

## While Carter Stews, Soviet Army Rolls Back Afghan Mullahs Hail Red Army!

The effective deployment of thousands of Soviet troops in Afghanistan is one more stinging humiliation for American imperialism in the Near East. The Carter administration saw 25 years of U.S. foreign policy in the region blow up in its face with the Muslim seizure of its once seemingly omnipotent Teheran embassy and its staff in November. The Soviet high command watched as Khomeini's Iran slipped into near-total chaos, as U.S. aircraft carriers lined up in the Persian Gulf, as the Soviet-allied regime in Kabul was threatened by a reactionary jihad (holy war). Seeing Washington at an impasse with the ayatollah, the Kremlin bureaucrats seized the time to quell the uprising by the mullahs and khans (religious and tribal leaders).

Anti-Soviet opinion around the world—from the White House to the Chinese Great Hall of the People, from "non-aligned" neo-colonies like Zambia to the Spanish and Italian Communist Parties—railed against "Soviet expansionism" which had "trampled on the national sovereignty and integrity of Afghanistan." The imperialist media pulled out the stops to build sympathy for "freedom fighters" battling sophisticated tanks and planes with sticks, stones and chants of "allah akbar." But in the military confrontation pitting the Soviet soldiers backing the nationalist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) against feudal and pre-feudal forces aided by imperialism, Marxists side with the Russian tanks. Hail Red Army!

The pretext of Soviet troops in Afghanistan was exploited by President Carter and his Dr. Strangelove national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, to translate the Cold War rhetoric of their anti-Soviet "human rights crusade" into action. On January 4 Carter got on nationwide TV to announce that the U.S. was going to engage in economic warfare against the USSR: 17 million tons of grain already ordered by the Soviet Union would not be shipped; sales of high technology products, such as advanced computers and oil-drilling equipment, would be cut off; four Coast Guard cutters were dispatched to Alaska to protect the fish from Russian aggression; scheduled openings of consular facilities were stopped, as were any new cultural and economic exchanges.

More than the U.S.-backed Islamic tribesmen bargained for: Soviet jet transport lands troops in Afghanistan.

Over the Teheran embassy crisis Carter pledged not to use food deliveries as an economic weapon against Iran. But against the Soviet Union, which needs American grain in order to increase meat production and improve the diet of its population, the United States uses nutritional blackmail in the hopes of fomenting social discontent. Washington has obtained pledges by other wheat producers to hold the line on exports to the USSR and intends to turn billions of bushels of surplus grain into "gasohol." Carter/Brzezinski have

decided to spend billions to send their message: Starve for human rights!

Carter's vague references to a "new Munich" notwithstanding, the U.S. didn't wait for Soviet troops to roll across the border or land at Kabul airport to begin fulminating about "Moscow aggression." Using the flimsiest excuse (e.g., Russian forces that had been in Cuba for the last 15 years), the fanatical anti-Russian Pole Brzezinski launched his own jihad against the USSR, a holy war in which he has the blessing of the Polish pontiff in the

Vatican, "John Paul" Wojtyla. Ever since someone told him that Russians are Communists, "Zbig" has been anti-Communist, too, but willing to latch onto anything anti-Soviet, including "Communist" China.

And so this week Secretary of Defense Brown was dispatched to Peking to deepen the anti-Soviet U.S./China alliance, already twice tested militarily: over the South African invasion of Angola and the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. Now the Pentagon

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Wide World



Michel Setboun

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# Give Back Philip Agee's Passport!

On December 22, escalating an eight-year vendetta to silence ex-CIA agent Philip Agee, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance revoked the passport of the outspoken opponent of the U.S. spy agency. Attempting to justify this outrageous violation of Agee's rights, the State Department claimed that his activities "are causing or are likely to cause serious damage to the national security and foreign policy of the United States." The government is ludicrously trying to link Agee with the takeover of the American Embassy in Teheran, asserting that his statements about the CIA intensified anti-American sentiments and encouraged the attacks on the American embassies in Iran, Pakistan and Libya.

The action taken against Agee is extraordinary; this is the first time the Carter administration has revoked a U.S. citizen's passport. Even the *New York Times* is questioning the legality of such a move. In an editorial January 7, it points out that Agee has yet to be accused of violating any law, and cautions the State Department that "The Supreme Court made clear two decades ago... that citizens who haven't broken the law can't be denied passports under the statutes in the books." But the CIA desperately wants to get Philip Agee.

The CIA and its cohorts have hounded Agee from country to country. He has been deported from Britain, France, the Netherlands and Norway. With his U.S. passport now revoked, Agee faces deportation from West Germany, where he currently resides in the city of Hamburg with companion Angela Seixas. The West German government threatens him saying his residency permit there is valid only with a passport, while the American government has ominously offered Agee a one-way identity pass to the U.S.

Agee's exposés of the CIA's crimes have made him no small thorn in the side of U.S. imperialism's Murder, Inc. His tireless research into the CIA's activities provides a valuable service to working people and the left. The 1975 publication of Agee's book *Inside the Company: A CIA Diary* documented the extensive provocations of the CIA in Latin America (where Agee was a high-level operative). In 1978, Agee and journalist Louis Wolf published *Dirty Work: The CIA in Western Europe*, in which they revealed the names and last known assignments of more than 700 CIA agents who have been under diplomatic cover.



Philip Agee

Terence Spencer

The activities of Agee are obviously driving the CIA crazy. Agee's attorney Melvin Wulf elaborated on the long-time campaign of harassment against Agee to a *WV* reporter: "You only have to use your imagination. It's the work of the CIA from beginning to end." He further speculated that there is probably "a whole Philip Agee task force at [CIA headquarters in] Langley" trying to "make his life miserable."

The CIA may well want to do more than just make Philip Agee's life miserable. Human life is very cheap for the professional assassins and bloody torturers of the CIA, who trained and set up the shah's hated secret police, the SAVAK. The murderous CIA must not be allowed to silence Philip Agee!

The bourgeois press has made much of the timing of the State Department's move against Agee with his suggestion that the CIA's secret files on Iran be exchanged for the hostages being held at the embassy. Agee argued that for the U.S. this would be an expedient way to gain freedom for the hostages, and that the Iranians would have a much more

conclusive case using the files than anything the shah or hostages would have to say at a tribunal. Marxists are indifferent to the fate of the hostages, but it is indicative that *both* sides have turned down Agee's proposal. The CIA would surely sacrifice the hostages (including its own agents) to keep its full files on Iran secret.

The fanatic Islamic followers of Ayatollah Khomeini at the embassy have also rejected Agee's suggestion. Khomeini is much less interested in a real tribunal of crimes of the CIA and the shah than he is in diverting attention from the reactionary nature of his own regime through stunts like the embassy seizure. Furthermore, full CIA files would undoubtedly document the arms the U.S. sent to Khomeini after the fall of the shah, arms used to butcher the national minorities in Iran today.

The revocation of Agee's passport recalls the McCarthyite witchhunt of Communists, liberals and homosexuals in the '50s. Then passports were routinely denied to U.S. citizens to restrict the travel rights of "subversives." Recently

the INS has been ordered to enforce a statutory ban on the admission of homosexual visitors to the U.S.—a law passed in 1952 as part of the draconian McCarran-Walter Act. The INS has also started a dragnet search for "illegal" Iranian students to deport them. Already 12 have been deported, 55 have left voluntarily and over 6,000 have been found to be "out of status" and potentially deportable.

The campaign against Agee exposes once again that Carter's "human rights" crusade is only a banner of deceit and hypocrisy behind which U.S. imperialism polices and plunders the oppressed of the world, propping up reactionary regimes from the shah to Pinochet. We look forward to the day that the working class opens up the CIA's secret files in the course of socialist revolution, to use them in workers tribunals to finally bring the CIA killers to justice.

Stop the witchhunt of Philip Agee! Open the secret CIA files on Iran! Not the courts of the fanatic mullahs, but workers tribunals to try the crimes of the shah, CIA and Khomeini! ■

## PDC Telegram

6 January 1980

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

Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Partisan Defense Committee vigorously protests secretary of state Cyrus Vance's revocation of the passport of noted author and journalist Philip Agee for the "crime" of suggesting that the CIA's secret files on Iran be exchanged for the hostages held in the U.S. embassy Teheran. This gross violation of democratic rights recalling the McCarthyite witchhunt is

the latest episode in an 8-year vendetta against this former CIA agent. Agee has exposed some of the murderous crimes and grisly "dirty work" done in the service of U.S. imperialism's policy of installing and backing the most reactionary regimes from Teheran to Santiago. For this valuable service to working people and the oppressed, the imperialists have hounded and harassed Agee, deporting him from four western European countries.

The PDC demands Agee's passport be restored, that restrictions on his right of travel and residence be immediately lifted and that the U.S. government stop its ominous campaign to silence this courageous foe of CIA crimes.

## 200 N.J. Postal Workers Protest Death on Conveyor Belt

JERSEY CITY—Chanting "Unsafe Conditions—We Had Enough—No Cover-Up," 200 militant postal workers demonstrated in front of the County Municipal Building in a hailstorm January 7, as Congressional hearings into unsafe working conditions in the Post Office's Bulk Mail Center were set to begin. Many came in response to the death of mailhandler Michael McDermott, who was crushed to death December 15 between the rollers of a conveyor belt at "the Bulk." Only two weeks after his death, postal worker Frank McGhee sustained neck injuries in a similar accident, barely escaping with his life.

As the hearing was about to begin, court cops initially excluded the postal workers who were jammed into the hallway outside. But the angry, chanting crowd quickly forced a change to a larger hearing room, where they heard, among other testimony, an emotional plea from McDermott's wife for the safety of his fellow workers.

The rally, sponsored by the Postal Workers Defense Committee—a rank-and-file group supported by the pro-Peking "Revolutionary Workers Headquarters"—centered on demands around giving the federal government's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) authority to enforce safety conditions in the post



WV Photo

**Militant postal workers demonstrate for job safety and amnesty for strikers at N.J. facility.**

office. Noticeably missing was any criticism of New York Metro Postal Union head Moe Biller. For all his militant rhetoric, Biller has done no more about the abominable conditions at the Bulk center than he has in the fight to rehire the 200 postal militants who lost their jobs after the July 1978 contract strike. And across the river at the Morgan station in Manhattan, finally opened last year, the mails continue to pile up due to mismanagement and unsafe conditions while

Postmaster General Bolger blames the workers and threatens further speedup.

Postal workers must not look to any agency of the bosses' government, but to their own strength—if necessary, using strike action. Instead of relying on OSHA investigations, unionists must fight for elected union safety committees with power to strike to ensure safety on the grueling production lines. Without these, postal workers will continue to be sacrificed for Bolger's murderous speed-up machine. ■

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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## Walkout Over NY Phone Workers' Deaths

# "Ma Bell Kills"

At 6:30 a.m. on December 21 scores of angry unionists, outraged over the recent deaths of two co-workers, rallied in sub-freezing weather outside the giant American Telephone and Telegraph overseas communications (Long Lines) center in lower Manhattan and appealed to their fellow operators to stay out of work. A caravan of Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 1150 members circled the block, a coffin lashed to the roof of the lead car, while pickets covered each entrance to the phone building. As they marched, the demonstrators, mostly women, many of them black, chanted "Ma Bell kills!"

The militants assembled in response to a locally sanctioned "emergency 24-hour traffic [operators'] meeting" called to protest mounting grievances and the "Job Pressures and Harassment [which] have contributed to the death of two of our brothers and sisters" (Local 1150 leaflet). Catherine Daily, aged 62, was literally harassed to death. Daily was sent home early on December 13 for "plugging out" her position to make time to properly fill out a service ticket required by company regulations. Deeply upset over her first suspension ever in 36 years of service, Daily put in the next day for retirement and AT&T retaliated with merciless harassment. "The super yelled at her like a little kid," a worker on Daily's tour told *WV*. Riding home on the subway, she dropped dead of a heart attack December 14.

