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Hawke/Evans: Point-men for UN Counterrevolutionary Force No Imperialist Troops to Cambodia!

The social revolutions in Vietnam and Cambodia are today in deadly peril. For three decades the Vietnamese workers and peasants fought to liberate their country from first French and then U.S. and Australian imperialism. Their stunning victory in 1975 inspired liberation struggles the world over and radicalised a whole generation of youth and working people. Ever since the defeated imperialists have waged a vengeful campaign to "bleed Vietnam white" through economic embargo and military provocation on its borders. Now, with the collapse of Stalinism and the ascendancy of open counterrevolutionary forces in the Soviet Union, Cambodia and Vietnam are isolated, their vital Soviet aid cut off. The right-wing Stalinist Hun Sen regime in Cambodia, seeing no other way out, has finally caved in and accepted imperialist troops back on their soil. The sordid imperialist UN "peace" agreement,

Defend the Indochinese Revolution!

signed on 23 October, aims at the counterrevolutionary overthrow of the gains of the Cambodian deformed workers state. It formalises the dismantling of Hun Sen's government and the entry of some 10,000 UN troops to disarm the army and militia who defend Cambodia against Pol Pot's genocidal Khmer Rouge. *The Spartacist League calls on the organised working class internationally to take action to spike this imperialist move towards the re-conquest of Indochina! Defend embattled Cambodia and Vietnam!*

The Hawke Labor government is up to its neck in this colonialist dirty work. Foreign Minister Gareth Evans has acted the frontman for the imperialist plot

hatched by anti-Vietnam zealot, U.S. congressman Stephen Solarz. They eagerly pledged 500 troops, 40 communications specialists are already in place and an Australian general has been put in command of the UN forces. Indochina's former colonial overlord, France, has 60 troops in the advance contingent. In the "logic" of Bush's "New World Order" of imperialist barbarism, Gareth Evans has been nominated by Solarz for the Nobel Peace Prize for bringing the Pol Potists back to Cambodia!

The gruesome prospect of imperialist troops once again taking position on Indochinese soil, along with their genocidal Khmer Rouge henchmen, evokes

deep anger and bitterness amongst class conscious militants and anti-imperialist fighters around the world. In 1979 Vietnam liberated Cambodia from the "killing fields" of the genocidal Pol Pot regime and gave the Cambodian people a future! With Vietnamese support, the Cambodian people have made enormous progress in reconstruction. Today's grotesque imperialist deal, set in motion when Gorbachev forced Vietnam's 1989 withdrawal, threatens to undo everything that has been achieved. The Khmer Rouge in power killed over a million people, pursuing a pre-feudal program based on fantasies of re-creating the barbaric Angkor Wat slave kingdom. Since 1979 they have survived in camps on the Thai border armed and funded by the imperialists and the Chinese Stalinists. They are ultra-chauvinists and now proclaim their commitment to restoring

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"New World Order" Step Toward New World War

The following article is reprinted from Workers Vanguard No. 534, 13 September, fortnightly newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S. It is the second part of a two part series. Part one appeared in WV No. 529, 21 June.

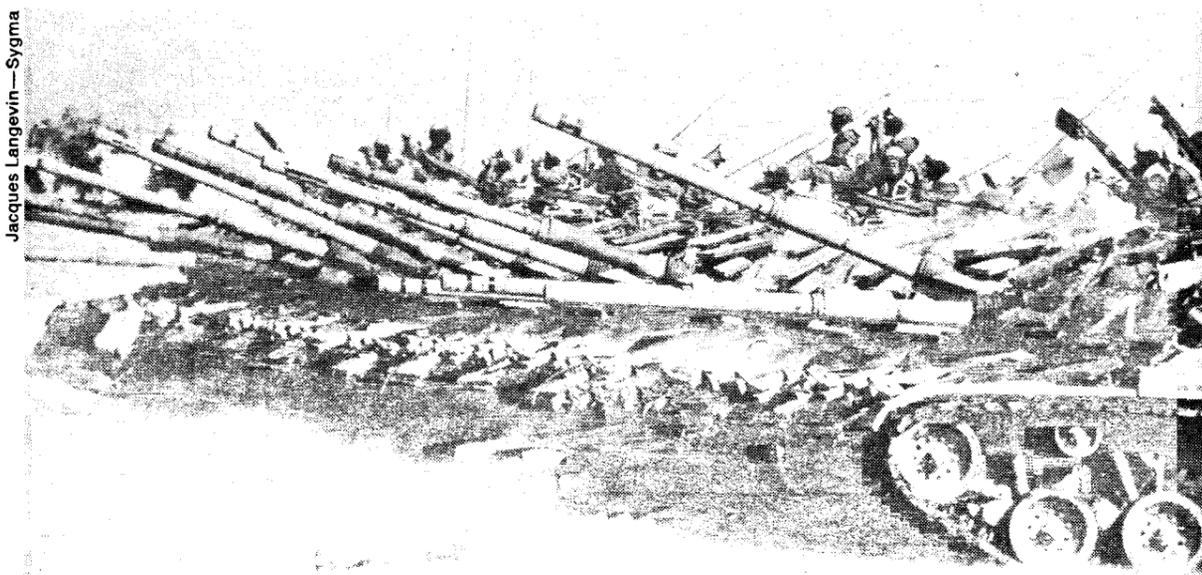
When the tanks rolled into Moscow's Red Square on August 19, the London *Financial Times* (20 August) headlined, "Coup Against Gorbachev: Back Towards the Old World Order." Many imperialist pundits declared that it was all over for the "New World Order" that the United States had proclaimed by gruesome slaughter in the Persian Gulf and by the grace of the United Nations, thanks to Gorbachev's support in the Security Council. When the tanks rolled out two days later, U.S. rulers saw it as global victory—"Communism" was dead, the "American century" was back, and the rest of the world had better shape up and fly right. British correspondent Martin Walker wrote from Washington:

"The collapse of the Communist Party in its heartland has reinforced the verdict of the Gulf war. The global dominance of U.S. military power and its subtle ideology of free markets, democratic institutions and American culture, appear to be beyond challenge. The ability of other nations to conduct an independent foreign policy, or of Third World countries to adopt a different development model, has never been more constrained."

— *Guardian* [London], 28 August

Washington's official ideologues have proclaimed a "unipolar world," with the United States as "the only remaining superpower." To vividly demonstrate this was the whole point of bombing Iraq back to "a pre-industrial age" (as a UN report summarized the devastation). But Walker noted "the irony that America's international triumph rests upon an enfeebled domestic base." And its economically more dynamic imperialist allies aren't about to roll over and play dead. Salivating at the prospect of opening up a huge Soviet market of 280 million consumers, a Colgate-Palmolive executive remarked, "That's a lot of teeth." The USSR also has

From Gulf War to Global Trade War



Bush's "New World Order" was cemented on the bloody massacre of over a hundred thousand Iraqis. Lackey Australian Imperialism eagerly supported imperialist carnage.

huge supplies of fuel and other raw materials. In fact, a disintegration of the Soviet Union could sharply escalate inter-imperialist rivalry, with Germany exploiting the resources of European Russia and the Ukraine as Japan pounces on Siberia. This predators' feast would feed into an imperialist race to redivide the world.

With Washington proclaiming victory in the Cold War and the Gulf War, many European imperialist leaders and their mouthpieces have been uneasy over

Washington's "hubris" (*Economist*) and "America's assertive world role" (*Financial Times*). "Ever since the end of the Gulf war five months ago George Bush has behaved as if he was president of the world rather than just the United States," lamented the *FT* (29 July). Already at the outset of the fighting, the *Guardian's* Walker wrote of the "Flawed Vision of the New Imperial Rome." He voiced fears that instead of the original conception of the "NWO" (New World Order)

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Cambodia...

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capitalism. Chillingly, according to journalist John Pilger the Khmer Rouge have a "hit list" of up to two million people, including all ethnic Vietnamese living in Cambodia!

Along with the contra resistance forces of Son Sann and Sihanouk the Khmer Rouge will join representatives of the present Cambodian government in a Supreme National Council. This wretched coalition can't last. The feuding contra groups only maintain the facade of unity because their imperialist masters demand it. Everyone knows the Khmer Rouge killers are caching their weapons. The UN force aims at re-establishing neo-colonial rule in Cambodia, through disarming the Hun Sen regime and supervising elections which they expect to return a compliant government. The Vietnamese and Cambodian workers and peasants fought long, suffered horribly and made enormous sacrifices for their liberation. The last thing in the world they want is the return of the hated Khmer Rouge, the landlords and the imperialist bloodsuckers.

The defence of Cambodia and Viet-

nam relies upon the active support of the international working class, especially in Japan, the U.S. and France. During the Vietnam War, Australian maritime workers showed the way through strikes and bans in support of the Vietnamese and Cambodian workers and peasants. *Australian workers: Break with the policies of the ALP imperialist "statesmen," would-be policemen of Southeast Asia, lackey junior partners of U.S. imperialism! For political strikes and bans to stop Australian troops to Cambodia!*

The future of the Indochinese workers states is inseparably bound up with that of the Soviet Union. Determined action by workers in the imperialist centres in defence of Cambodia and Vietnam can in turn be a mighty impetus for the Soviet working class in their battle against Yeltsin/Gorbachev's capitalist restorationist forces. The Soviet working class, which in the recent past has shown ample signs of its enormous social power, can defend the gains of the October 1917 Revolution only by fighting to establish a workers government based on genuine soviet democracy. Key to this is forging a Leninist-Trotskyist party in the Soviet Union. The Soviet proletariat in power will of necessity construct links of internationalist solidarity with the

working people of Indochina. The Soviet working class is indebted to Vietnam. For over a decade the heroic Vietnamese working people took the full brunt of the U.S. military behemoth, enabling the Soviet Union to achieve rough nuclear parity with the U.S. in the 1970s. Gorbachev's cutoff of aid to Indochina is a hideous betrayal! *Soviet workers: Fight for full economic and military aid to the Indochinese workers and peasants! Defeat Yeltsin/Gorbachev counterrevolution!*

The nationalist lie of "socialism in one country" (a self-justification for the Stalin bureaucracy's attempt to protect its privileges by "renouncing" world revolution) brought the Soviet Union to the brink of catastrophe, as Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky warned it would. Stalinism, in all its varieties, has undermined the defence of all revolutionary conquests. Now the Chinese deformed workers state is also in imperialism's firing line and after more than a decade and a half of bitter conflict Vietnam and China have announced a "normalisation" of relations. But international communist unity, to defend and extend the gains of all the workers states, can only be achieved through working class political revolution from

Moscow to Beijing to Hanoi to Havana.

