

War-Crazed Imperialists Stalk the World

For Class Struggle Against U.S. Capitalist Rulers— Defend Afghanistan Against Imperialist Attack!

OCTOBER 9—As cruise missiles and bombs began raining down on Kabul, Kandahar and other parts of Afghanistan on Sunday, U.S. and British forces launched what George W. Bush vowed to be a “sustained and relentless” military assault. Some 50,000 imperialist troops, upwards of 400 bombers and fighter jets and dozens of warships are now in the region surrounding Afghanistan. The absurd lies coming from the White House and the capitalist media notwithstanding, this massive array of military might is clearly not intended simply for taking out several hundred “Islamic terrorists” in a country that is already little more than a vast, empty expanse of rubble.

The pretext for the imperialist bombardment of Afghanistan is retaliation for the indiscriminate terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. But far more to the point is that this takes place in the context of a world capitalist economy that was already rapidly going into a tailspin. Whoever carried out the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, it was in some ways a “gift from god” for the American capitalist class. As profits drop and competition for markets stiffens, the American imperialist bourgeoisie—like its rivals abroad—is intent on ratcheting up the rate of exploitation of the working class at home. The domestic purpose of the “war against terrorism” is to regiment the population as the capitalist rulers seek to pay for the cost of recession and military buildup out of the hides of the working people and minorities.

Internationally, U.S. imperialism is intent on projecting its military power particularly into Central Asia. With its huge, untapped oil and natural gas reserves, Central Asia is becoming a cockpit of rivalries. A thousand U.S. troops have been moved into the former Soviet republic of Uzbekistan, a precursor of what the U.S. intends to be a permanent military presence, and they are not there just to go after Osama bin Laden. U.S. companies have invested billions of dollars in oil and gas projects in the region and plan to invest billions more. Kazakhstan just opened a new



Imperialist terror bombers: U.S. fighter jet takes off from aircraft carrier in Arabian Sea to attack Afghanistan.

\$2.6 billion oil pipeline financed largely by Chevron and Exxon Mobil. Another American oil giant, Unocal, has had plans for a natural gas pipeline through Afghanistan “if conditions in Afghanistan allowed” (*Financial Times*, 3 October). As in the case of the 1991 Gulf War against Iraq, which the American rulers claimed was about saving “poor little Kuwait,” what is going on today is not only a bloody assertion by U.S. imperialism of its overwhelming military clout but a drive particularly to maintain its control over the world oil spigot.

It is the obligation of the proletariat internationally, especially workers and minorities in the U.S., to defend Afghanistan in the face of the imperialist attack. The reactionary, woman-hating Taliban cutthroats who are today targeted by U.S. imperialism were, along with bin Laden and his fellow *mujahedin*, originally bankrolled by Washington as part of its counterrevolutionary “holy war” against the Soviet Union—where there was no capitalism, unemployment and homelessness—in the 1980s. But the reactionary nature of the Taliban regime does not in any way diminish the duty of revolutionaries to stand in military defense of small countries like Afghanistan against the most deadly imperialist power on the face of the planet.

When Mussolini’s Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1935, Leon Trotsky stressed the need to “support Ethiopia, despite the slavery that still prevails there and despite the barbaric political regime...because the defeat of Italy would signify the beginning of the collapse of the obsoles-

cent capitalist society” (“The Fourth International and the Soviet Union,” July 1936). Opposition by the U.S. proletariat to the imperialist depredations of its exploiters can, in Trotsky’s words, be pursued “only through the revolutionary mobilization of the masses, that is, by widening, deepening, and sharpening those revolutionary methods which constitute the content of class struggle in ‘peacetime’” (“Learn to Think,” May 1938). **For class struggle against capitalist rulers at home! Defend Afghanistan against imperialist attack!**

A New “Great Game” of Imperialist Intrigues

In the latter part of the 19th century, as capitalism entered the epoch of its decline, Afghanistan was the stage for the “Great Game” of intrigues and rivalries between British imperialism and the Russian tsarist autocracy. A focus of these intrigues was the decrepit Ottoman Empire under Turkish rule, which was supported by Britain as a bulwark against tsarist expansion to the south. By the time World War I broke out in 1914, shifting imperialist interests had brought Britain and France together in an alliance with

Russia, pitted centrally against German imperialism. At the start of the war, the French and British had no clear plans with regard to the Ottoman Empire. But as soon as Germany got the Turks to declare war on its side, Britain and France developed an appetite for the Near East, much of which was then part of the Ottoman Empire.

One can expect something comparable to develop now in the Central Asian region around Afghanistan. Until recently, aside from using the Afghan *mujahedin* as foot soldiers in their counterrevolutionary crusade against the Soviet Union, the American and West European imperialists had somewhat platonic designs on that region. The U.S. basically lost interest in Afghanistan once the Red Army pulled out in 1989. But when oil and natural gas were discovered in Central Asia and the Caspian Sea

in the mid-1990s, in the wake of the capitalist counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet Union, the U.S. sought to extend its influence largely through investment. A now-capitalist Russia has remained the dominant military power in the Central Asian republics, with as many as 25,000 Russian troops stationed in Tajikistan. The current massive imperialist military presence in the region both reflects and stimulates new appetites among the U.S. and the West European imperialist powers to get their hands on whatever they can, including control over the strategic oil and natural gas pipelines that will now be in the offing.

The destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92—marking the final undoing of the Bolshevik-led October Revolution of 1917—ushered in a far more dangerous world, one whose political outlines increasingly resemble those in the years before World War I. As the glue holding together the U.S.-led anti-Soviet consensus disappeared, the conflicting interests among the imperialist powers have come sharply to the fore. The competition for markets, spheres of influence and control over supplies of oil and other natural

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Megawati: Tool of IMF, Indonesian Military

Indonesia in Turmoil

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At Paris Demonstration for “Women’s Rights” in Afghanistan

Fake Leftists, Feminists Appeal to Imperialists Against Taliban

As U.S. imperialism prepared for military action against Afghanistan, supposedly in “retaliation” for the September 11 attacks, fake-leftist and feminist groups in Paris joined with the French government in waving the banner of “women’s rights” as a cover for backing U.S. efforts to oust the reactionary Taliban rulers of Afghanistan. On September 29, 5,000 demonstrators marched at the Place de la République under the main slogan, “For Women’s Rights, for Peace and Democracy in Afghanistan.” The 20 September call for the rally, initiated by the organization Support to Afghan Women, was signed by all the government parties Socialist Party, Communist Party, Greens) along with a panoply of feminist groups and leftist organizations.

The central thrust of the demonstration was to portray imperialism, particularly French imperialism, as a friend of women’s rights and as a force for bringing “democracy” to Afghanistan. The 20 September demonstration call began, “For years, Afghan women, denied their most elementary rights, have been absolute victims of the obscurantist and totalitarian power of the fundamentalist Taliban militias, with the indifference and often the complicity of the great Western powers.” The rally’s sole speaker, Shoukria Haidar, leader of Support to Afghan Women, urged participants to sign a petition asking the U.S. to put an end to the Taliban and to the Pakistan regime which supports it. Flanking the sound truck were five gigantic color

pictures of Ahmed Shah Massoud, the recently assassinated leader of the U.S.-backed Northern Alliance.

The Ligue Trotskyiste de France (LTF), French section of the International Communist League, refusing to join in this march in support of imperialist war moves, set up a literature table and held a speakout. Over the megaphone, our comrades denounced the demonstration’s veiled calls for imperialist intervention under the pretext of “helping Afghan women.” We condemned the French government’s ongoing “Vigipirate” campaign—which has been stepped up since September 11—of racist state terror against minority youth, particularly portraying youth of North African descent as “dangerous fundamentalists,” about which the bulk of the French left has been scandalously silent. We called for defense of the besieged Palestinian people under the jackboot of U.S.-backed Zionist terror in Israel and denounced the crimes of the French rulers in the Near East, Africa and elsewhere, saluting the military defeat of French imperialism and its torture machine in Algeria and calling for the destruction of imperialism through the fight for socialist revolution at home.

Many demonstrators listened attentively as LTF speakers recalled the intervention of the Soviet Red Army in Afghanistan in 1979, which for the first time allowed Afghan women to free themselves from the tyranny of the veil and the bride price, to get an education and to participate in social and economic life. It was the spectre of women’s liberation, even more than the land reform and other modernizing measures of the Russian-supported Afghan PDPA regime, which enraged the bloodsucking Islamic mullahs, along with the feudal landlords, tribal chiefs and moneylenders, and touched off the “holy war.” When the USSR intervened militarily, we Trotskyists took a side with the Red Army and the forces of social progress and women’s emancipation. When the USSR, with the suicidal illusion of placating imperialism,



Greg/Indymedia



Clovis/Indymedia

Paris, September 29: Feminists, fake leftists hail assassinated leader of U.S.-backed woman-hating Northern Alliance.

pulled out of Afghanistan in 1989, we denounced this betrayal. The *mujahedin* took power in 1992, wreaking bloody vengeance and throwing women back into “their place” of illiteracy and seclusion. It is essential today that this lesson in recent history be understood, against the obfuscations of the imperialist rulers who want to portray Osama bin Laden as not their creation, and against the attempts at collective amnesia by the fake left in France and internationally. In fealty to their own capitalist ruling classes, organizations ranging from the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), which falsely claims to be Trotskyist, to the “state capitalist” followers of Tony Cliff lined up against the USSR in Afghanistan. The Cliffites embraced the *mujahedin*, while the LCR’s international lash-up, the United Secretariat, condemned the 1979 Red Army intervention and a year later openly demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops. These social democrats in “socialist” clothing

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TROTSKY

Class Struggle and Imperialist War

The target of the current war buildup is clearly not simply “Islamic terrorists” in benighted Afghanistan who were previously Washington’s allies in the war against Communism. Rather, U.S. imperialism seeks to vastly extend its global military reach while stepping up attacks on workers and the oppressed at home. As Leon Trotsky, in a resolution of a 1936 conference for the Fourth International, stressed in polemicizing against the centrist “London Bureau” in the years before World War II—amid pleas to the “democratic” imperialists to act against fascist Italy’s invasion of Ethiopia—only workers revolution can end the threat of new imperialist wars. To this end, we seek to mobilize the multiracial proletariat in opposition to U.S. military adventures abroad and in defense of small, backward countries like Afghanistan against imperialist attack.

