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Near-East Tangle



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UPI

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U.S./China—Hands Off Vietnam!

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Today, on the eighth anniversary of the fall of Saigon (30 April 1975), we salute the courageous workers and peasants of Vietnam. Our internationalist solidarity with the Vietnamese Revolution demands implacable opposition to the renewed U.S./Chinese military pressure against Vietnam. Once again it appears that U.S. imperialism is trying to crush Vietnam. Over the April 22-24 weekend China, Washington's anti-Soviet ally in Asia, launched artillery attacks against Vietnam for the first time since Peking's 1979 invasion. Meanwhile the U.S. is rushing ultramodern weaponry—Redeye antiaircraft missiles, long-range 155-millimeter howitzers and the like—to Thailand. Early this month, U.S.-supplied Thai warplanes dropped napalm on Vietnamese forces in Cambodia (Kampuchea). And then came an ominous report that CIA director William Casey had dined with former South Vietnamese Marshal Ky, the jumpsuited Hitler-lover, at the Philippines presidential palace in Manila. The Chinese border, the Cambodian border, poking around in the south...the Americans are orchestrating an attack all around Vietnam and inside as well. The Trotskyists demand: U.S./China—Hands Off!

Even more ominous is the way this onslaught is being presented. "U.S. is Airlifting Missiles to Thailand in Face of Vietnamese Threat" headlined the *New York Times*. What threat? Peking presents a diplomatic note to Hanoi saying that if Vietnam lets "the trend of armed provocations against China's border continue to develop, they must be held responsible for the grave consequences." Earlier the Chinese chief of staff declared in Bangkok, that "if Vietnam dares to make an armed incursion into Thailand...the

Vietnam News Agency



Ho Chi Minh

Chinese army will not stay idle." This is the language of someone who is planning war, like Bismarck's Prussia on the eve of its war against France in 1870. The U.S. allies are acting provocatively, hoping to draw in the Vietnamese and then claiming some incident as a pretext for unleashing a bloody attack.

Perhaps behind these anti-Vietnamese provocations is a message from Reagan to Andropov: "Get out of Nicaragua and El Salvador and we will let you have 'Nam.'" But there is a corollary: "this is what we intend to do to the Soviet Union." The Chinese are telling the Kremlin that the price of détente is giving up Vietnam. Vietnam is a long way from Russia and the connection is from Vladivostok through the western Pacific. The Americans could easily interdict those sea lanes, but then they've got World War III. So it depends on what the Soviets are going to do and on how crazy those guys in Washington are.

The Sino-Vietnamese border has been a potential trip wire for World War III since early 1979 when China, vowing to "teach Vietnam a bloody lesson," invaded that nation and ended up receiving a bloody lesson of its own. Perhaps the U.S. is now seeking to really smash Vietnam, using China as its instrument. Two or three million Chinese may die doing it. While the Vietnamese army is vastly superior to the Chinese army man-for-man, the population ratio of the two countries is 50 million to one billion. The Chinese can put more soldiers in the field than the Vietnamese have children. It is possible that Vietnam is on the brink of extinction. *If China does invade, all people everywhere must rally to the defense of Vietnam in all ways.*

Vietnam heroically fought French colonialism and American imperialism for 30 years and won. The Vietnamese army of peasants and workers inflicted the most humiliating defeat the United States has ever

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North Vietnamese army takes Saigon, April 1975. A historic defeat for U.S. imperialism.

suffered. The image of those Marines desperately trying to escape from the roof of the American embassy in Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) remains a searing, bitter memory for the men who inhabit the Pentagon, the CIA headquarters at Langley and other corridors of power in Washington. They long to avenge themselves on this small but heroic people.

And in Maoist-Stalinist China, frustrated in its ambitions to become the hegemonic power in Indochina, American imperialism found a ready instrument to attack Vietnam. In late 1978, shortly after Vietnam overthrew the hated genocidal Pol Pot regime in Cambodia, which killed at least two million of its own people, Washington gave Peking the green light for a "punitive" invasion of Vietnam, although it didn't turn out that way. We wrote at the time:

"...the Chinese invasion is clearly intertwined with imperialist opposition to the gains of the Vietnamese revolution, won at the cost of more than a million lives and decades of struggle. Socialists and labor militants throughout the world must demand that China Get Out of Vietnam Now! We call on the workers and peasants of the Chinese deformed workers state to demand an end to the obscene, sinister anti-Soviet Peking-Washington alliance now aimed at bloodying the working people of Vietnam."

—"China Get Out!" WV No. 226, 2 March 1979

The Chinese army withdrew at that time with heavy casualties. Ever since Washington/Peking have kept up military pressure on the Vietnamese, mainly through support for the remnants of the Khmer Rouge of the despised butcher Pol Pot and rightist insurgents in Cambodia supplied through Thailand. And it looks like the Vietnamese are finally cleaning up the counterrevolutionary scum in the border enclaves, which naturally causes their imperialist backers to cry "atrocities!"

The Vietnamese must counter the constant military threats at great cost. They suffer the grim consequences of three decades of imperialist war and devastation: per capita

income in 1981 was only \$153, ranking them among the poorest of nations. Under pressure from the U.S., most Western capitalist countries have cut off all aid and credits to the Vietnamese. *Break the Imperialist Economic Blockade!*

Economic aid from East Europe is due to be cut by some 20 percent as well. It is with bitterness that we view the resources of the Russian collectivized economy being spent to fatten the bellies of clerical-fascist Pilsudskiites in Poland, while the heroic people of Vietnam endure grim poverty to stand up to the powerful forces arrayed against them.

By forcing Vietnam to expend massive military resources in Cambodia and on the Chinese border, U.S. imperialism is seeking to starve the Vietnamese people and prevent the government from rebuilding the war-ravaged economy. Another important U.S. ally against Vietnam is Australia, whose newly elected right-wing Labor prime minister Robert Hawke has aggressively put himself forward as Reagan's man in Asia. In the past few months Washington has evidently decided to step up the all-sided squeeze on Vietnam. When U.S. secretary of state George Shultz visited Peking in February, he and his Chinese hosts agreed to closer military cooperation.

Despite recent frictions disturbing the anti-Soviet Washington-Peking alliance (over U.S. arms sales to Taiwan), China continues to play the U.S. game, especially against Vietnam. Yet if U.S. imperialism succeeds in its ultimate aim of destroying the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China will not long survive. Does anyone doubt that an anti-Communist fanatic like Reagan would like to return China to the heirs of Chiang Kai-shek who now rule Taiwan under American protection? The defense not only of the Vietnamese Revolution but also of the gains of the Chinese Revolution and ultimately of the Soviet Union demand: U.S./China—Hands Off Vietnam! ■

Imperialist, Israeli Troops Out of Lebanon!

Near East Tangle

Fake-Leftists Push "Pax Americana"

It is a tragic and grotesque irony of history that the U.S.-backed Israeli invasion and occupation of Lebanon can only be described in the language of the Nazi occupation of East Europe. An Israeli general interviewed on American television said his forces were aiming at the "final solution" to the Palestinian "problem." The Israeli army described its mission with the Hebrew word *letaher*—the "purification" of Lebanon of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The massacre of Palestinians at the Shatila and Sabra refugee camps were carried out by the Israeli's Lebanese Einsatzgruppen, the Phalangists and forces of Saad Haddad. The survivors of the Nazi Holocaust in creating a "Jewish state," i.e., a clerical-racialist state, have necessarily adopted the Hitlerite methods for acquiring *Lebensraum* (living space), condemning another people, the Palestinian Arabs, to diaspora and genocide.

And in their demented vision of creating a Greater Israel that stretches from the Nile to the Euphrates the Zionist chauvinists are acting as the regional spearhead for a global U.S./NATO war drive to overthrow the gains of the Russian October Revolution, a war drive threatening all of humanity with nuclear holocaust.

PLO leader Yasir Arafat spoke the obvious truth when



Azoulay/Paris Match

Zionist holocaust sends thousands of Palestinians to concentration camps.

before the assembled Arab rulers in Fez, Morocco this past September he called Israel's Lebanese blitzkrieg "essentially a U.S. war... supported militarily, politically, diplomatically by the U.S." This understanding did not prevent the petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership of the PLO from calling for U.S. imperialist "peacekeepers" in Lebanon. There is no question that on June 6 of last year when 40,000 Israeli troops, with hundreds of tanks and armored personnel carriers, crossed the Lebanese border, Jerusalem's quartermasters in Washington not only gave their approval but pledged massive military support.

Israel's invasion of Lebanon was long threatened and long planned. Its 1978 invasion of southern Lebanon was universally seen as a dress rehearsal for a more massive military campaign in the future aiming at the de facto annexation of Lebanon south of the Litani River and establishment of a protectorate in the rest of the country. Toward that end Israel reshipped American military supplies to the Phalange, the fascist organization based on Lebanon's privileged Christian Maronites, and created its own Lebanese Einsatzgruppen commanded by a renegade Lebanese army officer Saad Haddad. Israel's fanatical war minister at the time of the Lebanese blitzkrieg, Ariel Sharon, revealed that he had been "planning this operation since I took office" in July 1981. And during this time the Pentagon rushed war supplies to Israel. In the first quarter of 1982 these were *ten times* the amount supplied in the same period in 1980. Massive U.S. aid to Israel amounts to between \$3,500 and \$4,000 for every family of five in that small country!

On the eve of the invasion Sharon visited Washington and informed then U.S. secretary of state, the megalomaniacal former NATO commander, Alexander Haig, of his imminent war plans. According to Zeev Schiff, the well-informed military editor of the Israeli paper *Haaretz*, "Haig issued no threat against Israel's forthcoming military action.... From Sharon's point of view the American had provided a green light" ("The Green Light," *Foreign Policy*, Spring 1983).

On June 2, three days before the invasion, the *Wall Street Journal* published an editorial practically commanding the Israeli military campaign:

"The most immediate issue in the Middle East is how to deal with the entrenched Soviet-Syrian-PLO position in Lebanon and the threat it poses to peace. And in trying to solve that riddle, the US and European policy makers could do worse than to pay more attention to the views of the Israelis, who have had some experience surviving in the Middle East."

The American imperialists could not suppress their glee at the thorough and brutal manner in which Israel solved the "riddle" of the so-called "Soviet-Syrian-PLO position in Lebanon." They believe that Israel's conquest of Lebanon, humiliation of the Arab states and dispersal of the PLO forces have fundamentally altered the balance of

power in the Near East. Haig expressed the consensus of the Reagan administration that the Israeli invasion provided "a great strategic opportunity" with "the chance for redrawing a new political map for the region." The liberal Democrats were, as usual, even more fervently pro-Israel than the right-wing Republicans. A Democratic Party convention held during the siege of Beirut overwhelmingly passed a resolution hailing Begin/Sharon's genocidal war for creating "a new opportunity to build lasting peace for the people of Lebanon and greater security for Israel" while also constituting a "severe blow" to "international terrorism" and "Soviet influence."

Washington is attempting to build an anti-Soviet "strategic consensus" in the region that runs from Nairobi to Karachi and incorporates the colonels of Baghdad, the House of Saud as well as the Zionist barracks state. U.S. imperialism has increasingly reasserted, indeed flaunted, its role as policeman of the Near East and beyond. The Rapid Deployment Force of elite U.S. troops now has bases finished or under construction in Egypt, Kenya, Oman and Somalia. The 1979 Camp David accords between Egypt and Israel provided another base for U.S. troops (in the guise of "peacekeepers") in the Sinai.

And now isolated and abandoned by the Arab regimes, the petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership of the PLO, too, has embraced Pax Americana. It was Arafat who negotiated the entry of the U.S. Marines, French Foreign Legion and Italian troops into Beirut. Pax Americana means continued capitalist enslavement and murderous national oppression for the toiling masses of the Near East. As long as Israeli and imperialist forces remain in Lebanon there will be more Shatilas and Sabras. The U.S. "peacekeepers" and those of its NATO allies also have in their gunsights the Soviet-backed Syrian forces; the Near East could well be the tripwire for World War III. Lebanon has become a front line of Reagan's anti-Soviet war drive. The international workers movement must demand: U.S. Marines, French Foreign Legion, Italian troops get out! No imperialist "peacekeepers"! Israel out of Lebanon and the occupied territories! Not another dime or bullet for the Zionist butchers!

"Judeo-Nazism"

In late June of last year four of Israel's leading intellectuals held a press conference to condemn Begin/Sharon's invasion of Lebanon. One of them, Yeshayahu Leibovitz, a distinguished chemist and editor of the *Encyclopaedia Hebraica*, spoke of:

"...the phenomenon of Judeo-Nazism which is occurring now. This phenomenon is arising because we inflict a rule of conquest on another people.... We cannot make a pre-Zimbabwe Rhodesia here. But the state as it exists today, June 20, 1982, has three million Jews and four million Arabs in the area from Eilat and Beirut, and it is all under Jewish rule."

—reproduced in *Journal of Palestine Studies*,
Summer/Fall 1982

In the mounting protests by sections of the Israeli Jewish population (restricted almost entirely to Jews of European origin, the Ashkenazi) to the invasion of Lebanon, Israel was frequently compared with Hitler's Germany, especially by the survivors of the Nazi Holocaust.

These protests, whether of intellectuals at press



Der Spiegel

Begin/Sharon's bloody Lebanese adventure sparked massive antiwar rallies in Israel led by Zionist "doves."

conferences, soldiers returning from the horrors of Lebanon or hundreds of thousands in the streets of Tel Aviv, occurred mainly within a Zionist framework. Leibovitz, for example, indicted "Judeo-Nazism" in the following manner: "As a matter of principle I ask whether the State of Israel is the State of Jews or not." Here the subjugation of four million Arabs by the Zionist state is seen as wrong because it undermines the *racialist* character of that state.

The idea that the age-old oppression of European Jewry could be resolved through mass emigration and the establishment of a Jewish nation-state was a reactionary utopian fantasy that initially found support only on the fringe of the Jewish petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. It was the rise of German fascism and the closing of all borders to Jewish refugees, including those of the most "democratic" imperialists and Stalin's Russia, that transformed Zionism into a mass movement capable of compacting a state power in the Near East. These reactionary and cataclysmic developments were products of the long death agony of capitalism in which the global productive forces have been

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shackled by the nation-state and private property. In the imperialist epoch the Zionists could carve out a new nation-state only under the sponsorship of one or another imperialist power. Just as Zionism required the victory of Nazism to attain a mass base, so it required the methods of Nazism to create and maintain a "Jewish state."

The "Judeo-Nazism" of Israel did not begin under the regime of the right-wing Zionist Begin but with the so-called Labor-Zionists who founded the Israeli state by terrorizing and driving out the Palestinian Arabs. The Labor-Zionists were always committed to an Eretz Israel (Greater Israel) incorporating the West Bank of the Jordan. And they also had ambitions toward Lebanon. In 1948 David Ben Gurion, the founding father of the Israeli state, wrote that "a Christian state ought to be set up there [in Lebanon] with its southern frontier on the Litani" (quoted in Michael Jansen, *The Battle of Beirut* [1983]). Ben Gurion's protégé, the little bonaparte Moshe Dayan, further developed plans for annexing southern Lebanon and making the rest into an Israeli protectorate. In 1955 the then-foreign minister Moshe Sharett recorded:

"According to Dayan the only thing that's necessary is to find a Lebanese officer, even a major will do. We should either win his heart or buy him with money to declare himself the saviour of the Maronite population. Then the Israeli army will enter Lebanon, occupy the necessary territory and create a Christian regime that will ally itself with Israel."

