

Defeat U.S. Imperialism—Defend Iraq!

Terror Bombing Has Not Broken Iraq

FEBRUARY 11—Four weeks into the U.S. air war against Iraq, the Pentagon and George Bush keep repeating hypnotically that everything is "on course" and "on schedule." The mass media lull the public to sleep with round-the-clock lies and images of an antiseptic war in which not a drop of blood nor a mangled body ever appears on the TV screen. But the only thing which is on schedule is the mass slaughter being visited on the Iraqi people by the U.S. war criminals.

The A-bomb which leveled Hiroshima carried 15,000 tons of explosive firepower. That much and more is what is being rained down on Iraq by the U.S. and its allies every day. Homes and hospitals, schools and factories are being turned into rubble. City bridges in Baghdad are destroyed. Not content to drop their payloads of death from the air, U.S. pilots even strafe civilians fleeing for shelter and refugees fleeing west to Jordan on the "highway of death."

In World War II, Hitler adopted a policy of *Schrecklichkeit*, deliberate terrorizing of the "enemy" population. This was expressed in the bombing of Coventry and the London blitz. The Allies outdid the Nazis in this department with the firebombing of Dresden and Tokyo, turning those cities into huge crematoria. In Vietnam this was called "destroying the country in order to save it." George Bush has set out to terrorize and destroy the Iraqi people to impose a *Pax Americana*

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U.S. Prepares Bloody Ground War



Dejong/AP

"Apocalypse Now" in the desert.

Troops Protest at Fort Hood

The Army admits it's the first mass protest by American soldiers since the Persian Gulf War began. Over 100 Louisiana National Guardsmen at Fort Hood, Texas walked off at midnight on February 5 to protest conditions at the base, including charges of racism. Forty of the Guardsmen, members of the 1st Battalion, 156th Armor, 256th Infantry Brigade, were declared AWOL. Officials said 90 others used a 24-hour pass to head home to Shreveport.

The following night "another large group" were stopped as they prepared to go home on a number of chartered buses! The entire 4,300-member brigade was reportedly confined to post. According to the *Baton Rouge Morning Advocate* (8 February): "The Army said the detentions was the first mass protest by U.S. troops training for the Persian Gulf war."

According to WVUE-TV, New Orleans, some of the Guardsmen were

arrested on "suspicion of mutiny and conspiracy." Federal agents and MPs arrested scores of soldiers as they returned to Fort Hood. Army and Guard brass are threatening swift punishment including busting rank, hard labor and years in the brig, and possibly the death penalty for desertion in wartime.

The protesting troops of the 256th Infantry Brigade included both blacks and whites. Press accounts mentioned soldiers' complaints of inadequate medical care and food, and that their promised leave was cut in half. A Louisiana reporter told WV that charges of racism were not being reported because they were "unsubstantiated." But this explosive issue slipped past the media self-censors in one AP dispatch, which said that brigade commander Brig. Gen. Gary Whipple "generally dismissed their claims of mistreatment and racism."

Just two weeks before the protest,

members of another unit of the 1st Battalion, the 141st Field Artillery from New Orleans, went AWOL. Others were arrested at the Killeen, Texas airport. One soldier said he didn't want to be "cannon fodder" in Saudi Arabia (New Orleans *Times-Picayune*, 26 January).

Soldiers who spoke to the press told of being forced to train in freezing rain without cold-weather gear. Fifteen men suffered frostbite or exposure. One artillery battery refused orders to fire in early January unless conditions improved. Another Guardsman in the 256th, a student at Southern University, declared he would not fight in the Middle East.

In the face of a wave of patriotic hoopla designed to regiment the American population in support of this racist war, here is an integrated group refusing to just "eat it." In fascist David Duke's backyard there

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Louisiana Guardsmen walk off Fort Hood army base to protest rotten conditions and racism.

Eastern Strike Was Betrayed

The mechanics, cleaners and ramp service workers were on the picket lines against Eastern Airlines for 686 days, one week longer than the bosses, who folded the bankrupt, scab operation on January 18 after bleeding it dry of hundreds of millions of dollars.

The Eastern Airlines strike attracted instant solidarity from workers across the country—here was a national, high-profile strike against a boss, Frank Lorenzo, whose name was synonymous with the greed and union-busting of the Reagan/Bush years. When the International Association of Machinists struck in March 1989, their picket lines staffed by militant black, white and Hispanic workers were respected by the flight attendants and pilots. This was the first time in years that airlines industry unions didn't scab on each other. Everyone looked at Eastern and said, this is a strike that can win.

Yet the Machinists were isolated, set up and sold out, their jobs destroyed. The strikers hung tough for almost two years, and at incredible costs—strikers took arrests and abuse at the hands of the cops and scabs, families were destroyed, there were even suicides among their ranks. Their slogan was to stay out "one day longer" than Lorenzo, and they did. They brought down the bastard who screwed them, but the courage of the Eastern

SWP Covers for IAM Sellouts

THE **MILITANT**

—8 February 1991

Eastern strike scores gains for labor

After 686-day battle with rank-and-file Machinists, airline folds

—EDITORIALS

Eastern strikers' victories

Working people can just as easily celebrate and salute the victories in the 22 month strike against Eastern Airlines as they can lament the fact that the airline folded when the carrier was forced to shut its doors January 18.

Of all strikes since the end of World War II, the Eastern Airlines strike was the most successful. It was the only one in which the strikers won a complete victory over the bosses.

When Lorenzo was finally forced out of Eastern, the government was compelled to do its duty and to prevent a live sale. The government has tried to prevent a live sale. The government has tried to prevent a live sale.

SWP's misnamed **Militant** portrays betrayal as "victory."

strikers was squandered. A strike that could have won big, and energized unions across the country, was knifed by the traitors who are running the American labor movement into the ground.

PATCO air controllers, Morenci copper miners, Hormel meatpackers, Greyhound bus drivers didn't lose in battle—they were betrayed. And the sellouts who produced this string of defeats also robbed Eastern strikers of the victory that should have been theirs. The AFL-CIO mouthed empty "solidarity," IAM tops appealed to Reagan's Labor Board and

the capitalist courts while the power of the bosses' state was mobilized against the strikers. The labor fakery "strategy" amounted to shopping around for a buyer to whom they would offer as much in givebacks as Lorenzo demanded, or more. These same loser policies are burying the New York Daily News strike, now over 100 days old.

At the outset of the Eastern strike, the road to winning was clear. We said it: "Spread the Eastern Strike—Shut Down the Airports! Rip Up the Injunctions!" (WV No. 473, 17 March 1989). But the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy, especially the IAM leadership of then-president William Winpisinger, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, crawled to Congress and did everything in their power to keep the strike from spreading. We emphasized that "the stranglehold of the AFL-CIO tops must be broken" in order to use hardball tactics, like hot-cargoing and solidarity strikes, that could win.

As they isolated the Eastern strikers, the labor tops had some help from a few "socialist" water boys. But none more craven than the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and their newspaper, the badly

misnamed *Militant*. Occupying a couple of "strike coordinator" posts, supporters of the SWP carried out a cynical, reformist game, endlessly proclaiming that the strike never looked better, even after the pilots and flight attendants crossed the IAM lines and returned to work in November 1989.

At the very beginning of the strike, Wimpy and the AFL-CIO tops blustered about shutting down East Coast commuter railroads with secondary strikes. The *Wall Street Journal* called it "Labor's 'atom bomb'." We wrote: "Picket lines must go up now at every airline, air freight and airport service company. No more PATCOs! Shut down the airports!" But the SWP, after admitting that Eastern strikers, and rail workers, were "looking forward" to the secondary pickets, defended the IAM bureaucrats when they reined in the pickets:

"But the Eastern workers refused to be provoked [!] into breaking the court injunctions and held back from setting up the pickets—a move that could have jeopardized the broad public support for the strike and the unity of the strike itself."

—*Militant*, 5 May 1989

The "unity" the SWP talks about is their unity with "Wimpy" and IAM District 100 honcho Charles Bryan.

Now that the strike is over, these water boys for the bureaucracy proclaimed "Eastern Strike Scores Gains for Labor" and editorialized about "Eastern Strikers' Victories" (*Militant*, 8 February). With more "victories" like this, there won't be much of a labor movement left. To cover its ass, the SWP now tsk-tsks "attempts by the union officialdom to divert the fight into the courts, halls of Congress, or buyout speculation" (*Militant*, 8 February). But back in May '89 when it counted, these reformists were telling strikers that solidarity with the strike "has been strengthened by the official support the strike has won from the AFL-CIO leadership." This

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TROTSKY

American Racism and Imperialist War

Young black men and women are used as cannon fodder by the Pentagon war machine while their families are condemned to starve and freeze in America's inner-city ghettos. Fully one-third of the ground troops in U.S. imperialism's war for the Persian Gulf oil fields are black and Hispanic. At the height of the so-called "American century" in the early 1950s, the veteran Trotskyist Richard Fraser pointed to the link between the racist



LENIN

underpinnings of American capitalism internally and its slaughter of dark-skinned people in the colonized world.

Having become the imperialist leader of the capitalist world, the U.S. exports race prejudice as naturally as it does death and destruction to the colonial world. Europe was virtually free of color prejudice until the white American army began its indoctrination of the "American Way"....

In the Korean War the wholesale destruction and massacre of civilians gave the world a foretaste of the ruthless contempt that the American rulers hold for the darker people of the colonial world. The introduction of "Luke the Gook's Castle" into official military and journalistic geography attests to the persistence with which the U.S. military spreads "the miasma of race prejudice," as Trotsky called it....

But capitalism, even in the southern United States, has created the conditions necessary for its own destruction. It has disrupted the old agrarian pattern, undermined the privileged white middle class, thus weakening the whole fabric of social repression. It has created great industries, proletarianizing white, urbanizing black. This process has centralized the Negro community in positions of great strategic advantage in large city communities, whereas before they were dispersed over the countryside. Capitalism has likewise created the conditions for the overthrow of race prejudice by working class solidarity.

It falls upon the shoulders of the proletarian revolution, in which the American workers will join together with the Negro people in the abolition of capitalism, to uproot the Jim Crow system.

—Richard Fraser, "The Negro Struggle and the Proletarian Revolution" (November 1953), reprinted in *Prometheus Research Series* No. 3, "In Memoriam Richard S. Fraser" (1990)

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Editorial Note

South Africa and Revolution

The concluding paragraph of the two-part article, "South Africa and Permanent Revolution" (WV Nos. 515 and 516, 30 November and 14 December 1990), notes in the "uneven and combined development of South Africa today striking similarities to Russia in the early years of this century." We pointed to the autocratic regime presiding over vast areas of backwardness as well as a modern urban economy, and also to its Achilles' heel, a young and vibrant proletariat increasingly conscious of its power. However, there is a danger of drawing the Russian analogy too closely: there is also an important difference, centered on the racial/national question (the focus of Part I of the article).

In the tsarist "prison house of peoples" the Bolsheviks championed the fight for liberation of oppressed nations and nationalities, but the core of the revolutionary struggle was Russian workers rising up against Russian rulers. In South Africa, in contrast, the black workers are fighting a regime based on a privileged white minority. This makes the fight for working-class power more difficult. With the Afrikaner lager mentality—a kind of frightened racist nationalism—white supremacy in its death throes will have a broader social and military base than the Russian autocracy had at the end. And with the overwhelming weight of national oppression, until now workers' allegiances have been drawn, with the aid

of the reformist Communist Party, to the petty-bourgeois nationalism of the ANC, which is unable to overcome the tribal/ethnic divisions adroitly exploited by the apartheid rulers.

This underlines our insistence that "The central strategic task for a communist vanguard in South Africa is to set the proletarian and plebeian base of the ANC against the petty-bourgeois nationalist and collaborationist tops in the struggle to create organs of dual power, the basis for a black-centered workers government." While the reformists with their pipe dream of "power-sharing" are today opposing struggles of the black proletariat (such as the bitter Mercedes-Benz strike in East London), we raise the program of socialist revolution which can unite blacks, coloureds and Indians and the increasing number of whites who do not wish to live in a racist garrison state.

It is at the workplace, where the proletariat is physically concentrated, that serious struggles for class unity can be made. Organized initially independent of the ANC, the black trade unions have grown explosively to become the central focus for class struggle in South Africa. But they have since been co-opted by the SACP/ANC. The critical task is to break the working class from the nationalist/reformist stranglehold and free its enormous power in the fight to smash apartheid—for workers revolution. ■

Defense of Iraq Banned in Britain

Spartacist Arrested at Hyde Park

LONDON—On February 2, police arrested and attacked a Spartacist supporter at the demonstration organised by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament protesting the Gulf War in London. The Spartacist contingent marched behind a banner which called for "Defeat U.S./British Imperialism!" and "Defend Iraq!" Police threatened that anyone chanting "Victory to Iraq" was liable to arrest under the Public Order Act. Comrade Alastair Green was seized by the cops after demonstrators refused to stop chanting their slogans.

While the march halted for 20 minutes and outraged protesters demanded "Let him go!" our comrade was dragged away and eventually thrown into a police van. Inside the van, one of the arresting officers hit Green on the face with a helmet; the comrade sustained a nasty injury to his mouth. He has been charged with "obstructing a police officer" and "threatening behaviour."

At the beginning of the February 2 demonstration, a line of police moved into the crowd to force leftists carrying a banner of the Hands Off the Middle East Committee calling for "Victory to Iraq" to pull it down under threat of arrest. CND stewards applauded vociferously when the banner came down. At the end of the march, the banner was raised again in Hyde Park; the police intervened, cheered on by CNDers, and again the banner went down.

The Spartacist League/Britain had marched with its banner along with an "anti-imperialist contingent" of other left groups (including Workers Power, the Workers International League and



Alastair Green seized by police at February 2 demonstration.

supporters of the Revolutionary Communist Party). Later on, after repeated cop threats and harassment the police threatened that the next person who chanted "Victory to Iraq" would be arrested, and they waded into the Spartacist contingent and roughly seized comrade Green.