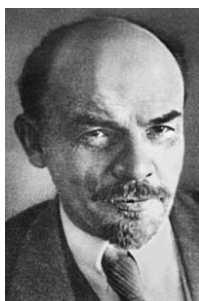
ing against the centrist “London Bureau” in the years before World War II—amid pleas to the “democratic” imperialists to act against fascist Italy’s invasion of Ethiopia—only workers revolution can end the threat of new imperialist wars. To this end, we seek to mobilize the multiracial proletariat in opposition to U.S. military adventures abroad and in defense of small, backward countries like Afghanistan against imperialist attack.

The “struggle against war” cannot be conducted as something separate and apart from the class struggle itself, from the intransigent struggle of the proletariat against imperialist capitalism, that is, against that social order which inexorably gives rise to imperialist war and oppression and which is inconceivable without these twin scourges. Any attempt to conduct a struggle “against war” by means of “special methods” separate or “above” the class struggle itself is at best a cruel illusion and as a rule a malicious deception that facilitates the work of the imperialist warmongers....

The struggle against war, properly understood and executed, presupposes the uncompromising hostility of the proletariat and its organizations, always and everywhere, toward its own and every other imperialist bourgeoisie. Yet among the announced adherents of the London Bureau congress are to be found such notorious supporters of the League of Nations (i.e., imperialist) “sanctions” as the Italian Socialist Party, which is presumably to organize a common struggle against war with opponents of these “sanctions,” such as the British ILP claims to be. A prerequisite for the proletarian struggle against war is not unity between pro-“sanctionists” and anti-“sanctionists” but the ruthless separation of them.

The struggle against war and its social source, capitalism, presupposes direct, active, unequivocal support to the oppressed colonial peoples in their struggles and wars against imperialism. A “neutral” position is tantamount to support of imperialism.

—Leon Trotsky, “Resolution on the Antiwar Congress of the London Bureau” (July 1936), in *Documents of the Fourth International: The Formative Years, 1933-1940* (Pathfinder, 1973)



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CIA Backed Islamic “Holy War” Against Afghan Women

Trotskyists Said: No to the Veil! Hail Red Army!

The following are excerpts from the article “Afghanistan and the Left: The Russian Question Point Blank” published in *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 29, Summer 1980.

Afghanistan is a flash of lightning which illuminates the real contours of the world political landscape. It has exploded the last illusions of détente to reveal the implacable hostility of U.S. imperialism to the Soviet degenerated workers state. It has stripped away all diplomatic cover for Washington’s alliance with Maoist/Stalinist China. And it has confronted the left inescapably with “the Russian question”: the nature of the state originating in the Bolshevik Revolution and its conflict with world capitalism.

For revolutionary socialists there is nothing tricky, nothing ambiguous about the war in Afghanistan. The Soviet army and its left-nationalist allies are fighting an anti-communist, anti-democratic mélange of landlords, money lenders, tribal chiefs and mullahs committed to mass illiteracy. And to say that imperialist support to this social scum is out in the open is the understatement of the year. U.S. “national security” czar Zbigniew Brzezinski actually traveled to the Khyber Pass and rifle in hand incited the insurgents: “That land over there is yours and you will go back one day because your cause is right and God is on your side.” The gut-level response of every radical leftist should be fullest solidarity with the Soviet Red Army.

Yet much of the left, with the Maoists leading the pack, has joined the imperialist crusade against “Soviet expansionism.” In fact, the official pro-Peking group in the U.S., the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) attacked the Carter Doctrine *from the right* as too soft on the Russians. Likewise, the “Third Camp” social-democrats, like the British Cliff group, which could maintain a certain left posture in the days of détente, stand once more revealed as State Department socialists. Those leftists, whatever they call themselves, who deny that the Soviet Union is a proletarian state power (albeit bureaucratically degenerated) find themselves, some more, some less willingly, on the same side of the barricades as U.S. imperialism.

It is not surprising that the Maoists and social democrats should rally to imperialist anti-Sovietism, although some may bridle at making common cause with the crazed anti-communist Brzezinski and his Afghan cutthroats. But for Trotskyists, support to the Soviet army in Afghanistan should be an elementary political reflex. Trotsky’s last great factional struggle, against the “Third Camp” Shachtman/Burnham opposition in the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in 1940,



Reuters

Women’s militia fighters in Kabul in late 1980s. Soviet intervention opened road to women’s liberation.

was provoked by the imperialist campaign against the Soviet invasion of “little, democratic Finland.” Drawing the hardest line against social-democratic anti-communism, Trotsky declared: “The safeguarding of the socialist revolution comes before formal democratic principles.”...

With its massive intervention in late December, the Soviet armed forces became the dominant power in Afghanistan, whose present fate will be decided in Moscow, not Kabul. Of course, the conservative bureaucrats in the Kremlin did not send 100,000 troops into Afghanistan to effect a social revolution, but simply to make secure an unstable, strategically-

placed client state. No doubt Brezhnev & Co. would prefer a friendly bourgeois state like Finland. But Afghanistan is not Finland. There is no way that country can sustain anything remotely like a stable bourgeois democracy. In any case, the rightist insurgents and their imperialist backers are intransigent against any coalition government the Russians would accept. It is possible the Kremlin could do a deal with the imperialists to withdraw, for example, in return for NATO’s reversing its decision to deploy hundreds of new nuclear missiles in West Europe. That would be a real counterrevolutionary crime against the Afghan peoples.

More likely is the Soviet army’s prolonged occupation of Afghanistan and with it the possibility of its transformation along the lines of Soviet Central Asia or Mongolia. Social revolutionary measures (e.g., land to the tiller) would be necessary to erode and win over the poor peasant supporters of the reactionary insurgency. Only those leftists poisoned by bourgeois-nationalist ideology could deny that such a social revolution, although imposed from without and bureaucratically deformed, would have an enormously liberating effect for the Afghan masses. Even the *New York Times* admits that Soviet Central Asians regard their country’s military intervention in Afghanistan as support for the liberation of their backward, oppressed neighbors. (See “Soviet Central Asians Back Afghan Intervention,” *Workers Vanguard* No. 254, 18 April.)

The difference between Soviet Central Asia and Afghanistan is to be measured not in decades but in centuries. While Afghanistan is over 90 percent illiterate, neighboring Soviet Uzbekistan probably has a higher literacy rate than Jimmy Carter’s Georgia. The average life expectancy in Uzbekistan is 70 compared to 40 in Afghanistan. A major reason for this is that in Uzbekistan there is one doctor for every 380 people and in Afghanistan one doctor for every 20,000! *All* social and economic comparisons show the same thing.

Marx and Engels, following the French utopian socialist Charles Fourier, maintained that “in any given society the degree of women’s emancipation is the natural measure of the general emancipa-



As U.S. launched Cold War II, Trotskyists fought for military defense of Soviet Union.

tion.” The status of women in Soviet Central Asia is not only higher than in *any* Islamic bourgeois country (let alone Afghanistan), but in some areas (e.g., representation in the government) compares favorably even with the advanced bourgeois democracies. For example, 18 percent of all judges and 45 percent of all legislative members from the village level up in Uzbekistan are women.

To be sure, the workers and peasants of Soviet Central Asia suffer the same inequalities and bureaucratic oppression as their class brothers and sisters in Great Russia. There is some pressure for Russification in Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan, Khirgizia, etc. and, of course, the Moscow Stalinist regime denies all nationalities the democratic right of self-determination, i.e., the right to secede and form a separate state. Should Afghanistan be transformed into a Soviet-satellite deformed workers state, it is possible a future revolutionary crisis could find the Afghan workers and peasants battling against a Soviet army under command of the Kremlin Stalinist bureaucracy. And in general proletarian political revolution within the Soviet bloc will be interwoven with the struggle for the right of national self-determination and other democratic rights and freedoms. But to raise the banner of “national self-determination” for Afghanistan today is to provide a democratic cover for imperialist-backed social counterrevolution of the most brutal, barbaric kind....

