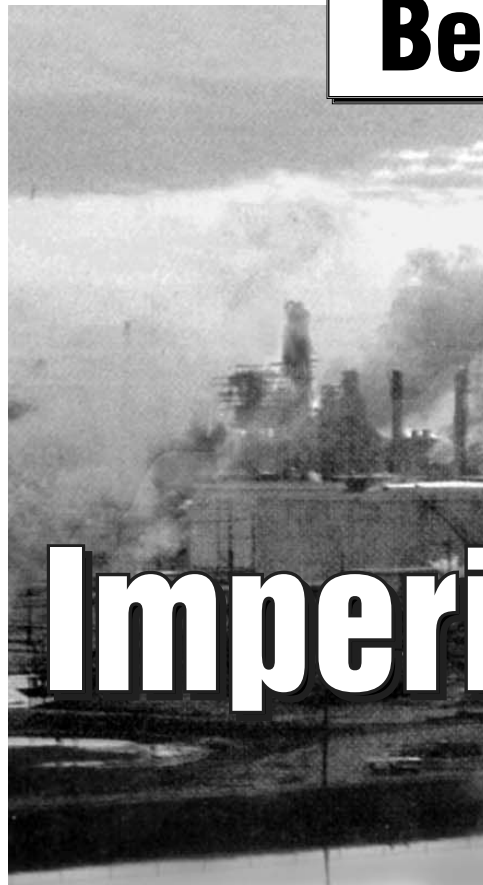


Behind the Exxon-Mobil Deal

Big Oil and Imperialist Power Politics



David Nance

In the wake of four days of murderous bombing raids by U.S. and Britain against the Iraqi population in December, U.S. military forces continue to rain missiles down on Iraq. Meanwhile, in the face of ever more vocal opposition from France and other imperialist powers, Washington maintains its insistence on enforcing the economic embargo imposed under the auspices of the United Nations. In the more than eight years since it was first imposed, the imperialist starvation blockade has led to the deaths of some one and a half million Iraqis, overwhelmingly children, the poor and the elderly. In rallying to the military defense of Iraq against the imperialist assault, we demand: U.S./Britain, get your bloody imperialist hands off Iraq! Down with the starvation blockade!

In a Spartacist League/U.S. leaflet issued on 16 December 1998 (reprinted in WV No. 704, 8 January) and distrib-

Repeated U.S. terror bombing of Iraq is aimed at intimidating semicolonial peoples and maintaining American imperialist control of Gulf oil fields.

imperialist rivals, especially Japan and Germany....

"The blood of Iraqis is today being spilled to cement U.S. control over vast oil and natural gas resources which are vital to Germany and Japan."

At the same time, we are seeing a further consolidation of the Anglo-American oil cartel on whose behalf the U.S. and its

off 9,000 or more of its 123,000 workers worldwide.

These layoffs are timed with the merger, but that is not their basic cause. Rather both the merger and layoffs were driven by a more fundamental factor: the cyclical nature of capitalist production. The East Asian economic crisis has depressed oil prices and slashed profits. Since the East Asian boom went bust in mid-1997, the benchmark price of crude oil has plunged by **55 percent** and is now \$10 a barrel, the lowest level (adjusting for inflation) in a quarter century.

So cost-cutting is the order of the day in Big Oil. Not only the new Exxon-Mobil combine but also Royal Dutch/Shell, BP-Amoco, Texaco, Conoco et al. are all making substantial cuts in their workforce. Oil is not the only sector of the American economy already hard hit by the collapse of its Asian markets. The giant aircraft manufacturer Boeing is planning to lay off 48,000 workers—a whopping quarter of its total labor force—over the next two years.

The threatened layoffs in oil and aircraft manufacture pose a union fight to defend jobs and workers' livelihoods. The Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW) and the International Associa-

tion of Machinists (IAM) are potentially among the most powerful unions in the U.S. Yet while mouthing "progressive" rhetoric—and, in the case of the OCAW bureaucracy, even talking of the need for a party of the working people—the union tops promote class-collaborationist policies which tie workers to the capitalist exploiters, centrally through support to the capitalist Democratic Party. The fight to mobilize union power in defense of jobs, wages and working conditions is necessarily linked to a political fight within the unions against the pro-capitalist labor bureaucrats, based on a program of class struggle against the capitalist system as a whole.

Heirs of Rockefeller and Sheiks of Araby

The stated aim of the Exxon-Mobil deal and other oil company mergers is to reduce costs by pooling facilities like refineries, offices and gas stations. No less important is pooling money-capital to buy off government officials in oil-producing countries. The item listed as "costs of exploration and development" in the financial statements of the Seven Sisters include in large measure payoffs to Arab sheiks, Nigerian and Indonesian generals, Venezuelan politicians and the like.

Recently, Mobil was edged out by Royal Dutch/Shell in bidding to construct a pipeline in the former Soviet Central Asian republic of Turkmenistan. That is, Shell shelled out more money to the ex-Stalinist apparatchiks who now run this small but oil- and natural gas-rich state for their own profit. But the new Exxon Mobil combine will have a slush fund second to none. With this in mind, a senior official of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation gleefully exclaimed:

continued on page 8



Agnis/New York Times

December merger announcement by Exxon and Mobil came with threat to lay off 9,000 workers.

uted at protest demonstrations around the country, we noted:

"The death and destruction being wreaked upon the people of Iraq right now show what imperialism is all about, a rapacious system based on the exploitation, subjugation and murder of the workers and semicolonial masses in order to expand the profits of a handful of filthy rich capitalists....

"What's behind the murderous attack on the people of Iraq is Washington's aim of intimidating through sheer terror and blackmail all the semicolonial peoples over which it rides roughshod and maintaining its position as top dog against its

British ally police the Persian Gulf. In early December, Exxon and Mobil signed a merger agreement, which would create the biggest industrial corporation in the world in terms of revenue. And last summer, British Petroleum took over Amoco to become the third largest oil company in the world. The Anglo-American oil cartel used to be called the Seven Sisters. Now, a financial journalist quips, the Sisters are turning into three or four well-married dowagers.

The current merger wave in Big Oil is, predictably, intended to further enrich their executives and stockholders at the expense of their workers. Mobil chairman Lucio Noto stands to gain \$3 to \$5 million in stock options once the deal goes through. The new oil giant, to be called Exxon Mobil, has announced plans to lay

Southeast Asia: Trotskyism vs. Nationalist Reformism...4



On Lincoln, Slavery and Habeas Corpus

Johannesburg
25 December 1998

Dear Comrades,

In the article “Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!” (WV No. 703, 25 December 1998), we observed that in 1871 President Grant suspended the writ of *habeas corpus* in the fight against the KKK. In April 1861 Abraham Lincoln also suspended the writ to crush the resistance of secessionists. It was one of his shining moments as he grasped the necessity of waging ruthless class war against the slaveholders.

The four border states (Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri and Virginia) contained large and resolute secessionist minorities which offered potentially crucial support to the Confederacy. Maryland, which enclosed Washington on three sides, presented an important challenge to Union resolve. According to Civil War historian James McPherson, secessionists in Baltimore rioted on 19 April 1861 and after the Confederate vic-

tory in Manassas, they were emboldened. The army arrested the police chief, four police commissioners, and scores of others. On April 21, Lincoln suspended the writ. Secessionist mobs attacked and killed Union troops (the 6th Massachusetts regiment). Among those arrested and imprisoned in Fort Henry was the grandson of Francis Scott Key who wrote the “Star Spangled Banner” and John Merryman, a wealthy landowner and lieutenant in a secessionist county. It was racist judge Roger B. Taney (author of the notorious Dred Scott decision), acting in his capacity as the senior judge of the federal circuit court in Baltimore, who ordered Merryman’s release and denied Lincoln’s right to suspend the writ. Lincoln refused to obey and took drastic action against active counterrevolutionary elements for their “substantial and unmistakable complicity with those in armed rebellion.” Hail Lincoln for this.

D. McClain

Anti-Native Racism in Canada

Boston
24 December 1998

Dear Comrades:

I read with interest the article “Canada: Labor Must Defend Rights of Native

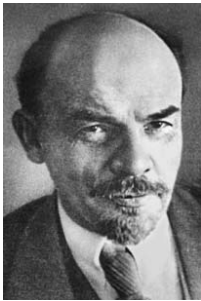
Peoples” in WV 703 [25 December 1998]. I was reminded of Canadian author Farley Mowat’s books on the horrendous, and largely unknown, 20th century genocide of the Ihalmiut, the now-extinct tundra



TROTSKY

Monopolies, Trusts and Imperialism

By the beginning of the 20th century, the world capitalist economy was dominated by monopolies, trusts and cartels which effectively controlled the governments in North America, Europe and Japan. In 1914, these imperialist powers went to war for the redivision of markets and spheres of exploitation. The frightful carnage of World War I precipitated the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the greatest historic victory for



LENIN

the international proletariat. The ABC of Communism, a basic exposition of the principles and program of Bolshevism, explained the development of monopoly capitalism out of “free market” competition.

Syndicates and trusts exercise an almost complete control over the market. They no longer fear competition, for they have crushed competition. Its place has been taken by capitalist *monopoly*, that is to say, by *the dominion of a single trust*.

In this way the concentration and centralisation of capital gradually lead to the suppression of competition. Competition has devoured itself. The more frantic the development of capitalism, the quicker did centralisation proceed, because the ruin of the weaker capitalists was more speedily effected. In the end the centralisation of capital, arising out of competition, proved fatal to competition. “FREE COMPETITION” HAS BEEN REPLACED BY THE DOMINION OF CAPITALIST COMBINES, BY THE RULE OF SYNDICATES AND TRUSTS....

We can therefore say that A CAPITALIST COUNTRY UNDER THE DOMINION OF FINANCIAL CAPITAL IS AS A WHOLE TRANSFORMED INTO AN IMMENSE COMBINED TRUST. AT THE HEAD OF THIS TRUST ARE THE BANKS. THE BOURGEOIS GOVERNMENT FORMS ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, etc., are nothing but State capitalist trusts, powerful organisations of trust magnates and bankers, exploiting and ruling hundreds of millions of wage slaves.

—N. Bukharin and E. Preobrazhensky, *The ABC of Communism* (1919)

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Biweekly of the Spartacist League of the U.S.



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No. 705

22 January 1999

dwellers of northern Canada (in *The Desperate People*), and similar and related crimes against the Innuit people on the coast. One particular tale is so bone-chilling it is hard to forget. A group of Innuit living happily and successfully on one of Canada’s subarctic islands was persuaded by agents of the Canadian government to move to an uninhabited island even farther north, an island that the Canadian government wanted inhabited in order to strengthen its national claim to it. The government promised them a good life and the government’s support. The story of their desperate struggle against starvation and the descent into madness as told in *The Snow Walker* is one of history’s more horrific tales. On the scale of other crimes perpetrated by the world’s capitalist classes like the holocaust, international wars, the atomic incineration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, mass murder in Nanking, and the diabolical oppression of

African-descended people in the United States, this story touched the lives of relatively few people. However, the entire story of the destruction by government-sponsored commercial interests of the lives, livelihoods and culture of Canada’s native peoples, a crime that included the racist genocide of the Ihalmiut by commercial manipulation and callous neglect after luring them into commercial dependence in a terribly harsh environment, a crime that was perpetrated from the beginning of this century into the 1950s, is one that is largely unknown and that deserves to be known. The Canadian capitalist class, much junior to the capitalist class of the United States in terms of power and world-threatening danger, is no less venal and cruel when it comes to the callous victimization of its own indigenous peoples.

Robert F.

Marxism vs. Eco-Radicalism

We publish the following letter in full.

27 November 1998
Washington, D.C.

Attn: WV editorial staff
RE: “Eco-Radicalism” Series
(WV #695/696)

I read with much interest your series on “Eco-Radicalism” explaining the Trotskyist position on Ecology issues. The presentations were very informative and thorough specially in exposing the ideological origins of the environmental movement as an expression of middle class/“conservationist” soul-searching. You opened my eyes on that point. I have to take issue with some of the comments made on part one of the article though....

To begin with, not all Greens favor primitivism. The neo-primitivist wing of the ecology movement is (at best) a loud minority; many Green activists (and I have worked with many over the past five years or so in Texas, South Florida and DC) favor the use of non-Toxic Technologies and accept industrialization as a flawed positive.

What Greens oppose is the misuse and mismanagement of Technology and Industry to serve anti-people and ecologically destructive ends.

Many Greens would agree that Technology and Industry could be utilized as tools to achieve progressive ends (and by “progressive” I mean the democratic extension of economic rights and the guarantee of personal autonomy to ALL members of society).

The Green movement (a section of the overall ecology movement) proposes the enactment of TECHNICAL REFORMS in the process of production to make it less toxic and more sustainable—with the implicit understanding that the application of ecologically benign technology is indispensable in course of achieving this end.

I really think that labeling Green activists as “Ecofreaks” is out of line and offensive.

Many individuals who work with the Green Party (and with the ecology movement in general) do so out of a genuine commitment to ensure the viable existence of a non-toxic ecology for future generations (including future generations of working class people).

