—has almost tripled in the last year. A basket of goods to cover the basic needs of housing, food, clothing, utilities and transportation for a family of four, according to analysts that I have had the opportunity to see, costs nearly eight thousand Dominican pesos a month. The monthly wage for government employees is six hundred Dominican pesos.

The gap between family needs and family income continues to widen. And the tendency is to get worse. In particular, with the imminent signing of a new agreement between the Balaguer government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the masses can expect nothing but higher prices and more unemployment.

Recently, however, there has been what one may call an improvement in the exchange rate of the Dominican peso as compared to the U.S. dollar. Some five months ago, the official rate was \$12.50 Dominican pesos per dollar, while the black market would pay even \$15.00 Dominican pesos per dollar. But there has been a decrease in the rate. Even though the official rate remains the same, the black market won't pay more than \$12.50, and on certain days it may pay less. The day before my departure, private banks were paying \$12.30 pesos, \$0.20 pesos less than the official rate.

What has been the impact on the economy of this temporary recovery of the Dominican peso? There has been a reduction for certain goods, like construction materials. For example, a bag of 96 pounds of construction cement costs \$48.00 Dominican pesos on the average, compared to \$60.00 Dominican pesos some seven months ago.

As far as basic goods, like rice, milk, beans, plantains and other agricultural produce, there has been what seems to be a temporary stabilization of prices the last two months. However, the fact remains that today's prices of basic goods are about triple what they were a year ago.

As well, the basic utilities services continue to be chaotic. Water is scarce and the supply of electrical power continues to be in crisis. This last fact is important, given that the government tried to blame the electricians' national union (SITRACODE), for the crisis in electricity, and used this as a pretext to justify firing over 2,300 electrical workers last year. In this regard, I should add that some of the charges made by the government against many of the leaders of the electricians' union were true, accord-

ing to some people that I talked to. A bureaucracy was building in SITRACODE. Some of the leaders had special privileges like official cars and handguns assigned to them. There was some corruption in the sense that some leaders were playboys, having two and three girlfriends. This last aspect may sound irrelevant but has been used by the official propaganda against the union. These were charges, although exaggerated by the government, that some union leaders were using the union and official vehicles and facilities for personal use.

This brings us to the question of the situation of the trade union movement and the popular movement, as part of the political situation.

After the heavy blow to the workers movement of the destruction of the telephone union in the mid-1980s, by combined action of the government, imperialist ITT (proprietor of the telephone company), and the rotten policies of PCT (Communist Party of Labor), the hopes of the militant workers were centered around SITRACODE.

The destruction of this union has put the workers movement totally on the defensive. Union busting has become the norm, and the remaining organization among the major industries, the minor sector for example, has turned very passive, and are subject to the dictates of the official opposition, such as (Juan Bosch's Dominican Party of Liberation) PLD and the (one-time ruling party, the social-democratic Dominican Revolutionary Party) PRD, which have more influence than others. But even their influence is not decisive. Disorganization and frustration reign among the workers.

As a result of the demoralization brought by the disappearance of the most militant trade unions, the trade union associations like CGT, CUT (associated with PCT), CTM (associated with the PLD), UGTD (associated with PRD), etc., have lost almost every aspect of real workers' representation. There is no life in them. What remains of them are small groups of activists with organizational ties with the left or the official opposition.

Finding themselves without a rank and file to base their work on, the above trade union associations decided several months ago to form a single trade union federation, and that's how the United Workers Association (Central de Trabajadores Unitaria, the CTU) came to be. This organization was a formal compromise between the left and the official opposition. The current president of CTU is a PRD guy, Jacinto de los Santos. His presidency will last for the first year, and then he will be replaced by, I think, Nelsida Marmolejos, a PLD woman and legislative representative. Thereafter, someone else, probably from the left (perhaps

the PCT or PTD) will take the presidency.

Aside from the CTU, there is still a small faction of the CGT (without ties to the workers), and two similarly lifeless entities called CASC and CNTD, this last one with ties to the AFL-CIO.

The CTU, however, is the one with most militancy to it. The CTU was the one behind the last two general strikes, along with the Coordinadora Nacional Popular (the part of the popular movement at the hands of the PCT). These strikes counted on the support of another part of the popular movement at the hands of a PTD faction, named the Collective of Popular Organizations (El Colectivo de Organizaciones Populares). The last few years have seen a series of general strikes, most of which have been effective in stopping the economy for several days. However, that's all there has been to them. They have not been able to get the government to give into the basic demands put forward by the movement, for several reasons. Among them is that the leaders of the movement are very reformist, and in many instances have negotiated with the government to end the strikes based on promises made by the president. The masses can see almost nothing as a result of these general strikes. A sense of frustration and of having been sold out by the leaders of the movement have spread widely among the population.

But given that the living conditions of the masses have worsened so much in the last few years, they still respond to certain calls to fight the policies of the Balaguer regime. That's why there were two successful general strikes in the first two weeks of July, the first called by El Colectivo, and the second by CTU and La Coordinadora. This second strike was called for an indefinite period of time: it would force Balaguer to give in or the country would remain paralyzed. From what I gathered, it seems like the people got ready for this general strike. People bought as much food and other basic supplies as they could, and the mood was good.

But just after the strike got under way the organizers said that the strike was going to be only for 48 hours, July 9 and 10.

After the people spent almost everything they had to get ready for this strike, and got no results, the frustration became general. Almost everywhere I went the people expressed doubts about the leaders of the CTU and of the popular movement in general. They suggested that the leaders sold them out, that the leaders called off the strike in exchange for personal favors from the government.

It was obvious that the general strike called for July 29, 30, and 31 was not going to be successful. Even some people from the movement, who I saw two days before the strike, anticipated a failure. But everyone was hoping that a miracle would take place. Why do I say a miracle? Because this was the least organized strike I ever saw. There was not a single leaflet to be seen anywhere agitating for the strike. Not a demonstration, not a picket line. Given that the strike of July 9 and 10 was successful, it seems like the organizers thought that they actually had

the power to strike for the third time in a month. They based themselves on a press conference held right after the previous strike, when they announced the one for July 29-31. They lost contact with the people, and they harvested failure.

On July 29th, things were about 50% of normal in Santo Domingo. In some other cities, the strike was about 70% effective. But in most places it was a total fiasco. By early morning on the 30th, everything was normal everywhere, and the organizers were forced to call a press conference "to call off the strike." The fact is that the strike called itself off. Two days after the aborted strike, I saw a friend of mine who is in PRD and one of the cadres of a section of the popular movement oriented towards the PRD called the Committees of Popular Action (Juntas de Accion Popular, JUNTAPO). My friend told me that inside the Executive Committee of PRD there was a lot of debate the day before over whether to go ahead with the strike or call it off. Some PRD leaders had the feeling that things were not going well, and suggested that they could use the fact that the doctors' strike, which had been going on for about two and a half months already, was about, after some negotiations with the government, to come to an end. They would say that the movement was going to call off the strike to give negotiations a chance, and would still be in a good position. But Jacinto de los Santos, president of the CTU and spokesperson for the Strike Committee, insisted on maintaining the call to strike. That position prevailed. And the results are already known.

The same friend of mine told me that people in CTU from the left and PLD also had some doubts about the possibilities of the strike to be successful. But no one wanted to be accused of hesitation. That's what he said.

The failure of this strike has increased the sense of frustration in the people, and I think that it is going to take some time before the movement can recover from this.

With this failure, Balaguer has scored a victory against the workers and the popular movements, as well as against the official opposition. This doesn't mean that Balaguer is more popular among the people than he was before the last two strikes. It simply leaves a temporary vacuum in the movement, which Balaguer will try to use to discredit the workers and popular movements as a whole. The people have the same hatred for Balaguer. The question is that the movement will have to reevaluate its tactics.

One aspect of the tactics that I think plays a role in all this, which I mentioned to you more than a year ago in another report on a trip to the Dominican Republic, is what seems to me to be an abuse of strike tactics on the part of the Dominican movement. Also the form that the strikes have taken during the last five years. Too many strikes take place, and they are called off without achieving the goals or demands of the people. The strikes have taken a totally passive character. Today the strikes are not called as a way of mobilizing the people against the policies of the government. The orientation is that people should stay in their homes, period.

That orientation has a good deal to do with the reformist policies of the left and the influence of the liberal official opposition in the workers' and popular movement. The left is not interested in waging a real struggle against the government and plays into Balaguer's game, which accuses the movement of conspiring against his regime each time there is some motion in the workers' and popular movements. Hence, in order not to be accused of conspiring against the government, they have a strike, but a passive one. The left have renounced actually mobilizing the people into the streets. It seems like the demonstrations, pickets, marches and other forms of mass mobilization were things of the past. The slogans of the movement are totally reformist. Since for them revolution is a question of the past, all revolutionary slogans have become antiquated for the workers' and popular movements.

A final note on the PCT.

In the same measure that their politics have become more and more rotten, their organization has dismembered. A significant number of their cadres have abandoned them and have gone to the PRD, in particular, they are joining the section of the popular movement with a PRD orientation, namely, JUNTAPO. Things have gotten to the point where, for example, a cadre who I talked to, with more than twenty years in MPD and then PCT, put it this way: "Well, I am getting old, this is getting nowhere" and showed no interest in talking politics. And I was told that this is the attitude with a good number of them. One of PCT's better known activists in the workers' movement, who was one of the leaders of SITRACODE, has abandon-

ed PCT and turned totally passive.