The threats to protesters and the arrest itself were a direct implementation of the Crown Prosecution Service instruc-

tions to police on the day.

It is often said that civil liberties, no less than the truth, are among the first casualties of war. Thus the present-day star chamber "hearings" against Iraqi and other Arab residents. This government and Labour governments before it have a despicable record on this score, war or no; to name but a few, the judicial frame-up of the Birmingham Six, Winchester Three and Guildford Four, the "ban" on Sinn Féin and Irish Republican spokesmen, the savage attack and round-up of anti-poll-tax demonstrators last March.

Now these methods, used against striking miners, print workers and their supporters, are in operation against leftists in the context of the criminal war against Iraq. Again the government has relied on its loyal opposition to exercise such repression. On January 12, Spartacist demonstrators in Glasgow were surrounded, sealed off and threatened with arrest at the behest of the CND and Militant tendency. On January 23 the *Independent* quoted CND leader Marjorie Thompson baiting those who call for Iraq's victory as "agents provocateurs," expressing the wish that they be off the demonstrations. And now the arrests begin, based on shadowy "complaints" against leftists.

The likes of Labour left MP Tony Benn and the CND endorsed the sanctions against Iraq, the prelude to war. They promoted the United Nations as a fig leaf for the vast buildup of forces which have now been unleashed in the filthy war against Iraq. Now the CND leadership—those "pacifists"

whose overriding loyalty is to the war-mongering Labour Party of Neil Kinnock—have done their bit to set the stage for police repression against leftists participating in antiwar protests.

The "Hands Off the Middle East Committee" has voted unanimously to endorse Alastair Green's united front defence. Marxists have the right to organise, and the duty to mobilise working-class action against the slaughter of the Arab peoples on behalf of Washington's oil plunder. We call on all those in the workers movement and on the left to join us in condemning the state's attack on ourselves and others who raise the call to defend Iraq. We demand that all charges against comrade Green and others arrested at the demonstration be immediately dropped! No deportations, no internment of Iraqi and Arab people! Defeat British/U.S. imperialism! Defend Iraq! ■

The Partisan Defense Committee is undertaking a publicity and fund-raising campaign to mobilize support for the Spartacist comrade, Alastair Green. Because Green refused to be gagged, he is being victimized expressly on the basis of the SL's political positions on the Gulf War—for the defeat of U.S./British imperialism and for the defense of Iraq. Contributions to Alastair Green's defense can be sent, earmarked and payable to: Partisan Defense Committee, Box 99, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013.

John Lennon Ruled Subversive

BBC Bans "Give Peace a Chance"

The BBC is doing its bit for the war effort by coming up with a blacklist of music deemed unsuitable for broadcast, including John Lennon's song "Give Peace a Chance." Give us a break, we thought, but when our comrades of *Workers Hammer* called up the British Broadcasting Corporation's press office they were told that such a memo of "assistance and guidance" was indeed sent out to the BBC's stations.

Other moldy goldies reportedly on the hit list of 67 songs deemed too tasteless "for the duration" include Lennon's "Imagine," Queen's "Another One Bites the Dust," Abba's "Under Attack," Sonny & Cher's "Bang Bang" and the Bee Gees' "Staying Alive"—not what Her Majesty's cannon fodder is supposed to concentrate on in the Gulf, obviously.

In France, meanwhile, *Le Monde* (22 January) reported that 800 cassettes of a song purportedly glorifying Saddam Hussein and insulting the

president of the Republic were seized. The song "Forge Ahead Saddam" and others on the cassettes were by the popular Algerian singer Mazouni. In an outburst of chauvinism many French radio stations have stopped playing any popular songs about Arab culture or peace.

What's next—nonstop military music drumrolling across the airwaves? This revolting chauvinism isn't new, of course. During World War I, German composers were banned from New York's Metropolitan Opera, which also banned Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* after Pearl Harbor! Such are the depths to which war hysteria quickly drags the supposed "culture" of decaying capitalism.

Meanwhile, after recent events at No. 10 Downing St., we don't suppose Her Majesty's music cops at the BBC are going to be playing "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" anytime soon either.



Her Majesty's music censors set the drumbeat for war. They prefer the message scrawled on a bomb by captain from Kokomo.

The following article is reprinted from the 8 February issue of *Socialist Organiser*, representing a left-wing tendency in the British Labour Party.

**SOCIALIST
ORGANISER**

Police Censor Anti-War Slogans

An alarming turn was taken on the anti-war demonstration of 2 February when the police stopped a section of the march from chanting pro-Iraqi slogans.

Alastair Green was one of a group from the Spartacist League chanting "Defeat British/US imperialism!" and "Defend Iraq!" Police told them to stop or they would be arrested under the Public Order Act. They didn't, and Green was pulled into a police van and bashed in the

mouth by a police helmet.

He has since been charged with "obstructing a police officer" and "threatening behaviour."

If the organisers of the anti-war demonstrations allow, without protest, the cops to determine what slogans can and cannot be shouted on the peace marches, then a day may come when the police will decide that slogans like "Peace" and "Stop the bombings!" are a breach of the peace too.

Freedom is indivisible.

Young Spartacus

Lessons of the Vietnam Antiwar Movement

Young Spartacus is pleased to print a presentation by Al Nelson of the Spartacist League Central Committee to our Bay Area district in January. Nelson's remarks have been edited and abridged for publication.

I really strongly urge everybody to read the material recommended for this class and Trotsky's "War and the Fourth International" in particular. It's like a handbook. What struck me was the programmatic continuity from Trotsky's writings anticipating World War II, through our material in the 1960s and '70s, to now. The rules of class struggle and the lines demarcated by the irreconcilability of the working class and the ruling class have not changed since the beginning of capitalism. The roles of the bourgeois liberals, the social democrats, the reformists, the right centrists and the left centrists, have not changed a bit from the first imperialist war, the second war, and all through the various partial wars to the present. We've got a very rich body of experience and basic Marxist understanding that guided the comrades through the first imperialist war, after there hadn't been a war in Europe since the Franco-Prussian War in 1871.

Trotsky starts off with a concise introduction in "On the United Front" (*The First Five Years of the Communist International*, Volume 2):

"The task of the Communist Party is to lead the proletarian revolution. In order to summon the proletariat for the direct conquest of power and to achieve it the Communist Party must base itself on the overwhelming majority of the working class.

"So long as it does not hold this majority, the party must fight to win it.

"The party can achieve this only by remaining an absolutely independent organization with a clear program and strict internal discipline. That is the reason why the party was bound to break ideologically and organizationally with the reformists and the centrists who do not strive for the proletarian revolution, who possess neither the capacity nor the desire to prepare the masses for revolution, and who by their entire conduct thwart this work.

"Any members of the Communist Party who bemoan the split with the centrists in the name of 'unity of forces' or 'unity of front' thereby demonstrate that they do

Leninist Opposition to Imperialist War



"All Indochina Must Go Communist!" Spartacists called for revolutionary victory in Vietnam at antiwar protest in Washington, D.C., January 1973.

not understand the ABC of Communism and that they themselves happen to be in the Communist Party only by accident."

That's not a bad introduction to this whole discussion.

Early Days of the Vietnam Antiwar Movement

I got my training in a faction fight that was about the fundamentals of a revolutionary perspective. We spent three years in that fight in the early 1960s and other comrades anticipated it even longer. That was in the right-centrist SWP (Socialist Workers Party). Then within a year of our expulsion the bombings of North Vietnam had taken place and the SWP made its play. In a sense it was like Part Two of

the faction fight and it was all about the same basic revolutionary program and principles. The first time out for the SWP was in October 1965 with the Fifth Avenue Peace Parade Committee. It was the first of many SWP-organized coalitions we saw and marked the passage of the SWP from centrist to reformist.

We hadn't heard of the first meeting; we weren't invited. We went to the second meeting and it was very clear that the policies discussed were classical popular-frontist approaches. There were no organizations there, except of course everyone was a member of an organization—I knew everybody in the room and they knew me. The SWP was there in force in the guise of the Washington

Heights Peace Committee, the "Chelsea Housewives for Peace," and all these sorts of things. Ditto for Workers World, the Workers League (then the American Committee for the Fourth International) and others. They proposed rally speakers by category: the official liberal, the official disabled person, the official black, the official poet, the official folk singer, all that sort of thing.

In the next meeting we said, "No. You're trying to restrict this. There is a social revolution taking place in South Vietnam. This is why the Americans have intervened. Your single demand to the exclusion of others of 'Stop the War Now!' is a deliberate attempt to obscure the class nature of the American intervention in South Vietnam and the nature of the social revolution taking place there. We're not in favor of stopping the war! There are just wars. There are just, revolutionary wars. We're for the victory of the NLF and the forces they represent against the puppets of U.S. imperialism and against the U.S. forces in order to achieve that social revolution. Your policies are intended specifically to obscure that fact and to restrict the ability of the American working class to perceive the class nature of their own society and to struggle against it."

We made these arguments and argued against exclusion of signs, etc., and our position carried. (Probably for the moment the other leftists felt guilt-tripped, but it carried.) Then, out steps this old fellow, a spokesman for SANE, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, which represented the left wing of the

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Giai Phong! (Liberation). Saigon, April 1975: victorious NLF tanks take presidential palace.

Liberal Mask Is the Real Face ISO in the Antiwar Movement

An American B-52 bombers rain death and terror upon the Iraqi people, a new generation of youth are 'marching in protest, attending teach-ins, snapping up socialist literature and earnestly looking for a way to stop the U.S. war machine. Students just awakening to political consciousness must beware however of ostensibly socialist organizations who seek to act as "Sominex" on the body politic to keep youth from waking up to the truth that to end imperialist war we have to bury the capitalist system that breeds war.

Two, three, many antiwar coalitions have popped up. Workers World's "Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East" vies with the "National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East" (which includes other reformists like the Socialist Workers Party, Democratic Socialists of America and the Young Communist League) in organizational squabbles over who will control "the movement." Politically, they both compete with each other—and the right wing—on a populist "peace is patriotic" basis while Iraq is carpetbombed under the stars and stripes.

Students looking for a more radical alternative might be attracted to the International Socialist Organization. Here's a group that claims to defend Iraq and calls for "broad-based unity," hemoaning the "disastrous split" in the antiwar movement. But let's take a closer look at the ISO, the American offshoot of the British Socialist Workers Party.

Before the bombing of Baghdad began, the ISO wrote "in the case of the blockade and in the event of an actual war, we are on the side of Iraq" (*Socialist Worker*, October 1990). But to "campaign and agitate under the slogan 'Victory to Iraq'...would also be a sectarian error erecting a barrier between ourselves and many of those who are genuinely opposed to the war drive...."

If the ISO's position looks equivocal on paper, it was crystal clear in action. Given a choice between two very right-wing demonstrations, the "Victory to Iraq" ISO endorsed the more right-wing January 26 "Campaign for Peace" march which condemned Iraq's annexation of Kuwait and called for United Nations sanctions as an "alternative" to war—i.e., to starve the Iraqi people with a blockade backed up by aircraft carrier groups, troops and missiles. Some "defense!"

The ISO not only huries their own position of defense of Iraq but tries to censor other leftists' views. Cops and the ISO's own goon squad (wearing red, white and blue armbands!) sealed off members of the Chicago Spartacus Youth Club and the centrist Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) from an ISO-

organized antiwar conference on January 19. Facing a yawning abyss between their nominal views and their real appetite to tail liberal Democratic Party politics, the ISO resorts to exclusions and threats of violence to suppress their own contradictions.

We in the Spartacus Youth Clubs say "Defeat U.S. imperialism—Defend Iraq"...and that's exactly what we fight for. In the political debates on campuses and in demonstrations around the country we seek to win youth to an understanding that defense of the working people and exploited masses of the world requires a struggle to defeat U.S. imperialism in its

But the ISO thinks it has a better idea and cynically peddles the notion to their membership that censorship is really very clever, that they can rope in more people by pretending to be just liberals and then drop the mask when they've determined folks are "ready" for socialism. But for the ISO the liberal mask is the face—and sometimes it looks more reactionary than even liberal.

• While George Bush rails that Hussein is "another Hitler," the ISO carried a sign at the January 19 antiwar demo saying "Saddam may be a Hitler but Bush started this holocaust." Meanwhile, what echoes Hitler is George Bush's

antiwar movement similarly dissipated the anger and militancy of that generation by consciously suppressing revolutionary politics to keep the protests "safe" for the Democratic Party politicians they pandered to. The failure of that antiwar "strategy" is seen in the fact that just 15 years since the U.S. was defeated in Vietnam, humanity is again victim to a genocidal war for the global ambitions of the American ruling class.

As Leon Trotsky summarized Lenin's views:

"It is impossible to fight against imperialist war by sighing for peace after the fashion of the pacifists. 'One of the ways



Bloody U.S. rulers who were defeated on the battlefield by the Vietnamese say, "No More Vietnams." So does the ISO and their Canadian cothinkers, shown here at Toronto rally on January 19.

bloody oil grab and bid to be top cop of a "new world order." That is why we take a clear side in this war.

Saddam Hussein should be toppled by the Iraqi working people, the oppressed Kurds and other minorities—and their cause will be furthered by defeating the U.S. which supported Hussein for years but now wants to replace him with another dictator hand-picked by George Bush. Our fight for labor political strikes against the war stands in sharp contrast to star-spangled peace crawls built by fake-leftists who plead to murderous U.S. rulers to "give peace a chance."

Marxism vs. Pacifism

In the *Communist Manifesto* Karl Marx and Frederick Engels state: "The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims." That is an elemental credo of Marxism we Spartacists live by. Many working people, students, and particularly the black and Hispanic population hate this war. What they need is leadership. We seek to politically organize the widespread anger in a revolutionary workers party to lead class-struggle action against the capitalist state.

blitzkrieg for a "new world order"!

• George Bush promises the American people "no more Vietnams." Richard Nixon titled his memoirs *No More Vietnams*. The ISO says... "no more Vietnams." During the Vietnam War the ISO's political forebears (the International Socialists) tailed the liberal wing of the ruling class which only called for "U.S. troops out" after it was clear they were losing.