Green activists—by the way—have been active on issues of social and economic import (specially since 1996) beyond environmentalism...I have participated in Clinic Defense Actions and Gay Rights demos side-by-side with Green organizers...and during the UPS strike many Greens joined Socialists and Feminist activists in supporting picket lines and strike related protests. The term “ecofreak” is a term of abuse, usually utilized by rightwingers to demonize ecologically aware persons. It has no place in sober political discourse. Green-baiting is as offensive as Redbaiting.

It is not true that “all” Green Radicals “deny” that Judeo-Christianity is a pillar of western Bourgeois Ideology. On the contrary, many Greens are aware that

Spartacist 4 Events

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CHICAGO

Anti-Sex Witchhunt Threatens Right to Privacy for All
Clinton Impeachment and U.S. Imperialism
Break with the Democrats and Republicans: Capitalist Parties of Racist Reaction! Forge a Revolutionary Workers Party!
Thursday, January 28, 7 p.m.
Cobb Hall, Room 116, 5811 S. Ellis
University of Chicago
For more information: (312) 454-4930

Spartacus Youth Club Forums

LOS ANGELES

Women’s Liberation and the Struggle for Socialist Revolution
Thursday, February 4, 6:30 p.m.
3120 Rolfe Hall, UCLA
For more information: (213) 380-8239 or lasyc@ucla.edu

SYC Class Series

VANCOUVER

Capitalism, Communism and the Fight for Revolution

Next classes: January 27, **Permanent Revolution and the Fight for Socialism in Asia**; February 10, **Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty! Alternate Wednesdays, 7 p.m.**
UBC, Buchanan Building, Room B330
Information and readings: (604) 687-0353

NEW YORK

Revolutionary Marxism: The Fight for a Socialist Future

Next class: February 9
Marxism: A Guide to Action
Alternate Tuesdays, 8 p.m.
Loeb Student Center, Room 511, NYU
Information and readings: (212) 267-1025 or spartacus.club@nyu.edu

Judeo-Christian beliefs are at the core of the kind of Anthropocentric value system that views the planet and other life forms within it as raw material for our use and disposal.

The truth is that the planet *does not* exist FOR us...*we* simply exist *IN IT*. We are *NOT* the center of the universe (and neither is “God”). Greens view the universe as centerless. We exist as biological beings in context of nature. Greens understand that our collective-social survival as a species depends on the non-toxic preservation of the planetary/ecological context.

In the article it is stated that “Radical environmentalism as an ideology has a quasi-religious character”.... The same has been said about Marxist-Leninism-Trotskyism. Greens might be spiritual, but not religious.

Many Greens identify with wicca inspired Naturalist/Neo-Pagan spiritualities (in opposition to both Pure Atheism *and* Judeo-Christian monotheism), some Greens are Atheists and a few still identify with Christianity (specially with Franciscanism); but overall Greens are opposed to establishment Judeo-Christianity as exemplified by the Religious WRONG.

The Green Party does not impose a religious line on its members. Individual activists and organizers are free to pursue the spiritual activities of their choice so long as those activities do not contradict the 10 key values of the movement (i.e. Ecological Wisdom, Social Justice, Grassroots Democracy, Non-Violence, Decentralization, Community-based economics, Feminism, Diversity and Global/Personal Responsibility). I would argue that Ecology is fundamental to the Proletarian Revolution. It is in the interest of working class people that the ecological context remains a functioning physical/material basis for the future construction of Socialism on a planetary scale.

It is usually overlooked on the Marxist Left that Socialism cannot be built on a Toxic wasteland.

Either working people take control of the Industries and Technology and put them to use in a non-Toxic manner or Corporate Capitalism will end up consuming our planet.

Sincerely,
John M.
Socialist Party Member

WV Replies:

John M. is right that not all environmental activists should be called “ecofreaks,” and we do not do so. “Eco-Radicalism and Bourgeois Politics” (*Young Spartacus* pages, WV Nos. 695 and 696, 28 August and 11 September 1998) began by indicating that there are two distinct wings of the present-day environmentalist movement in the U.S. There is a thoroughly bourgeois wing represented by the Audubon Society, Sierra Club and Democratic Party vice president Al Gore. At the other extreme are radical primitivist types, mainly

student-youth and lumpenized intellectuals, represented by groups like Earth First! and Friends of the Earth.

Between these two wings lies a gamut of groups and individuals which can be described as *left-liberal* environmentalists. Representative of this current are the various Green parties, which are bourgeois or petty-bourgeois parties. The program of what John M. calls the Green movement is indistinguishable from the

German Green Party leader Joschka Fischer is now foreign minister of Europe’s strongest capitalist state, linchpin of the nuclear-armed NATO alliance.



F. Darchinger

liberal wing of the Democratic Party of American capitalism, except for a greater emphasis on environmental issues and local self-government. The Green Party in Maine demands:

“We must raise the minimum wage, strengthen our educational system, support sustainable neighborhoods and communities, create an affordable health and dental care system, reinforce the meaning of family and respect for our youth and elders, and assure religious freedom.”

There is nothing here that is not also said on occasion by mainstream Democratic Party politicians, including imperialist Commander in Chief Bill Clinton.

Most American Greens look to the Green parties in Germany and France as successful political models to be emulated. German Green leader Joschka Fischer is now foreign minister of the most powerful capitalist state in Europe and the linchpin of the NATO military alliance. The Green Party in New Jersey issued a statement on 1 October 1998 enthusing: “We want to express our congratulations to the members of Germany’s Green Party upon taking the historic step of entering a coalition government with the Social Democratic Party.”

There are enough nuclear weapons deployed by the NATO forces in Germany to exterminate humanity and many other species on the planet. To maintain a shred of his former pseudo-pacifist credentials, Fischer cautiously suggested that NATO declare it would not be the first to use nuclear weapons in a war. Such a statement, of course, would in no way prevent the American or West European imperialist powers from doing just that. Remember that the U.S. A-bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, when Japan had no nuclear weapons. When Washington angrily rejected Fischer’s

“no first use” proposal, the world’s foremost Green politician immediately abandoned what is supposedly a basic principle of this movement.

The main difference between the Green parties in the U.S. and in Germany or France is that the latter have a sufficiently large following so that the capitalist class finds it expedient to co-opt their leaders into the government. If the Green movement in the U.S.



Der Spiegel

achieved comparable political weight, its leaders would act just like Joschka Fischer and his colleagues.

As Marxists, proletarian revolutionaries oppose the environmentalist movement *not* because we deny that the existing organization and use of industrial technology, governed by the world capitalist market, degrades the environment. For example, the burning of hydrocarbons—coal and oil—as the primary sources of energy pollutes the atmosphere and may have other harmful long-term effects. What we deny is the liberal-reformist illusion that the existing American and West European states can be agencies for bringing about an “ecologically benign technology,” to use John M.’s term.

In recent years, the U.S. government, including environmentalist vice president Al Gore, has killed well over a million Iraqis to keep the Persian Gulf safe for Exxon, Mobil, Chevron and Texaco. As we wrote in Part One of “Eco-Radicalism and Bourgeois Politics”:

“Capitalist governments will never sacrifice the profits of large corporations and banks to ‘protect the environment,’ no matter how piously they pay lip service to it.... Control over major ecological problems such as air and water pollution can be achieved only within the framework of an *internationally planned, socialist economy*. This in turn requires *workers revolutions* to take the factories, transport systems, oil fields, mines and other means of production from the privately owned and profit-maximizing corporations and banks which now dominate the world economy.”

Left-liberal and radical environmentalists commonly point to the former Soviet Union to argue that socialist planning is just as destructive of the environment as capitalism. However, the ecological disasters which occurred in the USSR

resulted from the *mismanagement* of its collectivized economy by the parasitic and corrupt Stalinist bureaucracy. We noted after the tragic accident at the Chernobyl nuclear plant in 1985 that “Soviet safety standards have been undermined by the bureaucratic degeneration of the Bolshevik Revolution” (WV No. 403, 9 May 1986). A Soviet government based on workers democracy, representing the interests of the working

people, could and should have, for example, prevented the pollution of the Caspian Sea. Likewise, the struggle to keep Lake Baikal pristine was important.

But we approached such questions from the standpoint of strengthening, developing and extending the planned, collectivized economy and technological progress. The capitalist counterrevolution which destroyed the Soviet Union in 1991-92 has certainly “improved” the environment, and some Green radicals may welcome the closing of Russia’s steel smelters and other factories, since they no longer poison the atmosphere. But the complete devastation of Russia’s industrial economy has brought with it an enormous rise in the death rate and a sharp decline in longevity due to widespread malnutrition and rampant disease.

John M. balks at our reference to the quasi-religious character of radical environmentalism. But in opposition to scientific socialism (Marxism), both traditional religion and Green radicalism hold that society should be governed by laws laid down by higher powers, god in the first case, an idealized nature in the second. The Judeo-Christian ethic is “go forth and multiply,” which is not so good for the environment. Meanwhile the people of China are supposed to be punished with a lower standard of living for encompassing a quarter of the world’s population.

For most of human existence life has been, in the famous words of the 17th-century English political philosopher Thomas Hobbes, “poor, nasty, brutish and short.” This condition can be transcended only by the development of the productive forces through the application of science and technology under the international rule of the proletariat. ■

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Australian DSP—Warmed Over Mensheviks

Southeast Asia: Trotskyism vs. Nationalist Reformism

We reprint below a January 1999 leaflet issued by the Spartacist League of Australia which was widely distributed at the national conference of the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) held earlier this month at the University of Western Sydney. Confirming the truth of what the leaflet says about the DSP, conference organizers summoned security guards—behind whom stand the capitalist state’s cops—to evict our comrades from the campus in a vain attempt to shield its members from our Marxist politics. Appealing to the enemies of the working class and the oppressed is indeed the stock in trade of these visceral anti-communists.

What kind of “socialist” organisation:

- defends notorious Croatian Ustasha fascists, World War II butchers too bloody even for the Nazis;

- hails the murder of the heroic Vietnamese Trotskyists who led the 1945 Saigon insurrection against French and British imperialism;

- supports reactionary, anti-woman “movements” from the “Iranian Revolution” of Ayatollah Khomeini to Polish Solidarność, counterrevolutionary instrument of the Pope, the CIA and Western bankers;

- upholds the jackal white racist Australian imperialist rulers as potential “friends” of the oppressed from Papua New Guinea to Irian Jaya to East Timor? The polar opposite of revolutionary Marxism, the program for emancipation of the working class and all the oppressed, these are some of the hallmarks of the “socialism” preached by the Australian Democratic Socialist Party.

From the very beginning of the Marxist movement, revolutionaries have had to wage unyielding political battle against self-proclaimed “socialist” and even “revolutionary” organisations whose fundamental political tenet is the inevitable and continued existence of capitalism. But even among the long line of such reformists, the DSP stands out for its truly boundless opportunist appetites. The DSP leadership has proven willing to adopt almost any political posture if they perceive the possibility of gaining “influence,” as they have pursued “unity” with an endless array of organisations whose stated political positions are not only at sharp variance from those of the DSP but with each other (from Stalinists to “Euro-communists” to ostensible Trotskyists).

While openly declaring its opposition to Trotskyism, the DSP falsely claims to admire Marx, Engels and Lenin, and works overtime to distort them as purveyors of its own special brand of petty-bourgeois radicalism. In this, insofar as they have an impact among militant young proletarians and leftward-moving student youth, the DSP does yeoman’s service for the Australian imperialists who fear above all socialist revolution in their “backyard.” The Australian imperialists have time and again sought to drown the insurgent masses across Asia in blood: the drive to crush the Malayan Communist Party in the so-called “Emergency” of the 1950s; the Korean War; the 1958 CIA-backed “Outer Islands Rebellion” in Indonesia; the 1965 mass slaughter of Indonesian leftists and others. That the DSP includes among its leaders one Max Lane, whose “foreign service” career included a posting as second secretary in the Australian Embassy

in Jakarta, Indonesia, speaks volumes.

What became the DSP grew out of the Sydney University Labor Club, becoming the Socialist Workers League (SWL) in 1972 and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in 1976. Falsely claiming adherence to Trotskyism, early on they hooked up with the hardened, if eccentric, reformists of Jack Barnes’ U.S. SWP, one wing of the misnamed “United Secretariat of the Fourth International” (USec). In 1982, Barnes explicitly repudiated Trotskyism and carried out a purge, targeting as well the Australian SWP leadership of Jim Percy who then broke off

aries. Against the likes of the DSP, the International Communist League proudly stands on the program and tradition of the Communist International under the leadership of V. I. Lenin and L.D. Trotsky.

DSP Resurrects Menshevik/ Stalinist Betrayals

The DSP’s “repudiation” of Trotskyism is nothing other than a repudiation of the program for proletarian revolution. The first “major political error” of Trotskyism, according to the DSP, is the theory of permanent revolution, the cornerstone of proletarian revolutionary

bourgeoisie, and later a socialist revolution. Lenin’s Bolsheviks were closer to Trotsky’s view—they insisted that the Russian bourgeoisie was incapable of leading a democratic revolution. The Bolsheviks argued for an alliance between the working class and the peasantry, culminating in the “democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.”