Bush's "New World Order" was announced in the lead up to the massacre of over 100,000 Iraqis. But instead of a stable balance of imperialist power, the "post-Cold War" period is producing a "new world disorder" of mounting inter-imperialist rivalry which evokes parallels with 1914 on the eve of the imperialist carnage of World War I. U.S. imperialism now sees itself as undisputed master of a "uni-polar world." But today Japan is the economic powerhouse of the Asia-Pacific region and seeks to incorporate Indochina into its new Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. And France is angling to reclaim a slice of its former colonial possessions. Mounting U.S.-Japan rivalry in the region has the Australian ruling class deeply worried, torn between its U.S. big brother "protector" on the one hand and on the other, Japan—its chief trading partner as well as the object of its deepest White Australia racist fears.

Only international socialist revolution can avert the threat of imperialist devastation and barbarism. The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) is dedicated to the forging of a world party of socialist revolution. The fate of humanity depends upon it! ■

"New World Order"...

(continued from page 1)

based on cooperation of the Americans with the Japanese and West European trading blocs, now "the cold war is in dire danger of being replaced by trade wars." And from trade wars plus a capitalist feeding frenzy over the Soviet Union, the imperialist rivalries point once again to world war.

From Cold War to Chip War

Three times in recent months there have been hard clashes between the U.S. on the one hand, and Japan and West Europe on the other. At the July 1990 Houston summit of the group of seven leading imperialist powers (G-7), the Europeans caucused beforehand to force the Americans' hand on loans to Gorbachev's Russia, much to Bush's annoyance. Last December there was a breakdown of the "Uruguay Round" trade negotiations over the European agricultural subsidies, or alternatively the American demand that hundreds of thousands of West European peasants (and right-wing voters) go under so that Washington can balance its trade balance through wheat and butter exports. Then this spring when the U.S. wanted to force West Germany to lower its interest rates (in order to increase growth, and thus demand for American exports), the Bundesbank told their "colleagues" at the Federal Reserve flatly "no."

The Europeans and Japanese are by no means happy with a global Pax Americana, and rankle at recognizing U.S. imperialist ascendancy as *primus inter pares* (first among equals). With the "Soviet threat" no longer of use for Washington to whip its allies into line—or put another way, without the

Cold War justification for subordinating conflicts of interest of the rival capitalist powers to a common front—interimperialist economic rivalries are rapidly escalating. The first stage is the demise of the Cold War "free trade" regime under GATT (General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs) in favour of competing imperialist trade blocs: a German-led European Common Market, with East Europe as its hinterland; a Japanese-led "East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere," with Southeast Asia as its low-wage workshops; and a U.S.-run North American free trade area, with the rest of the hemisphere supplying raw materials and sweatshops.

But it's not just about "beggar thy neighbor" tariff discrimination. As the experience of the 1930s demonstrates, trade wars point straight to shooting wars. Pentagon insiders repeat the old quip that the purpose of NATO was to keep the Russians out and the Germans down, adding that the U.S.-commanded military alliance should be maintained because only half of its reason for existence is gone. For now, as *Le Monde* (9 July) writes:

"The Americans are using velvet gloves, since their prestige has come out of the Gulf War strengthened. The world, which had forgotten it, is reminded that guns remain among the attributes of power. This eclipses, at least for now, the idea of a debt-burdened nation suffering from a slow industrial decline. The fact that, for lack of financial resources, the war was financed by German, Japanese or Saudi taxpayers, was little stressed, except as the product of a kind of authoritarian taxation, and thus another demonstration of untrammelled domination."

If German and Japanese politicians needed reminding of the importance of military power, Mercedes-Benz and Mitsubishi are prepared to redress the balance. And despite the paper constraints of post-World War II "peace

constitutions" imposed by the U.S., following the recent war both Bonn and Tokyo demonstratively sent military forces to the region (Japanese mine-sweepers in the Persian Gulf, German troops dispensing "humanitarian" aid to Kurdish refugees in Iran).

Instead of a stable balance of imperialist power, the "post-Cold War" period could produce "new world disorder." East Europe is rent by national strife, Yugoslavia is shattering in a nationalist civil war, now the Soviet Union faces dissolution. The American shark is sharpening its teeth to swallow the Cuban sardine. The world is looking a lot like the period leading up to the First World War. And while champagne is flowing in the imperial chancelleries, millions are still starving in Third World slums. As the Spanish weekly *Cambio 16* (29 July) wrote: "But the party isn't for everyone. A huge bleacher section consisting of the majority of human beings, submerged in underdevelopment, looks on at the capitalist jubilation grinding their teeth and clenching their fists. For them, the world continues to be a slaughterhouse and its brutal rules are the only order they know."

In the imperialist centers themselves, the bourgeoisie's class war on workers and the minority poor continues with a vengeance. In the United States, the "American Dream" long ago faded into thin air as the real income and standard of living of the working class have steadily declined for more than a decade and a half. During the '80s, the myth of a

homogeneous middle-class society disappeared as the gulf between the opulent rich and the miserable poor widened enormously. Brutal police terror stalks the ghettos and barrios. Homelessness and unemployment are mass phenomena throughout the advanced capitalist countries. Yet the working class is paralyzed, lacking the key element, a revolutionary leadership, needed to mobilize its tremendous power at the head of the oppressed to bring the whole rotting edifice crashing down.

As World War I turned Europe into a charnel house, a giant morgue, Rosa Luxemburg declared the alternative facing humanity was "socialism or barbarism." Behind the censored TV images, the Persian Gulf War showed the grisly face of high-tech barbarism. The fight for socialist revolution is urgent, the key is revolutionary leadership.

Fourth Reich Drive to the East

It was in Germany that there was the biggest opposition to the U.S. war plans, and where there were the largest antiwar demonstrations. While the U.S. "peace" movement was shot through with patriotism, in Germany there was a direct connection from the government to the streets, via the Social Democrats (SPD) and the ex-Stalinist PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism). Thus after Bonn received an angry phone call from Washington complaining about the wide support for the January 26 peace demo, Chancellor Kohl decreed that there must

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Australasian

SPARTACIST

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

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Defeat Yeltsin-Gorbachev Counterrevolution!

Lenin-Trotsky Fund Needs Your Dollars!

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



Soviet Union costs money. Help forge the Trotskyist nucleus needed to lead the Soviet working people in struggle against counterrevolution.

Make donations payable/send to: Spartacist, GPO Box 3473, Sydney NSW 2001. Earmark: "Lenin-Trotsky Fund" (or simply "L-T Fund").

Serbia-Croatia War Ripping Apart Yugoslavia

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

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

Since the fighting broke out last spring, the Croatian nationalists—hopelessly outgunned—have appealed for and sought to provoke Western imperialist military intervention on their behalf. In a desperate last-ditch maneuver, in mid-September the Tudjman regime cut off food, water and electricity to federal army garrisons which had not been previously involved in the fighting. The army responded with punishing attacks throughout Croatia. Warplanes bombed and strafed the Croatian capital of Zagreb and other cities. Naval warships bombarded and blockaded the Adriatic seaports of Split and Sibenek. The Dalmatian coast was cut off from the rest of Croatia. A federal army tank column, supported by Serbian militias, is approaching within 30 miles of Zagreb.

It would take a large-scale imperialist military intervention to restore conditions in Croatia to what they were even a few weeks ago. From the outset of the Yugoslav crisis, Germany has put itself forward as the big-power protector of traditionally Catholic Croatia and Slovenia, which before World War I were provinces in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Kohl government has pressured the European Common Market to recognize the independence of the right-wing nationalist regimes in Zagreb and Ljubljana and threatened to do so itself. In recent weeks Bonn, backed by Paris, has been pushing for sending a European "peacekeeping" force—estimated at 20,000 to 50,000 troops (but no Germans)—into Yugoslavia. For the moment such a move has been blocked by British opposition, but imperialist military intervention cannot be ruled out.

The rapidly escalating Yugoslav civil war is threatening to spill over into Bosnia, the most ethnically mixed of Yugoslavia's republics. Its largest ethnic group is Slavic Muslims, who consider themselves neither Serbs nor Croats and were



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

recognized as a separate nationality by Tito. In recent days Croatian and Muslim militias have obstructed federal army units, predominantly Serbian, from moving into Croatia. The extension of the war to Bosnia would mean a communalist bloodbath on a massive scale. One Slavic Muslim predicts: "What happened in Lebanon in 15 years will happen in 15 days in Bosnia."

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

As we go to press, there is another declared truce—which may soon go the way of earlier short-lived "cease-fires." A swirl of confusion surrounds the current objectives of the Yugoslav military, particularly seen from afar. The imperialist press acts as if they are about to go in and clean out Zagreb. In reality,

faced with openly fascist Croatian forces, the federal army's reaction has been a nationalist response, allying with Serbian fascists and seeking to seize control of Serbian enclaves in Croatia. Indeed, in the squalid warfare which is ripping Yugoslavia apart, on no side is there any evidence of mobilization on a proletarian, class axis. Yet that is what is urgently necessary.

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

Heirs of the Croatian Ustashi and Serbian Chetniks

Last year anti-Communist nationalists gained political power in Slovenia and Croatia, the two northernmost, and

wealthier, republics. The enfeebled Stalinist bureaucracies in these republics totally dissolved, with most of the remnants going over to the avowedly capitalist-restorationist and secessionist regimes. Croatia's new president, Franjo Tudjman, was a former general in the Yugoslav army and history professor who gained notoriety as an apologist for the wartime clerical-fascist Ustasha regime, which under German protection massacred hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews and Roma (gypsies). Tudjman is notorious for his chauvinism, remarking, "Thank God my wife is neither a Serb nor a Jew." One of the first acts of his government was to change the name of the Square for the Victims of Fascism in Zagreb to the Square of the Croatian Giants! Similarly, the new government of Slovenia amnestied all wartime collaborators of the Nazi German and Italian fascist forces.

There are 600,000 Serbs living in eastern and southern Croatia—some 12 percent of the republic's population. These regions are the old Croatian military frontier, originally populated by Serbs in the 15th century who continued to resist when the medieval Serbian kingdom was overrun by the Ottoman Turks. The Serbian communities in Croatia have good reason to fear for their well-being and very lives under the new nationalist regime in Zagreb. The genocidal massacres of the Ustashi are a living memory in these regions. The Ustasha fascists—whose atrocities appalled even German Wehrmacht officers—collected the eyeballs of the victims and cut babies out of wombs of pregnant Serbian women.

