

Workers Must Oppose Islamic Reaction!

Shah Flees

JANUARY 16—Within minutes of the announcement that the shah of Iran had stealthily slipped out of the country, tens of thousands of jubilant Iranians poured into the streets of Teheran. As the thousands swelled into millions a carnival atmosphere swept the city. Some of those celebrating were observed tearing the shah's portrait out of their paper currency.

By the end of his 38 years of regal dictatorship, the regime of Mohammed Reza Pahlavi was felt to be an unbearably oppressive burden by the vast majority of the urban population. The "white revolution" façade had crumbled, exposing a corrupt and rapacious court looting the country to salt away fortunes in Swiss banks and Los Angeles real estate.

No more could a technocratic middle class dream of becoming a world power by the turn of the century; instead they saw the oil billions being used to equip an overbearing Prussian-style military caste which grew more insolent by the year.

Now the victims of torture were not limited to the Communists but were to be found at every level of society as the brutal SAVAK relished its American equipment, Israeli instructors and Nazi techniques.

And in the last year the shah's savage repressive machine declared open season on the populace, on several occasions murdering more than 500-1,000 protesters in a single demonstration. This was a regime that had clearly entered its death agony, flailing out in every direction, sustained only by its bayonets and tanks and the support of Jimmy "Human Rights" Carter.

The shah had fled! The masses breathed a giant sigh of relief...but it was clear that the dramatic confrontations were far from over. Was the high-living fashionable torture-shah really gone for good? In 1953 he left and was back in a week thanks to the CIA. Would the U.S. and hard-line generals organize a coup?

Most importantly, the artificial unity of the anti-shah opposition must soon come apart. Rather than resolving the situation, the departure of the shah simply takes the lid off the pot. With the fire still on full blast the Iranian pressure cooker threatens to boil over at any moment. The seething opposition runs from "Marxist-Leninist" guerrillas to ultra-reactionary Muslim preachers. A time of reckoning is approaching.

But up until now it has been the Islamic religious hierarchy that has been the dominant political leadership. From exile in France Muslim patriarch



No Asylum for Butcher Shah!

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini announced his imminent return to Iran and issued a stern warning: "I call on Iranian youth to prevent any destruction or disorder. Those who create disturbances create an environment for foreigners to intervene and will be severely punished" (UPI dispatch, January 16).

What has been absent above all is a revolutionary leadership mobilizing the working class. Instead all sectors have bowed to Khomeini. This prepares the way for the possible imposition of an "Islamic Republic" whose rigidly feudalistic reactionary social and political program will give a rude shock to the democratic aspirations of the Iranian masses. A revolutionary leadership is needed which can break the exploited and oppressed from the reactionary leadership of the mullahs. In the coming days the masses' long-suppressed hatred

of the shah and his torturers will explode in a wave of popular retribution. Revolutionary Marxists demand that the shah be subjected to something more than a "brief vacation"—revolutionary proletarian justice.

In this politically fluid situation all eyes are on the army. Demonstrators place red carnations in the barrels of soldiers' guns, hoping to win them over to the anti-shah forces through fraternization. Speculation is rife concerning a pro-shah coup by hard-liners in the general staff, or the seizure of power by generals or junior officers loyal to Khomeini.

Now more than ever must Marxists fight for an independent proletarian axis counterposed to the reactionary social program of the Muslim religious opposition. This is a life or death question for the Iranian proletariat. It

was the economically strategic oil workers who played a decisive role in bringing down the shah, but without a Trotskyist vanguard party a viciously anti-communist and anti-working-class theocratic dictatorship will ride to power on the backs of the Iranian masses.

Despite the mullahs' present popularity, an Islamic Republic, quite likely ruled by a Persian version of Pakistan's General Zia, would be no less reactionary than the shah. In fact, the religious opposition's attitude toward women—a key social question in backward, especially Islamic, societies—is more reactionary than the shah's superficially modernizing regime. The ayatollahs (high Muslim clergy) are also hostile to the shah's limited land reform, which seized mainly lands of the clergy, and have made it clear that they will not cooperate with communists in any way. Thus, while the legions of opportunists calling themselves Marxists were enthusing over the Muslim masses taking to the streets, the international Spartacist tendency was *unique* on the left in giving no support to the religious opposition. Instead we raised the slogan: "Down with the shah! Down with the mullahs!"

The disintegration of the shah's regime, the keystone of the U.S.' anti-Soviet strategy in the region, has produced a vicious backbiting debate in Washington over "who lost Iran." Cold warrior Zbigniew Brzezinski is sounding the alarm against a supposed Soviet offensive in an "arc of crisis" stretching from Ethiopia to India, and is being echoed by the bourgeois media. (*Time* magazine has even revived the stock Cold War cartoon image of the menacing Russian bear for its front cover.) The CIA, now busy dismantling its listening posts on the Soviet-Iranian border, is under attack for incompetence because it gave Carter no warning that the shah faced any trouble last year. Even the nomination of Shahpur Bakhtiar to head the shah's new civilian government came as a complete surprise to the U.S. Embassy. Having clung for too long to the shah and deluded themselves that he was secure on the Peacock Throne, U.S. policy makers are now trying desperately to preserve their influence in Teheran.

Bakhtiar on the Brink

One thing is clear about the coming period: the government headed by the shah's appointee Shahpur Bakhtiar has little hope of retaining the reins of power. It must be remembered that in

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No Asylum for the Bloody Pahlavis!

As the gilded torture-chic court of the doomed Pahlavi dynasty seeks luxurious asylum in the rolling hills surrounding Los Angeles, officials of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) are sweeping the city for Iranian student protesters. The INS manhunt comes in the wake of the vicious January 2 cop assault on some 500 Iranian demonstrators who had surrounded the palatial Beverly Hills estate of Princess Shams Pahlavi, the hated sister of shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi.

Just the previous day the shah's mother along with several of his younger offspring had fled from Teheran to safety at the \$600,000 hillside mansion of Princess Shams, whose notoriety as a sinister drug-runner rivals that of the Vietnamese Madame Nhu. In the ensuing cop riot, protesters were attacked with tear gas, hilly clubs and fire hoses while police cruisers tore into the crowd at top speed, leaving some 40 people injured and seven others arrested.

In normal times, the star-studded bedroom communities of Beverly Hills and Bel Air are policed as though they were private country clubs; motorists venturing off Sunset Boulevard who don't look like they "belong" are likely to be stopped and questioned by the police. So when 2,000 protesters marched into the area and some 500 proceeded toward the shah's sister's estate, the cops went berserk. As the demonstrators marched along the public street, police pelted them with rocks. Brush fires broke out as cops lobbed exploding tear-gas canisters while witnesses reported at least two shotgun blasts.

News photographers have documented in chilling color how sheriff's deputies slammed their squad cars into the crowds, injuring scores and leaving one demonstrator with both legs crushed. Indeed, while it is usually difficult to pinpoint the identity of police assailants, in this case photographers have provided irrefutable evidence: the drivers of Sheriff's Department squad cars numbers 60 and 62 should be jailed for attempted murder!

Following the demonstration, the L.A. city council demanded Iranian students be rounded up and their visas revoked. A day later Carter's "human rights" attorney general, Griffin Bell, pronounced that "all participants in such violence will be deported to the extent which the law permits and requires" (*Los Angeles Times*, 4 January). *This is no hollow threat*—Iranian students have reported that INS officers immediately swarmed down upon their homes, also entering mosques, demanding to see passports and attempting to identify individuals from videotapes taken on January 2. By press time, some 301 Iranians have reportedly been "surveyed" for visa violations and 50 have been arrested!



Cops crush the legs of anti-shah demonstrators beneath their wheels to protect the Beverly Hills mansion of the shah's family.

This chauvinist witchhunt demands an immediate response by the American left. The Spartacist League quickly issued a call for a united demonstration around the demands, "No Deportations—Hands Off the ISA—Drop the Charges!" and "No Asylum for the

Butcher Shah and His Supporters!" With the exception of the Revolutionary Socialist League, the ostensibly socialist organizations in the Los Angeles area refused to join in united action in defense of the victimized ISA supporters. Nevertheless, the demonstration took place January 10, with some 40 people picketing the Federal Building in downtown Los Angeles.

The working people of the U.S. do not welcome the grisly collection of Iranian torturers, gusano bombers and Vietnamese generals who are brought to this country by their CIA mentors when they get in trouble at home. Elementary justice demands that the criminals of the despised Pahlavi dynasty be brought

Alan Thornett Gets a Lesson in Workers Democracy

SAN FRANCISCO—Alan Thornett, big-shot leader of the Workers Socialist League (WSL) of Britain recently received a valuable lesson in workers democracy from the Spartacist League and its supporters here. Whether he learned it is another question altogether.

Late last month Thornett was the featured speaker at a forum sponsored by the WSL's American ally, an outfit of a half-dozen members calling itself the Socialist League Democratic-Centralist (SL-DC). It was a tough night for Thornett and the SL-DC. At first their TV cameras didn't work. Why TV cameras? Because the delusions of grandeur nursed by the WSL/SL-DC include the desire to establish "the first international Trotskyist videotape network on a monthly basis" (SL-DC *Internal Bulletin*, June 1978). But these technical difficulties in their media mania were only the beginning of what was beyond their control that evening.

The real problem for Thornett and his cronies was that at least two thirds of the audience of about 75 were

Alan Thornett: Taught.



John Sturrock/Report

supporters of the Spartacist League, including numerous trade unionists and a good number of union executive board members and shop stewards. They were not about to be humiliated by Thornett's self-aggrandizing account of the world as seen from the Cowley auto plant of British Leyland.

For an hour Alan Thornett talked about Alan Thornett and his world at Cowley. Recounting his odyssey as a militant trade unionist, he barely mentioned his move from the Communist Party to the Healyite SLL/WRP to the WSL, of which he is the major spokesman. Although the audience had come to hear him speak on "A Strategy for the Working Class in Britain," Thornett spent altogether perhaps five minutes on the subject of strategy.

Even then his only "strategy" turned out to be pressuring the reformist parliamentary labor lieutenants of the British capitalists to fight their bourgeois paymasters. According to Thornett, "the only way to fight social democracy is to put them in office." And since the WSL's policy is to vote Labour under any and all circumstances, he should have added a rider: "and

keep them there." Like in Germany in 1918?? The counterrevolutionary implications of this idiot position are obvious.

Before the discussion period began, the meeting's chairman, SL-DC leader Steve Bryant, looked out over the array of experienced class-struggle unionists eager to expose Thornett's myopic opportunism. Sizing up the audience he announced that anyone who wished to speak would get three minutes. Which meant that "certain" speakers would get the promised three minutes, while any SL supporters would have to fight to get even half that much before Bryant cut them off.

So when Jane Margolis, a member of the executive board of Communications Workers of America Local 9410 (San Francisco) took Thornett to task for his failure to struggle for the Transitional Program in his trade-union work, Bryant cut her off after a minute and a half. He did the same to a steward from International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) Local 6.

However, when Howard Keyrol, an executive board member of ILWU Local 10 took the floor, an incensed audience was having none of Bryant's sneaky "half-time for revolutionaries" tactics. When the chair tried to muzzle him as well, the crowd backed Keyrol up. He completed his remarks, denouncing Thornett for failing to address the question of state power and a workers government.

Unable to get away with shaving the speakers' time allotments, Bryant turned over the clock to one of his comrades, who to his credit did an honest job. SL speakers and labor militants continued to score Thornett for turning electoral support for Labour into a principle, for his capitulation to Irish nationalism and his general parochial workerism. The WSL leader tried to counterattack, at first with the oft-repeated slander that the SL "abstains from the class struggle." With about two dozen active trade-unionist supporters of the SL in the audience, this line of defense was not much use.

So Thornett retreated to a bigger lie, attacking the Spartacist League as "racist" and claiming that the SL supports immigration controls by misquoting an

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Class-Struggle Militants Re-Elected in ILWU Local 10

SAN FRANCISCO—The first round of elections of the West Coast International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) Local 10 were concluded this Friday as Larry Wing, once a leader of dissident bureaucrats opposed to the policies of former International chief Harry Bridges, won re-election to the Local presidency. George Kaye, another former Bridges "opponent" was elected secretary-treasurer, succeeding his cohort Herh Mills.

While Wing was re-elected, the results by no means indicate a clear mandate for the class-collaborationist policies he has pursued uninterrupted over the past year. Wing's election last year represented in part a desire for change by the Local 10 ranks, many of them taken in by his previous posture of "opposition" to the then Bridges-led International. But for two years running Wing has won with less than 50 percent of the total vote, reflecting increasing distrust and disgust with the role he has played in administering every major sellout of Jimmy Herman's International.