The victorious October Revolution of 1917 was the *permanent revolution in reality*. It completely refuted the Menshevik idea of the revolution as stagist and transcended the limitations of the “democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and



L.A. Times

Reformist DSP promotes illusions in Third World bourgeois nationalism, from Cory Aquino’s U.S.-backed “people power” movement in the Philippines in 1986 (left) to Javanese-chauvinist Megawati in Indonesia today.



Reuters

relations with the Barnesites, denouncing them as a “sect.” By July 1984 the Percytes declared they too had “repudiated” Trotskyism (and in 1985 split from the USec altogether). Having never in fact been revolutionary Trotskyists, this was the SWP’s announcement that even the faintest hint of an association with the Trotskyist program of international proletarian revolution was anathema.

To underscore the point, in 1989, as the Berlin Wall fell amidst unfolding capitalist counterrevolution in Eastern Europe, the SWP changed its name to Democratic Socialist Party and renamed its newspaper *Green Left Weekly* (from *Direct Action*). It is entirely appropriate that this group adopted the name “democratic socialist,” the banner under which pro-imperialist social democrats have long waged war against Marxist revolution-

strategy in countries of belated capitalist development, which they denounce as “ultraleft” and “sectarian.”

Developed prior to 1917 as a projection of the likely course of the Russian Revolution, the core of permanent revolution is that in the imperialist epoch, in countries where the national bourgeoisie is tied by a thousand strings to the imperialists, solving the most basic democratic tasks—national liberation and the agrarian question, for example—requires socialist revolution, the seizure of power by the proletariat at the head of all the oppressed. To open the road to socialism requires the extension of the revolution to the advanced capitalist countries.

The Russian Mensheviks asserted that the revolution would occur in distinct stages: first a bourgeois-democratic revolution under the leadership of the liberal

the peasantry.” The agrarian-democratic revolution was realised, not as a stage before the proletarian seizure of power, but as a result of it. It was the Stalinists (who betrayed and ultimately strangled the Bolshevik Revolution) who resurrected the Menshevik two-stage strategy as a defeatist corollary to their nationalist schema of building “socialism in one country.” Applying it to the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, the Comintern ordered the young Communist Party to liquidate into the Guomindang, party of the national bourgeoisie. The result was the defeat of the revolution. The Guomindang drowned the Chinese working class in blood (see “Permanent Revolution vs. the ‘Anti-Imperialist United Front’: The Origins of Chinese Trotskyism,” *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 53, Summer 1997).

Far from the essence of Leninism, as the DSP claims, the two-stage schema has brought terrible defeats for the proletariat, and the *physical destruction* of the communists. But for the DSP, the many bloody defeats that have flowed from this bankrupt program count as nothing. Falsifying Lenin, Trotsky and history in general, John Percy claimed in his 1992 *A History of the Democratic Socialist Party*:

“Well, if any programmatic position has been thoroughly tested and been found correct in the light of the living experiences of the working-class movement, it must be Lenin’s two-stage strategy of revolution in the industrially backward countries.”

On the contrary, the October Revolution fully confirmed Trotsky’s position. Lenin’s slogan for the “democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry” was flawed in any case as it projected the creation of a state defending the interests of two different classes, and in April 1917 he rejected it. In his



Australasian Spartacist

Spartacist contingent at 1997 Melbourne protest against Suharto dictatorship. Sign in Indonesian reads: “Independence for East Timor! For Workers Revolution in Indonesia! Down With Australian Imperialism!”

“Letters on Tactics,” Lenin stated: “The person who *now* speaks only of a ‘revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry’ is behind the times, consequently, he has in effect *gone over* to the petty bourgeoisie against the proletarian class struggle; that person should be consigned to the archive of ‘Bolshevik’ pre-revolutionary antiques.” Thus Lenin fought against those (including Stalin) who wanted to support the *capitalist* government issuing out of the February Revolution, supposedly the “first stage” of the revolution.

The DSP occasionally revises the timing of the Menshevik/Stalinist version of two-stage revolution. Instead of the first stage being the February 1917 Revolution and the second stage the October Revolution, the DSP defines the “first stage” of the Bolshevik Revolution as “from November 1917 until June-July 1918.” They say this was “a peasant-*democratic* revolution carried out under *proletarian political leadership*, which grew over, in its second stage from July through to October 1918, into a proletarian-*socialist* revolution” (*The Activist*, February 1996). They deliberately obscure that the agrarian-democratic revolution and the expropriation of the bourgeoisie were carried out by the *dictatorship of the proletariat* following the seizure of state power in October 1917 by the proletariat supported by the peasantry.

The DSP is refuted by Lenin himself! Immediately after the seizure of power he proclaimed to the Congress of Soviets, “We shall now proceed to construct the socialist order.” It is the dictatorship of the proletariat which the DSP opposes. The proof of their opposition is that in every country they unfailingly preach the Menshevik program of placing confidence in the imperialist-dependent bourgeoisie as the vehicle for liberation.

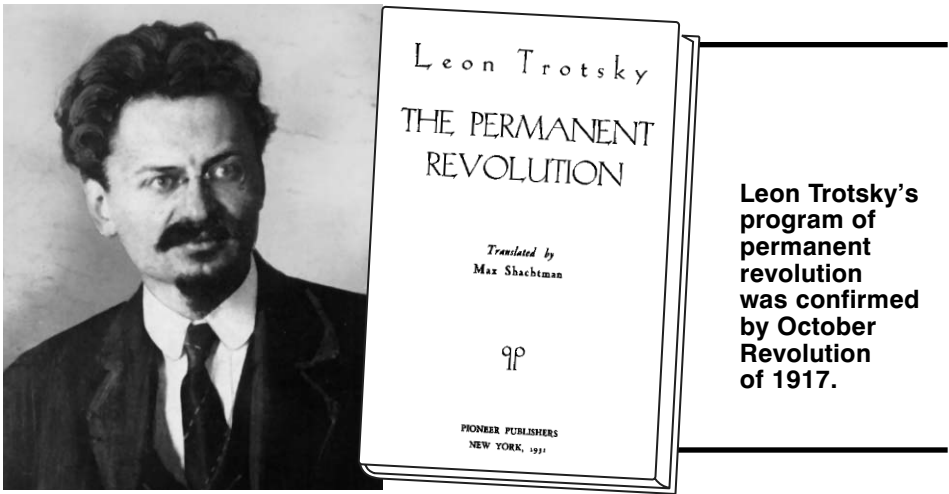
Permanent Revolution: Nicaragua

According to Percy, it was the 1979 Nicaraguan Revolution that “toppled our Trotskyist theory that socialist revolutions were one stage affairs” (*A History*). This is, on the face of it, absurd. The Sandinista leaders truthfully *denied* that they had any intention of abolishing capitalism following the overthrow of the U.S.-backed tyrant Somoza by the Nicaraguan masses. The FSLN, agreeing with Cuba’s Fidel Castro, refused to undertake a thorough-going social revolution, leading directly to the defeat of the revolution.

Against the petty-bourgeois Sandinistas’ social pact with the “anti-Somoza” bourgeoisie in the name of “political pluralism,” we stressed that defence of the Nicaraguan Revolution required that it be completed through expropriation of the capitalist fifth column and extended throughout the region. Far from confirming the “stagist” conception, the Nicaraguan Revolution tragically illustrates that short of the proletarian seizure of power, the most basic democratic tasks cannot be solved. As we wrote in 1990 when contra candidate Violetta Chamorro took office, “In the face of unrelenting imperialist hostility, seeing no road to revolutionary victory and demoralized by the FSLN’s increasingly pro-capitalist policies, the Nicaraguan masses sought a respite from their suffering by bringing in Washington’s woman” (WV No. 501, 4 May 1990).

Opposing permanent revolution, a strategy for *proletarian* power, the DSP has no need of a proletarian revolutionary party—any petty-bourgeois nationalists will do. The DSP was so enamoured of the Sandinistas that they denounced the U.S. SWP, who were and are hardly shy about tailing anti-proletarian forces, for not going far enough in lauding the Sandinistas as revolutionaries. They also one-upped the Barnesites, claiming that “the Castro leadership were revolutionary Marxists even before taking power in Cuba” (*A History*).

The ICL fundamentally opposes the doctrine proclaimed by Maoists and others which rejects the vanguard role of the working class and substitutes peasant-based guerrilla warfare as the road to



AP

socialism. As we wrote in our ICL “Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program” (*Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 54, Spring 1998):

“In Cuba, a petty-bourgeois movement under exceptional circumstances—the absence of the working class as a contender for social power in its own right, the flight of the national bourgeoisie and hostile imperialist encirclement, and a lifeline thrown by the Soviet Union—did overthrow the old Batista dictatorship and eventually smash capitalist property relations. But Castroism (or other peasant-based guerrilla movements) cannot bring the working class to political power.

“Under the most *favorable* historic circumstances conceivable, the petty-bourgeois peasantry was only capable of creating a bureaucratically deformed workers state, that is, a state of the same order as that issuing out of the political counterrevolution of Stalin in the Soviet Union, an anti-working-class regime which blocked the possibilities to extend social revolution into Latin America and North America, and suppressed Cuba’s further development in the direction of socialism. To place the working class in political power and open the road to socialist development requires a supplemental *political* revolution led by a Trotskyist party. With the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state and consequently no readily available lifeline against imperialist encirclement, the narrow historical opening in which petty-bourgeois forces were able to overturn local capitalist rule has been closed, underscoring the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution.”

Permanent Revolution: Vietnam

The SWP’s condemnation of permanent revolution led them in short order to embrace bloody Stalinist terror in the service of imperialism. In 1945 at the end of World War II, the Vietnamese Trotskyists led an insurrection in Saigon to oppose the reinvasion of Vietnam by the British and French imperialists. Under the banner of the Fourth International, they fought for slogans such as: Down with Imperialism! Long Live World Revolution! Long Live the Workers and Peasants Front! People’s Committees Everywhere! Long Live the Arming of the People! Land to the Peasants! Nationalisation of the Factories under Workers Control! Toward the Workers and Peasants Government! The Vietnamese Stalinists, in line with the Soviet bureaucracy’s appeasement of the “democratic” imperialist Allies, “welcomed” the colonialists’ return. They crushed the Saigon uprising, murdering hundreds of Trotskyists, including Trotskyist leader Ta Thu Thau.

The SWP, in a 1984 pamphlet by Allen Myers (*The Vietnamese Revolution and Its Leadership*), grotesquely praised this slaughter of communists, retailing deadly Stalinist Moscow Trials-type slanders:

“It was at this time that leaders of the Trotskyists and of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalists were executed....

“The Trotskyists and their nationalist allies had made a major contribution to the near-destruction of the revolution in the South. Preventing further damage, if necessary by physical repression, was imperative.”

Fighting for the Marxist program of permanent revolution, the heroic Vietnamese Trotskyists had significant roots in the proletariat and led tens of thousands of workers in the Saigon insurrection. The Stalinists, bowing before the French imperialists, destroyed the most class-conscious militants, paving the way for 30 years of imperialist war against the Vietnamese. Infamous for their “peaceful,

legal” kowtowing before the Australian ruling class, safe at home the DSP, red in tooth and claw, stands with Stalinist murderers of revolutionary internationalists.

Indonesia, Philippines: More Betrayals

The “stagist” program peddled by the likes of the DSP was the program of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). Basing itself on the Menshevik/Stalinist schema of “two-stage” revolution—which amounts to mobilising the workers to bring the bourgeois nationalists to power in the first “stage” and ends in the massacre of workers and Communists—the PKI opposed the fight for proletarian revolution. They preached “national unity” with the bourgeois-nationalist rulers led by Sukarno, banned strikes, suppressed peasant protests and preached confidence in Sukarno and his generals.

Politically and militarily disarming the Indonesian working class, the PKI opened the road to the bloody defeat of 1965-66 in Indonesia. Suharto came to power through an anti-Communist massacre of over 500,000, carried out by the

Vietnamese independence fighters jailed and executed by French colonial troops in late 1945 after Stalinists suppressed Trotskyist-led Saigon insurrection. DSP hails Stalinist assassins of Trotskyist leader Ta Thu Thau (inset).

Keystone



military and reactionary Islamic gangs, *with the direct involvement of the American CIA and its Australian jackals*. This horrendous slaughter, in which the PKI, the largest Communist Party in the capitalist world, was crushed, was a bitter lesson in the deadly danger of class collaboration.

Today the DSP act as press agents for the petty-bourgeois Indonesian Peoples Democratic Party (PRD) which has openly pushed alliances with bourgeois politicians like Megawati Sukarnoputri and Islamic leader Amien Rais. Demonstrating the truth of Trotsky’s understanding that the bourgeoisies in countries such as Indonesia are incapable of winning even bourgeois democracy, Megawati is a Javanese chauvinist who is for the incorporation of East Timor as the 27th province of Indonesia.