For unconditional military defense of the deformed and degenerated workers states through socialist revolution in the capitalist countries and political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracies! Extend the gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples! ■

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Megawati: Tool of IMF, Indonesian Military

Indonesia in Turmoil

We reprint below a slightly abridged article from *Australasian Spartacist* No. 176 (Spring 2001), newspaper of the Spartacist League of Australia, published in late August. On September 19, Indonesian president Megawati Sukarnoputri met with U.S. president George W. Bush in the White House. Having risen to power with Washington's backing, Megawati rushed to express her support for the imperialists' "anti-terrorism" war drive in the wake of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. However, any involvement by Jakarta in Washington's drive against Afghan Islamic forces would threaten to set off a powder keg in Indonesia, home to the world's largest Muslim population. Ruling over a desperate population

Australasian SPARTACIST

made more desperate by a four-year-long economic crisis, the Megawati regime rests on the support not only of the blood-drenched military but of increasingly assertive Islamic political forces, including her vice president. In recent weeks, there have been repeated Islamist mobilizations to protest U.S. war threats against Afghanistan. Groups like the Islamic Youth Movement Brigade and the Holy War Front are openly recruiting volunteers in Jakarta and elsewhere—including among veterans of the army's murderous East Timor "militia" auxiliaries—for an anti-American *jihād*. In 1965-66, such Islamic gangs—with the direct assistance of the American CIA—joined with the military in carrying out the massacre of hundreds of thousands of Communists, ethnic Chinese and others.

* * *

On 23 July, hard-line Javanese chauvinist Megawati Sukarnoputri was installed as Indonesia's president following the ouster of her rival Abdurrahman Wahid. For 21 months the Wahid regime carried out brutal capitalist austerity dictated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Indonesian bourgeoisie. But Indonesia is a boiling social cauldron, and Wahid did not deliver the stability demanded by the Indonesian capitalists and their imperialist overlords to ensure the smooth flow of profits. In particular, Wahid failed to suppress the separatist insurgencies in resource-rich Aceh and West Papua, major sources of imperialist plunder.

For Workers Revolution!

As calls for Wahid's removal inside and outside Indonesia grew louder, various imperialist powers signalled their willingness to treat with vice-president Megawati. In early July, police refused Wahid's order to arrest the national and Jakarta chiefs of police. When he tried to declare a state of emergency and dissolve parliament, the military refused to back him. Instead, on the evening of 22 July,

nesses of Suharto and his cronies.

It is only the proletariat, standing at the head of the toiling masses, which has the social power and historic interest to break the yoke of imperialist servitude through establishing its own class rule. During the 1998 upheavals the International Communist League insisted on the urgent need for the working class to emerge as an independent revolutionary factor, along



Sydney Morning Herald

Megawati (left), imperialist lackey, civilian face of Indonesian military dictatorship. Jakarta police attack students protesting fuel price hikes in June.



Reuters

thousands of heavily armed soldiers and tanks surrounded the presidential palace where Wahid was holed up. The "People's Consultative Assembly" impeached him, Megawati was sworn in and, days later, under threat of arrest, he left for the U.S. for "medical treatment."

Over three years ago, the brutal 32-year military dictatorship of Suharto's New Order was brought to an end by massive student-centred demonstrations. In response to skyrocketing unemployment and inflation—the result of the devastating economic crisis that hit Asia in 1997—turbulent plebeian protests swept the country. When the government, in accord with brutal IMF dictates, slashed subsidies on fuel and other necessities, sending prices soaring by over 70 percent, the Indonesian powder keg exploded. Student protesters, often joined by workers, faced down murderous military repression while starving slum masses targeted mansions and busi-

nesses of Suharto and his cronies. It is only the proletariat, standing at the head of the toiling masses, which has the social power and historic interest to break the yoke of imperialist servitude through establishing its own class rule. During the 1998 upheavals the International Communist League insisted on the urgent need for the working class to emerge as an independent revolutionary factor, along

with the forging of an internationalist vanguard party committed to leading the proletariat to the seizure of state power. Instead, the enormous anger of the plebeian masses was directed into supporting a supposedly more "democratic" section of the bourgeoisie under the banner of "reformasi," the reform of the capitalist state apparatus. Scrambling to impose stability, in May 1998 the imperialists and sections of the Indonesian bourgeoisie installed Suharto's deputy B. J. Habibie, a fanatically anti-Chinese racist, as president. To contain the explosive social discontent in parliamentarist channels, a year later stage-managed elections were held. While Megawati, the daughter of Sukarno, Suharto's predecessor, got the most votes, after much horse-trading Wahid, former head of Nahdatul Ulama (NU), Indonesia's largest Islamic organisation, was made president.

Among those who sought to ensure that the courageous struggles against Suharto and Habibie stayed within the bounds of capitalism were the left nationalist People's Democratic Party (PRD). From its inception the PRD's perspective has centred on a class-collaborationist strategy of chaining the Indonesian proletariat and toiling masses to its class enemy. Early on they sought alliances with Megawati and even urged members to distribute her pictures and writings, openly backing her call for an alliance with so-called "moderate" Islamic forces in the United Development Party (PPP).

But once Wahid was in power, the PRD heavily promoted him as a "lesser evil," pushing illusions in his rambling "promises" of greater political liberality while painting him as a "moderate," secular-minded Muslim leader. Backing first Megawati, then Wahid, these petty-bourgeois nationalists would take the proletariat and oppressed masses down the same deadly road of class-collaboration that produced the bloody anti-Communist massacres of 1965-66 that brought

Suharto to power. The PRD must bear some political responsibility for their part in preventing workers and the oppressed from breaking from their capitalist exploiters, as they do for the capitalist misery and repression Megawati's regime will bring.

Megawati: Imperialist Lackey

Megawati, the woman the PRD championed for so many years, is a deeply conservative Indonesian nationalist. A strident proponent of a unitary Indonesian state, she holds in contempt Indonesia's oppressed minorities and national-

ities and supported Suharto's 1975 brutal annexation of East Timor.

Backed by the blood-drenched military, Megawati touts her links with them and was pictured last year strutting around in the uniform and red beret of the murdering Kopassus special forces. Propped up by the Golkar party of ex-dictator Suharto, her new cabinet includes two former high-ranking Kopassus officers. One of them, A. M. Hendropriyono, head of the State Intelligence Co-ordinating Body, is infamous for his involvement in a massacre of scores of villagers in Lampung, Sumatra in 1989.

With good reason, the imperialists expect Megawati to do their bidding and harshly crack down on the working class and oppressed. The day after her victory the rupiah shot up, reflecting guarded imperialist approval, and in late July the Australian and U.S. imperialists agreed to re-establish "limited" contact with the Indonesian military.

The government is nearly bankrupt with a staggering 80 trillion rupiah budget deficit (A\$13 billion). Indonesia's foreign debt is US\$154 billion—102 percent of the country's gross domestic product! Half the budget services this imperialist debt bondage. Promised IMF loans have been repeatedly held up as the IMF vultures demand more cuts to fuel and other subsidies, deepening the already desperate poverty endured by the masses.

Indonesia is a dependent neocolony. It has fabulous natural resources—oil, gas, gold, timber—and in particular the U.S., Australian and Japanese imperialists seek ruthlessly to remove all obstacles to their plunder of this wealth. Straddling the major sea lanes between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea through which Japan's oil and Asia's exports to Europe must move, Indonesia also has enormous strategic importance to the contending imperialist powers. The U.S. and their Australian lackeys, as well as their rival Japan, Indonesia's largest trading partner, want a stable, unified Indonesia. This

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4. Dasar Teoritis dan Strategis Liga Komunis Internasional (Internasionalis Keempat)

5. Sifat Internasional Revolusi Sosialisme

6. Peranan Kelas Buruh sebagai Pelopor dalam Menembus Kaum Tertindas

7. Dasar Borjuis dari Revisionisme

8. Perjuangan Melawan Perang Imperialis

9. Masalah Nasional dan Hak Seseorang Bangsa Untuk Menentukan Nanti Sendiri

10. Revolusi Nasional, Revolusi Permisian dan "Jalan Gerilya"

11. Front Rakyat: Bukan sebuah Taktik Melainkan Kebijakan Tersebut

12. Program, Organisasi dan Disiplin Partai Revolusioner

13. Kami Akan Berdiri Untuk Menaklukkan Sejarah!

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is not only to rake in vast profits but also as part of the imperialists’ counter-revolutionary drive against the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state. This was underscored in a proposed new defence link between the U.S., Australia, Japan and South Korea recently announced after a meeting of U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell and Australia’s foreign minister, Alexander Downer. A U.S./Australia communique reasserted the imperialists’ long-standing support to Indonesia’s “territorial integrity.”

For years the Javanese-chauvinist bourgeoisie has ruled over this prison house of peoples through bloody military repression. At the same time, ruling-class elements have stoked communal violence such as in the Maluku Islands. The very storms they whip up undermine neocolonial stability and the “orderly” pursuit of profit-making. Aiming to prevent separation, the Australian and U.S. governments suggested offering Aceh and West Papua some kind of autonomy deal. Accordingly, on 16 August, while arrogantly declaring that Aceh and West Papua “should remain within the context of preserving the territorial integrity of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia,” Megawati introduced a sham “autonomy” law which the Acehese separatists, not surprisingly, rejected. Proletarian revolutionaries in Indonesia must struggle against the Javanese chauvinism which poisons the unity of the working class.