"Our" boys were the heroic Vietnamese who defeated U.S. imperialism and freed their country from neocolonial bondage and capitalist exploitation. The Vietnamese victory was a gain for workers all over the world—Che Guevara coined the slogan "Two, three, many Vietnams!" Stung by that defeat, the U.S. imperialists were unable to directly intervene on behalf of South Africa's racist army in Angola or send the Marines in against Sandinista Nicaragua.

What then is the ISO's role in the antiwar movement? They build liberal coalitions that are an obstacle to the development of socialist consciousness because they foster the illusion that the bourgeois government can be "pressured" to act against its own class interests. The U.S. war on Iraq is a war for imperialist hegemony—to really fight against it you have to oppose the economic and social system that produced this war. Why do the avowed socialists of the ISO pretend otherwise? Because for them, "the movement" is everything and their ostensible political program is excess baggage to chuck overboard whenever convenient.

How then do they hope to win youth to Marxism? They promote the myth that people will automatically be radicalized in the course of a bourgeois pacifist movement. If this were true, who needs Leninists? The principal effect of pacifist ideology is to obscure the class nature of war and to prevent the cohering of a politically independent working-class struggle against the "Republican" parties of war and racism.

The reformist leaders of the Vietnam

of fooling the working class is pacifism and the abstract propaganda of peace. Under capitalism, especially in its imperialist stage, wars are inevitable. A peace concluded by imperialists would only be a breathing spell before a new war. Only a revolutionary mass struggle against war and against imperialism which breeds war can secure a real peace. "Without a number of revolutions the so-called democratic peace is a middle class utopia!"

—"Lenin and Imperialist War" (December 1938)

Crime Doesn't Pay

The discrepancy between the ISO's pretensions to Marxism and their "just us liberals here" posture has some of their own members feeling like they've been shipped up the Gulf without a paddle. At the October ISO conference in Chicago, one member complained how he had been besieged by his comrades: "I had 5, 6, 7 people coming up to me saying 'How are we supposed to explain this? Are we supposed to bury the party program or what?'" Judging from the January issue of *Socialist Worker*, the ISO ironed out this wrinkle by moving further to the right—even the thin camouflage of left rhetoric (any reference to "capitalism" or "imperialism" for instance) has all but vanished from its pages.

continued on page 15

Socialist Worker

October 1990

...and political opposition to Saddam, to the dictatorship, to the repression of trade unions and the oppression of the Kurds.

If we support Iraq should we then campaign and agitate under the slogan "Victory to Iraq?" This would be a serious tactical error.

In the first place it would sow all sorts of confusion in our audience, who would not, from the slogan, be able to make a distinction



ISO cynically claims to defend Iraq, but to say so out loud would be a "tactical error" because it would be unpopular. In public, ISO apes Bush's war propaganda that Hussein is "a Hitler."

Spartacist League Public Offices

— MARXIST LITERATURE —

Bay Area

Thurs 5:30-8:00 p.m. Sat 1:00-5:00 p.m.
1634 Telegraph 3rd Floor (near 17th Street)
Oakland California Phone (415) 839-0851

Chicago

Tues 5:00-9:00 p.m. Sat 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
161 W. Harrison St. 10th Floor
Chicago Illinois Phone (312) 663-0715

New York City

Tues 6:30-9:00 p.m. Sat 1:00-5:00 p.m.
41 Warren St. (one block below
Chambers St. near Church St.)
New York NY Phone (212) 267-1025

Antiwar Movement...

(continued from page 4)

Democratic Party. He said, "If this policy carries, we split." The SWP freaked out, called a recess, worked over everybody else, urging classless "unity," then reconvened, and our position which had been voted up was reconsidered and voted down. We walked out. The others stayed.

We therefore had to fight our way into the first peace demonstration in New York City. We carried bundles of our signs wrapped in paper. We spotted the U.S. Committee to Aid the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam. They liked the Viet Cong flag and they would get in trouble for raising it at demonstrations. We defended their right to carry that flag though we wouldn't carry it ourselves since it would too closely identify us with the politics of the Stalinists. So there was a de facto bloc there and we defended their rights to carry the Viet Cong flag against the wimpy SWP marshals. Then we waited until the march started to move, ripped off the paper from our signs and rapidly handed them out. They said: "Unconditional Immediate Withdrawal of All U.S. Forces from Vietnam," "Victory to the Vietnamese Revolution! No Negotiations!" and "Vietnam, Watts: Same Struggle, Same Fight." Very controversial, right?—this was a peace demonstration. But these signs



After Fifth Avenue Peace Parade Committee attempted to ban Spartacist call for "Victory to the Vietnamese Revolution," SL defiantly marched together with Walter Teague's Committee to Aid the NLF, New York City, October 1965.

That's how the blockade is supposed to work its way, and of course with the aid of the CIA which must still have assets there because they've been working with Iraqi intelligence for ten years, feeding them the names of Hussein's leftist opponents, and are now sitting there being very quiet.

The difference the peace movement has with the government is a tactical one. Basically they're for sanctions. They agree with the premises but want "impe-

minds what our political line is and what it is based on.

Capitalist System Is Root Cause of War

We're Marxists. Our starting point is the irreconcilable class interests of the ruling class and the working class. In "War and the Fourth International," Trotsky talks about the creation of the national state as the basis for the capitalist system. World War I posed the limitations of the national state as the form for the productive forces of society. Those forces had outgrown the national state and World War I was the first inter-imperialist war for redivision of the entire world in terms of spheres of influence. That's where Iraq and Kuwait came from. The victors drew lines on a map.

The pacifists start from the false premise that it's possible to ensure peace outside of the class struggle. Bourgeois pacifism is what you can characterize basically as a spontaneous ideology—but it's not really—because it's what people are taught. Most people who are reacting to the possibility of war are reacting in a purely pacifist sort of way, that "war is bad." To the extent that the pacifists of an organized sort and the ordinary worker do not understand the social-chauvinism that lies within both wings of the bourgeoisie, whether they're liberal and for sanctions or they're the hard-liners for war, to that extent they will be gullible in terms of being prepared for a larger war of an inter-imperialist sort, like World War I or World War II.

It is our task to prepare the working class for revolution. That means to utilize every social struggle to make them aware of the class basis of society and the class nature of war. War exposes the nature of capitalism in a way that nothing else does. Every day all over the world there are thousands of people that die from starvation, lack of medical attention, exposure, pure state repression, industrial accidents. War is like taking all these phenomena, these thousands of people that die every day in a random sort of way in every capitalist country in the

world, he it dictatorial, democratic, Third World or most advanced, and concentrating it geographically and compressing it in time.

War is so horrible because it's such a concentration of mass killing by mass means. A kind of horrible mass industrial accident with metal removing sections of bodies, heads and arms and limbs flying in all directions. Preobrazhensky and Bukharin in their book (*The ABC of Communism*) tried to calculate how many tons of human beings were killed in World War I: "If we assume the average weight of a soldier to be 150 lb., this means that between 1 August 1914 and 1 January 1918 the capitalists had brought to market twelve hundred million pounds of putrid human flesh."

A pacifist can say these things too. The point is, what is it about capitalism that leads inevitably to war? We understand what the limitations of the nation-state are. At the same time, the nation-state is the basis for mobilizing the working class in an inter-imperialist war—social-patriotism. The capitalist rulers always talk of some "high motive," but the bourgeoisie does not wage war for political principles. It wages war for raw materials, for spheres of influence, for financial markets, for world hegemony and its own wealth. That's the basis for war.

You cannot end war without ending capitalism. It's a question of breaking down the false consciousness of the workers, so that in time of war they are not vulnerable to the appeals of the social-patriots. The purpose of these antiwar coalitions is to form a popular front—an alliance with political agents of the ruling class—to suppress revolutionary politics. Against this we counterpose the Bolshevik tactic of the *united front* where all groups participating in a particular action have an equal opportunity to express their views. The clash of opinion and test in action of the various forces claiming to be socialist is a crucial element in raising the consciousness of working people and youth.

Workers Have the Power

The SWP dominated the antiwar movement from 1965 through 1973. By the middle of 1971 or even earlier, their classless liberal program had so dissipated the forces that were kind of radical, not even leftist, that the campuses were quiet. The spring of 1971 was the quietest spring on the campuses in over ten years, yet this followed the invasion of Laos. The year before when the United States went into Cambodia, there were big demonstrations on the campuses. That's where the Kent State massacre came from. The SWP's policy dissipated all the militancy of all these kids who hated the government.

At the same time, it was never clearer than in 1971 how the popular-frontist antiwar coalition was counterposed to the revolutionary mobilization of the workers. The National Guardsmen that shot down those kids at Kent State had just come from a strikebreaking mission against the Teamsters who were at that very same time engaged in a huge national wildcat strike, which was opposed

Political Affairs

We must demand

- A U.S. military pull back and its replacement by a military force under United Nations command.
- A peaceful political resolution to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, based on mechanisms established by the UN Security Council and the Arab League.
- A comprehensive international conference on the Middle East to include ending Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and exorcise of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.
- Humanitarian aid and food for the refugees and children.

END THE WAR! LET SANCTIONS WORK!

For a peaceful solution to the crisis in the Persian Gulf and a peace dividend in the US, DSA calls for:

1. A declaration by the United States that no permanent bases will be established in the Middle East and that US armed forces will not remain in the region. The withdrawal of all US ground troops from the gulf region. Whatever US naval or air forces remain to enforce the sanctions must be under direct UN command

Communist Party (left) and DSA social democrats want UN fig leaf to cover U.S. war on Iraq. Would you buy an "antiwar" movement from people like this?

went over big and a lot of people took them, so we had a bloc. But we had to shove SWP marshals away.

Sanctions = Kill Iraqis ...Slowly

That's how it started. What we're dealing with today is our own political understanding, so that we don't get disarmed by the social-patriots waiting to support a new imperialist war. If you look at the antiwar movement writ large, and all the peace forces, their program is basically the same as the Democrats: "Sanctions, not war." They agree with the premise that "Hussein is a real bad guy," that it was "a real bad act of aggression" that Iraq went into Kuwait and "they should get out of there." But "we don't want war, we don't want killing, we had enough killing in Vietnam," so "we should allow sanctions to work their way."

What is a blockade? That means "let's kill the Iraqis real slow" and starve first the children, then the old people. That's what happens first when you have lack of nutrition. It's slow death, as opposed to a big bombardment. Then when the misery reaches a certain level, presumably a wing of the Ba'athist military elite will make a move and assassinate Saddam Hussein in order to be the new rulers in an overtly U.S.-dominated Iraq.



At 1971 antiwar conference (left), SWP goons assaulted members of Progressive Labor and Spartacists for opposing presence of bourgeois politician—Democratic Senator Vance Hartke was keynote speaker. SWP antiwar honcho Fred Halstead with social-patriotic sign (right).



Young Socialist

not only by the governors of various states, be they Republican or Democrat, but also by the Democratic Party mayors where it affected them, by the president of the Teamsters and by the vice president of the Teamsters, who was considered a liberal, and who was on the steering committee of NPAC (National Peace Action Coalition).

We published a special supplement to *Spartacist* in July 1971 and said:

"It was from this strikebreaking detail that four hundred Guardsmen were taken and sent to Kent State. Unlike the Teamsters, the students put up no resistance. But it was students, not Teamsters, who were gunned down. Why? A massacre of Teamsters, in the middle of a tense, militant nationwide wildcat by one of the country's strongest unions, would have precipitated a series of nationwide protest and sympathy strikes—a far greater show of social power than all the student strikes, peace crawls and police confrontations combined. In contrast, the massacre of students had little more long-term social impact than starting summer vacation three weeks early on college campuses.

"What made the protesting students so vulnerable was precisely the question of brute social power: the Teamsters and other organized workers have it, students do not."

The Teamsters were not the only union engaging in strikes. There was a lot of strike activity in the country at that time. Yet the workers saw in the leadership of this antiwar movement some of their most sophisticated opponents. Guys who were liberals on the question of the war in Vietnam, but sponsored anti-labor legislation in Congress. And then all the parasites and labor lieutenants of capital, all the guys they *hate* in their own union, up there speaking as liberals against the war. So there was a tremendous gulf between the working class and the antiwar groups because of the reformist political character of the antiwar movement. Furthermore, there were conscious elements who sought to maintain that.

SWP Wages War on Reds for Peace with Democrats

NPAC was the SWP's antiwar coalition and on the steering committee was Senator Vance Hartke. They had an NPAC conference on July 4th weekend in New York in 1971. We went in there to intervene with our class-struggle program and to distribute our *Spartacist* supplement. The SWP had prepared about 300 of their own members plus union goons to put down so-called "disruption." The liberal wing of the bourgeoisie broke over the 1968 Tet Offensive and now opposed the war because the U.S. was losing. Hartke represented this defeatist wing of U.S. imperialism and the SWP wanted to prove to the bourgeois liberals that they could handle



National Guard troops who put down 1971 Teamster wildcat strike also carried out Kent State massacre (right), leaving four students dead.



Rutiner/Life

the reds by drawing a line in blood to prevent opposition to the war from taking a revolutionary direction, especially since there was class struggle going on in society as well.

In addition to Senator Hartke, there was Victor Reuther (the brother of Walter Reuther and the CIA's man in the labor movement in Europe, who personified the linkup between the labor movement, the Democratic Party, the CIA and all its rotten operations all over the world). Our forces were very disciplined and, surprisingly, so were the PL/SDS (Progressive Labor/Students for a Democratic Society) forces. I made a motion that Senator Hartke not be permitted to be in this meeting, that it was an obscenity that a representative of the ruling class be at an antiwar conference. That motion was voted out of order. When Hartke attempted to speak, we just shouted him down—us and PL.