—quoted in *Ibid.*

Begin/Sharon's genocidal terror in Lebanon were prepared for and planned during the three decades of Labor-Zionist rule since the state of Israel was created through forced population transfers, while the half million Palestinian Arabs who remained in Israel were subjected first to martial law and then to third-class citizenship (second class is reserved for Jews from Arab countries, the Oriental or Sephardic Jews). It was Labor which ordered Israeli soldiers to fight alongside British and French imperialism against Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956. It was Labor which in the 1967 war seized the West Bank and Gaza and subjected their 1.5 million Palestinian inhabitants to martial law and forced popula-

tion transfers through land expropriation, Zionist settlement and a sustained campaign of terror. It was Labor that nurtured the bloodthirsty monster Ariel Sharon, who was chief military adviser to the last Labor government. Begin/Sharon only fulfill with greater thoroughness and less hypocrisy the expansionist and génocidal program of Labor-Zionism.

Cracks in the Zionist Fortress

When Begin invaded Lebanon he had the solid backing of the Labor Alignment opposition. (Labor is *not* a reformist workers party of any kind but a bourgeois party.) In the second week of the war a motion of no confidence put forward by Israel's pro-Moscow Rakah party in the Knesset (parliament) was rejected 94 to 3.

But as Begin/Sharon's blitzkrieg extended northward into Lebanon, spreading mass terror and destruction, morale in the army began to crumble as both officers and soldiers protested the war, an unprecedented act in the midst of a military campaign. For example, almost the entire elite commando unit which had taken part in the famed Entebbe operation signed an antiwar statement. As Israeli soldiers returned home disillusioned with the war or in bodybags, these protests spread among the general Ashkenazi population. An antiwar protest organized by the liberal Zionist Peace Now group brought 100,000 people onto the streets of Tel Aviv in early July.

At the same time, Begin retained his support among Sephardic Jews, who were mobilized in pro-war demonstrations that numbered hundreds of thousands and also into gangs for attacks on antiwar protests and Labor rallies. Humiliated and discriminated against by the privileged Ashkenazi elite, the Sephardim (somewhat analogous to poor whites in the American South) have found in Begin and Sharon the Führers of a Zionist clerical-fascist movement.

The war was unravelling the Zionist fortress. The enormous strains produced by the creation of this Near East Sparta, with its small population and narrow, if technologically advanced, economic base, have kept Israel in a perpetual state of war mobilization, generating an

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Israelis organized massacre of Palestinians at Shatila/Sabra after imperialist troops disarmed PLO commandos.

inflation rate of 130 percent and a net migration of Jews out of Israel that is already referred to in the Hebrew press as a new diaspora. Every additional acre of Arab land the "Jewish state" conquers, every additional Arab it brings under its rule exacerbates these strains which threaten to blow Israel apart. Further, Israeli expansionism threatens to upset the reactionary status quo in the Near East. It is these considerations which motivate Labor-Zionist "moderation" and the pacifism of Peace Now. It is also why the Zionist "doves" and "moderates" want to replace the Israeli army now occupying Lebanon with beefed-up imperialist, especially U.S., forces.

Trotskyists stand for the Leninist position of *revolutionary defeatism* toward Israel. We defend the Palestinians and Lebanese Muslims against Begin's genocidal campaign, and recognize that every casualty inflicted by the PLO fighters against the Israeli war machine, every Israeli soldier sent home in a bodybag hastens the day when the Zionist fortress can be overthrown from within. As we wrote during the siege of Beirut:

"Whatever their military weaknesses, the PLO commandos have never lacked courage. While the PLO cannot win set-piece battles against the mechanized Israeli juggernaut, there are other effective forms of resistance. Had the PLO created small squads of snipers to take out Israeli soldiers, even if they themselves took two or three times the number of losses, the strain on Israeli society with its master-race psychology would have been intolerable. The Zionist belief that one Jew is worth hundreds of Arabs cuts both ways. Israeli war fervor will be sapped when their coffins begin coming back by the hundreds and thousands."

— "Israel Out of Lebanon!", *Workers Vanguard*
No. 308, 25 June 1982

The massive antiwar protests in Israel have shattered the myth, always pushed by Arab nationalists and their fake-left tailists, that the Hebrew-speaking population of Israel is one reactionary mass, that Israel is nothing but an "outpost" of U.S. imperialism without internal class and social divisions. Probably only great historic events such as

Israel's defeat and humiliation in war or a cataclysmic economic crisis can break a section of Sephardic Jewry from the Begins and Sharons and thereby lay the basis for a mass revolutionary workers party in Israel. For such a development to be possible there must be crystallized in Israel a Trotskyist nucleus from among the militant workers, left-wing students and intellectuals and especially the oppressed Palestinian Arab population. Smash the Zionist state! Break with Palestinian nationalism! For a socialist federation of the Near East!

PLO Embraces Pax Americana

Buried along with the thousands of Palestinian men, women and children killed by the Zionist blitzkrieg in Lebanon is the fiction of "Arab unity" behind the Palestinian cause. Not a single Arab state, not even the most "radical," came to the aid of the Palestinians facing Begin/Sharon's genocidal terror. During the siege of Beirut Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), the number two man in the PLO, exclaimed with bitter irony: "It is the first time in history the Arab countries have agreed with each other. I am referring to the unity of silence and of betrayal and of just looking on."

The Lebanese catastrophe is but the culmination of decades of betrayal by the Arab rulers. From King Abdullah in 1948 to Egypt's Sadat and Syria's Assad the Arab rulers have only fought Israel to divide the spoils of the dismembered Palestinian nation while being just as savage oppressors of the Palestinians as the Israelis. Black September 1970 when King Hussein, supported by the Americans and Israelis, crushed the Palestinian resistance in Jordan. The Tel Zaatar massacre in 1976 when Lebanese Maronite militias, backed by Assad's Syria (whose intervention was endorsed by the Arab League) as well as Israel, slaughtered thousands of defenseless Palestinians. The 1979 Washington-sponsored Camp David accords which by securing Israel's southern border with Egypt allowed Begin/Sharon to concentrate their war machine against the Palestinian forces in Lebanon. These are the milestones on the road to Shatila/Sabra.

Yet the PLO has always sought its allies among the Arab rulers as against the Arab toiling masses, while adhering to Palestinian nationalism based on the principle of "non-interference in the internal affairs of Arab countries." The PLO's nationalism has prevented *class struggle* by the Palestinian proletariat and channeled rebellions which could have taken a revolutionary turn—in Jordan in 1970 and in Lebanon in 1975—into self-isolating movements which were easily beheaded and which in Lebanon contributed to the subsequent bloody communalism.

In Jordan in 1970 there existed a condition of dual power, which obviously could not last long, between the Palestinian commandos and King Hussein's army. It should be emphasized that a majority of the population of Jordan and of the royalist army consisted (and still consists) of Palestinians. Yet the PLO leaders, including the "radicals" George Habash and Nayef Hawatmeh, did not appeal to the Palestinian soldiers of Jordan or attempt to undermine the discipline and effectiveness of the royalist army. Instead in the name of "anti-Zionist unity" the PLO strategy aimed to transform the Hashemite Kingdom through peaceful pressure into a reliable ally of the

Palestinian cause. In this way the Palestinian masses were politically and militarily disarmed before Black September.

In the wake of Black September the Palestinian commandos concentrated in Lebanon, the only Arab country where they could operate with any degree of freedom. In early 1975 Lebanon stood on the brink of a social revolution which could have radically altered the political situation in the entire region, most immediately by extending itself to Syria. But the PLO leadership subordinated its forces to the traditional Muslim clan chiefs, notably Druze sect head Kamal Jumblatt, thus paving the way for the communalist civil war between the Lebanese Muslims and Palestinians on the one side and Christian Maronites on the other. (Significantly, Kamal Jumblatt's heir as head of the Lebanese National Movement, his son Walid, pronounced the PLO "finished" and called upon Arafat to surrender at the very beginning of the Israeli invasion.)

During the past 15 years the PLO has shifted its axis from "armed struggle" to diplomacy. The group around Arafat saw the October 1973 war and the oil boycott as a decisive shift in the balance of world forces in favor of the Arab regimes (as did most of the left, which hailed both). The PLO strategy became one of pressuring the Arab regimes to pressure the United States to pressure Israel to withdraw from the territories occupied in the 1967 war, allowing the establishment of a Palestinian mini-state in the West Bank and Gaza.

After Israel's Lebanese blitzkrieg the bankruptcy of depending upon Saudi oil money and UN resolutions was clear to everyone. A *Wall Street Journal* (8 July 1982) columnist observed:

"The harshest lesson for Mr. Arafat now is that moderation doesn't pay. The PLO campaign of the last eight years to restrict terrorism and gather international support—which led to PLO diplomatic missions in 85 cities and recognition from most of the world's nations—didn't stop a single Israeli tank."

Abandoned by the Arab regimes, the PLO ranks fought heroically although terribly outgunned without an air force, naval forces or antiaircraft defense. Even the maniac Begin feared the consequences of ordering Israeli troops into West Beirut to wipe out the PLO commandos. He knew that the scale of Israeli casualties in such house-to-house fighting would likely produce an antiwar explosion on the home front. That is why Begin/Sharon halted their

war machine before Beirut and called for a U.S.-led imperialist force to disarm and disperse the PLO fighters. Washington duly obliged. U.S. liberal imperialist brain-truster George Ball, who favors a stronger line against Zionist expansionism, criticized Reagan for doing Israel's dirty work vis-à-vis the PLO: "Instead of trying to exact any commitment from the Israelis, we foolishly concentrated solely on getting the P.L.O. to leave. In other words, we pulled the Israeli chestnuts out of the fire for nothing" (*Time*, 23 August 1982).

Arafat did not surrender his forces to the U.S. Marines because there was no alternative but suicide, as the PLO's left apologists like the American Socialist Workers Party argue. In negotiating the introduction of imperialist troops into Lebanon, the PLO leadership continued and deepened its long-standing strategy of pressure for a Pax Americana to restrain Israel. So the United States finally "recognized" the PLO by taking its commandos to concentration camps strewn across the Arab world. This was the great "political victory" claimed by the Palestinian nationalists and their left cheerleaders.

The immediate result of the PLO's turn to Pax Americana was to leave the half million Palestinians in Lebanon defenseless before the genocidal terror of the Zionists and their local Einsatzgruppen. The Shatila/Sabra massacre was predictable and predicted once the Palestinians guarding the refugee camps were removed. Even before the bodies had been unearthed at Shatila and Sabra, Arafat was claiming the United States had betrayed the agreement to protect the camps made by Philip Habib at the time of the PLO withdrawal. But who except the pro-Zionist liberals and the PLO's fans of the "left" really expected the U.S. to protect Palestinian refugees? The real betrayal was by Arafat and those who called for the troops that set up the massacre. Yet after Shatila/Sabra the PLO leaders once again called for (and got) an imperialist "peacekeeping" force.

As a reward for brokering the introduction of American troops into Lebanon, Arafat got the Reagan plan, which does not recognize the PLO, rejects the Palestinian right to national self-determination and proposes a Palestinian "entity" under the guns of King Hussein, the butcher of Black September. This American plan for a Palestinian bantustan under a Hashemite monarch was welcomed by Arafat for its "positive elements" and has since dominated PLO diplomatic activity.

When Arafat visited Jordan last fall to negotiate over the Reagan plan with his new friend King Hussein, Palestinian militants greeted him with the shout, "You betrayed us at Shatila!" Indeed he did. Palestinian militants rebelling against Arafat's treachery must draw the political lessons of the Lebanese catastrophe culminating in the horror of the Shatila/Sabra massacre. They must break with Arab nationalism which since 1948 has disarmed the Palestinians politically and militarily in the face of the imperialist-backed Zionist genocide and ruthless repression by the Arab bourgeois states.

American SWP Supports Reagan's Marines

Much of the U.S. left also embraces Pax Americana in the Near East, maintaining that its own imperialist bourgeoisie—the most bloodthirsty and reactionary force

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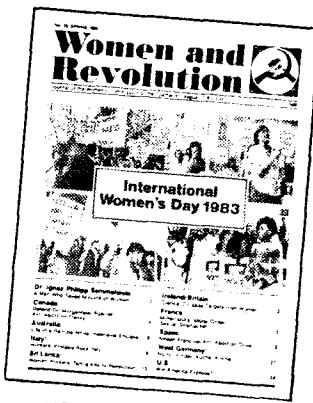
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Le Bolchévik
French Trotskyists oppose sending imperialist "peacekeepers" to Lebanon, August 1982.

on the planet—can play a potentially progressive role in world politics. At bottom, we see here the gross capitulation of the American left to the anti-Soviet war drive, the ideological basis of which was laid with Jimmy Carter's "human rights" crusade. It is grotesque that last June there took place the largest "peace" demonstration (anti—"nuke") in U.S. history, which did not even mention Israel's genocidal war in Lebanon and the counterrevolutionary terror in Central America, both armed and supported by Washington.

The same self-styled leftists who ten years ago attacked Israel as nothing but an outpost of U.S. imperialism are today calling upon Reagan's Marines to protect the Palestinians from the Israeli army. The pseudo-socialists who ten years ago defended the PLO's acts of indiscriminate terror, who denied that the Hebrew-speaking people had any right to national self-determination are today making common cause with Zionist "doves" who believe that Begin/Sharon's policies weaken and endanger Israel's "security."

When Begin came to deliver his warmongering harangue to a UN disarmament (!) conference last June, Sam Marcy's Workers World Party, Third World nationalist cheerleaders *par excellence*, organized a protest which called for "effective U.S. action to achieve Israeli withdrawal." This at a time when Begin solemnly proclaimed that the Israeli army would withdraw from Lebanon if and only if a U.S.-led multinational force took over the job of suppressing the Palestinians and securing Israel's northern border. Well, Reagan has since given the Marcyites effective U.S. action in Lebanon.

Another ardent defender on the U.S. left of the American "peacekeeping" mission in Lebanon is the once-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Its outright support to U.S. imperialist military intervention in the colonial world is a landmark even for that miserable reformist party.



Paris Match
Mass murderer Sharon welcomes French Foreign Legion, a haven for Nazi war criminals.

After the Shatila/Sabra massacre a joint statement signed by the SWP and the French and Italian sections of Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat (USec) appeared in the 4 October 1982 issue of *Intercontinental Press* ("Imperialist 'Peacekeeping' Force No Protection for Palestinians"). This centrist-sounding statement admitted what had become obvious, that the imperialist force "dismantled the Palestinian defense lines in West Beirut" and so left the Palestinian population "defenseless against the Zionist army, the Phalangist militias and the butcher Maj. Saad Haddad's mercenaries."

But two weeks later the SWP claimed it had never signed this statement and sharply attacked it: "A position that implies that the PLO's policies in any way contributed to the massacre in West Beirut is scandalous" (*Intercontinental Press*, 18 October 1982). According to the SWP, the imperialist intervention was *necessary to protect* the PLO:

"To help ensure that its fighters would not be massacred by the Israeli army during the withdrawal, the PLO proposed that a multinational force be brought into Beirut to serve as a buffer between the Palestinians and the Israeli troops encircling the city."