It is important to note that PCT does not have a paper, despite having functioning printing installations. They are using them as any other profit-making business. It seems to me that they no longer have the excuse of lacking printing facilities to publish *Lucha*, it is clearly an expression of their ideological bankruptcy.

The popular movement is where PCT has been strongest in the last few years, and their main representative and spokeswoman for La Coordinadora, Virtudes Alvares, is pretty much discredited among the masses. One reason for this is the stand of PCT in the popular movement, every day more reformist, and another is Virtudes, after becoming a well-known personality, has been targeted by Balaguer for compliments. For example, in a nationally televised speech about a year ago, Balaguer referred to Virtudes as an example for Dominican women. PCT didn't respond to that as strongly as they should have, and the people began to suspect her. What should people expect of a person who Balaguer referred to as an example? And also, during the general elections of 1990, PCT ran with Virtudes leading a front organization that they created just to take part in the elections. As a result, they were favored with vehicles and money, which they were entitled to according to Dominican electoral law, but there have been insistent rumors among the masses, accusing Virtudes of personally benefiting from all this. For example, it is said that she kept one of these vehicles, a Jeep, of a type that is seen as luxurious in the Dominican Republic. And people see this, and mention it, and begin to feel apart from her. □

## Lying to the people

Last December 12, the liberal *Philadelphia Inquirer* published an editorial *Poverty and Norplant—can contraception reduce the underclass?* It suggested that the way to reduce poverty is to stop the poor from having children. It blamed black poverty on poor blacks having children. (See 'Pro-family' paper against the poor having families in the January 1 issue of *The Workers' Advocate*.) Faced with a wave of denunciation for racism, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* apologized.

Now, however, David R. Boldt, the man responsible for the editorial page of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, admits that the *Inquirer's* apology was a lie. (*Detroit Free Press*, Sept. 18) He went to a two-day seminar on "political correctness" at the American Press Institute in Reston, Virginia, and boasted that others are coming to his way of thinking, including the governor of California.

Why, then, did the *Inquirer* apologize? Just to stop people from denouncing its racism. As he put it, "I went along with the abject nature of the apology because I feared that the emotional temperatures surrounding the issue had gotten so high that no one was paying attention to what we were really saying." But, he says, some other

establishment journalists are denouncing the *Inquirer* "for cowardice under fire, which, on recent reflection, we may deserve."

Boldt believes that all he has to do to justify the *Inquirer's* racist and antipeople editorial is sound off against "political correctness." Oh, the ruling class newspapers can get up on their high horse about the free exchange of ideas, but when the working masses challenge their prejudices and distortions, they proudly say they don't have to be "politically correct." They won't bow down to anyone—except the interests of the privileged few, the prejudices of the advertisers and businessmen, and the demands of the ruling class establishment.

The newspapers in this country are published in the interests of the rich. When they are caught inciting atrocities against the people, they are quite willing to lie in order to lower "the emotional temperatures." The working people and activists need their own press. We need leaflets and papers, such as *The Workers' Advocate*, which tell the truth about the exploitation and corruption in this country. We need to make things hot for the racists, exploiters, and liars in this country. □

# “People’s Age”--a new, revolutionary journal from Bangladesh

On July 1, 1991, *Janajug* (People’s Age), a new national journal was launched in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Published in the Bengali language, it is expected come out every two weeks. The magazine is produced by activists of the Democratic Revolutionary Front.

The first edition of *People’s Age* carried the following description of its editorial policy:

“Here is the first edition of *People’s Age*.

“As a political journal, *People’s Age* will represent the interests of the working people of Bangladesh and the rest of the world. Towards that end, the journal will carry reports, discussion and analysis: on the real-life conditions of the masses and the nature of the problems they face; on the character of the domestic and international forces oppressing and exploiting them, and the relations among them; on the conditions and organizations of the workers, peasants and other laboring people and the path to resolve those problems; and, above all, about the need for fundamental change in the social and economic relations in our country.

“In this country, the economic and political domination of the commercial bourgeoisie has been established and, in an inseparable link with imperialism, they are exploiting and oppressing the working people. This oppression is not being blocked by any governmental changes within the existing socio-economic framework. On this there is no difference between the former military rule or the present ‘democratic’ government established through impartial elections. That is because they both represent the very same economic and political interests.

“Therefore, we believe that the essential aim of the democratic movement in this country is not a change in government but a fundamental change in the current socio-economic system. Our editorial policy is to give every support we can to the political movement necessary to attain that goal.” (Translated by the *Workers’ Advocate* staff.)

## Highlights of the first two issues

The focus of the first edition was on issues raised by the cyclone disaster which struck Bangladesh on April 29. That cyclone took several hundred thousand lives. Several articles took issue with the idea that such large-scale deaths were simply a matter of nature’s course. They pointed to the antiquated warning system, lack of adequate shelters, and the absence of an organized relief apparatus. The journal blamed these on the capitalist government and its dependency on imperialism. It concluded that without ousting the

exploiters form power, the cycle of death that ravages Bangladesh will continue.

The July 1 issue also covered the new civilian government installed last spring in an article titled *BNP’s civilian despotism*. Another article discussed the need for the Workers and Employees Unity Council, the alliance of most of the workers’ organizations in the country, to return to renewed struggle on behalf of the interests of the working class. These articles exposed the fraud promoted by the bourgeois establishment of a democracy that supposedly benefits all classes in society. They pointed out that while the new government rode in on the struggles of the working people against the Ershad military dictatorship, their actual policies have only favored the rich while spurning the needs of the masses.

Bangladesh just went through a political discussion on constitutional reform (whether to have a parliamentary or presidential system). A referendum ratified the plan for a parliamentary order. In two articles in its August issue, *People’s Age* brought out that behind the alternatives espoused by the government and the bourgeois opposition stand the very same class interests—of the businessmen, bureaucrats, and the military chieftains.

The magazine carries reports on conditions facing the workers. One article carried a description of the horrifying conditions facing the women workers at Bengal Fine Ceramics Industries plant outside Dhaka. Another covered the severe oppression of workers and union activists at plants belonging to Bengal Glass Works.

Movement news is a regular column in *People’s Age*. It covered protest actions by fishermen in Bajitpur; lockouts and repression of the workers’ movement in an industrial district in Jessore; and a recent struggle by book bindery workers.

Besides news about workers and toilers, *People’s Age* has also discussed campus issues, the oppression of women, and is serializing the conclusions of an international commission which investigated the widescale violation by the Bangladesh government and military of the human rights of minority people in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

*People’s Age* also provides coverage of international news from the perspective of working people. The first issue covered the economic crisis in the U.S. and carried reports on various protests and strikes against budget cuts. In its second issue, the magazine analyzed the third world debt crisis. Another article discussed the religious violence in India sparked by the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP); this piece also brought out that the reformist, so-called communist parties in India also shared responsibility for boosting BJP’s fortunes since not too long ago they were working in a political alliance with this right-wing

party. *People's Age* also reprinted several items on the situation facing workers in Latin America, eastern Germany, and New Zealand translated from the *Workers' Advocate*. *People's Age* can be contacted at

Janajug  
68/2 Purana Paltan  
Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh. □

## Hurricane deaths need not have been

On April 29, a devastating hurricane struck the coast of Bangladesh. It blew in at over 150 miles per hour, accompanied by 20-foot tidal waves, and ended up killing several hundred thousand people.

Such destructive storms are becoming more common in Bangladesh. The last storm of a magnitude similar to this year's hit in 1970, taking 500,000 lives. That cyclone strengthened the Bengali people's hatred for the government of Pakistan and fueled the desire for independence; the Pakistani government had taken a half-hearted approach to the needs of the storm-stricken millions.

Do the hurricanes assaulting Bangladesh have to result in the tremendous loss of life that they usually bring? Two articles in the July 1 issue of the Bangladesh journal *People's Age* take issue with the idea that the deaths of hundreds of thousands is simply a matter of nature's course.

One article brought out that the early warning system is antiquated and gives a misleading picture to the masses of the approaching storms. For example, the warning declarations refer to the strength of storms due to hit sea and river ports, but there are no declarations which warn people beyond the ports as to how dangerous the storms approaching them are. And the declarations do not let people know about the full potential of approaching storms.

The article also discussed the lack of shelters. Some 10 million people live in the low-lying areas in the southern part of the country. These people face a difficult battle for survival every day, but there are simply no shelters to save most of them from hurricanes. At most some 800,000 may be able to find shelters. After the 1985 storm, over \$100 million in aid came into the country, but not even 10% of that money was spent on building shelters to save lives. Fancy plans are announced, but little is ever done.

*People's Age* brings out that the large-scale deaths are the result of the failure of the existing social and economic system. It concludes that

"People want security. But this socio-economic system keeps people living without security. We count corpses, while this system allows the exploiters to count their money. It is possible to save hundreds of thousands of lives by ousting the exploiters — otherwise the cycle of death will continue."

Another article in the journal discussed the inadequacy of official relief efforts in the face of the April cyclone. The people were given paltry band-aids in the face of massive devastation. The article brought out that both the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the opposition Awami League (AL) see relief work as simply means to acquire political advantage for their political parties.