It was from the Serbian-populated villages of Croatia as well as from ethnically Serbian Montenegro that the Communist partisan forces under Marshal Josef Broz Tito drew many of their recruits. The partisans, whose leading cadre were drawn from all the peoples of Yugoslavia (Tito's father was a Croat and his mother a Slovene), combatted the forces of fratricidal nationalism on all sides. They fought not only the German occupying army and its Ustasha puppets but also the Serbian royalist guerrillas—the Chetniks—who frequently collaborated with the Italian fascist occupiers against the Communists. Today, however, the Serbian militias in Croatia are under the sway of the nationalist strongman Milosevic and, significantly, call themselves Chetniks:

"Mr. Milosevic prefers to patronise the operations of the 'Chetnik' forces, controlled by Vojislav Seselj, known as 'the Duke.' In spite of his far-right views, 'the Duke' is widely suspected of being an agent

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



Traitors, Not Trotskyists

Cheerleaders for Yeltsin's Counterrevolution

With the exception of the Socialist Party of Australia (which cautiously backed the pathetic and short-lived Stalinist coup in Moscow), to a man the Australian left openly stood on the barricades of counterrevolution. The International Socialist Organisation, for example, who hold the ludicrous view that the USSR is capitalist, predictably joined the imperialist cheering of Yeltsin's counter-coup and lied that "Workers Crush the Coup" (*Socialist*, 23 August). The political bandits of the Socialist Labour League, whose only political consistency is vitriolic anti-Sovietism and crass Labor-loyalism, echoed Yeltsin by calling for "the overthrow of the whole Stalinist apparatus, including the KGB and the military" under a headline that fraudulently implied the opposite: "Defend the Heritage of October 1917" (*Workers News*, 23 August). But then, what can you expect from outfits that spend their time trying to ensure that the viciously racist, sexist, anti-working class Hawke Labor Government stays in power. For the interest of our readers we reprint here an article from *Workers Vanguard* (No. 535, 27 September 1991) which polemicalises against the major international fake-Trotskyists who, in the hour of need, stood as traitors to the Russian Revolution.

* * *

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

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

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

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

We of the International Communist League today continue the struggle for Trotsky's Fourth International. *Workers Vanguard's* statement following the pathetic Stalinist "coup" attempt and pro-capitalist counter-coup was headlined:

"Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" (*WV* No. 533, 30 August). Pointing to the yuppies, speculators, fascists and priests who flocked to Yeltsin's "White House" in Moscow to present themselves as the shock troops for social counterrevolution during the two days of the feeble putsch by Yanayev & Co., we wrote: "a call on Moscow workers to clean out this counterrevolutionary rabble was in order. Yet the coup plotters not only did not mobilize the workers, they ordered everybody to



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

stay at work and at home."

In the face of the ascendancy of the counterrevolutionary forces, we laid out a program of struggle against capitalist restoration, calling for independent workers committees in the factories to take control of production and fight privatization, for committees of soldiers and officers to resist the use of the Soviet army as an instrument against the working class, for workers militias to crush anti-Semitic pogromists and anti-Communist lynch mobs and to ward off communalist butchery by revanchist nationalists. We immediately translated this article into Russian, and it is now being distributed among class-conscious Soviet workers with the aim of forging a Leninist-Trotskyist nucleus capable of leading a struggle by the Soviet working people to victory over the counter-revolution.

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

Socialist Action and the Fourth Internationalist Tendency (FIT).

For the last three decades our Spartacist tendency has denounced the impostors who masquerade as Trotskyists while abandoning every principled position Trotsky stood for and above all the fight for an independent Trotskyist vanguard. We have polemically combatted those who sought popularity in becoming the "left" tail of bourgeois "popular fronts," from Allende in Chile to Mitterrand in France. We exposed those

who hail anti-Soviet nationalists from Khomeini in Iran to Walesa in Poland. We warned that their cowardly flinches and treacherous opportunism, their renunciation in deeds of revolutionary Trotskyism, went against every historic interest of the working class. Now they have openly shown themselves for what they are: *not Trotskyists but traitors to the October Revolution*.

Painting Counterrevolution as "Victory"

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

Even as it unabashedly and uncritically reported how Yeltsinite mobs were tearing down statues of Lenin and Feliks Dzerzhinsky, the *Militant* (13 September) tried to paint it as some sort of proletarian uprising: "Key to the defeat of the August 19 coup was the action of tens of thousands of workers in Moscow, Leningrad, and elsewhere who defied the government's tanks, defended the democratic rights they had won in recent years, and in the process widened the space to advance their interests through demonstrations, debates, and political

organization." The FIT likewise praised the "Soviet masses" for stopping the coup, and Socialist Action transformed the anti-Communist mobs of pro-capitalist yuppies into a "popular uprising."

In justifying their support to Solidarność counterrevolution a decade ago, the line of these outfits was that "ten million Polish workers can't be wrong." Today Solidarność in power is subjecting its former working-class base to vicious capitalist austerity. Even when the mass of workers is temporarily deluded into supporting counterrevolutionary forces, it is necessary for the communist vanguard to swim against the stream and defend the historic interests of the international proletariat as a whole. Moreover, in this case it's utter sophistry to claim that revolutionary-minded workers flocked to Yeltsin's counterrevolution. If anything, the overwhelming mass of Soviet workers—despite political confusion, cynicism and illusions in Western-style capitalist "prosperity"—exhibited far more class consciousness by refusing to heed Yeltsin's appeals than these cynical liars.

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

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

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

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

These handmaidens of social democracy have become full-blown social democrats themselves. Thronging to the counterrevolutionary barricades outside Yeltsin's White House, they have offered themselves up as foot soldiers in Bush's "New World Order." Not even a pretense of Trotskyism is left to any of them.

Capitalist "Democracy" vs. the Workers State

Insofar as these cheerleaders for counterrevolution in the Soviet Union attempt to provide any kind of "theoretical" fig leaf, it is that the Stalinist bureaucracy is the chief, indeed the only, instrument for counterrevolution. The view, summed up in the phrase "Stalinism is counterrevolutionary through and through," has historically been used to justify de facto abandonment of the Trotskyist position of defense of the Soviet Union. Today it is being used to justify support to the counterrevolution. Thus, trying to buttress its outlandish claim that the victory of the Yeltsinites was a defeat for imperialism, *Socialist*

Action (September 1991) claims that with the botched coup by the "gang of eight": "It will be extremely difficult now for the bureaucracy and its allies to organize a new, effective, instrument to carry through the restoration of capitalism."

In the first place, as Trotsky pointed out time and again, the bureaucracy was not a homogenous class but a brittle, contradictory layer resting atop proletarian property forms, from which it derived its privileged position, and potentially including both restorationist and revolutionary elements. In the absence of a proletarian challenge and under sharp pressure from imperialism, it was the restorationist wing of the Stalinist bureaucracy which blossomed under Gorbachev. The coup plotters were themselves committed to introducing a capitalist market economy, though more gradually and under centralized control. But the bureaucracy has now utterly collapsed. And, in any case, Yeltsin had already broken from it to become the spokesman for the incipient bourgeoisie—the "yuppsies," black marketeers and a political spectrum ranging from would-be Western "democrats" to the fascists of Pamyat.

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

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

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

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

WP not only put themselves in Yeltsin's camp, they attack him for not being anti-Communist enough. WP concedes, "The measures to deprive the Stalinists of all the levers of economic and political power are an essential stage, a prerequisite to turn to the next stage—the task of rapidly dismantling the instruments of central planning." But they "put no trust in Yeltsin...to carry out the destruction of the Stalinist dictator-

Soviet Pull-Out: Set-Up for U.S. Attack!



Workers Vanguard

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

On 13 September the Spartacist League/U.S. held an urgent "Solidarity with Cuba" demonstration in New York City outside the Cuban mission to the United Nations. The demonstration was called after the Soviet Union's treacherous announcement of withdrawal of troops and aid from Cuba. Demonstrators demanded "U.S. out of Guantanamo!" and raised the call "Cuba in peril—high time for socialist democracy." Among the slogans carried were: "U.S. Killer Cops of the World, Keep Your Bloody Hands Off Cuba! Independence for Puerto Rico! Stalin's 'Socialism in One Country' Undermines Defense of all Workers States" and "For Socialist Revolution Throughout the Americas!"

As the press release announcing the demonstration read:

"The advancing counterrevolution in the Soviet Union not only threatens every gain of the Soviet working people. It has sharpened the voracious appetites of U.S. imperialism

around the globe.... Now Gorbachev and Yeltsin have given U.S. imperialism a green light to drown the Cuban people in blood.

"For the last 31 years, Washington has tried to roll back the Cuban Revolution—through invasion, assassination, and a decades-long economic blockade intended to starve the Cuban people into submission. On the heels of its invasion of Panama and the hideous slaughter of the Iraqi people, the U.S. is out to impose its 'new world order' on defiant Cuba, 90 miles off the Florida Keys."

A Spartacist spokesman noted: "The revolution lifted the Cuban working people from the degradation, racism and grinding poverty they suffered under the Batista dictatorship, the U.S. sugar barons and the Mafia syndicate. Today the Cuban population has medical care and education superior to that in U.S. cities. If the capitalist bloodsuckers return, all that the Cuban people have built in the last three decades will be wiped out."

The Spartacist League/U.S. from its inception has been an ardent defender of the Cuban Revolution, while opposing its bureaucratic deformation. While U.S. rulers, from Democrat Kennedy to Republican Bush, have railed against Havana exporting revolution, in reality the Stalinist Castro regime counselled the Chilean and Nicaraguan masses not to embark on the road of a "second Cuba." But all attempts to appease vindictive U.S. imperialism are doomed to failure.

"It is our duty, the duty of all opponents of Yankee imperialism, to make clear their stand in solidarity with Cuba in this crucial hour," the demonstration organisers also said, "We look to class struggle, in the U.S. and around the world, to defend Cuba against Yankee imperialism and counterrevolution." Defend Cuba and all the deformed workers states against imperialist attack!

Reprinted from *Workers Hammer* No. 125, September/October 1991.

ship." No, they call for a *workers' witch-hunt*, for "workers' action to drive out the party and KGB spies in the workplace." And Workers Power's German affiliate, the Arbeitermacht group, calls (unnecessarily) for the SPD—bloodhounds for the butchers of Luxemburg and Liebknecht, and architects of the German bourgeoisie's *Ostpolitik* aimed at subverting and smashing the Soviet Union—to organize demonstrations to support the Russian counterrevolution.

For a Fourth International Trotsky Would Call His Own!

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

the Russian parliament. They add:

"For Trotskyists there should have been no more talk of critical support for, or for united fronts with the Yeltsinites than with the coup leaders. Where strikes occurred in response to Yeltsin's initial (never-repeated) call, Trotskyists should have participated, but fighting to turn them against both wings of the bureaucracy."