Far from *opposing* the bourgeoisie, the PRD turns to their imperialist masters. They demand that the UN, that imperialist den of thieves and their victims, “be given full authority to resolve the issue of East Timor” (PRD “Resolution on East Timor,” 22 July 1996). The DSP goes even further with its calls for “freedom” for East Timor under the auspices

of “democratic” Australian imperialism, demanding that these imperialists “withdraw recognition of Indonesia’s takeover of East Timor” (“People Before Profits,” 1996). These are the very forces which have armed and trained the Indonesia army of occupation. Against these calls on “democratic” imperialism, we say independence for East Timor now!

In the Philippines, the DSP are promoting a new reformist outfit, the Sosyalistang Partido ng Paggawa (Socialist Party of Labour—SPP) whose program states they are for “the principle of uninterrupted revolution, from national-democratic to socialism” (*Green Left Weekly*, 9 December 1998). But “uninterrupted” is just a cover for an explicitly stagist program as made clear by Sonny Melencio, a leading light of the new party, who openly defended class collaboration in a speech to a 1997 DSP conference. Raising the question of “whether or not to include the bourgeois liberal forces in a broad front, form an electoral bloc with them and support them in elections,” he falsely claimed that Lenin argued “precisely for such a tactic” in “*Left-Wing Communism—An Infantile Disorder*” (*Links* No. 8, July-October 1997).

It was not Lenin’s Bolsheviks but the Mensheviks who promoted political blocs with the bourgeoisie, and Lenin opposed them down the line. As we wrote in “How Philippine Fake Leftists Falsify Lenin” (WV No. 703, 25 December 1998):

“In polemicizing against ultraleftists who rejected temporary tactical alliances with reformists or bourgeois liberals on principle, Lenin noted, ‘Prior to the downfall of tsarism, the Russian revolutionary Social-Democrats made repeated use of the services of the bourgeois liberals.’ He referred parenthetically to the fact that around 1907, in areas where the Bolsheviks were a minority to the Men-

Quatrième Internationale



sheviks in the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, they had agreed to the Menshevik policy of according votes to the Cadets (bourgeois liberals) ‘during second rounds of elections.’ Where the Bolsheviks had a majority, Lenin held that they should either vote for socialist candidates or, if given no other choice, abstain....

“Lenin fought for the *political independence of the proletariat*. At the time, however, Lenin considered the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks to be two factions within a common party. Lenin’s view on the party question evolved over time. After the Bolsheviks formed a distinct party in 1912, they never supported bourgeois formations politically.”

In 1986, the Filipino left liquidated into a *bourgeois* movement against the Marcos dictatorship. Following suit, the then-SWP tailed the “people power” movement of wealthy landowner Corazon (“Cory”) Aquino, serving as local promoters for the reformist Bayan group which praised Aquino’s policies as “very progressive and promising” (*Direct Action*, 12 March 1986). Such “leftists” foisted on workers and peasants dangerous illusions that bourgeois liberals were their allies, and that capitalism could be reformed. The upshot, as always, was that

continued on page 6

DSP...

(continued from page 5)

a mass plebeian uprising was deflected into bourgeois political movements aiming to put a prettier face on the continued rule of the bloody bonapartist, capitalist dictatorships. The proof is the Philippines today.

Against this deadly class collaboration, in the Philippines and throughout South-east Asia, it is necessary to forge Leninist vanguard parties rooted in proletarian internationalism and armed with the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution. Socialist revolution in the Philippines would necessarily have to link up with the struggles of the working people in Indonesia, South Korea and elsewhere in the region—and would act as a powerful impetus for proletarian political revolution in China and for socialist revolution in Japan, Asia’s economic powerhouse.

Little Aussie Nationalists

The *Communist Manifesto* declared, “The working men have no country.... Workers of all countries, unite!” If there is a consistent thread in the DSP’s political history, it is precisely rejection of this ABC of communism.

This was graphically illustrated in 1995 when the Australian imperialists whipped up a chauvinist frenzy against their French rivals in the South Pacific under the guise of opposition to France’s testing of nuclear weapons. Fully backing this vile Australian nationalist campaign, which included protests targeting French restaurants and individual French-descended residents, the DSP urged “all unions to place industrial bans on all French goods and services,” and demanded the Australian government ban trade with France (*Green Left Weekly*, 26 July 1995). Enthusing over the anti-French Bastille Day “national unity” mobilisations, the DSP was silent about the disgusting, racist calls to “nuke the frogs” which were a feature of these actions.

In a joint statement, the Spartacist League of Australia and the Ligue Trotskyiste de France proclaimed:

“The orgy of chauvinism in Australia and France touched off by the dispute over renewed French nuclear testing in the Pacific underlines how capitalism in its epoch of imperialist decay leads inexorably through trade war to world war, unless the problem is destroyed at its root by socialist revolution. The enemy of the workers and oppressed is not ‘the French’ or ‘the Australians’ but the rapacious capitalist ruling classes which dream of plundering the whole world while turning the screws on their ‘own’ workers in the interests of profit. The real and terrible danger of war will only be ended by the workers of all countries joining together, rejecting all the divide-and-rule capitalist machinations parroted by the current misleaders of the working class, to throw out their exploiters and take the future in their own hands.... The main enemy is at home!”

—Australasian Spartacist
No. 157, Summer 1995-96

The DSP’s crawling before the Australian imperialist rulers has a long history. For nearly three decades they have peddled the dangerous lie that white Australian capitalism can be pressured into playing a “progressive” role, especially when the Australian Labor Party (ALP) social democrats rule on behalf of the bosses. When the Vietnamese workers

Murderous Indonesian military armed and trained by Australia and the U.S.



Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter

and peasants were handing a humiliating military defeat to U.S. imperialism and its lackey allies, including Australia, in the early 1970s, the DSP’s predecessor, the SWL, opined: “Australia and likewise New Zealand can play an extremely important role in opposing the United States and its warmaking efforts” (“U.S. Out Now!” undated leaflet).

During the mid-1980s they were at it again, demanding, “The Australian government should encourage a peaceful solution to the Central American crisis.” This was at the height of the U.S. imperialists’ efforts (under Ronald Reagan) to drown in blood the leftist rebels of El Salvador, a key component of the drive to roll back the Cuban Revolution, part and parcel of Cold War II against the Soviet Union. In line with the petty-bourgeois nationalist guerrillas’ pro-

foreign policy.” It was the anti-Marxist renegade Karl Kautsky, enemy of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, who decreed that imperialism consisted merely of a set of policies that the capitalist rulers could embrace or reject. In his book *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin exposed Kautsky’s line as open capitulation to his own bourgeoisie. For communists, the imperialists’ drive to put all the world under their yoke through war, starvation and terror is not the result of moral failings or a bad choice of “foreign policy” but the inevitable outcome of the capitalist system in its death agony that can only be ended with victorious international proletarian revolution.

The DSP leadership tells its members that we Spartacists are “too extreme on foreign policy.” The DSP has consistently supported racist Australian imperialism’s



no credit

1927 Shanghai massacre, marking bloody defeat of 1925-27 Chinese Revolution, was prepared by Stalinists’ support to bourgeois-nationalist Guomindang.

capitalist leadership, the SWP denounced class-struggle opposition to imperialism in the name of pressuring various capitalist countries to pressure the U.S. Thus they sought to mobilise impotent peace crawls crafted to attract churchmen, pacifists and anti-Communist liberals. They spilled gallons of ink attacking our efforts to build “Anti-Imperialist Contingents” that drew the class line in Central America and defended the USSR. In an anti-Soviet frenzy, they carried out a vicious, premeditated physical assault on our contingent in Sydney in 1981. For these self-proclaimed socialists, calling the cops against communists was “perfectly justified” (“Sectarians Try to Disrupt Sydney El Salvador March,” undated leaflet).

In its pamphlet *What is the DSP?*, these little Aussie nationalists declare: “We fight for Australia to have a progressive

military adventures under the guise of providing “humanitarian” assistance from Somalia to Cambodia. Scandalously, the DSP said Australian military intervention in Irian Jaya was “welcome” (*Green Left Weekly*, 13 May 1998), even while admitting it would directly benefit the murderous Indonesian military!

The DSP so deeply believes in the reformability of capitalism that its 1996 election platform calling “For a democratic foreign policy” offers heart-felt advice to the imperialists that they should “renegotiate” the debt that draws the lifeblood out of the peoples of the world and they should “restructure” international agencies such as the International Monetary Fund whose brutal hand has driven millions to the brink of starvation.

We inscribe on our banner: Not one man, not one penny for imperialism! The main enemy is at home! The heroic German Communist Karl Liebknecht (later murdered with Rosa Luxemburg at the behest of the Social Democrats) was tried for treason in 1916 for his anti-militarism and opposition to the German ruling class amid the carnage of World War I. At his court martial he proclaimed:

“He who does not attack the enemy, imperialism, face to face, but instead attacks those far away, those outside his shooting range...is no Socialist, but a miserable lackey of the ruling class.”

“Democratic” Anti-Communism

From the moment the working class took power in Russia in October 1917, the bourgeoisie and its social-democratic frontmen railed against the Bolsheviks, denouncing the dictatorship of the proletariat as “totalitarian.” In the words of

Kautsky, the contrast between the Bolsheviks and the non-Bolsheviks is “the contrast between two radically different methods: the *dictatorial* and the *democratic*.” For our part, we stand with the Bolsheviks who fought to defend the proletarian state power against counter-revolution at all costs.

Firmly in the camp of Kautsky and the rest of the pro-capitalist social democrats who have proclaimed themselves “democratic socialists,” the DSP breathes not a word about the necessity for proletarian *revolution* to overthrow capitalism. Wrapping themselves in bourgeois liberalism, they declare the “DSP stands for the universal application of the principle of democracy.” For them “socialism” means “*extending the principle of democracy* to all spheres of life” (*What is the DSP?*).

Lenin’s *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (1918) directly addressed this “democratic” claptrap:

“‘We,’ the revolutionary Marxists, never made speeches to the people that the Kautskyites of all nations love to make, cringing before the bourgeoisie, adapting themselves to the bourgeois parliamentary system, keeping silent about the *bourgeois* character of modern democracy and demanding only *its* extension, only that *it* be carried to its logical conclusion.

“‘We’ said to the bourgeoisie: You, exploiters and hypocrites, talk about democracy, while at every step you erect thousands of barriers to prevent the *oppressed people* from taking part in politics. We take you at your word and, in the interests of these people, demand the extension of *your* bourgeois democracy *in order to prepare the people for revolution* for the purpose of overthrowing you, the exploiters. And if you exploiters attempt to offer resistance to our proletarian revolution we shall ruthlessly suppress you; we shall deprive you of all rights; more than that, we shall not give you any bread, for in our proletarian republic the exploiters will have no rights, they will be deprived of fire and water, for we are socialists in real earnest, and not in the Scheidemann or Kautsky fashion.”

Deep in the grip of “democratic” imperialism, in the 1980s the then-SWP was notorious for its embrace of Polish Solidarność, agency of the Catholic church, CIA and imperialist bankers for counter-revolution against the bureaucratically deformed Polish workers state. In December 1981, they marched side by side with fanatical anti-Communist East European nationalists—the sinister “Captive Nations” gang—at the Polish consulate in Sydney. Proclaiming themselves “the most closely aligned to Solidarity in Australia” (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 January 1982), the SWP put out wall posters featuring a quotation from and picture of the anti-woman, anti-Semitic, capitalist tool Lech Walesa. No doubt to the SWP’s chagrin, they were in no position to compete with the real “Solidarity with Solidarność” forces—the clerical-reactionaries led by the now-dead B.A. Santamaria who in the 1950s ran a sinister operation to purge the union movement of any hint of Communism.

Despite the economic devastation, clerical reaction, anti-Semitism and the crackdown on abortion wreaked by Solidarność’ capitalist counterrevolution in Poland, in 1992 the DSP was still touting its grotesque “solidarity actions” with anti-Communist scum. In “defending democratic rights in the Stalinised states,” they were happy to march “with anyone,” including, as they fatuously put it, people “who didn’t understand the need to defend the Polish socialist state against imperialism” (*A History*).

The “Russian question” has been the defining political question of the 20th century: the October 1917 Russian Revolution took the Marxist doctrine out of the realm of theory and gave it reality, creating a society where those who laboured ruled through the dictatorship of the proletariat. The pressure of imperialist encirclement, the devastation of the Russian working class in the Civil War and the isolation of the Russian Revolution enabled a bureaucratic layer headed by J.V. Stalin to usurp political power in a political counterrevolution in 1923-24. The Trotskyists alone upheld Lenin’s

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Australian Section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

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- VIII. For Science and Mathematics
- IX. The Origins of the Spartacist League
- X. For New October Resolutions!

The Spartacist League and the Left 15

Revised 1992. Printed 1992. 1000 copies. 10c per copy.

Lech Walesa's Polish Solidarność, counterrevolutionary instrument of CIA and Vatican. Banner of Australian SWP, predecessor of DSP, was prominent at December 1981 pro-Solidarność rally of anti-Communist reactionaries.