This article presented the opinion that Bangladesh, a country prone to natural calamities, requires an organized and well-equipped relief apparatus, much like a fire brigade. Such an institution would be responsible for building emergency shelters, communications networks, relief supply networks, etc. However, all the bourgeois governments since independence in 1971 — AL or BNP or otherwise — have failed to establish such a relief mechanism.

*People's Age* gives the view that the capitalist governments in Bangladesh are incapable of setting up such a system, because they are dependent on imperialism — and imperialism prefers to garner political capital for itself as the oh-so-generous savior of the helpless masses. The article concluded that the people have to recognize that how disaster relief is organized is not separate from the existing capitalist system and will only be improved by a society free from the profit-based economy and imperialist control.

Yet another article in the magazine discussed the cyclone and the politics of religion. This described how in the face of the cyclone, the right-wing forces are using religious obfuscation to expand their political advantage. Former dictator Ershad, who had taken religious politics to new levels of hypocrisy, announced from his jail cell that the cyclone was god's retribution for his removal. The present BNP government is also carrying forward Ershad-style religious politics. One of their leaders announced that the cyclone was just an act of god. This was to divert people away from indicting the BNP's own irresponsibility in the face of the disaster.

In its column covering movement news, *People's Age* also carries a report on relief activities by the Democratic Revolutionary Front and describes protest actions held by DRF in May against the bringing in of U.S. military forces into the country under the pretext of cyclone relief. □

# What Bangladesh migrants face in Saudi Arabia

Around the world some 20 million working people are migrants these days. Unlike prior waves of emigration, most migrants today are "guest workers" or contract laborers. They are not allowed to seek residence in the lands where they go to work, and they are subject to severe abuse and exploitation.

The last two decades have seen a huge number of people from the most poverty-stricken countries of Asia traveling to jobs in the Middle East. Many are from Bangladesh. The July issue of *People's Age* carries a letter from a Bengali migrant in Saudi Arabia describing some of the conditions there.

"In Saudi Arabia, migrant workers are being deprived of their rights and opportunities in many ways. Quite routinely the local companies do not pay the monthly wages owed to workers coming from Bangladesh and other Asian and African countries.

"Besides, the hours of work are not based on international labor laws. It is mandatory to work 10 hours a day but no pay is given for the overtime work. If any workers demand the pay owed to them, the authorities proceed to fire them from their jobs.

"At certain times ordinary workers and employees have protested these oppressive policies through work

stoppages.

"It is noteworthy that the embassies are not interested to take any initiatives on behalf of the ordinary workers and employees. If workers try to get relief from their oppression by appealing to Saudi labor courts, not only do they not get justice but those workers who get known as workers' leaders are fired and deported back to their countries. Their paychecks or other money owed to them are confiscated."

The letter to *People's Age* also reports that while the Saudi monarchy bans all political activity, they nevertheless give free rein to the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami party to pressure migrant Bengali workers into financially supporting them. The Jamaat is the main Islamic fundamentalist party in Bangladesh. It is an extreme right-wing party which has long been supported by Saudi petrodollars. In 1971 it was a notorious for joining with the Pakistani military in murderous assaults against the Bengali masses during the struggle for independence from Pakistan. The Jamaat has since been rehabilitated by successive bourgeois governments in Bangladesh. It campaigns for a right-wing, religious dictatorship in the country. Revolutionary democrats in Bangladesh see the struggle against the Islamic fundamentalists as an important political task. □

## What about a demonstration against the massacre of the Kurds?

*The following is from the letters to the editor section of the May-June issue of Política Operária. It was replied to in the same issue with the article "Why we don't demonstrate for the Kurds", which we also reprint, starting on the next page. The translation into English is ours. For our views on the issue raised by this letter and Política Operária's reply, see page 17.*

I was not in agreement with the positions of P.O. [on the Gulf war]. It seems to me that, once again, an old recipe was taken out of the drawer that is not applicable in the present: the classical pattern is being presented of imperialist war, which through an anti-imperialist reaction, would lead us to revolution. It was true at the beginning of the century; today many things have been reversed. It is one thing to take a stand against capitalist war and against those fundamental class interests, to sound the alarm over the massacre of the Iraqi people, to criticize the ideological justifications given for intervention ("international law"). It is another thing to act as if nothing fundamental happened in inter-capitalist relations after 1920!

After having analyzed the imperialism of his epoch, Vladimir L. had concluded that they were on the eve of the social revolution of the proletariat. Where are we today? What is the economic nature of the current form of imperialism? What relation can there be today between these adventurous wars and the social revolution? In the epoch of the crumbling of State capitalism, what does it mean to be anti-imperialist? If the ruling classes of the peripheral countries can no longer align themselves with one of the blocs against the other, what is the future of the orthodox anti-imperialist ideology? How is the social question related to these realignments? Concretely, what is the nature of the Baathist regime in Iraq, which was, for years, a mercenary of Western capitalism against the Iranian revolution (I am saying the revolution, not the Islamic regime)? And if Mr. Saddam were a man of the Western bloc transformed into a pretext? That is a supposition

which could be argued and which alters a lot of things.

Contrary to what you say, the regime of Saddam is also our enemy; from a class point of view, first of all, to the degree that he is a perfect product of the capitalist system. Like all the other leaders and regimes of the "Third World".

And if the war were a direct consequence of the Western capitalist contradictions, of the decline of American capitalism? And if the main object of this capitalism were to impose its political domination on its own "allies", much more than the control of the petroleum of the Gulf (where normal production is, in any case, paralyzed for a good number of years)?

There are so many investigations and so many questions that need debate. Once more, I fear that it is necessary to begin with the principle that this is a new epoch. What if we put the old slogans and schemes on the shelf and we put our brains to work. It's not as easy, it requires more work, but it is the only solution!

Regardless, the Iraqi people paid with blood and are continuing to pay! "Mister Mau", enemy of all the democracies and of international law, continues there; on this occasion, massacring on his own account. Now that the Baath regime continues to repress the people with the troops and arms which the Westerners left intact on purpose (the air force which had "disappeared" during the war), where is the "left" and the "extreme left" which was demonstrating a few weeks ago? Or is it that this massacre is justified? And in the name of what anti-imperialist principles? It is curious that the current silence places anew the majority of the anti-imperialists of yesterday on the same side with those who supported the war! All are helping, side by side with the Western troops who are present on [Iraqi] terrain, the continuation of the massacre of the Iraqi people. A strange convergence of attitudes which makes relative all the agitation which preceded ... (...).

Jorge Valados—Paris □

# Why we don't demonstrate for the Kurds

*We have translated the following article from the May-June 1991 issue of **Política Operária**, journal of the Communist Organization—Workers' Politics (OCPO) of Portugal. For our views on the issue, see page 17.*

The last phase of the dark Gulf war, with a million Kurds fleeing the Iraqi repression and dying in the mountains, consolidated in the West the camp of "democratic" opinion which considered the military intervention conducted by the U.S. to be justified: could anyone thus doubt that Saddam was an implacable hangman of the people of his own country? And is it not finally the U.S. and the European powers which, in spite of their alleged "imperialism", came to the relief of the Kurdish people?

Also those who understand the position of the left in this conflict as an equal distancing from both camps judged that they saw in this new episode a proof of their theses. There are thus those who ask why we did not go the route of condemning the massacre of the Kurds by Saddam in the same form in which we had for three months condemned the American expedition against Iraq. If we are in the presence of crimes, are not the two crimes equal?

In fact, we don't think the two crimes are equal. What does exist is a gigantic publicity operation under cover of which the super-gangster cynically continues to shout against the crimes of the little gangster, in order to continue its own massacres in tranquility. The equidistance is, in this case, an armadillo. Even more so when our own country is nothing more than an obedient peon of the principal aggressor.

## A genocide waiting for judgment

Before we come out on the road of declaring ourselves in favor of the Kurds and against Iraq (and thus, whether we want to or not, in favor of America), it would be necessary for us to clarify some points.

Is it true that two or three hundred thousand Iraqi civilians died under the rubble caused by the most concentrated and devastating aerial bombardments in history and that this crime against humanity, of a size rarely equalled, is covered up deliberately thanks to the complicity of the great powers of the UN?

Is it true that, in spite of the hunger, the destruction, and the epidemics, Iraq continues to be under embargo from the UN, imposed by the U.S., when there is no longer justification, thus multiplying the effects of the genocide?

Is it true that 80,000-100,000 Iraqi soldiers were killed (according to Western calculations), massacred gratuitously while they fled, after Baghdad had accepted the resolutions of the UN Security Council? And that this was done just to "give a memorable lesson" to the Third World?

If the list of horrors attributed to Saddam's soldiers in Kuwait are not confirmed in the overwhelming majority of

cases, and, on the contrary, it does not equal the wave of tortures and summary executions after "liberation", should we not conclude that now in Kuwait there reigns a terror unleashed under American sponsorship?

Why is it that, contrary to what was promised during the war, Israel not only is not disposed to return the stolen lands but, on the contrary, accentuates its intransigence, its actions of repression and its colonization of the occupied territories, maintaining hundreds of thousands of Palestinians like cattle in concentration camps? Doesn't this mean that the American military victory gave a powerful impulse to Zionist fascism?

And if, four months after the end of the war, there are not indications of the promised democratization of the Gulf states allied with the U.S., is this not another confirmation that the victory of the "forces of democracy" was in reality a victory of the forces of fascism and of terrorism?