Facing no serious opposition, Wing suffered the effects of what was clearly a protest vote. In addition to a large vote for John Carr, an unknown, some 242 men abstained from voting for the Local's top officer. In addition, the presence on the ballot of a number of "69 men" (the last group of Longshoremen hired into the Local was in 1969) indicated a desire for change by a section of the membership.

At the same time, the improved showing of class-struggle militants Howard Keylor and Stan Gow, publishers of the opposition newsletter "Longshore Militant," reflects the determination of a significant section of the membership to break with the servile business unionism of the International and Local bureaucrats and take the bosses on in a hard fight to preserve historic union gains and win jobs for all longshoremen. Gow and Keylor were re-elected to a fifth straight term on the Executive Board, polling 291 and 335 votes respectively, or about 20 percent of the total vote.



These militants have stood out from all sections of the leadership in pointing the way forward for West Coast longshoremen. Last summer they opposed ratification of Herman's sellout contract and were alone in calling for a strike, raising demands for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay, abolition of all steady-man categories, union-set manning scales on all operations, full cost-of-living protection, and a right to strike over grievances and in defense of other workers.

Gow and Keylor exposed Herman's Special Equipment Board as nothing but a fraud that will strengthen the steady-man system. They are continuing to fight implementation of this section of the contract, demanding instead skills training for all on a voluntary basis, paid for by the bosses' Pacific Maritime Association (PMA). They opposed (and won the support of nearly a third of the October membership meeting) Local 10 endorsement of Democrat Yvonne Burke for California attorney-general, arguing instead for a break with the capitalist parties and formation of a workers party and a fight for a workers government.

Herman's contract sellout last summer, preventing a decisive showdown with the PMA bosses, has given them

**For Executive Board
ILWU LOCAL 10**

**RE-ELECT
GOW & KEYLOR**

**Stan
Gow**

**Howard
Keylor**

BALLOT
NUMBER
47-B

BALLOT
NUMBER
37-C

Vote for GOW and KEYLOR —

**The only candidates with the
class-struggle program that
can win.**

*Longshore Militant
Program*

1. **Jobs for All—6 Hours' work for 8 hours' pay** No dependence on PGP Manning scales on all operations—skill training for all. 100% automatic COLA. Delay any government wage freeze.
2. **Realize Union Control of Hiring Hall—** restore cuts in boards, dispatch categories and gangs. No one on Special Equipment Board forced to go steady. Abolish all steady man categories.
3. **Protect Older and Disabled Men—No "Buy Out" or forced retirement.** No limits on Dock Preference Board Union-issued job exemptions for temporarily or partially disabled men.
4. **Full Support to 1979 ILWU Warehouse, Sugar and Canadian Longshore Contract Fights—** No handling of scab or diverted cargo. Solidarity action against government/employer strikebreaking. No one crosses picket lines.
5. **Keep the Bosses Government Out of Our Union—** No court suits against the union, officers, or members.
6. **Union Action to Smash Discrimination—** Support busing, the Equal Rights Amendment. For labor/black defense against Klan/Nazi terror.
7. **Stop Officers' Collaboration with PMA.** For a militant, fighting union—Dump the sellouts. Build a class-struggle leadership.
8. **Break completely with the Strikebreaking Democratic and Republican Parties—** Smash the "slave labor" Taft-Hartley Act. For a workers party based on the unions to light for a workers government which will seize all major industry without payment to the capitalist bosses and establish a planned economy.

Election palmcard of Gow and Keylor.

the green light to intensify a series of job-slashing attacks inflicted on the union over the last several years. In spite of a tripling of cargo tonnage since implementation of Bridges' sellout mechanization and modernization (M&M) contract in 1961, the longshore division of the union has suffered a massive loss of jobs and erosion of historic union gains. And in spite of the recent increase of shipping on the West Coast and the projected "boom" of the China trade, the employers remain determined to bolster their profits as part of the strikebreaking Carter administration's anti-union offensive.

For the last three years, Local 10—the traditional center of the union—has borne the brunt of these PMA attacks, while the Wing/Mills leadership has done the job for the shipping bosses. Going into last summer's contract period, a particularly popular demand among S.F. longshoremen was the elimination of all so-called "steady" jobs, returning the Local to its historic practice of dispatching all jobs through the hiring hall on a daily basis. Under pressure from the Local 10 ranks, Wing, Mills & Co. adopted an empty posture of opposition to the continuation of steady categories, all the while refusing to call for a strike and sabotaging Howard Keylor's motion for a strike at a July 23 membership meeting.

The Special Equipment Board (SEB) section of the contract—set up by Herman as a compromise "solution" to quell unrest over the steady-man issue—would in fact double the number of steady men and serve as the central instrument in Local 10 for PMA's "productivity" drive. Older and disabled workers not "suitable" for the bosses' purposes are to be driven off the waterfront.

The SEB provides for an increase in the number of job categories to be filled

by steady men and includes a stipulation that SEB steady men be required to perform all types of skilled work, in many cases combining jobs by operating several different pieces of equipment in a single eight-hour shift. Traditionally, union control of the hiring hall has required the bosses to hire one man from the hall for each piece of equipment to be operated in the course of a shift.

Since contract ratification, Wing, Mills & Co. have been cooperating with the International and PMA in setting up the SEB. At the same time, nearly half of the first group of 60 men selected for training were disqualified by PMA for "medical reasons," while others were arbitrarily eliminated while in training. PMA clearly intends to select younger men—making a joke out of the promotion-by-seniority provision.

Another element in PMA's current drive was unveiled in October when the Local 10 bureaucrats, under pressure from the bosses, sold the membership on the idea of eliminating all "volun-

teers" dispatch categories. In the past, longshoremen were not required to take certain particularly difficult "volunteer" jobs dispatched off their boards—a protection for the older and disabled men. These moves, taken together, will create an impossible situation for these men, forcing them to compete for a declining number of jobs (many of which they are not physically capable of doing), depriving them of pay guarantee benefits if they refuse any job, and forcing them to accept an inadequate cash "buy-out" by PMA in return for elimination of their jobs.

The bosses' drive to create a docile workforce is not limited to Local 10. As reported in the 11 January Local 10 "Bulletin," a superintendent for American President Lines in Seattle threatened a Seattle Local 19 business agent with deregistration (firing from the industry). The move backfired on the shipping bosses when the Local responded by shutting down three APL ships for 48 hours, resulting in withdrawal of the firing threat against the B.A. The Local 10 bureaucrats hypocritically hailed this action, declaring, "Job action is alive and well in Seattle!" At the same time, Wing, Mills & Co. have blocked every proposal by the "Longshore Militant" for job action to repel the current round of PMA attacks.

In sharp contrast to the solid vote for the "Longshore Militant" candidates was the showing of supporters of the *People's World*, West Coast newspaper of the Communist Party (CP). Since the retirement of prominent CP longshoreman Archie Brown, this grouping has been unable to elect a spokesman to any significant union office in Local 10. This time around, CP supporter Billy Proctor was decisively repudiated by the membership in his second bid for election to the Executive Board and the Local's Publicity Committee, polling only 141 votes and 205 votes respectively. Leo Robinson, Proctor's frequent bloc partner, was re-elected to the Executive Board, polling 274 votes, a slight decline from last year.

During the contract period, Proctor, Robinson & Co. continued the long-time Stalinist practice of acting as a "left" cover for the bureaucracy. Leading up to the ratification vote, they preached the line that "voting no doesn't mean a strike" where it was perfectly clear that to make any gains, longshoremen had to back up a "no" vote with effective coastwide strike action.

Dissatisfaction with the defeated leadership cliques was reflected in the spread of votes given to a number of men running for the first time, including

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Stan Gow and Howard Keylor, right, campaigning for re-election to Executive Board.

Iran...

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1953 the shah also took a "vacation" only to return within a week after a CIA-organized coup had toppled his opponent, Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadeq. Today the U.S. imperialists' ability to intervene is much weaker, the Iranian army less cohesive and reliable. But Bakhtiar may still be overthrown by a military coup conducted by hard-line pro-shah generals.

Otherwise Bakhtiar will be replaced by some kind of "Islamic Republic" overseen by Muslim patriarch Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. The first two days of the Bakhtiar government were greeted with a general strike and mass demonstrations called by Khomeini and his allies, the bourgeois politicians of the National Front. Khomeini branded Bakhtiar a "tool of Satan" and called on government employees to boycott his administration. As a result, Bakhtiar's newly appointed ministers found themselves alone in their vast ministries. Khomeini has countered Bakhtiar's formation of a regency council to replace the shah with the announcement of his own "Council of the Islamic Revolution" charged with selecting members of a provisional government for an Islamic Republic, which he says will be formed within a matter of days.

The government has been unable to stem the daily demonstrations which chant "Bakhtiar hi-ekhtiar" (Bakhtiar is a puppet). In the northeastern city of Meshed where, according to opposition sources, 2,000 protesters have been killed by the shah's troops, the army has been effectively driven out of the city and confined to its garrison post by a mass uprising of the city's population. The city and its public services are under the control of the Islamic religious hierarchy.

Bakhtiar had counted on the support of his erstwhile comrades of the National Front and on the less militant wing of the religious opposition, represented by Ayatollah Shariatmadari. Bakhtiar pledged to free political prisoners, disband SAVAK, lift martial law (albeit "gradually"), deny oil to Israel and South Africa and execute corrupt officials—all of which are demands of the opposition. He seemed to have gained its tacit cooperation when striking oil refinery workers began to return to work on January 10.

Bakhtiar proved unable, however, to fulfill his stated intention of filling half of his cabinet posts with National Front members. Front leader Karim Sanjahi, who had at various times over the last year aspired to play the role Bakhtiar is now playing, denounced Bakhtiar and expelled him from the National Front. Sanjahi is following the dictates of Khomeini, recognizing him as a far stronger contender for power. Khomeini's return to Iran, which is expected to occur imminently now that the shah has fled, will doom any further attempts by the government to find support among the anti-shah forces.

The Contest for the Army

Clearly the new prime minister had no chance of appeasing the anti-shah forces as long as the shah remained in the country. But with the shah gone it is not at all clear that the generals loyal to the throne will follow Bakhtiar's orders. Three hard-line generals—former Teheran military commander Gholam Ali Oveissi (who has since left the country with \$17 million), army aviation chief Manochehr Khosrowdad, and air force commander Amir Hossein Rahii, all resigned the day before Bakhtiar assumed office. Khosrowdad openly stated that if the shah goes the army will not obey Bakhtiar.

The possibility of a military revolt against the government was further heightened when Bakhtiar's nominee for war minister, General Feridoun Djam refused to join a government he

saw was obviously doomed. Djam, respected by the officer corps, had also acquired a reputation as a critic of the shah in past years. He had insisted on complete personal control over the armed forces, a condition rejected by both the shah and Bakhtiar.

The shah also fueled coup rumors in an interview with the Paris newspaper *Le Figaro*, in which he expressed doubt that the government could survive if he left the country. He also claimed to have considered re-enacting the events of 1953, but said he had rejected this plan as involving too much bloodshed.

This leaves the U.S. government as Bakhtiar's sole supporter—at least on



Ayatollah Khomeini

the surface. However, this support is extremely unpredictable. Secretary of State Vance's policies are continually contradicted by Brzezinski, who is in constant communication with Ambassador Zahedi. The U.S. dispatched deputy NATO commander General Robert Huyser to Iran as a liaison to the Iranian generals and supposedly counseled them to stand behind Bakhtiar. But the administration's real intentions were questioned by a CBS correspondent's report that the White House feared "leftist radicals would soon dominate a religious government" and that "the Carter Administration currently favors a military takeover in Iran...."

At the very least the U.S. is trying to hedge its bets on Bakhtiar and to keep up its ties to the general staff. U.S. imperialism's attitude toward Khomeini remains hostile. Although Khomeini has stated his willingness to continue to sell oil to the U.S., he has refused to accept the presence of American military bases or personnel on Iranian soil.

For their part Khomeini and Sanjahi have redoubled their appeals to the military hierarchy. Sanjahi made his pitch to the officer corps by vowing, "We in the National Front want to maintain the Army, we need a strong Army, and we don't want to do anything to discourage the Army.... We have never called for desertions or tried to create indiscipline" (London *Guardian*, 13 December). Khomeini stressed in a CBS interview aired January 14 that:

"It is not to say that in the army everyone is for the shah, supporting the shah. A great part of the army also has relation with the nation and will act accordingly. At the moment it is the foreign hand within the army which forces the army to act like that, otherwise they would also be acting according to our national interest... I don't think the army will be loyal to the shah or to wish to follow some traitor."