Der Spiegel



Australasian Spartacist

program of proletarian internationalism—the understanding that the survival of the October Revolution depended on its *extension* through working-class revolution. In the Soviet degenerated workers state, and in the bureaucratically deformed workers states of Eastern Europe, we Trotskyists stood for unconditional military defence of these states against internal counterrevolution and imperialist attack, and for proletarian political revolution to oust the bureaucratic castes and place the working class in political power and open the road to socialist development.

We thus opposed Solidarność’ drive to capitalist restoration in Poland. Proclaiming “Stop Solidarność Counterrevolution!” we said that this threat must be crushed at all costs and by any means necessary. We fought for Polish *Trotskyism*, for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy which at every turn undermined the defence of the planned, socialised economy and the consciousness of the Polish proletariat. The DSP was on the other side of the barricades.

It was precisely under the pressure of anti-Soviet Cold War II that the SWP in July 1984 junked what had always been its empty pretence to Trotskyism. Proving, as Stalin said, that paper will take anything written on it, the SWP pronounced that the other “major political error” of Trotskyism was “an overestimation of the place, within the tasks confronting the workers states and within the world revolution, occupied by political revolution against the ruling castes in the bureaucratised socialist states” (*A History*).

What the SWP was really on about was removing any perceived obstacle to sucking up to various nationalist formations around the world who claimed inspiration from the Cuban and Vietnamese Revolutions. They “distinguish” between these governments, who, they falsely claim, “act in the working people’s interests” (*What is the DSP?*) and China and North Korea—which are rather less “popular” and, more to the point, particularly targeted by the Australian imperialists.

The SWP’s selective “Stalinophilia” also allowed them to be as one with the social democrats and liberals infatuated with the emergence of Russian leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Proclaiming “market socialism,” he began to dismantle the centrally planned Soviet economy as he openly capitulated to imperialism, from pulling out of Afghanistan to handing over East Germany.

When in August 1991 Boris Yeltsin staged his counter-coup against the impotent “Gang of Eight” who had moved against Gorbachev, the DSP rallied with the rest of the traitorous left to cheer on capitalist counterrevolution. On 28 August 1991, *Green Left Weekly* editorialised: “The defeat of last week’s disastrous attempt by the Stalinist old guard to turn back the clock opens a new political phase in the USSR. In particular, it marks the first big victory for mass political action over the repressive bureaucracy.”

DSP leader Renfrey Clarke was on Yelstin’s barricades, joining those imbued, in his own words, with “vehement anti-Communism” (*Green Left Weekly*, 4 September 1991). He also spent a night inside the “White House” trying to help a

Scottish Labour MP deliver a letter of solidarity to Yeltsin from British Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock, infamous for knifing the heroic British miners strike of 1984-85. This object service to social-democratic anti-communism exactly sums up the political essence of the DSP.

Today the DSP vociferously denies they supported the Yeltsinite “democrats.” But the DSP’s hailing of capitalist counterrevolution as a “lesser evil” to Stalinism is unambiguous: “Our central conclusion is that the collapse of the Stalinist regimes in Eastern Europe and the USSR and of the political influence of Stalinism in the West represents an enormous step forward for the struggle for socialism” (*The Collapse of ‘Communism’ in the USSR*, 1992).

Far from the anti-communist fictions of the DSP, the ascendancy of counter-revo-

allies in the Stalinist bureaucracy, sections of which seek to become the new capitalist exploiters, looking to the wholesale dismantling of what remains of the planned economy of the deformed workers state. The extreme nationalist ideology pushed by the Stalinist bureaucrats is a direct bridge to capitalist restoration. China stands on the brink of proletarian political revolution or capitalist counterrevolution. The DSP champions the likes of Han Dongfang, editor of the *China Labour Bulletin* which advocates “independent” trade unions in China. He is regularly featured on *Radio Free Asia*, an official anti-communist mouthpiece for U.S. imperialism. We urgently seek to intervene as the subjective factor which will make the difference in the Chinese proletariat becoming a class *for* itself by bringing revolutionary internationalist



Inquirer (Philippines)

August 1997: Striking transport workers block traffic in Quezon City, Philippines. Proletarian class independence from all wings of bourgeoisie is key to struggle for socialist revolution.

lution in the former USSR was an unparalleled defeat for working people all over the world. As our ICL “Declaration of Principles” states: “We Trotskyists stayed at our posts and fought to preserve and extend the revolutionary gains of the working class while every other tendency on the planet capitulated to the ideological pressure of imperialist anti-communism. Above all our defense of the USSR was expressed in our fight for new October Revolutions around the world.”

We continue to stand, as we did with the USSR and the deformed workers states of Eastern Europe, for unconditional military defence of China, Vietnam, North Korea and Cuba against imperialism and internal counterrevolution, and for proletarian political revolution to oust the narrow, nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies whose continued misrule threatens further defeats for the international working class.

Not so the DSP, which upholds the Cuban Stalinist regime as a model. This is pretty rich given that the capitalist counterrevolutions that ravaged Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union have left the Cuban Revolution economically prostrate and at the mercy of the imperialist powers. As the Castro regime undermines the very foundations of the revolution by introducing the dollar economy and foreign capital investment while welcoming the Pope of counterrevolution, the Trotskyist program of proletarian political revolution is more urgently posed than ever.

With the destruction of the Soviet Union, the imperialists have set their sights on China and have found powerful

class consciousness to the working masses in China and in the large Chinese diaspora.

Anti-Communists for Hire

The DSP hasn’t hesitated to stir up the bloody brew of nationalism and anti-communism in Australia, too. In the early 1980s, the SWP worked intimately with the sinister Croatian Movement for Statehood (HDP). This outfit openly proclaimed its goal of dismembering the Yugoslav bureaucratically deformed workers state as they lauded some of the most bloodthirsty of the Ustasha butchers whose bestiality in World War II in murdering Serbs, Jews, Roma and many Croats gave even the Nazis pause. The SWP produced a special four-page supplement to its newspaper (July 1983) to

declare “the Ustasha was *not* a fascist movement” while alibiing the mass murderer Ante Pavelic who ran the Nazi satellite state of Croatia.

This is the kind of trash that usually comes from the mouths of Nazi apologists who claim the Holocaust never happened. Youth in Australia attracted to the DSP’s loudly proclaimed “anti-racism” might ask themselves how it would feel to join arm in arm with the likes of the HDP. And all the DSP’s quotations from Trotsky about “defence of the workers states” will not and cannot cover up their obscene hailing of the 1971 murder of a Yugoslav diplomat by a fascist terrorist as an “act of struggle against national oppression” (see *Australasian Spartacist* No. 103, August/September 1983).

The DSP proclaims itself for women’s rights, for gay rights, but this is evidently a program for Australians only. From Iran to Poland they have backed forces of reaction that have trampled mercilessly on the rights of women and gays. In 1979, the SWP, with most of the left, tried to paint the Iranian mullahs who decreed death to “adulterous” women, homosexuals and national minorities as “anti-imperialists.” A short time later, even as the mullahs in Khomeini’s Iran were torturing their own erstwhile comrades, the SWP upheld “the Iranian revolution” and denounced our proletarian opposition to the Islamic fanatics as “counterrevolutionary.”

The imperialists have long cultivated Islamic fundamentalism as a weapon against communism. In 1950, John Foster Dulles, who later became U.S. secretary of state, pointed to a “common bond” with the “religions of the East,” whose “spiritual beliefs cannot be reconciled with Communist atheism and materialism.” This view was chillingly echoed by SWPer Andrew Jamieson who, in a signed statement dated 27 June 1979, declared:

“We would support the Muslim masses in so far as they were against the Stalinist practices of the PKI in Indonesia in 1965.”

Indonesian and other leftists take heed—the DSP has had no compunction about supporting the darkest forces of reaction if they are “popular.”

Anti-Proletarian, Anti-Leninist, Anti-Trotskyist

The DSP outright rejects the elementary working-class principle of not voting for the parties of the class enemy. These

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Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program

International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)

Adopted in 1998 at the Third International Conference of the ICL.

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(第四国际主义者)

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Big Oil...

(continued from page 1)

“There is no question consolidation of the oil industry is a good thing for most of us.... The big companies will have the money, and we have the oil.”

The current wave of megamergers in the world oil business is governed not only by the particularities and present conditions of that industry but expresses a basic law of the capitalist system. In the mid-19th century, Karl Marx discerned that the effects of market competition, combined with economies of scale in production and distribution, would necessarily lead to ever greater concentrations of capital: “The expansion of capitalist production creates the social demand here, the technical requirements there, for those gigantic industrial enterprises, which depend for their realisation on a previous centralisation of capitals” (*Capital*, Volume I).

Business historian Ron Chernow writes with studied irony in a recent biography of John D. Rockefeller, the great-grandfather of Exxon and Mobil:

“When he railed against cutthroat competition and the vagaries of the business cycle, Rockefeller sounded more like Karl Marx than our classical image of the capitalist. Like the Marxists, he believed that the competitive free-for-all eventually gave way to monopoly and that large industrial-planning units were the most sensible way to manage an economy.”

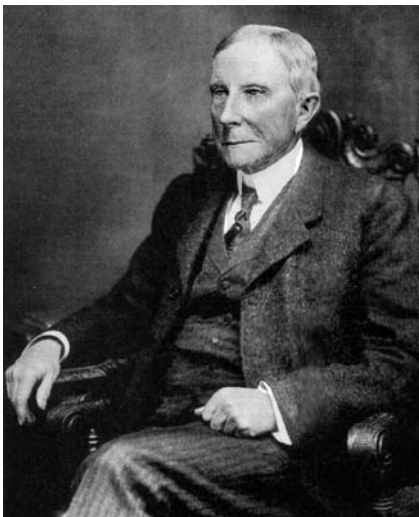
—*Titan: The Life of John D. Rockefeller, Sr.* (1998)

The difference, of course, is that we Marxists fight for a rationally planned *socialized* economy under a workers state,



U.S. Army

National Guard and company thugs killed 19 strikers and family members in 1914 Ludlow massacre. John D. Rockefeller built Standard Oil trust through ruthless brutality toward workers and bankrupting of small competitors.



Pach Bros.

the socialist program of nationalizing industry.

Furthermore, by branding Rockefeller and his cohorts “the biggest criminals in the country,” Theodore Roosevelt enhanced his own authority as an imperial president who purportedly defended the interests of the American people against a rapacious plutocracy of wealth. In reality, the bully boy in the White House committed crimes on behalf of American capitalism of an even greater magnitude than the titan of the oil trust. While Roosevelt was vice president and then president, U.S. military forces in the Philippines killed tens of thousands of people in suppressing the struggle for national independence after the U.S. seized that colony from Spain in the 1898 war. In 1903, Roosevelt seized and detached northern Colombia in order to build the Panama Canal. This was of enormous strategic importance for

9,000 CFI miners went on strike. The strikers and their families were evicted from company housing and were forced to set up tent colonies in the surrounding area, the largest concentration being at a spot called Ludlow.

As the strike expanded and became increasingly hard fought, the governor of Colorado sent National Guardsmen into the coal fields to “restore order.” In April 1914, the Guardsmen, many of them CFI gun thugs, opened fire with machine guns on union pickets at Ludlow. They then set the tents ablaze, burning to death two women and eleven children. The Ludlow massacre revealed the true nature of the American capitalist state—consisting at its core of armed bodies of men committed to defense of capitalist property and profits—which the bourgeois reformers who led the trustbusting campaign against Rockefeller and Standard Oil sought to obscure.

In recent decades, trustbusting has played a far lesser role in the ideology and program of American liberalism than at the beginning of the era of monopoly capitalism. However, the Exxon-Mobil deal has evoked echoes of “Progressive Era” politics. A Mobil refinery worker in Beaumont, Texas, fearful of losing his job, exclaimed: “It’s a revival of the Standard Oil Company. It’s going to put 20 or 30 thousand people out of work. I think the Justice Department should step in and stop it” (*New York Times*, 30 November 1998).

While such a view is understandable, it is wrong. First, there is no reason whatever to think that the layoffs at Mobil would be any fewer if the company merged with a smaller oil company like Texaco or Conoco, or remained independent. Texaco and Conoco are planning to reduce their workforces in the coming year by about the same percentage as the new Exxon-Mobil combine. Most recently, ARCO has announced a new round of jobs cuts.

More fundamental is the illusion that the federal government is or can be an agency for defending the interests of working people against corporate capital. One of the few bourgeois politicians who cultivates a liberal populist image, Minnesota Democratic Senator Paul Wellstone, explained why there is no opposition in Washington to the Exxon-Mobil merger. “The biggest reason is the mix of money and politics,” he said. “For both parties, these are heavy hitters, the moneyed interests who have a huge impact on the tenure of people in Congress. Not too many people want to challenge them” (*New York Times*, 6 December 1998).