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

The "gang of eight" was incapable of sweeping away Yeltsin in its pathetic excuse for a putsch because, as we wrote, it was a "perestroika coup." But both imperialism and the forces of internal counterrevolution were aligned on Yeltsin's side. The coup plotters were not only irresolute but didn't want to unleash the forces that could have defeated the more extreme counterrevolutionaries, for that could have led to a civil war if the Yeltsinites really fought back. And in an armed struggle pitting outright restorationists against recalcitrant elements of the bureaucracy, defense of the collectivized economy

would have been placed on the agenda whatever the Stalinists' intentions. Trotskyists would have entered a military bloc with "the Thermidorian section of the bureaucracy against open attack by capitalist counter-revolution," as Trotsky postulated in the 1938 Transitional Program. This precisely was our policy toward Jaruzelski in 1981. But the RIL, beholden to social-democratic "anti-Stalinism," can't stomach being in a bloc with Stalinists even in defense of a workers state.

Leon Trotsky went to his death—in the hands of a Stalinist assassin—an intransigent defender of the Soviet workers state. His last political struggle was waged over this question, against the Soviet-defeatist Burnham/Shachtman opposition in 1939-40 in the then-Trotskyist American SWP. As Trotsky wrote in his April 1940 "Letter to the Workers of the USSR" so eloquently: "Those who are incapable of defending conquests already gained can never fight for new ones." Should the homeland of October succumb to the counterrevolutionary tide, workers around the world will pay for it in blood for years to come. The need has never been more urgent for reorganizing a Fourth International that Trotsky would have recognized as his own. Defeat Yeltsin/Gorbachev counterrevolution! For a Trotskyist party in the Soviet Union, built in the struggle to reforge the Fourth International! ■

Nationalist Bloodbath Threatens in Soviet Breakup

SEPTEMBER 10—Boris Yeltsin threatens to annex the Russian-populated regions of the Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Newly independent Lithuania declares a blanket amnesty for wartime Nazi collaborators and mass murderers. Georgia's dictatorial nationalist president orders that oppositional demonstrators be met with a hail of gunfire. This is the true face of the counterrevolutionary tide dissolving the Soviet Union, a counterrevolution hailed by Wall Street and Washington as a triumph of "democracy" and the "death of Communism."

In the wake of the pathetically botched August 19 coup by Kremlin Stalinists, Yeltsin, with an enfeebled Gorbachev in tow, seized the reins of power in Moscow in the name of "free market" capitalism and Russian nationalism. The Communist Party was suppressed, and a purge of 80 percent of the senior commanders of the Soviet military announced. The imperialists declared victory in their 74-year war—sometimes hot, sometimes "cold"—against the Bolshevik Revolution.

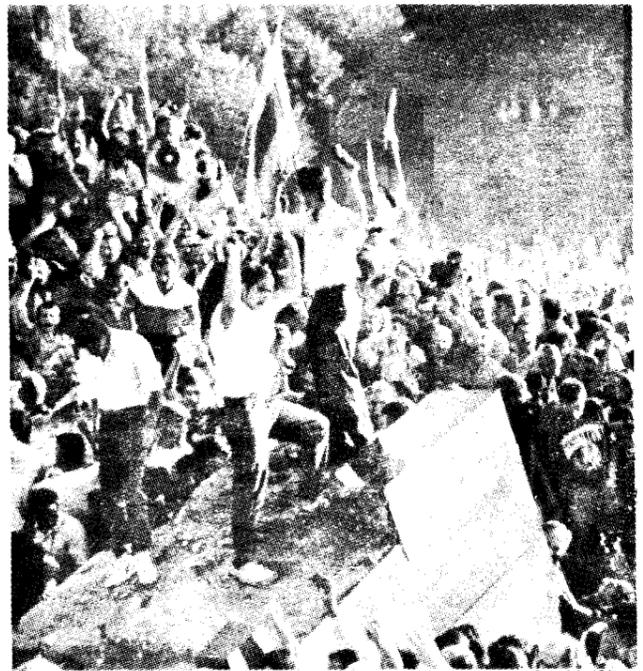
As we wrote two weeks ago: "The working people of the Soviet Union, and indeed the workers of the world, have suffered an unparalleled disaster whose devastating consequences are now being played out.... But while Yeltsin & Co. now see a clear field to push through a forced-draft reintroduction of capitalism, the outcome is not yet definitively decided" ("Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" *Workers Vanguard* No. 533, 30 August).

The Soviet Union is descending into near-total political, national and economic chaos. One republic after another has declared "independence" from the impotent Moscow center, raising the prospect of border wars, mass forced population transfers and communalist blood feuds. Industrial output is in a free fall, while prices are expected to increase tenfold or more over the next year. The winter threatens to bring mass unemployment and famine.

Trying to balance atop the collapsing power structure, Gorbachev, backed by Yeltsin, rammed through the self-liquidation of the Congress of People's Deputies. For the moment, the repository of "authority" will be a Council of Republics consisting of Gorbachev and representatives of ten republics which have not completely severed their ties to



Der Spiegel



Juraitis/Sipa

All the old crap returns: Russian Orthodox priest on barricades at Yeltsin's "White House" (left); rabid Lithuanian nationalists celebrate counterrevolution (right).

Moscow. But Yeltsin's Russian republic holds the whip hand. On the streets of Moscow, this Council is already being called the "GKChP II," after the coup plotters' "emergency committee."

At the end of their last session, Gorbachev gave the People's Deputies the kiss-off: "OK, that's it, *tovarishchi, do svidaniya*"—"goodbye, comrades." It might have been easy to dismiss these parliamentary cretins, who were pieced off by getting to keep their salaries, and perks like free air travel. But it will not be so easy to deal with an angry and hungry working class. Gorbachev's former foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze, a leading light in the "democratic" counterrevolution, warns: "Last time round it was a palace coup. I don't think that will happen again. But that doesn't mean people won't take to the streets to rebel against chaos in the economy."

The last couple of weeks have seen little more than parliamentary playacting. The real question is what will happen when the new regimes in Russia, the Ukraine and other republics begin to introduce the various "shock therapies" aimed at moving toward capitalism. Should workers take to the streets to defend themselves against the ravages of capitalist restoration, against the shut-

down of "unprofitable" enterprises, mass unemployment and impending starvation, all the plans of the imperialists and their Soviet running dogs could go up in smoke.

Through the dissemination of our propaganda and a Trotskyist program of struggle against the counterrevolution, the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) seeks to cohere an authentically communist nucleus to intervene in this desperate situation to lead the coming struggles of the working class to victory against the now ascendant counterrevolution.

Rapacious Nationalists Come to the Fore

From Tatar villages on the Volga to Moscow's intellectual circles, there is a growing fear of Yeltsin as a new Russian tsar. Former dissident Roy Medvedev, who admirably still calls himself a Communist, voiced these sentiments:

"The failed coup is turning into a counter-coup. Everything that is happening suggests a state of total emergency. Many of the decrees that Yeltsin has issued and that Gorbachev has swallowed are constitutionally illegal. The laws on freedom of the press and political parties have already been trampled on by the closure of newspapers and the closure of all the Communist Party offices. These are bad signs."

—*Guardian* (London),
30 August

Yeltsin and his Russian nationalist cohorts wasted no time in unsheathing the claws of the Great Russian bear. In response to Ukrainian president Leonid Kravchuk's declaration of "independence," Yeltsin ominously threatened to "review" Russia's borders, while vowing to "defend the interests of Russians outside the Russian republic." Leningrad mayor Anatoly Sobchak has demanded that the Crimean peninsula, placed under Ukrainian control by Khrushchev, be returned to Russia.

Yeltsin is flagrantly courting the present-day descendants of the Black Hundreds, the Pamyat fascists whom he legitimized in one of his first acts as Moscow party chief in the mid-1980s. Asked his opinion of the "very strongly anti-Semitic" Pamyat in a September 5

ABC-TV "town meeting" interview, Yeltsin blithely replied that this fascist outfit is not "so extreme as it was when it was started." He added: "I've had dealings with Pamyat for quite a long time."

Gorbachev's market "reforms" fueled the resurgence of long suppressed nationalist antagonisms—first expressed in the fratricidal fighting between Armenians and Azerbaijanis in the Caucasus—and encouraged Great Russian fascists like Pamyat and the Hitlerite NTS to emerge from their rat holes. From the time Pamyat first appeared on the streets of Moscow and Leningrad, we Trotskyists called for independent mobilizations of workers, Red Army men and women, Jews and other minorities to sweep these fascist blackshirts away. The bureaucracy, for its part, protected Pamyat, and now these pogromists are flourishing under the flag of the new counterrevolutionary regime.

Yeltsinites and Stalinist "patriots" alike have acted to drive Soviet Jews, whose forebears fought in disproportionate numbers to defend the Soviet state in the Civil War and World War II, into the arms of the Zionist deathtrap of Israel. An authentic Leninist vanguard, as "tribune of the people," must combat all manifestations of anti-Semitism.

The new Council of Republics is aimed at presiding over the "orderly collapse" of the Soviet state. But the collapse of the Soviet Union will be neither orderly nor democratic. The multinational population of the USSR is deeply interpenetrated—indeed, often intermarried—far more so than under the tsars. In Estonia only three people out of five are ethnic Estonians, in Latvia one out of two are Latvians, and in Kazakhstan, scarcely more than one in three are Kazakhs. And Russia is home to more than 100 national and ethnic groupings, including 16 autonomous republics. At the Congress of People's Deputies representatives of these nationalities asked for guarantees against Yeltsin's Russian nationalist regime.

The virulent petty-bourgeois nationalists who now reign supreme in the various former union republics—mostly drawn from the old Stalinist bureauc-



Spartacist

Pamyat fascists, Great Russian anti-Semitic terrorists, legitimized by Yeltsin, march in Moscow earlier this year with portrait of Tsar Nicholas II.



Planeta



Planeta



Novosti



Novosti

Leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution. From left: Yakov Sverdlov, first president of Soviet Republic; Feliks Dzerzhinsky, founder of Cheka; Stepan Shaumyan, head of 1918 Baku soviet; Christian Rakovsky, first president of Soviet Ukraine.

racism—are out to resurrect the “right” of their nationality to lord it over others. In Moldavia, nationalist leader Mircea Snegur calls for unification with Romania in order to “fulfill the dream of our King Stephen the Great”—from the 15th century! Needless to say, this does not sit well with the more than one-third of the Moldavian population which is Russian, Ukrainian or Turkic-speaking Gaugaz, nor even with many ethnic Romanians.

In response, non-Romanian minorities have declared an independent Socialist Republic of Dniester, where statues of Lenin still stand, and staged militant protests—including stopping trains—to demand the release of their president arrested by the Moldavian authorities. “We want to remain in the Soviet Union,” said one elderly Ukrainian woman protester (*New York Times*, 2 September).