Why do more than seven thousand soldiers of the American expeditionary force continue to be stationed in the base at Dhahran, Saudi Arabia? Should we not conclude that one of the essential goals of the war was to establish a giant control tower for the U.S. in order to squash the slightest desire for resistance by the peoples of the regions?

As can be seen, the apparently sensible idea that "the one is as good as the other" in this case serves to tranquilize consciences, freeing them from the obligation of denouncing the monstrous crimes of American imperialism.

## Humanitarian spectacle

Many of the persons who believed that the war had democratic objectives, found themselves, in the past few weeks, bitterly censuring Bush for not having carried his intervention through to the end, overthrowing Saddam and liberating the Iraqis and the Kurds. "If the objective is to establish a more just and more democratic new world order, then the U.S. must utilize to the end the 'right of intervention' in Iraq, not being held back by legalisms," they protested.

It is a good argument, in spite of the stupidity of those who believe in it. In fact, the American government didn't do this because this was never its objective. The rising of the Kurdish nationalist forces was encouraged (as with the rising of the Shiites in the South), with the view toward precipitating a military coup d'état which was judged to be imminent in Baghdad. The U.S. knew that the hypotheses of success of this uprising were more than problematical because the Iraqi army would not cease smashing the rebels in order to avenge itself for the defeat it suffered; the U.S. knew that it was deceiving the Kurds since there exists a general agreement of the powers not to permit the establishment of a Kurdish state; it knew that this new conflict, coming up after the terror of four months of massive

bombardment would unleash an uncontrollable panic in the public, with innumerable victims, but they did not deal with such considerations.

After several weeks, since the anti-Saddam coup didn't take place and the dismembering of Iraq did not coincide with the Western interests, the Kurdish guerrillas were abandoned to their fate; which produced optimal images of horror for television and permitted the appearance of the tired Western exercises in humanitarian aid to the hungry of the Third World, who spend their time in killing each other.

### What do the Kurds think?

The paper *Worker Today*, which is published in Stockholm, put out an article in its edition of May 13, under the title "The Iraqi Kurds, victims of the new world order", which seems to us to be of interest, given that its author, Reza Moqaddam, is linked with Komala, the revolutionary armed resistance movement of the Kurds.

"At the beginning of the Gulf War," said the article, "the U.S. and its allies sent a warning to the Kurdish leaders: 'Don't bet on the wrong horse!' But when they saw that they were on top of the situation, they didn't want to know about these leaders and they allowed the people of Kurdistan to fall into the hands of the Iraqi army, which was defeated, wounded, and seeking revenge."

"There has never before been a relation of forces so favorable for the Kurdish movement in relation to the central government of Iraq. Never before has the Kurdish movement occupied such a vast region. Never before has it been so strong from the military point of view, in numeric terms (hundreds of thousands) or in armaments (artillery, tanks, and even planes). On the other side, the Iraqi government was at its lowest point, having its army in disarray and the country in chaos. How was it possible to make the Kurdish forces leave its cities?"

"Only one thing can explain this fact: the idea which dominates in Kurdish nationalism, that without imperialist support it can not win. For years the Kurdish nationalist leaders worked to obtain the support of the imperialist powers, under the argument that without this condition victory was impossible. It was due to this logic that the Kurdish regime, freed within a few days, never offered resistance."

"Now the Kurdish nationalists explain the situation as the result of 'treason'. As if the rights of the oppressed nations could be restored in the new world order of Bush! As if it were the wish of the Iraqi opposition to enter the presidential palace in Baghdad on the coattails of the American army. The Kurdish people of Iraq were victims of these monumental illusions."

This testimony confirms the idea that in the current drama of the Kurdish people, the principal responsibility

falls, once again, on the Pentagon, the same one which, without shame, accuses Saddam of being a demon. We don't have any doubts about affirming this, in spite of the fact that it will cost us, from the side of some hurried democrats, new accusations of "saddamism". The history of U.S. ambushes of the Kurds is not new.

### A history of the 70s

The tricking of the Kurds, abandoned to their fate after being instigated by the U.S. to rebel, brings to light a similar episode which occurred about two decades ago. In a few words, it was a true history related by the columnist Pike, a secret document revealed in April by the Washington Post and which has, since then, gone around the world.

In May of 1972 the Shah of Iran, who was involved in a border conflict with Iraq, asked the U.S. to arm and finance an insurrection of Iraqi Kurds in order to create difficulties for the Baghdad regime. The regime of the Shah was, at the time, the main support of the CIA in the region and Nixon and Kissinger approved the proposal. A clandestine plan of action was elaborated, to the cost of \$16,000,000, which supplied the guerrillas with arms furnished by Israel.

For three years the Kurds fought the Iraqi army, suffering terrible losses; a proposal from the Iraqi government for negotiations on a law of autonomy was rejected by the Kurds, on the advice of the CIA, which at the same time blocked them from launching a large scale offensive. The strategy consisted of, the columnist Pike explained, "maintaining the hostilities at a level which would minimize the resources" of Iraq.

However, contacts were taking place between Iran and Iraq to put an end to the border conflict. The CIA, knowing this fact, not only did not inform the guerrillas but incited them to continue the combat, in order to give more triumphs to the Shah in the negotiations with the Iraqi government. On March 9, 1975, the peace treaty was signed between the two belligerents; immediately all the support to the Kurds was cut off and they suffered the effects in a vast operation of liquidation launched by the Iraqi army. Of the 200,000 Kurds who sought refuge on the Iranian side of the border at least 40,000 were turned over to Iraq. "We are under the threat of complete destruction," Barzani, the Kurdish commander complained to the CIA, "and we were not given any explanation for all this . . ."

The Americans were never concerned about the loss of human life caused by their maneuvers. They were hardly even interested in keeping their duplicity in the dark. "If we had done nothing to aid the Kurds," the CIA chief in Teheran wrote on April 10, 1975, "we can be sure that the massacre would not have been allowed without their recounting the tragedy to the whole world." Silence was purchased cheaply. The guerrilla leader, Barzani, who was gravely ill, was secretly taken to the U.S. for treatment under a deal not to make any statements hostile to the American government. He died there in 1979. It fell to his

son, Massud Barzani, to lead the Kurds in a new insurrection two months ago, but once again to be stabbed in the back by the American government.

### Can one be a revolutionary without being anti-Imperialist?

Our position in relation to this war has never been easy. Even in the left our refusal to join the chorus against the "new Hitler" provoked hostile reactions. We were accused of "Maoism", "Three-worldism", "frontism", or coverers of bloody bourgeoisies on the pretext of anti-imperialist unity. The truth is, however, that we never attempted to find any merits in the dictator Saddam Hussein, neither before nor during the war; we just rejected any position which would weaken in the least our antagonism to the imperialist aggressor, because this was the key question for an alignment of the left.

And if this put us temporarily in conflict with the state

of spirit of the large masses of the workers in our country, in contrast it aligned us with the Arab masses and with the abandoned of the Third World. These never had a doubt that imperialism is their hangman.

There could be someone who would think that our position was quixotic since nothing in it could have any practical influence over the development of events. We don't think that way. Similar struggles will arise anew between imperialism and the peoples. To stand in all circumstances for the defeat of the imperialist camp, not to slide into the ambiguous criticism of the "excesses" of imperialism which ends up making concessions to imperialist ideology, this is the essential thing for giving life to a new left current which is communist and revolutionary. All splitting with bourgeois nationalism which is not seated on the firm foundation of anti-imperialism runs the risk of being reactionary.

Francisco Rodrigues

□

## Replying to the Portuguese communists: On the silence about the Iraqi Kurds

In recent months, the *Supplement* has been carrying an exchange of views with the comrades of the Communist Organization—Workers' Politics of Portugal (OCPO). So far the discussion has revolved around the Workers' Advocate editorial of January 1, 1990 *Tasks of workers' communism during the collapse of revisionism* and the OCPO comrades' article *Replying to the American communists*.

This time we take up a new issue. It involves the communist stand towards the recent Persian Gulf war.

In the May-June issue of OCPO's journal *Política Operária*, a reader from Paris wrote a letter asking "Why are there no demonstrations for the Kurds?" This question is answered in an article by comrade Francisco Rodrigues, who asserts that it was right not to have a public outcry in defense of the Iraqi Kurds. (*Both the letter and Francisco's reply appear on pp. 14-17 of this issue of the Supplement.*) He shows that this was the natural derivative of their viewpoint on the Persian Gulf war, in which OCPO condemned the U.S. imperialists but refrained from denouncing Saddam's regime in Iraq.

Comrade Francisco insists that to criticize the Iraqi regime meant help to imperialism. He writes: "Before we come out on the road of declaring ourselves in favor of the Kurds and against Iraq (and thus, whether we want to or not, in favor of America), it would be necessary for us

to clarify some points." (Emphasis added.) And he goes on to enumerate a list of the gross crimes of U.S. imperialism in the recent war. The same point is repeated in his conclusion: "...we never attempted to find any merits in the dictator Saddam Hussein, neither before nor during the war; we just rejected any position which would weaken in the least our antagonism to the imperialist aggressor, because this was the key question for an alignment of the left."