If the Indonesian bourgeoisie is unable to suppress the struggles of the exploited and oppressed peoples of the archipelago, then “foreign intervention,” as U.S. deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage recently hinted, is a possibility (*Australian Financial Review*, 19 June). Enforcing neocolonial stability was precisely the purpose of the 1999 Australian-led invasion and occupation of East Timor. In addition to acting as “deputy sheriff” for the U.S., Australia’s leading role marked its aim to suppress the struggles of the peoples of the region to free themselves from imperialist exploitation. Rallying around the flag, virtually the entire fake left joined marches and demonstrations screaming for the racist Australian imperialist military to occupy East Timor. They hailed the chauvinist Labor Party and trade-union bureaucracy who whipped up anti-Indonesian racism as they mobilised to demand Australian imperialist intervention. It was the Marxist Spartacist League which upheld the banner of proletarian internationalism against our “own” ruling class, demanding: Australian/UN troops get out! Independence now for East Timor!

Last year as communalist bloodshed swept the Malukus and separatist movements in Aceh and West Papua strengthened, the danger of imperialist intervention in Indonesia sharply escalated. Underscoring that it was the occupation of East Timor that opened the door wide for this, we declared:

“The Australian workers movement has a particular duty to oppose the intervention of our ‘own’ rulers—anti-woman, anti-Aboriginal, anti-immigrant union-busting bigots at home, racist overlords of oppressed neocolonies abroad, from Papua New Guinea to the Solomons to Fiji. Australian imperialists get out of East Timor and stay out! Hands off Indonesia!”
—*Australasian Spartacist*
No. 172, Spring 2000

Capitalist Crisis Fuels Islamic Reaction

In 1997, industrial workers in Indonesia comprised just 19 percent of the workforce, but contributed almost *half* of the country’s gross domestic product. In conditions of severe repression workers waged many militant battles. However, the massive 1997 economic crisis threw millions out of work, plunging at least 100 million people in Indonesia into horrific destitution. By 1999, *half* of children under five were underfed. As the blood-sucking IMF’s “rescue package” kicked in, large-scale privatisations were carried out, subsidies for essentials like food, fuel and education were slashed and virtually all restrictions on imperialist investment were removed.

Workers protest IMF austerity, May Day, Jakarta. Proletariat holds key to emancipation of all the oppressed from imperialist subjugation.



As a result of the economic crisis, there has been a growing tide of communalist violence which has served to undercut working-class struggle. Feeding off the destitution and human misery, a number of Islamic religious parties also emerged, such as the National Mandate Party of the vicious anti-Chinese, anti-Christian bigot Amien Rais and Wahid’s National Awakening Party.

Wahid, Rais and Megawati have all stoked the flames of communalism and Islamic reaction. Rais has led rallies calling for *jihad* (holy war) against Christians in the Malukus. Wahid repeatedly threatened to mobilise his NU base against those who sought his downfall. Suicide squads were formed at massive prayer rallies as NU leaders debated whether it was proper to kill Wahid’s opponents. Megawati sought to discredit Chinese women who had been brutally raped during the pogroms instigated by the army during the communal violence that followed Suharto’s fall in 1998. Today her position rests heavily on an Islamic alliance which answers to Rais.

In Indonesia as elsewhere, the rise of religious fundamentalism is a reactionary reflection of the absence of a communist alternative and the bankruptcy of nationalism. Bourgeois nationalist leaders such as Megawati, unable to alleviate mass poverty or advance towards social justice, offer chauvinism and religious obscurantism. For the masses religion becomes not only a consolation but an illusory opposition to an unbearable status quo which is easily put to the service of capitalist reaction. In Indonesia the growth of political Islam, in all its variants, is a deadly threat to the multiethnic proletariat and especially to the deeply oppressed women of the archipelago.

During the 1990s women entered the workforce in large numbers, playing a leading and often heroic role in numerous class battles. Coming into the factories from the villages, many of them found a measure of freedom from the strictures of family and village life. Yet these women are still subject to harsh Islamic dictates, many enshrined in law, including a ban on abortion while arranged marriages remain common. The doctrine of *Panca Dharma Wanita*, the “Five Duties of Women,” encompasses measures designed to keep Indonesian women shackled to the patriarchal family. The economic crisis hit women workers with double force as many were thrown out of work and compelled to return to their villages. And the rising tide of Islamic reaction has seen more and more women don the Islamic headscarf (*jilbab*).

The fight for women’s emancipation is integral to the proletarian class struggle to overthrow the system of capitalist exploitation. Communists fight to end patriarchal practices oppressive to women, like the polygamy system and bride price—legacies of social backwardness today upheld by religious reactionaries in league with the capitalist rulers. We fight for full equality for women, for free abortion on demand and for the separation of mosque and state.

For Proletarian Independence! For Permanent Revolution!

When the Wahid government ordered a 30 percent increase in fuel prices in June,

angry protests and strikes broke out across the archipelago. Police tear-gassed and fired “warning shots” at protesting students while bus drivers and other transport workers struck in cities across the country, facing down threats of massive state repression. Later that month, the Wahid government retreated from its plans to abolish severance pay for retiring and resigning workers in the face of more worker protests. In response, the imperialist investors who had demanded this measure screamed about labour “terror” and denounced “union rights” and “assertive” workers. In July, 9,300 workers at the strategically important Bandung state aircraft factory struck against company corruption and graft and for a three-fold wage increase.

Indonesia is a country where capitalist development was belated. Unlike in Europe, for example, where the emerging national bourgeoisie had to sweep away the accumulated rot of the *ancien régime* in order to come to power, in countries such as Indonesia the domestic capitalists developed under colonial and then imperialist rule, which was based

A million Communists, workers, peasants and ethnic Chinese were massacred in 1965-66 bloodbath that ushered in the rule of Suharto.



upon and utilised deep social backwardness and diverse forms of oppression that are a heritage of pre-capitalist times. Far from fighting to achieve social modernisation, the weak Indonesian bourgeoisie, tied to and dependent upon imperialism, fears the threat the proletarian masses pose to its private property more than it desires to free itself from the imperialist yoke. The bourgeoisie cannot resolve the burning democratic needs of the masses—such as political democracy, equality for women, separation of religion from the state—much less alleviate the misery and poverty that consigns hundreds of millions to a life of desperate struggle to survive.

The proletariat is capitalism’s gravedigger. Brought together in huge modern industries, the workers uniquely possess the class interest to overcome the communal, national, religious and other divisions which are manipulated by the capitalists to “divide and rule.” A Trotskyist party in Indonesia today would struggle against the hold of Javanese chauvinism which poisons and obstructs proletarian unity, upholding the right of self-determination for oppressed nations. The proletariat is the social force capable of accomplishing the democratic tasks, but only if it draws behind it the oppressed masses and establishes its own class dictatorship, abolish-

ing the system of capitalist exploitation. Mobilising around its own interests, the working class must struggle for the establishment of political liberties, for women’s rights and for an end to the imperialist subjugation which sucks the lifeblood from the workers and peasants. Its ally in this is not some mythical “democratic” or “anti-imperialist” section of the bourgeoisie, but the proletariat and oppressed throughout Asia and beyond, from Japan to South Korea to Australia. If it is not to be strangled by backwardness and imperialist intervention, a victorious socialist revolution in Indonesia would necessarily have to extend to the major imperialist centres, appealing to the proletariat to throw out their own capitalist exploiters.

This is the Trotskyist program of *permanent revolution*. The International Communist League fights to build a revolutionary Leninist-Trotskyist party in Indonesia, a tribune of the people, to raise the working class to consciousness of its historic task, built on the granite foundation of *complete independence of the proletariat from all wings of the capitalist exploiters*.

“Reformasi Total” Means Class Collaboration and Defeat

As the drive to oust Wahid gathered force, the PRD built pro-Wahid blocs centring on Nahdatul Ulama. Prostrating himself before the leaders of this huge Muslim organisation, PRD leader Budi-man Sujatmiko called on NU to help “build a movement to destroy the remnants of the new order as the key platform in accelerating the process of reformasi total” (PRD statement, 23 January).

The PRD is allied with the Australian Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), and, like the DSP, ardently supported Australian troops in East Timor. The DSP also backed Megawati in 1998, and this year gave Wahid “their critical support” urging “progressive forces” to “take sides

against the anti-democratic and deeply corrupt New Order forces, who are gathered behind the push for vice-president Megawati Sukarnoputri to replace Wahid as president” (*Green Left Weekly*, 20 June).

During Wahid’s regime there was an escalation of deadly anti-communist Islamic violence of which the PRD itself has repeatedly been the target. Wahid briefly mooted overturning the 1965 ban on Communism, but backtracked in the face of virulent anti-communist protests. The works of novelist Pramoedya Ananta Toer, imprisoned by Suharto for eleven years on Buru Island, are being removed from bookstores after threats from an outfit called “United Islamic Youth.” In June, a Jakarta conference sponsored by PRD groups was viciously attacked by cops and anti-communist thugs. At the time of Wahid’s ouster, 19 PRD supporters were languishing in jails.

With Megawati in the presidential palace, the PRD is pushing yet another coalition with bourgeois forces, this time embracing Megawati’s sister Rachmawati and her National Forum party, 75 NGOs (non-governmental organisations), the student wing of NU and...“radical sections” of Megawati’s own Indonesian Democratic Party for Struggle (PDIP). Backing

continued on page 9

SYCs Say...