The Latvian government is debating whether to even grant citizenship rights, much less language equality, to the 48 percent of its population who are Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians or other non-Balts. What is involved here is not only national but also class oppression, for Russian-speaking workers make up the overwhelming majority of the industrial proletariat in Latvia and also Estonia. These Russian-speaking workers are far from powerless against the new regimes’ attempt to make them non-citizens or drive them from their homes. *The formation of real workers soviets in Riga and Tallinn could teach the petty-bourgeois Baltic nationalists a well-needed lesson in democracy.*

Nazi Collaborators and Imperialist Puppets

The heritage of bourgeois “independence” and “democracy” that the various nationalists in the Soviet Union harken back to today is one of imperialist subjugation, fascism and bonapartist dictatorship. An international uproar was triggered over news that “democratic” Lithuania has been “rehabilitating” thousands of Nazi collaborators sentenced for war crimes by Soviet courts.

Zionist anti-Communist Elie Wiesel exclaims, “That this would be among the first steps of an independent Lithuania is something no decent person can understand or accept.” What did he expect? Interwar Lithuania was under the grip of a regime of White Terror which persecuted Communists and oppressed Jews, Poles, Russians and other minorities. The pro-capitalist Lithuanian Sajudis nationalists glory in this past and, not surprisingly, are shot through with outright fascists.

In the western Ukrainian city of Lvov recently, there was a march of World War II “anti-Soviet partisans” in full battle regalia and uniforms. To be an “anti-Soviet partisan” in World War II was, simply put, to be a Nazi or Nazi collaborator. The most prominent of these outfits, the Union of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) of Stepan Bandera, was notorious for its massacres of Jews, Poles and Communists in the western Ukraine. Well before Hitler launched his Operation Barbarossa, the OUN “had been busy preparing for the Nazis lists

of Jewish and Polish intellectuals to be murdered as soon as Lvov fell into their hands” (Reuben Ainsztein, *Jewish Resistance in Nazi-Occupied Eastern Europe* [1974]). Alongside and subordinate to the war between the Red Army and Nazi Germany, the Ukraine was the scene of a civil war between anti-Communist Ukrainian nationalists on the one hand and Jewish and Red partisans on the other.

The Ukrainian and Baltic collaborators of the Third Reich were but the continuation of the imperialist-backed nationalist forces who fought the Bolsheviks in the Civil War of 1918-21. German imperialism presided over the birth of an “independent” Ukraine, and joined with British imperialism to “self-

full and equal national rights for all peoples in order to secure the fullest unity of the workers of all nationalities, which made this possible. The Bolshevik leadership was an embodiment of this perspective. Alongside the Russians Lenin and Bukharin there were the Pole Dzerzhinsky, the Romanian Rakovsky, the Georgian Stalin, the Armenian Shaumyan, the Jews Sverdlov and Trotsky, and others.

As the administrative apparatus of the Soviet state and Bolshevik Party cohered into a bureaucratic caste, and as this caste usurped political power in 1923-24, these internationalist policies were subverted and finally reversed. Confined to bed by illness in 1923, Lenin urged a

of the Soviet regime, the foundations of the planned economy instituted by the October Revolution laid the basis for a massive advancement by the minority nationalities formerly oppressed under the tsarist empire. Speaking of continuing advances in national policy, Trotsky noted in *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937): “This is especially true of the backward nationalities of the Union, which must of necessity pass through a more or less prolonged period of borrowing, imitation and assimilation of what exists.” The nomadic peoples of Siberia, the Muslim clans of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan were brought forward centuries in a matter of decades.

If the Central Asian republics continue to remain under the control of old-line Stalinists—who, to be sure, now espouse Turkic nationalism—and statues of Lenin continue to stand in Tashkent, it is because these peoples more than any other Soviet nationality benefited from the strides forward Soviet power brought them. Even now, up to half of the budgets of the Central Asian republics rely on subsidies from the center. And it is they who will suffer most from a capitalist free-for-all.

At the same time, Yeltsin & Co. have incited resentment among Russians that the great wealth of Siberia’s natural resources goes in part to develop the more backward Turkic-speaking regions. The Yeltsinite “free marketeers”—largely the children of Stalin’s apparatchiks—want to sell Siberia’s oil and natural gas fields, and gold and diamond mines, to Wall Street and Frankfurt so they can live like Western yuppies.

Indeed, the immediate background to the recent flood of nationalist antagonisms was not the Great Russian chauvinism of the center. Perestroika fueled the aspirations of the more advanced republics like the Baltics and Armenia for an even greater slice of the pie. Baltic nationalists dream that by ridding themselves of Russia and the

continued on page 11



Amid Yeltsin’s counterrevolution, thousands wait in mile-long line at Lenin mausoleum to honour leader of the Bolshevik Revolution.

determine” the Baltic states and Georgia. While the peasant masses of Estonia and Latvia flocked to the red banner of Bolshevism in 1917—with the Latvian Riflemen serving as crack troops in the young Soviet regime—the bourgeois and landlord classes which had formerly been a bulwark of the Romanovs took the road of separatism as a means of combatting the revolution.

The situation in Transcaucasia was even more striking. In Baku in 1918, the Armenian Bolshevik Stepan Shaumyan formed a soviet government based on largely Azerbaijani and Russian oil workers. Shaumyan and his comrades were subsequently murdered by nationalist forces acting on British orders. In contrast, the bourgeois Transcaucasian Republic formed at the same time rapidly fell apart as Armenian, Azerbaijani and Georgian nationalists went at each other: Azerbaijan became a puppet of Turkey, Menshevik Georgia a vassal of first German and then British imperialism. Only after the Bolsheviks defeated the nationalists and their imperialist patrons was a basis laid for these interpenetrated national communities to co-exist.

Leninist Internationalism vs. Stalinist Nationalism

The Bolshevik Revolution transformed what Lenin called the tsarist “prison house of peoples” into a multinational federation. It was only the Bolsheviks’ internationalist program, which asserted

full-scale assault on the ascendant bureaucracy headed by Stalin, particularly over the latter’s arrogant treatment of the Georgian Communists in 1922. The struggle against the emerging Stalinist bureaucracy was taken up by the Trotskyist Left Opposition.

Despite the bureaucratic degeneration

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Yugoslavia...

(continued from page 3)

of Serbia's communist-run secret police force. He recently won a by-election in Belgrade under a campaign which included promises to 'cut the Croats' throats with rusty knives.'

—Independent [London],
7 August

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

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

However, Serbs and Croats have not suddenly been infected by intense nationalist hatreds as if by a plague of unknown origin. What is happening in Yugoslavia and the rest of East Europe is the end product of four decades of Stalinist bureaucratic rule and its ultimate collapse. While Tito's partisans fought against fratricidal nationalism, his policy of "market socialism" and enterprise "self-management" widened the economic differences and thus increased political tensions between the more advanced republics of Slovenia and Croatia and the poorer southern regions. Meanwhile, over the past few decades Yugoslavia has become ever more indebted to the imperialist banks.

Under orders from Western finance capital, two years ago the government of federal prime minister Ante Markovic imposed a savage austerity program on working people throughout Yugoslavia. Last April 750,000 Serbian workers staged a one-day general strike to protest their intolerable economic con-

ditions. A perceptive article on Milosevic in the *New York Times Magazine* (1 September) noted: "Social unrest also cannot be ruled out in Serbia, where tens of thousands of workers have gone months without a paycheck, and where unemployment is rising." To head off and divert working-class struggle against the effects of imperialist debt peonage, both Milosevic and Tudjman are inciting nationalist hatreds and communalist warfare.

Milosevic's Drive for Greater Serbia

The Western bourgeois media commonly and falsely describe Milosevic's Serbia as the last "hard-line Communist"



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

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

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

Milosevic's drive to create a Greater

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

The war is changing the political and

Zika Zivanovic

Germany taking the lead, the imperialists now consider the secession of Slovenia and Croatia as a kind of second-best solution. But Milosevic's efforts to incorporate large chunks of Croatia in a Greater Serbia are disrupting the plans of Washington and especially Berlin to pull off an easy "peacekeeping" intervention.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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"New World Order" ...

(continued from page 2)

be no anti-Americanism. Two days later at the Bonn demo there were signs everywhere saying, "I'm not anti-American."

There was evident lack of enthusiasm among the German bourgeoisie. The months-long wrangling over how many D-marks Bonn would cough up for the "war effort" (the final total was eleven billion) ended up with German finance minister Waigel going to Washington in April demanding to see the Pentagon's books to make sure they weren't being overcharged. Rudolf Augstein complained in a *Der Spiegel* editorial (11 February) about imperial allies always calling for sending "The Germans to the front!" Right now, he opined, Germany is busy with reunification and pre-occupied with the Soviet Union. "This is not our war," Augstein wrote, "the next one may be." He added: "One shouldn't, after all, think that the Germans in particular will permanently stay out of it when one day it comes to finally destroying the world."

The view of large sections of the German bourgeoisie was captured in an article by Theo Sommer in *Die Zeit* (22 March), which recalled how in the 1880s Bismarck was pressed from many sides to win more and more colonies for the Reich. As a prominent friend showed him a map of Africa, the imperial chancellor replied: "Your map of Africa is very beautiful. But my map of Africa is in Europe. Here is Russia, and here is France. And we are in the middle. That is my map of Africa." Sommer adds: "But his remark, this is my map of Africa, can quite well be reformulated for the present situation of the federal republic. Our Near East lies between the Elbe and Eisenhüttenstadt [on Germany's border with Poland], our Middle East begins beyond the Bug [Poland's border with the Soviet Union]."

When Bonn politicians tacitly agreed with the slogan of leftist demonstrators, "No Blood for Oil," it wasn't because the rulers of German imperialism's Fourth Reich are pacifists. They want to avoid the mistakes which have led to past defeats. On the 50th anniversary of "Operation Barbarossa," the 1941 German invasion of the Soviet Union, *Spiegel* editor Augstein wrote of Hitler: "His internal and foreign policy until 1938 is a model of tactical soundness, indeed, if you don't require of statecraft a great political design, a model of statecraft." Hitler's downfall was to repeat the mistake of World War I: "no two-front war" (*Der Spiegel*, 10 June). So German imperialism wants to keep its sights trained on the main target: the Soviet Union. And this time instead of sending tanks to conquer Russia, they're relying on the deutschmark, currently the strongest weapon in German imperialism's arsenal, first to subvert the Soviet economy and now to try to buy it up.

Coming War With Japan?

For Tokyo, the Persian Gulf War marks a sea change in its post-World War II history. As British historian Anthony Sampson wrote after a recent visit, "Most Japanese seem to accept that the Gulf war presents a critical turning point in their relations with the West, particularly with the United States." They asked, said Sampson: "Should the Japanese accept US diplomatic and military leadership when, increasingly, they are becoming the masters of high technology and global finance?" (*Independent*, 20 February). An obvious question.