The U.S. government is not, as Wellstone implies, merely a passive observer of mergers between large industrial and financial corporations. Washington often promotes such deals, especially for strategic military purposes. A good example of this is the merger between Boeing and McDonnell Douglas in 1997, intended to strengthen the U.S. aircraft industry in relation particularly to the giant European Airbus monopoly.

Liberal Democrats like Wellstone occasionally offer criticisms of big business in order to enhance their credentials as supposed “friends of labor.” Such illusions are avidly promoted as well by the IAM and other AFL-CIO bureaucrats. In fact, the Democratic Party is a party of big business no less than the Republicans.

For their part, the OCAW union tops, notably Tony Mazzocchi, pretend to offer an alternative to the AFL-CIO bureaucracy’s ties to Clinton’s Democrats. In an article in the union journal, *OCAW Reporter* (November/December 1998), opposing global mergers in the chemical industry, OCAW official Joe Drexler proclaims:

“Finding the proper political path to confront corporate power will not be found within the two-party structure in the U.S. We need a different way to think and a different way to act. We need to replace market needs with worker needs. That’s why we need a party of the working class. That’s why we need a Labor Party.”

What the OCAW tops have in mind is not a workers party forged in militant struggle against the capitalist profit system but a wretchedly pro-capitalist reformist formation on the model of Tony Blair’s British Labour Party, which is currently administering the capitalist state on behalf of the City of London financiers. Despite its (increasingly attenuated) ties to the trade unions, Blair’s Labour Party is viciously anti-working-class and racist. From the terror bombing of Iraq to bloody repression against the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland—which has only intensified as a result of the imperialist “peace” fraud imposed by Blair last year—Labour enforces the dictates of British imperialism.

And the sham Labor Party promoted by the OCAW tops (as well as a host of reformist “socialist” outfits) does not even offer an electoral alternative to the capitalist Democrats. Since its formal founding at a 1996 conference of Labor Party Advocates, the Labor Party has yet to run a slate of candidates in opposition to the Democrats and Republicans, including in the 1996 presidential elections. Indeed, Labor Party Advocates was formed explicitly in order to pressure the Democrats, as Mazzocchi made clear in 1991 when he stressed: “Organizing Labor Party Advocates is not going to retard the re-birth of the Democrats. On the contrary, it will encourage it” (*Labor Party Advocate*, August 1991; see “Why ‘Labor Party Advocates’ Doesn’t Advocate a Labor Party,” WV No. 622, 5 May 1995). We fight to break workers and minorities from the partner parties of capitalism in the struggle to forge a *revolutionary workers party*.

The Caspian Oil Bonanza and the East Asian Economic Crash

Underlying the current megamergers in Big Oil are three fundamental developments shaping the world today: the destruction of the Soviet Union through capitalist counterrevolution; the intensifying rivalry between the three major imperialist powers—the United States, Germany and Japan; the collapse of the East Asian economic boom, including a prolonged and deepening recession in Japan.

With the disintegration of the USSR in 1991-92, a major oil (and also natural gas) producing region came up for grabs by Western imperialism for the first time since the discovery of oil in the Persian Gulf in the 1920s and ’30s. The small states surrounding the Caspian Sea were now run by men, mainly former Stalinist bureaucrats, who wanted nothing more than to become well-paid agents for the Seven Sisters. In fact, the current prime minister of Kazakhstan was “trained” at



Behrman Archives

Saudi Arabia’s King Ibn Saud meets with U.S. president Franklin D. Roosevelt during World War II. Control over Persian Gulf oil fields gives U.S. imperialism enormous strategic advantage over main rivals, Germany and Japan.

governed by and for the working people. Rockefeller organized monopolies and cartels for the benefit of their wealthy owners *at the expense of the working class.*

“Trustbusting”: A Liberal Fraud

Financial journalists have pointed to the historical irony that the two biggest successors of the old Standard Oil Trust, Exxon (formerly Standard of New Jersey) and Mobil (formerly Standard of New York), are getting together again. “Rockefeller Revived,” headlined the London *Financial Times* (27 November 1998).

The Standard Oil Company was the main target of the trustbusting fervor of the “progressive era” identified with Teddy Roosevelt. John D. Rockefeller was intensely and widely hated for his ruthless brutality not only toward his workers but also small and middling businessmen who got in his way. Ida Tarbell, author of the famous 1904 muck-raking attack *The History of the Standard Oil Company*, was the daughter of the owner of a small Pennsylvania oil refinery who was driven out of business by Rockefeller and his partners, the railroad magnates.

Yet in a way, the public vilification of Rockefeller strengthened rather than weakened American capitalism politically. All economic ills were blamed on a handful of “robber barons” like Rockefeller and Wall Street banker J.P. Morgan, who supposedly violated the normal capitalist rules of the game. Trustbusting was promoted as a liberal alternative to

emerging U.S. imperialism in becoming a Pacific power and challenging the European and Japanese imperialists in the Far East.

The 1911 Supreme Court decision ordering the breakup of Standard Oil was hailed as a great triumph for the trustbusting campaign. But this liberal reform in no way changed or softened the brutal exploitation of the American working class by Rockefeller and his ilk. This was gruesomely demonstrated a few years later by the 1914 Ludlow massacre.

Rockefeller had extensive holdings in addition to Standard Oil. Among these was Colorado Fuel and Iron (CFI), which owned 24 coal mines that provided coke for its own steel mills. In his biography, Chernow described conditions in the Colorado coal fields as “raw capitalism such as Karl Marx pictured it: dangerous mines run by harsh bosses and policed by armed guards in a desolate, hellish place.” At one point, 74 workers were killed in a mine explosion. While the CFI managers predictably blamed the disaster on the miners’ own carelessness, even the Colorado Bureau of Labor Standards charged the company with “cold-blooded barbarism.”

Rockefeller had a fanatical hatred toward trade unions which he bequeathed to his son John Jr., who oversaw the CFI operation. When, in 1913, the United Mine Workers launched an organizing drive in the Colorado coal fields, Rockefeller Jr. and his henchmen brought in professional gun thugs who were deputized as county sheriffs. In September,

Chevron’s headquarters in California. However, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan are landlocked countries a long way from the main oil markets in West Europe and East Asia. Integrating the Caspian region into the world oil industry therefore requires a massive investment in constructing new pipelines and upgrading existing ones.

In 1992, Chevron bought up a majority interest of the Tenghiz oil field in southwestern Kazakhstan, one of the ten largest in the world. Chevron then sold a big chunk of its share to Mobil. The two U.S. partners (both descendants of the old Standard Oil trust) have pledged to invest \$25 billion in Kazakhstan over the next 20 years. In 1994, the oil fields in the Caspian Sea off the coast of Azerbaijan were taken over by an international consortium including Exxon, British Petroleum, Amoco, Pennzoil and others. The companies involved promised the Baku regime \$8 billion over the next few decades.

The American and British oil companies have no interest in expanding the marketed supply of petroleum and natural gas for its own sake. On the contrary, the basic aim of the international oil cartel, ever since the days of John D. Rockefeller, has been to limit production in order to prop up prices. However, in the euphoric ideological climate following the destruction of the Soviet Union, Western capitalists, including oil executives, believed that good times were here for good. The International Energy Agency, which represents the governments of North America, West Europe and Japan, projected a steady rise in world oil consumption from 68 million barrels a day in 1994 to over 90 million barrels in 2010. In particular, oilmen expected demand in East Asia for petroleum and natural gas to continue growing at more than 10 percent a year well into the new millennium.

The investment boom in Caspian oil was in large measure geared to the East Asian economic boom just as this was about to go bust. From the end of 1996 through mid-1998, oil consumption in Japan fell by over 20 percent. During this period total world demand declined by three million barrels a day in the face of a quite substantial expansion of productive capacity in the oil industry. The Tulsa-based *Oil & Gas Journal* (28 December 1998), an authoritative industry organ, now writes that with the collapse of Asian oil demand, “something of structural upheaval—a sea change—is under way in the oil industry.” Part of that structural upheaval is an even greater concentration of capital than before.

Big Oil and Imperialist Rivalries

Oil is not just another commodity. It is the source of more than 40 percent of the world’s energy. True, the generation of electric power using petroleum and natural gas could over time and at great expense be replaced by coal or nuclear energy. However, modern means of transportation (cars and trucks, railroads and airplanes) and military hardware—tanks, fighter planes and many naval vessels—run on oil, for which there is no practical substitute. Access to oil, especially cheap

oil, is thus of vital strategic importance for modern capitalist states.

Unlike coal, which is found in abundant supply in many countries, petroleum and also natural gas deposits are highly geographically concentrated. About two dozen mammoth fields—known in the industry as “elephants”—supply most of the world’s oil. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the small sheikdoms in the Arabian peninsula have *three-quarters* of the world’s proven reserves. And petroleum from the main Persian Gulf fields can be extracted for about \$2 a barrel, or one-fifth the current, historically low price. Ever since the 1920s, control over the Persian Gulf oil fields has given American imperialism, with Britain as its ally and junior partner, an enormous strategic advantage over its main rivals, Germany and Japan.

This was clearly demonstrated during the Second World War. When the war broke out in Europe in 1939, Germany was cut off from its main oil supplies in the Western hemisphere and Near East. The German war economy resorted to the hydrogenation of coal to produce gasoline. But this was a very expensive process which absorbed a huge fraction of Germany’s material and labor resources. By contrast, the U.S. expanded its domestic oil production by 30 percent during the war using but a small fraction of its industrial capital and labor force. German imperialism’s drive to seize the Baku oil fields was a key immediate factor motivating the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941.

In July 1941, the United States, Britain and Holland embargoed oil shipments to Japan without which it could not survive. It was this act of economic warfare which drove the Tokyo regime to attack the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, thereby launching the Second World War in the Pacific, which ended with the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by U.S. imperialism and the defeat and occupation of Japan. Trotskysts—revolutionary Marxists—opposed all sides in this interimperialist conflict while calling for unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state.

The U.S. emerged victorious from World War II as the pre-eminent imperialist power. And the USSR, defeating the Nazi juggernaut at a cost of more than 26 million Soviet lives, emerged from the war as the second strongest industrial-military power in the world. Common hostility to the Soviet Union then formed the basis for the U.S.-dominated Cold War imperialist alliance which included Germany and Japan. But with the counterrevolutionary destruction of the USSR, the three major imperialist powers have increasingly sought to gain advantage at the expense of one another.

The American ruling class is determined not to give up in the slightest its enormous strategic advantage of effective control over the Persian Gulf oil fields. As the USSR was fast falling apart in 1990-91, the U.S. launched a devastating war against Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, formerly a Moscow client state. Since the 1991 Gulf War, the U.S. has imposed a starvation blockade against Iraq repeatedly punctuated by terror bombing. This is intended as a message to the other Arab

Mobil Oil and the Indonesian Death Camp

The merger agreement between Mobil and Exxon has generated a spate of stories on the two U.S. oil giants in the financial press. However, an article titled “What Did Mobil Know?” in *Business Week* (28 December 1998) is very different from the usual analysis of costs, prices, profits, stock options and the like.

The article begins by describing the horrible torture of Teungku Bintara at an Indonesian military prison camp in the northern Sumatran province of Aceh in 1990-91. It then goes on:

“Bintara’s gruesome experience unfolded only a few hundred yards from the chemical plants and white storage tanks of P.T. Arun, a liquified natural-gas (LNG) producer in which Indonesia’s state-owned oil monopoly, Pertamina, holds a controlling 55% stake and Mobil Corp. owns 35%.”

A mass grave near the former military camp is located on Pertamina-owned land that is less than three miles from a Mobil gas-drilling site.

Mobil’s management were not just passive and silent observers of these atrocities. According to survivors of the camp and other investigators, the U.S. company supplied the Indonesian army with heavy earth-moving equipment to dig mass graves. A Mobil spokesman admitted that the company provided the Indonesian army with excavators—which it supposedly believed were being used only for “projects beneficial to the community.” During a visit to Jakarta in early November, Mobil chairman Lucio Noto pleaded that the company had “no control” over the army’s actions and echoed earlier management denials of any knowledge of “human rights abuses” in the area. Yet for decades the region has been the scene of repeated terror campaigns by the Indonesian military against Acehnese separatist insurgents.

As came out in the course of an extensive investigation conducted by *Business Week*, which surprisingly on occasion engages in old-fashioned lib-



AFP

Victims’ remains from mass grave near Mobil Oil operations on the Indonesian island of Sumatra.

eral muckraking, Mobil managers were told by local contractors that human body parts had been found close to company sites and the use of company equipment to dig mass graves was a common topic of discussion in the Mobil cafeteria. *Business Week* also interviewed a former Mobil employee at the site who had been warned by subcontractors not to use a certain road leading to a Mobil-operated gas field. “Don’t go there,” he was told. “Don’t you know the army is killing people and burying them in mass graves with Mobil equipment?”

From the CIA’s role in providing hit lists for the mass slaughter of Indonesian leftists and workers during the 1965-66 anti-Communist bloodbath to Mobil’s collusion with the military dictatorship—these are the means by which the U.S. capitalists secure the fabulous profits extracted from the semicolonial masses.

oil states and Iran not to defy the will of Wall Street and Washington. It is also intended as a message to Germany and Japan not to challenge American hegemony in the Persian Gulf, for example, by cultivating their own client states in the region.