We have no quarrel with comrade Francisco's denunciation of the horrors of the U.S. war or its imperialist-aggressive aims in the Persian Gulf region. Although some of the casualty figures he gives — such as 2-300,000 civilians dead due to the bombing — are higher than any we have seen and probably exaggerated, nevertheless there is no doubt about the fact that the U.S. conducted its war in a brutal and inhuman fashion.

But the nature of the war cannot be answered by simply listing the Iraqi casualties. Or are we to judge the Iraqi regime by comparing the hundreds of thousands of Iranians and Iraqis it sacrificed or slaughtered in the Iran-Iraq war with the hundreds of thousands of Iraqi casualties in the Gulf War? Was it OK for Saddam Hussein to gamble the welfare of the Iraqi people on the occupation of Kuwait simply because it was the Pentagon that was the bloodiest

murderer with the bombing and blockade? And how can the anti-popular and oppressive nature of the Iraqi occupation regime be excused simply because U.S. war propaganda was hysterical and exaggerated and lying?

We find it saddening that comrade Francisco finds it necessary to forego any criticism of Saddam's regime as implying aid and comfort to the principal enemy. OCPO may not have sought any merits in Saddam, but why is it silent on the fact that Saddam's aims in this war were also reactionary and exploitative? Saddam was not just waging a war of defense against aggression; he was seeking regional hegemony for the Iraqi capitalist regime. And when he was massacring the Kurds, or the Shiite rebels in the south, he was not by any stretch of the imagination defending against imperialism; he was simply defending his oppressive regime against popular unrest, unrest which goes back many years.

### **Our stand**

The position of our organization was different. We fought hard against this war. We strongly campaigned against Bush's war drive, from the buildup and sanctions all the way to the war itself and the post-war "victory parades." We fought in the anti-war movement against the stands which weakened the struggle against "our own" imperialist rulers, such as illusions in the U.N. or support for sanctions.

However we did not consider Saddam's war as any type of liberation or defensive war against imperialism. Although the relative strength of Iraq vis-a-vis U.S. imperialism or its global coalition was small, this did not mean that there was any justice on Iraq's side in this war. In the final analysis, this was a reactionary war on both sides, between a global marauder and a would-be regional bully who had been groomed by imperialism until not so long ago. And we saw no problem in explaining this. It did not weaken the anti-war struggle here; rather it provided a clear-cut class analysis of the forces involved in the conflict and pointed to working people's upheavals against both sides as the real alternative to the sordid war over Kuwait and oil profits. It did not weaken our struggle to build a movement to overthrow our "own" U.S. capitalist ruling class, but prevented it from getting bogged down in a dead end. And it did not prevent us from holding that, here in the U.S., our chief enemy was our "own" imperialists.

From this standpoint, we opposed the massacre of the Kurds, and held both Bush and Saddam responsible. We supported the popular uprisings in Iraq; these rebellions showed that the working people inside Iraq did not support the tyrant in power. We believe that the mass rebellions deserved support by progressive and anti-imperialist forces, despite the rotten leadership by the Iraqi Kurdish nationalist parties who were willing to link up with imperialism. Their corrupt stand did not turn the Kurdish movement into an agency of imperialism, as OCPO tries to suggest.

### **The strawman of "equality"**

We do not see OCPO's logic that one had to be silent about one in order to be against the other. OCPO manages this logic by raising the issue that if one condemns or criticizes Saddam during this conflict, this somehow implies equality between the U.S. and Iraq.

This is a strawman. Communists should not shy away from forcefully condemning capitalist barbarism — no matter it be from a big power or a smaller one. However, the willingness to make such a condemnation implies nothing at all about the relative global significance of the two powers. Denouncing the war between Bush and Saddam as reactionary on both sides, or denouncing Saddam's crimes against the Kurds and Bush's brutality against the Iraqi people, imply nothing about whether or not the two sides are "equal" powers in the present-day world.

If comrade Francisco's logic is right, then the communist approach towards a war between two powers ought to be based on the relative size and power of the two sides in a conflict. If this were so, then confronted by wars between two reactionary powers, we would have to choose the "weaker" side to support (or at least to be silent about its aims and character). Thus in the Malvinas war between Argentina and Britain, we would have had to be silent about the goals of the fascist generals then in power in Buenos Aires. Or in the 1971 war between India and Pakistan, the right thing to do would have been to be silent towards the brutal oppression by Pakistan of the people of Bangladesh. But the Marxist approach towards wars has never been based on this kind of logic. Rather, it has been based on the question of what are the politics that a war is a continuation of, and what are the class forces involved.

### **Some additional justifications**

Two additional reasons are given to justify silence about the Kurds.

One is that some forces, confronted by Saddam's massacre of the Kurds, raised the demand that the U.S. should intervene on their behalf. Comrade Francisco correctly explains the U.S. didn't do this because it was never its intention to really support the Kurds — Bush was willing to egg the Kurds on but he was not for their victory.

However, OCPO fails to prove their case that just because some forces raised the cry for U.S. intervention, somehow this necessarily means that anyone in favor of the Kurds was for U.S. intervention. In fact there were a number of left-wing forces, including the MLP, who condemned the massacre of the Kurds without letting up on opposition to U.S. imperialism.

The other reason OCPO gives in its favor is to refer to the stand of the comrades of the Communist Party of Iran, which is known to represent the militant, toilers' wing of the Kurds in Iranian Kurdistan. Two articles have been

published by CPI comrades which place the onus for the massacre of the Kurds principally on U.S. imperialism and the Kurdish nationalist parties in Iraq.

We think that CPI was right to voice the outrage of the Kurds against the nationalist leaders who linked up with U.S. imperialism and again put the fate of the Kurdish struggle upon the good offices of the imperialist big powers. However, we don't think it was right for them to soften the condemnation of Saddam Hussein. CPI's stand, like OCPO's, negated that there was indeed a legitimate popular rebellion in Iraqi Kurdistan at the close of the U.S.-Iraq war. (For CPI's views and our response to them, see July 20 issue of the *Supplement*.)

### "Orthodox anti-imperialism"

Our criticism of the stand of OCPO doesn't mean that we agree with all the views of the reader from Paris who wrote to OCPO criticizing their refusal to defend the Kurds. We agree with his stand in defense of the Iraqi people against massacre by the Ba'ath regime, his denunciation of the regime of Saddam Hussein, and his demand for looking concretely at the situation, and not just applying old stereotypes.

However, for example, what he describes as the orthodox anti-imperialist ideology was not a correct anti-imperialist stand in the past either, nor a correct description of the best revolutionary theory, but one of the variants of the widespread three worldist outlook. He asks what should one do in the present "if the ruling classes of the peripheral countries can no longer align themselves with one of the blocs against the other, what is the future of the orthodox anti-imperialist ideology?"

But even back in 1920 there was a distinction between the social movement of the oppressed against imperialism, and the wheelings and dealings of whoever happened to be the ruling class. And more recently, those ruling classes of the "third world" which either took up state capitalist forms or spouted anti-imperialist rhetoric were not thereby automatically anti-imperialist heroes.

The collapse of revisionism, the shift of the "third world" ruling classes away from state capitalist models, etc. undoubtedly has a major effect on world developments. But the three worldist negation of the social movement in the "third world" helped paralyze the movement in the past. And the current developments will, in the final analysis, bring closer the day of the social revolution of the proletariat, even though for the time being we are living through a painful period of the collapse of movements and struggles from the past.

### Is this the way to break with the wrong traditions of the past?

The OCPO too, has the sentiment to overcome harmful

stereotypes from the past. In many of its statements of recent years, OCPO has made much of developing a new communist politics and style of work that is left and revolutionary and based on a radical rupture with the revisionist corruption of the past. This is a rightly felt sentiment of theirs, something we share with them and why we consider them our comrades. Unfortunately, however, on a series of issues, the comrades of OCPO are demonstrating an inability to really break with the erroneous traditions of the past. This is seen in their stand towards the Gulf war and the struggle of the Kurds.

In fact, in the left there is a long tradition in many circles of refusing to support the liberation struggle of the Kurds in Iran or Iraq under the pretext that either the main enemy was imperialism or social-imperialism, or under the excuse that the nationalist leaders were tainted with links to outside powers. Such was the stand of the Party of Labor of Albania.

In his book *Reflections on the Middle East*, Enver Hoxha wrote in a journal entry dated Sept. 17, 1979,

"As to the question of the Kurds, which is an acute problem in Iraq, it should be made clear to the Iraqis that Albania never interferes in the internal affairs of others, that it is for the unity of the state of Iraq and against the intrigues and intervention of the imperialist and revisionist powers in the internal affairs of that country." (p. 343, emphasis added)

Thus, in the name of Iraqi state unity, Enver negated the right to self-determination of the Kurds and implicitly condemned the Kurdish movement as an intrigue of imperialism.