Joe Burnsby, aged 23, was enrolled in a phone company "counseling" program for workers with emotional problems. Friends of Burnsby told *WV* that the "counseling" really amounted to company threats and that the troubled worker was anxious to quit the program. On November 9, shortly after a "counseling" session and after being harassed by management on his day off when he picked up his paycheck, Burnsby was killed when his car smashed into a tree at high speed.

What began as a 24-hour protest demanding the "removal" of Catherine Daily's supervisors and the settlement of accumulated local grievances—most importantly, Ma Bell's attempt to rip up the contract by suspending seniority rights for Christmas scheduling—became a three-day defensive battle against company reprisals. Though



Phone workers with symbolic coffin protest company harassment that led to two workers' deaths.

WV Photo

"emergency meetings" are contractually permitted, management stated that any Long Lines employee who participated in the job action would be subject to discipline. The operators, however, were determined that they would not go back to work under threat of suspension. A management offer to exempt some operators from disciplinary measures due to "confusion" was unanimously rejected at a meeting on December 21.

The union stated that more than 600 out of 880 operators stayed out of work. But though the Christmas holidays, with heavy telephone traffic, presented a favorable opportunity for successful militant action, the officials of Local 1150 were reluctant to press their advantage. And needless to say, there was no help from International president Glenn Watts. CWA members from the clerical and plant departments in the targeted building outnumber those in traffic, yet none of these workers were called out in solidarity with the operators. Union officials stressed that the picket lines were "informational" so that

management, as well as scabbing operators, could go in to work under police protection despite the increasing anger of the pickets. The 1150 tops even pulled down the picket line at one point as a show of "good faith" to management. Then on December 23 local officials caved in to a court order and sent the operators back to work.

At a union meeting later that week, Local 1150 president Gary Whaley hailed the court-ordered "settlement" as a victory since the judge ruled that rank-and-file operators could not be disciplined for involvement in the work stoppage, and that the company must immediately proceed to arbitration on the scheduling issue. But Local 1150 officials may well be victimized, Catherine Daily's tormentors are still on the job, and the contract issues are in the hands of pro-company arbitrators. As one operator told *WV*, "Two people died. It's a tragedy but everything's the same."

The Local 1150 operators did not win their demands. But the staging of a

three-day job action without suffering wholesale suspensions is significant nevertheless in an industry where the bosses traditionally answer *any* militancy with massive retaliation. Nor was the job action by New York phone workers an isolated case; in several local strikes over recent months CWA members have demonstrated their willingness to take on the company.

Ma Bell will continue to treat its employees like dirt until the union wins a decisive victory over the company. Decades of sellouts by the no-strike Beirne/Watts International have only emboldened the arrogant bosses. CWA members must look to the program raised by the class-struggle opposition in the union, the Militant Action Caucus (MAC), for a strategy to win against the company: for a militant, nationwide strike in 1980 to end speedup and absentee control; for a big pay hike—smash Carter's wage controls; for jobs for all through a shorter workweek at no cut in pay, and the unlimited local right to strike. ■

## CWA Members Back Jane Margolis Suit

The unprecedented lawsuit of Jane Margolis, a union official and phone worker militant who was dragged by U.S. Secret Service agents from the floor of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) convention in Detroit last July, is already winning significant backing from elected officials and rank-and-file members of the union. Margolis is a member of the executive board of CWA Local 9410 in San Francisco.

CWA members, outraged over the feds' invasion of their convention, have initiated the Union Committee Against Secret Service Harassment (UCASSH) to support and publicize the case. Committee members told *WV* that UCASSH has received formal membership endorsements from CWA locals in

Chicago and Portland, Oregon, as well as a \$250 contribution voted by the Portland membership.

Individual militants from locals in several areas of the country have likewise declared their support. These include officers, executive board members and stewards in New York, Los Angeles and Michigan. On January 2, the executive board of Sacramento, California Local 9412 endorsed the lawsuit as have over 20 stewards in Margolis' own local. CWA members there have donated close to \$700 to cover legal expenses. So far UCASSH has raised nearly \$1,100 and hundreds of dollars more have been pledged.

Margolis, an elected delegate at the CWA convention last summer, was seized by the U.S. president's secret

police and handcuffed like a common criminal. The Secret Service threatened her with arrest and imprisonment and deprived her of legal counsel, all in an effort to silence her criticisms of Jimmy Carter, who was about to address the union gathering.

State repression against the working-class movement is, of course, nothing new. On December 7 Margolis, a leading spokesman for the class-struggle Militant Action Caucus in the CWA, spoke at a Spartacist League forum in the Bay Area. She stated: "From the mass trials of the IWW, to the deaths of Sacco and Vanzetti, to the trials of the Trotskyists and the Teamster organizers of Local 544 for opposing the [U.S.] intervention in the imperialist war, to the Taft-Hartley law, the story of labor is all the same."

Just last month, the head of the Secret Service admitted that his agents interfered with protestors from the International Association of Machinists who dogged President Carter during his summertime riverboat tour of the Mississippi. "We would like to begin to pry the lid open on the dirty tricks against the union movement," Margolis

said at the forum.

Margolis has retained San Francisco attorney Charles Garry to handle the legal case. The million-dollar lawsuit, which challenges in principle the government's "right" to disrupt and control the trade-union movement, merits the support of every defender of working-class rights. But whereas the state has unlimited funds with which to carry out its anti-labor mission, militants who take on the government must rely on their friends and supporters for financial assistance. And funds are urgently needed! UCASSH spokesmen informed *WV* that expenses have already run over \$5,000 and the total cost is expected to reach \$20,000 or more. ■

**Donations  
should be sent to:  
Union Committee Against  
Secret Service Harassment**

**P.O. Box 12324  
San Francisco, CA 94112**



# LAMBERT-MORENO:

# THE MOST ROTTEN BLOC



For the last three years the Argentine adventurer Nahuel Moreno has been charging around the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec) looking for an issue to provoke a split in this chaotic gang of renegades from Trotskyism. After breaking with the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) over the latter's "State Department socialist" line on Portugal in 1975, he flirted for about a year with the USec majority headed by Ernest Mandel, then decided to set up his own Bolshevik Faction (BF) in 1978. Decked out with an abstract leftist platform accusing Mandel of tailing Eurocommunism and the SWP of neo-Kautskyism, Moreno began swashbuckling through Latin America, capturing clots of militants in several countries with lightning raids and bureaucratic expulsions. He then headed for Europe, hoping to grab a piece of the perennially crisis-ridden USec sections on the Old Continent by presenting an efficient, well-financed machine always on the move with a new campaign to win the eye of the masses. And scouring the globe for hot spots, Moreno finally found his vehicle: the struggle against Nicaraguan tyrant Somoza led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

But it didn't turn out exactly as expected. Moreno first dreamed up the Simón Bolívar Brigade (BSB) as a publicity apparatus to make a name for the BF and as a pressure group to push the FSLN to the left. But soon after the U.S. puppet dictator fled in late July, the Morenoite-led BSB got into hot water with the Sandinista tops. After little more than a week of organizing unions and urging local militias to hold onto their arms, the Brigade got the ax from the new junta. On August 17 the BSB was rounded up and herded onto planes for Panama, where several of the brigaders were beaten by the National Guard. That might have been the end of the episode, except that SWP and Mandelite representatives in Managua publicly endorsed the deportations. Moreno may have lost his chance for a big-time operation in Nicaragua, but he got his pretext to split the USec. In a

series of *diktats* the United Secretariat ordered the BF to cease operating and expelled leaders of the allied Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency (LTT); in turn the BF and LTT walked out with their troops—not even bothering to show up at the "11th World Congress" to protest the expulsions.

Following the rupture of the United Secretariat in October there has now arisen a competing international conglomeration which claims the allegiance of "a majority of the organizations, tendencies and militants who can legitimately claim to stand for the Fourth International." Moreno has teamed up with Pierre Lambert's French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI), the Lambertist LTT and the OCI's satellites in the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International (OCRFI) to form the "Parity Committee for the Reorganization (Reconstruction) of the Fourth International." The Parity Committee directs its fire at the USec's liquidationist policies on Nicaragua and in particular against the SWP's "Castroite leadership." These are compared to the 1951-53 revisionist offensive by Michel Pablo, then head of the International Secretariat. In their joint declaration establishing the Parity

Committee, the OCRFI/BF/LTT call for:

"...a common, international discussion of all those elements, forces and organizations which place themselves on the terrain of the Transitional Program, with a view to reconstructing and recomposing the International and its organizations in a reunified Fourth International."

—*Informations Ouvrières*,  
3-10 November 1979

This discussion is to be organized around a "democratic conference open to all forces which claim to be Trotskyist."

## Fake-Trotskyist Musical Chairs

Increasingly under the ascendancy of the reformist American SWP, currently led by Jack Barnes, the USec committed crimes against the workers' cause in Nicaragua, including alleged fingering (which has not been denied) of the Simón Bolívar Brigade to the FSLN. For organizations that call themselves Trotskyist, the SWP/USec's string of betrayals is truly breathtaking: political support to a class-collaborationist government, advocating popular-front alliances with capitalist forces, calling for imperialist "aid" to the "revolutionary" ruling junta, opposition to "risky" nationalizations and "irresponsible"

union demands, praise for disarming the masses, approval of bourgeois repression against the left, and ordering the dissolution of both USec sympathizing groups in the country. But this was no accident, to be blamed on the perfidious nature of Peter Camejo or the shameless SWP. Such groveling capitulation before the bonapartist Sandinista "revolutionary leadership" is the inescapable result of the basis on which the United Secretariat was founded.

The USec was formed in 1963 by the SWP and the European lieutenants of Pablo on a program of political support to the alleged "natural Marxist" Fidel Castro and his bureaucratically deformed workers state in Cuba. But while both sides rejected the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution and the necessity of an independent proletarian vanguard, the components of the USec were divided by clashing opportunist impulses on very different national terrains. So in the face of every major upsurge in the class struggle this pseudo-Fourth International has collapsed. A dispute over Latin American guerrillism sparked a decade-long faction fight during the late '60s and early '70s. In 1974-76 the USec was admittedly on the verge of a split over Portugal and Angola, as SWP minority and Mandelite majority found themselves on opposite sides of the barricades. But despite subsequent dissolution of the factions, and even though Nicaragua was (on both sides) more an excuse than a cause, Moreno's determined drive managed to rip out an estimated 25-30 percent of the USec membership.

Although on the single issue of policy toward the victorious FSLN in Nicaragua the Parity Committee stands to the left of the United Secretariat, the new Morenoite/Lambertist bloc offers no alternative for would-be Trotskyists. In fact, this marriage of convenience is even more incompatible than the USec itself: the OCI is a staid social-democratic organization with a pronounced case of Stalinophobia, while Moreno is an adventurer setting out to build a personal international with a program of infiltrating all manner of



Sandinista commanders with Fidel Castro in Havana.

Class Struggle



"Third World" nationalist-bonapartist regimes. Thus before the Sandinistas took power, the OCI's man for Managua (Fausto Amador) was attacking the FSLN from the right as "adventurists" for organizing a second offensive to topple Somoza, while Moreno's BSB was based on the single demand of "support for the struggle of the Sandino people." Moreno the political chameleon spent years masquerading as a Peronist in Argentina, then switched to Castroism, then social democracy and now is on a leftist kick; Lambert's reformism is consistent—like the SWP he cheered the counterrevolutionary drive by the CIA-funded Portuguese Socialist Party in 1975. Here is the fake-Trotskyist rotten bloc of all time.