This is, of course, the same line as the U.S. State Department, one of whose spokesmen boasted, "We saved Arafat's skin in West Beirut" (*New York Times*, 15 October 1982).

To justify its support for imperialist military intervention in Lebanon, the SWP uses the following analogy:

"...an analogy could be made to the organizers of a progressive demonstration who, faced with an attack by a superior force of armed rightist thugs, call on the police to defend the democratic rights of the demonstrators."

Reagan's Marines as the world's policemen. This analogy certainly has a consistent reformist logic. As Trotsky pointed out in his 1934 "War and the Fourth International," the same social democrats who support their own imperialist bourgeoisie in war as "defenders of democracy" also routinely call on the bourgeois state to disarm the



Workers Vanguard Photos

20 September 1982: In New York City (left) and San Francisco (right) the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League initiated protests against Zionist atrocity at Shatila/Sabra.

fascists domestically. But what the SWP has done is *worse*. It supported its own imperialist state in disarming not the Lebanese fascists or Sharon's genocidal armed forces but the PLO!

While the Mandelite wing of the USec criticizes Arafat's open turn toward Pax Americana, it nonetheless reaffirms its view of the PLO as the "legitimate representative of the Palestinian people" ("The War in Lebanon—A Turn in the Middle East Situation," *International Viewpoint*, 1 November 1982). These centrists reject the need for working-class leadership—a Trotskyist vanguard to break Palestinian militants from the petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership which ordered them to surrender to the U.S. Marines and French Foreign Legion.

Palestinian Liberation Through Social Revolution!

Jimmy Carter's Camp David accords call for Palestinian "autonomy" under the Zionist state. The Reagan plan (similar to the Israeli Labor Party Allon plan) calls for a Palestinian "entity" under King Hussein's Jordan, a country even more economically and militarily dependent on U.S. imperialism than Israel. The PLO nationalists call for a Palestinian state on any territories from which the Israelis withdraw.

Officially the PLO position is that the West Bank mini-state is but a first step toward its maximum program for a "secular, democratic Palestine." In the name of Arab unity and narrow nationalism even this maximum program excludes the 1.2 million Palestinians—a majority of the population—in Jordan. The PLO's "secular, democratic Palestine" is to be limited to the boundaries of the pre-1947 British mandate.

Recently, moreover, PLO spokesmen have presented the West Bank mini-state as an *alternative*, not a stage, to a

"secular, democratic Palestine." In his well-publicized interview with Zionist "dove" Uri Avneri during the siege of Beirut, Arafat stated:

"The first solution which we proposed in 1969: that we all live in one secular democratic state. Jewish, Christian, and Muslim. This was rejected. In 1974, the PNC [Palestine National Council] suggested *another solution*. OK, we are ready to live in any part of Palestine, from which the Israelis withdraw, or is liberated." [our emphasis]

—reproduced in *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Summer/Fall 1982

The notion of a genuinely independent Palestinian state wedged between Zionist Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is ludicrous. It could only be a bantustan into which Israel and the neighboring Arab states would dump their unwanted Palestinian populations, while providing super-exploited labor for Israeli capitalism. The West Bank Palestinian population is already to a large degree economically integrated into Israeli capitalism. Half of the employed labor force on the West Bank works in Israel. One third of the West Bank's salaried workers have been employed in Israel for at least ten years. No to a West Bank/Gaza bantustan! Self-determination for the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking peoples through a bi-national workers state in a socialist federation of the Near East!

The Palestinians have a right to national self-determination which encompasses not only Ramalleh and Nablus but also Haifa, Tel Aviv and Amman. How can this right be attained? What are the social forces capable of destroying the Zionist state and Hashemite Jordan, which between them have dispossessed the Palestinian people?

The program of a bourgeois-democratic, secular Palestine (insofar as it is not simply a liberal cover for Arab nationalism) is a utopia. All sections of the Israeli bourgeoisie are by their very nature committed to a racially exclusionist "Jewish state." The Zionist "doves" like Avneri and former Israeli general Matti Peled, whom the

PLO leaders are now assiduously wooing, will concede to the Palestinians at most the West Bank and Gaza. And they are in large part motivated by a desire to preserve the "Jewish" character of the Israeli state.

It is only the Hebrew proletariat which has the capacity to destroy the Zionist citadel from within and the vital interest in doing so. For unless the Israeli working class—especially its intensely chauvinist though relatively underprivileged Sephardic component—is broken from Zionism, there is no future for the Hebrew-speaking people in the Near East. The bloody course of Israeli expansionism makes the three million Jews of Israel the automatic scapegoat for the Arab rulers seeking to prevent the 200 million Arabs of the region from rising up against their exploiters at home. And in the context of U.S. imperialism's mad drive toward anti-Soviet world war, Israeli expansionism points directly toward a nuclear Masada (after the fortress where ancient Hebrew zealots committed mass suicide rather than surrender to the Roman imperial army).

The Arab/Israeli conflict is the product of the historic interpenetration of two peoples on the same territory. Our position on this complex question was first elaborated in the article, "Birth of the Zionist State: Part 2" in *Workers Vanguard* No. 45, 24 May 1974:

"It was clear that the establishment of an independent nation-state, either by Palestinian Arabs or the Jews, would occur in Palestine only at the expense of the other nation. When the national populations are geographically interpenetrated, as they were in Palestine, an independent nation-state can be created only by their forcible separation (forced population transfers, etc.)."

How then is it possible for both the Hebrew-speaking people and dispossessed Palestinian Arabs to exercise the right of national self-determination? Only through a bi-national Palestine in a socialist federation of the Near East.

To see that this is not some utopian pipedream, look at post-WWII Yugoslavia. The savage national and ethnic blood feuds between the Serbs and Croats, for example,

were far older and even bloodier than the hostilities between Jews and Arabs in the Levant. Yet against the background of World War II a largely Serbian and Montenegrin Communist party led by the Croat Tito carried through a social revolution. As an expression of *proletarian state power*, albeit bureaucratically deformed, Yugoslavia laid the basis for the unity of the Serbian and Croatian peoples.

The several million Jews in the Near East could well be part of an extremely valuable cultural and technical vanguard in the region, but *not* separated from and counterposed to the Arab masses. The key in the Near East is communist leadership forging a cadre of Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews united in struggle against the Beginns and Peres, the Husseins, Assads and Arafats. Only an internationalist revolutionary workers party can lead the way forward to peace and national justice for all the peoples of the Near East.

For Revolutionary Internationalism!

The division of the Near East into conflicting reactionary nationalisms is a legacy not only of imperialism but also the treachery of the Kremlin and the Arab Communist parties. In pursuit of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism and class collaboration with the Arab bourgeoisie, the Stalinists have zig-zagged between the most grotesque and counterrevolutionary opportunism. Thus, they have capitulated to the most backward manifestations of Arab nationalism, for example, the Palestinian Communist Party's support in 1929 for the anti-Jewish pogroms led by Muslim feudalists. Then after World War II the Kremlin reversed itself and in the name of fighting British imperialism helped engineer the UN partition of Palestine and armed the fledgling Zionist state.

This betrayal did much to fuel the rise of Arab nationalism of the Nasser/Ba'athist type during the 1950s. But the prestige of the October Revolution was such that

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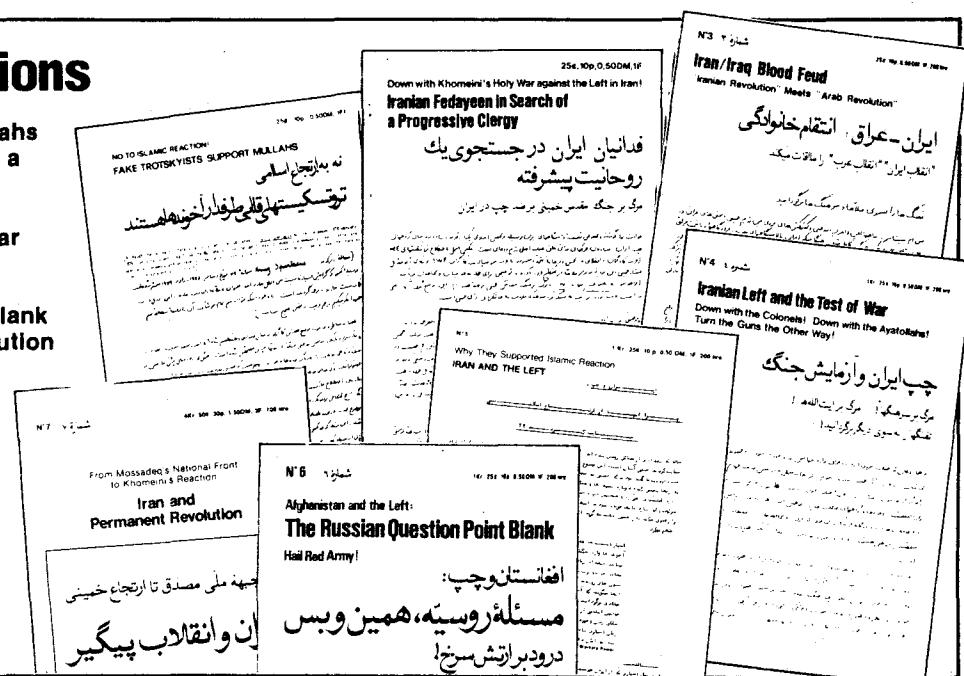
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even after its Stalinist degeneration, key sections of the proletariat of the Arab East looked to the Communist parties, which falsely claimed the Bolshevik heritage. Perhaps the greatest crime of the Stalinists was their betrayal of the 1958 Iraqi revolution. The insurgent masses, led by the strategically placed oil workers, yearning for their own October placed the Iraqi Communist Party at their head. In reaction, under the "Eisenhower doctrine" of containing "Soviet aggression," the U.S. landed 10,000 Marines in Beirut, ostensibly to put down a Muslim-led Lebanese rebellion. In fact, the U.S. sought to use Beirut as a staging area for military intervention in Iraq where the proletariat was making a bid for power. But the imperialists were better served by Khrushchev, who was pursuing "peaceful coexistence" with Eisenhower. The Kremlin ordered the Iraqi Communists to turn power over to General Kassem and his nationalist officers, who in turn suppressed the Iraqi Communist Party and its working-class followers.

Iraq, along with Iran, contains the key to unlock for the entire region the chains of imperialist subjugation and capitalist exploitation. That key is a powerful industrial proletariat with a rich history of class struggle. As in Iraq, the Iranian Stalinists betrayed a number of important revolutionary opportunities, especially in the period after World War II. Iran under the shah with its weak bourgeoisie, with an autocracy thoroughly corrupt,

discredited and isolated, with a small but powerful proletariat, with an explosive mixture of national and agrarian questions, most closely resembled tsarist Russia. But the absence of a Bolshevik party at the head of the proletariat and the egregious tailism of the Tudeh Stalinists, the petty-bourgeois radical Fedayeen and the rest of the left allowed the reactionary Shi'ite clergy to place itself at the head of the insurgent masses. When the shah's peacock throne was toppling in 1978-early 1979 the international Spartacist tendency uniquely called for: "Down With the Shah! Down With the Mullahs! For Workers Revolution in Iran!"

The rewards of Stalinist opportunism are that today almost the entire leadership of the Iraqi Communist Party has been hung or shot by their Ba'athist nationalist "allies," while the entire leadership of Tudeh has been jailed and tortured by the very Imam Khomeini to whom they showed such disgusting subservience. At the same time, the working class of both countries has been thrown against each other in a reactionary war of territorial aggrandizement. Only the international Spartacist tendency from the very beginning of this war raised the call for *revolutionary defeatism for both sides*: for the proletariat of Iraq and Iran, your enemies are your own ruling classes. Turn your guns against them and not your class brothers.

The Kremlin bureaucracy has tried to create in the Near East a buffer of "friendly" or "neutral" countries by bribing with weapons and aid the reactionary regimes of the region. The result of this policy is that Soviet-built munitions plants in Egypt are being used to equip CIA-backed Afghan rebels to kill Soviet soldiers! Soviet guns are used by the Iraqi Ba'athists to kill oppressed Kurds, Iraqi Communists and Iranian workers. Soviet tanks are used by Syrian Ba'athists to level the country's fourth largest city with countless thousands of casualties. The Soviet Union did not lift a finger to aid the besieged Palestinians in Beirut, because the existence of this people, especially with an independent armed movement, constitutes an obstacle to "peaceful coexistence" with the Reagans and Mitterrands, the Assads and Husseins.

The outcome of the Kremlin's class collaborationism in the Near East is that U.S. Marines once again patrol the streets of Beirut and the U.S.-backed Israeli army has the Syrian army and its Soviet advisers within range of its rifle sights. The recent Begin-Gemayel-Shultz agreement, turning southern Lebanon into an Israeli protectorate, was a provocation designed to be rejected by Damascus. Begin is chomping on the bit for a war with Syria, a war which could immediately involve their respective patrons. Should the Soviet Union become directly involved in such an imperialist-designed military provocation in the Near East, the urgent requirement of the world proletariat would be unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union.

The burning question on the agenda now is that of revolutionary political leadership, especially for the proletariat of Iran and Iraq. This is programmatically linked to the perspective of proletarian political revolution in the Soviet Union, to reforge the alliance between the masses of the Near East oppressed by imperialism and the land of the October Revolution. Permanent revolution in the Near East is linked to socialist revolution in the imperialist countries without which no conquest of the oppressed can be secured. ■

International Spartacist Tendency Directory

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Ligue Trotzkiste de France Leaflet

"Israelis, French Paratroopers, U.S. Marines Out of Lebanon!"

**REPRINTED FROM WORKERS VANGUARD
NO. 313, 17 SEPTEMBER 1982**

Mitterrand's paratroopers have landed in Lebanon, back in France's former protectorate to oversee the PLO's liquidation. The imperialist troops lend the Begins and Sharons a hand in the expulsion of the Palestinian fighters, handing them over to the Assads, Husseins, etc., Arab hangmen of the Palestinian people. Mitterrand, in sending this so-called "peacekeeping" force—which is pledged in advance not to hamper Israeli action against "insubordinate" Fedayeen—adds Lebanon to Suez and Algeria in the long list of imperialist crimes perpetrated by French social-democracy with PCF [Communist Party of France] backing.

Ravaged Lebanon will not find peace in this imperialist "solution." Just the opposite. For the Zionist terrorists, willing to level whole cities to achieve their goal of exterminating the Palestinian people, smashing the PLO is only the beginning. The Palestinians remaining in Lebanon will be delivered defenseless to reactionary Maronite killers taking their orders from the Zionist occupiers. The French troops didn't go to Beirut to direct traffic in rue Général de Gaulle, like the UN troops at the start of the Israeli invasion (witness the famous photo of a French lieutenant in the dust of the Israeli tanks he is watching pass by). This time,

along with French military transports will come the old diplomats, those old specialists in the byzantine machinations utilized for decades to "divide and conquer."