On the American side, capitalist Japan is fast replacing "Soviet Communism" as the "evil empire" threatening U.S. "national security." Washington's fear of a Japanese drive to become a global power was captured in a CIA-commissioned study, *Japan: 2000*, that was



ASp photo

SL contingent in January 19 Sydney anti-war protest. Fighting for an anti-imperialist program based on the massive social power of the working class.

leaked to the press in May. The report asserts that "Japan is an economic superpower whose world dominance appears inescapable and incontrovertible, absent some dramatic unified reassertion of Western intent, coupled with an equally dramatic and focused economic resurgence." And in Europe, escalating opposition to Japanese investments and exports has been crystallized by the new French prime minister, Edith Cresson, who is trumpeting jingoistic calls for trade war. What's being projected is a three-cornered battle for imperialist hegemony.

While the U.S. saw its one-sided "Desert Slaughter" as an opportunity to flex its muscles, for Japan the Gulf War was a diplomatic disaster. Although it paid through the nose, some \$13 billion—the largest contribution by any of the imperialist allies and far more than the cost to the Pentagon, which probably made a profit on the deal—for a war it didn't start and didn't want, U.S. Congressmen complained that Tokyo wasn't really "on board." Japanese prime minister Kaifu replied that he had tried last fall to get approval from the Diet (parliament) to send an unarmed force to the Gulf, but this was rejected amid a public uproar. However, the U.S. "victory" evidently turned public opinion around, so that after the fighting Kaifu was able to dispatch Japanese minesweepers to the Gulf with hardly a peep of protest.

Japanese rulers are worried that the U.S. victory in the Gulf will be used against them to unilaterally dictate new trade terms. The *Wall Street Journal* (14 March) quoted a Japanese opposition legislator, Masao Kunihiro, on the growing perception of the U.S. as a "fear-some country": "Once a tiger has tasted human blood, he is going to be a repeater, and the U.S. has tasted the sweet success of its concentrated bombing of Iraq." But the Japanese were not overly impressed with American military-technological prowess. The *Journal* quotes an official of a big securities company saying: "If we had been fighting the U.S.—not that we ever would—we would have inflicted major casualties." And Japan's leading America-basher, Shintaro Ishihara, has just published a book, *The Japan That Can Really Say No*, pointing out that the U.S. "smart" bombs used in the Gulf War are dependent upon the high-quality Japanese semiconductor PTV. Nor is Japan flinching at U.S. threats of trade war.

Virulent Japan-bashing isn't limited to the Americans. Upon taking office in May, French prime minister Cresson unleashed a chauvinist and outright racist verbal assault on the Japanese, whom she has described as "yellow midgets" and "ants." "They sit up all night thinking of ways to screw the Americans and the Europeans," she said. "They are our common enemy." Cresson's immediate purpose was to get the Common Market to impose quotas on autos exported from Japan and those

produced by Japanese subsidiaries in Europe. The French also want protection for Europe's outclassed computer and microchip industries. As "Nippophobia" escalates, the purpose is to raise a protectionist wall around a "Fortress Europe." Japan Inc., meanwhile, is increasing investments to get in before the scheduled completion of European economic union in 1992. And as the brickbats fly, Japanese rightists "guillotined" an effigy of Cresson with a *boken* (wooden sword) in Tokyo on Bastille Day.

Under mounting pressure, Japanese imperialism is indeed preparing itself for economic war...and worse. Far more than its European and American rivals, this island power without natural resources is utterly dependent on imports for its raw materials, importing 100 percent of the oil, natural gas, iron ore, copper, nickel, bauxite, manganese, molybdenum and titanium used in production, along with 91 percent of the lead, 88 percent of coal consumed, etc. For every ton of finished products it exports, Japan must import eight tons of supplies. This materials deficit makes it extraordinarily vulnerable to economic boycott, even informal. That is why Tokyo has resisted American pressure to open the market to rice imports: it seeks to be self-sufficient in food at all costs. Two-thirds of Japan's oil imports came from the Persian Gulf, but it wasn't happy with the U.S. war because it sees control of oil supplies by Iraq, which would have to sell it, as less dangerous than control by the Americans, who could cut it off, as they did on the eve of WW II.

Today Japan has the third-largest war budget in the world and is the only world power that is sharply increasing its military power. *Air Force Magazine* (June 1991) reports, "In the 1980s, Japan conducted the most consistent defense buildup of any nation, focusing on acquisition of modern weaponry." When its acquisition programs are completed Japan will have more high-performance jet fighters than any air force in the Pacific theater. Tokyo is also carrying out a major expansion of its war fleet, and by this year will have 60 destroyers—twice the number in the U.S. Seventh Fleet. It is particularly focusing on anti-submarine warfare, critical to keeping sea lanes open for merchant ships. And its Type 90 tank is more sophisticated than the Americans' M-1 and narrow enough to operate on Japanese roads. The clear purpose of this buildup is to reassert its imperialist appetites in Asia and neutralize pressure from the U.S.

Meanwhile, Japanese international economic strategy is shifting rapidly. In the last couple years Tokyo banks have pulled back heavily from their multi-billion-dollar purchasing of U.S. Treasury bonds and American real estate. While the Japanese government has insisted on the Soviet Union handing over the Kuril Islands as a precondition for loans, Japanese companies have

launched a number of big joint-venture projects in Siberia, several using North Korean labor. It maintained and increased trade with China after the Tiananmen Square massacre. And mainly Japan has redirected investment to Southeast Asia, opening a factory a day in Thailand last year, aiding Indonesia in constructing naval bases, increasing ties with Vietnam despite the U.S. embargo. Malaysia has invited Japan to act as "leader" of a proposed "East Asian Economic Grouping," and ASEAN diplomats have suggested (over U.S. objections) that such an EAEG might also embrace security matters.

Class Struggle vs. Drive to WW III

Over the last decade of Cold War II, the international Spartacist tendency (iSt)—now the International Communist League—argued against pseudo-Trotskyists such as Ernest Mandel (who blithely claimed that detente was alive and well, and nuclear war was impossible) that the imperialists were indeed driving toward a third world war. In the introduction by the International Executive Committee of the iSt to the *Prometheus Research Series* bulletin No. 2 (February 1989), "Documents on the 'Proletarian Military Policy'," we wrote:

"World imperialism has already brought human civilization to the brink of the abyss with two world wars. A rational human being would not consciously embark on a course leading to nuclear world war. But capitalism long ago created economic forces which strain against the boundaries of the nation-states in which they are fettered: world imperialism isn't rational, and neither are the men who rule over us in its interest...."

"While the irreconcilable hostility of U.S. imperialism to the Soviet Union is the main factor now posing the threat of WW III before humanity, one cannot ignore inter-imperialist contradictions. The strength of Japanese industry and world trade cannot be suppressed peacefully. And there is evidence that German imperialism is ready for renewed imperialist adventure."

In itself, the Persian Gulf War was a non-contest. The Pentagon used it to test out and showcase its latest high-tech weaponry with minimal danger. But Washington used the opportunity to reassert U.S. imperialist hegemony in a "post-Cold War" world. With the collapse of the East European Stalinist regimes and now the ascendancy of counterrevolutionary forces in the Soviet Union itself, the post-World War II "bipolar" confrontation between the U.S. and USSR has been superseded. But as the counterrevolutionary Polish Pope John Paul II noted, the postwar world has now been replaced by a prewar world. Interimperialist conflicts are heading toward WW III, and they got a big push down the road from the Gulf War.

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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"New World Order" ...

(continued from page 9)

Yet the "antiwar" movement disappeared. As if to underscore the similarity to the period leading up to 1914, a number of rad-libs actually supported the U.S. military buildup in the Gulf, mouthing platitudes about nonexistent "international law" and using the United Nations as a fig leaf. In the run-up to the fighting, a number of supposed "socialists" sported yellow ribbons and many carried social-patriotic signs to "support our troops." And as soon as it was clear there would be no significant "Allied" casualties, the "antiwar" movement simply vanished. As always, the reformist left tailed after the liberal Democrats, and the pusillanimous nature of the "peace" movement reflected the fact that, when U.S. "victory" was assured, for the first time in decades the American bourgeoisie spoke with one voice.

The Spartacist League, based on the program of Lenin and Trotsky, denounced the American invasion from the outset, calling to defeat U.S. imperialism and defend Iraq. We began our article "Break Blockade of Iraq!" (WV No. 509, 7 September 1990):

"What's going on in the Middle East right now is a bald attempt by the United States to seize control of the world's oil supplies. Having lost its economic predominance, Washington is now trying to reassert its role as imperialist global policeman through brute military force. That's what George Bush means when he talks about a 'new world order,' echoing Adolf Hitler in the 1930s. But in fact, the American invasion is setting the stage for a new world war."

"It is the lack of effective opposition

that is the novel element in today's world," wrote Edward Mortimer in the *Financial Times* (15 May), adding: "The limits to American power are mainly internal." But those limits are very real. The budget deficit, instead of falling to under \$100 billion this year, has ballooned to over \$300 billion. So Secretary of State Baker repeatedly had to go around to U.S. allies with a tin cup asking for dollars to pay for the war. Bush keeps announcing the imminent end to the "recession" which officially began in August 1990. Instead, unemployment is at 7 percent officially (double that when you include those who can't find a full-time job or who have dropped out of the labor market altogether) and is still growing. To avoid the term depression, bourgeois economists are now talking of a "double-dip recession," in which a slight upturn is followed by another fall.

The biggest obstacle to a recovery is now the towering debt piled up during the 1980s. The federal debt skyrocketed from \$900 billion to over \$3.4 trillion during the decade. Two-thirds of the cities and virtually all the states are running deficits, which unlike the federal government they can't cover by printing money. Heavily indebted consumers likewise aren't buying autos or refrigerators. And 28 percent of U.S. corporations' cash flow, over half their pretax profits, goes for interest payments. The savings and loan associations are bankrupt, with the bailout projected to cost \$500 billion. Insurance companies are precarious. And the banks are teetering on the edge: already this year there have been major mergers in New York and California to avert bankruptcy and a possible nationwide bank collapse. As a result there is almost no investment in

the American economy today. Meanwhile, the capitalist managers continue to loot the companies with abandon. At the end of World War II, the average U.S. corporate chief (CEO) earned 12 times the average factory worker's wage. At the beginning of the 1980s the average annual pay of CEOs was \$643,000, or 42 times the worker's wage. But in 1990, this had shot up by 212 percent to an average of \$1.9 million, 85 times the worker's wage (*AFL-CIO News*, 21 May)! Meanwhile, the real take-home pay of factory workers has fallen since 1973, to the point that today young working-class families have virtually no hope of buying a house. Things have gotten so bad that *Business Week* (19 August) ran a cover story asking "What Happened to the American Dream?" So much for the myth of a "classless society."