In an item dated January 1980, he wrote in reference to Iran,

"Another obstacle which reaction is using to sabotage the revolution of the Iranian people is that of inciting feuds and raising the question of national minorities. Reaction is inciting the national sentiments in Azerbaijan, inciting the Kurds, etc. etc., in order to weaken this great anti-imperialist and 'pro-Moslem' uprising of the Iranian people. The incitement of national sentiments has been and is a weapon in the hands of imperialism and social-imperialism and all reaction to sabotage the anti-imperialist and national liberation wars." (p. 391-2)

OCPO has broken with the revisionism of the PLA, and one of the issues which inspired this break was precisely the PLA's fawning over the Khomeini regime in Iran in which the PLA condemned the Kurdish struggle there for disrupting the general struggle against imperialism which Khomeini was allegedly leading. Now, OCPO may not go as far as saluting Saddam as an anti-imperialist bulwark, but the underlying logic is not all that different: writing off the Kurdish struggle as a creature of imperialism and finding an anti-imperialist cause in the acts of the regime oppressing the Kurds. □

## Sources for Soviet history Continued from the front page

Albanian scholars who devoted the better part of the Brezhnev era to polemicizing against the stillborn Lieberman reforms of Khrushchov's time as though they were present-day fact.

Half a century ago, for lack of other possibilities, particle physicists engaged in "thought experiments". That is, they would imagine an experiment and then write a paper reporting their "results". Whatever place one may or may not give this method in quantum mechanics, it has none in the study of history. Lenin once observed that the living soul of Marxism is concrete analysis of a concrete situation. If one is to accept this dictum, then it follows that making historical analysis presupposes some grasp of historical fact, and a reasonably systematic grasp at that.

This explains the bias in the present bibliography toward works which may be of some factual merit. But to be of some merit is a long way from being gospel. All the authors listed below, be they mainstream bourgeois scholars, or the handful of syndicalists and trotskyites sprinkled among them, have their own axes to grind. And the presentation of history is not neatly divided into two sections, facts and axe. On the contrary, an author's ability to present his or her interpretation of history by "letting the facts speak for themselves" generally involves more than a little ventriloquy, and comes into play in the selection of facts for presentation as well as in the shaping and shading of that presentation.

The careful researcher must therefore pick his or her way through this minefield with caution. In the absence of a map this calls for the use of multiple independent sources (that is, sources which do not simply draw upon one another or upon a common third source), and a reasonable awareness of each author's particular biases; a keen awareness where those biases are more subtly manifested.

### Trends in Sovietology

Since the sources listed here are largely English-language works, it may be useful to note some of the trends in Anglo-American Sovietology as they have presented themselves thus far in this work.

Post-War Western Sovietology—especially in the U.S.—has been dominated by the "totalitarianism" school typified by the hacks of the Hoover Institute. This is a school of propagandists and ideologues notable chiefly for a surfeit of rabidity and a dearth of research. Its fundamental thesis is that the Soviet Revolution is essentially totalitarian from October 1917 onward. Hence, there is no development and change, no history to be studied, and no facts to be dug for. This leaves only two possible paths for the ambitious academic. One is to take part in the debate of interpretations. Is the essence of the October Revolution the Marxist doctrine of world

conquest? Or is it really Great Russian nationalism? Is communism godless atheism or a new religion? Etc., ad nauseam. The other path is to engage in fabrication in the best traditions of any Ministry of Truth. The method and spirit of the last are neatly captured in Robert Conquest's dictum: "basically the best, though not infallible, source is rumor." [1]

During the past two decades other trends of thought in Anglo-American Sovietology have emerged from the shadow of Cold War hysteria. These trends are often grouped under the common umbrella of the revisionist school, meaning a revision of the out-and-out Cold War dogmas.

Just as the ascendance of the Hoover-ite school corresponded to the hard-line tactics of U.S. imperialism in the Cold War, the rise of the revisionist school corresponds to the re-grouping in the 1960s and thereafter of an imperialist political trend opposed to the excesses of Cold War tactics and favoring more sophisticated policies in the tradition of Harriman, Kennan, et al. Just as the Hoover Institute has nurtured the trend associated with it, so too have an array of institutions nurtured the revisionist school. Among these are the Harriman Institute at Columbia University, which has underwritten the publication of a wide range of literature on Soviet society, including no less than a dozen of the titles appearing below.

To the extent that the revisionist school can be regarded as having a common thesis regarding Soviet history, it is that this history goes through various stages of change and development which the Hoover-ites not only cannot explain, but obscure with their prattle about "totalitarianism". To understand this history some attention is due to the social forces and tensions at work in the society. Beyond this, there is little agreement as to what these stages of development are, what is significant about them, and what brings about their coming into being and their passing away.

The trends grouped under the umbrella of the revisionist school share in common with the Hoover-ites a bourgeois world outlook. Among their collective work are to be found a more than reasonable representation of vacuity, distortion and anti-communist venom. This work is nonetheless of interest because it on the whole entails a degree of factual research which the work of the Hoover-ites does not. This does not mean that the conclusions of the revisionist scholars can be accepted, nor even that their presentation of the facts can simply be taken at face value. Nonetheless, this body of work offers something in the way of factual material to sift through.

A reasonably comprehensive presentation of the trends making up the revisionist school is beyond the scope of the present work. Here an effort will be made to sketch a few particulars which may prove of interest.

Mention should be made of the work of E.H. Carr. Carr's work, begun in the early 1950s, is too early to literally qualify as revisionist. But for that very reason Carr has informed or infuriated all those who have followed and therefore deserves mention.

Carr's work covers a decade or more of the history in some detail, making his 14 volumes an irreplaceable reference for a chronological overview. But Carr cannot be relied upon for a comprehensive and balanced picture of any one issue or period. This is due only in part to what may be limits imposed by so sweeping a coverage (e.g. relying too often on official documents, or even just his own sweeping pronouncements, in lieu of looking at what was actually taking place).

By no means pro-Bolshevik, Carr nonetheless finds himself able to sympathize more than a little with Trotsky. In no sense a Marxist-Leninist, Carr nonetheless fancies himself an authority on all theoretical questions. His idiosyncracies become especially marked, and his objectivity especially questionable, whenever he ventures into party affairs and ideological questions, and whenever he attempts to characterize the historical turning points and issues which become foci of inner-party debate. These subjects make up not a small part of the history, and this is therefore not a small criticism.

Carr found collaborators in the Birmingham group. The

focus of the Center for Russian and Eastern European Studies (CREES) at the University of Birmingham is economic history, and economic historians find it hard to ply their trade without at least some reference to facts. Baykov, an authority on economic planning, was a central figure at Birmingham. Davies was a protege of Baykov and published the standard reference on Soviet budget policy before entering into collaboration with Carr and subsequently succeeding Carr as the emeritus figure of serious Western Sovietology.

It may also be noted that a number of leftists, some of them associated with the trend represented by the Glasgow journal *Critique*, function under the aegis of CREES with the aim of making leftist critiques of the history; among these are admirers of Rakovsky and Preobrazhensky.

Revisionist Sovietology in the U.S. too has a pre-history, here in the work of Fainsod and Moore at Harvard in the 1950s. This went no further than a mild-mannered treatment of Soviet society from the standpoint of ordinary bourgeois sociology and political science. From this milieu came Jerry F. Hough, who became a senior figure of the

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revisionist school. Hough, going further in the vein of Fainsod and Moore than they themselves did, became the polemical spear-bearer for the revisionist school against the Hoover-ites on questions of methodology.

In the 1960s, revisionism took on more substantive form regarding the treatment of Soviet history with the concentration at Columbia of a handful of scholars sympathetic to Bukharin (Cohen, Lewin). Since this time a plethora of trends and shadings have unfolded.

Among these are a trend which has identified itself with a specific characterization of these stages of development; namely, that the NEP ended with a period of revolutionary activity followed by a "Great Retreat". The foremost figure of this trend is Sheila Fitzpatrick, whose many activities include an editorship at the Harriman Institute. Her field of study is the intelligentsia; her thesis, that mass promotion from workbench to administration is the social basis of a revolutionary surge in 1928-1930 and of reversal thereafter.

An array of social historians can be placed in various degrees of proximity to this last trend of thought. Among the younger scholars are Viola, Rassweiler and Kuromiya, all products of the graduate program at Princeton, all specializing in different aspects of the period of the First Five Year Plan, the last now positioning himself to become a collaborator of and successor to Davies.

Getty makes use of Fainsod and Hough in deriding the "totalitarianism" model, and his critique of Conquest follows directly from Fainsod and Hough, second edition, chapter 5. His approach to the history, however, is distinct from the trends mentioned thus far. While Fitzpatrick, et al., see a revolutionary surge in the late 20s and a retreat in the 30s, Getty and Rittersporn focus on the 30s and try to make sense of the Great Purges, not as part of that retreat, but as a last-ditch resistance to it. It goes without saying that such concepts as revolutionary surge, retreat, and resistance thereto prove to be quite different things in the thinking of even the best bourgeois scholars than a Marxist-Leninist understanding of them.

### The "Socialist Herald"

A last footnote should go to an earlier generation: the menshevik émigrés grouped around the journal *Socialist Herald*. These were the remnants of the menshevik trend that had not gone over to the Whites in the Civil War. They had the advantage over their competitors that they continued to exist as a trend; the others had long before dissolved into whiteguard circles. Furthermore, the *Socialist Herald* had many correspondents in the Soviet Union, not least of all among state functionaries. The *Socialist Herald* is worthy of mention because it is a pre-Cold War school whose work on the conditions of the working class is often cited as scripture, the more so given its access to sources inside the Soviet Union and its "socialist" credentials. But given the polemical temptations, materials in the *Socialist Herald* should be regarded as something less than gospel;

works by its editors, something still less. Among the figures associated with the *Socialist Herald* were Dan, Schwarz and Yugov.