(continued from page 12)

Similarly a decade ago, other “coalitions” including the same cast of characters were set up during the Persian Gulf War. And then too, professed “socialists” like the ISO and Socialist Action eagerly joined with pro-imperialist liberals who demanded that “peaceful” means instead of bombs be used to pursue the U.S. government’s aim of bringing down Iraq’s dictator Saddam Hussein. The “peaceful” means presented as the “alternative” to the bombs were sanctions against Iraq, which were implemented...and which have killed an estimated million and a half Iraqi civilians.

WWP and the ISO implicitly share the rulers’ premise that the U.S. imperialists have a right to “retaliation.” While the WWP’s International ANSWER coalition bleats that “war is not the answer,” the ISO dementedly declares: “US Bombs Won’t Bring Peace.” No shit! At the September 29 San Francisco march, a Spartacist comrade bullhorned:

“The groups organizing this demo from Workers World to the International Socialist Organization and Socialist Action whine that war is not the answer. They accept the liberal notion that imperialism is just a policy and that capitalists can be pressured to pursue more humane and peaceful policies. This is a lie! Imperialism is a system that can be ended only through socialist revolution. Workers World and the ISO capitulate to the prevailing climate of national unity, appealing to all classes to give peace a chance. We say no to the bosses’ national unity. We stand for class war against our oppressors, the capitalist class.”

As the ISO and WWP jockey for position in the “new antiwar movement” through their rival coalitions, WWP has been able to score some points against the ISO’s more overt social-chauvinism. For example, they ridiculed the ISO’s call to settle accounts with Osama bin Laden through a “court of law” by asking which blood-drenched imperialist power the ISO looked to for “justice.” This is pretty rich coming from WWP, which for years called for a “new trial” for black death row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, peddling the illusion that Jamal could find justice in the very capitalist courts that condemned him to death for his opposition to the racist terror and violence through which the American imperialists preserve their rule.



February 2000 NYC protest after police killers of Amadou Diallo were let off. “War against terrorism” will mean more victims of racist killer cops.

WWP’s differences with the ISO do not flow from any attachment, however remote, to the Marxist perspective of bringing down imperialism through socialist revolution in the “belly of the beast.” Rather, it is the expression of their support for “Third World” nationalism, painting petty-bourgeois and bourgeois nationalist forces such as the Palestinian PLO and Serbia’s Milosevic as genuine opponents of U.S. imperialism.

And let us not forget the WWP of the second mobilization, the Internationalist Group (IG). These defectors from the International Communist League share the same accommodation to Third World nationalism. In a special supplement to the IG’s journal, *The Internationalist*, they assert that the 12 September SL/U.S. Political Bureau statement, “The World Trade Center Attack,” did not call “to *defend* the countries (notably Afghanistan and Iraq) which were already targeted by Washington.” In the case of Iraq, this is a blatant lie. Our statement made clear that we have “stood for the military defense of Iraq against U.S. imperialism during the Gulf War and in the face of the subsequent terror bombing” as well as our opposition to the UN/U.S. starvation blockade. In the case of Afghanistan, the IG

objects because we didn’t join them in their call to defend a country that was not yet under military attack. As one of our youth members quipped, the IG’s position could be encapsulated in the slogan: “Defend Afghanistan before the war—Third World nationalism is what we’re for!”

There is no real contradiction between red-white-and-blue pro-imperialist pacifism and vicarious cheerleading for Third World nationalist forces. The ISO, a political tendency whose origins lie in an embrace of the imperialists’ Cold War drive aimed at destroying the former Soviet Union, has also championed many of these same forces. Falsely declaring that the Soviet degenerated workers state was “state capitalist,” they lined up with any force arrayed against it, such as Khomeini’s reactionary Iranian mullahs and their even more vicious Afghan counterparts. In 1994, Chris Harman, a leader of the British Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which was until recently the leading light of the ISO, wrote a pamphlet called *The Prophet and the Proletariat*, a grotesque and puerile apology for Islamic fundamentalism. And the SWP’s *Socialist Worker* (20 August 1994) declared: “*Islamists have now replaced socialists and the left in terms of being in the front-line against the state in many countries*” (emphasis in original). One may expect the ISO to soft-pedal this aspect of their line in order to swim more comfortably in the present anti-Islamic, anti-“terrorist” stream, although we note that ISO members at a recent Chicago rally were handing out green armbands in solidarity with Islam.

Reformists Squirm Over Afghanistan

The civil war in Afghanistan was ignited over the woman question. The modernizing left-nationalist government that took power in 1978 introduced reforms, not least including the lowering of the bride price, which provided a modicum of progress for the desperately oppressed women and drove the reactionary mullahs into rebellion, fomented by the CIA. The Soviet Union entered Afghanistan to bolster the regime and to protect the USSR’s southern flank from imperialist penetration. It was one of the few progressive acts of the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy. The Red Army was the only force that could have pulled Afghanistan—a desperately poor country without any economic infrastructure, which in 1978 had a quarter of a million mullahs but only 35,000 industrial workers—out of the seventh century and into the modern era by extending the gains of the Russian Revolution there. As one Afghani woman who became a doctor during the Soviet intervention told the *London Observer* (30 September), “Life was good

under the Soviets. Every girl could go to high school and university. We could go wherever we wanted and wear what we liked.” The International Communist League said: “Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!” All those groups which today denounce U.S. support for the *mujahedin* were at the time—when it counted—on the side of U.S. imperialism and the fanatical, woman-hating reactionaries.

Since the September 11 attacks, it has become fashionable on the left to denounce U.S. support for the *mujahedin* during the 1980s war against the Soviet Red Army. In its September 11 statement on the attacks, the ISO writes: “The CIA trained Bin Laden as a commander in its proxy army that fought the USSR after its invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.... Another close collaborator with the CIA in Afghanistan was the Taliban militia.” Similarly, the more left-sounding Progressive Labor Party (PLP), in an undated statement on its Website after the September 11 attacks, writes: “Osama Bin Laden, who some are blaming for this terrorism, was, after all, trained by the Central Intelligence Agency to wage a ‘holy war’ against the Soviet army in Afghanistan. Islamic fundamentalism was built by the U.S. bosses and their allies in oil-rich Saudi Arabia to wage an anti-Soviet crusade in the 1980s.”

Too true! But what’s missing from this picture? The U.S. organized the *mujahedin* and armed them to the teeth as part of the class war waged by imperialism since 1917 to finally undo the Russian Revolution and reinstitute capitalist exploitation. And the ISO and PLP bought into that reactionary crusade. PLP had turned its back on the defense of the USSR many years earlier, claiming it was just another “imperialist” great power. And the ISO frankly celebrated the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, which abandoned unveiled women and all leftist and secular forces to the bloody revenge of the *mujahedin*, writing: “We welcome the defeat of the Russians in Afghanistan. It will give heart to all those inside the USSR and in Eastern Europe who want to break the rule of Stalin’s heirs” (*Socialist Worker*, May 1988). Indeed, it did “give heart” to the counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states of East Europe within a few years, bringing in its wake mass impoverishment, “ethnic cleansing” and an all-sided rollback of social progress and women’s rights.

Another organization that considered the USSR “state capitalist” as the excuse to avoid defending it against U.S. imperialism is the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP). Like the ISO, the LRP seems to be having an attack of amnesia over Afghanistan. A 13 September LRP statement correctly notes bin Laden’s “leading role in Afghanistan’s *mujahedin*, the Islamic fundamentalist military force then waging war against the Soviet-backed regime in Afghanistan,” observing that the *mujahedin* “received massive organizational, military and financial backing from the U.S. government.” However, at the time the LRP’s *Socialist Voice* (Summer 1980) ludicrously claimed that the Soviets “hail Islam and crush women’s gains” and argued that “to support the Russian military intervention is to line up with the side of imperialism, stability and counterrevolution.”

Anarchism Has No Answer

The U.S. rulers are making it clear that they will brook no opposition, no matter how tame, to “national unity” and the war mobilization. The chancellor of the City University of New York viciously attacked an October 2 teach-in as a “teachers’ hate rally,” particularly singling out Walter Daum, a supporter of the LRP (*New York Post*, 6 October). Conservative columnists are using the September 11 suicide bombings as a pretext to attack the anti-globalization movement in general and its militant anarchist contingents in particular. For example, an op-

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ed piece in the 22 September *International Herald Tribune* by one Reginald Dale grotesquely compares anarchist protesters with those who carried out the attacks in New York, writing: “Even if their tactics are different in scale and in nature, there is a not entirely coincidental synergy between the actions of the terrorists and the aims of the anti-globalization forces—particularly the most violent and anarchistic among them.” The stage for such diatribes was set by the leaders of the “anti-globalization” movement and the reformist left who joined the imperialists’ witchhunting chorus targeting the “Black Bloc” anarchists after the Genoa protests.

Many anarchists have stood to the left of the pseudo-Marxists in the wake of the September 11 attacks. An undated statement by the Boston Local of Anarcho-Communists rightly noted:

“As the most powerful capitalist State (politically, economically, and militarily), the United States has been a prime motivating force behind many devastating terrorist campaigns. From the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to the more recent bombing of the Al Shifa Pharmaceutical company in Sudan; from the installation of dictatorships in Latin America, to the financial and military aid of murderous regimes in Israel, Turkey, Colombia, and elsewhere; from the deliberate cluster-bombing of a crowded Yugoslav marketplace to ongoing economic sanctions against Iraq which have culminated in over 500,000 children dead; and now, in a new ‘war against terrorism’ abroad, we can expect to see a new chapter in the terrorist legacy of the United States. These events are not historical exceptions, rather they are a necessary component of maintaining the economic and political dominance of a powerful capitalist State.”