So much so that even the USec feels it can get away with accusing the Parity Committee of being an unprincipled combination! In response, OCI/OCRFI spokesman Stéphane Just brags that "We do not intend to mask the differences which exist among us." Thus even after the advertised "open conference," "We will each keep our own physiognomy and our own political positions" (*Informations Ouvrières*, 10-17 November). And in an interview in the same issue of the OCI paper, Moreno admits that "for now it [the Parity Committee] is a united front...." Yet Just/Moreno both call on the components of the Parity Committee "to fight for the construction of revolutionary parties"—on whose positions? Clearly what is intended is that both sides will continue to build their own satellites, so that when the inevitable split comes, they will just pick up their pawns and leave. Meanwhile the LTT is rapidly losing its "own physiognomy" (its political positions were always borrowed, first from the SWP and later the OCI). The French LTT, organized in the Ligue Communiste Internationaliste (LCI) since the expulsion/walkout from the USec, has set up a "permanent contact committee" (LCI Circular No. 1) with the OCI; and the *Lettre d'Informations Ouvrières* of 11 December reports that "the OCT and LCI consider themselves segments of the same revolutionary workers party."

The bankruptcy of both sides in the USec split is revealed by the fact that what comes out of it is two blocs, each composed of a reformist and a centrist element. Moreno and Lambert are no more united politically than Mandel and Barnes. In fact, during 1976-77 it was Barnes/Lambert vs. Mandel/Moreno, and before that it was Barnes/Moreno/Lambert against Mandel & Co. in the perpetual game of fake-Trotskyist musical chairs. For the OCT this is a continuing methodology which has already borne its fruits: the Parity Committee formula was the same federalist program on which the ill-fated OCRFI was built...and on which it foundered. For years Lambert had unresolved differences with his major bloc partner, Guillermo Lora's Bolivian POR, over the latter's participation in a "Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Front" with nationalist general Torres, and further differences with Lora's Argentine followers of Política Obrera over their tailing after Perón. Then last January the OCT broke with most of its Latin American allies. The charge: capitulation to bourgeois nationalism, particularly Peronism (surprise!). Now Lambert is at it again with a re-edition of the OCRFI. It is the "unity" of the lowest common denominator, not the Bolshevik program.

### What About Cuba?

In their statements since the USec split, the Parity Committee leaders have taken great pains to portray themselves as consistent fighters against Pabloism. According to Nahuel Moreno, "Even if

the Nicaraguan revolution was the detonator for the current crisis," its origins go back to "the terrible crisis in the Fourth International caused by the Pabloist deviation in 1951-53" of ordering deep entrism in the Kremlin-loyal CPs. He also accuses Pablo/Mandel of "one of the greatest crimes in the history of the workers movement" by giving critical support to the bourgeois Bolivian government in 1952. And in a resolution presented at the showdown meeting of the United Secretariat last fall, the Bolshevik Faction noted that the SWP's position on Nicaragua was to "apply Pablo's tactic toward the Algerian FLN" (*Lettre d'IO*, 10 October). Not only politically supporting the FLN, Pablo entered it and himself became a technical adviser for the post-independence bourgeois Ben Bella government.

In order to combat the political program which gave rise to the USec's present capitulation to the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua, it is crucial to analyze its origins. Entrism "sui generis" in the pro-Moscow Stalinist parties, Bolivia 1952, Algeria 1964—these are all Pabloist betrayals as is the SWP/USec line toward the FSLN. LTT leader C. Nemo also cites Mandelite support for Latin American "focoism" (Guevarist guerrillaism), subsequent chasing after "new mass vanguards" in Europe and fostering illusions in Eurocommunism. But why these particular examples— isn't something missing? What we have here is self-amnesty by means of a selective presentation of history. Moreno leaves an important gap in his supposed unrelenting struggle against Pabloism—namely the "reunification" of 1963 and subsequent years. And there's one example he doesn't cite—the most relevant one, in fact—Cuba.

The parallels between events in Nicaragua today and the early years of the Castro regime are inescapable. The basic forces involved are the same: a victorious guerrilla army in shaky alliance with domestic bourgeois liberals, facing a United States temporarily reluctant to intervene directly. (But where Castro was forced to adopt increasingly radical measures in the face of imperialist hostility, Carter seeks to conciliate the new regime—which in turn directs its main fire at those who want to go beyond the capitalist limits it has imposed on the anti-Somoza revolution.) The SWP is right to stress the fundamental identity of its line then and now. Today Barnes okays the expulsion of the BSB and offers the FSLN advice on how best to get rid of "ultralefts," while Mandel tags along; Sandinista left-winger Jaime Wheelock remains the USec's darling despite his anti-Trotskyist tirades. And back in the early '60s—when the Castro regime banned the Cuban POR newspaper, arrested their leaders and smashed printing plates for Trotsky's *The Revolution Betrayed*, while Guevara denounced Trotskyism as a tool of Washington—then, too, the SWP (and Moreno) remained silent or even excused the bureaucratic repression.

Cuba is a key issue for Trotskyists because there for the first time a radical petty-bourgeois leadership without previous connections with Stalinism (unlike in China, Vietnam or Yugoslavia) took power and expropriated essentially the entire bourgeoisie, instituting a collectivist economic system. This raised basic questions for the theory and program of permanent revolution. The response of the SWP, and the basis for forming the United Secretariat, was to throw the "old Trotskyism" out the window: the peasantry could replace the working class as the leading force, and where previously a Leninist-Trotskyist party was deemed necessary now the "blunted instrument" of a guerrilla band would

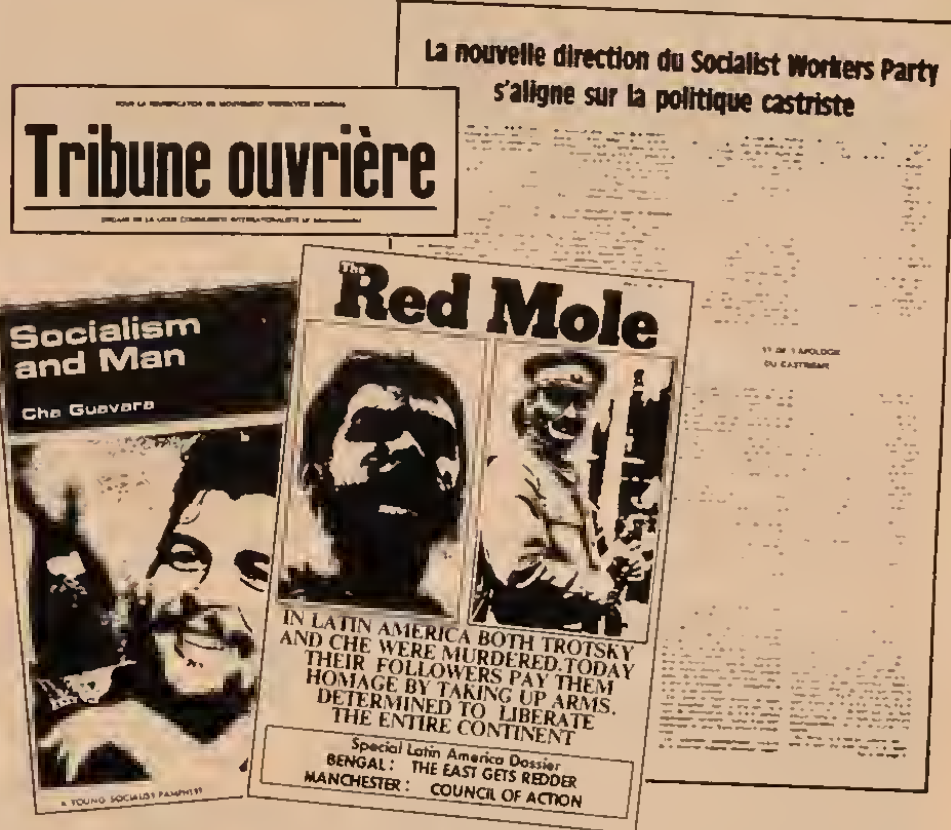
do. (The fact that what resulted was a bonapartist regime counterposed to workers democracy, which in foreign policy necessarily followed the Stalinist-nationalist line of conciliating imperialism, was of no concern to the Pabloists.) Moreno also took this tack; if anything, prior to 1968 he was even more enthusiastically pro-Castro than his SWP mentors. Lambert, however, answering with a knee-jerk pseudo-orthodoxy, blindly denied that there had been a social revolution in Cuba. For two decades the OCI called Castro's regime a "phantom capitalist state."

So coming from opposite directions the Lambertists and Morenoites both found themselves saddled with positions on Cuba which made it difficult to do battle with the SWP/USec over Nicaragua. (Barnes/Mandel could at least claim consistency in their opportunism.) As a result, in the past few months both the OCT and Bolshevik Faction have come out with documents which for the first time characterize Cuba as something approximating a deformed workers state. Yet both make the shift furtively. The BF has a convenient lapse of memory—ignoring Moreno's previous support to the USec position—simply stating that Castro & Co. are a "leadership with a petty-bourgeois bureaucratic policy placed at the head of a workers state which never managed to degenerate because it was born deformed..." ("Resolución sobre América Latina," September 1979). The OCT, however, wants to hold onto its old position with one hand, labeling it one variant—"plausible at the time it was

the misnamed Leninist-Trotskyist Faction (LTF), which attacked Mandelite/Guevarist guerrillaism from the right. Ditto for Moreno, who was part of the LTF leadership until splitting from it in 1975. What about the mid-1960s when Moreno called for "developing a technical apparatus strictly subordinate to the discipline of OLAS," Castro's stillborn "international" (see our *Moreno Truth Kit* for the facts); and when Hansen claimed that OLAS' call for continental guerrilla war "echoed the Bolshevik tradition" (see "For Workers Political Revolution in Cuba," *WV* Nos. 223 & 224, 19 January/2 February 1979)?

Above all, the various components of the Parity Committee seek to avoid confronting both the program and the struggle of the international Spartacist tendency. The iSt alone has put forward a coherent Trotskyist position on the Cuban question and from its origins as the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) of the SWP has consistently fought to politically destroy the Pabloist liquidators. The RT was unique in analyzing, at the time, the origins of the Cuban deformed workers state and its meaning for the Trotskyist program (see "Cuba and Marxist Theory," *Marxist Bulletin* No. 8). In opposition to the SWP leadership's resolution, "For Early Reunification of the Trotskyist Movement," which became the founding document of the United Secretariat, the Revolutionary Tendency presented a counter-resolution to the June 1963 SWP convention, which states:

"13. The Cuban Revolution has exposed the vast inroads of revisionism



Parity Committee supporters attack SWP's "new" Castroite leadership (top), but as IMG's Red Mole and SWP pamphlet show, USec Castroism wasn't born yesterday.

formulated"—which was not realized. Instead, "Another variant took shape: the constitution of a workers state resembling the workers states which were bureaucratic from the beginning" (*La Vérité* No. 588, September 1979). It took them only 19 years to figure it out!

### The Spartacist Spectre

The Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency had been calling for a change in the USec position on Cuba for some time, and thus could not dismiss the importance of the question as lightly as the BF and OCI try to. But their claim that "The New Leadership of the Socialist Workers Party Lines Up With Castro's Policy" (*Tribune Ouvrière* No. 1, November 1979) is patently absurd: the SWP has supported Castroism since 1960! This is a bald attempt by the LTT leaders to excuse their own role as disciples of SWP leader Joe Hansen in

upon our movement.... Thus Trotskyists are at once the most militant and unconditional defenders against imperialism of both the Cuban Revolution and of the deformed workers' state which has issued therefrom. But Trotskyists cannot give confidence and political support, however critical, to a governing regime hostile to the most elementary principles and practices of workers' democracy, even if our tactical approach is not as toward a hardened bureaucratic caste.