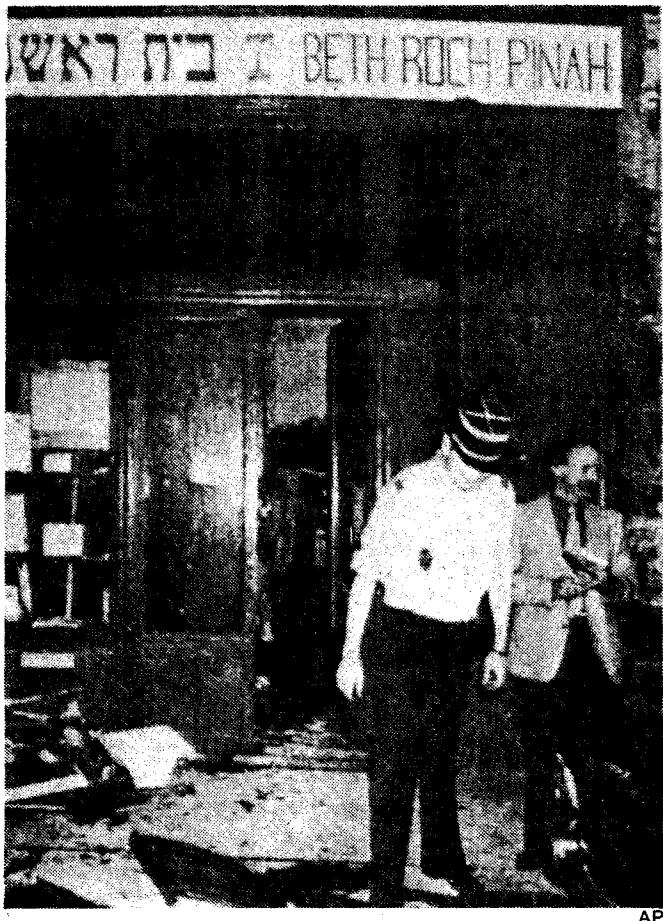
Their experience can be an important support for the American artillery and French paratroopers because once these latter finish their work on General Sharon's behalf with the Palestinians, the question for Israel and the American imperialists would be how to prop up this extremely diversified, explosive region so as to be able to contain Soviet influence. The Zionists' next goal is precisely Syria and ultimately rooting out—in league with the imperialist anti-Soviet warmongers—all Soviet influence in the Middle East. The landing of the marines and paratroopers in Beirut, where a few miles east they will confront Syrian troops armed by the Soviet degenerated workers state, could make the Middle East a bridgehead for the anti-Soviet war campaign led by Reagan and supported by Mitterrand. Everyone who calls himself a socialist or opponent of genocide must demand not only that Israel withdraw immediately from Lebanon but also "Imperialist troops out of Lebanon!"

No, Anti-Zionism Is Not Anti-Semitism

But while negotiations trailed on and Beirut's inhabitants awaited the final assault, the monstrous rue des



U.S. Marines and French Foreign Legion disarmed PLO fighters and took them into another exile.



Bombed-out Paris synagogue. Anti-Semitic attacks underscore French revolutionaries' duty to combat anti-Semitism masquerading as "anti-Zionism."

Rosiers attack [the August 9 bombing of a Jewish restaurant in Paris which killed six] by killers in the service of persons unknown swells the putrid effluences of anti-Semitism so deeply rooted in French society. This coldly calculated butchery targeting the Jewish community shows once more just how much Zionism feeds anti-Semitism. With the genocide being carried out in Lebanon by the terrorist Begin, one of those responsible for the massacre at Deir Yassin in 1948, every anti-Semite now has his excuse.

Using "anti-Zionism" as a pretext, Direct Action [which was not involved in the rue des Rosiers massacre] is on a terrorist campaign targeting Jewish hardware and department stores, mimicking the Nazis' 1934 *Kristallnacht*. We savagely denounce these actions and the use of terms belonging to the workers movement—i.e., anti-Zionism—to perpetrate acts that can only be racist and anti-Semitic and that strike a deep responsive chord in this country. In the petty bourgeoisie; in the peasantry, even in the workers movement (one of many examples of the results of Stalinism), anti-Semitism is widespread. The same thread runs through, from Barre's slip after the rue Copernic attack when he deplored how innocent French citizens had been made victims, to Defferre's complaint after rue des Rosiers about innocent citizens dying for foreign causes, to Mitterrand's insistence upon denying that it was really an anti-Semitic attack: Jews are not like "us," the "real Frenchmen." And this in a country that during the war delivered its Jews voluntarily and from the zone unoccu-

pied by the Nazis to the ovens and gas chambers. The working class should have exploded with rage at the atrocity in the rue des Rosiers.

Although Israel is a by-product of the most barbarous excesses of capitalism in its agony—the Nazi "final solution" and the closing of the "democratic" imperialist countries' borders—the Zionist state could only be carved out of the living body of the Palestinian people with Hitlerite methods: mass terror and forced transfers of entire populations. Zionism is a capitalist genocidal "solution" for the problem of the existence of two peoples—the Palestinian and Hebrew-speaking peoples—interpenetrated on the same territory. While anti-Semitism has fed Zionism for years and continues to do so, inversely and quite inherently, Zionism lends justification to anti-Semitism. Particularly in Stalinist propaganda can be found this rotten impulse to want to put forward perfectly anti-Semitic politics in the name of so-called anti-Zionism.

The only way out of this trap is united struggle by the Hebrew proletariat with its Arab class brothers against their Zionist masters. The truly democratic answer to the problem of national oppression in the Near East (and not a completely phony solution, like the proposal for a Palestinian "bantustan" in the West Bank)—self-determination for the Palestinians (which should involve also the territory of Jordan) and for the Hebrew-speaking people—can be brought about only in the context of socialist revolution throughout the region and a socialist federation of the Middle East.

Popular Front Clears the Way for Reaction

A beneficiary of the outrage in the rue des Rosiers is the right and the fascists, who are hollering for reinforcing the police apparatus. Mitterrand didn't need their encouragement—he banned Direct Action. This 1936 law against "armed leagues," a product of the first popular front, in fact targets any working-class self-defense action and should be condemned.

Not only Jews are victims of the racist attacks; murderous violence is also aimed more and more frequently at immigrant workers. The economic crisis, the unemployment throwing ever-broader sectors of the population into despair create a real danger that fascist bands will find a growing echo in the enraged petty bourgeoisie as it is touched by the crisis and will swell their ranks by suggesting attacks on everything un-"French."

Rooting out racism and struggling against the fascist bands is a life-or-death question for the working class. And for this it must place no confidence in Mitterrand's bourgeois government that sends cops against workers in struggle, nor in the workers movement bureaucrats who try their best to keep the working class passive in the face of government attacks. It must count only on its own strength organized in picket lines and self-defense militias to prevent any of its oppressed brothers from being threatened by this scum.

Today it is the popular front that is paving the way for reaction by disarming the working class. But the PCF, responsible for the repulsive Vitry incident [where a PCF mayor ordered bulldozers in to break down the doors of immigrant workers' housing in an attempt to drive them out of town], is no alternative for those who want to combat racism and fascist terror.

The organizers of Vitry have once again dug into the garbage cans of chauvinism. Responding to a Zionist spokesman who said, "France did even worse things in Algeria," *l'Humanité* (9 August) declares: "No French government laid siege to Tunis and massacred its inhabitants!" These remarks simply reflect the PCF's refusal at the time to struggle for independence in Algeria, where the paratroopers who today are in Lebanon were laying siege to Algiers.

The Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire is also crawling on its belly to Mitterrand. And this even though its 18 August demonstration was banned. The LCR said it was "astonished" at this decision, as the slogans "were not hostile to the French government" (*Libération*, 19 August). For weeks the LCR hasn't breathed a word about the sending of paratroopers to Lebanon, these killers they demonstrated against in 1978 during the Kolwezi [Zaire] intervention. Repeated appeals for sanctions against Israel, a strategy of "solidarity" with the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples that amounts to pressure on Begin, make it quite unlikely the LCR will take a position against French troops to Lebanon. If the LCR is today on the verge of frankly supporting a military operation of its own imperialism, it prepared the way by its support to this austerity/Cold War popular front. Last December 13 the LCR was the "left" component of the holy alliance extending from the fascists to the far left in support of Solidarność, company union for the CIA and Western bankers.

For Permanent Revolution in the Middle East

While Begin's invasion of Lebanon exposed the genocidal logic of Zionism, it also exposed the bourgeois Arab regimes, "radical" as well as "moderate," as its indispensable collaborators. The Palestinian and Arab left militants must draw the lesson: the need for working-class struggle. It's in the name of nationalism that the PLO hailed as their allies these same Arab governments who today stab them in the back. The slogan of "struggling against Zionism" in the mouths of Arab leaders is a way to *detour* the class struggle in their countries, while these same leaders betrayed the Palestinian cause in a thousand ways, from "Black September" to Camp David to Tel el Zaatar.

The main enemy is at home!

The liberation of the Palestinians cannot be won by a purely national struggle or some utopian rapprochement between Zionist "doves" and PLO "moderates." The Zionist state and the bourgeois Arab states surrounding it must be exploded from inside by proletarian revolutionary struggle. The massive antiwar protests in Israel, even though today they don't transcend "left" Zionism, smash to bits the idea that the whole Hebrew-speaking population of Israel is one homogeneous reactionary mass. A real solution to the right of self-determination for the Palestinians is possible only through the destruction of the Hashemite monarchy and the clerical Zionist state. These two states were carved out at the expense of the Palestinian people.

The Israeli workers must break with Zionism, and the Palestinian workers must break with the PLO, which could easily become their bourgeois oppressor. There is already an important Palestinian *proletariat* in Jordan and in the occupied territories as well as in Israel. But through the nationalist dogma of "non-interference in the internal affairs" of the Arab regimes, the PLO prevented the Palestinian proletariat from undertaking *class* struggles (even in Jordan, where Palestinians are the majority) against the Hashemite monarchy with its extremely narrow social base. Instead the PLO's nationalism channels the rebellions that could have taken a revolutionary direction—Jordan 1970, Lebanon 1975-76—into self-isolated and easily decapitated movements, contributing to the subsequent bloody communalism in Lebanon. Only a party with a proletarian internationalist vision based on the program of Trotsky's permanent revolution can mobilize the Jewish and Palestinian workers for desperately necessary struggle for a socialist federation of the Near East.

- Defend the Palestinians! No to Begin's "final solution"!
Israel out of Lebanon! French troops out of Lebanon!
No to the imperialist "peacekeepers"!
- Not Jew against Arab but class against class!
- For a socialist federation of the Near East!

Ligue Trotskyte de France,
24 August 1982

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How Labor/Black Mobilization Shook Washington

"We Stopped the Klan!"

REPRINTED FROM WOMEN AND REVOLUTION
NO. 25, WINTER 1982-83

More than 5,000 protesters—mostly black people and many of them unionists—chased the KKK out of Washington, D.C. on November 27. The race-terrorists had said they would rally at the Capitol and march past the White House in their white sheets, for the first time since 1925. The Reagan government had shown itself determined to force this provocation down the throats of the mainly black D.C. population. But the Klan did not march, did not rally, did not even put on their robes! Instead, thousands of anti-Klan militants at the Labor/Black Mobilization rally blocked off the Klan's starting point and the cops had to sneak the Klansmen away in defeat.

The Labor/Black Mobilization to Stop the Klan was initiated by the Spartacist League (SL) after discussions with area unionists showed a shared determination to militantly stop the cross-burners from marching in the nation's capital. The leaflet (250,000 copies were distributed) said:

"...if we don't stop them [the Klan] here and now, decent people will continue to pay with their lives. We want a massive counterdemonstration against these terrorists, *right where they say they're going to start their march....*

"The Klan is the naked expression of what the racists in the White House, the Congress, and city halls think and

feel. The Klan carries it out in ugly word and bloody deed....

"But the KKK better know that Washington is not Klantown. This city is filled with black residents who know exactly what the Klan is. Many families here have experienced firsthand the terror of the Southern nightriders.... Within reach of Washington are powerful integrated unions whose members—hit hard with givebacks, union-busting, mass unemployment—know that the hooded labor-hating racists want to finish them off....

"We don't need an impotent protest that amounts to a hat-in-hand appeal to Democratic politicians to fight Reagan reaction. We need to mobilize above all the power of labor and blacks, independently and fighting in their own interests....

"America must complete the Civil War.... The Klan arose to eliminate black political rights and bury Reconstruction. It was the violent arm of the reaction which robbed newly freed blacks and a young working class of most of their gains. Now the U.S. has grown into the imperialist world power opposing social revolution from El Salvador to Southern Africa. The KKK wants to nail America to a cross with the nails driven through black flesh! The KKK's protectors in the White House want to extend this crucifixion throughout the world and above all to Russia, for its original sin of revolution.

"The Klan is the symbol and cutting edge of racist reaction in America. If they can get away with it here in Washington, it will whet their appetite for more racist



Workers Vanguard

Chanting "We stopped the Klan!" thousands charge up Capitol Hill where Klan march was to begin.

Workers Vanguard

**27 November 1982:
Labor/Black
Mobilization takes to
the streets of
Washington, D.C.
Spartacist-initiated
mobilizations
against fascist terror
give a taste of
proletarian power.**



violence. It is not a matter of free speech.... Where the KKK thinks they've got the edge, *they're killers*. Remember Greensboro....

"It's labor's job to lead the fight to smash Klan/Nazi race-terror...."

Participation of organized labor was key. The first support came from Norfolk, Virginia and the predominantly black waterfront unions in the tri-city Tidewater area, the largest working-class concentration in the Southeast. In little more than a week some 70 union leaders, exec boards and union locals nationwide endorsed the Labor/Black Mobilization. The participation of tough, responsible union guys in the demonstration's monitors squad was key to the safety of the disciplined, militant protest.

The thousands of black working people and unemployed who turned out to stop the Klan got a little taste of power on November 27. The Klan was stopped and when the cops pulled out, the anti-Klan protesters poured into the streets and surged up Capitol Hill. They took over the route the Klan was to have taken, stopping traffic as they marched past the White House and streamed into Lafayette Park, claiming for their own the spot where the Klan had intended to rally for genocide. "There are no white sheets here—only the red banner of the working class," declared SL spokesman Al Nelson as the cops' tear gas canisters were popping at the outskirts of the park.

At another, much smaller rally earlier that day in McPherson Square, miles away from the mobilization that stopped the Klan, the All-Peoples Congress (a front for Sam Marcy's Workers World Party) held a tepid rally aimed at channeling anti-Klan outrage into votes for Democrats. The Marcyites had promised anti-Klan action but delivered only windy reformist speeches, and finally had to *link arms* against the people they had mobilized to try and keep them there. Some of the frustrated youth broke out and set off on their own, a setup for the cops who clubbed and tear-gassed them.

In the aftermath the bourgeois press naturally focused

on "violence." But what happened was *the Klan was stopped!* Elsewhere, police rioted against frustrated anti-Klan protesters and the media screamed "looting" after the cops had clubbed black youth right through plate glass store windows.