The example of Pakistan, where a mullah-led Islamic opposition brought down the dictatorship of Ali Bhutto only to bring to power the equally reactionary Muslim fanatic General Zia shows the danger for Iran of a bloc between Muslim reaction and a military strongman. In Pakistan today none of the democratic aspirations of the masses

have been satisfied—instead the army rigorously enforces the mullahs' barbaric Islamic judicial code with all its medieval cruelty and savagery and suppresses the trade unions and student protests.

People's Justice, Not the "Just Rule of Islam"

The Iranian masses have forcefully demonstrated their bitter hatred for the shah's terrorist rule by targeting its most feared instrument—SAVAK. The names, addresses and phone numbers of its agents are being posted on city walls and the houses of SAVAK officers burned and bombed. SAVAK agents have been lynched in Meshed, and in Shiraz the secret police headquarters were sacked and burned to the ground and four SAVAK men beaten to death by a crowd. Suspected agents are now placing ads in the Teheran newspapers protesting their innocence.

However, populist outrage against American hacking of the shah and the Iranian ruling class' luxurious corruption is heavily marked by religious prejudices. It is not only SAVAK buildings which have been burned but also "immoral" movie theaters, bars and restaurants serving liquor, and banks which charge interest on loans in violation of Islamic law. In Shiraz demonstrators attacked the house of a member of the Bahai sect, charging that all Bahais support the shah (in reality Bahais have long been targeted for their heretical deviation from Shi'ite Islam). In Qarehah near Teheran two Afghani workers accused of theft were hanged from lamp posts by zealous Muslims who exceeded the Koranic penalty of amputating a thief's hand!

The universal hatred for the shah's dictatorship has, in the absence of a genuine and broadly based working-class leadership, been given a political ideology and leadership by the reactionary Shi'ite mullahs. But the mullahs' program for the establishment of an Islamic state will do nothing to attack the underlying causes of the oppression and exploitation of the Iranian workers and peasants and does not even represent a democratic alternative to the Pahlavi dictatorship. The mullahs' opposition to the shah dates only from the point at which the shah, in a largely cosmetic "modernization" drive, gave women the vote and launched a token land reform program.

In his writings and speeches, as well as through the actions of his followers, Ayatollah Khomeini, the undisputed leader of the Islamic opposition, has made the policies of his proposed Islamic republic perfectly clear. Under such a reactionary theocratic dictatorship the law of the Koran, in all its medieval barbarity, would become the law of the land. Theft would be punished by amputation, and fornication by stoning.

The legal enslavement of women would be reinforced. The *chador*, the Persian version of the Muslim woman's veil, would be mandatory. The *chador* is more like a straitjacket than a "veil." It covers a woman's body from head to toe and, because it lacks buttons or hooks, must be held closed at all times by gripping it tightly at the neck or holding it clenched in the teeth! But Abdul-Reza Hejazi, a prominent mullah in Teheran, provides a breath of "liberalism": a woman need not wear the *chador*. "She just has to be dressed so that all the ups and downs of her body cannot be discerned" (*Time*, 25 December).

The rights of minority religions will also come under attack in Khomeini's Islamic state. Although he protests that tolerance will be greater than under the shah, his published lectures are filled with attacks on Jews, as well as calls for banning women from the workplace and for absolute religious rule. When challenged on this by CBS interviewers, Khomeini simply asserted that such statements could not be found in his books, but did not deny the authenticity of the published lectures attributed to him!

Khomeini's appetite to suppress the left has been made clear time and again. He has promised that "After the Shah leaves, the press will be free except for those articles which would be harmful to the nation" (*New York Times*, 11 January). During his CBS "Face the Nation" interview, Khomeini indicated that under Islamic rule parties "working for the domination of foreign powers" would be banned. Of course it is not only the pro-Moscow Stalinists, but all those who put the class struggle above "national unity" who would be threatened with imprisonment or execution under such a regime.

For Proletarian Revolution in Iran!

The plebeian masses' concern for swift and sure justice against the shah's henchmen provides a wedge with which communist revolutionaries can split them from their religious leaders. The mullahs and the National Front have denounced the attacks on SAVAK agents and offices. Ayatollah Taleghani, linked to the Front, proposed taking the trial of suspected SAVAK agents out of the hands of the people by bringing them before "Islamic tribunals." Khomeini himself issued a message condemning the masses' actions and warned against "trying to create a panic which might justify a military coup" (*Washington Post*, 12 January).

Thus the mullahs correctly see the popular mobilizations against SAVAK as counterposed to building up their jurisdiction and keeping up good relations with the officer corps. People's tribunals to punish the SAVAK torturers could be the beginning of revolutionary dual power, directed against both the religious hierarchy and officer corps. No interference, by the mullahs or soldiers, in popular vengeance against SAVAK criminals!

The fight for such democratic measures as the abolition of SAVAK, the ending of martial law and the establishment of a sovereign, secular constituent assembly in Iran must be combined with a strategy for workers revolution. The revolutionary proletariat must establish itself as the tribune of all the oppressed, for only when it takes power can such democratic goals as the right of self-determination for Iran's national minorities, land to the tiller, full equality for women and national emancipation be achieved.

The international Spartacist tendency has stood alone on the left in opposing both the shah's savage dictatorship and the right-wing religious opposition of the Islamic clergy. That our position is the genuine communist one has lately been recognized from an unexpected source. In a recent BBC interview one of Khomeini's aides, Ibrahim Yazdi, stated that the communists call for: "Down with the mullahs! Down with the shah!" But in fact the main so-called "communist" tendencies—the pro-Moscow Tudeh, Maoists and Pabloite "Trotskyists"—are all tailing the Islamic opposition. With the keen class instinct that reactionaries sometimes possess, Khomeini's spokesman understands that real communism does mean "Down with the mullahs" as well as the shah. A central task of an Iranian Trotskyist vanguard party, future section of a reformed Fourth International, is to combat all forms of bourgeois domination over the workers and peasants, not least Islamic fundamentalism ■

A Spartacist League Forum

**For Workers Revolution in Iran!
Down with the Shah!
Down with the Mullahs!**

Saturday, January 20, 1979, at 7:30 p.m., in Altschul Hall, Lehman Auditorium, Barnard College (116th and Broadway) \$1 donation

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For more information call: 212-925-5665

NEW YORK CITY

Don't Deport Marroquín!

"Your application for political asylum is...denied," wrote the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in a December 21 letter to Héctor Marroquín Manríquez. Fighting to remain in the U.S., Marroquín, a member of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), faces deportation hearings in Texas set for January 17. If asylum is denied, Marroquín will be returned to his native Mexico where he has been sought on a 1974 frame-up murder charge. The left and labor movement must protest these deportation proceedings and demand that Marroquín be granted political asylum. Deportation could mean imprisonment, torture or even death by "disappearance"—a too-common fate of left-wing militants in Mexico.

In September 1978 the Mexican government decreed an amnesty for certain political prisoners and exiles, among whom was listed Héctor Marroquín. The State Department has used this "Amnesty Law" to alibi the López Portillo government, which the U.S. is currently flattering, in hopes of getting Mexican approval for an INS plan to erect a barbed-wire "Cactus Curtain" along the border in order to cut down on illegal



Héctor Marroquín

immigration. The U.S. now claims that "fair public trials" in Mexico are the "norm" and echos the official lie that there are "no political prisoners" in Mexican jails.

However, a recent report issued by the Commission of Inquiry to Mexico (jointly sponsored by the International League for Human Rights, the Fédération Internationale des Droits de l'Homme and PAX ROMANA) has exposed some of the brutal truth behind the lying decrees and "human rights" rhetoric. The report states

that Mexico is second only to Argentina in the number of "disappeared" persons, many of whom were released by the amnesty and some of whom are known to have been subsequently killed. Proof was also provided to show that prisoners are held without trial or sentencing, tortured, forced to sign blank or prepared confessions. The existence of the *Brigada Blanca* (White Brigade), a clandestine terror police group, is also confirmed by this report.

Marroquín's defense is being conducted by the SWP-sponsored United States Committee on Latin American Political Prisoners (USLAP). A wide spectrum of left, labor and civil liberties groups has joined in protesting the U.S. government's refusal to grant asylum to this Mexican socialist militant. Deportation would be a threat to Marroquín's life, an attack on the left and a whitewash of the brutal policies of the Mexican government. Three other student activists framed up on the same charges as Marroquín have already tasted Mexican "justice": two were gunned down in the streets of Monterrey by right-wing death

squads while the other was arrested and "disappeared." Marroquín must not share their fate!

Political Asylum now for Héctor Marroquín! Free all left-wing prisoners in Mexico!

Leonel Castillo, Director
Immigration and Naturalization
Service
Washington, D.C. 20536

We protest your refusal to grant asylum for Héctor Marroquín. For the U.S. government "human rights" means open borders for mass murderers like the shah, counterrevolutionary Cuban terrorists, and South Vietnamese generals. But the borders are closed to the victims of right-wing repression.

Your continued refusal to grant him asylum threatens Héctor Marroquín with the common fate of too many other left-wing militants in Mexico—imprisonment, torture or death by "disappearance." Héctor Marroquín must not be deported!

Partisan Defense Committee
Box 99 Canal Street Station
New York, N.Y. 10013

Cambodia...

(continued from page 12)

plead its cause before the United Nations. But hardly were the words out of his mouth than the flamboyant, unstable "Comrade" Prince began denouncing violations of "human rights" in Democratic Kampuchea. Asked about his long-standing relationship with Peking, he replied:

"Mao Tse-tung used to tell me that I was an adorable prince and that I should convert to Communism. But for me, Communism is like mathematics, physics and chemistry—I don't understand a thing about it."

Then, remembering why he had been released, the prince quickly added that his three-year Phnom Penh house arrest had come complete with air-conditioner and swimming pool, and that

"The people were not unhappy. They smiled. On their lips were songs, revolutionary songs. I prefer love songs. I was a crooner and composed love songs, but revolutionary songs are not had."

—New York Times, 9 January

With the blasé fatalism of irrelevance, Sihanouk has not lost a sense of realism. "If the Cambodians feel themselves happier under the Vietnamese than with Pol Pot," he said, "even the most massive Chinese aid will not bring Pol Pot back." Some of his remarks may have sounded risqué to his hosts, but they did not worry. They keep him in reserve precisely in order to present a favorable image to the West when necessary. No doubt Sihanouk's Peking antics were also an attempt on China's part to dissociate itself from the Pol Pot regime.

From China, Sihanouk went on to New York and a United Nations debate on the Cambodian situation. Here he titillated the slick representatives of the mass-murdering imperialist regimes by getting into a verbal slugging match with the Cuban delegate, Dr. Raúl Roa. To Roa's charges that he was an "opera prince," Sihanouk retorted that Fidel Castro was an "opera premier, always dressed in that silly military uniform." But within a few days, the entertainment value of such sparring had worn off. At press time, it was reported that the prince had checked into a hospital suffering from acute exhaustion, thus depriving his fan club of any more thrills. No doubt "Sandeck" Sihanouk will soon be off to a lengthy recuperation

at his Mediterranean villa near Nice, while the UN, for its part, is not expected to do anything in particular about Cambodia.

SWP Supports Vietnamese Invasion

Strangely enough, the ex-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has come out in support of the Vietnamese invasion, on the grounds that Pol Pot's Cambodia represented simply a "tyranny" and for Hanoi the invasion represented "the military defense of the

state until the means of production have been nationalized (thereby denying that Russia was a dictatorship of the proletariat until late 1918, even though the Bolsheviks were in power). More importantly, its claim that South Vietnam was still capitalist after the victory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam/National Liberation Front (DRV/NLF) in 1975 is part and parcel of the SWP's classless policy during the Vietnam war. By denying there was a civil war going on at all and claiming that the only question was self-determination, the SWP justified its call



Women soldiers of FUNSK celebrate after taking Phnom Penh.

workers state this parasitic caste feeds on." The 19 January *Militant* article by Fred Feldman, "Behind the Fall of Pol Pot," at one point refers to Democratic Kampuchea vaguely as an "agrarian regime," while elsewhere the article characterizes it as "bizarre authoritarianism based on the labor of a militarized peasantry." But while the SWP apparently can't figure out just what the class nature of Pol Pot's Kampuchea was, it has concluded that there is a class difference between the Cambodian and Vietnamese Stalinist regimes and is now portraying the invasion as a "defensive" expansion of the "bureaucratized" Vietnamese workers state.

According to the SWP's clock South Vietnam itself only just became a workers state (or region?)—it was already part of the "Socialist Republic of Vietnam") last year, when private business was nationalized. This curious position derives partially from the SWP's theoretical quirk whereby it claims that nothing can be a workers

only for "U.S. Troops Out," while refusing to take sides in the vast social revolution raging throughout Indochina.