When Victor Reuther got up, we chanted ten times, "Labor strikes against the war!" and sat down. PL went on a little longer, but eventually they were quiet. After Reuther spoke, everything was quiet. The SWP was disappointed. SWP honcho Fred Halstead (a big, flabby sucker, but big) comes down and grabs some poor kid in a choke hold, rips him over the back of the chair and drags him out; the kid is choking. Seymour and I look at each other, and Seymour says, "We have to go. We have to go." We jumped out, pulled Halstead off and then 300 guys came up that center aisle like a hammer.

It was the most brutal experience of violence within the workers movement I've ever been through. Beating went on there for well over an hour. Someone got thrown through a plate-glass door, I had

chunks of hair pulled out, somebody had their nose broken. The PL students got it worse than we did. Many were beaten badly. The Wohlforthites (now the Workers League) were on the goon squad. And right up front were Nat Weinstein and Dick Garza. Weinstein is now the leader of Socialist Action. They were then the liberal, trade-union face of the SWP, the SWP's interface with the pro-capitalist labor forces. This was the role that Socialist Action and their Workers World Party competitors now seek to replicate.

By 1972, a severe polarization had taken place and by the end we had a very hard time selling papers at the peace crawls organized by the official antiwar movement. It was pure, pure, pure liberal. All the speakers were respectable Senators and labor bureaucrats and such.

Anti-Imperialism Abroad Means Class Struggle At Home!

Right now this present antiwar movement is stepping off politically at this lowest point of the former antiwar movement. This is a very conscious policy aimed at keeping the level of opposition to the present war within the framework of capitalist ideology and capitalism itself. The brokers of today's antiwar coalitions perpetuate the illusion that war can be stopped by means other than socialist revolution which takes away the power entirely from the bourgeoisie. In so doing, they further illusions in the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie. The liberal wing is just as social-patriotic and social-chauvinist as the most conservative Jesse Helms or Bush or anybody. In creating these illusions in the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie, they encourage social-patriotic views among the working

class, and prepare them to be cannon fodder in the next imperialist war. That's the significance of these coalitions in search of imperialist doves we're looking at and the little centrist groups who seek to be their tails.

What we badly miss right now—and we should understand that it's a handicap for the time being, but it doesn't detract one bit from our political tasks—are fractions in the industrial working class. Our main role would be agitating amongst the workers in the workplaces. And this is what we will attempt to do as this war unfolds and we work out a series of tactics and see what we're actually intersecting. Now the workers are much more inclined toward struggle than they were during the Vietnam War. The standards of living have been reduced 20, 30 percent.

The barbaric nature of imperialist war is one of the purest expressions of the indifference of the capitalists toward the workers who produce their profits. They don't give a shit about workers and will kill 60,000 in one day—it happened in World War I. World War I was a war of attrition. The Allied generals put their heads together and said, "Well, neither side has the advantage but we have more men. Eventually they'll run out of men and we won't." Some huge percentage of all the young men between certain ages simply were killed.

That horrible waste of human life sparked revolutions all over Europe after the war. Our task relative to this war is to deepen the understanding of the working class to facilitate class struggle against the capitalist system as a whole, and to recruit a new political generation of workers, blacks and students to our revolutionary perspective. ■

Black History Month Spartacist Events

Racist War Machine in Gulf War Oil Grab Black Soldiers in the Jim Crow Military

CHICAGO

Guest Speaker Bernard Branche, member ATU Local 308

Saturday, Feb. 23, 7:30 p.m.
Blackstone Hotel, Regency Room
636 South Michigan Avenue
For more information: (312) 663-0715

BERKELEY/OAKLAND

Saturday, Feb. 23, 7:30 p.m.
UC Berkeley, 126 Barrows

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Speaker Paul Collins, SL Central Committee

Saturday, Feb. 23, 2 p.m.
Howard University
Undergraduate Library Lecture Rm.
For more information: (202) 872-8240

Speakers Hursey Bush
Don Alexander

For more information: (415) 839-0851

Bankrupt U.S. Empire Goes for War

Defeat U.S. Imperialism! Defend Iraq!

SAN FRANCISCO

Speaker Diana Coleman
Thursday, Feb. 21, 7:30 p.m.
San Francisco State University
Student Union B 112
For more information: (415) 863-6963

CLEVELAND

Tuesday, Feb. 26, 7 p.m.
Cleveland State University
22nd and Euclid
University Center 361
For more information: (216) 781-7500

LOS ANGELES

Monday, Feb. 25, 7 p.m.

Los Angeles City College
Franklin Hall, Room 101
For more information: (213) 380-8239

Spartacus Youth Club Class Series

NEW YORK CITY

Saturdays at 2 p.m.
41 Warren Street
(1 block south of Chambers
between Church and West Broadway)

February 16
A Marxist Understanding of the State
February 23
War and Revolution

For more information: (212) 267-1025

In Honor of Comrade Garry Gianninoto

Our comrade Garry Gianninoto died on January 9, after more than a year of hantling cancer. He was 43 years old.

Garry joined our organization in 1978 and served in a leading capacity in both our Circulation Department and on our Medical Commission. He was a Vietnam veteran. For more than six years, in the 1980s, he worked as a physician's assistant at Harlem Hospital.

On February 2, a memorial meeting was held in his honor in New York City. His comrades, friends and coworkers from Harlem Hospital came out to pay tribute. Members of both Garry's and his wife Mindy's families were there. Garry's brother Tony spoke at the meeting.

Messages of condolence, remembrance and respect came in from comrades across the U.S. and from Sri Lanka, Britain, France, Germany, Japan and Canada. Some had personal experience with the care, kindness and attention that Garry brought to dealing with medical problems of various comrades and others internationally. A comrade from Britain wrote:

"I remember several occasions when there were comrades in Britain with seemingly intractable medical problems, with no apparent hope of decent treatment from the National Health Service.... Even while understanding the limitations of capitalist society, Garry fought for what was available in a very concrete way.... When a comrade was sick, he would manage to keep in touch by day and by night, regardless of the time difference and regardless of his shifts."

Even those comrades who had not personally worked with or known Garry felt the impact of his contributions. This was conveyed in a letter written on behalf of the comrades of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France: "Garry did not live to see the beginning of this latest imperialist crime against humanity, the war in the Gulf, but his work and especially his recent article, 'Vietnam: Racism and Rebellion Behind the Lines,' were key in arming the party—internationally—for that critical moment of the war breaking out, when the torrent of lies and chauvinist poison can shake even a steeled revolutionary party." A comrade wrote in from Chicago that this article also had a big impact on transit workers there who were Vietnam vets.

Garry was a hard communist. In his last months he made a tape dedicated to his wife, and comrade, Mindy. At the memorial meeting Mindy spoke for him, conveying the testimony that Garry had wanted



Mindy Gianninoto

to leave with his comrades—of his dedication to, and understanding of, the necessity of building a revolutionary combat party to fight for a socialist future.

It was a very emotional meeting which reflected the tragic loss of a man so young and a man who brought so much, both in our organization and in his work outside, to furthering the cause of decency, humanity and a life free of degradation, exploitation and oppression. The rich diversity of Garry's contributions—memos on health care, meticulous statistics and records he kept in the Circulation Department, bulletins he had printed, articles from *Workers Vanguard* he had contributed to, and many other examples of his work—were displayed at the memorial.

The meeting began with the playing of the *Internationale* in Russian as Garry had wanted, and ended with the singing of the *Internationale*.

Garry deeply touched many people and many honored him at the memorial in their speeches, letters and other contributions. Here we are publishing edited excerpts of some of these. We hope that they will give our readers some measure of the man—our comrade Garry Gianninoto.

* * *

Deborah Mackson

Garry was born on October 14, 1947. He died on January 9, 1991. His 43 years were not long enough for him to do what he wanted to do, which was to help usher in a socialist America. The hope for a future where there would be no more of what he saw in Vietnam, and no more of what he saw in Harlem, gave him the strength to fight, every day of his adult life, to do his best for our party. If he believed nothing else, he believed this party was America's last best hope.

Garry was a casualty of the Vietnam War. I say this not just because I believe his cancer was likely caused by some toxic chemical to which he was undoubtedly exposed while he was there, but also because, like many other veterans, he suffered the war every day of his life afterwards.

Garry joined the Navy as a Medical Corpsman in November of 1966 at the age of 19. At that time, the government began canceling deferments for a whole class of medical problems. So Garry's deferment for a bad knee was history. Like a lot of other young men, he shopped around looking for safe service. He was told that Navy Corpsman was probably his best bet, that he would likely never be sent to Nam. So what happened? Besides the fact that they always lie about such things, Garry figured it was pure and simple bad luck.

In February of 1968, he was shipped to Da Nang. Four months later he reported to HQ to forthrightly announce that this war was wrong and he quit. They threw him in the brig. Conditions there, as you can imagine, were savage. Garry participated in one of the first prison rebellions there, which some of you will remember spread in the summer of '68 and led to the burning of what the troops bitterly referred to as "the LBJ," the Long Binh jail. Later, still in the brig, Garry helped lead sitdown strikes against the inhuman working conditions that he and his primarily black comrades were forced to endure.

Based on some study, it is my belief that those sitdowns in the Da Nang brig were in fact the spark which spread the sitdowns not only through the U.S. prison system for its own men in Southeast Asia, but later to active troops on the edge of the DMZ. Other veterans in our organization, who went to war later, tell me that by the time they arrived opposition among the troops was much more organized and individuals no longer had to face what Garry did. Entire units were literally *disarmed* and moved to the rear because they were "unreliable."

You can read about Garry's experiences, in his own words, in his article, "Vietnam: Racism and Rebellion Behind the Lines—A GI's View of America's Dirty War," printed in *Workers Vanguard* on 2 November 1990. This article was a gift to our organization—it came as the world was poised on the brink of another war. Relating and bringing this truth to a new generation cost Garry dearly. I really don't believe any of us can know how hard he had to fight—through so many memories and so much pain—to give us that history.

When he finally got out of the Navy in July of 1969, Garry had two things burned into his soul: an intense hatred of American imperialism and a deep,



WV Photo

New York memorial meeting to honor Garry Gianninoto, 2 February 1991.



Garry at the front of SL-organized anti-Imperialist contingent marching for military victory to leftist insurgents in El Salvador, 3 May 1981.

thorough understanding of the black question. He knew he was a communist and, after some unpleasant trial and error, found the Spartacist League in 1978. He applied for membership in October while working on our New York City election campaign and was accepted as a candidate member of the New York local on November 19.

In January 1979, while still a candidate member, he was made literature director of the New York local. The local was in some disarray at the time, which must have driven the careful, meticulous Garry right up the wall. But he was also a very resourceful guy. So he quickly acquainted himself with the Circulation Department and started working through them to keep things in order. As it turned out, Garry found his niche there, bringing his organizational skills to bear on the statistics and record-keeping so necessary to keep on top of the stocking and circulation of all our publications.

In May of 1979, he fell in love with Mindy, and he never fell out. He chose well. Mindy's courage through especially the last year is and will remain an inspiration to all of her comrades. I think she knows she has our love, our respect and our most professional military salute.

By 1981 Garry was trained to operate our press and was printing our subscription blanks and the wrappers for our newspapers. After a brief tour as a treasurer in the New York local Garry returned to circ in 1983. In early 1985, Garry came to the party leadership with a big worry—many of our bulletins and pamphlets were out of print. Many of the bulletins, in particular, had been mimeographed and the stencils were too old to use and we needed new copies. This led to some intensive research on the printing of our material and in February of 1985 we decided to divide the circ department into "circulation" and "non-periodical production." Garry was made chief of the production operation.

The Spartacist League is quite proud of its history and unlike other organizations, who sometimes have a problem with their past positions, we are careful to preserve and make our material available to our members and others. Garry made this deeply felt principle—the party as the collective memory of the working class—a reality for us. This was really quite an assignment, and Garry brought his perfectionism to every aspect of the work. He was the pressman, but he also conceived the job and saw it through to the end. He coordinated the tricky "priority" and "technical" decisions, the use of other party resources—like the knowledge, skills and responsibilities of other comrades—with all the other party department heads. The comrades he worked the most closely with during this period wanted me to say for them that he was a pleasure to work with.

Darlene, who was our circ chief for a number of years, remembers that Garry set new standards for the production of our material. "No one took as much time, pride and care on even the simplest jobs," she said. But there were complicated ones as well, in

particular the Farsi language pamphlets were a nightmare to produce. The script had to be done by hand and the negatives were not very clean. Garry, who didn't know the language, nevertheless spent days agonizing and poring over the negatives on the light table to ensure that each dot and scratch, in this language of dots and scratches, was supposed to be there. He did a similar job on our pamphlet "The World Prospect for Socialism" which Helene told me was his idea to produce and is on display in the back of the room with some of his other work.

During this time, I believe it was June of 1983, Garry went to work as a physician's assistant at Harlem Hospital Center. Working at Harlem Hospital was hard for Garry, it often exacerbated his post-traumatic stress disorder. We tried several times to



Garry and Mindy, St. Croix, summer 1986.

get him to change to an easier job. But for whatever complicated reasons, he chose to stay in Harlem to help those whom society had written off.

In January of 1983, we formed the party Medical Commission with Garry as one of its members. This is the area in which I worked most closely with him, and so it is the most painful for me to talk about. Garry liked this work and his contribution was unique. His substantial medical knowledge was painstakingly applied to each and every individual case with a kindness and a generosity of spirit not often found in this world. He also enriched our press by contributing to our articles on the AIDS epidemic, for example, "AIDS Devastates Gays, Ghettos," in October of 1988.

I think, though, that his most valuable contribution was his ability to move medical professionals to do right by each and every comrade, or their family members, who needed help. He would settle only for the best. If he didn't know who the best was, he would find out, somehow drag their asses out of bed and get them on the case. He never quit on this front, and he continued to do it from his hospital bed when he himself was dying. This is something I don't think we will ever be able to replace and we are much, much poorer for it. I will miss him horribly and it really hurts to think about it.

Garry always hated it when we got to the point where we had to say about a particular medical problem, "there's nothing (or nothing more) we can do." His wartime training and subsequent work at Harlem Hospital instilled in him an urgency and great drive to do everything possible to save lives and eliminate pain. This is one of the reasons his battle with cancer was so bitter for those of us who worked closely with him in this area—there was nothing we could do to make it better, and we hated that.