### What has Sovletology looked into?

The availability of well-researched secondary sources in English varies greatly from period to period and topic to topic. The period of 1917-1918 is undoubtedly the most densely covered; from 1930 onward the most sparsely. Survey works include Chamberlin's 2 volumes covering 1917-1921, followed a generation later by Carr's 14 volumes which extend up to the launching of the First Five Year Plan. Thereafter the pickings are sparse. Davies has committed himself to continuing Carr's work; thus far he has extended the coverage to 1931, but succeeding volumes are increasingly "economic" (in the narrowest sense). Kuromiya offers one volume of a "mainly political and social study" of the period of the First Five Year Plan as "mutually supplementary" to Davies's work. Kuromiya's is undoubtedly the richest work yet available on the period. But his own field of study is the shock brigades of 1928-1930, and his work tapers off thereafter as the activity of the shock brigades tapers off.

Among topics, none has inspired less usable research than the national question; save for some recent coverage of the period of the October Revolution, the national question long ago became the preserve of friends of the Ukrainian National Famine Board whose working title is invariably "Bolshevism—Killer of Nations" (Hoover fellows) or "Stalinism—Killer of Nations" (British trotskyites).

But for one or two exceptions, military history attracts ex-officers with predictable results. Party history, on the other hand, has received a goodly share of attention, with results such that one might wish it had received none at all.

### What we selected

What follows is a working bibliography. Effort has been made to be at once both wide-ranging and discriminating. A large number of well-known and widely-cited titles from Hoover, Harvard and Columbia have been omitted because they are drivel. Numbers of titles have been included to ensure—to a reasonable extent—that there is more than one title covering a given area, so we are not bound to a single source on some crucial question. Thus, while Davies' work on collectivization is bound to figure centrally in research on that question, works by Lewin, Halperin, Miller, Viola, Volin and Jasny serve to cover the same ground and extend the coverage into the mid-1930s. Effort has been made to resist expanding the list for the sake of length. The titles which appear here do so because they each have some particular use, even if in some cases it is a limited one. Particular attention has been given to the titles which have served as standard reference (Baykov, Bergson, Beinstock, etc.) for a previous generation of

scholars and polemicists, and the titles (Davies, Kuromiya, etc) which will become the standard references for the next generation. Many works here are included primarily for specific reference and for purposes of cross-verification; it is not expected that it is either necessary or desirable to study this number of works from cover to cover.

The organization of this bibliography undoubtedly leaves much to be desired. The division of sections is sometimes debatable; the assignment of works to one or another section often arbitrary, especially when in choosing between assignment by topic or by period. Ideally, works should be repeated wherever necessary and reference for some works

should be by chapter, not just by title. That, however, seemed beyond the scope of the present bibliographic work.

The researcher should thus be warned to look broadly through this bibliography in search of reference material—and to discriminate sharply upon laying hands on said material.

(The above introduction is by the comrades who prepared the bibliography.) □

[1] Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror*, p. 754, cited on p. 5 of Getty's *Origins of the Great Purges*.

## A working bibliography on Soviet history

(+) key work

### 1. Statistical Sources

Lewytzkij, Boris, *The Soviet Union Figures-Facts-Data*, Munich: K.G. Saur, 1979. Drawn from contemporary Soviet sources, easier to use than the Soviet originals.

Wheatcroft, S.G. and Davies, R.W. eds., *Materials for a balance of the Soviet national economy 1928-30*. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985. Translation of the October, 1932 publication of the Central Administration of Economic Records of the USSR. (+)

### 2. Documents in English Translation

Bone, Anne, tr., *The Bolsheviks and the October Revolution*, London: Pluto, 1974. Party and other documents.

Bukharin, Nikolai I., *Selected Writings on the State and the Transition to Socialism*, Day, Richard D., ed., Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1982

Bunyan, J. and Fisher H.H., eds., *The Bolshevik Revolution 1917-18: Documents and Materials*, Stanford, 1934.

Daniels, Robert V., ed., *A Documentary History of Communism, revised ed., vol 1: Communism in Russia*, Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1984. Remake of a 1960 2-volume work. A good quick reference on opposition documents (+)

Degras, Jane, ed., *The Communist International 1919-1943: Documents*, 3 vols., New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1965. Should be used only where other sources of

Comintern documents fail; Degras's selection and excerpting are as slanted as her commentary.

Keep, John, ed., *The Debate on Soviet Power*, Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1979

Kuibyshev, V.V., *Summary of the Fulfillment of the First Five Year Plan* (Moscow: Gosplan, 1933)

Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works* (+)

McNeal, Robert H, ed., *Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU*, U of Toronto, 1974 (+)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Guide to the Decisions of the CPSU 1917-1967*, U of Toronto, 1972. Described by Getty as invaluable.

Meisel, James H. and Kozera, Edward S., *Materials for the Study of the Soviet System*, Ann Arbor, 1950

Preobrazhensky, E.A., *The New Economics*, London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1965. His platform, with an introduction by Nove.

\_\_\_\_\_, *The Crisis of Soviet Industrialization*, Filtzer, Donald, ed, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1979.

Rakovsky, Christian, *Selected Writings on Opposition in the USSR 1923-30*, Fagan, Gus, ed., London: Allison & Busby, 1980

Schlesinger, Rudolf, *The Family in the USSR*, London, 1949

Sokolnikov, Gregory, et al., *Soviet Policy in Public Finance, 1917-1928*, Stanford, 1931. Translation of the Soviet text. Sokolnikov ran finance under NEP.

Spulber, Nicholas, ed., *Foundations of Soviet Strategy for Economic Growth: Selected Soviet Essays, 1924-30*, Univ. of Indiana, 1964. Not to be confused with Spulber's volume of commentary, published under the same title.

Stalin, J.V., *Selected Works*. Note that some materials were edited for re-publication. Pre-Works editions are more likely to include the original blemishes. (+)

Stalin, J.V., et al., *From the First to the Second Five-Year Plan*, New York: International, 1933.

Trotsky, Leon, *The New Course*, Ann Arbor, MI, 1965

\_\_\_\_\_, *Whither Russia: Towards Capitalism or Socialism?*, New York, 1926. Also available from Pathfinder in *Challenge of the Left Opposition*.

Yurolavsky, L.N., *Currency Problems and Policy of the Soviet Union*, Leonard Parsons 1925. Currency Commissar in the early 20s. Describes currency policy under War Communism and the post-1921 reversal.

### 3. General Surveys

#### 3A. Soviet History

*The works in this section are one volume surveys, for quick reference on dates, etc. (Hosking and Schuman) or, for those unfamiliar with the history, for getting some orientation. They are of little or no use beyond that.*

Fitzpatrick, Sheila, *The Russian Revolution 1917-1932*, Oxford Univ. Press, 1982. See introduction on Fitzpatrick.

Hosking, Geoffrey, *The First Socialist Society*, Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1985. A standard British anti-communist work, but OK for quick reference.

Schuman, Frederick L., *Soviet Politics at Home and Abroad*, New York: Knopf, 1946. Polemical but occasionally useful for quick reference.

Service, Robert, *The Russian Revolution 1900-1927*, Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1986. A brief work notable chiefly for its bibliography.

#### 3B. Soviet Economy

Baykov, Alexander, *The Development of the Soviet Economic System*, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1948. Most authoritative of the earlier works.

Dobb, Maurice, *Soviet Economic Development after 1917*, 6th ed., London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966. Dobbs is strongest on NEP, weakest on objectivity.

Nove, Alexander, *An Economic History of the USSR*, London Allen & Unwin, 1969. Most available work of this type, briefer but has advantage of standing on shoulders of others. (+)

### 4. Eve and Launching of the First Plan

Carr, E.H., *Foundations of a Planned Economy*, (+) vol 1, 2 books, (with R.W. Davies) London, 1969; vol 2, London, 1971; vol. 3, 3 books, London, 1974-76

Ehrlich, Alexander, *The Soviet Industrialization Debate 1924-28*, Cambridge: Harvard, 1960. The standard reference. (+)

Lewin, Moshe, *Political Undercurrents in Soviet Economic Debates*, Princeton Univ. Press, 1974. Interpretive but important of this type.

Pethybridge, Roger, *The Social Prelude to Stalinism*, New York: St. Martin's, 1974

Reiman, Michal, *The Birth of Stalinism*, Bloomington: IUP 1987 (Frankfurt am Main 1979). Mostly diatribe.

NB: See also Chase below (listed under section 22D).

### 5. Budget, Finance, and Foreign Trade

Arnold, Arthur Z., *Banks, Credits, Money in Soviet Russia*, New York: Columbia, 1937. A standard reference; covers through 1934. (+)

Baykov, Alexander, *Soviet Foreign Trade*, Princeton 1946. See also other Baykov title, above in section 3B.

Davies, Robert William, *The Development of the Soviet Budgetary System*, Cambridge, 1958. A standard reference; covers through 1941. (+)

Holzman, Franklyn D., *Soviet Taxation: The Fiscal and Monetary Problems of a Planned Economy*, Cambridge: Harvard, 1962. One of the few to focus on tax policy.