For years the Vietnamese and Cambodian Stalinists sought to make a coalition government with sections of the bourgeoisie. But when the Vietnamese army finally drove the puppets of U.S. imperialism out of Indochina, the Stalinists subsequently held power alone, not in alliance with any bourgeois force. To defend their rule they would be forced to expropriate the capitalist class; in Saigon, it simply took them three years to get around to it. But while in reference to Vietnam the SWP's position is merely a curiosity, when applied to Cambodia it takes on bizarre implications. Here, the Khmer Rouge immediately collectivized everything in sight. The expropriation of all property-owning classes was so extreme that even currency was abolished. This forced the SWP into the ridiculous position of arguing that a capitalist economy

(unless it wants to argue that Pol Pot took Cambodia back to feudalism) can exist without money, and while being ruled by a Stalinist party!

If there is any serious content to the SWP's murky characterization of Cambodia, it would be to liken it to something on the order of a Mozambique run amok, with its collectivized villages and its "Comrade President" bombastically proclaiming the "dictatorship of the proletariat." But this simply emphasizes what is different in the two cases. In Cambodia both Pol Pot and his successors in the Vietnamese-sponsored FUNSK have been trained for years in the Stalinist movement. Secondly, they did not merely expel a foreign colonial power, but drove out their own domestic bourgeoisie. And while the African petty-bourgeois nationalists use their state power to foster a new exploiting class and in the process to line their own pockets, when the Khmer Rouge took power it could do nothing else but abolish private enterprise as a threat to its rule.

For a Soviet Federation of Indochina

After Pol Pot had been routed, Hanoi announced that the three countries of Indochina—Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia—could henceforth build a "common destiny" (*Le Monde*, 10 January). And on Phnom Penh radio FUNSK communiqués, after warning Peking against foreign intervention in Cambodia's affairs (!) and attacking U.S./Chinese "hegemonism and expansionism," went on to promise the restoration of the traditional "solidarity and friendship" between the peoples of Vietnam and Cambodia! In the mouths of the Hanoi bureaucrats and their protégés in the FUNSK, such statements have a cynical quality.

A genuine soviet federation of Indochina, in which Vietnam would necessarily play a leading role, would be a considerable advance. But enduring solidarity between the Khmer and Vietnamese peoples cannot be achieved on the bayonets of the occupying Vietnamese army or with a puppet government installed in Phnom Penh. It can be established only through the ousting of the Stalinist parasitic caste in Hanoi and Phnom Penh. For proletarian political revolution in Vietnam and Cambodia, led by a Trotskyist party of Indochina! ■

A little bit less than two decades after the Bolsheviks seized power in Petrograd, Joseph Stalin issued a new constitution of the USSR proclaiming that classes had been abolished among the Soviet people and the revolution entered the stage of socialism. This bombastic claim was helied by the overwhelming poverty of the collective farms, the huge military expenditures made necessary by capitalist encirclement, the tremendous disparity between the living standards of the working people and the new elite of the "Soviet" bureaucracy. Yet with its tremendous resources, geographical isolation and a worldwide propaganda apparatus at disposal, the Kremlin rulers were able to convince millions of the Stalinist myth of "socialism in one country."

But 20 years after the Cuban Revolution no one would believe that "socialism on one island" could exist in the middle of that American lake called the Caribbean, with Guantánamo Naval Base at its back door and the nest of gusano hommers and assassins in Miami staring at it across a mere 90 miles of the Florida Strait. The very fact that Fidel and Raúl Castro had to make the U.S.-imposed economic, political and military blockade the theme of their anniversary speeches is proof enough. Still living under siege conditions, perhaps more than any other of the countries which have overthrown capitalist rule since World War II, the fate of Cuba is inseparably bound up with the question of international revolution.

Even though the Cuban leaders no longer talk of continental guerrilla war in Latin America, the "Cuban question" is still fought out on battlefields as far away as Angola and Ethiopia. But things have changed somewhat, as the guerrillas in olive drab are no longer talking of creating "two, three, many Vietnams" and are now supporting capitalist governments. Moreover, Havana's foreign policy has for some years worked closely in tandem with the détente policies of the Soviet bureaucracy. And the regimes that Castro supports have brutally suppressed leftist students and wars of national liberation by oppressed peoples. Even though neanderthal elements in the Pentagon still talk of Cuban forces as "international bandits" for their role in Angola, many leftists have begun to ask serious questions about the Castro regime.

If Cuban policy is an example of proletarian internationalism, then why does it aid Mengistu's Derg in Ethiopia, which slaughters the Guevarist student leftists of the EPRP and rains bombs on the Eritrean independence fighters who only a few years ago received military aid from Havana? The Cuban role (with essential Soviet back-up) in beating back the South Africa/CIA imperialist invasion in Angola in 1975-76 was decisive, but why does Havana now aid



No cult of the personality in Cuba?

Black Star



The course of the Cuban Revolution: Posters of Brezhnev

in building up Neto's secret police, who repress popular discontent in the Luanda slums? Why does Castro hobnob with military dictators like Torrijos in Panama, who is beholden to the New York banks and Jimmy Carter's "Human Rights" campaign?

And more. If in 1972 Castro praised Allende's "peaceful road" in Chile, which then led to a bloodbath of disastrous scope, did this represent a new policy for Cuba? What about the praise for the Peruvian junta as "anti-imperialist"—the same junta which murdered striking miners and peasants "invading" their ancestral lands? If this represented a turn, then when did it occur and why? But then there was Castro's support to the Goulart government in Brazil, to Araújo in Ecuador, Jagan in Guyana, etc. If there is no fundamental shift in Cuban policies, then what does that imply about the nature of the Castro regime?

These questions are hardly abstract—they have tormented a whole generation of Latin American youth, many of whom went into the hills in the early and mid-1960's, only to straggle back in defeat and confusion. Some of those who have since become the most critical of Castro's Cuba are precisely those who themselves experienced the bankruptcy of Guevara's guerrilla war strategy, watching their own comrades die in hopelessly unequal battle, and then stood by helplessly as the supplies from Havana dried up. This was the case of Venezuelan FALN leader Douglas Bravo, who in 1970 denounced Castro's submission to Soviet détente policies. The significance of this reexamination of Cuba is tremendous, for in Latin America the Castroite generation is the equivalent of the New Left in the United States or the generation of '68 in France.

The course of Cuban foreign policy has been treated extensively in two previous articles, "Castro's Search for Hemispheric Détente" (WV No. 141, 21

January 1977) and "Castro Exports Stalinist Betrayal" (WV No. 219, 17 November 1978). However, the questions raised by this investigation go straight to the fundamental issue of the class character of the Castro regime. This was a subject of great debate in the Trotskyist movement in the early 1960's, for the Cuban Revolution posed problems which had not previously been faced head-on by Marxists. The question of questions was whether petty-bourgeois-led, peasant-based guerrilla movements could replace the Leninist party of the working class as a revolutionary vanguard.

In the flush of enthusiasm for Castroism that swept through the left, most of those groups laying claim to the Trotskyist heritage and program put in with the Cuban regime. True, the revolution wasn't led by a Leninist party, they admitted, but it is the first revolution since October which has "bypassed the obstacle of Stalinism." Perhaps there were no Soviets, but didn't Castro mix with the people, hold mass rallies to mobilize the workers for revolutionary struggle? It was on the basis of political capitulation to Castroism that the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec) was formed in 1963. And on this basis also that their Latin American activities, notably the USec's guerrilla war orientation, were directed until the mid-1970's.

There were other responses to the theoretical/programmatic challenge posed by the Cuban Revolution: some closed their eyes and denied that capitalism had been overthrown; others sought to hide behind an amorphous conception of workers and peasants governments that were neither capitalist nor proletarian in their class character. But the only response which upheld the fundamental principles of the Trotskyist movement while giving a Marxist explanation of the development of the

Castroite movement was that put forward by the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the United States. The RT and its successor, the international Spartacist tendency, have been *unique* among ostensible Trotskyists in consistently maintaining that Cuba had become a bureaucratically *deformed workers state* in the fall-winter of 1960, and that further progress toward socialism required a *political revolution* to establish soviet organs of workers democracy.

The various theories of the Cuban Revolution have now been submitted to the test of time. Many of those who during the "heroic" period of Castro/Guevarist guerrillaism held that Cuba was a healthy workers state with a revolutionary leadership have become "sadder and wiser"...and often bitter. In renouncing their previous guerrillaist positions, the centrist majority of the USec led by Ernest Mandel reached the conclusion that Cuba is today a "bureaucratized workers state," although they do not mention political revolution. The reformist minority of the USec led by the SWP continues to hold that the Cuban regime has not qualitatively degenerated. Still others, formerly associated with the SWP-led faction, have recently advocated a deformed workers state characterization of Cuba, but as a move to the *right*, in order to have a consistently Stalinophobic position.

The Spartacist program is the only one that has proved to be consistently correct in its analysis of the Cuban regime and revolutionary in its conclusions over the course of the past two decades. The core of this position is set forward in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 8, "Cuba and Marxist Theory." However, as various tendencies seek to grapple with the contradictions of their policies it is worthwhile contrasting their analyses with the realities of the Cuban regime as it has subsequently developed.



Joseph Hansen

Militant

Spartacist Spectre Haunts USec Debate on Castroism

FOR WORKERS POLITICAL REVOLUTION IN CUBA!



No cult of the personality in Cuba?

Black Star



The course of the Cuban Revolution: Posters of Brezhnev and Che in the Plaza de la Revolución.

Prensa Latina

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This is the purpose of the present article in two parts, the first dealing with the SWP and the second dealing with those groups—which have adopted a critical posture toward Castroism.

The conclusion of both sections is that it is impossible to grasp the nature of the Cuban Revolution without confronting the Spartacist analysis. And this analysis/program in turn provides a key for unlocking many of the key theoretical problems posed by the appearance of a series of deformed workers states in Europe and Asia following World War II.

"Trotskyist" Fidelistas

Among those who claim to stand in the tradition of Trotskyism, the most enthusiastic supporters of the Castroite regime in Cuba are unquestionably the leaders of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party. Soon after the Rebel Army marched into Havana the SWP jumped with all fours on the bandwagon. As the Cuban Revolution moved to the left under the blows of American imperialism the *Militant* began effusively praising "Fidel" as a revolutionary of epic stature. By 1961-62 the party was totally immersed in its defense (not only military but also political) of the Castro regime: the Fair Play for Cuba Committee was far and away the major SWP activity; every issue of the paper had an article on Cuba (sometimes two or three); translations of speeches by Castro and "Che" Guevara were distributed by the thousands.

The SWP leaders made no bones about what they were doing. When a minority in the party objected to the blatant political support being offered to Castroism, Joseph Hansen summarized the official position as being "to accept the Cuban revolution as it is, plunge in fully and completely, attempt to form relations with the revolutionaries and cement those relations if possible." Against attacks from old-line Cuban Stalinists he replied that "The

mainstream of world Trotskyism...could with some justification even be called 'Fidelista.'" Not only that, these "Trotskyist Fidelistas" believed their attentions were being returned. The founding document of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec) stated dramatically:

"As I.F. Stone, the acute American radical journalist observed after a trip to Cuba, the revolutionists there are 'unconscious' Trotskyists. With the coming of full consciousness among these and related currents, Trotskyism will become a powerful current."
—"Dynamics of World Revolution Today" (1963)

After years spent crossing the desert,



Che Guevara: The USec's archetypal romantic "unconscious" Trotskyist. "In power he was a Stalinist persecutor of the conscious Trotskyists."

latching onto Castroism would finally put them on the road to power.

However, there was a price to pay. For the SWP, the Cuban Revolution marked the turning point at which it abandoned the Trotskyist program and commenced a rapid slide into reformism. As usual in such cases, opportunist appetite preceded full-blown theoretical revision. But as Hansen and the central SWP leadership steered onto this rightist course they faced the difficult problem of coming up with a justification for Castroism using their accustomed Marxist terminology. In the process they had to turn the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution on its head and do considerable violence to the history of the Cuban Revolution besides.

Many of the SWP's distortions and anti-Marxist apologies for Castro have recently been collected in a volume of essays and documents by Hansen, entitled *Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution* (1978). These focus on the key question of revolutionary leadership. Where was the Leninist vanguard party which Trotskyists hold is necessary to lead the socialist revolution? Fidel Castro's July 26th Movement was not even part of the workers movement, and Castro himself had been a parliamentary candidate on the slate of the bourgeois Ortodoxo Party in 1952. His program from the time of the attack on the Moncada barracks up through the early months of the Revolutionary Government included nothing more radical than return to the 1940 constitution. Did this mean that petty-bourgeois populists could replace the communist vanguard?