There are a few more things I'd like to say about Garry. He was a news hound. To show you how important that was, let me tell one story. We were over at Jim's one night—September 30, 1986 actually—just "sitting around telling lies," as Dick Fraser would have put it, and maybe playing a little bridge. Just after midnight the phone rang. It was Garry, who had been tracking the news. He called to say that the ILA had just walked out on the East Coast. Garry knew this was important and he was right. Within hours we were producing a special *Workers Vanguard* supplement on the strike. Over the next several days we distributed a half million copies to striking longshoremen and others. In the two months following that strike we produced many, many pieces of literature which had to be circulated around the country, to new places. Garry ran the entire circ department for those months.

At the beginning of this talk, I mentioned to you that Garry came out of Nam with a deep understanding of the black question. This was another area where I enjoyed working with him. I often talked to him about public events we were having on this question and he always gave me ideas and help. The last time was five days before he died. We are going to be having a public forum on blacks and the Jim Crow military, and wanted to span the period from the Civil War to the Persian Gulf. While we were sitting in the radiology department waiting for yet another test, we worked on a list of books to recommend to the comrade preparing the talk.

So I've tried here to give you an outline of Garry's history in, and multifaceted contribution to, our party. Hopefully, a little sense, too, of who he was. He was a troubled man, he had mostly sleepless nights and every day he fought a battle to maintain an emotional equilibrium which would allow him to go forward. The results of that battle were uneven, some days he won, some days he lost. But he kept fighting, and kept giving what he could. That he could give so much under such circumstances makes his contribution all the more significant. It is a testament to him, and something to which the rest of us can aspire.

Garry was a good man, not so easy to be in this world, and a fine communist, of which this world has far too few. We loved him, we will miss him and as a tribute to him we will go forward, the International Communist League, for Garry and for the rest of the human race for whom he cared so deeply.

* * *

Mindy Gianninoto

It is very hard to express what another human being felt, but I feel I need to try.

There were only two things that mattered to Garry: myself and the party.

Garry felt deeply committed to this party and what we stand for. He did and would do whatever was asked of him with no complaints. As he said, "I gave it my best shot." He said he "would have died for this party, but that should be a given."

He had no tolerance for people complaining that any task was "shit work" or people not doing what was necessary to carry out the work. He never lost sight that we were here to change this world. He felt that it was too bad that, in particular, our younger members never went through military training. That is where he learned what a combat organization is,

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In Honor of Garry Gianninoto...

(continued from page 9)

from the chain of command to the discipline.

I believe that without the party and myself, Garry could have very easily ended up like a lot of other Vietnam vets. Garry was a tortured soul. He could never live with or come to terms with that war. He never thought he had a right to live past 20. But he never wanted to go this way.

Garry had post-traumatic stress disorder. This government never gave a damn about any vet. All they wanted and want is cannon fodder. But Garry did courageous and honorable things in an "unhonor-able" war. After four months of being a corpsman he went to his CO and said, "I'm not doing this anymore." He led a sitdown strike in the brig along with a brig uprising. All these things he expected to be shot for.

Garry really cared about people. He thought, and demanded, that everybody should get the best care. I watched this man work, and he was good. If some- body needed a neurologist, surgeon, or whatever— whether it was immediately operational or for a referral—he would get on the phone, call a contact and say, "Who's the best?" Then he'd get them.

What the party and comrades did for Garry, in his words, made it easier for him to die. He thanked people for this. Garry was asocial and he thanked comrades for the friendship that broke through this.

All through the years the party has always gone all out to help Garry—from financially facilitating his being able to see a psychiatrist for his post-traumatic stress disorder, to making Garry a consultative mem- ber so that he did not have to quit the party. Although he always hated not having a vote.

Garry took a medical leave of absence because of major depression. He was having an extremely diffi- cult time in life, but was in the middle of producing the first Prometheus Research Library bulletin. He wanted until the bulletin was produced to take his medical leave, not one day before and not one day after. I believe that during this time Garry was already sick.

The two things that they say about people who have cancer is: one, they should never be in pain, and two, they should never be alone. Garry took a lot of morphine and was still in some pain. But it was tolerable. The one thing about oncology, and probably the only thing in my opinion, is that they have been "won over" to no pain. And the party made sure that Garry was never alone. From the day Garry was diagnosed, I was never expected or asked to continue with my job—even though it had to be a big strain on the organization and comrades.

Being with Garry was important to him and impor- tant to me. There are large parts of terror and fear that another human being can never touch. But we built our own little fragile world. It worked pretty well until September, when life came crashing in.

What the party made possible was giving Garry a real quality of life, for what time he had remaining. One, he didn't have to worry about being evicted, and two, all those wonderful trips Garry and I took.

Going to Florida was very important. They did a thoracotomy on Garry which took him months to recover from. Tony and Brenda were just wonderful



September 1983, Garry at Spartacist protest against U.S.-sponsored seating of Cambodian Pol Pot regime in UN, part of continuing imperialist vendetta against the Vietnamese Revolution.

people. Garry loved Tony but hadn't seen him for probably 12 years. They opened up their lives to us. We had more privacy in their home than they did. To be able to sit out in the sun and watch nature was very nice.

Then, all our trips to Montauk—to be able to get away from New York meant being able to leave our house, to get away from the hospital and just watch birds, feed the birds, and listen to the ocean.

The comrades were always available day or night for Garry and myself. That made a huge difference. You guys never cried and we both thank you for that.

The only thing that came easy in Garry's life was that he died in his sleep.

Garry had a tremendous sense of survival which I believe came from the war. I don't know anyone who would have gone through chemotherapy. But he wanted to give it a shot.

Neither Garry or I ever thought life was fair. So, it's never been a question of this wasn't fair. There is a real deep feeling of bitterness. But the man still weighed 215 pounds and had his hair, as much as they tried to destroy that.

Garry was a hard man. And he was a good man. I think I had a pretty rare thing in life. He never would have changed places with me—if there could ever be such an option in life.

* * *

Dr. James Curtis

It's a real pleasure for me to be here. As director of psychiatry for Harlem Hospital Center, it was a great pleasure for me to hire Garry. I think it must have been about six years ago now.

He worked on a project that was remarkably close to so many of the other things that I've heard about this afternoon. We were following a group of 150 patients who were being discharged from our psy- chiatry in-patient service, and we needed to have someone on that team of about a dozen people who could take care of their physical health care needs. That was the special assignment that Garry had, to be in charge of the physical health care case manage-

ment for this group. We followed those people, not just in and out of the hospital, but all over Harlem and all over New York City, for five years. We worked extremely closely with Garry, in conferences that were held at least once a week.

So I came to know him quite well, and to know of his ability. He was really dedicated and competent and perfectionist. And the deep caring for people, you could just see it. The patients loved him and admired him and looked up to him. But the people with whom he worked, including me, also had such a tremendous feeling of warmth and respect and love for Garry.

I had no idea of the sources of some of his strength, and I'm really pleased to be here this after- noon to hear something of what inspired him and gave him the particular kind of strength of will and determination that he brought.

He also was someone who had the remarkable gift of not being caught up in cliques and factions of people who were wrangling with each other. And you can't be on a team of six or eight people, working with extremely difficult patients, without having people fall into cliques and factions. But remarkably, he never got caught up in either side and kept his eye steadfastly on the mission of our work. He was truly a remarkable man, and my life and all of our lives were made so much the better for having known him.

* * *

Jim Robertson

To Garry's family, coworkers, his friends and his comrades: I did not know Garry nearly well enough. He was, as he described in his own words, a bit asocial. I'm pretty shy, which is a terrible trait in a politician, and there was a generation gap between us.

We began to work together on the Medical Com- mission. Our party, having observed hospitals and the medical profession, does not let medical doctors serve on the Medical Commission. They serve as consult- ants. If you're a physicist, a chemist, a pharma- cologist, a nurse, or otherwise in some relationship to the health field, you're a member of the commis- sion. I believe our party doctors are very good fellows indeed. But it's a kind of profession that resembles too much the professional officer corps.

I found Garry uniquely suited for finding the right doctor in the right field for a given patient. As things unfolded over the years, I found that he had a fine wry sense of humor, an enormous interest in nature— his concern with photography and birds. I also had the opportunity, at the last possible moment because I did not think it would be very pleasant, to listen to his tape, in his dying days, of goodbye to the comrades.

I've been thinking since Garry died of what one might say, and having listened to his goodbye tape, I know that I have his full authority to make the kind of remarks that I will make, because this is how he felt.

Garry was shaped as an adult by his experiences in the Vietnam War. Garry did not draw pacifistic conclusions. He thought it was a *wrong* war, in which American soldiers were fighting on the *wrong* side. He did believe that there was a valuable quality to be learned through military discipline and responsibility. He was not a hippie.



Garry's meticulous work as party printer enabled Spartacist program to appear in Farsi, Japanese, Turkish-language publications.

That raises another question that's once again come up. General Norman Schwarzkopf claims that American veterans returning from the Vietnam War were spit on by antiwar activists. Now I've known a lot of militant antiwar activists. They never had any desire to spit on returning American soldiers. I never heard of such a thing. This is a version of the Hitler stab-in-the-back myth that "German Jews sold out Germany in the First World War, and that's why we lost, us front-fighters." It was a lie. It's a lie today. What do antiwar activists want to do to the reserves that are being called overseas? Give them one cold bottle of beer before they get hauled into this hellhole—because it's a bad war.

Men are terribly traumatized in good wars, but the great bulk of them come out intact. Both sides believed in the American Civil War, and so whichever side they fought on, you did not have very much post-traumatic stress syndrome, even though they went through bloody hell. When Erich Maria Remarque, a German soldier, wrote *All Quiet on the Western Front*, was he being anti-German by showing that this was a terrible war, killing men on both sides for no good purpose? So it's part of our job as socialists to fight this infamy, where the antiwar elements are supposed to be set up against the guys who are being dragged into the slaughter. Let us look instead at the Schwarzkopfs, their masters.

Beginning with the help of Stalin and now completing with the restoration of capitalism in East Europe, there are again to be two classes: the people in shirts and ties, and the people who clean the toilets. Garry despised that. He believed that all people are equal. And he meant it in the most literal, practical way. In our party, I hope that we've carried that out. Anytime you find somebody who finds that there's some task that's too menial, trivial or degrading, you have somebody who's profoundly an elitist and who believes that they ought to be part of a master class. And Garry felt that too very strongly.

Our organization went for a long time being very, very lucky and we didn't know it. It's been in existence for about 25 years. For the first ten years, nobody died or got really hurt. Then we started getting it. Toni Randell, at the age of 39, cancer; Kim Kilmer in an accident; Alden Cavanaugh, suicide; Noah Wolkenstein, suicide; Clay Dickinson, AIDS; Garry Gianninoto, cancer. We've had other serious problems. These are young people. I can list some old people, who were either old party comrades or who were, if not in close agreement, at least collaborated with us on matters of common interest. But when you get a heart attack at the age of 82 after profound medical complications, that's the way we hope we all leave this world. But in the last years, we have been getting the wrong side of the equation: early and miserable death. And Garry is the latest.

Well, the world is certainly changing. We are witnessing the death agony of the Stalinist takeover of the Russian Revolution. Immediately there's the bourgeoisie saying "Communism is dead." Some



Mindy Gianninoto
In Florida at his brother's house, February 1990.

fellow in the State Department said "history is dead." Now we have a new war, the consequences of which are incalculable. The world possesses 40,000 hydrogen bombs, and some of them are already in the hands of really crazy people. It's not easy to appreciate moving into a new period. Some of the elements today—except that there's one power, the Americans, who have this vast armament—are reminiscent of pre-1914. You have these very large capitalist powers jockeying for position.

The last good thing that I can recall that happened on this planet was that a force of Angolans and Cubans beat South Africa, threw them out of Angola and assisted in getting rid of the white domination in Namibia. That was back in the Brezhnev era, because there was some residue in foreign policy on the part of the Soviet Union that was not simply to give up in the favor of imperialism. Then there was stalemate in Afghanistan and collapse, and now the Russians are butting out everywhere including inside their own country. So it's not possible to know what is going to happen.

But I know what Garry wanted, and I know what this party is committed to, and that is to struggle for the authentic socialist organization of society. And that remains true even though we are moving into a new period, many of the variables of which are not now known to us. It is necessary to fight.

* * *

Glenn

I had the privilege to know and work with Garry for many years. In many tense and serious situations Garry always stood tall and held his ground.

He paid heavily for being in the Vietnam War, and for being against it. There's discussion on whether Agent Orange is a facilitator of cancer. Of course it's not in the government's interest to make that determination. But Garry was exposed to Agent Orange and he died of lung cancer. He was also forced to live with other scars from Vietnam. He was exposed to and experienced the horrors that you see in war. As a medic, he felt the strong intensity of those horrors and the pain inflicted on soldiers. Post-traumatic stress syndrome burns those horrors into your psyche. Simple, everyday life events retrigger those emotions with similar intensity. That's why it's so debilitating. This made his life harder. It made suffering from his disease harder, particularly since he knew and hated the health system, he saw what was happening to him, and that made it all the harder for him.

As a medical professional, I often worked with Garry on medical problems that arose. We always saw in him a clarity of thought, a demand for accuracy in information, firmness and determination to push things through. He also demonstrated the ability to be lighthearted when that was appropriate, which I think everyone has always appreciated.

I think the most important thing was the trust that he earned from everyone. Comrades always knew they had someone that was in their corner. Whether it was an illness or an accident, Garry was always interested in organizing all the facets because it's not simply medical. There's the personal, financial and political side.

Garry helped to develop the medical component of the anti-Klan demonstrations that we've initiated and organized. Our strategy is to organize the trade-union movement and minority organizations who are targeted by the fascists. The strategy makes us strong.