"14. What is true of the revisionists' approach toward the Castro regime is even more apparent in regard to the Ben Bella regime now governing Algeria on the program of a 'socialist' revolution in cooperation with French imperialism.... As revolutionaries our intervention in both revolutions, as in every existing state, must be in accordance with the position of Trotsky: 'We are not a government party; we are the party of irreconcilable opposition' (*In Defense of Marxism*). This can cease to apply only in relation to a government

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## Fraser's Answer: "Socialism" for the Bosses, Wage Cuts for the Workers

Some months ago when United Auto Workers (UAW) president Doug Fraser was trying to convince the Carter administration to buy out one-third ownership of Chrysler, he described it as a "dose of socialism." Various phony socialist groups agreed, each one appealing to the capitalist government for slightly more far-reaching schemes to save the failing company. In massive lobbying throughout the fall, the union begged for subsidies to the bosses. And in mid-December Congress responded to their pleas. Chrysler got a bailout to the tune of \$1.5 billion in loan guarantees. The UAW chief got a seat on the board of directors. And auto workers got the shaft.

Already they had a substandard contract shoved down their throats, breaking the Big 3 pattern for the first time, with plant closings certain anyway. At present over 32,000 Chrysler employees are on indefinite layoff, fully half the company's production workers. And on January 1 the historic Dodge Main plant in Hamtramck was closed down for good, throwing several thousand mainly black and Arab workers onto the streets of Detroit where chances of finding a decent job are virtually nil. Now, under orders from the government, the UAW is negotiating an even worse contract with further wage and benefit cuts totaling over \$400 million. This is Doug Fraser's "dose of socialism": billions for the bosses, wage cuts for the workers.

Fraser's scheme of partial nationalization of bankrupt industry combined with trade-union participation in management was seen within the confines of the American labor movement as unusual and somewhat unprecedented. In fact, there was nothing at all novel about Fraser's program; it was lifted in its entirety from the arsenal

of European social democracy. The big business press is playing up the UAW chief's accession to the Chrysler board as the first seed of "co-determination" (West Germany's famous *Mitbestimmung*) in the U.S. For the American workers movement Fraser's response to the Chrysler bankruptcy does pose something new, and it is the job of revolutionary Marxists to expose and combat such social-democratic reformism.

The particular terms of the Chrysler bailout were so horrendous for auto workers that even the majority of the American left, which regularly tails the Solidarity House bureaucracy, were forced to offer some criticisms. But in their methodology the reformist "socialists" differed not one whit from Fraser. Where the UAW misleader called for one-third government ownership and one union rep on the Chrysler board, the fake left presented only more grandiose versions. The Stalinist Communist Party (CP), in its most respectful manner, suggested, "Nationalization would be an equitable solution of the Chrysler problem" (*Daily World*, 16 August). The eclectic Stalinoid Workers World group, somewhat more radical, demanded that the millions the government is giving to the Chrysler bosses be used instead to finance "workers control of the [auto] industry."

But the fastest-talking salesman for Chrysler nationalization is the fake-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP). According to the *Militant* (31 August) a Carter-financed born-again Chrysler would miraculously "provide jobs at decent wages" while producing "efficient, safe, inexpensive cars that don't pollute the environment" and also "socially necessary public transit vehicles and agricultural machinery." The SWP doesn't even like to use the term

# Chrysler and the Bankruptcy of Social Democracy

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nationalization, much less expropriation, which smacks too much of socialism. In its political resolution adopted last August the section on partial nationalizations is presented under the rubric "public ownership," as if the big auto manufacturer were a municipal waterworks.

As against all the reformist hogwash, the Spartacist League has been unique in putting forward a program for militant class struggle. From the day Chrysler announced its intention to close the Dodge Main assembly plant, the SL called on auto workers to respond with militant plant occupations. And when Chrysler asked the Carter government for a billion-dollar subsidy, *WV* (No. 238, 17 August) responded with an article headlined, "Whatever Chrysler's Worth—Give It to the Workers!" Secondary headlines proclaimed,

"No Government Handouts to the Bosses!" and "Answer Layoffs with Sitdowns!" We called on Chrysler workers to occupy the plants, seize the company assets and distribute their net worth to the employees without a dime to the stock and bond holders.

The nationalization of the losers of capitalist competition has nothing in common with the socialist expropriation of the means of production. Government takeover and subsidization of bankrupt firms, supposedly to "save jobs," is a standard reformist practice. In that most decaying capitalist country, Britain, it has become almost institutionalized under successive Labour governments. Nationalized industrial cripples, like the auto manufacturer Leyland, are then run in competition with more efficient private firms by resorting to massive subsidies financed by immiserating the working class as a whole.

Even more than in profitable private firms, these inefficient, state-owned operations have to resort to wage restraint, speedup and layoffs. Just two months ago British Leyland management announced the layoff of 25,000 workers and sacked the firm's most important trade-union leader to show it meant business. (Meanwhile, BL management is trying to climb out of the hole by importing Japanese technology—a new Honda car is to be built at Leyland's Cowley plant.) Were the American government to nationalize Chrysler (unthinkable in the present political situation), it would simply duplicate the experience of British Leyland. The end result would be similar to the bail-out scheme advocated by Chrysler head Lee Iacocca and Carter: handouts to the bosses—layoffs and wage cuts for the workers.

Moreover, the failure of Chrysler takes place in the context of international capitalist competition, in which the No. 3 auto manufacturer's domestic market was taken over by Japanese and German imports. Five years ago Fraser's predecessor, Leonard Woodcock, called on the government to impose quotas on foreign car imports. Fraser's support to a government bailout has the same fundamental character as Woodcock's more open protectionism: subsidizing the profits of American capitalists at the expense of the jobs of Japanese and German auto workers.

As revolutionaries we do not advocate bankrupt "socialism" à la

Britain, which is necessarily bound up with national-chauvinist protectionism. We stand for the expropriation of all the basic means of production by a workers government as the basis for socialist economic planning.

### The Collapse of Chrysler

What happened to Chrysler? In 1946 the company was the second largest domestic car producer, after General Motors. But profits were siphoned off into (a) excessively high dividend payments and (b) export of capital. Management continued to pay dividends right up to the time the company effectively declared bankruptcy! In 1978, when Chrysler lost \$200 million, some \$65 million was still paid out to shareholders. Dividends were maintained to preferred shareholders through even the third quarter of 1979. At the same time, the company had over \$1 billion in long-term debt and was borrowing heavily against short-term credit. In short, on the edge of bankruptcy, Chrysler was borrowing money to line the pockets of its stock and bond holders. That is outright looting!

In an effort to increase profits Chrysler, like GM and Ford, invested heavily abroad. But by the time the slower-moving Chrysler management got into the overseas business, GM and Ford had already bought up the productive facilities. Chrysler was stuck with the losers and its foreign operations became a massive drain on the company's capital, preventing necessary investment and retooling of its U.S. plants.

Meanwhile, Chrysler's domestic operations were going to the dogs. Between 1968 and 1978, while GM and Ford roughly maintained their traditional shares of the domestic market and auto imports soared 70 percent, Chrysler's share declined by 40 percent. Then came the energy crisis engineered by the oil trust. That broke Chrysler. Having long relied on the demand of the American consumer for big cars, Chrysler found itself totally incapable of coming up with the large sums needed to down-size its product in line with shifting demand.

Even the business press recognizes that Chrysler is a case of exceptionally bad management. Here is how *Business Week* (20 August) analyzed the company's imminent bankruptcy:

"Chrysler's new big cars came out in the fall of 1973, just months before the Arab oil embargo destroyed the market for



WV Photo



Yates/Business Week

Nobody wants Chryslers.



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"Chrysler's new big cars came out in the fall of 1973, just months before the Arab oil embargo destroyed the market for

gas guzzlers. Chrysler reacted not by starting its biggest product overhaul in history, as GM did, but by laying off hundreds of engineers, setting back even further planning of future products. "Since then, Chrysler has made one untimely move after another."

## A Revolutionary Program for Chrysler Workers

The central axis of the SL program for Chrysler has been for plant occupations and class-struggle mobilizations as against reliance on the government. The sit-down strike is not only particularly appropriate to counter plant closings, but it has important historical tradition in the United Auto Workers. Precisely because it challenges the sacred property rights of the bosses, this type of strike has a galvanizing effect on other sectors of the working class. The historic 1937 Flint GM sitdown sparked a wave of similar strikes in the successful battle to unionize basic industry. Factory occupations by Chrysler workers today to win even a small share of what the bosses have taken from them would do far more to inspire a real fight for jobs by the American working class than all the government bail-out schemes retailed by the bureaucracy and its reformist hangers-on.

Revolutionaries who aspire to lead the American working class to power have a responsibility to give an answer to the plight of Chrysler workers. We have put forward a perspective that simultaneously offers the workers much more than they can get from any bail-out scheme and represents a radical attack on capitalist property rights. If Chrysler is going bankrupt, let the workers seize the plants and hold them. "Not piracy but mutiny," as the *WV* article put it.

Faced with this attack on their sacrosanct property rights, the bosses will certainly respond by raising the armed fist of the state: police, National Guard, even the army. But these threats can be beaten back. With expensive machinery in the workers' hands, the bosses will hesitate to order an assault.

"If Chrysler is going bankrupt, let the workers seize the plants and hold them. Not piracy but mutiny."

And the labor movement can counterpose a superior force by dispatching "flying squads" of pickets (the beginnings of a workers militia), calling for spreading the strike industrywide and locally, and sparking militant actions elsewhere. Such a plant takeover in the Chrysler citadel would electrify Detroit, bringing thousands of fellow auto workers to the defense of the sit-downers.

And then? The more left-talking reformists would have the workers call on the government to nationalize the company. (The SWP and CP are such wet noodles that in calling for

mined to hold on to the seized properties, management may be in a mood to hargain. If the bosses plead poverty, then we have a proposal they will surely understand—a good old-fashioned *bankruptcy sale*. Only this time it will be the workers pounding down the gavel. As *WV* wrote:

"...the workers ought to democratically elect a board to liquidate Chrysler. But not a cent to the Wall Street shareholders of Chrysler! Let the stocks, bonds and bank debts go down the tubes. All the money from the sale of assets should go to the Chrysler workforce including the foreign workers."



Der Spiegel

British Leyland protesters. Social Democracy in Britain: The wages of a working class impoverished.

government/"public" ownership of Chrysler they don't breathe a word about factory occupations.) But in the absence of a general working-class upsurge posing the possibility of proletarian revolution, operation of such state-owned facilities according to the rules of the capitalist game will simply mean more wage cuts, speedup and layoffs, as at British Leyland. This hardly points in a revolutionary direction.

Instead of relying on the capitalist government—don't forget it's *theirs*, not ours—class-struggle unionists must wage a militant fight against the companies. If Chrysler isn't really bankrupt, then with workers deter-

Such a radical, anti-capitalist demand would have an enormous appeal not only among auto workers, but also broader sections of the population justly outraged at Chrysler's wealthy mismanagers asking for government handouts while their employees get wage cuts and dismissal notices.

Attentive readers of *Workers Vanguard* will note that we have not always raised this program. In an article last spring on the shutdown of Dodge Main (*WV* No. 232, 25 May), we wrote: "In the event of large-scale plant closings, militants would demand government takeover of the plants and nationalization of Chrysler without

*continued on page 8*



AP

Detroit, July 19: Only Spartacist League called for factory occupations against plant closures, mass layoffs.



# Chrysler...

(continued from page 7)

compensation." This was a reflexive attempt to give immediacy to the socialist program of expropriation, but here it was incorrect. Our rejection of nationalization in this case is based on the specifics of the Chrysler situation and the politics of the American working class. This antiquated, looted and mismanaged firm was driven to the wall by superior domestic and foreign competition. Nobody wants Chryslers. Now accounting for only 10 percent of auto production, Chrysler is hardly vital to the American economy.