Over five million children go to bed hungry, and there are an estimated three million homeless. Worst off are black and Hispanic minorities, particularly ghetto youth, who have no education, no job, and no hope of getting either. The decay of American cities has produced a wasteland of social pathology, of massive drug addiction and violent crime. As liberal Democrats call for an "Urban Storm" to solve the urban crisis, the response of the government at all levels, from the Republican White House to black Democratic mayors, is to increase the number of jails and cops.

Some years ago, AFL-CIO chief Lane Kirkland accused the bosses of waging a "one-sided class war." The central responsibility for this state of affairs lies with the misleaders of the workers movement, who have gone along with billions in givebacks that have gutted their own unions as they grovel to demonstrate

their higher loyalties to the capitalist system. As a result, the number of major strikes last year was at the lowest point since the end of World War II (when they had an actual strike ban). The treachery of the labor tops is shown by their acquiescence in the massive spread of scabbing (now called "permanent replacement workers"). And since the unions aren't producing benefits, it's no surprise that the unionized sector of the industrial workforce is now about 15 percent. Nevertheless, over 20 percent of black workers are unionized, reflecting greater militancy and awareness of the oppressive reality of capitalism.

The internal contradictions of American imperialism are enormous. But to take advantage of them requires above all the forging of a leadership prepared to fight the class war—which the bourgeoisie is waging at home with the same ferocity it used against the Iraqis, devastating American cities, shutting down industry, all in the name of profits. As we wrote in the iSt document on the threat of World War III:

"The world bourgeoisie has at its disposal enormous political experience and economic reserves. If the history of the 20th century proves anything it is this: within the social context there is no situation in which the bourgeoisie cannot prevail, if there does not exist a revolutionary party capable of wresting power from its hands. Revolutionary proletarian parties are not built overnight: it took two generations of ferment in the Russian intelligentsia, the dress rehearsal of 1905, and years of patient underground work among the proletarians of the tsarist empire to produce Lenin's Bolsheviks. But if the small forces which adhere today to the revolutionary program of Lenin and Trotsky do not succeed in forging themselves into parties with the experience, will and authority among the masses to lead a successful proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries, there will be no future for humanity." ■

Abortion...

(continued from page 12)

first came up for debate.

Organisations such as the Women's Abortion Action Committee and their left hangers-on have responded to the Nile Bill by relying on parliamentary pressure tactics aimed particularly at the ALP. Given the ALP's position of allowing its MPs a "conscience vote" on abortion, (i.e. a free hand to the Catholic reactionaries of the NSW right-wing ALP machine) and its record of parliamentary blocs with Nile's Call to Australia Party, the illusions fostered by WAAC et al in the ALP are suicidal.

The enormous social power of the working class must be mobilised in defence of women's rights and against all capitalist reaction. The 23 October statewide general strike in NSW against the Greiner government's draconian Industrial Relations Bill was a display of this power, shutting down NSW basic industry, along with public transport, the schools and other government services. Equally it was a cynical political exercise by the NSW Labor Council, who sought to cover the tracks of their inaction and treachery over the Bill with a stay-at-home protest which was never intended as an all-out fight to stop the legislation. The strike was only called when the anti-union Niles, who hold the balance of power in the NSW Upper House, finally announced they would support the Bill. For years the Laborite union tops have sucked up to and pleaded with the Niles to save them from this legislation, and now its passage into law is accomplished fact. Over women's abortion rights,

what's necessary is the mobilisation of union contingents to defend abortion clinics and teach the reactionary "Right-to-Lifers" a lesson. But wielding this power requires a class struggle strategy which means breaking from the ALP.

The current Nile anti-abortion bill comes in the context of a wholesale attack by the NSW Liberal government on social services, health and education. The erosion of social services began under the previous state Labor government, in concert with the federal Labor Government's all-sided attack on working people, the poor and oppressed. Job conditions and wages have been gouged under the anti-working class Accord. Unemployment is over ten percent. For youth and immigrants it is more than double that figure and for Aborigines it is four times! Appalling health and living conditions sentence Aborigines to a life expectancy twenty-years lower than the national average, while jailings have increased by a staggering 70 percent over the last couple of years. In misogynist, racist Australia where, according to a government survey (*Australian*, 9 March 1988) 20 percent of the population condones wife beating, women workers still average only 79 percent of male wages, the same as in 1975 when the Equal Wages Act was introduced. Working women have suffered most under capitalism's recession, toiling in non-unionised sweat shops, driven into casual employment if not entirely back into the home. Childcare is expensive and difficult to obtain.

It is testimony to the decayed state of NSW public health that Nile considers that simply limiting abortion to public hospitals would be a victory for anti-abortionists. The addition of all abortion services—an estimated 27,000 to 35,000 patients annually—to the public health system would be crippling, and doctors threaten that it would mean a reduction in other services.

On 15 October, NSW hospital workers struck for 24 hours against hospital closures and funding cuts. One surgeon told the *Australian* (21-22 September)

that patients are being sent to his hospital "not with referral notes but with letters to the superintendent pleading that they be treated or they would probably die." Casualty wards in western Sydney hospitals are regularly closed. The *Australian* also noted that the Royal Women's Hospital, facing funding cuts of three million dollars, is regularly hit by bed shortages during which "mothers who had given birth simply backed up into the labour ward where they waited on trolleys or wheelchairs until another bed was available."

The fight for abortion rights cannot be isolated from the struggle for decent living conditions and democratic rights for all. Alongside the call for free abortion on demand and freely available contraception, the Spartacist League raises the demand for universal free quality health care, and free 24 hour childcare, measures which address the profound oppression of poor and minority women. Abortion reform alone does not threaten the institution of the nuclear family, which remains the main source of women's oppression; the fight for abortion rights must be linked to the fight for a socialist, working-class program for women's liberation.

Following the collapse of Stalinist rule in Eastern Europe, counterrevolution has targeted first and foremost immigrants and women. The right to abortion, previously available on demand, is now under attack in Poland and the former East Germany. In Latin America, where close to a million women are admitted to hospital each year for post-abortion complications, only Castro's Cuba provides abortion on demand. Moreover Cuban citizens have access to a higher standard of health care than in many US cities. Now these and the other gains of the Cuban revolution are in the cross-hairs of imperialism, following Gorbachev's betrayal in pulling out Soviet military forces and withdrawing aid.

The struggle for women's emancipation is inseparable from the struggle for the emancipation of the working

class from capitalist exploitation and oppression. Lenin's Bolsheviks in the early Soviet state legalised abortion on demand. The 1917 October Revolution opened the road to the liberation of women. Today, under the leadership of a multiracial vanguard party, the workers and oppressed must struggle for power, establishing a workers government which would open the way for a new socialist society where production would be for the needs of all, not profit for a few. In such a society the bourgeois family would be replaced by socialised childcare and housework, enabling women to be full participants in social and political life. Full employment, decent housing and free education would eliminate the material basis of sexual and racial oppression. Only then will we be able to provide a decent future for our children. For women's liberation through socialist revolution! ■

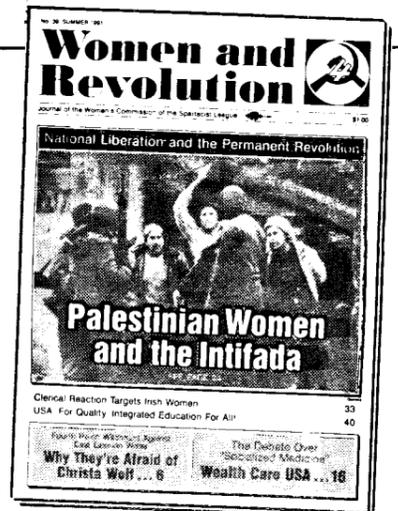
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AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

Gays...

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Arena is the head of a parliamentary committee set up to investigate giving compensation to the so-called "innocent victims of AIDS" (those who acquired AIDS medically), as if everyone else is guilty. The "outing" issue became front-page news, with the full resources of the capitalist media mobilised against what they dubbed a "Vicious gay campaign" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 August). But the truly vicious anti-gay terror on the streets is buried inside the paper, if it's news at all.

Reliance on the capitalist state is suicidal! Homosexuals have always been discriminated against under capitalism. The Australian ruling class, with its "culture" of ocker mateship, is bigoted and vicious. Along with the anti-gay terror on the streets goes institutionalised discrimination by the state. South Australia is the only state where the age of consent for homosexuals is the same as that for everyone else, sixteen. Elsewhere, homosexual sex is only legal after eighteen, or twenty-one in Western Australia. In Tasmania, homosexual sex is illegal. The previous Labor government in supposedly enlightened New South Wales established a special 40-strong police team dedicated to smashing gay groups trying to de-stigmatise sex involving people under the statutory age limit. Victoria, under the ALP's John Cain, was home to the notorious Delta Task Force, celebrated in the bourgeois press for campaigns of infiltration and innuendo, raids and arrests, tying in with "dob-in-a-paedophile" phone-ins.

Established gay pressure politics is mired in parliamentarism, looking to the ALP and "independents" like Clover Moore for reforms. This is a dead end even on the most superficial level. Labor panders to pervasive anti-gay bigotry by upholding "conscience" voting on issues dealing with homosexuality. The Goss Labor government in Queensland is enacting "anti-discrimination" legislation which specifically does not protect anyone who promotes an "inappropriate lifestyle" where children are involved, i.e., teachers can be sacked for being gay. This sinister legislation is, in reality, a de facto legalisation of discrimination against homosexuals.

The working class is the one force with the social power to turn things around. Through the Hawke years it has been paralysed in the straitjacket of the reactionary ALP/ACTU Accord. But after nine years of waging war on the workers and oppressed minorities the ALP's bureaucratic stranglehold over the working class is very fragile. Government

scapegoating of racial and sexual minorities and attacks on their democratic rights threaten the workers movement itself. Democratic rights are indivisible! The workers movement has a duty to fight all forms of discrimination and victimisation and defend gays and lesbians against violence on the streets. Today's gay-bashing gangs, products of capitalism in an advanced state of decay, can be the nucleus of tomorrow's extra-parliamentary shock troops of capitalism, attacking workers' picket lines.



Jamie Dunbar—Sydney Star Observer

Sydney, 7 October: Cops attack demonstrators protesting against anti-gay, anti-abortion rally organised by Rev Fred Nile and "Right-to-Life."

These fascist scum can and must be stopped, by integrated, union-based workers defence guards. A good, hard-fought strike against the vicious austerity that the Labor henchmen of capital have imposed could blow a hole in the blanket of capitalist reaction which is smothering workers and oppressed minorities. But to exercise its enormous social power the working class must be broken from the pro-capitalist ALP traitors. A revolutionary party like Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks must be built, to lead the working class as the tribune of all the oppressed.