That is all quite true. But the anarchists have no program for ending the political and economic dominance of capitalist class rule. Their rejection of the Leninist vanguard party and the perspective of the



Humbert-Droz Archives

Delegate at 1920 Soviet Baku Congress proposes program for liberation of women of the East.

class rule of the proletariat means they have no way of fighting for the very things the best of them aspire to. At bottom, anarchism is an impotent if more militant expression of the fake left’s liberalism and pacifism. A 20 September statement by the Anti-Capitalist Convergence (CLAC) declared that for the September 29 demonstration in Washington, D.C., they would create a “Temporary Autonomous Zone” which “will be a hate free zone, war free zone, and a capitalist free zone.” Just how manifestly ludicrous this conception was was demonstrated in Washington, D.C., where the CLAC contingent was surrounded by thousands of cops who attacked their supposed “capitalist free zone.” On a larger scale, the anarchist talk of “autonomy” peddles the treacherous illusion that one can escape the exploitation, oppression and repression of bourgeois class rule while capitalism remains intact.

In place of building a revolutionary party, anarchists seek to win over the masses through the “propaganda of the

deed,” where the masses are supposed to emulate the self-sacrifice and at times heroism of anarchist fighters. But as we explained in “Radicals Without a Compass” (WV No. 764, 14 September):

“What especially white middle-class youth have yet to learn is that setting yourself up as an easy target for state repression is hardly inspiring to the oppressed masses who face factory exploitation and police terror on a daily basis. This is part of the reason why the most militant contingents of anarchist youth are overwhelmingly petty-bourgeois and the movement against ‘globalization’ as a whole has yet to attract much from the barrios and the ghettos. It is the potential for *victory*, not for victimization, that will rally the oppressed masses to a revolutionary movement, and in 1917 it was Lenin’s Bolsheviks who did exactly that.”

Nothing is leaderless. Anarchists, rejecting the fight for leadership, leave the working class in the grip of their current labor misleaders. The organized violence of the capitalist state demands an organized response. Just as the proletariat must be organized in trade unions to wage

defensive economic struggles, so its most advanced sections must be organized in a revolutionary vanguard party to wage the political struggle for power. In turn, a successful workers revolution has every right to defend itself against counterrevolution, and that requires a workers state—the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But rejecting “all states,” anarchists refuse to defend already-won gains, such as the social revolutions that smashed capitalist rule in China, Vietnam, North Korea and Cuba, however bureaucratically deformed by Stalinist misrule. The right wing of the anarchists are as hostile to communists, and often violently so, as the social democrats, and wield their belief in classless “democracy” in order to enlist alongside the AFL-CIO leadership in the bourgeois crusade against China in particular. But even the more leftist anarchists are incapable, to paraphrase Trotsky, of defending past gains or making new proletarian conquests.

Communists struggle to destroy the imperialist system through socialist revolution by the working class, the only class with the social power and consistent class interest to uproot bourgeois rule and private ownership of the means of production. Only socialist revolution can establish the equality of nations in an international planned economy and put an end once and for all to poverty, racism, sexism and war. As part of winning the working class to the communist program, we fight for the union movement to throw out its chauvinist, pro-imperialist “leaders” and to stand in solidarity with colonial and semicolonial peoples against our “own” bourgeoisie. The Spartacus Youth Clubs fight to win students and young workers to build the revolutionary workers party under whose leadership the working class will bring down this system of capitalist exploitation and imperialist plunder—join us! ■

The Bolshevik Tendency and the Pathology of Renegades

The International Bolshevik Tendency (IBT) responded to the attack on the World Trade Center with a supplement to its journal *1917*, titled, “U.S. Imperialist Rule: An Endless Horror.” Notably, if not the least surprisingly, the IBT says not a word in opposition to the red-white-and-blue social-patriotism of the liberals and reformists whose “antiwar” coalitions are defined by bleating appeals to the imperialist rulers that “war is not the answer.” On the contrary, they reserve what polemical fire they have to attack the Spartacist League/U.S. as “social-patriotic,” citing our refusal to hail the attack on Marine barracks in Lebanon in 1983 as “defensible blows against imperialism.” In verbal exchanges, particularly with our younger members at recent protests, the IBT has demanded to know “our position” on the attack on the Pentagon which took place coincident with the destruction of the World Trade Center. Youth comrades in our Canadian section, the Trotskyist League/Ligue Trotskyste, report this went so far as having IBT members pressing them to agree that all those killed in the attack on the Pentagon “deserved to die.”

Such vicarious bloodthirstiness is nothing new for this outfit, which was founded by people who quit our organization in the early 1980s when they caught the first whiff of the heightened reaction and repression of the imperialist’s anti-Soviet Cold War II. It is a posture that has always been in direct proportion to their own adaptation to the labor tops, social democrats and liberals. Today, the IBT amnesties the “war is not the answer” reformists in the U.S. In Britain they are firmly in the tow of the Labourite “left” of Socialist Alliance, which ran point in the recent elections for Blair’s Labour Party—the most stalwart ally of U.S. imperialism in its “war on terrorism.”

On the Pentagon Attack

Evidently they seek to cover their tracks in fervid efforts to demonstrate that we have “flinched” on the question of the attack on the Pentagon.

Unlike the World Trade Center, which was simply a complex of buildings housing various businesses employing tens of thousands of working people, the Pentagon is the command and administrative center of the U.S. imperialist military, and rather quintessentially represents the military might of U.S. imperialism, the main enemy of the working people and oppressed of the world. That recognition does not translate this attack into an “anti-imperialist” act, nor do we think the planeload of innocent passengers which was used as the massive bomb “deserved to die” (or the janitors and secretaries who were employed at the Pentagon).

As Marxists we oppose terrorism as a strategy, even that which derives from real, if misguided, anti-imperialist impulses. It is counterposed to mobilizing the proletariat in *class struggle* against the imperialist rulers. The fact that innocent civilians are often killed in terror attacks, and that the end result only serves to bring down the jackboot of the capitalist state on the necks of the working class and oppressed, underline the futility, and stupidity, of terrorism as a strategy for the liberation of the masses. Moreover such acts merely serve to provide the bourgeoisie a bloody shirt to wave in order to cement the workers to capitalist class rule.

The Pentagon is a genuine military target, representing the brutal attacks of U.S. imperialism on the world’s work-

ing class and oppressed. The planeload of random innocent civilians that was hijacked and used as a bomb was not. In any case, the attack on the Pentagon was a sideshow to the attack on the World Trade Center. As the Spartacist League/U.S. Political Bureau wrote in its 12 September statement, “The World Trade Center Attack”:

“It is not simply that the target wasn’t even an institution representing the brutal and murderous U.S. imperialist rulers. Those who perpetrated this horrific attack (and there is still no evidence at all as to who that was) *embrace the same mentality as the racist rulers of America—identifying the working masses with their capitalist exploiters and oppressors!*”

Correspondingly, the U.S. rulers have seized on the destruction of the World Trade Center to try to rally the working class around “united we stand” patriotism. The attack on the Pentagon could hardly serve such a purpose, as is demonstrated in the fact that it barely gets a mention by the capitalist rulers or their media mouthpieces.

When over 240 U.S. Marines were blown to pieces in the bombing of a compound in Lebanon in October 1983, it provoked widespread outrage within the American population against the Reagan administration which had sent these troops to Lebanon. Seeking to intersect and direct this outrage into conscious opposition to the U.S. imperialist rulers for whom the lives of working-class troops are considered expendable, we raised the slogan; “Marines Out of Lebanon, Now, Alive!” The IBT’s pred-

ecessors in the “External Tendency” denounced us as “social patriotic” and solidarized with whatever forces blew up the Marines as “anti-imperialist.” But at the time, no side in the squalid inter-communal conflict in Lebanon was fighting imperialism! And to this day it is by no means clear who undertook this attack.

As we wrote at the time in our article “Marxism and Bloodthirstiness” (WV No. 345, 6 January 1984):

“*We are for the victory of just causes.* Necessarily and above all, the centrality of just causes is the shattering of the exploiting and oppressing classes and the victory of socialism. We are socialists not least because we are passionately opposed to war, the gathering together of large numbers of young workingmen to be slaughtered in the interests of the rulers. In this savagely class-divided world, dominated by the mass murderers of My Lai, the struggle for the victory of just causes will have a big physical component. We must stand therefore for the maximum assembling of effective force on the just side, hopefully to demoralize and deter the forces of reaction so that the actual casualties are minimized.”