A successful Klan march in Washington would have given the green light to stepped-up KKK terror against blacks, immigrants, Jews, leftists, strikers. It was the intersection between the communist program of the Spartacist League and the bitter determination of the black masses of Washington that stopped the Klan's provocation on November 27. That's why we need a Marxist vanguard party, like the Bolsheviks of Lenin and Trotsky: to act as the collective memory of the revolutionary working class and as a "tribune of the people" fighting on behalf of all the oppressed. There's plenty of will to fight back among the oppressed and exploited of capitalism; what's needed is the leadership with the program for victory. Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution! ■

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Only Trotskyism Can Defend the Gains of October

Stalinism: The Roots of Eurocommunism

With the onset of Cold War II the Eurocommunist parties have openly crossed into the anti-Soviet imperialist camp. Thus the head of the Italian Communist Party (PCI), Enrico Berlinguer, declared that the suppression of Solidarność' counterrevolutionary bid for power in Poland marked "the end of an epoch" in "which the forward thrust originating in the October Revolution has been spent." The American journalist Flora Lewis, whose views often parallel those of the CIA, noted approvingly: "About the sharpest and most clear-cut stand of a Western leader on the East-West undertones of the Polish crisis came, surprisingly, from the Italian Communist leader Enrico Berlinguer" (*New York Times*, 20 December 1981).

However, the efforts of Berlinguer, Spanish CP leader Santiago Carrillo & Co. to enlist their followers in Reagan's anti-Soviet crusade have encountered some stiff internal resistance. In and around the Italian, Spanish, British and other Eurocommunist parties there have emerged oppositional groupings, often expressing a leftist impulse, which espouse a more or less traditional pro-Moscow Stalinist outlook. This current is quite heterogeneous, ranging from youthful trade-union militants to cynical old-line Stalinist hacks. Below we reprint material produced by sections of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) directed at those Communist militants who oppose Eurocommunism from the left.

These militants must understand that Eurocommunism is an inevitable product of Stalinism. The isolation of Soviet Russia amidst hostile imperialist encirclement, especially after the failure of the German revolution in 1923, gave rise to a conservative, narrowly nationalistic bureaucratic caste. As Trotsky predicted in 1929, the Stalinist doctrine of "socialism in one country"—an attack on the material basis of proletarian internationalism—would "be the beginning of the disintegration of the Comintern along the lines of social patriotism." The capitulation of the powerful German Communist Party to the victory of Nazism in 1933 marked the Communist International as having no internal potential for revolutionary renewal. In the wake of this world-historic defeat, Trotsky raised the call for a new Fourth International, while the Stalinists turned openly to class collaborationism (the popular front). The Stalinists now incited the "democratic" imperialist powers to go to war "against fascism." Stalin's Comintern became essentially similar to the social democrats of the Second International, who rallied to their "own" imperialist bourgeoisies with the outbreak of World War I in 1914. On the eve of World War II Trotsky wrote:

"Stalin has reconciled the Communist parties of imperialist democracies with their national bourgeoisies. This stage has

now been past.... Henceforth the Communio-chauvinists will have to worry about their own hides, whose interests by no means always coincide with the 'defense of the USSR'."

— "A Fresh Lesson," *Writings [1938-39]*

Who today will deny that this has indeed come to pass?

Eurocommunism developed in the mid-late 1970s in the context of Jimmy Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" campaign as the West European CP leaders sought to prove to their "own" bourgeoisies and to Washington that they could be entrusted with ministerial portfolios and seats in the councils of NATO. With the Soviet military intervention against the imperialist-armed feudalist insurgency in Afghanistan in December 1979, Carter's "human rights" crusade officially became Cold War II. Washington cut off American grain shipments to Russia, organized a boycott of the Moscow Olympics and sought to rally Western public opinion behind the Afghan "freedom fighters," i.e., Islamic fanatics and cutthroats who shoot schoolteachers for teaching young girls to read. The international Spartacist tendency raised the call: Hail Red Army! Extend Social Gains of the October Revolution to Afghan Peoples!

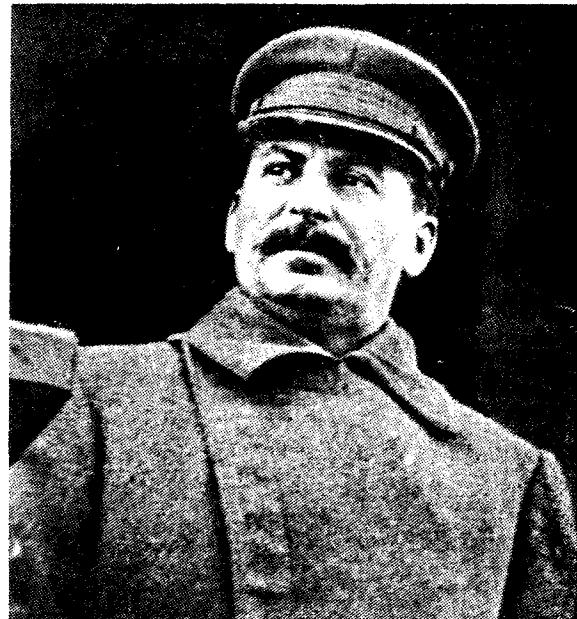
With the imperialist bourgeoisie in full war cry, the Eurocommunist bureaucrats reasserted their loyalty to "democratic" imperialism by demanding the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan. Their outright support to the imperialist camp in a direct military confrontation involving the Soviet Union crystallized the formation of significant oppositional tendencies inside the mass Italian and Spanish CPs (dubbed "the Afghans") and also the smaller Eurocommunist parties.

The pro-Moscow Cossutta tendency in the PCI and Catalan Communist party in Spain, which initially tapped a broad current of discontent, have not been able even in their own terms to wage an effective fight organizationally against the Eurocommunists. At bottom this is because they adhere to the traditional Stalinist policies of class collaboration and popular frontism, policies which do not substantially differ from those of the Berlinguers and Carrillos.

Imperialist warmongers and their social-democratic and Eurocommunist henchmen found it difficult to whip up much popular enthusiasm for the Afghan "freedom fighters" (especially with the rebels' Iranian counterpart, the Imam Khomeini, running amok). But the emergence of Solidarność in Poland was viewed in NATO capitals as the perfect anti-Communist cause, especially in appealing to workers in the U.S. and West Europe who disdain the usual "free world" rhetoric. Styling itself a "trade union" based on resistance to the Stalinist regime's gross economic



The struggle of Trotsky against Stalin was the struggle of proletarian internationalism against bureaucratic national reformism.



mismanagement, corruption and repression, Solidarność soon showed itself a markedly counterrevolutionary nationalist front for the pope and Wall Street. Thus the spectacle of the most reactionary union-busters in the capitalist world—Reagan, Thatcher, the *Wall Street Journal*—suddenly championing “workers rights” and “labor militancy,” of course, *only* in Poland.

Just as the Polish crisis deepened the ties between the Eurocommunist bureaucrats and imperialist warmongers, so it deepened the fissures within the Communist parties. Some of the anti-Eurocommunist groupings basically want to return to the “good old days” of Stalin’s reformist Comintern/Cominform. Others simply want to avoid considering the Stalin period wherein lie the roots of Eurocommunism. In general, they define their role as a loyal opposition seeking to reform the official Communist movement. This is an utterly utopian prospect, the more obviously so since the Kremlin is hardly about to break relations with the official Communist leaders like Berlinguer and throw its support to the dissidents. Elements among the anti-Eurocommunist Stalinists could well be propelled to the left of their original intentions. The Trotskyists, the international Spartacist tendency, must intersect such elements and fight to win them to the understanding that only the program of Trotskyism can genuinely defend the gains of October through international proletarian

revolution above all in the imperialist centers.

The “Open Letter to the Comrades of PCI Branch 39, Torino” by the Lega Trotskista d’Italia is addressed to an extreme left-wing version of the “Afghan” current, one which has pretensions of anti-bureaucratism. This group was originally apparently formed by some former followers of Michel Pablo, the arch-revisionist of Trotskyism, who advocated a liquidation (“deep entry”) in the Italian Stalinist party in the early 1950s. We are reprinting sections of the letter dealing with social-pacifism and détente (key questions for the West European workers movement) and also sections debunking the myth that the Italian Communist Party of the Stalin/Togliatti era was a Leninist, i.e., revolutionary, party.

“Poland and the TKP Leninists” is an abridged version of a polemic by the Spartacist League/Britain directed at a left-Stalinist Turkish group which originated a few years ago in a split from the West European exile centers of the pro-Moscow Turkish CP. Its main cadre remain in West Europe with a center in Britain and a large concentration in West Germany. The TKP Leninists refuse to recognize the *degeneration* of the Leninist Communist International under Stalin in which the fight against Trotskyism was the decisive battle. In this the TKP Leninist group is characteristic of the anti-Eurocommunist current in general.

Open Letter to the Comrades of PCI Branch 39, Torino

The Polish crisis, with its repercussions in Italy—and particularly, the break from the Kremlin by the PCI national leadership—has opened an important period of reflection and discussion in the workers movement, especially among those who call themselves Communist and look to the Bolshevik Revolution.

Poland powerfully illustrates the need for a Marxist understanding of the social nature of the USSR and the Eastern European countries, underscoring the validity and urgency of the Trotskyist program for a proletarian political revolution to defend the social gains of the working class by sweeping away the parasitic caste that

constantly undermines these gains.

Faced with the spectacle of the top layers of the capitalist West's largest Communist Party lining up with NATO and their own imperialist bourgeoisie against the USSR, the great mass of Italian workers, especially PCI members, have refused to play Reagan and [prime minister Giovanni] Spadolini's game. As we observed: "Large sections of the Italian CP, concentrated in the Italian proletariat, remain pro-Soviet and profoundly anti-clerical" (see "Italian CP Dances to Reagan's Tune," *Workers Vanguard* No. 298, 5 February 1982). This sentiment, felt by a large proportion of the PCI's ranks, was already demonstrated at the time of the 1979 Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. At that time, while the Eurocommunist leadership around Berlinguer & Co. was lining up with the Christian Democracy and the CIA to condemn the USSR, wide sectors of the PCI ranks sided with the Red Army, whose intervention opened up possibilities for liberating women and the oppressed populations of that country. This is an important element in the struggle to build a real revolutionary alternative to the PCI's reformist politics.

Those in the PCI opposed to the "NATO-Communist" line include, notably, Branch 39 in Torino, which opposed Solidarność' counterrevolutionary activities. Its leader denounced the "anticommunist scum, from the [fascist] MSI, the Christian Democrats and the Socialists, to the so-called lefts in *Il Manifesto* and *Lotta Continua*" who support Walesa en bloc. Dubbed, in typical '30s Stalinist police style, a "well-known nest of Trotskyites" by *Il Manifesto* (18 December 1981), Branch 39 does not adopt the attitude of uncritical support to the Polish or Soviet bureaucracy typical of most "Afghans" and "Kabulists."

That is why we feel it is important to offer this contribution polemicizing with Branch 39's positions because, as comrade Lenin said, in any political dispute it is necessary to carefully examine the views of all sides.

The failure of socialist revolution to spread throughout the world was rationalized, by means of socialism in one country, into a perspective denying the necessity of international revolution. No wonder "socialism in one country" turned from prophecy into reality: the Stalinized Comintern had become the great organizer of defeats; the dictatorship of the proletariat remained isolated in one country, taking on hideous forms of bloody repression against the real communists and, subsequently, against whoever was not sufficiently servile toward the leading clique, including among them these very same bureaucrats. For Branch 39, Stalinism is an objective phenomenon of the past:

"...a particular development involving errors and sacrifices, degeneration and mistaken subjective implications on the political level, bureaucratization and centralization."

—On the International Workers Movement,
January 1982

Thus they cannot formulate a program able to mobilize the workers of the USSR and the workers states to defend their own class interests by ousting the bureaucracy and extending socialist revolution internationally. And it is just this lack of revolutionary program that leads Branch 39 to make significant concessions to anti-Sovietism. Faced with the imperialist powers' war preparations, aimed very precisely at bettering the conditions by which to deal the

deathblow to the USSR, Branch 39 flatly opposes the lessons of Leninism on the decisive question of war and peace. Alongside the incredible assertion that "missiles cannot be divided into good ones and bad ones"—just try to apply this notion to the American bombardment of Hanoi!—we have the proposal for "non-alignment of Italy," even applying the dogma of socialism in one country to Italy:

"...through a policy of development and neutrality to direct our country's resources not to arms, but to the construction of a new society, the socialist society."

—"Motion to the Conference on Organization," by
PCI Branch 39, 1-2 December 1981

Yet the causes leading to war are inherent in the character of this imperialist epoch—"an epoch of war and revolution"—and the hostility of all the capitalist states toward the USSR is irreconcilable. As Lenin explained in 1920:

"We passed from war to peace, but let's not forget that war will return. As long as capitalism and socialism exist side by side they cannot live in peace: one or the other will have victory in the end, and the requiem will be sung at the end either for a soviet republic or instead for world capitalism. At the present we are in a state of truce."

—Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31

The inexorable logic of social-pacifism will push Branch 39 to explicitly call upon the USSR to disarm. Trotskyists, on the contrary, insist upon unconditional military defense of the USSR and all the deformed workers states against imperialist capitalism as fundamental to our program:

"Revolutionaries are opposed to every form of imperialist armament, nuclear and conventional, and in the eventuality of a conflict between the bureaucratically deformed workers states of the Soviet bloc and the armed capitalists, like in 1919-21 and in 1941, the place of proletarians is alongside the Red Army against the troops of all the imperialist governments, whether fascist or democratic ones!"

—"The Main Enemy Is at Home! Defend the USSR Against NATO!" *Spartaco* No. 5, November 1981 (emphasis in original)

The PCI from Togliatti to Berlinguer: "Mistakes" or Betrayals?

Furthermore the lack of a program for the deformed workers states, and Branch 39's difficulty in understanding Stalinism in the USSR and Eastern Europe, are not isolated phenomena. One can search in vain for any revolutionary program for the Italian working class in the documents criticizing the PCI leadership. Branch 39 speaks of a "series of tactical and strategic mistakes on the part of the PCI" but does not explain exactly what this means. Perhaps class collaboration is a strategic mistake? Well then, should Lenin have entitled his polemic against the leader of international social democracy "The Proletarian Revolution and the 'Mistaken' Comrade Kautsky?"

And now that the PCI has gone all the way to "NATO-Communism," it's certainly not enough simply to say no to Berlinguer. It was Togliatti himself who, after having been for years one of the principal international instruments of the Kremlin's counterrevolutionary policies (e.g., Spain 1936-39), returned to Italy in 1944 to close off any possible revolutionary opening for workers' mobilizations and the partisan struggle. The "Salerno turn" codified for Italy the definitive abandonment of any revolutionary politics, and



Eurocommunist Enrico Berlinguer speaks for NATO imperialism, but Italian workers reply: "We won't strike for the madonna of Czestochowa."

acceptance of the Stalin-Togliatti politics of the Popular Front, internationally ratified by the Comintern's Seventh Congress in 1935 after the ruinous betrayal by German Stalinism in 1933. What is Branch 39's position on this?

The Popular Front, by any of its miscellaneous labels ("anti-fascist unity," "anti-imperialist front," "democratic alternative," "historic compromise" and so on), including Branch 39's formula for a "new democratic government by the forces of labor," means one thing only: an attempt to put an end to class struggle through collaboration between the ruling bourgeoisie and the exploited and oppressed classes, in order to achieve aims that are supposedly "national, popular and transcending all parties," etc., etc. The results are well known: from Spain to Chile, it is always the workers who pay with their blood. Indeed, we saw in Italy immediately after the war a concrete application of this politics of betrayal, with the PCI's entry into the class-collaborationist governments engaged in reconstructing capitalist Italy by the sweat of the workers, repressing the worker and peasant eruptions in "liberated" southern Italy, and disarming the partisans in the North after 25 April 1945. Even after the PCI's expulsion from the government as the Cold War began in 1947, its reformist leadership continued to behave *loyally* toward the imperialist bourgeoisie.