Notably, the U.S. launched an earlier war buildup in the Gulf region, in 1997, only days after the French oil giant Total, joined by Russian and Malaysian firms, had signed a \$2 billion contract with Iran to pump offshore natural gas. The *New York Times* decried the deal as a “direct challenge to the United States” and the Clinton administration threatened to impose punitive economic sanctions against Total and its partners. Washington has itself since tried to improve relations with Teheran, seizing on the installation of the supposedly more liberal clerical regime of President Mohammad Khatami.

While Israel remains U.S. imperialism’s chief ally and gendarme in the region, the Zionist rulers’ expansionist appetites and brutal subjugation of the Palestinian people are a constant irritant in Washington’s efforts to consolidate its influence among the Arab bourgeois regimes. For its part, the Zionist lobby in the U.S. views Big Oil as fanatically pro-Arab. Divisions within the American bourgeoisie over Near East policy are reflected in the ongoing clash over whether to release Jonathan Pollard, a former Pentagon employee serving a life sentence for spying for Israel.

Britain, predictably, has been acting as the main U.S. ally in the Near East and elsewhere. Ever since the late 19th cen-

tury, when many a daughter of the American plutocracy married into the British upper classes, the bourgeoisies of the two countries have developed close financial ties. This was the economic basis for the alliance of the U.S. and Britain against Germany in both the first and second imperialist world wars.

The links between American and British capital are nowhere closer and more clearly manifest than in the oil industry. In the late 1920s, at a secret meeting in a Scottish castle, Royal Dutch/Shell and British Petroleum joined with their five largest American counterparts to form the famous Seven Sisters cartel.

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Financial Times

Royal Dutch/Shell propped up murderous military dictatorship in Nigeria.

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In a letter that day to the OEA, Mumia wrote from death row:

That was exactly what the school authorities and their bosses feared. Just hours after the OEA vote, school superintendent Carole Quan, at Gallo's bidding, issued orders to cancel the teach-in assemblies planned at two Oakland high schools.

The actions and accusations of the school board and the OEA leadership have thus adopted the capitalist rulers' equation of Mumia Abu-Jamal with a cop killer, while the racist cops and rulers seek to reconvict Jamal in the press. On January 14, 2,000 cops closed down the streets of Oakland for the funeral in a massive demonstration of force, with a miles-long cavalcade of motorcycle cops and squad cars and police helicopters flying overhead. Like similar funerals held throughout the U.S., this was a demonstration for police bonapartism, as the cops assert their power to act as judge, jury and executioner on the city streets independent of all constraints. To those teachers who went ahead with class discussions on Jamal's case and the death penalty, a police spokesman ominously warned, "We believe this is a slap in the face to law enforcement here and around the country" (*San Francisco Examiner*, 14 January).

A black and white photograph capturing a large-scale teacher strike demonstration. In the foreground, a woman on the left wears sunglasses and a t-shirt that says 'CUT SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION'. Next to her, a man holds a sign that reads 'CLASSROOMS COME FIRST!'. In the center, a man looks directly at the camera. To his right, a woman holds a sign that says 'OAKLAND CHILD DESERVE BETTER'. Further right, a man holds a sign that reads 'CLASSROOMS FIRST!'. In the background, a large sign says 'O.P.S. UNFAIR TEACHERS ON STRIKE' with 'OEA • CTA • NEA' below it. Another large sign to the right says 'CUT SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION Spend money in the classroom where it counts support the teachers'. A sign in the upper right corner says 'Buy Books Not Bureaucracy'. Other visible signs include 'CLASSROOMS COME FIRST! CAR SHOWROOMS NOT AT ALL', 'OAKLAND CLASSROOMS FIRST!', and 'CLASSROOMS FIRST!'. The crowd is dense, and many more signs are visible in the background, creating a sense of a large, organized gathering.

What has motivated everyone who clamored against the desire to teach students about the frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal is the fear that explaining his case to the ghettoized poor in Oakland's public schools will explode the myth of American democracy. Young people are taught that the U.S. is the best democracy in the world, that "we, the people" have fair and regular elections for a government that represents and serves its citizens, that there is freedom of expression, equality before the law and a right to a jury of one's peers. But the bitter reality that working people, blacks and immigrants face is not what the capitalist

America is a capitalist society in which a small minority owns the wealth which the vast majority produces. The state—at its core the cops, army, prison system and courts—is not a neutral body but an instrument of organized violence to keep the ruling class in power and protect its property and profits through repression of

Jamal's case exemplifies these truths: The cops fabricated a "confession" two months after his arrest and coerced witnesses to change testimony which implicated someone other than Jamal; the prosecution was allowed to systematically exclude blacks from the jury; the judge, an honorary member of the Philadelphia F.O.P., denied Jamal's court-appointed lawyer more than \$150 each for an investigator and medical and ballistic experts; and the death sentence was secured on the basis of Jamal's political views. (See "Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the Racist Death Penalty!" *Black History and the Class Struggle* No. 15 for full details of the frame-up.) The fact is that Jamal was denied even the semblance of "due process"—this innocent man didn't get a fair trial, and the state and its institutions will not and cannot be "fair" now. That is why we don't call for a new trial, but rather demand his freedom now.

Jamal has been targeted by the Philly cops and the FBI since he first became a member of the Black Panther Party at age 15. Ex-Panthers in Oakland today, like current City Council candidate David Hilliard, who hails the bourgeois politician Brown as a “progressive mayor,” long ago made peace with racist capitalism. But the Black Panther Party represented at one time a challenge to the racist capitalist rulers—unlike Martin Luther King Jr., who accommodated the racist status quo but is today nevertheless

Officials of the OEA endorsed the emergency united-front demonstration initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee to stop the execution of Jamal in August 1995, and members marched under their union banner. Those labor-centered protests pointed to the potential power of the multiracial workers movement. But to mobilize this power requires a revolutionary workers party that will wage a political struggle against the leadership of the unions who embrace the strikebreaking racist cops as fellow “city workers” and tie the workers to their class enemy, largely through support to the Democratic Party. One cannot fight for Mumia’s freedom while upholding the tenets of the system that framed him up.

“In taking up the fight for Jamal’s freedom, the working class will be striking a blow against an entire system predicated on the brutal exploitation of labor and rooted in the racist repression of the black population. And in doing that they will be taking steps down the road to the emancipation of all of the working people and oppressed through a victorious socialist revolution that smashes the chains of capitalist exploitation and degradation.”

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist death penalty! ■

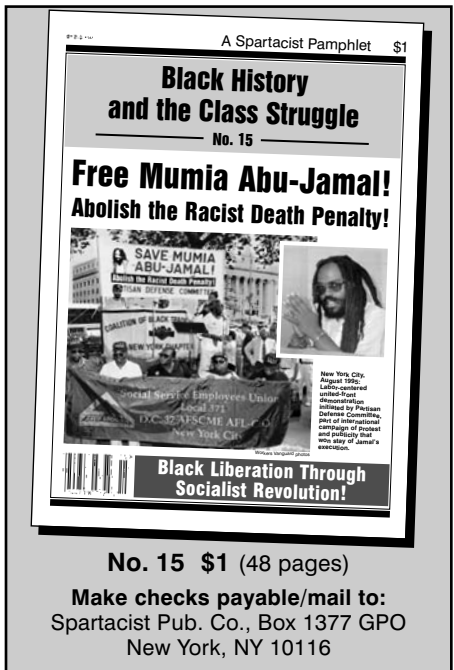
(continued from page 9)

—“For a Workers Europe—
For Socialist Revolution!”
WV No. 670, 13 June 1997

In controlling the Persian Gulf oil fields, American imperialism has used not only the stick but also the carrot. While the stick is the cruise missiles smashing into Baghdad, the carrot is the tens of billions of dollars in the treasuries of the American and British oil companies. And the bigger they are, the more money they have. In an op-ed piece in the *New York Times* (5 January) on the Exxon-Mobil deal, Rockefeller biographer Ron Chernow pointed out that "one motive for the Exxon-Mobil merger was to combine Mobil's Saudi connec-

From the Ludlow massacre to the terror bombing and starvation blockade of Iraq, Rockefeller and his heirs have purchased their wealth with the blood of countless victims. The rational utilization of oil and natural gas to provide energy for the mass of humanity, as well as the development of safer and more efficient forms of energy, can be attained only through an internationally planned, socialist economy. And for that to be established the heirs of Rockefeller and

sheiks of Araby must be swept into the dustbin of history through proletarian revolution. ■



Chicago...

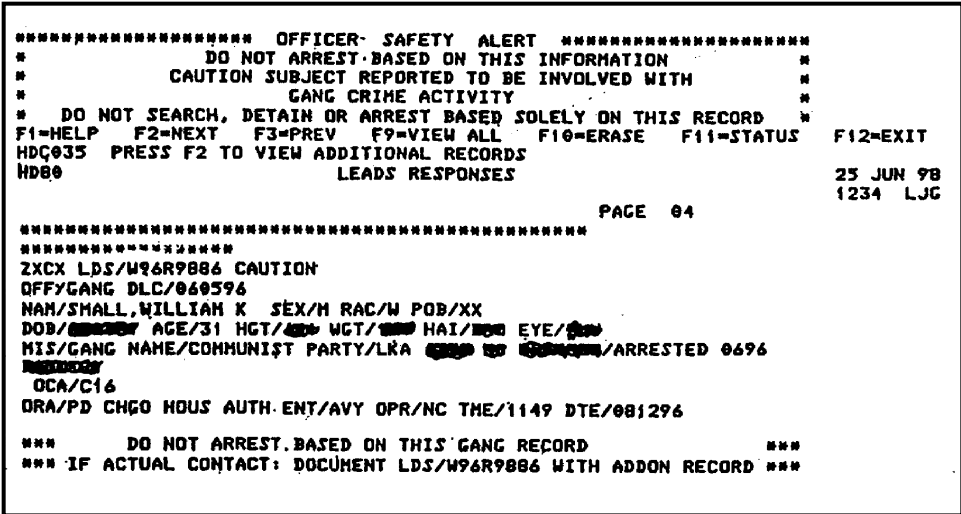
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amalgamating leftists into this database. When AK Small was pulled over for a traffic violation following an October 1997 protest against police brutality, he found that his name was on the “gang” database, appearing on an “Officer Safety Alert.” His name was listed with the notation, “gang name/Communist Party”!

The sinister attempt to designate leftists as criminals or “terrorists” is not new. In 1981, the Spartacist League won a suit against the State of California for listing our Marxist party—alongside the KKK and Hell’s Angels—in a 1979 “Report on Organized Crime in California.” In fighting this “new McCarthyism,” as we called it, we wrote: “We were falsely labeled as dangerous people, to be dealt with militarily, mad dogs to be shot down. It was a murderous effort to set us up for the same kind of campaign of government violence that destroyed the Black Panther Party” (WV No. 296, 8 January 1982).

The RCP/RCYB is in the cross hairs of the state repressive apparatus because of its vocal and persistent defense of public housing residents, those whose voices are rarely heard. But revolutionary rhetoric aside, in practice the RCP despairs of the possibility of mobilizing the working class as an agency for any kind of social change, much less for socialist revolution. Instead, they push reformist politics like low-level community organizing aimed at pressuring the capitalist government.

One of their liberal coalitions, the “October 22, 1998, National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality, Repression and the Criminalization of a Generation,” by its very name embodies illusions that cop violence can be stopped under capitalism. The cops are the armed defenders of private property whose job is to keep the working class in line: the words “police” and “brutality” cannot be separated. Denying this elementary fact, the RCP’s do-good community activism leads them right into coalitions...with cops. The October 22 coalition was endorsed by Ron Hampton of the National Black Police Association. And during the campaign to save black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal from an impending execution warrant in the summer of 1995, the Refuse & Resist group associated with the RCP went so far as to



Illinois police database lists AK Small’s “gang affiliation” as “Communist Party.” Chicago Red Squad worked hand in hand with FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover in murderous COINTELPRO vendetta against Black Panthers.

appeal for a “debate” with the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police, which has spearheaded the crusade for Jamal’s legal lynching.

Today the RCP seeks to organize minorities into liberal coalitions including the sworn enemies of workers and the oppressed. In the past, the RCP’s forebear, the Revolutionary Union, lined up with outright racists in *opposing* racial integration. In 1974, they crassly capitulated to the white racist anti-busing mobs in South Boston, proclaiming “People Must Unite To Smash Boston Busing Plan”! (*Revolution*, October 1974). Defense of busing became a pivotal battleground in the struggle against black oppression in general. The Spartacist League supported busing as a minimal measure of integration offering some chance of an education for the black poor and called for labor/black mobilization to defend schoolchildren against the racist mobs. At the same time, we stressed that the government’s busing plan was totally inadequate to redress school segregation. As part of our fight for quality integrated education for all, we demanded: “Extend busing to the suburbs!” and “Free universal higher education!”