Weissenburger, Ulrich, *Monetärer Sektor und Industrialisierung der Sowjetunion 1927-1933*, Frankfurt am Main, 1983

### 6. Central Planning and the Plans

Davies, R.W., *The Industrialization of Soviet Russia 3: The Soviet Economy in Turmoil 1929-1930*, Cambridge MA: Harvard, 1989. The series continues. (+)

\_\_\_\_\_, "The Socialist Market: A Debate in Socialist Industry 1932-33", *Slavic Review* 42:2 (Summer 1984)

\_\_\_\_\_, "The Ending of Mass Unemployment in the USSR", in Lane, David ed., *Labour and Unemployment in the USSR*, Sussex, 1986

Davies, R.W. and Wheatcroft, Stephen, "Further Thoughts on the First Soviet Five Year Plan" *Slavic Review* 34:4 (December 1975)

Jasny, Naum, *Soviet Industrialization 1928-52*, Chicago: Univ. of Chicago, 1961. Ex-Kerensky minister.

Kirstein, Tanjana, *Sowjetische Industrialisierung — geplanter oder spontaner Prozess?*, Baden-Baden, 1979. A study of the Ural-Kuzneck Combine from 1918 to 1930

\_\_\_\_\_, *Die Bedeutung von Durchführungsentscheidungen in dem zentralistisch verfassten Entscheidungssystem der Sowjetunion*, Berlin, 1984. A study of Magnitorsk.

Lewin, Moshe, "The Disappearance of Planning in the Plan", *Slavic Review* XXXII, 2 (June 1973)

Zaleski, Eugene, *Planning for Economic Growth in the Soviet Union 1918-1932*, Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina 1971. The standard contemporary reference. A triumph of data over history. (+)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Stalinist Planning and Economic Growth 1932-1952*, Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina, 1980.

(See also Baykov above in sections 3B and 5, and the relevant volumes of Carr.)

## 7. Transportation and Location Policy

Hunter Holland, *Soviet Transportation Policy*, Cambridge: Harvard, 1957

\_\_\_\_\_, *Soviet Transportation Experience*, Washington DC: Brookings, 1968

Koropecy, I.S., "The Development of Soviet Location Theory before the Second World War", *Soviet Studies*, July & Oct 1967

## 8. The Working Class in the First Five-Year Plan

### 8A. Key Works

Andrle, V., "How Backward Workers Became Soviet: Industrialization of Labour and the Politics of Efficiency under the Second Five-Year Plan 1933-37", *Social History* 10:2 (May 1985)

Barber, John, "The Development of Soviet Employment and Labour Policy, 1930-1941", in Lane, David, ed., *Labour and Employment in the USSR*, New York: New York Univ., 1986. Early 30s labor discipline

\_\_\_\_\_, "The Standard of Living of Soviet Industrial Workers 1928-1941", in L'industrialization de l'URSS dans les années trente, Actes de la Table Ronde organisée par le Centre d'Etudes des Modes d'Industrialisation de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Science Sociales (December 10 and 11, 1981), Paris 1982.

Chapman, Janet, *Real Wages in Russia since 1928*, Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1963. Chapman, a RAND consultant, was once oft-cited on real wages.

Dallin, David and Nicolaevsky, Boris, *Forced Labour in the Soviet Union*, London: Hollis & Carter, 1948. Two old Menshevik leaders. Included here because it is oft-cited.

Filtzer, Donald, *Soviet Workers and Stalinist Industrialization. The Formation of Modern Soviet Production Relations 1928-1941*, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1986. Greatly in debt to *Socialist Herald*. More than a little one-sided.

Kuromiya, Hiroaki, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution: Politics and Workers 1928-1932*, New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1988. The closest thing to a comprehensive history of the period. (+)

Rassweiler, Anne D., *The Generation of Power: The History of Dnieprostroi*, New York: Oxford Univ. Press 1988. Rich in parts (+)

\_\_\_\_\_, "Soviet Labor Policy in the First Five-Year Plan: the Dnieprostroi Experience", *Slavic Review* (Summer 1983)

Schwarz, Solomon M., *Labour in the Soviet Union*, London: Cresset 1953. Classic critique by a menshevik émigré. (+)

Siegelbaum, Lewis H., "Production Collectives and Communes and the 'Imperatives' of Soviet Industrialization 1929-1931", *Slavic Review* vol. 45 no. 1 (1986)

### 8B. Eye-Witness Accounts by Westerners

Chamberlin, W. H., *Russia's Iron Age*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1934

Hindus, Maurice, *The Great Offensive*, Smith & Haas, 1933. Eyewitness account by a Russian-born journalist.

Scott, John, *Behind the Urals*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1942. Eyewitness account of the building of Magnitogorsk.

Smith, Andrew, *I Was a Soviet Worker*, London 1937

### 8C. Eye-Witness Accounts from Soviet and Emigré Memoirs

Kopelev, Lev, *The Education of a True Believer*, New York 1980

Kravchenko, Victor, *I Chose Freedom: the Personal and Political Life of a Soviet Official*, London: Robert Hale, 1947

## 9. Agriculture and Collectivization

### 9A. General Histories

Trapeznikov, S.P., *Leninism and the Agrarian and Peasant Question*, 2 vols., Moscow: Progress, 1981. Like the philosopher in *Candide* (everything always works out for the best, in this best of all possible worlds...). Useful, but always needs verification.

Volin, L., *A Century of Russian Agriculture*, Harvard, 1970

### 9B. Eve of the Revolution

Pavlovsky, G.P., *Agricultural Russia on the Eve of the Revolution*, New York: Howard Fertig, 1968

### 9C. Agriculture under NEP

Atkinson, D., *The End of the Russian Land Commune 1905-1930*, Stanford, 1983.

Grosskopf, S., *L'Alliance ouvrière et paysanne en URSS (1921-1928): Le Problème du blé*. Used extensively by both Davies and Bettelheim, some striking citations. (+)

Male, D.J., *Russian Peasant Organization before Collectivization*, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1971. Widely cited.

Narkiewicz, Olga, *The Making of the Soviet State Apparatus*, Manchester, 1970. Rural administration under NEP.

Shanin, T., *The Awkward Class. Political Sociology of Peasantry in a Developing Society: Russia 1910-1925*, London: Oxford, 1972

Taniuchi, Y., *The Village Gathering in the mid-1920's*, University of Birmingham: Center for Russian and Eastern European Studies, 1968. Translated from the Japanese; apparently published in-house.

## 9D. Collectivization

### I. Key Works

Davies, R.W., *The Industrialization of Soviet Russia*, vols. 1 & 2, Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1980 (+)

Halpern, I.P., *Stalin's Revolution: The Struggle to Collectivize Rural Russia 1927-33*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Columbia Univ., 1965. Cited extensively by Davies, worth seeing in the original. (+)

Hindus, Maurice, *Red Bread*, London 1934. Eyewitness account.

Jasny, Naum, *The Socialized Agriculture of the USSR*, Stanford, 1949. Ex-Kerensky minister, best source for agricultural statistics before Davies, vol 2. (+)

Lewin, Moshe, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1968. Widely cited. (+)

Merl, Stefan, *Die Anfänge der Kollektivierung in der Sowjetunion: der Übergang zur staatlichen Reglementierung der Produktions- und Marktbeziehungen in Dorf (1928-1930)*, Weisbaden, 1985

Miller, Robert F., *One Thousand Tractors: the MTS and the Development of Controls in Soviet Agriculture*, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1970. Includes brief pictures of the party in the village and the MTS. (+)

Taniuchi, Y., "A Note on the Urals-Siberian Method", *Soviet Studies* 33 (1981):518-47

Viola, Lynne, *The Best Sons of the Fatherland: Workers in the Vanguard of Soviet Collectivization*, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987 (+)

### II. The 1932-1933 Crisis

Brower, D.R., "Collectivized Agriculture in Smolensk: the party, the peasantry and the crisis of 1932", *Russian Review*, vol. 36, no. 2 (April 1977)

Dalrymple, Dana G., "The Soviet Famine of 1932-1934", *Soviet Studies*, XV, no. 3, pp. 250-284 (Jan 1964)

Wheatcroft, Stephen G., "Famine and Epidemic Crises in Russia 1918-1922: The Case of Saratov", *Annales de Demographie Historique*, 1983. For comparison to later famines.

### III. The Contemporary Debate on Primitive Accumulation

Ellman, Michael, *Socialist Planning*, Cambridge 1978. Listed here for chapter 4 on agriculture.

\_\_\_\_\_, "Did the Agricultural Surplus Provide the Resources for the Increase in Investment in the USSR in the First Five Year Plan?", *Economic Journal* 85 (1975)

Millar, James R., "Mass Collectivization and the Contribution of Soviet Agriculture to the First Five-Year Plan: A Review Article", *Slavic Review*, XXXIII 4 (December 1974)

\_\_\_\_\_, "Soviet Rapid Development and the Agricultural Surplus Hypothesis", *Soviet Studies*, 22 (1970)

\_\_\_\_\_, "A Reply to Alec Nove", *Soviet Studies*, 23 (1971)

Millar, James R., and Nove, Alec, "A Debate on Collectivization. Was Stalin Really Necessary?", *Problems of Communism*, July-August 1976

Nove, A., "The Agricultural Surplus Hypothesis; A Comment", *Soviet Studies*, 22 (1971)

\_\_\_\_\_, "A Reply to a Reply", *Soviet Studies*, 23 (1972)

#### iv. Comparison of Soviet and Chinese Collectivization

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