Nonetheless there are risks of violence and attack, not only from the fascists but particularly from the squadrons of cops who have been mobilized to protect them. If Garry was there, he was in charge of the medical component. We needed to be ready for any eventuality and we always have been.

One of Garry's last projects, which you can see in the displays, was his work on preventive health care. The most important thing is simply to stay healthy, in order to stay out of this health care system. But therein lies the contradiction, because in order to stay out of it you have to use it. Garry actually devoted



WV Photo
Through articles in the pages of the Spartacist press, Garry told the searing and painful truth about what U.S. imperialism's dirty war in Vietnam was like, and the hellish medical conditions in America's ghettos.

a lot of time to trying to develop advice for people on how to keep themselves healthy.

So I miss him very much as a trusted friend and comrade.

* * *

Bruce

To those who don't know me, I'm a comrade of Garry's. I too wanted to give an example of his marvelous compassion and ability to organize on a moment's notice. When Laurie was pregnant, we learned from the doctor that the baby's chromosomes were scrambled. The doctors refused to issue an opinion as to whether the baby would be born perfectly healthy or brain-dead. In 24 hours' time, Garry had organized an appointment with the top cytogeneticist in the country, who Garry had learned was working in New York. He got another leading doctor, to speak to this scientist, so as to have the authority to get an urgent appointment. It was through that scientist's lab work and professional opinion—which she was willing to give—that we learned that the baby would be perfectly normal. The worst ailment that Sasha's ever had is the flu. That was Garry's doing.



WV Photo
"KKK, Hit the Road!" Leading chants at 5,000-strong rally that stopped the Klan in Washington, D.C., 27 November 1982. Garry also headed SL medical team to care for demonstrators in case of trouble.

Terror Bombing...

(continued from page 1)

on the Near East and the world.

"Our plan is mathematical and it has its schedule," a particularly dimwitted White House official announced last week. But as Count Helmuth von Moltke the Elder, chief of staff of the Prussian army, observed, "no plan survives contact with the enemy." And on January 29, U.S.-led forces got their first contact with Iraqi troops. An armored column of some 2,000 Iraqi troops swept straight into the high-tech teeth of the American war machine, took the town of Khafji six miles inside Saudi territory, held it for two days and then withdrew with the bulk of its forces intact.

While the brass played up the number of Iraqi tanks destroyed and played down the significance of the battle (like they did after the Vietnamese Tet Offensive in 1968), for the American troops on the ground, it was a sobering shock after weeks of glib, racist propaganda about how the Iraqis would simply collapse in the face of superior U.S. firepower. One Marine helicopter pilot who participated in the recapture of Khafji said afterward: "Nobody who is going to go face-to-face with the Iraqis—cold steel to cold steel—believes it will be a cake walk." Another added, "I wouldn't say this war will be quick. Many people will die."

Many people have already died. But once the ground war starts in earnest, it will no longer be just Iraqi civilians—many Americans will also die. Despite the cutesy codenames like "Razzle-Dazzle" and "Bulldozer" the Pentagon has assigned to its various scenarios for a ground assault, Khafji will seem like a cakewalk compared to what the U.S. is in for with the bloody ground offensive they're preparing. With a battle-hardened and well-armored army, Iraqi



Remains of baby formula factory in Baghdad destroyed by U.S. bombs.

soldiers will no doubt exact revenge on the ground for the murderous bombing inflicted on their families over the last month.

With Iraqi positions well entrenched behind layer after layer of defensive fortifications, ground fighting in Kuwait will be more like the trench carnage of World War I than any war the U.S. has fought since. In his antiwar classic, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1928), Erich Maria Remarque described the horrors of that war:

"We see men living with their skulls blown open; we see soldiers run with their two feet cut off, they stagger on their splintered stumps into the next shell-hole; a lance-corporal crawls a mile and a half on his hands dragging his smashed knee after him; another goes to the dressing station and over his clasped hands bulge his intestines; we see men without mouths, without jaws, without faces, we find one man who has held the artery of his arm in his teeth for two hours in order not to bleed to death."

This is what the flag-waving yahoos—financed and organized by Contragate terrorist John Singlaub and right-wing wheeler-dealer Richard Viguerie—are cheering.

Meanwhile, the war is being sold to

the American population through the tame media which is "free to report what they're told." *New York Times* correspondent Chris Hedges complained on ABC News (11 February): "You never see any problems, you're never allowed to report, nothing's ever wrong. This entire war has become videotapes of planes always hitting their targets like giant Nintendo games and soldiers up front eating turkey and waving flags. And it's a lie." This lie will be exploded as the body bags start coming home by the hundreds and thousands.

Smart Bombs, Dumb Bombs, War Crimes

"U.S. officials have repeatedly declined to disclose the cumulative tonnage of explosives dropped," notes the *Washington Post* (3 February). Why? Because the astronomical numbers would belie the Pentagon's sanitized picture of the air war as clean, "precision" bombing of strictly "military targets." While media attention has focused on high-tech weapons, Baghdad and especially Basra are being hit by Vietnam-era B-52s. "With B-52s, the emphasis changes from dropping smart bombs worth \$1,000 a pound to \$1-a-pound dumb bombs" reported the *U.S. News & World Report* (11 February), a bottom line which the rising stock market seems to love.

One report quotes a British defense consultant in Saudi Arabia that "the tonnage of high explosive bombs already released has exceeded the combined allied air offensive of World War II" (*London Times*, 5 February). This may be an overestimate, but not by a hell of a lot. Our own estimate (based on the Pentagon's conservative figure of 2,000 sorties a day and taking into account estimated percentages of those which did

not drop bombs) is that the U.S. is dropping at least 16,000 tons a day, a total of a half million tons in the first month of war.

This is mass bombing on an unprecedented scale. In four weeks the U.S. has hit Iraq with a quarter of all the bombing tonnage dropped in Germany and German-occupied Europe in all of World War II (2.2 million tons), and in ten days it exceeded the firepower unleashed against Japan (153,000 tons). As Baghdad rightly charged, the U.S. is out to "expel Iraq from the 20th century" (*Washington Post*, 7 February), just as the Americans tried to bomb Vietnam "back to the Stone Age."

A Vietnamese civil engineer in Basra, who lived through the carpet bombing of Haiphong, said: "I thought I was back in Vietnam." The Pentagon has declared the whole city of Basra a "military target," recalling the "free fire" zones of Vietnam. *Los Angeles Times* reporter Mark Fineman described videotapes of the destruction in Basra showing "limbs protruding from piles of residential rubble, dolls strewn atop twisted furniture in what clearly were once homes; bloodied civilians with shrapnel wounds being rushed into hospital emergency rooms; blanket-covered corpses on sidewalks; crumpled swing sets in battered playgrounds."

When CNN's Peter Arnett revealed that the supposed "biological weapons plant" bombed by the Americans made powdered milk and infant formula, he was denounced as a virtual Iraqi agent by Washington. Now an Australian clergyman who visited the devastated factory says: "I walked through the rubble of that plant and I was contaminated with milk powder." Nestlé's said they knew all about the state-owned factory, since they keep tabs on their competition. And the *Washington Post* (8 February) quotes the director of the French company which built the plant: "It would have been impossible to transform this...into the making of chemical products."

U.S. Threatens Nuclear Holocaust

The devastating bombardment of Iraq is justified with the line that it will "save American lives" in the coming ground attack, echoing Truman's justification for the nuclear incineration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The arrogant U.S. imperialists claim the right to bomb any country off the face of the planet if they think it will "save American lives" in a criminal invasion.

For the ground offensive, the Pentagon has delivered "fuel-air explosives," which dropped in clusters create a giant fireball



Fort Hood was hotbed of GI protests against Vietnam War. Five hundred GIs march in Killeen, Texas, 25 October 1971.

Fort Hood...

(continued from page 1)

are some cracks in the capitalist war machine. Fort Hood alone has supplied 23,000 Army troops and trained 10,000 Guardsmen for the Gulf War. The head of the Louisiana National Guard is quoted as saying the incident had "a platoon of four-star generals concerned."

Press accounts also talk of "low morale" in Mississippi and Georgia Guard units. Around the U.S., the Military Family Support Network says local groups to aid soldiers who desire to become conscientious objectors are mushrooming. And in Germany, about 100 U.S. soldiers have reportedly left their units, many seeking CO status. A network of German pacifists is sheltering those who refuse to fight Iraq.

Imperialist war sharpens social contradictions at home. Fort Hood, which draws soldiers from across the Deep South, has been a particular focal point

In June 1966 the Fort Hood Three were the first soldiers to publicly refuse orders sending them to Vietnam. In 1968, some 150 black GIs refused to leave base for "riot control" duty against antiwar demonstrators outside the Democratic convention in Chicago. And in 1971, over 500 active-duty troops marched down the streets of Killeen behind a giant banner demanding, "We Want Out Now." Fort Hood was also where the racist Army brass unsuccessfully tried to court-martial baseball star Jackie Robinson in 1944 for refusing to sit in the back of a bus.

Coordinated mass social protest in the army poses a threat to the war in a way that individual refusals to fight do not. When the generals launch their bloodbath on the ground and the body bags start coming into Dover AFB, such protests will spread among the black, Hispanic and poor white troops who are the "cannon fodder" for Bush's New World Order. Drop the charges against the Fort Hood protesters! ■

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Spartacists march in SF demonstration, January 26.

with the force and fire of a tactical nuclear explosion. In addition, the U.S. has thousands of actual nuclear weapons in the Gulf. The Tomahawk cruise missiles being launched from carriers in the Gulf were in fact armed with nuclear warheads which were replaced with conventional ones. The nuclear tips can easily be placed back on, and each has a yield of up to 150 kilotons. Naval aircraft can carry "tactical" nuclear bombs of up to a 1,000-kiloton yield.

And American spokesmen have already made clear they would have no qualms about unleashing a nuclear holocaust over Iraq. When Cheney was asked on CNN's *Evans & Novak Report* (2 February), "That means we might use tactical weapons, then?" he coyly replied, "It means that we've got a wide spectrum of capabilities." Cheney also gave the Israelis a green light to use their nukes against Baghdad, warning that if Iraq launched chemical weapons against Israel, "the possibility would then exist, certainly with respect to the Israelis, for example, that they might retaliate with unconventional weapons."

To that purpose, the Zionist madmen could certainly manufacture an "Iraqi" C-weapons attack, no doubt one that would land on the occupied West Bank, where 90 percent of the Palestinian population still has not been given gas masks. For all the outcry over Scud attacks, when one missile appeared headed for an Arab village in the West Bank, the Israelis told the American Patriot crew: "Let it go" (*New York Post*, 31 January). With the Washington/Tel Aviv axis aiming at Iraq, the Near East stands a good chance of suffering a regional Armageddon.

In the meantime the Zionist rulers, itching for some Arab blood, have opened a "second front" against Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. At least eleven Arabs, including prominent Palestinian journalist Sari Nusseibeh, have been rounded up as "Iraqi spies." And as

the U.S. gears up for a bloody ground war, the Zionists gear up for their bloody "Final Solution." Shamir has taken the Molelet party, whose sole program is the mass expulsion of all Palestinians from the Occupied Territories, into the cabinet. This flagrant statement of the Zionist henchmen's genocidal intentions angered many even in Shamir's own rightist Likud party.

Arab World in Turmoil

Massive protests are sweeping through all of North Africa and the Near East. After initially threatening to arrest anyone who tried to organize pro-Iraq demonstrations, Morocco's King Hassan—who has 1,200 troops in the U.S.-led coalition—not only permitted but endorsed a massive one-day general strike. Five hundred thousand people surged onto the streets of Rabat with Iraqi and Palestinian flags and banners reading "We are all Iraqis." In Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt high schools and universities have been shut down to prevent student demonstrations. And Iran remains a wild card.

To a large extent, the outpouring of opposition to U.S. imperialism in the region is influenced, if not dominated, by Islamic fundamentalists. But many of these countries, especially in North Africa, have sizable secular leftist move-

to drive out the erstwhile imperialist ally Saddam Hussein and the capitalist class rule he represents. Only workers revolution can ensure the national rights of all the peoples in the region—Palestinians, Kurds and Hebrews alike. For a socialist federation of the Near East!

Whose War?

In the wake of the battle of Khafji, the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* (10 February) front-page headline read: "The body bags begin to flow." This time, the Pentagon has ordered, there will be no TV cameras waiting when they return, no ceremonies, no flags draped over them. But the families will know, they will still get the dreaded phone call in the middle of the night, as did one family in the South Bronx last week.

Inside one of those body bags was 27-year-old Ismael Cotto Jr., a Puerto Rican who managed to escape the hellish conditions of his South Bronx harbo by enlisting in the Marines. "I think he died unnecessarily," said his distraught 23-year-old sister Maria as she lashed out at the government that sent him to his death:

"Why are they spending all this money on this stupid war? Why aren't they spending it here? Why aren't they spending it on the children, on the schools, on housing, on factories?..."

"I saw them on television saying they



Workers at demonstration of 400,000 in Algiers last month for Iraqi victory.

ments. Egypt and Turkey have substantial working classes. The memory of previous colonialist and imperialist atrocities is deeply seared into the consciousness of the masses of the Near East, not least Winston Churchill's use of poison gas to quell an anti-colonial uprising in Iraq in 1921, which he said would "spread a lively terror" among the "uncivilized tribes."

In the struggle to crush the imperialist invaders, a revolutionary leadership could channel the anti-imperialist sentiments of the masses toward proletarian-led uprisings to sweep away all the bloody despots in the region—from Teheran to Baghdad to Tel Aviv and beyond. It is the task of the Iraqi working people—Kurds and Arabs, Sunnis and Shi'ites—

were spending billions on this. I saw them on Wall Street and they were cheering! It was sick. They were cheering, like it was a game. Don't they know it means that people will die? Not them. Not their families. Not their kids. People like my brother. What do they want?"

—*New York Post*, 2 February

Describing the home that Ismael managed to buy for his young wife and three-year-old daughter in California, his brother Carlos said: "He achieved the things he dreamed of, the American dream."