Everyone knows this government is not going to nationalize Chrysler. Therefore, any talk of nationalization could only serve as a left cover for a government bail-out scheme. This is just how Fraser used his proposal (now dropped) for one-third government ownership. To demand the nationalization of Chrysler is to propagate the reformist program of nationalizing the losers. We have no desire to foster illusions, particularly where none such now exist, that government takeovers can guarantee full employment or generally overcome the irrationalities of capitalism.

## Partial Nationalizations and the Transitional Program

For workers to seize and sell off the assets of a bankrupt firm is not a tactic for all seasons and all places. Especially in a backward country and region, the failure of a big firm could be an economic catastrophe, forcing a large part of the industrial working class into permanent unemployment and impoverishment. British Leyland today is a case in point. Here the bankruptcy of a particular firm becomes a crisis point of the capitalist system in general.

Another situation is a wave of bankruptcies and plant closures during a deep depression as in the early 1930s. Here the capitalist system is obviously in crisis and socialism is directly posed. It was for this kind of situation that Trotsky in the 1938 Transitional Program presented the linked demands of the nationalization of closed-down businesses and workers control of production as a first step toward socialist economic planning under a workers state.

The Transitional Program poses the question of the expropriation of particular industries and firms in a limited and conditional way:

"The socialist program of expropriation, i.e., of political overthrow of the bourgeoisie and liquidation of its economic domination, should in no case hinder us from advancing, when the occasion warrants, the demand for the expropriation of several key branches of industry vital for national existence or of the most parasitic group of the bourgeoisie."

So Trotskyists do stand for partial nationalizations? Yes, in exceptional cases.

Such an exceptional case is the oil industry in this country today. Big Oil is seen as extortionate not only by the proletariat, but by masses of the petty bourgeoisie and even sections of the bourgeoisie itself. There exists widespread support in the U.S. for the demand that the strategic fuel resources be ripped out of the hands of these parasitic monopolists. Unlike the conservative bureaucrats of the AFL-CIO and the fake-lefts, however, we understand that it is absurd to place confidence in Jimmy Carter and the capitalist parties to carry out this task. We point out that this vast concentration of private wealth and political power can only be expropriated by a working-class offensive that would shake capitalist America to its foundation.

The slogan of expropriating the oil trusts without compensation channels popular hostility to Exxon, Texaco, etc., toward a workers government and

socialism. But the *indiscriminate* demand for nationalizing particular industries only fosters reformist illusions in the gradual socialization of capitalist society. Our tendency came to an understanding of this only over time. Some years past, incipient oppositional groupings in the UAW politically supported by the Spartacist League raised the slogan: "Expropriate auto under workers control!" In the course of discussions within the SL on the program and tactics for building class-struggle caucuses in the unions, we came to the conclusion that the slogan put forward for auto was incorrect.

To begin with, workers control means dual power at the point of production in a revolutionary situation; it is *not* some kind of utopian proletarian-democratic means of administering a nationalized industry under capitalism. That reformist conception of workers control is, predictably, espoused by the SWP: "The best guarantee that Chrysler will be run in the public interest is to entrust control over its day-to-day operations to the auto workers themselves" (*Militant*, 31 August). Oh happy little island of socialism in the rough capitalist sea!

But the demand to expropriate the auto industry is wrong in itself, quite apart from the confusionist appendage, "under workers control." Auto is a central pillar of American industrial capital, whose nationalization would be tantamount to the nationalization of American industry in general. Hence, the demand for partial expropriation of auto ultimately lends credence to the reformist schema of the piecemeal socialization of the economy.

This is, of course, the standard social-democratic program. It was clearly stated, for example, in the British Labour Party's 1960 programmatic declaration, especially designed to water down Clause IV of the party's 1918 constitution, which called for "common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange":

"It is convinced that these social and economic objectives can be achieved only through an expansion of common ownership substantial enough to give the community power over the commanding heights of the economy.... Recognizing that both public and private enterprise have a place in the economy, it believes further extension of common ownership should be decided from time to time in the light of these objectives...."

—reproduced in Harold Wilson, *The Relevance of British Socialism* (1964)

In reality, nationalizations by imperialist governments are generally restricted to bailouts of failing companies, or they are quasi-military measures designed to better prepare for or prosecute a war. This latter was true to a substantial degree in Mussolini's Italy. During World War II, even in the U.S., the merchant marine was brought under the control and management of the government (although profits continued to go to the owners). There is nothing whatsoever progressive about such statification undertaken simply to better defend imperialist interests.

To summarize, for revolutionaries the demand for the expropriation of particular industries is an agitational demand to be raised *conjuncturally* when popular hostility is directed against a particularly exploitative industry or group of capitalists. Taken out of this context, this demand, like almost any other in the Transitional Program, can be given a reformist twist. For Trotsky partial nationalization was a bridge to workers power, not a means of improving capitalism:

"Nationalization can signify as in England, the mines, in France the military industries, a voluntary agreement between the owners and government. The owners become participants in the nationalized property and many of them, in France for example, become richer than before, for they were saved from bankruptcy.

"That is why we can use, I believe, the alternatives in our agitation, the words expropriation and nationalization, but

underline the word *expropriation*. We can say to the miner, you wish nationalization. Yes, it is our slogan. It is only a question of conditions. If the national property is too hurdened with debts against the former owners, your conditions can become worse than now. To base the whole proceedings upon a free agreement between the owners and the state signifies ruin of the workers. Now you must organize your own government in the state and expropriate them."

—"Conversation on the Slogan 'Workers and Farmers Government,'" *Writings*, 1938-39

Under the impact of great events which radicalize the workers, mass reformist parties may adopt a *paper program* of widespread or even complete nationalization. Four years of slaughter in the trenches and the influence of the Bolshevik Revolution caused the British Labour Party in 1918 to adopt its famous Clause IV. Similarly the Great Depression and the victory of fascism in Germany produced sharp leftward motion in social democracy. In 1934 the Belgian Workers Party adopted the "De Man Plan" for the general nationalization of industry. In 1935 the social-democratic-led French General Federation of Labor (CGT) came out for nationalizing "certain key industries."

Such programs and plans seek to channel the socialist aspirations of the working class into a parliamentary-reformist path. Trotskyists do not dismiss the calls for general nationalization sometimes put forward by mass reformist organizations. Rather we point out that these programs can be realized only through revolutionary class struggle, which the bureaucratic leaderships adamantly oppose. Thus, Trotsky sharply criticized the CGT for its failure to put forward any concrete measures to implement its nationalization plan (factory committees, workers control, etc.) and concluded:

"Either the plan is transformed into a plan for the conquest of power by the proletariat, for the establishment of a workers and peasants government, or the people will put it down as null and unworkable."

—"From the CGT's Plan to the Conquest of Power," in *Writings*, 1934-35

## The British Experience

If Trotsky used the demand for expropriation as a transition toward a workers government, the British experience has been the Chrysler bailout writ large. Successive Labour governments have nationalized whole sectors of bankrupt industries, operating them through heavy subsidies extracted from more productive sectors of the economy. This social-democratic policy has proved no more of a step toward socialism than traditional Tory "free enterprise." It has simply perpetuated an ossified industrial structure with an increasingly impoverished population. In 1946 the standard of living of the British working class was still the highest in Europe; today it vies with southern Italy for being the lowest in Western Europe.

British capitalism, which had been in a state of decline for decades, emerged from World War II with its empire looted and in the process of disintegration. Industries vital to the economy, such as the mines and railroads, were bankrupt and falling apart. The first post-war Labour government was swept into power in 1945 with almost a two-to-one parliamentary majority. The working class had enormous illusions that this government would implement socialist measures. But the Labour ministers wasted little time in reassuring the more jittery sections of the ruling class that this was not the case. In November 1945, the conservative *Economist*, which had bitterly opposed Labour in the elections, was able to write:

"An avowedly Socialist Government, with a clear Parliamentary majority,

might well have been expected to go several stages further. There is nothing in the list about the land... ocean-going shipping... merchant shipping... or petroleum, which in its domestic aspects, might be thought the most obvious target of all.... The program... is almost the least it could do without violating its election pledges."

In fact, the Labour Party clearly stated in its 1945 electoral program that it intended to nationalize only the most inefficient and failing industries. These were distinguished from "many small businesses rendering good services" as well as "big industries not yet ripe for public ownership." The bankrupt British bourgeoisie was more than happy to dump its money-losers on the government. With the exception of iron and steel, all the nationalizations undertaken by the 1945-51 government were broadly accepted by the capitalist class. In fact, almost all of the nationalizations were carried out on the basis of findings and recommendations made by special investigative commissions dominated by Tories.

In short, Labour Party policy boiled down to bailouts for the bosses and austerity for the working class. Staggering amounts of compensation, totaling over £2 billion, were paid out for dilapidated and rundown properties: £1 billion for the railways and canals alone; £164 million to the hated coal operators; £58 million for the Bank of England. Meanwhile, the government engaged in ruthless strike-breaking activities. In 1945 troops were called out against dockers who wildcatted for higher wages and a reduction in the workweek from 48 to 40 hours, while the following year troops were again mobilized against striking London transport workers. All wings of the Labour Party, including the "left" leader Aneurin Bevan, supported these anti-working-class actions.

Summarizing the effect of three years of social-democratic government in Britain, Arne Swabeck of the then-revolutionary SWP wrote in the *Fourth International* of March-April 1946:

"Such state intervention has become wholly reactionary. It tends to aid monopoly capitalism; and it serves the purposes only in maintaining capitalist relations of production as a whole.

"Within the nationalized industries, saddled with a crippling burden of exorbitant compensation and expensive management set-ups, the revenues must come out of surplus value produced by the workers.... To workers this means more speed-up, greater intensity of exploitation under more severe austerity, and a generally reduced standard of living.

"The crucial question of which class benefits from the nationalizations is here made singularly clear."

The political and economic context in which the post-war nationalizations in Britain were carried out is fundamentally different from that in the U.S. today. Whole sections of the economy genuinely vital to national existence—the railroads, mines, overland transport, gas, electricity—were bankrupt. The issue posed *directly* in Britain was the need for a workers government to fully expropriate the bourgeoisie and set up a planned, collectivized economy. Such an outcome, in fact, was an objective possibility. Soldiers had voted more heavily for Labour than almost any other section of the population and in 1945 the British army was far from a reliable instrument to defend capitalist interests.

Had there been a militant defense of the living standards of the working class, particularly in the key sectors of the proletariat employed in the nationalized industries, it would quickly have exploded the entire social-democratic bailout integral to the stabilization of British capitalism. The result would have been a confrontation militarily posing the question of state power. However, the trade-union bureaucracy working hand in glove with Labour Party leaders succeeded largely in stifling such struggle.

Those who call for the nationalization

WORKERS VANGUARD



of Chrysler, look to Labourite Britain. There you have the result of three decades of nationalizing the Chryslers. This policy has not only impoverished the working class but now provides a most favorable environment for the growth of fascism. Thatcher's aggressive anti-working-class policies express the desperation of a capitalist class which can no longer afford social-democratic reformism. And for millions of petty bourgeois and even many backward workers, Leyland, the mines, the docks are labor-based socialism in practice. And if that's socialism, then they're against it. The fascist National Front appeals to the widespread feeling that something radical must be done to halt the rot of British society, a rot that definitely includes nationalized industrial cripples like Leyland.

## Fight Social-Democratic Reformism!

Since the late 1930s American social democracy has been extremely weak, basically acting as advisers for various sections of the trade-union bureaucracy, which, however, firmly support the Democratic Party. This parasitic relationship was disturbed by the Vietnam War. The rabidly chauvinist, central Meanyite bureaucracy became more hawkish than the bourgeois liberals. But with the revived Cold War atmosphere and rightward drive of the Democrats toward ever greater austerity for the workers, the social democrats have regained some favor among the union bureaucracy. It's a sign of the times that 17 AFL-CIO building trades unions, backbone of the Meanyite machine, took out an ad in the newsletter of Michael Harrington's Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC) congratulating it for "firm and militant support of the American labor movement" (*Democratic Left*, September 1979).