Well, Castro did successfully lead a revolution, and that was enough to convince the SWP. *Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution* is chock full of paeans to the "Cuban revolutionary leadership." Even before the decisive nationalizations of October 1960, Joseph Hansen was effusively praising the "Castro team" and declaring that they would overthrow capitalism:

"To finally break the hypnosis of Stalinism, it became necessary to crawl on all fours through the jungles of the Sierra Maestra.
"Men and women capable of that, will prove capable, we think, of transcending the bourgeois limits set at the beginning of the Cuban revolution."
—"Ideology of the Cuban Revolution" (1960)

And in his first document, "The Character of the New Cuban Government," written in July 1960, Hansen termed the Castro regime a "workers' and farmers' government of the kind defined in our Transitional Program as 'a government independent of the bourgeoisie'." Elsewhere in the volume, the SWP's

leading theorist admits to using the term in a very different sense from that of the Communist International: "...they also called the dictatorship of the proletariat a workers' and farmers' government," he notes. Moreover, "The Communist delegates in 1922 could not visualize such a change without the helpful presence of a genuine revolutionary socialist party such as the Russian workers had in the Bolsheviks. A key question requiring our attention, therefore, is the absence of this factor in Cuba" ("Theory of the Cuban Revolution"). Thus Hansen had already concluded, based on the Cuban experience, that it was no longer necessary to have a Leninist party to lead the socialist revolution.

On what did the SWP leadership base its confidence that the "revolutionary process" would give birth to a workers state? On the Castro regime's "tendency to respond to popular pressures for action against the bourgeoisie and their agents, and its capacity...to undertake measures against bourgeois political power and against bourgeois property relations." And what gave it this tendency and capacity? Why the "dynamic rather than static character of the Castro leadership," of course. Poor Bolsheviks! They thought it was necessary to build a communist party, steeled in combat for the Leninist program; and to form soviets, as revolutionary organs of workers democracy. Unnecessary, says Hansen. All they would have had to do was bring in the populist Narodniki on the basis of a peasant uprising and the problem would be solved.

But this idyllic picture completely distorts the actual record of the early years of Castro's rule. While the Rebel Army had destroyed Batista's private police and praetorian guard army, this did not impart a "socialist dynamic" to the Cuban Revolution. And, in fact, the first Revolutionary Government headed by the judge Urrutia and the lawyer Miró Cardona was simply pledged to clean government and social justice. It would be too simplistic to argue, as did some liberal circles in the 1960's, that Cuba "went Communist" solely due to U.S. hostility and the economic blockade. However, it is a fact that during his first six months in power, Castro carefully avoided any move which would necessarily have produced a split with Cuban liberals or with Washington.

The first measures of the Urrutia-Miró Cardona cabinet were to outlaw gambling, suppress prostitution and seize the holdings of Batista and his henchmen: nothing out of the ordinary for a bourgeois reform government dedicated to cleaning up the "bordello of the Americas." In March Castro cut rents by 50 percent for the poor and lower middle class; although it sent shudders through the landlords, this measure had been part of the Ortodoxo program since the late 1940's. Even Castro's May 17 land reform corresponded to this political framework. In line with the 1940 constitution, the law called for a maximum landholding of 1,000 acres (while allowing the most efficient plantations and ranches more than triple that amount). These limits far exceeded those in almost any of the bourgeois land reforms of the 20th century.

At this point, nothing the government had done went beyond measures advocated by various middle-class populists in the short-lived cabinet of Grau San Martín following the fall of the Machado dictatorship in 1933. Grau, however, had been overthrown a few months later by Sergeant Fulgencio Batista with the connivance of U.S. ambassador Sumner Wells. Two decades later in Guatemala, President Jacobo Arbenz suffered the same fate at the hands of the CIA. Castro and Guevara (who had personally experienced the Guatemalan coup of 1954) were not about to let this happen to them without a fight.

There followed a process of blow and

Cuba...

(continued from page 7)

counterblow in which the Cuban leaders responded to each imperialist attack with increasingly radical measures. In the cabinet crisis of June 1959 Castro booted out opponents of the agrarian reform within the July 26th Movement. A month later President Urrutia was ousted for joining in the anti-Communist uproar sparked by defecting air force commander Diaz Lanz. This pattern was repeated throughout 1960. When Eisenhower asked Congress in January for authorization to cut the Cuban sugar quota, a few days later Castro signed an agreement with Soviet deputy prime minister Mikoyan for the USSR to purchase one million tons of sugar yearly from Cuba. When in June imperialist-owned oil refineries refused to handle Russian crude, they were "intervened" by Cuban authorities. Eisenhower thereupon eliminated the sugar quota, and Castro responded on August 6 by nationalizing U.S.-owned properties in Cuba: 36 sugar mills, three oil companies, the power company and the telephone company.

The process of retaliation by nationalization reached its crescendo in the fall of that year. Faced with the escalating imperialist offensive, the Cuban government struck a decisive blow against the economic base of domestic reaction; on October 13 it nationalized all banks and 382 businesses, amounting to 80 percent of the country's industry. When the U.S. slapped an embargo on trade with Cuba, Havana responded by expropriating all remaining American properties in the country. To complete the cycle, it was on 16 April 1961 that Castro baptized the Cuban Revolution as "socialist," during his speech mobilizing the working people to fight against the U.S.-sponsored invasion at Playa Giron (Bay of Pigs).

Was this merely the unfolding of a dynamic inherent in the Cuban Revolution from the beginning? Joseph Hansen says yes, discerning a socialist tendency and capacity of the Castro regime and labeling it a workers and peasants government. And capitalism was overthrown in Cuba, so why argue with success? But this whole objectivist



Raul Castro: head of the armed forces.

schema leaves out several radically different possible outcomes. The Castro brothers and Guevara might have been defeated by the right wing of the July 26th Movement (regional army commander Hubert Matos, trade-union chief David Salvador), for example. Or there might have been a stand-off between the left and right wings, with Castro acting as the supreme arbiter (as he did during the early months). This situation could have led to a successful counterrevolutionary coup or invasion.

On the other hand, there were conciliationist elements in the U.S. ruling class (e.g., Ambassador Bonsal)

who under different circumstances might have held the upper hand. In order to keep Cuba in a neocolonial position (which it could do easily enough through control of the sugar quota), Washington could have accepted the agrarian reform and even subsidized some of the nationalizations. The latter option was precisely the course taken by de Gaulle in Algeria, through the 1962 Evian Accords. Interestingly, the SWP and the U.Sec also called the Ben Bella government in Algeria (1962-65) a workers and peasants government. When challenged later to explain why it was so easily overthrown by Boumedienne's palace coup, Hansen replied lamely, "Ben Bella was no Fidel Castro, Houari Boumedienne no Che Guevara" ("The Algerian Revolution and the Character of the Ben Bella Regime," in SWP Education for Socialists bulletin, *The Workers and Farmers Government*).

In other words, "You win a few and you lose a few." In contrast to this passive guesswork, those in the SWP who rejected the capitulation to Castroism by the party leadership upheld the original Bolshevik program of a workers and peasants government based on soviets led by a vanguard Leninist party. The Revolutionary Tendency (RT), the opposition which was later expelled from the SWP and subsequently became the Spartacist League/U.S., ridiculed Hansen's "queer animal—a 'workers' and farmers' government' in which there are no workers or farmers and no representatives of independent workers' or farmers' parties! Surely neither the Fourth Congress of the CI nor the Transitional Program envisaged such a phenomenon" ("The Cuban Revolution and Marxist Theory," *Marxist Bulletin* No. 8).

SWP Apologizes for Stalinist Repression in Cuba

While posing as the "best builders" of Castroism, the SWP does not fail to make a few "comradely criticisms." In a *Militant* interview (22 December), Hansen claims that from the beginning they had argued for the "development of structured workers democracy" in Cuba. Actually, during the early 1960's the SWP leadership hardly ever mentioned the subject of workers democracy in Cuba publicly, and then only as helpful hints to Castro. Instead of a Trotskyist critique of the untrammelled one-man rule, Hansen & Co. tried to pass it off as democratic, even going so far as to excuse Stalinist repression against Cuban Trotskyists.

In the "Draft Theses on the Cuban Revolution" (December 1960), where the SWP majority first declared that Cuba was a workers state, it used the following characterization of the Castro regime:

"10. When the capitalist holdings in the key sectors of Cuban economy were taken over by the government, Cuba entered the transitional phase of a workers' state, although one lacking as yet the forms of democratic proletarian rule."

Lest anyone take this as a criticism, the theses immediately add that although there are no workers, soldiers and peasants councils, "as it [the Cuban government] has moved in a socialist direction it has likewise proved itself to be democratic in tendency." And to underline the SWP's political confidence in the Havana rulers:

"13. If the Cuban revolution were permitted to develop freely its democratic tendency would undoubtedly lead to the early creation of proletarian democratic forms adapted to Cuba's own needs."

Well, it's been 18 years now, comrade Hansen, and the Cuban working people are still waiting.

Repeatedly in the early years of the Castro regime SWP leaders lauded it as revolutionary, "democratic and socialist in tendency," only occasionally mentioning the minor blemish that workers democracy had not yet been "formalized." Surely this was just a matter of

loose ends—an oversight, perhaps—which could be tied up later. (They neglected to mention how you could have democracy that was not formalized.) Not only did Hansen and his associates view Cuba as "an uncorrupted workers regime," they publicly polemicized against those Trotskyists who termed it a bureaucratically deformed workers state.

The Summer 1961 issue of *International Socialist Review* printed an article on the Cuban Revolution by the Chilean Partido Obrero Revolucionario (POR), which argued:

"In Cuba on the downfall of Batista, a workers government based on soviets—as in the Russia of 1917—was not inaugurated; instead a different process took place in which the capitalist state was liquidated without the establishment of workers organs of power or workers councils to administer the

leaders, with their propensity to abuse positions of trust, have been making undue headway."

—*Militant*, 7/14 August 1961

This was no isolated incident but a consistent pattern by Hansen over the years. When Guevara later said in an interview that smashing the printing plates was "an error," our "Trotskyist" theoretician saw this as "fresh confirmation of our opinion that the top leaders of the Cuban Revolution are democratic in outlook..." He considered it unworthy of comment that Guevara immediately added:

"However, we consider the Trotskyist party to be acting against the revolution. For example, they were taking the line that the revolutionary government is petty bourgeois, and were calling on the proletariat to exert pressure on the government, and even to carry out another revolution in which the prole-



January 1, 1959: Liberated from Batista's jails, and armed.

country's economy....

"In view of these considerations, we believe that Cuba is a deformed workers state. A state that was born with deformations, fundamentally because of the absence of a revolutionary Marxist party."

The SWP tops scolded their Chilean comrades for such a gloomy outlook: "...we think that the use of 'deformed' to indicate the kind of workers state is not a happy choice." The *ISR* editors even pointedly refuse to call for soviets: "We are not inclined to specify the exact form which we think proletarian democracy should take in Cuba." While it is true that scattered references to the "lack (as yet)" of "forms of proletarian democracy" under Castro may be found in Hansen's recent book, it should be pointed out that most of his texts from the early 1960's were internal to the SWP. Externally the party made almost no criticisms of "Fidel": in 64 articles on Cuba published in the *Militant* during 1961, only one even mentions the question of workers democracy!

Even worse than remaining silent on this crucial question—above all for those who claim to be Trotskyists—the SWP leaders were forced by the logic of their positions to cover up and even make excuses for the most vicious Stalinist repression directed against Cuban Trotskyists. In late May 1961 the Havana government seized the newspaper *Voz Proletaria*, published by the Cuban POR (which was associated with the Latin American Bureau of J. Posadas), as well as destroying the type for an edition of Trotsky's book *The Permanent Revolution* and taking over the small print shop for allegedly publishing "counterrevolutionary propaganda." The response of the SWP was a "Balance Sheet" in which it gives the regime a clean bill of health ("The main tendency of the Castro leadership is democratic") and tells its followers to take it all in stride:

"We think that defenders of the Cuban revolution could make no graver error than to lose their sense of proportion and give up the revolution as lost because the Cuban Communist Party

ariat would come to power. This was prejudicing the discipline necessary at this time....

"You cannot be for the revolution and against the Cuban Communist Party [that is, the PSP]."

—*Militant*, 9 April 1962

Rather than protesting this outrageous accusation of counterrevolutionary activity and peremptory ban on criticism of the PSP, instead of demanding that the Trotskyist press be allowed to publish freely, Hansen distances himself from the POR ("In general, we have the impression that the Cuban Trotskyists have been overly critical") and opines:

"...the fact that such opinions can be freely expressed testifies to the health of the Cuban Revolution and to the promise it holds for the expansion of workers democracy."