All too cruelly, Ismael Cotto Jr. found out in the end what the American dream really means for blacks and Hispanics and all the dispossessed in this disgustingly racist, capitalist society. "What do they want?" asks Maria Cotto, "To be the best in the world? Well, I don't care if we're the best. I want my brother back. They took him away." If Bush and his

class have their way, there will be many, many more Ismael Cottos before this bloody war is over, including hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians. This ruling class cares very much whether it's the "best," biggest and bloodiest in the world—that's what its survival depends on.

The dollar declines in value against the D-mark and yen, the U.S. economy is wracked by recession—a "temporary interruption of economic growth" as Bush terms it—while the stock market soars. American capitalism can't produce a decent car, not to mention VCRs, it can't provide education and housing for its population. But it can throw around its military muscle in an attempt to stay top dog of the imperialist pack. "When we win," rants Bush, the world will know "that what we say goes." When "we" win, vows the would-be *Führer* of the "new world order," Japan and Germany "have got to give us access to markets."

Class-Struggle Road to Peace

The left-liberal organizers of the anti-war protests seek to outbid the war criminals in patriotic sloganeering with calls to "support our troops" and displays of yellow ribbons and flag-waving. Ironically, Vietnam vets have taken to wearing orange ribbons, a reminder of the cancer-inducing Agent Orange defoliant that was dumped on the Vietnamese people as well as U.S. troops during the imperialist devastation of Vietnam. Now that the U.S. is sending another generation of youth to be slaughtered, Bush has finally signed legislation acknowledging that Vietnam vets were afflicted by Agent Orange.

As the German-Polish Jewish revolutionary Rosa Luxemburg put it during the carnage of World War I, the alternatives are socialism or barbarism. This could not be clearer than it is today. The imperialist system has spawned two world wars and more than 150 "lesser" wars so far in this century. More than three million people have died in wars since 1979, a million of them in the hideous eight-year-long Iran-Iraq border war in which the U.S. alternately (and sometimes simultaneously) supported both sides. While Bush talks of a "new world order," the reality underlines V.I. Lenin's statement that the imperialist epoch is one of wars and revolutions.

The barbarism of this imperialist system in its death agony must be swept away through revolutionary working-class struggle if humanity is to be spared ever grislier holocausts. A resounding battlefield defeat for the war criminals of Washington and Wall Street, linked to class struggle by workers and minorities at home, can pave the way for ending the horrors of imperialist war once and for all. The working people of this country have the power to bring down this most dangerous enemy of all humanity, the U.S. ruling class. The key to unchaining this power lies in the forging of an internationalist vanguard party committed to the program of socialist revolution.

For labor strikes against the war! Sink U.S. imperialism in the Persian Gulf! Defend Iraq! ■

Eastern ...

(continued from page 2)

came after Kirkland, Winpisinger and the Teamsters bureaucrats kept airline and airport workers on the job.

You see, according to the SWP, workers can't win strikes in this period:

"Taking place outside of conditions of generalized resistance or an offensive by the labor movement, the strike accomplished what the relationship of forces between the employers and the working class would today allow. This is its great victory."

The truth is the SWP, following the IAM and AFL-CIO, won't go beyond what the capitalist class, their courts, cops and labor boards will "allow." The Machinists strike could have been the battle that sparked a long-overdue offensive by the working class—as long as they didn't

play by the bosses' rules. The strikers' determination, the solidarity of workers across the country, a truly evil boss—it was all there, except the fighting leadership the strikers deserved.

Real militants who don't buy the SWP's cynical, self-serving reformism must draw the lessons of this betrayal. As we insisted early in the strike (WV No. 475, 14 April 1989): "The Eastern strike has posed pointblank the need for class-struggle leadership. Any serious class battle must be waged politically, taking on the capitalist labor boards, no-strike laws and strikebreaking injunctions. This means a fight to take workers' struggles out of the hands of the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy, ousting these class traitors and forging a workers party to fight for a workers government which will undertake the socialist reindustrialization of America." ■

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Soviet Union...

(continued from page 16)

Soviet peoples living in these republics. For example, the parliaments which declared "independence" were elected on voters' rolls which exclude large numbers of Soviet citizens who live in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

The Sajudis regime of Vytautas Landsbergis has demonstrated in the most flagrant way its intent to restore capitalism and the immiserization of the working class. A Sajudis supporter, Leonid Mlechin, summed up its economic program in the Moscow journal *New Times* (23 October 1990):

"Lithuania honours the right to private property and is prepared to give land to people, privatization schemes are being elaborated together with programmes to attract foreign capital....

"Former state enterprises will become either private or joint-stock enterprises. It is forbidden to make factories collective property of their work collectives, this practice is viewed in Lithuania as 'a manifestation of socialism, in particular Soviet ideology, which is incompatible with the Lithuanian model of economic reforms.'"

"Prices will be determined on a free market. Losses will never be covered by state subsidies. Goods, currency and securities will be freely exchanged and unemployment offices will appear."

This program could have been, and perhaps was, dictated by the *Wall Street Journal* or *London Economist*.

Just as the Lithuanian nationalists are in the forefront of capitalist counter-revolution, so they are spearheading the imperialist drive to dismember the USSR. In an interview with the *Wall Street Journal* (11 September 1990), Landsbergis called on the NATO powers to launch a new Cold War offensive: "We think that the West is too careful; too careful, not to risk any complications with the Soviets. They could push the Soviets back more strongly, because the Soviets are collapsing and are pulling back from all conquests and this pull-back could include the Baltics."

The Sajudis nationalists have deliberately provoked Soviet soldiers and officers stationed in Lithuania. They are taunted in the streets, their children beaten up in the schools, Red Army monuments commemorating the victory over Nazi Germany are destroyed and defaced. The Landsbergis regime has deprived Soviet soldiers of housing and their children of schools. The commander of a paratroop regiment stationed in Kaunas contrasted the Soviet military intervention in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, which he condemned, with the current situation in Lithuania: "There they were putting down democracy. Here there is no democracy. It is a real fascist dictatorship."

The Western bourgeois media depicts the internal opponents of Baltic secession, now organized around "National Salvation Committees," as simply agents



Demagogue Boris Yeltsin, longtime Stalinist hack, former Gorbachev lieutenant, is now hero of forces which openly seek to restore capitalism and dismember the Soviet Union.

or stooges manipulated by Moscow. Yet 20 percent of Lithuania, 40 percent of Latvia and almost half of Estonia consist of Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians and other nationalities. Heavily concentrated in the working class, these people will be the main immediate victims of the drive toward capitalist exploitation. If the Baltic nationalists secede and establish independent states, they will drive out those whom they sneeringly call "Soviet peoples."

That is why Moscow has a substantial base of support in the Baltic republics. This is seen even by the *Wall Street Journal* (17 January), which cites Galina

and the prime minister Kazimiera Prunskiene was forced to resign. She was then replaced by a more extreme nationalist and "free marketer." These protests point to the possibility of uniting the multinational working class against the forces of bloody counterrevolution from Vilnius to Moscow.

Behind Gorbachev's "Conservative" Turn

When Gorbachev denounced the Landsbergis regime for seeking to restore "the bourgeois system," the *London Guardian* (11 January) commented acidly: "This old Marxist-Leninist term is

cally, it is possible—although admittedly unlikely—for the Soviet Union to be transformed into a capitalist state while preserving its present boundaries. Insofar as Gorbachev has a coherent program, this is the direction in which he is moving. Thus his new economic policy, announced in mid-October, calls for both "speedy progress on the road to the market economy" and "a renewed federative and strong Union." Translating this program from paper to the real world is altogether another matter.

Gorbachev's current turn is not simply a reaction to the provocations of the Baltic secessionists. It is also a response to the campaign against him by the "democratic" opposition now led by Boris Yeltsin from his power base as president of the Russian republic. At the end of August, Yeltsin's spokesmen announced agreement on a "radical" new program worked out by Gorbachev's economic advisers, notably Stanislav Shatalin, for transforming the USSR into a full-fledged market economy. Housing would be privatized, agricultural land sold to peasant smallholders and at least 70 percent of industrial enterprises denationalized—all in 500 days. Real power of economic decision-making would be transferred from the central government to the various republics (see "Smash Yeltsin/Gorbachev 500-Day Plan!" *WI* No. 510, 21 September 1990).

The prime minister Nikolai Ryzhkov opposed this, while Gorbachev himself waffled for weeks. Finally, he backed away from the Shatalin plan for fear of triggering a mass explosion. In mid-October Gorbachev offered a new economic program which had the same goals as the Shatalin plan but without the forced-march timetable. It called for "denationalization and privatization" through the auctioning of state property, "including the incomplete construction projects, uninstalled equipment, construction materials, means of transportation, enterprises and shops, food and service outlets." It also specified that "Foreign firms can operate on the domestic market on an equal basis."

Had Mr. Perestroika come out with this economic platform a year earlier, it would have been hailed by *Wall Street*, the *City of London* and *Frankfurt* as a bold step toward "free markets," private property and the decentralization of the Soviet state. But now the "500-day" plan was viewed by the imperialist bourgeoisie and its Russian agents as a litmus test of the Soviet president's commitment to capitalist restoration. When Gorbachev rejected this, he came under heavy fire from the pro-Western "democrats" encouraged by their foreign godfathers.

Yeltsin threatened that the Russian republic would issue its own currency and establish its own armed forces, while pushing ahead with its own "free market" economic program. At the same time, Yeltsin demanded that Gorbachev disband the central Soviet government and replace it with a "government of national unity" including himself and other leading anti-Communists. This campaign was taken up by prominent intellectuals like Oleg Bogomolov and Tatyana Zaslavskaya who had been among the main ideologues of perestroika.



Mkhitaryan, a Byelorussian assembly-line worker at a Vilnius appliance factory, who describes the Landsbergis regime as "a totalitarian system." Last April Mrs. Mkhitaryan and her fellow worker militants formed the Civilian Committee, which became part of the National Salvation Committee in Lithuania.

A week before the crackdown in Vilnius in mid-January, there were large-scale demonstrations by Russians, Poles and also ethnic Lithuanians against the Sajudis regime's plans to raise prices between 200 and 800 percent! The price increases were immediately rescinded

one not heard from Mr. Gorbachev for many a long year—though it has been frequently used by his most conservative critics to denounce his attempt to introduce a market economy in the rest of the Soviet Union."

The Western bourgeois media is acting as if Gorbachev has betrayed his promises and even his own principles. But is that in fact so? Imperialist ideologues and their "democratic" Soviet protégés invariably link capitalist restoration to the breakup of the USSR along national lines. However, there is nothing inherent or necessary in such a linkage. Histori-

Soviet Pilots Refuse to Transport German Rockets

On February 8 a chartered Soviet air freighter arrived at the Bonn-Köln airport to pick up a German "Roland" anti-aircraft defense system and its Bundeswehr crew. But when the Soviet pilots found out that the cargo was to be delivered to southeastern Turkey, for use against Iraq in the present war, they refused to take off. The captain also refused to speak with the Soviet ambassador. Over the weekend there were hourly radio reports as the plane sat on the runway. The Kohl government insisted it had paid good D-marks to lease the giant Antonov freighter, one of the few planes large enough to hold the "Roland." (U.S. Galaxies are hooked up for the Gulf War.) But on Saturday, Gorbachev declared that Moscow was

unhappy over the U.S. military operations, and the next day the Soviet news agency TASS officially stated that Soviet planes would henceforth not be allowed to carry weapons to crisis areas.

During the standoff, our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD) issued a statement (translated below) solidarizing with the action of the Soviet pilots:

"The SpAD hails the refusal of Soviet pilots to carry Roland rockets to the Bundeswehr at Dyabarkir, in Turkish Kurdistan. The NATO-backed and widely hated Özal dictatorship has leaped into the U.S./NATO war of mass murder against the Iraqi people with designs on the oil fields of Kirkuk and Mosul. The Luftwaffe unit there is part

of NATO's mobile strike force, a dagger directed against the Soviet Union. The Kohl government has declared that defense of Turkey is required for reasons of alliance, raising the possibility of direct intervention of the Bundeswehr together with the rest of NATO.

"With the defense of Iraq against murderous imperialism directly posed, the Soviet Union backed first the U.S.-ordered UN blockade to starve Iraq, and then the U.S./NATO mass slaughter. This imperialist adventure to make the Pentagon cops of the world and to plunder and redivide the region's resources endangers the Soviet Union itself and brings the world closer to world war. U.S. war minister Cheney declared the land of October remains Enemy Number One. We say: 'Defeat U.S./NATO imperialism in the Gulf! Defend Iraq!' Your courageous action is a concrete measure in defense both of the Soviet Union and Iraq against imperialism, and is an inspiration to the international working class."

The ISO has eagerly built an aptly named front group, "Chicago Campuses Against War" or "CCAW" (read: see-saw). Now it looks like they may have created their own Frankenstein and spawned a group that's even too right-wing for them. At a February 3 CCAW meeting, the ISO scrambled to squash a proposal by the liberals they attracted to decorate Chicago campuses with blue and yellow ribbons (blue for "peace," yellow for "support our troops") and launch a blood drive for U.S. troops! The same meeting was crashed by anti-communist anarchists who were hilarious in spoofing the ISO's bureaucratic opportunism. One sported a circus ringmaster's costume and raised a sign reading "Welcome to the Zoo" while others passed out animal crackers and a satirical leaflet:

"CSAW members come from a broad variety of political perspectives and points of view, but we are united in our membership in the ISO. We agree to work together around four points of unity. Dissidents out of CSAW—No intervention in the CSAW hierarchy—No Democracy—Recruit at home and abroad.... Jump on the C-SAW!"

In their efforts to ride whatever wave may be popular at the moment, the ISO has hailed "movements" that would make even a reactionary blush. In 1979 the ISO supported the ayatollah Khomeini's "Islamic revolution" in Iran—a revolution that put women in veils, leftists in jails and killed countless thousands of Kurds and Communists. They swung back and forth over the squalid Iran/Iraq border war, first hypocritically denouncing the Iranian left's "fatal support for the mullahs at the outbreak of the war" (SW, October 1987) and then insisting that there was "no choice but to support the Khomeini regime against the U.S.

and its allies" (SW, February 1988).