Black and Red—The Way Forward

The increasing disparity between the 1 percent of the population which owns 40 percent of the wealth in society and the mass of the population lays the basis for tremendous social upheaval. The strengthening of the apparatus of state repression

is an attempt by the ruling class to squelch social protest before it happens. The bourgeoisie plays the race card as well to foster divisions within the working class and oppressed, undermining the possibility of united *class* struggle. As we noted in “Deadly Threat to Labor, Minorities—Chicago Cops Dust Off Red Squad” (WV No. 669, 30 May 1997):

“The government habitually covers bids for increased repressive powers by singling out relatively marginal or vulnerable elements. But in fact, the target of police red squads in this country is ultimately the organized labor movement. Among the 77 organizations listed in the 1974 lawsuit against police spying were the United Auto Workers, United Steelworkers, Teamsters and other unions.”

The ruling class uses many weapons to weaken and destroy the organized labor movement, from Red Squads to RICO (“racketeering”) laws to scabherding Pinkertons. But its most effective servants are the labor lieutenants of the trade-union bureaucracy who bind the proletariat to its class enemy, particularly through the capitalist Democratic Party. These chains must be broken in a political struggle against the pro-capitalist trade-union misleaders. This is the key to forging a revolutionary party to lead the fight for proletarian power, imbuing the multiracial working class with the consciousness of its historic task, to become a class *for* itself and overturn capitalist rule.

The SL understands that the fight for black freedom and the fight against the grinding exploitation of labor in this racist capitalist society must be joined together in order for either struggle to



Yoichi Okamoto

move forward. We fight for *revolutionary integrationism*, the full integration of blacks into an egalitarian, socialist society. On November 21, some 250 protesters—largely black trade unionists, as well as youth, socialists and other anti-racists—rallied in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal and against the racist death penalty at the Federal Building in downtown Chicago. This united-front demonstration, called by the Partisan Defense Committee, tapped into some of the potential social dynamite in the combination of red and black. As the SL speaker at the protest said:

“Racism, the race-caste segregation of blacks at the bottom of this society, is a primary obstacle to the mobilization of this potential. The trade-union movement, significantly black at its core, has the social power and potential to become battalions in the struggle against racism and exploitation, if mobilized in a revolutionary party operating to oppose *all* injustice, as the tribune of *all* the people, to overturn this decaying imperialist order. Black liberation through socialist revolution!”

The defense of the arrested RCP/RCYBers is about defending the elementary right to organize. Make no mistake—if they can go after the RCYB they can go after you! All those who would seek to protest injustice have a stake in their defense. The next court appearance for AK Small and Shawn Wall is February 17—All out to defend them! To contribute to the legal defense, send checks payable to “Law Offices of Doug Shreffler” to RCYB2 Defense Committee, c/o 3449 N. Sheffield, Chicago, IL 60657. ■

DSP...

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charlatans claim to have learned this class treason from Lenin, who, they write, “of course, never held that it was impermissible for socialists to call for a vote in a parliamentary election for a bourgeois party” (*A History*). Their “evidence”? In 1920 Lenin called for a vote to the British Labour Party (BLP)! Anyone the least familiar with Lenin’s “*Left-Wing Communism—An Infantile Disorder*” knows this tactic, of support “in the same way as the rope supports a hanged man,” was explicitly a call for a *class* vote “*for the Labour candidate and against the bourgeois candidate*.” Not for the DSP—they incredibly claim that for Lenin the BLP was a bourgeois party!

For Lenin, the BLP was contradictory. It was “a thoroughly bourgeois party, because, although made up of workers, it is led by reactionaries, and the worst kind of reactionaries at that, who quite act in the spirit of the bourgeoisie.” On the other hand, these leaders “are agents of the bourgeoisie in the working-class movement.” Lenin termed the BLP “a special kind of labour organisation of four million members, which is half trade union and half political and is headed by bourgeois leaders” (“Speech on Affiliation to the British Labour Party,” August 1920). The task of communists was and is to win the masses of workers away from the pro-capitalist

leaders, that is, to split such a “bourgeois workers party.”

We affirm Lenin’s position that critical support to a social-democratic party, such as the BLP or the Australian Labor Party, is to be used as a tactical weapon, affording a revolutionary party an opportunity to exploit the contradictions between that party’s bourgeois program and working-class base. Against the bulk of the fake left, however, we oppose the view that it is the duty of revolutionaries to invariably support the social democracy, critically or not. In the 1998 federal election, the ALP pledged continued attacks on the working class, women, Aborigines, immigrants and youth. We said, “No vote to Labor”—the tactic of critical support was not applicable, as it has not been for many years.

In 1984, the SWP blithely declared that the ALP, of which they had been practically an organic component, was and had been since its inception an outright capitalist party. Not born of leftist impulses, this crass revision of the class character of the social democracy was a ploy to advocate support to the *bourgeois* Nuclear Disarmament Party in 1984—into which the SWP threw itself “wholeheartedly.” As they put it themselves: “Once we had broken with Trotskyism, and once we had corrected our analysis of the ALP, the way was open for our party to contemplate a much wider range of political options. The possibilities emerged for seeking different types of regroupments with other political forces, and for having a much more flexible tac-

tical approach towards parliamentary elections” (*A History*). For the DSP, their brand of reformism does not depend on the ALP as its agent, and they have repeatedly supported capitalist parties in Australia such as the anti-immigrant Greens and the Democrats, whom the DSP claimed were no different from the ALP for whom they continued to vote.

The DSP *opposes* the struggle for socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Their maximum demand is that “the main assets of society must be publicly owned and democratically managed” (*Resist!*, 28 August 1998) and they openly say that a “revolutionary government” in this country “will require a multiclass alliance” (*The ALP and the Fight for Socialism*, 1985). Their “red and green” petty-bourgeois “community” and sectoralist politics are manifestly anti-proletarian in orientation.

In contrast to these opportunists, we Trotskyists—revolutionary Marxists—are guided by political principle and programmatic constancy, the precious theoretical and strategic acquisitions of the international workers movement paid for through bitter experience. As the program of the Spartacist League states:

“We seek to bring the ICL’s powerful revolutionary Marxist program into the working class, infusing the class with the necessary understanding of its historic task: the seizure of state power in a thorough-going workers revolution. Ardent championing the rights of the terribly oppressed Aboriginal peoples, of women, youth, and homosexuals, of immigrants and all the other exploited and oppressed, the working class will be

transformed from merely a class in itself, to a class *for* itself, and in the process will utterly smash this racist, misogynist and violent capitalist system and open the door to the future international socialist society.”

—“For a Workers Republic of Australia, Part of a Socialist Asia!”

What is the DSP? “Made-in-Australia” opportunists of the most unbridled variety lacking even the most rudimentary loyalty to the cause of the working class. Their scouring the world for co-thinkers and bloc partners can only be described, in Oscar Wilde’s words, as “the unspeakable in pursuit of the inedible.”

It is thus entirely appropriate that they despise Trotsky’s Fourth International, describing it as “a farce, a centralised world organisation built on nothing but small propaganda groups united around a written program” (*A History*). With the sneer of the arrogant petty-bourgeois, they mock Trotsky’s statement in 1938 that “today there is not another revolutionary current on the face of the planet worthy of the name.”

This was simply a true statement: against the social democrats and Stalinists, against all varieties of centrism, Trotsky’s Fourth International alone carried forward the program of the Bolsheviks and the Communist International, the fight for international proletarian revolution. That is the struggle carried on today by the International Communist League who fight for a reformed Fourth International, indispensable world party of socialist revolution. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Amid Ominous Cop Mobilization

Oakland Teach-In for Mumia Abu-Jamal Suppressed by Racist Vendetta

January 14 was slated to be a day of teach-ins in Oakland's overwhelmingly black public schools on the death penalty, exemplified by the case of black political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, an innocent man who has spent 17 years behind bars, framed up on charges of killing a cop and railroaded to death row because of his outspoken opposition to police brutality. But the case of Jamal exposes the lie taught in civics and social science classes that the racist capitalist state is a neutral body which metes out justice in a blind and evenhanded manner. This was brought home with a vengeance when the teach-in was squelched in the wake of the shooting of an Oakland cop on January 10, which touched off an hysterical mobilization of support to the racists in blue. In a town where cops routinely brutalize ghetto youth and have gunned down black unionists with impunity, a pledge of fealty to the police became as mandatory as the pledge of allegiance in the schools.

The frenzied vendetta which led to the cancellation of the Oakland teach-in is not an isolated act. From the moment the Pennsylvania Supreme Court turned down Jamal's appeal last October, the racist state authorities and their media mouthpieces have geared up their campaign to prepare public opinion for Jamal's legal lynching. The gutter press regularly runs editorials which could be lifted straight from the Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.) calling for Jamal's execution. On December 9, ABC-TV's 20/20 aired a 25-minute segment which was simply a

rehash of the prosecution's lying brief. When it was announced that proceeds from a January 28 New Jersey Meadowlands concert featuring Rage Against the Machine and the Beastie Boys will go toward Jamal's legal defense, racist radio and TV "shock jock" Howard Stern launched a rabid campaign to silence publicity for the concert. In a chilling threat against Mumia's supporters, the

New York Post (19 January) foams: "Concert Benefits a Cop-Killing Vermin."

The Oakland furor was triggered by a New Year's press release with a syllabus for teachers on topics related to the death penalty put out by members of the teachers union, the Oakland Education Association (OEA). The proposal met with a racist outcry from the beginning. Leaked to the press by the school board before

the OEA had completed a review, the teach-in proposal was sneeringly labeled "Ebonics II," evoking the racist derision that met the 1996 proposal by the school board that "black English" be taught in the Oakland school district. School board president Noel Gallo railed against "turning students into political pawns," according to the *Oakland Tribune* (1 January). Shannon Reeves, the anti-union Republican president of the Oakland chapter of the NAACP, denounced the OEA for taking time away from basic studies, suggesting that a teach-in on the stock market would be more appropriate!

The OEA rushed to assure critics that the subject would be taught with complete "neutrality," and acceded to the school board's insistence that it be voluntary and that parents could take their kids out of such classes. Satisfied that the subject would be taught in a manner that comported with the views of the cops and the racist rulers that hire them, the school board gave the nod for the teach-in to proceed. The killing of the Oakland cop, with the funeral set for the same day as the teach-in, exploded the compromise.

Following the shooting, the press spoke of the "somber mood...tinged with pride that Oakland residents provided tips in the case." Setting the pace for the racist "law and order" hysteria, newly elected mayor Jerry Brown, seen by most liberals and many blacks as the man who will breathe life into the impoverished city, ranted, "If they don't work, carry guns

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Free Mumia Now!



WV Photo

Spartacist/PDC contingent at November 1998 San Francisco protest following Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling upholding frame-up of Jamal.

Drop the Charges Against RCYB Supporters!

Chicago Cops Retool Sinister Red Squad

As the Chicago Police Department pushes for official sanction to carry on spying and sabotage of leftist, labor and black groups, activists of the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB) and Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) have been caught in the cops' cross hairs. RCYB supporters Bill "AK" Small and E. "Shawn" Wall face up to a year in jail on bogus charges of disorderly conduct, interfering with a police officer, obstructing an officer and resisting arrest. The charges stem from a protest by residents of the black Cabrini-Green public housing complex and their supporters against plans to raze their homes. This is part of a federal program, cynically named "HOPE VI," to make way for yuppies by flattening 100,000 public housing units, including some on prime lakefront property which have already been destroyed.

As the arrests of Small and Wall make clear, the Chicago bosses are determined not to let anyone get in the way of their devastating plans. On January 6, two oth-

ers were arrested while distributing the RCP paper *Revolutionary Worker* at the Cabrini-Green complex. Drop all charges against the RCP/RCYB supporters!

These arrests are part of a drive by the Democratic Party administration of Mayor Richard M. Daley Jr. to revive the

notorious "Red Squad," known in the 1960s and '70s for its infiltration and murderous subversion of labor, black and left organizations. Working hand in hand with J. Edgar Hoover's FBI Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) operation, the Red Squad set up the cop

murders of Black Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark on Chicago's West Side 30 years ago. The Red Squad was formally disbanded as a result of a 1974 lawsuit against police spying, though its subversion and harassment of dissident groups never stopped. A January 7 statement announcing a press conference protesting the arrests the day before reported how one of the cops exclaimed, "If Hoover and us had done our jobs earlier, we wouldn't have to be dealing with 'these' people now."

The city is now seeking to modify a 1981 consent decree which set restrictions on police spying operations, in order to further strengthen the machinery of the state. As part of this, and particularly to criminalize minority youth, the Daley administration is trying to whip up hysteria over "gang activity." The Illinois State Police "gang" database, containing 68,000 names, gives license to the Chicago cops to "shoot now, ask questions later." Ominously, the police have been

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Hestoft/SABA

Residents of Cabrini-Green housing project are subjected to incessant cop harassment. Mayor Daley's crusade against "gang activity" seeks to criminalize minority youth, targets leftists.