The concrete acts by which the PCI tops gagged and put the brake on a militant working class are many and well known, but some dates are particularly significant:

1948—a semi-insurrectionary general strike following the assassination attempt on Togliatti;

1960—street clashes all over Italy to bring down the [far right-wing] Tambroni DC-MSI government [a Christian-Democrat/neo-fascist coalition];

1969—the "Hot Autumn," possibly the biggest workers mobilization since the Red years of 1919-20;

and finally, although of lesser importance:

1980—35-day strike at FIAT, an important defensive battle for the entire Italian proletariat. (See "Italian CP Knifes FIAT Strike," *Workers Vanguard* No. 270, 12 December 1980.)

And now the PCI is taking advantage of Poland to offer its services to the bourgeoisie in crisis, while the pro-Soviet Stalinists are spouting "anti-imperialist" rhetoric. But among these same "Afghans" are some of the former partisan leaders who fought Mussolini and then, at the end of the Second World War, disarmed the Communist workers in order to bring Italy to heel under the boot of U.S. imperialism. The Kremlin-linked Stalinists like Cossutta were active collaborators in all the PCI's betrayals of historic import before Eurocommunism.

What's Needed Is a Party Armed with a Revolutionary Program

To oppose the PCI's reformist leadership, it is indispensable to draw the lessons of the class struggle both nationally and internationally. But one is hard pressed to find any reference to the Italian class struggle in Branch 39's published materials. Not only is there no mention of the FIAT strike, but not even of the "Hot Autumn" of 1969. For thirty years Branch 39 has been working in Torino toward an implausible "socialism in one country" (or "socialism in one city"?), and where are their conclusions on these vital experiences for the proletariat? Branch 39 accuses the PCI leadership of having abandoned "the camp of revolutionary forces," but where is its fight to direct the PCI toward revolution? Where is an alternative proposal that would open up the perspective of victory for the combative Italian working class?

Two fundamental reasons lie at the base of Branch 39's lack of struggle inside the PCI: their lack of program, and their conscious recognition that the PCI cannot be regenerated in a revolutionary direction. Knowing this, they spew forth proposals for organizational reform of the PCI:

"All the leading organs, from the lowest to the highest... must have an absolute majority of production workers, even using rotating methods, in order to *maintain the integrity of the party's class character.*"

—Motion proposed at the PCI City Conference, 10-13 December 1981: On Party Organization (our emphasis)

Hoping to avoid political struggle with the reformist leaders by giving greater weight to the working-class base, Branch 39 acquiesces to frankly anti-Leninist positions on the organization question. The entire history of Bolshevism is made up of an intransigent *programmatic* struggle to defend revolutionary positions against those who would introduce into the working class a program subordinated to bourgeois interests. In fact the PCI's bureaucratic apparatus, precisely because it serves as a channel for the penetration of bourgeois ideology into the workers movement, has nothing in common with the Leninist concept of a General Staff of the working class composed of "professional revolutionaries."

The troubles of Branch 39 and all the others who want to counterpose themselves to the PCI's pro-imperialist Eurocommunism come down to the fact that a revolution-

ary proletarian alternative to reformism cannot be built while remaining in the ideological and political orbit of Stalinism.

When Branch 39 writes that:

"Only with the broadest unity among countries in transition to socialism, among the working classes of all countries, liberation movements and revolutionary movements, and all Communist Parties, can the irresistible flow of history surge toward the complete victory of socialism."

—“On the International Workers Movement,”
January 1982

it is seeking in vain a “Marxist-Leninist tradition” in the Stalinist movement. From Moscow to Warsaw, from Hanoi to Peking, from Havana to Prague, in all the deformed workers states, the consuming greed of the bureaucratic apparatus in power is counterposed to the interests of the international proletariat. The Leninist tradition is elsewhere, in the struggle of Trotsky and the Left Opposition to defend the banner of the Bolshevik Revolution against Stalinist betrayal and repression. Only proletarian political revolution, sweeping aside the obstacle of the Stalinist bureaucracy, can open the path to

real socialist construction. Only an uncompromising, open split with Stalinism in all its variants in favor of the program of Trotsky's Fourth International, today defended by the international Spartacist tendency, can organize the PCI militants who want to really fight for communism.

The combative Italian proletariat needs a revolutionary leadership, a genuine communist party armed with the Leninist program of intransigent opposition to one's own imperialist bourgeoisie and fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat within the perspective of a Socialist United States of Europe. The Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution, must be reforged. Here is the way forward, toward the overturn of the rotting capitalist system and the affirmation of a new, communist order in Italy and the world over.

Milano, 16 May 1982

Lega Trotskista d'Italia
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Trotskyist Spectre Haunts Left Stalinists

Poland and the TKP "Leninists"

In the three years since it broke with the official pro-Moscow leadership of I. Bilen, the "Leninist wing" of the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) has lurched increasingly though unevenly leftwards. Centred around the newspaper *Iscinin Sesi* (Workers Voice), the TKP Leninists have had considerable success in winning support from within the TKP and its periphery, including among exiles and migrant workers in Western Europe, and politically control the Union of Turkish Progressives in Britain which produces the English-language *Turkey Today*. As well they have influenced a grouping in and around the British Communist Party centred around the *Leninist*.

Impelled into opposition by the TKP's grossly capitulatory tailing of the bourgeois Republican People's Party of Bulet Ecevit and then spurned by the Kremlin tops who share the policies of the "opportunist wing" of the TKP, the Iscinin Sesi grouping has since been forced to deepen and generalise its critical stance, not only with regard to the present Soviet leadership but also to the historical development of the Stalinist "world communist movement." The resurgent Cold War and imperialist war drive against the Soviet Union have accelerated this process.

The difficulties and contradictions of Iscinin Sesi have surfaced most sharply over the Polish events, which pose pointblank the Trotskyist analysis of the deformed and degenerated workers states of the Soviet bloc and the Trotskyist programme of proletarian political revolution based on defence of the collectivised property forms to oust the bureaucracy. Their critique of the bureaucratic character of Polish (and Soviet) society is far-reaching; yet their refusal thus far to see that this bureaucracy is a caste ruling in its own interests leads them to pursue a confused and utopian perspective of reform while leaving them theoretically disarmed before the neo-Kautskyan (and implicitly counterrevolutionary) calls for "classless" democracy advanced by the Eurocommunists and suchlike.

Likewise, in continuing to cling to a perspective of reforming the "world communist movement" through "ideological struggle," they look to the most craven opportunists as ideological allies against revisionism and resist an examination of the non-revolutionary premises upon which their programme and strategy remain founded. Today the TKP Leninists have gone about as far as they can within their present methodological framework. Only by making a complete break with their Stalinist heritage and coming to terms with Trotskyism can Iscinin Sesi supporters uphold their avowed desire to be revolutionary, proletarian-internationalist Leninists.

A Programme for Poland

The massive strike wave which gave birth to Solidarność represented the workers' reaction to years of bureaucratic mismanagement, privilege and abuse. The Polish workers

were faced with a historic choice: with the bankruptcy of Stalinist rule dramatically demonstrated, it would either be the path of bloody counterrevolution in league with Western imperialism or the path of proletarian political revolution for soviet democracy. Given the clerical-nationalist influence in Solidarność and the emergence of a mass organisation of the landowning peasantry, Rural Solidarność, the counterrevolutionary threat grew. At the same time a process of political differentiation had begun, a



Rosa Luxemburg, Communist leader and martyr, epitomized the internationalist tradition of Poland's historically socialist proletariat.

situation in which a genuine Leninist/Trotskyist opposition could have crystallised and quickly grown. Thus into the middle of 1981 it would have been the duty of genuine proletarian internationalists to protest any Russian military intervention while emphatically warning that any form of violent resistance against such an intervention would have been far worse, since that would simply have poisoned the situation for years.

However with its first national congress in September decisive elements of Solidarność were now pushing a programme of open counterrevolution. While pointing out that it was not our task to advise the Stalinist bureaucrats how to deal with a counterrevolutionary situation for which they bear ultimate responsibility, we said: "Stop Solidarity's counterrevolution!" adding that "If the Kremlin Stalinists, in their necessarily brutal stupid way, intervene militarily to stop it, we will support this." As it was, it was the Polish army which imposed martial law at the last possible moment, checking Solidarność's counterrevolutionary bid for power.

Martial law has not ended the crisis of Polish society, a situation which cries out for the creation of a proletarian and internationalist vanguard which can lead the Polish working masses out of this morass. From the beginning we raised a programme around which such a vanguard must be built: For trade unions independent of bureaucratic control and based on a programme of defending socialised

property! For the strict separation of church and state—fight clerical nationalist reaction! Promote the collectivisation of agriculture! For workers control of production, prices, distribution and foreign trade! For proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy—for a government based on democratically elected workers councils (soviets)! Break the imperialist economic stranglehold—cancel the foreign debt! Towards international socialist economic planning! For military defence of the USSR against imperialism! For the revolutionary unity of the Polish and Soviet working classes! For a Polish Trotskyist party, section of a reborn Fourth International!

Confusion and Contradiction

In its analysis of the Polish events the Ischinin Sesi makes a number of telling and correct points. Significantly the major statement by R. Yurukoglu (*Iscinin Sesi*, 21 December 1981—reprinted as a *Turkey Today* supplement) is entitled "Counterrevolution in Poland Must Be Crushed." Elsewhere as well the statement will have a familiar ring for readers of the publications of the international Spartacist tendency ("600,000 Soviet soldiers died in order to liberate Poland"). It says that the "main responsibility" for the crisis must rest with the PUWP, denounces the "antiquated bureaucratic structure, corruption and injustices" and condemns the leadership which "frightens the people by saying the Russians are coming! This is nothing but nationalism." The Solidarity membership "is a confused mass enraged by years of injustices," while Rural Solidarity is "fervently catholic, extremely reactionary and hostile to socialism" and "a truly dangerous force." And it concludes that "the Solidarity trade union movement has today ceased to be a trade union. It is an anti-communist movement striving for political power."

But in seeking a solution for the Polish crisis from the perspective of reforming the Stalinist regime, Ischinin Sesi becomes confused and contradictory. The same events that have produced "an anti-communist movement striving for political power" are also described as "the mass upsurge [which] is bringing forward a new, unsullied, and rank-and-file movement." Uncomfortable with Jaruzelski's coup Ischinin Sesi counsels "mass struggle":

"Our wish is that the tanks had never come. The party had advantages it could have used. If this is a class struggle, would that it had used these, called to action cadres loyal to communism, and waged a class struggle."

Iscinin Sesi's appeal to the Polish Stalinists to launch a revolutionary mobilisation is particularly absurd in the context of present-day Poland. This was not 1956 when the masses could be mobilised behind illusions in Gomulka's reform Stalinism even to the extent that Khrushchev was dissuaded from intervening with Soviet troops to remove Gomulka. By 1980 the Polish working class had heard countless admissions of mistakes and promises of reform and "socialist renewal." The PUWP was utterly discredited in wide layers of the working class. Leaving aside the question of which politics it was meant to wage "class struggle" for, the PUWP did not have other "advantages it could have used" aside from the army. Ischinin Sesi's claim that "*open discussion* became an irresistible fact within the party" is more a reflection of the PUWP's paralysis in the face of a movement which looked to Pilsudski and the

Vatican than a sign that a start was "made on closing the profound gap which exists between the party leadership and the party rank-and-file."

Iscinin Sesi characterises the central PUWP leadership as "centrist," ascribing this to the fact that "the world communist movement as a whole takes up a centrist position today." Seeking an alternative within the PUWP, Ischinin Sesi looks to the "left wing...led by the Katowice Group." No doubt healthy elements repelled by clerical nationalism and the vacillation of the central PUWP leadership may have been attracted to the Katowice group, but the central figures associated with this grouping came from those hardline officials most opposed to any concessions to the rank and file, sullied or unsullied; those most eager for a crackdown and closest to the Kremlin hardliners; those most identified with the virulent nationalism (and anti-semitism) that certain PUWP organs resorted to....

The Left Opposition v. the Bureaucratic Caste

If the PUWP is responsible for the crisis, is isolated and has reached the "height of bureaucratic deformation," then surely this raises some questions about the role of this bureaucratic layer in society. In a fuller historical discussion of the Soviet Union the "Leninists" say:

"All the characteristics rooted in the specifics of the development of Soviet society boiled down to something which Lenin strove to rectify all his life: the lagging behind of the democratic aspect of democratic centralism. One manifestation of these is the widespread bureaucracy which exists there and which Lenin constantly fought against. Another is the single party system which Lenin never regarded as a universal prerequisite. A further manifestation is the restrictions which were gradually imposed on discussion in society and in the party, especially after the 1930's. Another is the fact that the trade unions function as a state institution. None of these are characteristics derived from the theory of socialism. They are characteristics which socialism established in a particular country was compelled to exhibit for a long time, characteristics peculiar to that country, rooted in the fact that as Lenin pointed out, at the Eighth Congress of the RCP (B), 'Russia was not sufficiently developed as a capitalist country.' Moreover the fact that the period in which these were experienced was the most difficult seen in history made it hard to eradicate these shortcomings in the full sense of the term....

"Shortcomings and distortions which I have touched upon briefly cannot be reduced to the attitudes of leading cadres or general secretaries."

—R. Yurukoglu, "Socialism Will Win"

Elsewhere Ischinin Sesi describes how bourgeois pacifism, nationalism and opportunism have been pervasive in the Communist Parties. And it condemns the suppression of the works of Bukharin, Zinoviev and Trotsky in the Soviet Union (see *Turkey Today*, January/February 1982). But Trotsky's writings in particular were suppressed precisely because they described and fought against the phenomena that Ischinin Sesi now critically notes.

By not recognising that Stalin developed a *different programme* in the face of the difficult conditions confronting the isolated, young workers state, Ischinin Sesi objectifies the historic process suggesting that what happened was inevitable. Was Lenin just being utopian when he fought bureaucracy? No! And nor would his policy towards the present situation in the Soviet Union have been one of "critical acceptance" as Ischinin Sesi puts



Solidarność chief Lech Wałęsa gets instructions from his master, Pope Wojtyła.

forward in its Poland statement. Stalinist ideology is designed to obscure the role of the bureaucracy and to justify its counterrevolutionary betrayals. And it is not surprising, with its background, that Iscinian Sesi carries in its theoretical baggage positions that are not Leninist but Stalinist.

Had the Soviet Union remained under a Leninist leadership it was not at all inevitable that it would have remained isolated and subject to such great pressures. Trotsky and the Left Opposition fought the degeneration of the Soviet Union from the very time that Iscinian Sesi says things started to go wrong, and put forward a revolutionary-internationalist programme to restore soviet democracy, to undertake the task of socialist construction and to extend the world revolution. The supporters of Iscinian Sesi must confront that alternative to Stalinism and the programmatic struggle waged by its adherents.