Unlike the Meanyite building trades, the Reutherite UAW has a real, if somewhat atrophied, social-democratic tradition. There is a certain ideological continuity between Reuther's call in 1945 for a union-run "reconversion" of the American economy and Fraser's proposal for the one-third nationalization of Chrysler. But when Reuther approached the capitalist government to co-partner the post-war economy, the U.S. had just emerged supreme victor in World War II. Its technological and productive resources far surpassed those of its capitalist rivals. Today Chrysler, on whose board the UAW president sits, is composed of aging and dilapidated plants, its market taken by superior and cheaper Japanese and German autos. Social-democratic reformism in the U.S. today means nationalist protectionism. The ultimate capitalist answer to "protecting" Chrysler's jobs is a new imperialist war and another Hiroshima.

The social democrats—particularly fake Trotskyists like the SWP—disguise their collaboration with the imperialist state with talk about "economic democracy," "workers control," "workers management," etc. So the SWP calls for nationalization under workers control, to be implemented not even by a reformist party like the British Labourites—but by Jimmy Carter and the capitalist Democratic Party! Everyone knows all such talk is hogwash—what's really involved is simply government subsidies to bankrupts.

In the mouths of America's social democrats and fake-lefts such slogans as expropriation, workers control and workers management are bandied about to better sell the standard reformist schemes. As opposed to the SWP et al., we have no interest in conning American workers to take the ruinous road of British Labourism. To the reformist call for nationalizing Chrysler, we counterpose: Seize the plants! Whatever Chrysler's worth—Give it to the workers! Forward to a workers government! ■

# Hail Red Army...

(continued from page 1)

wants the People's Liberation Army to channel arms to the reactionary Afghan rebels through their mutual military client, Pakistan. With unprecedentedly forthright bellicosity, Brown's toast at a state banquet Sunday called on Peking to join American imperialism "with complementary actions in the field of defense as well as diplomacy." Now most of the cards are on the table.

Both Egypt's Sadat and Israel's Begin have offered the U.S. military bases in order to get in on the gravy train of the grand anti-Soviet united front. Before it's over Israel may be sending rabbis (only Orthodox, of course) as military chaplains to the anti-Russian Muslim forces. And seeking to enlist the Muslim world in his crusade, in particular Ayatollah Khomeini's Persian theocracy, Carter ended his television speech not with the usual appeal to the "free world" but with a denunciation of the attempt by "a powerful atheistic government to subjugate an independent Islamic people" (*New York Times*, 5 January).

This was Brzezinski's message as well, speaking December 30 on ABC's "Issues and Answers": "I think every sober-headed Iranian, even the most anti-American ones, ought to ask themselves, what do the events in Kabul portend for Teheran." But the appeal is falling on deaf ears, and ironically it was Brzezinski's own attempt to sign up Khomeini's prime minister Bazargan that led to the embassy takeover which has stymied U.S. plans. With Carter protecting the shah and brandishing his military might against Iran, Washington's call on Khomeini's regime for a common front against "godless Communism" is doomed to fail.

## SALT Shelved

Unlike the crazed Polish irridentist Brzezinski (and the new Polish pope), President Carter is a cynical bourgeois politician in the narrowest sense: while serving his class he tries to say without too many guffaws what he thinks will get him re-elected. Last month he ran for re-election against the ayatollah and his alleged ally, Edward Kennedy, and for the Christian god. This month Carter is running against Brezhnev and for god. Many folks will think, especially after the *Playboy* interview, that he's long overplayed the god game.

The administration is seeking to exploit the temporary climate of "national unity" generated in the U.S. by the seizure of the embassy hostages in Teheran to massively escalate the American war machine. Now there will be a massive weird subway system in the West, the size of a small state, to move around MX mobile missiles. Carter demanded that NATO allies including West Germany accept deployment of 572 nuclear missiles in West Europe targeted at the USSR. And he "compromised" with "hawks" in Congress who wanted a 5 percent increase (above

inflation) in the Pentagon budget—settling for 4.5 percent—over and above the \$20 billion increase in the next fiscal year.

Each escalation in American armament was palmed off as appeasing opponents of SALT. Clearly "Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty" means billions for more nuclear missiles, bombers, ships, etc. And these weapons are not being built to liberate hostages held by Islamic "students" chanting, "Carter is a dog." They are aimed at the USSR. With the Soviet army operation in Afghanistan, all the claptrap about "détente," SALT, etc.—by which the imperialists seek to negotiate the disarmament of the Soviet degenerated workers state—has been put into mothballs.

Of course, this counterrevolutionary diplomatic farce would not have gotten this far were it not for the class-collaborationist, pacifistic illusions of the Kremlin bureaucracy in "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. But even as hamhanded intransigence by employers sometimes forces even conservative union hacks to call a strike, so the septuagenarian Stalinist leaders in Moscow got fed up and did the obvious thing. Recognizing that (as American analysts have long admitted) Afghanistan has no strategic importance for the U.S., the Soviets took the opportunity to shore up the secular left-nationalists in Kabul and in the process extended their defense perimeter by several hundred miles around the eastern flank of Iran. As for SALT, it was obviously dead and only the impotent and frustrated Jimmy Carter could see "withdrawing" it from Senate consideration as a "warning" to Moscow.

## Afghanistan and the Soviet Union

U.S. imperialism has tried to portray the Soviet military operation in Afghanistan as akin to its invasion of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. In Hungary the Kremlin suppressed a working-class political revolution. In Czechoslovakia it clamped on a bureaucratic stranglehold and cut short potentially revolutionary ferment. Both invasions were neither in the interests of the international working class nor of the defense of the gains of the October Revolution. Afghanistan is entirely different.

Commanded by a parasitic Stalinist bureaucracy which has usurped political power from the Soviet workers, the lives of Red Army soldiers have often been squandered for counterrevolutionary ends: from the Sino-Soviet border war to supporting the blood-drenched, genocidal bonapartist Derg in Ethiopia. But the Red Army in Afghanistan, the Russian support to the heroic Vietnamese and the Soviet-backed Cuban defense of Angola against the U.S.-instigated South African invasion in 1975-76 are three instances since the end of World War II where Russian military action has clearly aided the liberation of the oppressed and the defense of the Soviet state against imperialism.

Afghanistan and Russia share a common border of over 1,000 miles. Like most backward regions, Afghanistan is a mosaic of peoples none of

which has been able to compact a modern nation and many of which extend into the Soviet Union or other neighboring countries. Out of an estimated population of 17 million there are more than 250,000 mullahs—a tremendous weight on the skimpy social surplus of this barren land. Some 70 percent of the population is engaged in agriculture, but two-fifths of them are landless. While 15 percent of the people are urbanized, there are only two factories in the whole country.

The enormous burden of the Islamic priest-caste in Afghanistan, as in Iran, is rooted in barbaric social institutions which are in turn conditioned by extreme economic backwardness. Marxists point out that social progress can be measured by the position of women, and what really drove the Afghan mullahs into opposition was the attempt by the Kabul regime to restrict (not even outlaw) bride price. For centuries women have been sold like chattel slaves. For most men the bride price was a lifetime's savings or a life-long debt to money lenders who charged usurious interest rates and gave the mullahs their cut in donations. For men without means, no money meant no sex—not with women, anyway. These days the clergy are telling young villagers to buy a rifle and go fight the "kaffir" (infidel) government; if you can't afford both a gun and a wife—well, bite the bullet.

Clearly within the framework of Afghanistan alone there was no solution to national and social oppression. These questions are linked, historically as well as socially, to the fate of the Russian Revolution. The extension of the October Revolution to Afghanistan in 1921 was prevented only by the presence of British imperialism in India. And one need only look at the gains that women have made in the Soviet East to see what proletarian liberation of these pre-capitalist areas meant. The October Revolution proclaimed the full equality of women, and Bolshevik cadres in the Asian regions where the mullahs held sway struggled, often at the cost of their lives, to draw women out of enforced seclusion. Even though this work suffered with the Stalinist political counterrevolution, nevertheless women in the Muslim areas of the USSR have vastly more social gains and real equality than in any bourgeois Islamic country.

Although the Stalinist bureaucracy is imbued with Great Russian chauvinism, its conduct is conditioned by the fact that Russians are a minority people within the Soviet state—albeit the predominant minority. In order to integrate the peoples of diverse national and ethnic backgrounds who make up the Soviet Union, the bureaucracy retained a democratic-national heritage. In contrast, the Chinese bureaucracy can and does resort to a policy of ruthless Sinification. The contrast between the USSR and China is clearest in their shared borderlands. For example, the Mongolians living in Outer Mongolia (a Soviet satellite) do not suffer anything like the national oppression of Mongolians living in China's Inner Mongolia, before that token of

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## Corrections

The article, "Spartacists Oppose Police Trap at Bay Area Anti-Nazi Demo" (*WV* No. 242, 26 October 1979), reported that several hundred would-be anti-fascist demonstrators led by various New Left collectives, Progressive Labor and the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party voluntarily walked into a fenced-in enclosure erected at Heather Farm Park in Walnut Creek, October 13, under the watchful eye of hundreds of riot cops. We have since been informed that the RCP was not among the groups which walked into

this temporary concentration camp.

In the article, "Split in the United Secretariat" (*WV* No. 243, 9 November 1979), several lines were dropped from the second paragraph of the fourth column at the top of page 6. The paragraph should have begun, "Thus the stage was set for the extraordinary LCR congress which began November 1 in the Paris suburb L'Hay-les-Roses."

In *WV* No. 246, 28 December 1979, the article "Queen of Spies?" referred to British monarch Elizabeth II as "a nasty Hessian Queen." In fact, the Windsor "royal" family descended from George I, who was of the German house of Hanover.



# Hail Red Army...

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regional autonomy was abolished during the "Cultural Revolution." And an estimated 200,000 Turkic-speaking people from Sinkiang, seeking to escape the oppressive chauvinism of the Han Chinese, have fled to the USSR since 1961.

The Soviet regime is particularly sensitive regarding its Muslim borderlands, where it has often made the greatest efforts to grant local and national autonomy in order to maintain the loyalty of peoples related to the rest of Central Asia. Muslim peoples number 50 million in the Soviet Union and they dominate six of the 16 republics of the USSR. Notably many of the soldiers of the Soviet army units in Afghanistan are recruited from Uzbeks and Tajiks. And if "fiercely independent Afghanistan" is about to suffer such horrendous national oppression at the hands of the Soviets, why indeed can Moscow use Muslim-derived troops without fear? Obviously because they know they're better off than they would be under the Afghan mullahs or Khomeini. Reportedly one reason why the Soviet army deployed substantial forces in Afghanistan was the feeling that the Kabul regime was being too high-handed and insensitive to the problems of carrying out reforms and consolidating a centralized governmental authority in backward areas with diverse peoples and was thereby fueling the reactionary Islamic insurgency

## "Poor Little Independent Afghanistan?"

With Peking criminally supporting the Afghan reactionaries, it was to be expected that their loyal followers would toe the line. If they supported the CIA/South African/Chinese-backed nationalists in Angola, then hailing these feudal reactionaries should come as second nature. And indeed, recent issues of the *Call*, organ of the Communist Party/"M-L," contain a series of reports entitled "With the Rebels in Afghanistan." If these press agents for the mullahs really want to carry out the Peking line, perhaps they should consider forming a brigade to go to Afghanistan and fight with the Islamic reactionaries. Carter might even pay for the trip—but they probably only need one-way tickets, because if the Soviet army didn't give them what they deserve, the fanatically anti-communist tribal gangs would do the job. Recall the reports of 30 Russian tourists slaughtered by a gang of mojahedeen (holy warriors) and the massacre of 25 Soviet military officers by mutinous troops last February—some skinned alive, others castrated and dismembered.