The incident and Guevara's "self-criticism" were certainly eloquent testimony, though hardly to the expansion of workers democracy. *Voz Proletaria* could only come out in mimeographed form, since its printer had been "intervened," and POR salesmen were regularly detained for distributing their newspaper. This finally resulted in the arrest of three leaders of the Cuban Trotskyists in November 1963 and their imprisonment for 17 months. The SWP did not say one word in their defense during this time, not even mentioning the case until several months after their release.

The Spartacist tendency was the first group outside of the Posadistas themselves to defend the Cuban Trotskyists and bring their case to world attention. Hansen and his colleagues remained silent, tried to pin the blame on old-line Kremlin supporters rather than the top Cuban leaders, and above all sought to get out of the line of fire. In response to Castro's violent diatribe against Trotskyism at the 1966 Tricontinental Congress, Hansen alleged it was most likely a case of "mistaken identity" and at worst a "belated echo" of Stalinist slanders, "the purpose of which remained completely obscure." Of course,

WORKERS VANGUARD

SPARTACIST

to those on the receiving end—particularly the Guatemalan MR-13 guerrillas, accused of being “agents of imperialism” because they called for socialist revolution—the purpose of this hatchet job was not at all obscure.

A final observation on the subject of anti-Trotskyist persecution in Cuba: polemizing against the views of his French comrades, Hansen remarks that “The meaning of the attacks on the Cuban Trotskyists is exaggerated and placed at the wrong door....” Actually, while former PSP leader Blas Roca set his poisoned pen to writing several lengthy articles in the style of the Moscow Trials, the most active slanderer of Trotskyism in the Cuban leadership has been Ernesto “Che” Guevara. Nor was his purpose obscure: he attacked the POR comrades on several different occasions in 1961, just at the time the Organizaciones Revolucionarias Integradas (ORI) was being formed as the precursor of the Communist Party (PCC). Guevara was reportedly the moving force behind the fusion of the July 26th Movement with the old pro-Moscow Stalinist PSP, and therefore wanted to clamp down on all criticism of the “Old Communists.”

Hansen Invents “Struggle Against Bureaucracy”

The formation of the ORI in mid-1961 marked the integration of a bureaucratic apparatus to politically organize the state machinery. It was the mouthpiece of the Stalinist ruling caste in formation rather than a workers party. But since no one ever ruled in the name of bureaucratic bonapartism, and since the SWP terms this party “revolutionary,” our revisionist pundits are called upon to do another public relations job, this time discovering a “struggle against bureaucracy” in the Escalante affair. In this instance the burden fell mainly on SWP journalist Harry Ring. In a 1972 pamphlet Ring wrote:

“In 1961 [1962], the conflict between the Fidelistas and Stalinists exploded with the ouster of the CP back Anibal Escalante from the post of general secretary of the predecessor political formation to the present Communist Party of Cuba. In motivating that ouster, Fidel’s scorching denunciation of bureaucracy and sectarianism was heard around the world.”

—“Cuba and Problems of Workers Democracy”

In a recent SWP internal document Hansen asserts that Castro’s “blistering attack on Escalante and the growth of bureaucracy in Cuba” was “recognized everywhere as an attack on Stalinism.”

What actually took place was an internecine bureaucratic clique fight, in which one side purged the other. Escalante, the former organization secretary of the PSP, naturally saw to it that “reliable” elements (i.e., his own men) were placed in the key positions of the ORI. Castro gave him the boot because *his* people, the former members of the July 26th Movement, were systematically excluded from positions of authority.

As bonapartist head of the bureaucracy, Castro did have a real grievance against Escalante: the latter was setting up a rival center of power. On that the *lider máximo* was quite eloquent, in the process revealing a good deal about the nature of the “United Party of the Socialist Revolution” being constructed:

“...we were making a leash, a strait-jacket.... Here we speak of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations, but what were the organizations?... “...how were the nuclei formed? I’ll tell you. In all the provinces the secretary-general of the PSP was made secretary-general of the ORI; in all the municipalities the secretary-general of the PSP was made secretary-general of the ORI; in all the nuclei a member of the PSP was made secretary-general of the nucleus. Is this integration?”

—“On Sectarianism” (26 March 1962)

At no point in this speech (which was

distributed in thousands of copies by the SWP) did Castro mention bureaucracy, bureaucratism or the like. Once, however, he cogently described an aspect of the phenomenon:

“In other words, there was not a single subject, not a single question, not a single detail which did not have to be discussed in the organization office of the ORI [Escalante’s den]. Whether at the higher level or at the lower—don’t think it would be a matter of weeks, when it might be months—a truly abnormal, absurd, intolerable, chaotic, anarchic procedure was being established, a habit of ordering people about, an avid urge to take decisions on all problems.”

—*Ibid.*

No doubt this was all true of the Comrade General Secretary. But there was another person to whom it applied even better, as everyone well knows: *Comandante* Fidel Castro Ruz. As far as resolving the problem, the only known measures taken were a reshuffling of the ORI secretariat to give a majority of July 26th leaders over the ex-PSPers, and the banishment of Escalante to Prague. End of Castro’s titanic “struggle against bureaucratism.”

What lay behind this outburst was simple enough. Bureaucracies are supposed to be monolithic. By breaking this cardinal rule, Escalante had committed a “crime against the state,” for Castro, like all bonapartist rulers deeply believes that “L’état, c’est moi!” The new party should be loyal to him, not Moscow, and therefore the old PSPers had to be kept in a subordinate position. Such intrabureaucratic purges are not uncommon in Stalinist regimes: witness Tito’s 1948 purge of the “Cominformists” at the time of his break with the Kremlin. And often they are accompanied by a lot of phony “democratic” and even “anti-bureaucratic” rhetoric, as in the Chinese “Cultural Revolution” in which Mao’s clique eliminated the previously dominant party bureaucrats around “China’s Khrushchev,” Liu Shao-chi.

Further evidence that what was behind the “Escalante affair” was a clash between the national loyalties of sections of the Cuban bureaucracy (Moscow or Havana) came with the replay of the whole business in 1968. After having been readmitted and placed in charge of a dairy farm, the former ORI general secretary was accused of organizing a “micro-faction.” This time he was jailed for 15 years, with 27 accomplices also receiving long sentences. Significantly, a second secretary of the Soviet embassy in Havana was expelled from the country for being involved in the affair.

They Never Learn Department: Stalinists are, of course, quite capable of demagogically attacking bureaucratism while themselves being the most notorious examples. Stalin used to do it all the time. In a vile speech against Trotskyism at the height of the Moscow Trials, he remarked cynically: “I have in view the question of the formal and heartless bureaucratic attitude of some of our

Party comrades ... toward the question of expelling members from the party...” (“Mastering Bolshevism” [March 1937]). But whenever Castro plays this tune, the SWP suddenly discovers a heartening renewal of the Cuban Revolution.

When in 1970 Havana went through a major reappraisal of its policies following the abysmal failure of the “Ten Million Tons” sugar harvest, Castro uttered a few words about the need to substitute “democratic methods for administrative methods.” This, rejoiced Ring, was “unambiguous language” about “creating a structured socialist democracy.” He doesn’t mention that the upshot of the 1970 reappraisal was the wholesale adoption of Russian-style economic management to replace the chaotic mess bequeathed by the primitive “planning” system set up by Guevara in the mid-’60’s.

Bonapartism and Bureaucracy in Cuba

Today, after two decades of the Castro regime, Hansen avers that “It would be untrue to say that the battle against bureaucratism has been won in Cuba.” He cites some examples: the introduction of ranks in the armed forces, the ban on organized dissent in the Communist Party, the jailing of the poet Padilla, the pillorying of homosexuals. “However,” he concludes, “the headway made by bureaucratism has not reached such a degree that one must conclude that a hardened bureaucratic caste has been formed, exercises dictatorial power, and cannot be dislodged save through a political revolution. No qualitative point of change has yet been adduced to substantially change this hypothesis” (introduction to *Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution*).

In the first place, it is not merely a question of bureaucratic practices: there have obviously been plenty of them from the beginning of the Cuban Revolution, and Castro is adept at brushing off such accusations with windy “self-critical” speeches. As for the “hardened bureaucratic caste,” with its current line the SWP wouldn’t recognize one in Cuba until it was practically mummified! Naturally, Hansen calls up images of the labyrinthine Kremlin bureaucratic machine, the luxurious dachas and official limousines, the leaders rigorously shielded from the Soviet masses. Then he compares this with Cuba, where government affairs are resolved with apparent informality (that is, if you are at the very top), where top officials for years wore their olive drab combat uniforms, where “Fidel” is always plunging into crowds and talking with old peasants about their smallest needs. His conclusion: there is no “hardened bureaucratic caste.”

Hansen deliberately confuses the origins of the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union, where it was the product of the degeneration of the workers democracy embodied in the soviets and the Bolshevik Party, and Cuba which had neither. Stalin rose to a commanding position by

becoming the spokesman for this privileged layer and championing its drive to raise itself above the workers; he became, in Trotsky’s words, a “Soviet bonaparte,” seeking to balance as an arbiter above the cliques, factions and classes. In Cuba there were no soviets, no Leninist party. From the beginning of the revolution, political power was in the hands of a tiny circle around the *lider máximo*. Hansen could not find a qualitative point of degeneration because Cuba was a bureaucratically deformed workers state from the moment the bourgeoisie was expropriated.

If in the early years the weight of the Havana bureaucracy seemed far lighter than that of the Kremlin, it was because in Cuba the bonaparte gave rise to the bureaucracy rather than the other way around. During the period 1961-65 Castro was trying to fashion a transmission belt to pass down the directives and whims of the ruling clique. The conflicts which arose, such as the Escalante affair, were over who should command this apparatus in formation. No doubt the level of personal material privilege was less than in the USSR, but this could be said with equal validity for Vietnam and other impoverished deformed workers states where the population has been kept in a constant state of mobilization due to imperialist threat and invasion. Castro and Guevara at first sought to fashion the new ruling elite in the image of the military asceticism of the Rebel Army, just as Mao tried to remold China in the “Yenan spirit.”

Napoleon used his army recruited in the provinces to put an end to the plebeian democracy which had reigned in Paris in the heyday of the revolution; Castro marched into Havana at the head of a peasant guerrilla band (which during most of the fighting never exceeded 300 men) to impose a revolution in which the urban workers, tightly controlled by Batista henchman Mujal and the Stalinist PSP, were merely spectators. He did not have to put down the workers, who had not risen up until after Batista fled; but he made it clear that real power would be in the hands of the victors who swept out of the Sierra Maestra. In his first speech to a monster rally in Havana, on 8 January 1959, Castro warned against the “proliferation of revolutionary groups” such as followed the overthrow of Machado; it was this, he said, that led to the success of Batista’s coup in 1934. A day later he made the point even more emphatically on television: “I have always thought that the revolution should be made by one movement alone” (quoted in Samuel Farber, *Revolution and Reaction in Cuba, 1933-1960* [1976]).

The Castroite regime in Havana has always insisted on its political omnipotence. This has now been consecrated in the new Cuban constitution which decrees the Communist Party’s role as “the highest leading force of the society and of the state” (*Granma*, 7 March 1976). Even when the first “elected” local governments were introduced in the province of Matanzas in 1974, the resolution on “people’s power” setting them up stipulated that “The party will guide, activate and control the tasks of the state organs....” As to the “party,” it did not hold its first congress until December 1975, a full ten years after its formation (see “Castro Holds First Ever CP Congress,” *WV* No. 100, 12 March 1976).

A pervasive feature of Stalinist parties is the “cult of the personality” around the supreme leader, and this is doubly and triply true of Cuba. The gigantic, 100-foot-high murals of Castro which dominate the million-strong rallies in the Plaza de la Revolución are well-known to everyone. Yet, amazingly, Hansen denies that there is any leader cult around “Fidel.” While he considers the concentration of power in Castro’s hands dangerous, even today he excuses it: “According to the theory of the Trotskyist movement, a personal dicta-

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TROTSKYIST LEAGUE OF CANADA

Victory to British Truckers Strike!

LONDON, January 16—With a suddenness which has caught James Callaghan's Labour Government napping, tens of thousands of British workers have walked out on strike during the past week in support of wage claims far above the government's 5 percent pay ceiling. The burgeoning strike wave—centering on lorry [truck] drivers and involving other sectors ranging from water workers to train drivers—is seriously threatening to bury Callaghan's Phase Four wage controls once and for all.