Trotsky developed the analysis that the "widespread bureaucracy" against which Lenin had fought had by 1924, under the terrible conditions created by scarcity and civil war, been able to consolidate itself as a distinct *caste* with distinct material interests, no longer serving the proletariat but independent from it. The collectivised property forms remained intact, the class character of the Soviet state was unchanged, but the regime of soviet democracy and proletarian internationalism had been replaced by the regime of a conservative, nationalist bureaucracy.

Intent on preserving the status quo this bureaucratic caste, with Stalin as its main spokesman, sought to defend the collectivised economy from which its privileges derived by appeasing and conciliating imperialism rather than promoting international revolution; and it sought to ward off any proletarian challenge to its position by appropriating for itself a monopoly on political power. The failure of the revolution to spread internationally was theoretically rationalised—through "socialism in one country"—into a perspective which denied the necessity for international revolution. Whether in an attempt to maintain its ties to the left TUC [Trades Union Congress] bureaucrats during the British General Strike or the needless sacrifice of the

Chinese Communists to Chiang Kai-shek, the Stalinist bureaucracy betrayed revolutionary opportunities time and time again. "Socialism in one country" was a self-fulfilling prophecy that the proletarian dictatorship would remain isolated in one country.

Is Socialism Possible in One Country?

Even until early 1924, Stalin presented what was for Marxist-Leninists an elementary axiom:

"...can the final victory of socialism in one country be attained, without the joint efforts of the proletariat of several advanced countries? No, this is impossible."

—"Foundations of Leninism," first edition,
Lenin and Leninism

A few months later he was saying the opposite. Though Marx and Lenin used the term "socialism" at times loosely or to describe their world view, in its precise scientific definition (as described by Lenin in *State and Revolution*) it meant for both of them the lower phase of communism. It is a society characterised by common property ownership, very high productivity of labour, the absence of class-based social antagonisms, the replacement of the standing army by a universal peoples militia, material incentives limited to equal pay for equal work, full emancipation of women, disappearance of the age-old distinction between town and country, etc. In short it is only the beginning of man's ascent from the "kingdom of necessity into the kingdom of freedom." It is obvious that the socialism which Marx and Engels envisioned would be a world society, necessarily embracing the industrialised countries of Europe, the United States and Japan. To declare, as Stalin did in the 1936 Constitution, that class struggle had ended in the Soviet Union and that socialism had been achieved flies in the face of the glaring non-socialist features in the Soviet Union. Similarly to talk of the existence of socialism in Poland and the Soviet Union today is a cover-up for the anti-socialist role of the bureaucracy.

In an attempt to be critical of the policies of the bureaucracy without coming to terms with their role per se, Iscinian Sesi, like Mao Tse-tung and other Stalinists before them, argues that class struggle exists under socialism. A careful reading of Lenin puts to rest this revision of Marxism-Leninism:

"Socialism means the abolition of classes. The dictatorship of the proletariat has done all it could to abolish classes. But classes cannot be abolished at one stroke. And classes still remain and will remain in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship will become unnecessary when classes disappear. Without the dictatorship of the proletariat they will not disappear. Classes have remained, but in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat every class has undergone a change, and the relations between the classes have also changed. The class struggle does not disappear under the dictatorship of the proletariat; it merely assumes different forms."

—"Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," 1919
(emphasis in original)

Between capitalism and communism (including its lower stage socialism) is a transitional period during which the proletariat enforces its dictatorship, and would of course begin to build even in one country "such prerequisites for socialism" as it can. But the use made by Iscinian Sesi of "socialism" and "democracy" reflects its Stalinist methodological heritage, and in turn the bureaucratic caste's

attempt to give itself the mantle of socialism. This bureaucracy will not reform itself but must be overthrown by proletarian political revolution....

Stalin's Menshevik Stagist Strategy

...To understand the roots of the official TKP opportunism with which they have only partially broken, Iscinin Sesi must again turn to Trotsky's struggle against Stalinism. The pervasive opportunism within the Communist Parties is not a question of episodic errors or ideological weaknesses; today's "world communist movement" is not a flawed, "centrist" continuation of the world party of socialist revolution built by Lenin and Trotsky but a consistent obstacle to world revolution. In his critique of Stalin's draft programme for the Sixth Congress of the Comintern (1928), Trotsky warned against the counterrevolutionary implications of "socialism in one country":

"The new doctrine proclaims that socialism can be built on the basis of a national state if only there is no intervention. From this there can and must follow (notwithstanding all pompous declarations in the draft programme) a collaborationist policy towards the foreign bourgeoisie with the object of averting intervention, as this will guarantee the construction of socialism, that is to say, will solve the main historical question. The task of the parties in the Comintern assumes, therefore, an auxiliary character; their mission is to protect the USSR from intervention and not to fight for the conquest of power."

—*Third International After Lenin*
(emphasis in original)

To speak of the "world communist movement" as being centrist today and reformable through ideological struggle is simply to ignore the world-historic *betrayals*, not just errors, carried out by the Communist Parties since then.

In short order, the abandonment of the perspective of world revolution in order to make capitalist "friends" was to become a policy of opposition to proletarian revolution for the same aims. The coming to power of fascism in Germany without a significant challenge by the mass German Communist Party nor a significant response from within the Comintern after the fact was the evidence that this course had taken the Communist International decisively over to a defence of the bourgeois order,

graphically confirmed several years later by its open struggle *against* proletarian revolution in Spain. Opposition to the class struggle in Russia's imperialist allies during World War II, the disarming of the Italian and French workers after the war and countless other examples were in no sense errors or aberrations but consistent betrayals. And to justify these betrayals of the struggle against capitalism, the Stalinists revised Lenin's teachings across the board, in large measure borrowing from the Menshevik theories which Lenin had so assiduously combatted and discredited.

The TKP Leninists reject "peaceful coexistence" and "détente," but they have not shaken off the legacy of Stalinist revisionism that goes with such policies. For one Stalinism abandons the tenet that there must be a revolutionary smashing of the bourgeois state, positing a peaceful reformist transition from bourgeois democracy to socialism, as glaringly expounded in the "British Road to Socialism" or Allende's "Chilean Road." It argues for "two stage" revolution, with first a struggle for democracy and later (i.e., never) socialism. And it allows a "joint dictatorship" of more than one class, giving this third type of state names like "peoples democracy" or, in Mao's case, "New Democracy." In reality such a third type of state has never existed since the armed bodies of men must in this epoch commit themselves to either proletarian or bourgeois class rule....

At best Iscinin Sesi has reverted to Lenin's old slogan of the "revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry," a slogan he abandoned in 1917 when he understood that only the dictatorship of the proletariat can solve the democratic tasks of the revolution simultaneously as it begins to undertake the socialist reconstruction of society. This understanding was at the core of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution and laid the basis, together with Trotsky's acceptance that Lenin had been correct on the party question, for their revolutionary collaboration in leading the October Revolution. And at worst Iscinin Sesi's position is but an attempt to give a more leftist colouration to the classic two-stage theory Stalin borrowed from the Mensheviks.

The TKP Leninists stand at a critical juncture. If they do not go forward to an understanding of Trotskyism, they can only retreat. In a sense the official TKP captures something of the contradiction which today besets Iscinin Sesi when it accuses Yurukoglu of being "left sectarian in his views before the revolution and Eurocommunist in his views after the revolution" (*Yasayan Sosyalizm*, our translation). Seeking answers in the tradition of Stalinism, seeking a "Marxist-Leninist core" in the Stalinist movement, will only entrap Iscinin Sesi in one variant or another of reformism. The tradition of Leninism lies elsewhere, in the struggle of Trotsky and the Left Opposition to defend the banner of the Bolshevik Revolution against Stalinist treachery and repression. Only proletarian political revolution to sweep away the obstacle of Stalinist bureaucracy can open the path to genuine socialist construction. Only a complete and uncompromising break with the legacy of Stalinism in favour of the programme of Trotsky's Fourth International can arm the TKP Leninists with a strategy to smash bourgeois class rule in Turkey and internationally.

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The Ominous Resurgence of German Nationalism

A conference last year of the Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands, German section of the international Spartacist tendency, centered on politically reorienting the organization in light of the rapid change in German society in the train of the altered relations between German imperialism, the other imperialist powers and the Soviet bloc. We are publishing an excerpt from a document adopted at the conference focusing on the need to combat the new German nationalism in both its "leftist" and rightist forms.

The result of the Second World War was, on the one hand, the dominance of American imperialism, described by Cannon¹ as "the American century [a term used by contemporary U.S. bourgeois ideologues]," and, on the other, the strengthening of the economically exhausted USSR through its victory over German imperialism in the East. Centrally Germany was divided between American imperialism (French and British imperialism emerged from the war weakened) and the Soviet degenerated workers state.

Through American imperialism's course of seeking to destroy the gains of October in the Soviet Union, the Soviet bureaucracy was forced to carry through a social revolution from above, extending a planned economy to the East European countries. When U.S. imperialism put West Germany on its feet with Marshall Plan aid, the German bourgeoisie took on an Anglo-American face whose meaning could only be anti-Sovietism in "the American century." The CIA-financed social democracy in exile in London and Stockholm became an "American"



Spartakist

German Trotskyists call for revolutionary reunification of Germany, key to a Socialist United States of Europe.

bourgeois workers party. Schumacher², who had survived a Nazi concentration camp, was known for his German nationalism; he even attacked Adenauer³ as "chancellor of the Allies." But his nationalism was less important than his overriding anti-Communism, which forced him to accept American dominance.

The construction of the Berlin Wall [in 1961] and its acceptance by the other imperialists showed that day X—the day on which the German bourgeoisie would destroy the DDR [German Democratic Republic (East Germany)] and Poland through the combination of a "popular" uprising and Bundeswehr support—lay somewhere in the future and that it would have to deal with the DDR.

With the collapse [in 1971] of Bretton Woods—the world monetary system resting on the dominance of U.S. imperialism—and the defeat of the U.S. in Vietnam, the change in the relations between the imperialist powers showed itself.

Japanese and German imperialism came to be rivals for U.S. imperialism. But the USA is still the strongest *military* and economic power in the Western world. U.S. imperialism's policy of détente—to gain time to rearm after the defeat in Vietnam—meant something different for German capitalism. The German bankers do not want a third world war *now*, whether fought with nuclear or conventional weapons, because they would lose it *now*. Thus, the German bourgeoisie is striving to undermine the planned economies through credits, commodities and joint projects and at the same time to penetrate these with bourgeois ideology in social-democratic colors with the support of the corrupt Stalinist bureaucracy.

The German bourgeoisie is preparing *its own* way of destroying the workers states. It is building its own atom bombs and the second largest army in NATO, preparing to *win* the third world war. In view of the differences between German and American imperialism, the trade war and the confrontation over sanctions (the pipeline deal), German nationalism as expressed in anti-Americanism and anti-Sovietism is on the rise.

The German section faces a change in German society and German social democracy, which is en route from being a party of the American to one of the German bourgeoisie. The TLD must fight German nationalism, both of the "left" (the social-democratic "peace" movement in the East and West) and that of the right (fascism and Nazism). The program of the German bourgeoisie is a new "Grossdeutsches Reich" for the "master race," racism against the Jews and Turks and "Lebensraum" in the East, i.e., the obliteration of the workers states.

—29 August 1982

¹James P. Cannon was the founding leader of American Trotskyism.

²Kurt Schumacher was the principal leader of German Social Democracy from 1945 until his death in 1953.

³Konrad Adenauer was the Christian-Democratic chancellor of West Germany from the establishment of the Federal Republic in 1948 until 1963.

Greetings From Our Comrades

Under the Terror in Sri Lanka

We reprint below greetings sent to the seventh national conference of the Spartacist League/U.S. by our comrades in Sri Lanka as this small Indian Ocean island nation was being torn apart by Sinhala chauvinist terror against the national/religious minority people, the Tamils, in pogroms instigated and organized by sections of the governing United National Party of J.R. Jayewardene. Until shortly before the American conference convened, we had received from Sri Lanka no information on the safety of our comrades, who while a very small group had become known in the course of their work as outspoken and active defenders of Tamil national rights on the island.

REVOLUTIONARY GREETINGS TO SL/U.S.

Spartacist League/Lanka
Colombo
8 August 1983

The Spartacist League/Lanka (SL/L) sends these warm greetings to the seventh National Conference of the Spartacist League/U.S. at a time when Sri Lanka is enveloped in the most severe political complexities ever recorded in its recent history.

The six-year administration of the pro-American, rightist J.R. Jayewardene's UNP [United National Party] government has not solved any problems of the people. Instead, they have become aggravated from bad to worse. The "open economy" and the "free trade zone" theories that the government sought to use as supporting pillars for the crashing economy, are now cracking under the unbearable burdens that rest upon them. By abolishing one by one the rights of the people and by introducing tough legislation the government keeps away the people from the path of struggle. This cruel government that appeared to brighten up not only the earthly life of the people but even their lives after death, and boasted that it laid the foundation for a "Dharmista" [Buddhist righteousness]

society, has now got all its dictators' medals soaked with agony and blood of the Tamil people—the victims of violent suppression during the last weeks. The intellectuals' and students' movements within the judiciary, religious and human rights organisations and also in the other layers of society are filled with unrest. More than at any time before, the poorest sections in the island are now facing brutal military law and the force of thugs.

The government, to keep up with its friends, is using all public media, political platforms and forces to declare a "cold war" against the Soviet Union. To serve American and other imperialists' interests, Sri Lanka is invitingly waving its hand to American forces via capitalist trade tactics. It is seeking to join ASEAN [the Association of Southeast Asian Nations] and other counterrevolutionary organisations in an attempt to disgrace the Red victories in Afghanistan, Vietnam and Kampuchea. The government is highly respectful of the Solidarity trade-union movement activities in Poland whilst denying the right of the local workers to demonstrate, picket and strike! The fierce government, having been unable to get out of the capitalist crisis, is now gradually absorbing military juntas into its administration.

As a part of the International, we of the SL/L today join you not only to fight capitalism, but social democracy, reformism and centrism too. Our part in the world is extremely difficult. Risky. We are devoted, as a propaganda group against all types of reactionaries, to building a party on the lines of Bolshevik traditions.

Comrades, Colombo is filled with guns, bayonets, barbed wire, fire, ash and burnt remains, and refugee camps. And from this city, with deep comradely feelings we hold your hand that is raising the red banner of struggle in the conference today.

- The main enemy is at home!
- Indian/Lankan workers key to the socialist revolution in South Asia!
- For the rebirth of the Fourth International! ■

SL/Lanka



**Devastation of
burned-out
Tamil-owned
businesses in
Colombo,
26 July 1983.**

Sri Lanka...