Our purpose is to bring revolutionary consciousness to the working class—the understanding that the “main enemy” is their “own” capitalist class rulers—in order to build the revolutionary workers party that can realize Lenin’s profoundly humanist view of the “socialist system of society, which, by abolishing the division of mankind into classes, by abolishing all exploitation of man by man, and of one nation by other nations, will inevitably abolish all possibility of war.” In contrast, the IBT’s vicarious bloodthirstiness and conspicuous silence on the social patriotism of the reformist left merely serve the interests of the class enemy, insofar as their insignificant forces are capable of serving any cause. ■

Immigrants, Blacks, Labor Targeted

U.S. Government's Domestic Terror Machine

Just after the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, Secretary of State Colin Powell sinisterly intoned: “The enemy is in many places. The enemy is not looking to be found. The enemy is hidden. The enemy is, very often, right here within our own country” (*New York Times*, 15 September). The U.S. rulers are now dropping bombs on Afghanistan, declaring their purpose is to drive Osama bin Laden out of his “terrorist hide-out.” But this manhunt is hardly limited to the shadowy bin Laden, an Islamic fundamentalist who himself was armed and bankrolled by the CIA. Riding a wave of “national unity” patriotism, the U.S. bourgeoisie is retooling its vast domestic state machinery of violence and repression. They’re loading their guns and they’re aimed directly at *you*.

Defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld—a man so crazed he even scared Nixon’s Dr. Strangelove, Henry Kissinger—declared in the *New York Times* (27 September): “When we ‘invade the enemy’s territory,’ we may well be invading his cyberspace. There may not be as many beachheads stormed as opportunities denied. Forget about ‘exit strategies’; we’re looking at a sustained engagement that carries no deadlines. We have no fixed rules about how to deploy our troops.... ‘Battles’ will be fought by customs officers stopping suspicious persons at our borders and diplomats securing cooperation against money laundering.”

The most immediate target of this all-purpose “war against terrorism” are immigrants. Hundreds of Arabs, Muslims, Sikhs and others have been hauled off buses, trains and airplanes, or snatched on the streets or in their shops by the FBI and local cops on no other grounds than that they look like they come from the Near East. The FBI is on a fishing expedition against foreign students. At San Francisco State University, the administration rushed to hand over all available records on students of Near Eastern descent and, reportedly, any others with known “connections” to the region.

A new Office of Homeland Security has been set up. With ardent death penalty advocate Tom Ridge at its head, this agency is charged with coordinating a wide range of forces including the FBI, BATF, INS, CIA and military, openly violating the Posse Comitatus Act banning the use of the army in domestic operations. Now, Attorney General John Ashcroft is trying to rush a new “anti-terrorism” law through Congress that will vastly expand the capacities of the government to spy on, intimidate and terrorize the population.

The proposed legislation would define “terrorist” to include anyone charged

with destroying public property for purposes that are deemed to be aimed at influencing or changing the government. Carrying sentences of up to life in prison, this provision could be used against anyone from an antiwar protester who throws a stone at a government building to a striking worker who disables a scab vehicle. As the president of the Criminal Justice Policy Foundation noted: “Even kids

money to the African National Congress—which currently heads the South African neo-apartheid government—when it was fighting apartheid in the 1980s could be deported.

- The government would be given free rein to use wiretaps, with restrictions on Internet monitoring virtually eliminated.
- The government would be allowed to seize the property of *anyone* accused of



Trenton, New Jersey cops surround passengers dragged off bus as “terrorist suspects” because they spoke “little English.”

carrying Boy Scout knives who vandalize traffic signs can be labeled terrorists” (*Village Voice*, 2 October).

Black Panther leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark got a full blast of what it means to be labeled “terrorists” in capitalist America. The secret police infiltrated their organization, set them up, and in 1969 Chicago cops kicked in their door and machine-gunned them in their beds in the dead of night.

Today, the government’s proposed “anti-terrorism” law, alternately known as the “Patriot Act” (House) or “U.S.A. Act” (Senate), includes the following deadly provisions:

- *Any* non-citizen—permanent resident, legal or “illegal” immigrant—who the government deems “may endanger the national security” could be imprisoned and/or deported without charges and with no hearing.
- *Any* non-citizen could be deported for providing financial support for the lawful activities of a “terrorist” organization—including retroactively! For example, a permanent resident of the U.S. who gave

any crime.

This measure has yet to be passed. But already the Supreme Court is busy handing down decisions upholding lower court rulings condoning workplace discrimination against Muslims and police “racial profiling” of black people. In the latter decision, the Supreme Court upheld the 1992 roundup of *every single black male* in Oneonta, New York as robbery suspects. This gives a green light for more cop street executions, like the killing of black African immigrant Amadou Diallo, who was cut down in a hail of 41 bullets outside his South Bronx apartment door two years ago. Cruise missiles launched against Afghanistan bore the insignia “NYPD.” At home, this deadly police force has set up an “anti-terror” squad with orders to “shoot to kill.”

Democrats, Republicans: Two Wings of the Property Party

The lunatic right-wingers in the Bush administration, which rode into the White House with no popular mandate, were described as representing the “reinauguration of the Confederacy.” Indeed, Attorney General Ashcroft is an open sympathizer of the Southern slavocracy. Now they are using the attack on the World Trade Center to revive “national pride.” The purpose is to ratchet up exploitation, racial oppression and state repression. Certainly, they face little opposition from the other party of American capitalism, the Democrats. In a statement echoing Kaiser Wilhelm on the eve of World War I—“I no longer know parties, I know only Germans”—Democratic Senate leader Tom Daschle declared, “There is no difference in our aim. We are resolved to work together, not as Democrats or Republicans, but as Americans.” New York liberal Charles Schumer was among the backers of a Senate “Combating Terrorism” bill.

A precursor of Ashcroft’s proposed

legislation was the New York State “Anti-Terrorism Act,” which was rushed through a special session of the state legislature on September 17. This law extends the death penalty to “terrorist” crimes which, as an article in the *Village Voice* (2 October) quipped, “allows for vengeance, but will likely do little to discourage future suicide missions.” But this is no joke. The target is not “suicide bombers,” but the mass of the American population, particularly working people and the ghetto and barrio poor.

In the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing, the Clinton administration’s 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act broadly extended federal crimes punishable by death while effectively gutting *habeas corpus* rights. A legacy of chattel slavery, the death penalty is the lynch rope made legal. It stands at the pinnacle of state repression in the U.S., the ultimate means for the capitalist rulers to terrorize the population and to silence through death any perceived threat to their system of exploitation and vicious racial oppression.

On the West Coast, Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein introduced a new “Maritime Security Act,” mandating intensive background checks of the workforce, which have long been sought by the maritime bosses to weed out militants and anyone else they want to get rid of. This recalls the “screening” laws instituted at the time of the Korean War aimed at keeping militants and reds out of the longshore and seamen’s unions.

The pro-Democratic Party labor bureaucracy stands foursquare behind the capitalist rulers. An ad by the AFL-CIO tops in the *New York Times* (9 October) boasts: “Through our unions, we’re organizing relief efforts and helping rebuild our country. And we’re standing behind our President in the counterattack on terrorism.” Transport Workers Union Local 100’s “progressive” president Roger Toussaint has allowed the NYC transit bosses to loot pension funds in order to bail out Wall Street while uttering not a peep in protest against management’s efforts to further discipline and regiment the union ranks. Transit workers are being checked and their cars searched as they go into work, while management tries to push through closed-circuit TV and other spying measures. All of these measures are aimed at trying to break the back of a union that has the power to bring the financial center of American capitalism to a standstill.

Unleash Labor/Black Power—For a Workers Party!

As we wrote in “The World Trade Center Attack” (WV No. 764, 14 September): “The ruling parties—Democrats and Republicans—are all too eager to be able to wield the bodies of those who were killed and wounded in order to reinforce capitalist class rule. It’s an opportunity for the exploiters to peddle ‘one nation indivisible’ patriotism to try to direct the burgeoning anger at the bottom of this society away from themselves and toward an indefinable foreign ‘enemy,’ as well as immigrants in the U.S., and to reinforce their arsenal of domestic state repression against all the working people.”

This is all the more convenient for the bourgeoisie as their economy was already in a nose dive into recession before September 11. Since then, close to 200,000 more workers have lost their jobs while corporations line up like pigs at the trough for billions in government handouts, which will be paid out of the Social Security “lockbox” and by fleecing the working class. The threadbare “safety net” that once existed was shredded by the Clinton administration, which instituted “the end of welfare as we know it.”

But the rulers are only too well aware that the current chauvinist consensus behind its “war on terrorism” is extremely fragile. In Minnesota, 22,000 state workers launched their first strike in 20 years on October 1. Denouncing the workers for striking when “we are coping with a possibility of a long and difficult war,” Governor (and former Navy Seal) Jesse Ventura deployed National Guard

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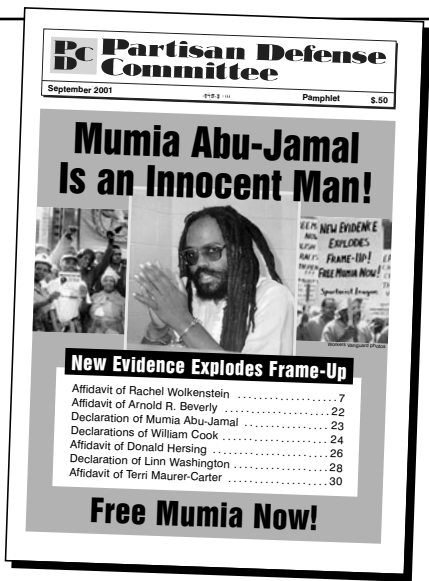
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Indonesia...

(continued from page 5)

one or another Javanese-chauvinist bourgeois politician, the PRD *and* their reformist Australian acolytes in the DSP contribute to the strengthening of the repressive, unitary Indonesian state.