The ISO wouldn't recognize the class line if they tripped over it—which they do, regularly. In the winter of 1984-85 Britain was convulsed by the militant coal miners strike. All sectors of society—leftist students, steel workers, blacks and Asian immigrants, gays and women—united in active solidarity with the miners because they saw the strike as the spearhead of a fight to bring down the vicious Thatcher government. But the British SWP incredibly declared: "The miners' strike is an extreme example of what we in the Socialist Workers Party have called the 'downturn' in the movement" (Socialist Review, April 1984).

The sellout Labour Party tops worked overtime against solidarity in action by other unionists who were eager to be called out on strike with the miners. As miners battled cops and scabs in the pits and villages throughout Britain, Tony Cliff, the ISO's British mentor, boasted at an SWP public meeting in London on 23 August 1984: "We have steelworkers in Redcar who cross picket lines. We have three steelworkers in Scunthorpe, they cross picket lines. We have a steelworker in Ravenscraig who crosses picket lines. We have a steelworker in Llanwern who crosses picket lines."

State Department "Socialists"

The problem for the ISO is that they have a wildly twisting weathervane where communists need a good backbone. Crisscrossing the class line is the defining political characteristic and origins of their organization. They crossed it decisively at the height of the Cold War when defending the Soviet Union became unpopular. The Cliffites abandoned defense of the Soviet Union—putting forward the ridiculous theory that the USSR is "state-capitalist"—and haven't known which way is up since. Ironically, the "we hate Russia" ISO

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streets, used however they wished.

Iranian women are on the threshold of a freedom denied them for years.

Thousands have been involved in the fight to oust

ISO hailed Khomeini's rise to power in Iran which put women in veils, leftists in jails, and thousands in the grave. "Socialist-feminist" ISO claimed the oppressive veil was a symbol of resistance to imperialism



employs every despicable practice that Stalinism brought into the workers movement—from physical violence against Trotskyists to building illusions in "democratic" capitalism and building popular fronts while duplicitously "boring from within."

Since 1917, when the Russian workers and peasants under the leadership of the Bolsheviks smashed the power of the capitalist class and instituted a workers state for the first time in history, the "Russian question" has been the litmus test for any organization that lays claim to Marxism. Although the gains of the revolution have been corroded by decades of Stalinist bureaucratic misrule, the imperialists have not given up on their drive to reconquer that lost market for capitalist exploitation. We Trotskyists fight to defend the Soviet Union against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution while struggling to oust the bureaucrats and restore workers democracy.

As Trotsky wrote:

"The workers' state must be taken as it has emerged from the merciless laboratory of history and not as it is imagined by a 'socialist' professor, reflectively exploring his nose with his finger. It is the duty of revolutionists to defend every conquest of the working class even though it may be distorted by the pressure of hostile forces. Those who cannot defend old positions will never conquer new ones."

—In Defense of Marxism

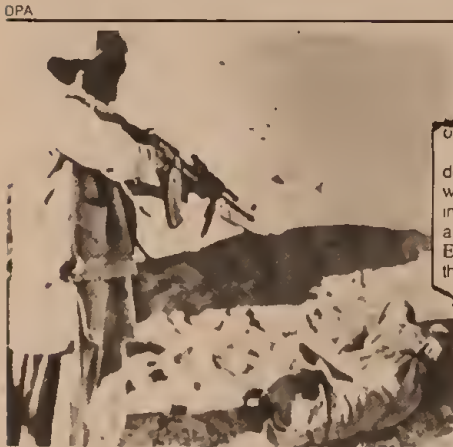
"Old positions" were junked rather than defended by Tony Cliff when the Cold War burned red hot over Korea. As in the Persian Gulf today, the U.S. fought the Korean War under the cover of the United Nations flag. Three million Koreans were slaughtered and the countryside was reduced to a moonscape. Cliff refused to take an elementary stand in defense of the North Korean deformed

workers state—instead he split from the Trotskyist movement. The ISO traces its origins to this, and in every conflict since, where the imperialists have sought to "roll back Communism"—from Poland to Afghanistan to Eastern Europe and the Baltics today—the ISO has stood in the camp of U.S. imperialism.

Only the fact of Soviet nuclear capability deterred the U.S. from using nuclear weapons in Vietnam. Today it is precisely the collapse of Stalinist rule in East Europe and the deepening crisis in the Soviet Union, as Gorbachev goes all out to appease imperialism—from the withdrawal from Afghanistan to the handing over of East Germany to capitalism and the "Fourth Reich"—that has emboldened the U.S. to launch its bloody adventure in the Near East.

The destruction being wrought by U.S. imperialism in the Persian Gulf is opening many young people's eyes to the horrors and injustices inherent in this so-called "democracy." Nothing short of a fundamental change in the class rule of this society will eliminate this system of war, racism and exploitation. To pretend otherwise is simply a lie. It is the working class which has the power to bring this rotten system down. Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home! As Trotsky's biographer Isaac Deutscher once told an audience of Vietnam antiwar activists, he'd trade all the peace marches for just one good dock strike against the war.

We take as our watchword Trotsky's injunction to "speak the truth to the masses." Antiwar militants should join the revolutionary youth organization whose program provides a basis for linking this struggle with the social power of the working class against the capitalist system. Join the Spartacus Youth Clubs! ■



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Just as socialists welcomed the defeat of the U.S. in Vietnam, we welcome the defeat of the Russians in Afghanistan. It will give heart to all those inside the USSR and in Eastern Europe who want to break the rule of Stalin's heirs.

ISO supported CIA-aided mujahedin cutthroats in Afghanistan. When Gorbachev criminally ordered Soviet withdrawal, ISO cheered.

In mid-December a special economic commission appointed by the world bankers cartel (International Monetary Fund, World Bank, et al.) "recommended" that the Soviet Union carry out a Polish-style "shock treatment"—a freeze on wages, an end to price controls and subsidies, the closure of unprofitable enterprises and privatization of state-owned property. Shortly thereafter, Yeltsin attempted his own economic "shock treatment" by threatening to cut back by 90 percent the Russian republic's contribution to the central Soviet budget!

Faced with the political offensive and provocations of the Yeltsin-led "democrats," amid mounting nationalist unrest and economic chaos, Gorbachev turned for support to the old-time Stalinist apparatchiks whom he previously downgraded and even abused. He replaced the "liberal" minister of the interior with a hardliner, Boris Pugo. Appointed as Pugo's deputy was Colonel General Boris Gromov, the last Soviet commander in Afghanistan, who as such is especially hated and feared by pro-imperialist forces. Gorbachev pushed through as his new vice president an undistinguished

party hack. Likewise, his new prime minister.

However, Gorbachev's "conservative" turn is of a quite limited character. The dismantling of the socialized economy is continuing at an accelerated pace. In October a presidential decree allowed foreign multinationals to own 100 percent of Soviet enterprises and repatriate their profits in hard currency. In January another presidential decree set aside 16,000 square miles of agricultural land to be leased to private farmers. No tumultuous debates on these issues were allowed in the Congress of People's Deputies.

Gorbachev's latest economic "reform" is to make the working people, including the poorest sections, pay for years of gross bureaucratic mismanagement. Ever since the late Brezhnev period, successive Kremlin regimes have pumped billions of rubles into the economy while seeking to freeze the prices of consumer goods sold in state shops. The result is an extreme case of suppressed hyperinflation with empty state shops and extortionate prices in private markets. The mass of unspendable rubles hoarded in savings banks, cupboards and mattresses

is at least equal to the annual wage bill.

The Gorbachev regime has now confiscated part of these forced savings by abolishing large 50- and 100-ruble bills while restricting withdrawals from savings accounts. The government claims that in doing so it is only going after the illegal earnings of black marketeers and speculators. But big-time private operators and, of course, well-placed government functionaries have already transformed their surplus rubles into foreign currency or real goods. Everyone in the world knows the Soviet Union is about to experience unsuppressed inflation. Official consumer prices are scheduled to rise 50 to 70 percent this year. The main victims of the currency "reform" are working people, especially old-age pensioners, many of whom do not trust putting their money in savings banks. Perhaps they remember how Stalin confiscated their savings after World War II.

Gorbachev's continuing attacks on Soviet working people internally are coupled with his continuing appeasement of Western imperialism globally. After Shevardnadze's dramatic resignation, Moscow went out of its way to assure

Washington there would be no change in the "new thinking" in foreign policy, especially support for the U.S. war against Iraq. A few weeks ago, Shevardnadze's protégé and successor as foreign minister, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, issued a joint statement with U.S. secretary of state James Baker maintaining that: "The military actions authorized by the United Nations have been provoked by the refusal of the Iraqi leadership to comply with the clear and lawful demands of the international community for withdrawal from Kuwait."

Restoring the independence of the filthy rich sheikdom of Kuwait is but a pretext for American imperialism to seize the Persian Gulf oil fields and reassert its role as cops of the world. If the U.S. defeats and occupies Iraq after a big, bloody war, Washington will be greatly emboldened in its aim of dismembering the Soviet Union in the name of Bush's "new world order." The Soviet working people must link the defense and regeneration of the collectivized economy, the restoration of workers democracy, to the struggle against imperialist militarism on a world scale.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

WORKERS VANGUARD

Pro-Imperialist "Democrats," Hardliners and Gorbachev

Where Is the Soviet Union Going?

"The West's Gorbachev honeymoon ends," proclaims the London *Guardian*. The London *Economist* writes of "The Rise and Fall of Perestroika." "No Aid for a Repressive Moscow," lectures the *New York Times*. The West European Common Market suspended \$1 billion in aid and the Bush White House canceled a scheduled summit in Moscow to show their displeasure at Gorbachev's crackdown against the Lithuanian

PART ONE OF TWO

secessionists who want to join the capitalist "free world" right now. As the *New York Times* complained: "This is where Mikhail S. Gorbachev has drawn the line."

Moscow's actions against the Baltic separatists, which so distress the Western imperialists, come in the context of a turn by the Gorbachev regime to shore up the disintegrating existing system. Mr. Perestroika now increasingly calls for law, order and discipline. The KGB has been instructed to crack down on illegal profiteering and "economic sabotage." Army troops have joined the police in patrolling major Soviet cities. Meanwhile, Gorbachev's once closest cothinkers and fellow "new thinkers" have gone by the wayside and been replaced by old-line Stalinist apparatchiks. In December foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze, described as NATO's best ally in the Kremlin, resigned, darkly prophesying, "A dictatorship is approaching."

Clearly, a turn of some sort has occurred. But how decisive and permanent is it? Has Gorbachev abandoned his "reform" program and is he now seeking



SHOWDOWN IN VILNIUS: Soviet troops outside Lithuanian parliament. Crises of Stalinism paves the way for capitalist restorationists, reactionary secessionists.

to restore strict Stalinist order? Is this even possible in any event? What are the prospects for a military coup, for a civil war? In short, where is the Soviet Union going?

The crackdown against Baltic separatists and the law-and-order turn is but an episode in the terminal crisis of Stalinist rule in the USSR. The Kremlin bureaucratic elite is disintegrating and tending to polarize. On one side are the pampered children of Stalin's apparatchiks who want to live like American or German yuppies. These "free marketeers" want to sell off the factories, mines and

oil fields—built by the sweat and blood of the workers—to Wall Street and the Frankfurt banks, and pocket the proceeds. They call themselves "democrats."

On the other side are conservative Stalinist apparatchiks, military men and KGB operatives who want to return to the days when they gave the orders and everyone kowtowed, when no one questioned their right to a dacha, ZIL limousine and the other privileges of the ruling caste (the *nomenklatura*). They now appeal to Great Russian nationalism and even vile anti-Semitic demagoguery. They call themselves "patriots."

What is missing in the present ideological division is the Soviet working class. While the October Revolution has been eclipsed in the political consciousness of the masses, working people take for granted the tangible gains of October: the right to a job, cheap food, subsidized housing, free medical care and schools for their children. And these gains are under attack by all wings of the bureaucracy.

Everyone is expecting strikes and mass protests against the impending sharp price increases planned by the Gorbachev regime. Working-class struggles in defense of social equality and the emergence of an authentic Leninist pole of attraction would shatter the present alignments within the bureaucracy and intelligentsia. Some intellectuals who now support the "democratic" opposition and also many Soviet-patriotic military men would come over to the side of the embattled masses. At the same time, some "free marketeers" would bloc with hardline Stalinists in seeking to suppress workers' resistance.

The Soviet working people must cut through the false polarization between the "democrats" and the "patriots," each in their own way heirs of the parasitic and reactionary Stalinist bureaucracy. The forces driving for the restoration of capitalism can and must be defeated, socialized property must be maintained and revitalized by the working class taking political power on the basis of Soviet democracy as was established by the 1917 October Revolution.

Today many Soviet working people rightly fear that the breakup of the USSR will ignite bloody nationalist strife (as now in the Caucasus), while the remnants will become semi-colonies of Western imperialism. The multinational Soviet state can be preserved and regenerated on a socialist basis only through genuine equality and justice for all its peoples. This requires returning to the proletarian internationalism of the Bolsheviks, who resolutely combatted all forms of nationalism, including and especially Great Russian chauvinism.

Lithuanian Sajudis in the Vanguard of Counterrevolution

As Leninists and internationalists, we stand for the democratic reorganization of the Soviet Union and for the right of any nationality with a leadership that opposes counterrevolution to withdraw to any extent it sees fit. However, the Baltic separatists mean to carry out a bloody capitalist counterrevolution. Behind their appeals to "democratic" rights, they have pursued viciously anti-democratic, indeed racist, policies toward the non-Baltic

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Gorbachev's perestroika has produced economic chaos. Left: Empty shelves in Moscow bread store. Right: Homeless erect tents behind Red Square.



Spartacist

Return to the Road of Lenin and Trotsky! For a Socialist Union of Soviet Republics!