(continued from page 32)

of the sizable Tamil merchant layer of the South (70 percent of Colombo retail and wholesale trade has been Tamil-run) by confiscating all properties ravaged by the violence. The "Ceylon" Tamils, comprising about 13 percent of Sri Lanka's 15 million population, have been disproportionately a merchant/professional layer, a legacy of British imperialist "divide and rule" policy which had incorporated many Tamils in the colonial administration. But since independence (1948), the Sinhalese have been displacing Tamils in government service and higher educational access. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP)-led chauvinist "Sinhala Only" agitation of the mid-1950s—endorsed by the popular-front Sinhalese "left" parties as breaking the imperialistic hold of the English language—codified anti-Tamil communalism as official state policy and unleashed a bloody wave of anti-Tamil terror unequaled until the present bloodbath. *Defend the Tamil people! Immediate withdrawal of Sinhala army units from all Tamil areas! Arms for the Tamil people!*

The massive atrocity taking place in Sri Lanka marks a watershed in that island's history. The bloodletting and the mass population transfers have set the economy back at least a decade and are forcing the separation of the peoples. J.R. has ripped the country apart, massacring many thousands and forcing the survivors into a virtual "bantustan" in the barren North. The international Spartacist tendency, which has vigorously campaigned for defense of the Tamil people alongside militant Tamil exiles on three continents, has always upheld the Tamils' right to self-determination while counseling against the exercise of that right and in favor of united working-class struggle for Tamil freedom. Now, however, in the wake of the mass killing of Tamils, the bitterness and hostility between the peoples of Ceylon has evidently become insurmountable at least in the short run. What is posed now as a minimal democratic demand is a *plebiscite of the Tamil working people to decide on the formation of an independent state in the North and East centered on Jaffna.*

J.R. Flirts with Holocaust

Since taking office in 1977 on a wave of popular disillusionment with the "left"-backed SLFP government of Mrs. Bandaranaike (which disorganized the economy and massacred thousands of radical Sinhalese youth in the 1971 JVP uprising), the wily Jayewardene has tried a bonapartist balancing act. Seeking to coopt the moderate Tamil leaders with too little, too late and lying promises of regional "devolution," J.R. found himself unable to placate the oppressed Tamil masses of the army-besieged North or wipe out the "Tiger" militants. He also found himself in trouble with the layers upon whom his real power rests—the Sinhalese upper classes and particularly the Sinhalese officer corps, soldiers and police. Jayewardene—alternately fanning the flames of anti-Tamil communalism and moving against too outspokenly bloody-minded UNP spokesmen, continuing to promise economic miracles while imperialist-imposed economic crisis drove masses of Sinhalese into a scapegoating frenzy—was flirting with a holocaust.

J.R.'s recent efforts to portray the violence as a spontaneous reaction to Tamil "terrorists" (or as the product of some fantastical Soviet or JVP conspiracy in the armed forces) are evidently a smokescreen to conceal a massive Sinhala chauvinist mutiny in his own armed forces. The government's secret efforts (subsequently denied) to obtain troops and materiel from the U.S., Britain, Pakistan and Bangladesh underscore the delicately worded suggestion of the (London) *Guardian* (16 August) that J.R. "is not in control of Sinhalese nationalists, including elements of his own army, who could be expected to react violently to such concessions [to the Tamil leaders]." The *Guardian* cited General Secretary of the TULF (Tamil United Liberation Front) and head of its ex-parliamentary fraction Amirthalingam's claim that a section of the UNP engineered the riots. The *Sunday Times* (London) described a J.R. speech as carefully hiding "the fact that after riots erupted on July 24... a sizeable number of Sri Lanka's 13,000 troops were in a state of mutiny for four days as they wreaked vengeance against the country's Tamil population" (7 August).

The anti-Tamil bloodbath began in late July when Sinhalese soldiers abducted and raped several young women from Palaly Teachers Training College near Jaffna. Two of the women, hopelessly degraded under prevailing social values, reportedly committed suicide the next day. Outraged Tamil youth took to the streets and erected barricades. Two army vehicles were ambushed: 12 soldiers and an officer were killed.

As the army ran wild in Jaffna, organized Sinhalese mob terror swept the South and the upland plantations while whole sections of Colombo were burned to the ground as the cops looked on. The scene in Colombo was described in a direct report written on July 25:

"... All hell broke loose when mobs, gangs, thugs, private armies armed with knives, krisies, iron bars, steel hammers, daggers got on to the streets searching for Tamils. From all high-rise buildings in the Fort [downtown Colombo] area to the slums in Peliyagoda every Tamil property was set afire, destroyed.

"I walked through the city on Monday. Colombo was wrapped in a mist of dark black choking thick smoke. Men, women, little children were running for their lives. Half-naked, drunken thugs were chasing after Tamils who



SL/Lanka

Jaffna Public Library, cultural and historic repository of the Tamil people, burned out during state-organized terror in 1981.

like on any other weekday reported to work.... Huge flames of fire were swallowing Tamil kovils (temples), hotels, jewelry and textile shops, and finally spread and gutted the huge factories.... All this happened in the presence of the police who were by that time deployed on the streets....

"I saw a hundred chasing a Tamil man running for his life (towards a police post) and several cops, armed, just watching this man fall and then be set upon by the crowd that followed. I saw logs being placed on roads, vehicles stopped and the search for Tamils going on. What happened when an armed patrol passed by? They waved and cheered.... But what shook me most was when I saw workers on McCullum Road (J.R. Wijewardena Mawatha) defending the government, smashing vehicles and demanding national identity cards.... The same men and the guns they stood to defend today will be the death weapon not only of themselves but of the entire labour movement of Lanka...."

Under the cover of government-instigated indiscriminate terror, J.R. & Co. escalated their effort to behead the Tamil nationalist movement. Only July 25, some 35 leading Tamil activists held in Colombo's maximum-security Welikada Jail were slaughtered. Army men opened the jail gates and cells to allow the professional killers inside the cells of Tamil militants. Groups of ten, armed with swords, rods and pistols, entered each cell. After ten minutes there was total silence. Two hours later, wardens appeared claiming some prisoners had broken out and killed the Tamils before "order" could be restored. Survivors say two Tamil leaders had their eyes gouged out with iron bars before they were killed (*Guardian*, 13 August). Two days later 17 more Tamil prisoners were butchered.

- J.R. is also invoking the beefed-up powers of his strongman-style regime against the whole spectrum of his critics. Since taking office Jayewardene has moved steadily toward naked dictatorship (e.g., Constitutional "revi-

sions," continuous brutal military "Emergency" rule in the North, six-year "extension" of the UNP-dominated parliament). Now by formally illegalizing advocacy of Eelam, he has suppressed the main parliamentary opposition, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF, a bourgeois-nationalist Tamil umbrella formation like the early Kuomintang in China), having prepared the way by banning two influential Jaffna-based papers, *Sutantiran* and *Saturday Review*. By outlawing the TULF, J.R. has cut the ground out from under the TULF leaders, whose perspective has been the combination of separatist rhetoric and legalist cretinism. On August 4 J.R. banned three Sinhalese leftist parties and jailed their leaders. *Down with press censorship! Free the JVP, CPSL and NSSP leaders. Tamil militants, and all victims of UNP terror! Vengeance for Kuttimani, Jeganathan and the other martyrs of Welikada!*

If J.R.'s preparations for Pinochet-style dictatorship have now come together with the anti-Tamil terror campaign, so too is the terror tightly linked to the U.S. imperialist anti-Soviet war drive. It's not for nothing that J.R. became known as "Yankee Dickie." For some time now Sri Lanka has been begging to get into ASEAN (successor to SEATO), pimp for genocidal Pol Pot and a front-line instrument for imperialist provocations against Vietnam. Now, prostrate before the IMF, J.R. has introduced drastic austerity measures and the tax-free, union-free "free trade zones" (FTZ). Seeking access to U.S. markets for FTZ goods produced by superexploited Sinhalese women workers, Jayewardene offers in exchange the strategically important deep-water harbor of Trincomalee, a historically Tamil area. Here the government has for several years implemented a policy of Sinhalese colonization, analogous to the Zionist settlements in the



International Spartacist tendency organized and participated internationally in protests against anti-Tamil pogroms with exile Tamil activists. In Berlin on 7 August (left). In London on 30 July (right).



Students demonstrating in Indian capital of New Delhi against butchery of Sri Lanka's Tamils. A massive outpouring of protest against the pogrom also swept the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

West Bank. U.S. imperialism's appetite for Trinco—to secure hegemony over the Indian Ocean as a staging area for control of the Indian subcontinent and Persian Gulf (and as part of its encirclement of the USSR/Vietnam)—is thus a main motor force of the Lankan state's war on the Tamil people. *J.R.'s massacres pave the way for the bloody USA! U.S. out of the Indian Ocean!—Hands off Diego Garcia! No U.S. base at Trincomalee!*

No Faith in Indira Gandhi!

In desperation, leaders of Sri Lanka's Tamil community and many exiles have appealed to Indira Gandhi of India (home of tens of millions of Tamils, many of whom have militantly protested the bloodbath in Lanka) to intervene on their behalf. But while under heavy Tamil pressure to play a role as negotiator between J.R. and the Tamil leaders, Mrs. Gandhi also said she would be "willing to send troops to Sri Lanka to reinforce the island republic's army" ([London] *Daily Telegraph*, 29 July). This should come as no surprise to those who recall that India sent helicopters and troops to Sri Lanka in 1971 to suppress the JVP-led youth insurgency. The fate of the Lankan Tamil masses must not be left in the hands of Indira Gandhi, with her dictatorial appetites, brutal oppressor of her own political, national, ethnic and religious minorities in India! The Indian army was the butcher of the guerrillaist Mukti Bahini in East Bengal in 1971 and more recently Gandhi orchestrated the massive communal slaughter in Assam.

Moreover, an Indian invasion would surely result in a brutal reversal of the terms of oppression between Lanka's nationalities, as did the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus, for example, when the previously oppressed Turkish Cypriots perpetrated great atrocities against the Greek population. As Marxists, we are not in the business of revenge of one people over another. Rather we believe the eradication of national oppression and the path to social progress requires proletarian socialist revolution.

Today Ceylon experiences the bitter fruit of decades of betrayal and defeat in the class struggle. The early LSSP tradition of defense of the Tamil masses was destroyed by the popular-frontist accommodation of the Sinhalese "left" to the communalist SLFP; today these parties are anathema to the Tamil liberation fighters. It is necessary to

begin again in the light of all experience since the British departed. But history does not simply repeat itself. The bloody communal struggle argues that even with proletarian revolution in Ceylon and South Asia generally, a federated socialist republic in Ceylon will be necessary to achieve the unity of Tamils and Sinhalese on a basis of justice and equality (and to take into account Sinhalese fears of vengeance at the hands of the millions of Tamils in south India).

While Marxists unconditionally defend the Tamils' right to form a separate state, we are less than enthusiastic about the prospects for an independent capitalist state in Jaffna. It would inevitably slide under the suzerainty of the oppressive Indian regime. With or without independence, the arid, industrially undeveloped North is economically unviable and ill-prepared to absorb another million or more Tamil refugees. And what is to become of the so-called "Indian Tamil" plantation workers in the uplands? These "stateless," doubly oppressed workers, descendants of laborers brought over by the British to work the large estates, have been strategic to Sri Lanka's economy (the plantation sector accounts for most of the country's hard-currency export earnings) but are championed by neither the chauvinist/parliamentarist "left" nor by the Tamil nationalist movement, which instead of fighting for their full citizenship rights in Sri Lanka has seen them only as potential settlers of a "homeland" in the North.

The formation of an independent state in the North out of the ashes of J.R.'s holocaust would not ensure national survival for the Tamil masses. What is needed is proletarian revolution to establish a federated socialist republic in Lanka, whose fight for real national equality and social justice can make the island a staging area for revolution throughout the Indian subcontinent by showing the Tamils of India—and the dozens of other oppressed nationalities there—that our internationalist proletarian power has nothing in common with the ultimately genocidal "non-aligned democratic socialism" of J.R. and Mrs. B.

What is desperately needed is to further the building of a Trotskyist party in Sri Lanka, necessarily substantially based among the exploited Tamil masses. The struggle for the national rights of the Tamil people is vital to forging such a party. Lasting national and class justice for the Tamil working people will be secured through permanent revolution—rule by the workers and peasants—and a socialist federation of South Asia. ■

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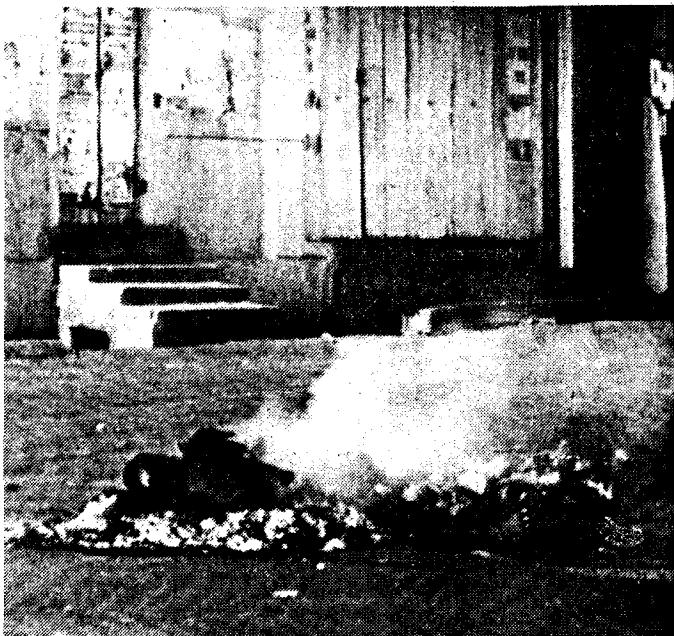
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Colombo: Tamil homes, shops and factories were systematically burned down by the terror orchestrated by J.R.'s United National Party. The body of a Tamil victim smolders in the road (right).

Massacre in Sri Lanka

The government-orchestrated Sinhala-chauvinist blood-bath against the Tamil people in the small Indian Ocean island nation of Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) has catastrophically altered for the foreseeable future the prospects for common class struggle between the Sinhalese working class and the oppressed Tamil minority. In the past two months murderous pogroms, instigated by the reactionary United National Party (UNP) government of J.R. Jayewardene, and executed by his rampaging, mutinous army, have hideously massacred many thousands of defenseless Tamils and sent countless more fleeing for their lives, while in the overwhelmingly Tamil North (Jaffna), J.R.'s army of occupation has become an army of foreign conquest as soldiers kill, rape, maim and pillage. In the name of combatting Tamil "Tiger terrorists" (the militant wing of the Tamil nationalist movement which advocates separation of the historically Tamil areas in a state of Eelam), the Lankan state is drawing the national lines in blood and driving the historically economically interpenetrated Tamils of Colombo and the South into a

compacted Tamil entity in Jaffna. At the same time J.R. has illegalized the advocacy of a Tamil state, making it a crime tantamount to treason. *For the right of Tamil Eelam!*

From Colombo and the South, upwards of 100,000 Tamils have fled in terror from the massacres, many of them now held in refugee camps where—starving, under unspeakably filthy conditions, at the mercy of the Sinhalese army—they await relocation in Jaffna. "We are sitting ducks," said one Tamil refugee in the Pillaiar Hindu temple compound near Colombo. "They can throw bombs in here and massacre us all like they did in Lebanon. We can't stay here" (*International Herald Tribune*, 30-31 July). *Patriation of Tamils in Sinhala areas to the North under the protection of the Indian army! No faith in Indira Gandhi! No "UN" troops!—Remember the Shatila/Sabra massacre set up by imperialist "peacekeepers"!*

While geographically compacting the Tamils with pogroms, J.R. is moving to destroy the economic interpenetration of Ceylon's peoples, dispossessing much

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