The nuclear family is one of the fundamental institutions of bourgeois rule, and with it goes the rigid, repressive and hypocritical morality the bourgeoisie imposes in the name of "family values." Recently Sydney artists Gary Manson and Dobrija Stamenkovic were convicted on charges of "committing indecent acts," over a photo series of an eleven-year-old girl on the theme of humiliation experienced by rape victims, produced

for Manson's Masters degree, and publicly exhibited late in 1988. Despite the clear consent of the girl, and the approval and attendance in the studio of the girl's mother, Judge Gibson upheld the Prosecutor's line that any such consent was irrelevant, and the two await the production of a "victim impact statement" pending sentencing, facing up to two years jail. The state has no business interfering in people's consensual activities, or in dictating who is or is not "old enough." Quash the convictions

for spreading AIDS. Racial and sexual bigotry overlap, with prospective immigrants being stigmatised as health risks and subjected to compulsory HIV testing. In a recent outrage, four visiting black South African nurses were forced to undergo the HIV test.

This official bigotry has led to violent attacks, such as when a dozen thugs with iron bars smashed their way into the Sydney Hospital's AIDS bus in an attempt to get at those inside. Besides fuelling such violence, AIDS hysteria saw countless other barbarities committed against people in need of medical attention. The AIDS Council of NSW has documented nearly 500 cases of discrimination against HIV carriers, including sackings, evictions, and the withdrawal of medical, legal and other services from HIV positive people and their partners.

The meagre medical facilities currently available to terminally ill AIDS sufferers are falling to the government razor gangs: Fairfield Hospital, one of Melbourne's few AIDS centres is set to shut its HIV ward. Closure of Sydney's Marrickville, Parramatta and St Joseph's hospitals, on top of reductions of beds at Sydney Hospital, puts further pressure on AIDS units and other critical services at remaining sites. AIDS units are almost constantly full, and end-stage patients are being parked on trolleys in hallways for hours before beds become available.

AIDS is a fatal and as yet incurable disease. There needs to be billions of dollars provided for AIDS research and treatment. Although evidence exists to show that the drug AZT can extend the life of those with AIDS, the government limits its availability, citing "prohibitive expense" as its justification. Meanwhile, pharmaceutical companies such as Wellcome, which manufactures AZT, are reaping the profits and refusing to allow the manufacture of cheaper generic drugs. AZT, along with other experimental drugs not being made available here, should be available, free, to all those who want and need it! For free, quality health care for all!

Marxists understand that sexual and racial oppression are inherent in capitalism, and can only be eliminated by social revolution led by the working class. Only workers rule can lay the basis for replacing the repressive nuclear family by socialising its functions. Unflinching opposition to all forms of oppression is central to the task of leading the proletariat to power. The Bolsheviks eliminated all discriminatory laws against homosexuals shortly after the October Revolution. Although such gains were later reversed by the Stalinist political counterrevolution, the Bolshevik example outlines the road to a society of equality and freedom for all. ■

Soviet Union...

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more backward republics and prostituting themselves to the deutschmark, they will live like Scandinavians. They might ponder what the D-mark has brought to the former East Germany—four million unemployed, economic devastation, social collapse.

Genuine Leninists stand for full equality of all nations and nationalities in a genuinely socialist federation.

Soviet Workers: Fight Capitalist Enslavement!

It will take more than parliamentary decrees to dismantle the Soviet state and consolidate a capitalist regime. While the pinnacles of the military, police and administrative apparatus are now occupied by counterrevolutionaries, the multimillioned base of the state apparatus will not be so easily purged. Moreover, the centrifugal tendencies

being promoted by the various separatist forces collide head-on with the fact that the economies of the republics are strongly intertwined and based from top to bottom on a centralized economy.

Talk of reorganizing the economy along the lines of the European Common Market is ludicrous. The Soviet republics are far more dependent on each other than even Wales and England, or any two states in the U.S. Nine of the 15 republics export more than 60 percent of their output to the rest of the Soviet Union, and virtually every industrial enterprise relies on other republics for raw materials and parts. One Western economist warns: "The process of establishing an efficient, prosperous market economy in the U.S.S.R. will take not years but decades."

Even given this illusory perspective, it would mean years of grinding poverty for the working people, throwing their living standards back to the days of tsarism. Yet the aspiring Soviet capitalists worry that they will not survive even the com-

ing winter if they cannot put food on the tables of the workers.

The working class has yet to make its voice heard. But there are unmistakable rumblings of discontent with the "new order." Tens of thousands have come to Lenin's mausoleum, standing in lines that have reached a mile long. And unlike the smug yuppies and pampered children of the bureaucracy who flocked to Yeltsin, those who gather to pay their respects to the founder of the Soviet state are predominantly working people.

Soviet workers do not relish the prospect of seeing their cities, and even their immediate families, torn apart by nationalist fratricide. They are already fed up with the rampant black marketeering and grotesque avarice fostered by five years of partial capitalist measures. And those still seduced by the siren song that full-fledged capitalism will bring VCRs and stereos to all will soon be rudely awakened.

As a worried Eduard Shevardnadze noted: "If people take to the streets, it is impossible to predict what slogans

they will be guided by, and who will lead that movement." In his own counterrevolutionary way, Shevardnadze understands that the fate of the Soviet Union will be decided by who will lead the working masses and under what program.

Soviet Stalinism is dead, and despite the imperialist and Stalinist lies that Stalinism was identical to communism, there is a sense among Soviet working people that this is not the case. One woman waiting outside Lenin's mausoleum said, "He tried to do good things for our country, but over the years his ideas have been distorted."

What is key to reversing the counterrevolutionary tide sweeping the homeland of October is for the vanguard elements of the Soviet working class to rediscover the undistorted program of Leninism, regrouping in a Trotskyist party all the forces who would return to the internationalist road of the October Revolution. That is the task of the hour.

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Union Action Needed Now:

Stop Murderous Anti-Gay Terror!

"In the last two years, there has been more violence and murders committed against gay men and lesbians than in the previous 20 years," cries one anguished reader of the gay community newspaper, *Sydney Star Observer* (4 October). Gay bashing is increasing in frequency and viciousness. The five gay-hate murders in NSW in 1990 made up five percent of all killings that year. The most recent was that of Felipe Flores, bashed and kicked to death in Woolloomooloo early in the morning of 2 September, the seventh such murder in Sydney since December 1988. In the 1990 Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, thousands of people wore red armbands to indicate they had been bashed. Summer last year saw about 20 bashings a week around Sydney's Oxford Street, according to

Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project co-ordinator Bruce Grant.

The culprits in the few gay murders that have been solved have been school-aged thugs, not particularly competent in covering their tracks. Ninety percent of reported bashings are committed by youths, in gangs sometimes 15 strong. Attacks are particularly frequent against those of non-European origins, doubly isolated from the White Australia dictates of "normality." In some cases skinheads in jackboots are specifically identified as the bashers. After the body of 19-year-old National Action fascist Erich Kuhn was found buried outside his home (his skull was smashed, possibly in some internal NA squabble, like the fatal shooting of another fascist in their Tempe office in July), police statements

revealed he had been known to belong to a gang of skinheads responsible for a series of gay bashings in the northern Sydney suburb of Narrabeen. Indeed the wealth of information on Kuhn and his associates released by police after the murder might suggest a closer relationship between the cops and the fascists than either cares to admit.

In Sydney, Melbourne, and many other Australian cities special "Police-Gay Liaison Groups" have been established, chiefly as a public relations exercise. Anyone who thinks that police harassment of gays is now a thing of the past is crazy. In fact, Sydney cops have launched an anti-gay crackdown, with "seductively dressed" constables running the same old entrapment routines around known gay "beats," recording

home and work details of their prey, verbally abusing, and handcuffing and arresting them. In Melbourne the police carried out a public "blitz on beats" campaign, and shortly after, on 8 October, Barry Arnoldt became another gay murder victim, stabbed to death in a park in Brunswick.

The recent controversy over "outing" is a case study in bourgeois hypocrisy and homophobia. "Outing" is the act of publicising the homosexuality of selected prominent people. As a tactic for pursuing gay rights it is stupid and defeatist, as it relies upon pervasive anti-gay bigotry for "success." In August a tiny gay group, Queer Nation was reportedly going to "out" NSW Labor parliamentarian Franca Arena's twin sons. Franca

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News Limited



Sydney, 15 October: NSW hospital workers rally against hospital closures.

ASp photo



Sydney, 7 September: protest rally against Nile's anti-abortion bill.

Free Quality Health Care For All!

Free Abortion on Demand!

On 7 September 2000 people rallied in Sydney against reactionary, anti-woman, anti-gay NSW state parliamentarian, Rev Fred Nile's attempt to restrict abortion rights. The demonstration, including many youth and students, tapped into widespread opposition to the Nile Bill, which aims to outlaw private abortion clinics, fine and deregister doctors "guilty" of carrying out "illegal" abortions and restrict abortions to public hospitals. This Bill is the first of ten foreshadowed pieces of reactionary legislation which include bills to give foetuses "full legal rights" and banning the annual gay Mardi Gras. Meanwhile in Federal Parliament, as the Hawke

government attacks Medicare with the introduction of a "user pays" levy, right-wing MP Alisdair Webster is attempting to have Medicare payments for abortion banned. This blatant anti-working class, anti-woman legislation would make safe abortion too costly for poorer women, making them have unwanted children for whom they cannot care, or force them into the nightmare of backyard abortion.

Nile's Bill is not expected to pass, this time, and he knows it. It is part of a long standing campaign to roll back abortion rights. In 1987/88 two abortion clinics were firebombed. "Right-to-Life" bigots have stepped up harassment of clinic patrons, attempting to imitate the vile

Operation Rescue thugs in the U.S. The anti-women rightists fight under the banner of "family values," propping up a fundamental institution of bourgeois rule—the patriarchal family, which is necessary not only to raise the next generation of wage slaves but is the bedrock of conservatism. "Right-to-Lifers" and their ideological ilk are a deeply reactionary movement who support the death penalty, hail AIDS as God's scourge on homosexuals and blame pornography for violent crimes. Their aim is to instil guilty fear and social conformity in the service of reaction. Nile was gung-ho for the Gulf War and described the imperialist "victory"—a mass-

acre of over 100,000 Iraqis—as a miracle from God.

Despite the continuing existence of laws which make abortion a crime, through struggle and the efforts of courageous fighters like the late Bertram Wainer, relatively cheap, safe abortions are available in most major Australian cities. Access to safe abortion has meant a vast improvement in women's health. Abortion under decent medical conditions is one of the safest surgical procedures—ten times safer than childbirth. The unpopularity of the Nile Bill was reflected in the parliamentary walk-out staged by 13 women MPs when it

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