Incredibly, an ostensibly Trotskyist

group has taken the same line as Brzezinski, Pope Wojtyla and the Peking bureaucracy, and it is not—as might be expected—the wretched reformists of the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) who consider any attack upon Khomeini's bigoted autocratic theocracy to be "racist" and "pro-imperialist." Instead it was the British International Marxist Group (IMG) which last week published a back-page headline on its paper, *Socialist Challenge* (3 January) demanding, "Soviet Troops Out of Afghanistan!" The author is IMG leader Tariq Ali, leading Pakistani spokesman for the fake-Trotskyist international rotten bloc called the United Secretariat (USec).

According to Tariq Ali:

"The decision of the Soviet Union to send troops to remove Hafizullah Amin, General Secretary of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, replaced him with Bahrak Karmal and occupy parts of the country must be condemned on every count. It disregards the rights of the people of Afghanistan to determine their own future. It tramples on the rights of the PDPA, limited though these were, to choose its own leaders and it will aid the most reactionary and backward-looking forces in Afghanistan."

Tariq Ali overlooks the fact that every PDPA leader, including Amin, called for Soviet military aid. The nationalists had attempted to consolidate power with an army and officer corps that was built up by the Daoud dictatorship and the monarchy. Since its equipment and training came from the Soviet Union, the army (relative to the rest of Afghan society) had undergone a certain radicalization and was not without pro-Soviet leanings. This facilitated the almost bloodless PDPA-led "revolution" of April 1978, which was backed by the Afghan army. But as the left-nationalist PDPA regime in Kabul became bogged down fighting a prolonged tribal insurgency, the army began to disintegrate—with significant forces going over to the Islamic insurgents and taking their Soviet weapons with them.

Unlike the British parliament, which is apparently Tariq Ali's frame of reference, in some countries politics are more direct. Regimes are often made and unmade by who arrives at the presidential palace with more tanks, or even more elementary, who is quicker on the draw. Such was the fate of the now-terminated president of South Korea. Colonel Mengistu in Ethiopia, a hero of Tariq Ali's American comrades of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), got "elected" by being the one who stepped over the corpses on the way to the door of the Derg's chambers. Likewise, Amin became president by killing the former president Nur Mohammad Taraki, the leader of the "April [1978] Revolution" and the historic Communist leader of his people (like Tito, Ho Chi Minh or Sen Katayama). If this is an exercise of the PDPA's right to choose their leaders, it certainly is "limited." And now Karmal has been

installed by the Soviet forces who had earlier backed Amin and Taraki.

The impressionistic centrists are ever so sensitive to petty-bourgeois radical opinion, especially in "Little England." And if Tory prime minister Margaret Thatcher decrees that the Queen's realm is "distressed" over events in Britain's former sphere of influence, then by osmosis the distress reaches the editorial offices of the IMG. In the U.S. Afghanistan awakens no great passions, but for Britain it is memories of Empire, the Khyber Pass, the gateway from Russia to the Indian subcontinent. The historic rivalry between the British and tsarist

are certainly preparing the way thoroughly, no doubt recalling that Cliff's own definitive exit from Trotskyism was his opposition to the Stalinist "invasion" of "poor little South Korea."

And what about the lickspittle American SWP, which as much as called the Spartacist tendency CIA agents when we refused to join the Ethiopian colonels' war against the Somali people and which labels us "pro-imperialist" propagandists when we tell the truth about clerical reaction in Iran? In Afghanistan, the CIA and Khomeini are on the same side of the barricades, and massive Red Army support to the Kabul regime against the American and Pakistani-aided Islamic tribal revolt poses the Russian question pointblank. Will the SWP again pretend it thinks imperialism's strategic aim of capitalist restoration in the USSR is beside the point, as it did during last year's Vietnam-China conflict?

In *Struggle for a Proletarian Party* (1940), a collection of his writings against the Shachtman opposition, American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon noted acidly:

"Year in and year out in innumerable articles, documents, theses, speeches, the leaders of the opposition have been promising and even threatening to defend the Soviet Union—'In the hour of danger we will be at our posts!'—but when the hour drew near, when the Soviet Union almost began to need this defense, they welched on their promise."

By giving unconditional military support to the Soviet army and PDPA Afghan forces we in no way place political confidence in the Kremlin bureaucracy or the left-nationalists in Kabul. While the Moscow Stalinists apparently presently intend to shore up the PDPA regime, and if anything limit the pace of democratic and modernizing reforms, the prolonged presence in Afghanistan of the Soviet army opens up more far-reaching possibilities. Speaking on the national and colonial question at the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920, Lenin foresaw that "...with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system, and through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage." Extend social gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples!

Today, such an outcome would be at worst a bureaucratically deformed workers state. Only a proletarian political revolution in the USSR can truly restore the Red Army and the Soviet state to its internationalist and revolutionary mission. And only Trotskyist parties armed with the program of permanent revolution can lead the colonial masses to their complete emancipation. Only the overthrow of the imperialist powers by their working classes can lay the basis for the world socialist order which can lift the deeply oppressed and backward regions like Afghanistan out of their poverty, isolation and obscurantism, establishing the genuine social equality of all peoples. But the liberation of the Afghan masses has begun! ■



Russia over Afghanistan was called by Kipling the "Great Game."

## Defend the Soviet Union!

From a military point of view the Soviet intervention may or may not have been wise, though certainly it is deeply just to oppose the Islamic reactionary insurgents backed by imperialism. There can be no question that for revolutionaries our side in this conflict is with the Red Army. In fact, although it is surely uncalled for militarily, a natural response on the part of the world's young leftists would be an enthusiastic desire to join an international brigade to Afghanistan to fight the CIA-connected mullahs. Most of the fake-leftists cannot see this, however—just as they cannot understand how workers are beginning to speak of particularly oppressive bosses as "ayatollahs"—because they support the analogous movement, Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution," next door in Iran.

The IMG's response to Red Army troops in Afghanistan is reminiscent of the response of the Burnham-Shachtman petty-bourgeois opposition in the Trotskyist American SWP on the eve of World War II, which denounced the Soviet invasion of Baron von Mannerheim's Finland after the Hitler-Stalin Pact. Will these "Trotskyists" who today shed tears for "poor little independent Afghanistan" still pay lip service to the duty of revolutionists to unconditionally defend the Soviet Union against imperialist attack or domestic counterrevolution as they make a beeline for the "state-capitalist" followers of Tony Cliff's British SWP? They

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# Rotten Bloc...

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genuinely based on workers' democracy.

"15. Experience since the Second World War has demonstrated that peasant-based guerrilla warfare under petty-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime. The creation of such regimes has come about under the conditions of decay of imperialism, the demoralization and disorientation caused by Stalinist betrayals, and the absence of revolutionary Marxist leadership of the working class. Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive significance only under such leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. For Trotskyists to incorporate into their strategy revisionism on the proletarian leadership in the revolution is a profound negation of Marxism-Leninism no matter what pious wish may be concurrently expressed for 'building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries'."

—"Toward Rebirth of the Fourth International," *Spartacist* No. 1, February-March 1964

Here is a program to fight Pabloism which provides real direction in arming communists for the test of Nicaragua. And it wasn't written yesterday.

## Reforge the Fourth International!

Would-be Trotskyists in and around the United Secretariat now face hard choices. If they remain with the USec they must clearly be prepared to endure, endorse and carry out further betrayals on the order of Nicaragua or worse—including turning in their own comrades. If they support Barnes they had better have strong stomachs—strong enough to swallow the SWP's pro-imperialist "neutrality" during the South African invasion of Angola. If they follow Mandel they may, like the British IMG, end up joining Jimmy Carter supporting Islamic reactionaries against Soviet troops in Afghanistan. And whether Mandelites or SWPers, they will find themselves chanting "allah akbar" and hailing the "progressive" Khomeini in Iran while the ayatollah's executioners mow down Kurds, Arabs, oil workers and women (and of course put their own comrades on death row). These are the standard wages of Pabloism.

But what of those who turned their backs on the USec to follow the Parity Committee? Moreno, it's true, looks pretty left in Europe today—hard against Eurocommunism, for a "Trotskyist party" in Nicaragua, "fight Pabloism"—and no doubt his Bolshevik Faction has attracted genuine leftists disgusted with the USec's record of sellouts. But Moreno is above all a charlatan. A reformist in Argentina, he now appears as a centrist. From Moreno the Peronist, the Castroite, the Maoist, the social democrat, we come to Moreno the heroic guerrilla and intrepid fighter against Pabloism! But offer him a cabinet post and he'll come full circle. He criticizes Mandel/Pablo/Lora over Bolivia, yet Moreno politically supported Perón against left-wing guerrillas. In Panama, where thousands of leftist students demonstrate against the dictator Torrijos (a friend not only of Fidel Castro, but also Chase Manhattan) whose troops beat BSB members, the Morenoites call for supporting

his supposed, "progressive" struggle against imperialism. And of course there are the financial scandals—like what happened to all the money for Hugo Blanco's peasant organizing in Peru?

Moreno, who criticizes Mandel for capitulating to the Eurocommunists, is now aligned with the OCI, politically somewhere to the right of Willy Brandt. Join up with Lambert and you better like being ideological front-men for the CIA! In France the Lambertists voted for the popular-front candidate, Socialist leader François Mitterrand, for president. In Portugal they backed the SP of Mário Soares when he was receiving CIA money and in league with fascists burning down CP offices. In Germany they call for a "national constituent assembly" and "unconditional reunification"—i.e., for liquidation of the social/economic gains of East Germany through a capitalist reunification. So Stalinophobic is the OCI that for it "Eurocommunism" was a plot hatched in Moscow; the class character of the Kremlin bureaucracy is defined simply as "bourgeois," even though it rests on the property forms established by the October Revolution; and internationally the USSR is supposedly in an unbreakable "Holy Alliance" contracted by the bureaucracy with imperialism," established at Potsdam and Yalta and unaffected by such vicissitudes as even the Cold War.

The unprincipled character of the Parity Committee is indicated by its very name. Here is what Trotsky had to say about such diplomatic combinations:

"The idea of 'parity of formations,' that is, of tendencies, is inherently absurd and vicious. The tendencies are not equal in numbers; but what is more important is the different ideological and political value of the tendencies. There are right and wrong tendencies, progressive and reactionary ones. Adventurists, who hold nothing sacred, may well accommodate themselves with all the possible tendencies. But Marxists are obliged to mercilessly fight the unprincipled tendencies and not to make alliances with them on an equal basis. The parity of tendencies means the parity of Marxism, centrism, adventurism, etc."

—L.D. Trotsky, *The Crisis of the French Section*

In the contemporary Lambert/Moreno version, the components of the bloc can't even agree on a name expressing a common goal. It's not immediately apparent what the differences are between "reconstruction" (OCI), "reorganization" (BF) and "reunification" (LCI) of the Fourth International. Clearly all three formulations are intended to leave the door open to maneuvers with elements of the USec leadership. Just as clearly, they stand in sharp contrast to the perspective indicated by the iSt's slogan "For the Rebirth of the Fourth International." As we wrote in our "Letter to the OCI/OCRFI":

"Our slogan implies that a very fundamental process must be gone through; that it is not possible simply to fit together existing bits and pieces, perhaps with a little chipping here or there, in order to get the edifice back together again."