Predictably, the strikes have driven Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Party and the national Tory press to near-frenzy. Images of children being sent home from school due to lack of oil supplies for heating, of panic-buying leaving supermarket shelves bare, of householders in the North East turning on their taps only to see a brown sludge drip out, of deserted and silent railway stations—all are daily evoked as the necessary backdrop to calls by Thatcher & Co. to the imposition of a State of Emergency and for the use of troops to break the strike. Indeed, the government has already called out the army once to deliver petrol in Northern

Ireland when Texaco tanker drivers refused to end their strike last week. Callaghan is quite prepared to engage in similar strikebreaking again when he deems it necessary.

Though the emotive sketches of the Fleet Street press and hysterical rhetoric of Margaret Thatcher serve the purpose of a concerted anti-union crusade, they nevertheless point to the real success that the current strike wave is having in destroying Callaghan's much vaunted "industrial harmony." Last Wednesday oil tanker drivers won flat-rate increases of 13 to 15 percent after less than a week on strike. In their wake, came a strike of 40,000 private haulage lorry drivers who now look set to win increases of up to 25 percent. Train drivers have been staging one-day national strikes, water workers are threatening a full national walkout, and hundreds of thousands of other public sector workers are also on the brink of strike action in pursuit of claims far in excess of the 5 percent limit.

Recognizing that its pay policy is in tatters, the Labour government has been stepping up attempts to forge a new Social Contract with the trade-union bureaucracy in an attempt to keep

the rank and file in check. The Trades Union Congress (TUC) chiefs are only too willing to find a new wage-cutting consensus with Callaghan—but the chances that they will be able to sell such a deal to the rest of the membership appear slim indeed.

After four years of steadily dropping living standards and lengthening dole queues [unemployment lines], Britain's workers are saying "enough." A sure index of the militant sentiment in the working class today is provided by the fact that the tanker drivers, lorry drivers and water workers strikes all began as spontaneous, unofficial walkouts. The union bureaucrats have only made the strikes official in an explicit attempt to control them. After the lorry drivers had tied up goods in ports throughout the country by dispatching flying picket squads to the docks, Transport & General Workers Union general secretary Moss Evans promised Callaghan that he would make their strike official in order to force the strikers to cut back their secondary picketing and allow "essential services" to continue.

As part of their offensive against "union power," the Tories and their press have been demanding legal mea-

sures to curb trade-union picketing rights. And already Callaghan has met them half-way, calling on his Secretary of State for Employment to draw up regulations to limit secondary picketing rights. But this is obviously a desperate rear-guard measure on Callaghan's part, designed to show the capitalist class that even as Phase Four collapses, he is still trying to find a way to keep the unions in line.

The British working class is today showing once again that it lacks nothing in militancy and fighting spirit. To ensure the smashing of Callaghan's wage controls for good, every section of workers with pay claims in the pipelines should come out on strike now, in a united offensive alongside the lorry drivers. But this Moss Evans and the TUC will never stand for. The union misleaders who seek to bind the working class hand and foot to the Callaghan government must be ousted, along with the treacherous pro-capitalist leaders of the Labour Party—and a new revolutionary leadership of the labour movement must be put in their stead if the struggles of the British working class are to go forward. Victory to the lorry drivers strike! All out to smash Phase Four!

Cuba...

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torship is not excluded in extremely exceptional circumstances..." ("Two Interpretations of the Cuban Revolution"). "Extremely exceptional circumstances" that have already lasted two decades?

One wonders why the SWP even bothers to ritually mention the need for a Leninist party in Cuba: in giant Russia seven years after the October Revolution the essential elements of Stalinism had triumphed under the pressures of isolation; but to believe Hansen. Castro on his tiny island 90 miles from the U.S. has managed to stave off the inroads of bureaucratism for more than twice as long! As to workers democracy, perhaps our "Trotskyist" theorist would agree with J.P. Morray (*The Second Revolution in Cuba* [1962]), a lyrically candid Stalinist, who wrote: "Through Castro, who is the Cuban Soviet, the workers discover their own interest and participate in the direction of society by ratifying his initiatives."

Laughable? Of course. But when Posadas characterized the mass rallies in which the Cuban workers are permitted to ratify Castro's measures as "plebiscites," Hansen accused him of "not seeing too clearly through the ultraleft smoke in his glasses" ("Trotskyism and the Cuban Revolution"). Yet to anyone who has read *The Revolution Betrayed*, the Cuban leaders' "democratic" procedures—from the monster meetings where the crowd roars its assent to the 1976 constitution approved by a 97.7 percent "yes" vote—cannot fail to recall Trotsky's vivid description of the plebiscitary methods of Stalin:

"As history testifies, Bonapartism gets along admirably with a universal, and even a secret, ballot. The democratic

ritual of Bonapartism is the plebiscite. From time to time, the question is presented to the citizens: for or against the leader? And the voter feels the harrel of a revolver between his shoulders. Since the time of Napoleon III, who now seems a provincial dilettante, this technique has received an extraordinary development. The new Soviet constitution which establishes Bonapartism on a plebiscite basis is the veritable crown of the system."

SWP Degenerates Into Pabloism

The significance of Hansen's denial of the necessity of a Trotskyist vanguard to lead the socialist revolution, of his apologies for the Castroite bureaucracy, of his failure to fight for workers democracy in Cuba extends far beyond the Western Hemisphere. For the Cuban Revolution was a decisive event in turning the SWP from the path of intransigent proletarian struggle against Stalinism.

In 1951-53, the SWP, after initial hesitations, had led the opposition to the liquidationist policies of Michel Pablo, then head of the International Secretariat (I.S.) of the FI.

In January 1951 Pablo wrote a document which pulled his confusions together into a program of conciliation to Stalinism. It was *objectivist* in its methodology, in effect denying that the crisis of revolutionary leadership was the decisive factor:

"The objective process is in the final analysis the sole determining factor, overriding all obstacles of a subjective order."

And it was *liquidationist* in its programmatic conclusions, holding that the Stalinist parties could be revolutionized (thereby making independent Trotskyist parties unnecessary):

"The Communist Parties retain the possibility in certain circumstances of roughly outlining a revolutionary orientation."

This was followed up by a practical

proposal to carry out long-term entrism in the mass reformist workers parties, particularly the pro-Moscow CPs.

Once the gravity of the Pabloist threat had become clear to the SWP leadership, it reacted sharply. A "Letter to Trotskyists Throughout the World" (November 1953) declared, "The lines of cleavage between Pablo's revisionism and Orthodox Trotskyism are so deep that no compromise is possible either politically or organizationally." However, as the impact of McCarthyism bore in on the party, which had lost most of its trade-union base in the 1953 split and was greatly reduced in number compared to the immediate post-war years, the SWP leaders also began to succumb to the pressures of isolation. By 1960 the one-time anti-revisionists also decided to "junk the old Trotskyism," Hansen wrote cavalierly:

"What provisions are there in Marxism for a revolution, obviously socialist in tendency but powered by the peasantry and led by revolutionists who have never professed socialist aims; indeed, who seem to have been limited to the bourgeois-democratic horizon? It's not in the books!"

"If Marxism has no provisions for such phenomena, perhaps it is time provisions were made. It would seem a fair enough exchange for a revolution as good as this one."

—"Theory of the Cuban Revolution"

Hansen & Co. were remarkably frank about their motivations in jumping on the "Fidel" bandwagon:

"Our theoretical and political contributions... drew the favorable attention of a whole new layer attracted by the Cuban Revolution, including such significant figures as C. Wright Mills. This work and the accompanying participation in demonstrations, etc.,... decisively advanced the SWP from its previous isolation to its present prominence in the American radical movement."

—SWP Political Committee, "Problems of the Fourth International and the Next Steps," SWP Discussion Bulletin, July 1962

At the same time, the Hansen-Dobbs leadership noticed that their enthusiastic support for Castro closely paralleled the positions of the International Secretariat:

"It noted especially that the IS had assessed the main stages of the Cuban revolution in the same way as the SWP, the Canadians and the Latin American Trotskyists... Most important of all, the IS in its majority and the IC in its

majority had passed the acid test of the Cuban revolution... It was impossible to escape the conclusion that objectively the correct course was to press for reunification."

—"Cuba—The Acid Test"

But the SWP tops' sharp turn to the right did not go unopposed. The Revolutionary Tendency presented a counterresolution to the majority's "Problems of the Fourth International..." The RT document stated:

"...the Pabloites have proposed one substitute after another for the revolutionary role of the working class and its Marxist vanguard..."

"In 1949 it was a form of Stalinism that would prevail for centuries; in 1951 it was imminent war that would force the Stalinists to project a revolutionary orientation; today it is the colonial revolution that is unfolding automatically. At no time has it been the working class organized under Marxist leadership that is central in the world revolutionary strategy of Pabloism..."

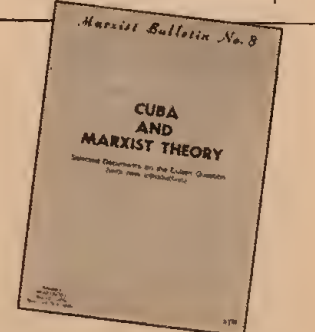
"...the entire national leadership of the party was swept up in the Cuban events and lost sight of the basic strategic approach that our movement must take towards such a revolution... It was hoped that through its virtually uncritical support to this government, the leadership could be won over wholesale to Trotskyism..."

"The Trotskyists should urge the workers to consciously struggle for democratic control over the governing apparatus rather than expecting the government to hand over such control to them on its own."

—"In Defense of a Revolutionary Perspective" (June 1962).

Marxist Bulletin No. 1

The Hansen-Dobbs leadership was



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now arguing for its policy of political support to "the Castro team" with the unmistakable objectivist methodology of Pabloism:

"The Cuban experience demonstrates once again that the ultimate determinant in the outbreak, course and outcome of a revolutionary struggle is the relationship of class forces on a national and world scale, and not the subjective political factors alone...."

"The favorable course of the Cuban Revolution was determined by far more powerful and fundamental forces than the original character and aims of the Castro leadership...."

"This is not to detract in the least from the tremendous role played by Fidel Castro and his associates in carrying the revolution through to its logical conclusion...."

"Somewhat unexpectedly, the comrades who insist so strongly at this date on the vital necessity of correct leadership have here a most convincing example to illustrate their thesis."

—"Problems of the Fourth International...."

Eureka! The crisis of proletarian leadership has been solved in Cuba... by Fidel Castro. Now it is petty-bourgeois nationalists who can in certain circumstances "roughly outline a revolutionary orientation." And the obvious conclusion: everyone should rush out and sign up as Fidelistas, which is precisely what Hansen & Co. did.

Just as Pablo's objectivism served to justify his liquidationist political program, the SWP leaders not only "forgot" but actively *denied* the need for an independent Trotskyist vanguard. Of course, they occasionally talked of a "revolutionary socialist party"...but note carefully what they mean by this. In criticizing the Chilean POR's characterization of Cuba as a deformed workers state, the SWP advocated the formation of a "mass revolutionary-socialist party in Cuba" which would include the old PSP and "The Castro leadership would naturally be elected to head the party. They have demonstrated their fitness and capacity to such a degree that we think every Cuban revolutionist would give them a vote of confidence." As for the Trotskyists, they should join the party as "completely loyal party builders" (*ISR*, Summer 1961).

This was not just liquidationism in the abstract. A year later the SWP majority wrote: "...we believe the Trotskyists of Cuba should seek to enter and take their place in the soon-to-be formed unified revolutionary party where they can work loyally, patiently and confidently..." ("Problems of the Fourth International..."). Recall that this is the same Stalinist party that was being set up by staffing its apparatus with ex-PSPers! This "modest proposal" certainly qualifies as "entrism *sui generis*" in the Pablo mold. And we have Hansen's own testimony to demonstrate the political bankruptcy of the SWP's Castroite perspective. A small Trotskyist group reportedly existed in Havana which supported Castro's movement even before the 1956 *Granma* landing, and which after the revolution was absorbed by the July 26th Movement:

"Under the ban on factions and tendencies it was not easy for them to spread their views, and some became discouraged. It is difficult to ascertain the present status of these loyal defenders of the Cuban revolution."

—Joseph Hansen, "Two Interpretations of the Cuban Revolution," *SWP Discussion Bulletin*, July 1977

Closely related to the SWP's liquidationism into the Castroite current and its whole position on Cuba is a narrow, almost genealogical conception of Stalinism. The source of Stalinism is the Kremlin bureaucracy, they argue, and only those who have been connected with that apparatus are Stalinists; this may be by extension, such as the Chinese and Vietnamese, but the fundamental explanation is hereditary. In contrast, the Spartacist tendency, following in the analysis of Trotsky, views Stalinism as the system of ideology and political domination corresponding to a parasitic bureaucracy sitting atop the property forms of a workers state

In Hansen's January 1961 "Report for the Political Committee" he remarks that the Cuban Revolution "immediately points to the discussions we had on Eastern Europe, on Yugoslavia, on China." The same parallel is drawn in others of his documents. But the SWP held that Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia and China were *deformed* workers states, whereas it refused to apply that label to Cuba. Answering this charge, Hansen remarks:

"True. An accurate observation. But then we try not to make a fetish of labels."