—*Spartacist* No. 22, Winter 1973-74

There is also the "open conference"

announced by the Parity Committee as a forum to debate the fundamental issues facing ostensible Trotskyists. A number of European left-of-the-USec centrist organizations will grab for this the way a drowning man grabs a lifesaver. Unable to elaborate a coherent program among themselves on such basic issues as popular fronts, the class nature of Castro's Cuba, Pabloism and the Fourth International, some hope that the Argentine *caudillo* can in bonapartist fashion bring them together before they go under for the last time in the pseudo-Trotskyist swamp. In the meantime the conference has apparently become rather less open. By mid-November the OCI was restricting attendance to those "who justly claim to stand for the continuity of the Fourth International." This explicitly includes the USec ("The United Secretariat of the Fourth International is invited to participate...") and we leave it to our readers to figure out just who might be excluded by the OCI "justly."

The Lambertists have already given a hint, with their usual means of expression. On November 13 an OCI goon squad outside a meeting hall in Paris physically attacked a sales team of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France, sympathizing section of the iSt (see "How the Lambertists 'Answer' Trotskyists: Gangsterism and Slander," *WV* No. 246, 28 December 1979). Shortly thereafter, LCI leader Nemo singled out "sects... like the Spartacists" which "do nothing but maintain the divisions in our movement for the sole profit of the bureaucratic apparatuses" (*IO*, 17-24 November). And in the second issue of *Tribune Ouvrière* (24 November) the LCI defends the SWP against "Spartacist provocateurs who characterize the SWP as reformist." In "justification" of their slander and gangsterism the Lambertists have lately been saying that the Spartacist tendency is outside the bounds of the workers movement.

Who are their authorities for deciding, George Meany and Zbigniew Brzezinski? Those are the people who inspire the OCI line! But if the iSt is to be dismissed as "provocateurs," whose agents are we supposed to be? The Kremlin's, say the Lambertists, pointing to our opposition to the Chinese invasion of Vietnam, support to Cuban troops in Angola against South Africa, and refusal to make common cause with Jimmy Carter on behalf of Soviet dissidents. U.S. imperialism, says the SWP, because we refuse to back Khomeini in Iran and support the Somalis' right to self-determination against Soviet/Cuban-backed Ethiopia. Funny they can't agree. This kind of agent-baiting on the basis of political positions is a hallmark of Stalinism, but actually common to all reformists—it is their favorite way of trying to dismiss revolutionaries. Thus the Russian Mensheviks retailed the tsarist slander that Lenin was a German agent; and the German social-democratic bloodhounds labeled Luxemburg and Liebknecht Russian agents.

The LCI claims that we proclaim ourselves the Fourth International. On the contrary, we have stated frankly that the iSt is a tendency fighting to reforge the world party of revolutionary socialism. And as an important component of our struggle to build fighting propaganda groups, we have used the tactic of revolutionary regroupment through a process of splits and fusions with forces breaking from revisionism and seeking the road to authentic Trotskyism. In the aftermath of the revolutionary ferment in Portugal during 1974-76, the international Spartacist tendency put forward as a principled basis for such regroupments a draft declaration by Trotskyists expelled or driven out of the USec (see *WV* No. 143, 4 February 1977). Centering on the struggle against popular frontism, for a Leninist party and for soviet power in Portugal, its nine points included:

• No political or electoral support to

popular fronts; for conditional opposition to workers parties in open or implicit class-collaborationist coalitions;

- Uphold the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution; for proletarian leadership of the national/social struggle;
- For military support to petty-bourgeois nationalist forces fighting imperialism, but absolutely no political support to such forces; for Trotskyist parties in every country;
- For unconditional defense of all the deformed/degenerated workers states against imperialism; for political revolution against the bureaucracies; no political support to competing Stalinist cliques and factions;
- Against violence within the workers movement;
- For communist fractions in the unions, based on the Transitional Program;
- For the communist tactic of the united front from above; for the tactic of regroupment to unite subjective revolutionists in the vanguard party; for intransigent exposure of centrism;
- Rejection of the claims of ostensibly Trotskyist internationals to speak for the Fourth International, destroyed by Pabloism in 1951-53;
- For the reforging of a democratic-centralist Fourth International which will stop at nothing short of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Today we must add that it was this program which prepared the iSt to *uniquely* put forward a revolutionary perspective in Iran, demanding "Down with the shah, Down with the mullahs" when virtually the entire left was praising Khomeini; and likewise led us to demand military victory to the FSLN-led insurgents in Nicaragua while calling not for a bonapartist Sandinista regime (as Moreno did and the SWP/USec now do) but for a workers and peasants government and a genuinely independent Trotskyist party. Events such as the Chinese invasion of Vietnam have demonstrated the Marxist political capacity of the Spartacist tendency, which a decade ago predicted the present anti-Soviet imperialist alignment with the Maoist regime. Our modest but real industrial implantation has enabled us to carry out exemplary communist work in the unions as well as the recent demonstration of 500 black workers and Trotskyists in Detroit against fascist provocations. And internationally the iSt was able last year to hold its first delegated conference, which demonstrated the political solidarity and combativity of our tendency.

Not rotten blocs of Pabloist betrayal, nor personalist "internationals" of footloose adventurers. Finish the struggle announced by the then-revolutionary SWP's 1953 "Letter to Trotskyists Throughout the World": "The lines of cleavage between Pablo's revisionism and orthodox Trotskyism are so deep that no compromise is possible either politically or organizationally." For the Rebirth of the Fourth International! ■

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Spread the Strike—Shut Down Thatcher's Britain!

# British Steel Workers Go Out

LONDON, January 6—More than 100,000 steel workers threw up picket lines throughout Britain last Wednesday morning to begin the country's first national steel strike in more than 50 years. The last time the British steel industry was shut down was the general strike of 1926. Today on the picket lines, in Britain's factories and shops, and also among the politicians at Westminster, the talk is of an industrial showdown on the scale of 1926.

From the Midlands to Yorkshire, from Wales to Scotland, every plant of the nationalised British Steel Corporation has been shut down by the 90,000-strong Iron and Steel Trades Confederation (ISTC) and the smaller National Union of Blastfurnacemen (NUB). While the leadership of the skilled trades unions criminally called for scabbing during the first days of the strike, these workers too are now threatening to go out. Flying steel worker pickets and blacking [hot-cargoing] by dockers and railwaymen have stopped all movement of raw materials and finished products to and from the mills. Flying pickets in Yorkshire and Wales have begun to extend the strike to private steel operations despite the opposition of their national leadership, which ordered ISTC men back to work in these plants. Shutting down all private steel production is a key to victory.

While the ISTC and NUB leaders seek to limit the strike to the single issue of higher pay, there are growing demands in the ranks that the fight must also be against the massive redundan-



Llanwern, South Wales, steelworker pickets: Thatcher government wants to eliminate two-thirds of the jobs.

cies [layoffs] and plant closures management is threatening. British Steel wants to chop *one-third* of the entire workforce! In South Wales, particularly hard hit by the proposed closures, the unions

have gone far beyond the national leadership by calling for regional general-strike action especially including the miners and railwaymen (see below).

The strike was precipitated by an insulting 2 percent pay offer in the face of a 17 percent inflation rate. Even ISTC general secretary Bill Sirs, a "moderate" on the far right wing of the British trade-union bureaucracy, couldn't buy this.

Management claims the nationalised company simply has no money. That's true—British Steel is broke. A combination of grossly incompetent management, antiquated industrial plant and a major downturn in the British and European markets for steel in the past few years has brought BSC to the point where it is losing £1 million a day. West German firms can produce a ton of steel in almost half the time the British can. So even with the real wages of its workers *falling*, BSC has been losing money hand over fist. But the workers must not pay for capitalism's failure.

### Stop Tory Anti-Labour Offensive

For years the steel union leaders have accepted "sacrifices" in order to "save British steel," negotiating substandard pay agreements and going along with tens of thousands of redundancies. But finally BSC and the rabid Margaret Thatcher and the industry secretary Keith Joseph pushed things too far. The steel strike follows hard on the heels of a series of major attacks on the British workers and poor, from massive social service cuts to new draconian immigration restrictions to the provocative sacking of Derek Robinson, the leading shop steward at British Leyland, to a new bill introduced in Parliament last month which, among other provisions,

threatens to illegalise secondary and flying pickets.

To date, these attacks have gone unanswered by the trade-union movement. Yet the unions have shown in 1972 and again in 1974 that they have the power to defeat even the most far-reaching and vicious anti-working-class measures like Heath's Industrial Relations Act and the three-day-week nationwide lockout.

The steel strike is far and away the most important industrial showdown to date under the Thatcher government. The bureaucrats have lost no time in showing that they intend to sabotage an effective fight. Nonetheless, this strike can and must be turned into an all-out offensive to smash *all* Tory/employer attacks.

- Every steel mill and factory must be shut tight, including the private companies.
- Union blockades must cut off the stockpiles which employers built up in preparation for the strike.
- Area and national strike committees must be elected to supervise picketing and oversee all aspects of running the strike.
- All foreign steel and raw materials must be blacked for the duration of the strike. (This tactic should not be confused with the call which unions have raised for protectionist import controls on foreign steel and coking coal.)

Steel workers have potential allies throughout the working class. Leyland workers have a huge wage claim and must still fight the Robinson sacking. Railwaymen too have lodged their claim and, along with the dockers, are already engaged in blacking in support of the strike. As for the miners, they stand to lose thousands of jobs as well, if BSC's proposed redundancies go through.

Bring them all out! Make this not just the first steel strike but the first *general strike* since 1926! If the whole country were shut down by the industrial might of the working class, this would show the government that *none* of its attacks will be tolerated. Indeed, with militant class-struggle leadership prepared to see the fight through to the finish, a general strike could bring down the hated Thatcher government and find the road toward actually putting the working class in power.

Thatcher must go! But the real alternative is a *workers government* based on independent organisations of the working class, not a government of Callaghans and Benns gracing the benches of Westminster. The fight for such a government requires a new revolutionary leadership of the working class. Only under a socialist planned economy, within a Soviet United States of Europe, can Britain's decrepit industrial plant be rebuilt and put to socially productive use.

And that is not a utopia, the stuff of Sunday speeches and "Clause IV socialist" dreams. The seizure of proletarian power is a burning *necessity* for a Britain which is sinking ever deeper into the quagmire of capitalist anarchy and decay. ■

## General Strike Called in Wales

LLANWERN/PORT TALBOT, South Wales, January 2—Gathered around charcoal-burning stoves to protect them from the cold, the pickets' mood was bitter and determined. They know the devastation British Steel management is threatening to wreak will be particularly severe in Wales. Here the nationalised company plans to eliminate *two-thirds* of the remaining steel jobs. The entire industry of this area, which has a long and proud tradition of trade-union organisation and militant working-class struggle, will be shattered if BSC and Thatcher have their way.

Faced with the angry response of the ranks, the Welsh Trades Union Congress has called for a general strike throughout Wales beginning on January 21 against the BSC redundancies and plant closures. Welsh miners, steel workers and railwaymen have formed a new "triple alliance" to head the strike action. They have not called for a Britain-wide general strike. Yet trade unions in at least five mining areas outside Wales have announced that they will be joining a day of strike action on January 21.

Scandalously, the national leaderships of the striking steel unions have not endorsed the Welsh TUC decision. They argue that a struggle against closures and redundancies cannot be limited to Wales. Yet their response is not a fight for a national general strike. Rather, the steel union leaders have sought to limit the BSC strike to the single issue of pay.

Welsh steel workers understand that their action will come up against the armed fist of the state. One older worker told us that he wouldn't be surprised if Thatcher called out the army and police to break the strike, just as Churchill did in 1919 and 1926. But, he said, they would defend their picket lines by any means necessary.

This strike must be won if the workers of South Wales are to have a future. Don't let *any* job be sold down the river! Occupy plants threatened with closure or mass redundancy and demand work sharing on full pay! All out on January 21, not just in Wales and not just in steel! Make this the launching pad for a nationwide general strike!