"Besides, Cuba has something new to offer.... Stalinists do not head the Cuban revolution. They were bypassed."

—"What the Discussion on Cuba Is About" (May 1961)

It is, of course, true that Castro was not a Stalinist at the outset of the Cuban Revolution. He was a petty-bourgeois nationalist populist. For Hansen and the SWP, Castro remained non-Stalinist even after the ORI/PURS/PCC "party" was formed as a fusion with the former Kremlin-loyal Stalinist PSP. Castro, you see, had not inherited the disease of Stalinism from his political parents. So, therefore, as long as Castro dominates the PCC or its predecessor formations, it is non-Stalinist, dixit the SWP. And if there are no "forms" of workers democracy, while that is unfortunate, it does not mean that Stalinism is triumphant, because Castro the democrat is still dominant. This is replacing Marxist analysis with predestination.

Thus armed with an objectivist method, a liquidationist program and a scholastic analysis of Stalinism, Hansen and the SWP were ready to play ball with the Pabloists. While suspending the RT (subsequently expelled for "disloyalty") the reunification was carried out in mid-1963. Cuba played a prominent role in the documents for the new USec. The main political resolution stated:

"The victory in Cuba marked the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the world revolution; for, aside from the Soviet Union, this is the first workers' state established outside the bounds of the Stalinist apparatus."

—"Dynamics of World Revolution Today"

It also wrote the Pabloists' false "lessons" from the Cuban experience into the USec program. Interestingly, Hansen now seeks to directly falsify this fact. In his introduction to *Dynamics of the Cuban Revolution* he pretends that "the American Trotskyists" criticized Havana's call for guerrilla war on a continental scale and generalizes: "...more effective means than a guerrilla band is required to lead the struggle for socialism. What is needed is a working-class party of the Leninist type." But here is what Hansen supported at a time when guerrilla warfare (or talk of it) was popular:

"Confronted with the powerful and well-experienced bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries, the working class can achieve victory only under a genuine revolutionary Marxist leadership...."

"The weakness of the enemy in the backward countries has opened the possibility of coming to power even with a blunted instrument."

—"Dynamics of World Revolution Today"

A second resolution, this one written by the SWP itself as the basis for the reunification with the I.S., was even more explicit on the question of guerrilla warfare. In a now-famous section it stated:

"13. Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerrilla warfare conducted by landless peasant and semiproletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial or semicolonial power. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from experience since the second world war. It must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of

building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries."

—"For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement" (March 1963)

What the founding documents of the USec were based on is the objectivist theory that the force of the colonial revolution was such that a proletarian vanguard was no longer necessary in order to lead the socialist revolution. This is the fundamental revisionist conclusion which Hansen & Co. drew from Cuba, as wide-ranging as Pablo's "new world reality" in the early 1950's and as destructive in its conclusions.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

ILWU...

(continued from page 3)

several '69 men. Many of these younger candidates were genuinely striving to revitalize the union, but none of them ran on a program of breaking with the business unionism of the bureaucrats. During their campaign, Gow and Kaylor characterized many of these men as "...show[ing] an honest concern with the state of the union..." but further warned them that "good intentions will fail without taking on the central question of how to break through the obstacle blocking union action: the contract provisions of arbitration, no job actions or strikes; the 'PGP Abuse' section; and the huge obstacle to action of the International Officers' open class collaboration" ("Longshore Militant," 11 December).

In the coming months, ILWU longshoremen must translate their distrust of the present Local and International bureaucracy into an organized opposition, looking to the program of the "Longshore Militant" as the key to unlocking the strategic strength of the Longshore Division, mobilizing support for West Coast ILWU and Teamster warehousemen in their contract struggle this spring, and opening the way for the demand to junk the Longshore contract and strike for a shorter workshift at no loss in pay to provide for jobs. ■

Thornett...

(continued from page 2)

article from *WV*. To that he added the slander that the SL blamed the 1958 Notting Hill riot in London on West Indian immigration and blamed unemployment in the U.S. Southwest on Mexican immigration! When he ended with a challenge to the SL to answer his accusations, the audience was fuming at the deliberate falsifications.

The SL supporters were prepared to meet this challenge, including to set right the distorted quote from *WV*. But Chairman Steve Bryant wouldn't have it, and called on five speakers before he

was finally forced to recognize the SL spokesman who asked to answer Thornett. Infuriated by the outrageously discriminatory chairing of the meeting, a typical Bryant performance, the speaker pointed straight at the chairman and said angrily, "You just couldn't resist, could you, you little cockroach?"

At this, the SL-DC and Thornett went berserk, rushing the speaker and screaming, "You're out!" But this frenzied attempt to compound their bureaucratic procedures with an exclusion was thwarted by about a dozen trade unionists who immediately went to the defense of the SL speaker. Stopped in their tracks, the Thornett clique retreated to the podium where they impotently howled and cried for the exclusion of the SL speaker. (The WSL had pulled a similar stunt—trying to escape political debate through labeling a harsh political characterization a "personal attack"—at a forum in Oxford last year.)

But this didn't work either. While the chairman and featured speaker were disrupting their own forum, the SL spokesman called to Thornett above the din, "If you'll shut up comrade, I'll explain why he is a cockroach." And after the badly outnumbered would-be goons of the SL-DC decided they had no choice but to give the speaker his time, he explained, identifying Bryant's political species and moral genus: a disgusting, dishonest political coward who attempts the most brazen censorship of anyone supporting the SL viewpoint.

The Spartacist spokesman noted the vicious red-baiting of militant trade unionists in the SL-DC's newspaper. He pointed out that Bryant gets his full time, and often more, to reply at SL forums. And he noted that in spite of the SL-DC's pitiful attempts to imitate the labor bureaucracy in suppressing workers democracy, on at least one occasion the SL defended Bryant's minuscule sect from Stalinist gangsterism of the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party.

When the speaker turned to read the quotations from *WV* on immigration which Thornett had shamelessly distorted, Bryant again interrupted to try and shut him up. But the audience demanded that the speaker had the right to set the record straight. After forcing and handily winning a vote, the speaker was finally able to finish without further interruptions, pointing out that the Spartacist League supports the right of self-determination for all nations and opposes all capitalist immigration laws. Thornett's baits were revealed as unmitigated slander.

All in all, it seemed a pretty good and instructive event for the "first international Trotskyist videotape network." It showed how slander and bureaucratic suppression grow out of political opportunism. And it shows that under the proper circumstances workers democracy can be victorious. But we don't think the WSL or the SL-DC are very likely to play the tapes. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Stalinist Nationalism Wracks Indochina

The End of Pol Pot's Cambodia

In the first ten days of 1979 the world watched in fascination as the Vietnamese army surged across Cambodia in a lightning-swift assault, occupied the capital and toppled the government of "Democratic Kampuchea" headed by the shadowy Pol Pot. Certainly no one was more surprised at the speed of the Vietnamese advance than Pol Pot himself, who is now reportedly roaming about somewhere in the hills southwest of Phnom Penh. In his place was installed the "Kampuchean United Front for National Salvation" (FUNSK), which immediately hoisted its new rebel flag (five towers of Angkor Wat instead of three). And with the technical expertise of the accomplished Vietnamese public relations apparatus, the FUNSK soon began sending out wire photos of happy peasants and radiant militia-women rejoicing over the "liberation" of Cambodia.

Hanoi instantly recognized its creation, quickly followed by Laos, Afghanistan and the USSR. Within hours of the FUNSK/Vietnamese entrance upon the deserted streets of Phnom Penh, *Pravda* had ascertained that "an outburst of popular wrath swept away the self-styled rulers." The U.S., venting its spleen over the fact that its hundreds of thousands of troops had been hogged down in Vietnam for years without being able to advance from one village to the next, self-righteously demanded the Vietnamese troops be withdrawn at once. And as several hundred Chinese advisers staggered across the Thai border Peking launched a full scale (verbal) assault against the "greater and lesser hegemonism" of Russia and Vietnam.

With the Vietnamese army now in control of Cambodia's towns, roads, and seaport, the scene shifted to the United Nations in New York where the big guns of the Russian and Chinese delegations squared off at each other. Meanwhile the Cuban representative fenced with the Cambodian representative, none other than the indestructible *Samdech* (Comrade) Prince Norodom Sihanouk. And while the various

representatives of the deformed workers states were at each other's throats, the black front man of U.S. imperialism, Andy Young, chortled, "this is as interesting a session of the Council as we've had in some time" (*New York Times*, 13 January).

But for all the comic opera froth at the UN, the situation in Indochina today is of serious concern to revolutionaries throughout the world. Almost immediately following the historic victory of the Vietnamese and Cambodian masses over imperialism in 1975, a festering, dirty horder war broke out between the feuding Stalinist cliques of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and Democratic Kampuchea.

The hostilities derived partly from the centuries-old ethnic hatreds between the Khmer and Vietnamese peoples, partly from the nationalism bred by all Stalinist regimes. Much of the Khmer Rouge (Cambodian Communists) leadership harbored deep resentments against Ho Chi Minh's Viet Minh for selling them out at the 1954 Geneva negotiations. Hanoi, in turn, was bitter over a reported massacre by Pol Pot of those Cambodian forces allied with Hanoi in the early 1970's.

Pol Pot's xenophobic, primitivist militarization and enforced peasantization of Cambodian society represented a truly grotesque caricature of Stalinist rule. Not only did the rulers of "Democratic" Kampuchea brutally and senselessly depopulate the cities, but they even cleared out the villages, forcing large numbers into mobile work brigades. Thus, the most notable immediate result of the Vietnamese invasion has been a reported massive return of the population to its native villages.

In the immediate future the new government installed in Phnom Penh promises to be more humane and rational than the Pol Pot regime—indeed, it would be practically impossible for it not to be. Thus a January 8 UPI dispatch broadcast from Bangkok reported of the FUNSK program that:

"The group promised Sunday to repopulate the cities, restore freedom of religion and reopen the schools. It also vowed to reunite families and send captured leading Khmer Rouge officials to 're-education' camps for long periods."

In addition, the FUNSK announced "voluntary marriage" would be reestablished (!) as well as a currency system, which Cambodia has been without since the Khmer Rouge took power. It should not be hard to come through on such elementary promises. For the FUNSK to "win the hearts and minds" of the Cambodian population it would likely be enough just to promise to stop dragging the sick out of the hospitals and sending them on forced marches!

Significantly, observers on the Thai border report that so far there has been no mass exodus of civilians from Cambodia. Despite ethnic animosities the population may well prefer life under the Vietnamese-sponsored FUNSK to the harsh life imposed by their former rulers. Indeed, a Thai colonel, Thanet Thapanani, stationed along Cambodia's northern border told



FUNSK soldiers capture Royal Palace in Phnom Penh.

UPI

a *New York Times* interviewer January 16 that many Cambodians view the FUNSK as liberators from the Pol Pot regime. "I think they feel free," he said. But, although the new regime set up by Hanoi is in a good position to win popular support, Cambodia is now effectively occupied by the Vietnamese army. Even if the new government is able to function effectively and the army tries to avoid atrocities, this situation is necessarily counterposed to the right of self-determination of the Khmer people. While in the short run the quality of life may improve, Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia will increase the poison of national chauvinism among both peoples and necessarily puts the national question back on the agenda in Indochina.

Despite the weird irrationality of Stalinist rule in Cambodia, the Spartacist League has insisted ever since the bloody Vietnam-Cambodia skirmishes came to public attention that the working people had no interest in supporting either bureaucracy and had

to take a revolutionary defeatist position in the border war waged by the qualitatively equivalent Hanoi and Phnom Penh regimes. However, as the war objectives shifted we warned in our last issue ("Stalinists' Squalid War in Indochina," *WV* No. 222, 5 January) that "what began as a squalid border war could develop into a struggle for the independent national existence of the Khmer people." Though the chances that the defeated Pol Pot regime could rally a popular and effective guerrilla counterforce against the felt sense of liberation appear slim indeed, that potential is exacerbated by the presence of the Vietnamese army.

Return of Sihanouk

Following the fall of Phnom Penh, Sihanouk resurfaced in Peking January 8, announcing at a six-hour press conference in the Great Hall of the Peoples that he had been dispatched by the crumbling Pol Pot "government" to

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Prince Sihanouk at the U.N.

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