The PRD are petty-bourgeois nationalists who rarely mention socialism. As Sujatmiko told an April 2000 Melbourne meeting, “We cannot defeat imperialism and advocate socialism at the same time.” This is but a more overtly right-wing version of the “two-stage revolution” originally pushed by the Mensheviks (the pro-capitalist wing of Russian Social Democracy who opposed the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution), then later by the Stalinist betrayers and all manner of petty-bourgeois nationalists. This class-collaborationist trap for the proletariat has always meant tying the masses to the capitalist class enemy. As the tragedy of 1965 proved, the first stage means murder of the communists; there never is a second stage.

In one of the most savage massacres in modern history, over a million Communists, workers, peasants and ethnic Chinese were slaughtered in 1965-66. The leadership of the pro-Beijing Indonesian Communist Party (PKI)—the largest Communist party in the capitalist world—preached “joint unity” with then-president Sukarno and his Indonesian Nationalist Party to form a “united national front, including the national bourgeoisie” which would carry out “not socialist but democratic reforms.”

Politically disarmed by this program of “two-stage revolution,” the working class was unable to defend itself when the Indonesian generals, backed by imperialism, struck to behead the PKI after the counterrevolutionary October 1965 coup led by Suharto. The 1965-66 bloodbath—a holy war against Communism—was the work of an alliance between the army and Islamic fanatics directly aided by the American CIA and Australia’s ASIS [Australian Secret Intelligence Service].

Neither Megawati nor Rais have criticised, much less repudiated, the horrific massacres of 1965-66. Indeed, Rais has declared that Indonesia must guard against reviving communist teachings. Between 1962 and 1965, Megawati’s new vice-president Hamzah Haz, leader of the PPP, was head of the Yogyakarta Muslim student movement and prominent in NU. It was NU’s youth who played a leading role in the bloodbath of 1965.

Opponents of the Struggle for Proletarian Power

The central lesson of 1965 is that the proletariat and bourgeoisie have no common class interests. For the proletarian party to proceed otherwise is suicidal and a betrayal. Trotsky’s program of permanent revolution is the alternative to placing confidence in fantasies resting upon the backward, imperialist-dependent bourgeoisie as a vehicle for liberation. We Trotskyists of the International Communist League uniquely stand on this program. Fake leftists in both Indonesia and Australia either openly oppose the program of permanent revolution or claim to “defend” it while gutting its revolutionary content. The DSP, for example, published a lengthy pamphlet in 1999 on Trotsky’s “errors” on permanent revolution and the Indonesian PRD echoes these views.

So too does the Indonesian Democratic Socialist Association (PDS). In November 2000, the PDS split from the PRD

NYC NOTICE

The New York Spartacist League’s public office hours have been indefinitely suspended. If you are interested in meeting or picking up literature you can do so between 7:30 p.m. and 9 p.m. every Tuesday on the third floor of the Student Events Center at New York University, 5 Washington Place. Please contact us at (212) 267-1025 or nysl_syc@yahoo.com.



Australasian Spartacist

Melbourne, 1997: Spartacists warn against illusions in Megawati. Sign in Indonesian reads: “Independence for East Timor! For Workers Revolution in Indonesia! Down With Australian Imperialism!”

based on the latter’s support to Wahid and making the struggle for women’s liberation and work in the labour movement a “non-priority.” But the PDS shares the PRD’s nationalist outlook, advocating a program that begins and ends with “*reformasi total*.” PDS leader Muhammad Ma’ruf may praise Trotsky’s “brave opposition to Stalin,” but he does “not agree with the basic idea of Trotsky—the theory of permanent revolution—which is a dividing line between those who belong to the Trotskyist tendency and those belonging to others” (*Socialist Review*, May 2001).

Permanent revolution is indeed a dividing line. Against the Stalinist bureaucracy’s anti-Marxist dogma of building “socialism in one country”—which meant the subordination of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie and the appeasement of imperialism internationally—Leon Trotsky, the Left Opposition and later the Fourth International fought for the continuity of the revolutionary internationalist program of Bolshevism. Permanent revolution was the core of the program on which the 1928 Left Opposition was formed following the crushing defeat of the 1925-27 Chinese Revolution, a direct result of Stalin’s policy of subordinating the working class to the Chinese bourgeoisie.

ISO, WP: Permanent Laborism

With the PRD so obviously jumping from one bourgeois faction to another, the International Socialist Organisation’s (ISO) Tom O’Lincoln takes the opportunity to posture against the “stages theory of revolution,” declaring,

“In practice, there is never complete democracy under capitalism, so we never get to the socialist stage....

“Our own approach, based on the theory of permanent revolution, attempts to develop struggles that may initially be limited to democracy and take them in a socialist direction, without any sharp division between stages.”

—*Socialist Review*, May 2001

This has nothing to do with the program of permanent revolution, but is literally a regurgitation of the two-stage program: first, struggles “limited to democracy,” then a “socialist direction.”

In Indonesia and elsewhere the ISO and its co-thinkers do exactly that, and many of the “struggles” they champion are not remotely “democratic.” In 1998 this outfit promoted the illusion that Megawati and Rais could create “a rank and file revolutionary movement in the army, to split it from below” (*Socialist Worker*, 6 March 1998). Today they sing a different tune, describing Megawati as “more clearly a front for the right,” claiming her “PDI-P was always fairly conservative, with ties to sections of the military” (*Socialist Worker*, 3 August).

O’Lincoln’s current “analysis” notes Megawati’s husband’s links to “right-wing religious fanatics.” This is rich coming from people who have for years portrayed Islamic fundamentalism as an “anti-imperialist” or “revolutionary” alternative. In 1979 they cheered on the reactionary Khomeiniite “mass movement” in Iran. One of the greatest crimes of this viciously anti-Soviet organisation was their support to the CIA-backed

mujahedin fanatics in Afghanistan whose victory over the Soviet Red Army has led to the Taliban and its regime of mass terror against women. Consistently anti-communist, in 1998 they grotesquely equated the anti-Suharto student protests with the howling anti-Communist student mobs of 1965-66: “The most impressive action was at the University in Jakarta, where students once played a role in bringing down the previous Sukarno regime.” Thus does the ISO put its stamp of approval on the bloodbath of a million Communists, workers and peasants and ethnic Chinese.

While mouthing words about “permanent revolution” for Indonesia, in Australia the ISO is cravenly prostrate before the pro-imperialist ALP. In 1999, while the ALP was demanding [prime minister] Howard send troops to East Timor, the ISO *endorsed* and marched in Melbourne demonstrations demanding Australian imperialism occupy East Timor. Now that the occupation has become so glaringly brutal and rapacious, the ISO wails that the “colonisation process has been quite disgusting.... Yet large sections of the Australian left cheered it on” (*Socialist Review*, May 2001). The ISO was in the thick of those “sections” of the left cheering on the troops. In particular they raved that the union bans against Indonesian businesses, the explicit purpose of which was to pressure the Australian government to send troops to Timor, were “magnificent.” To this day they do not call for the Australian occupying troops to get out of East Timor.

The centrist Workers Power (WP) tries to assume a more leftist posture, criticising the PRD for having “aligned itself with Wahid as representing some sort of ‘progressive wing’ of the ruling class” (*Workers Power* [Australia], August 2001). They also claim, at times, to be for permanent revolution. But WP’s real program is class collaboration, spelled out in their international co-thinkers’ *The Trotskyist Manifesto* (1989). Here they come out explicitly for the “anti-imperialist united front,” the formula which has been

used over and over to justify suicidal subordination of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie, starting with Stalin’s liquidation of the Chinese Communist Party in the 1920s into the Guomindang, Chiang Kai-shek’s party of the nationalist Chinese bourgeoisie (see “Permanent Revolution vs. the ‘Anti-Imperialist United Front’—The Origins of Chinese Trotskyism,” *Spartacist* [English-language edition] No. 53, Summer 1997).

Like the ISO, WP also ultimately looks to “democratic” imperialism to liberate the masses in the colonial world. In September 1999, WP hailed the chauvinist anti-Indonesia trade-union bans and marched cheek-to-jowl with the DSP, the ISO and the Labor Party in the “Peace-keepers In” mobilisations. To cover their left flank, WP has called, at times, for “Australian and UN troops out now” and even denounced the DSP for being “at the head of the chorus calling for imperialist intervention in East Timor” (*Independence for East Timor: For a working class solution*, undated pamphlet).

Support to “democratic” imperialism is not new for these pseudo-socialists. The ISO, DSP and WP were all cheerleaders for capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and they hope to do the same in China now. We Trotskyists, opposing our “own” ruling class and seeking its overthrow through workers socialist revolution, have always *defended* those states where capitalism has been overthrown. Unconditional military defence of the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state—and Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam—against imperialist attack and internal capitalist counterrevolution is central to revolutionary struggle. This is urgently posed in China now in the face of renewed imperialist military machinations and economic encroachments promoted by the Stalinist bureaucracy’s “market reforms.” Proletarian revolution in Indonesia would powerfully aid the fight to mobilise the Chinese workers in a proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist traitors.

Workers and youth continue to be drawn into struggle by the ineradicable contradictions of capitalism, and the struggles of the Indonesian working class in the face of IMF-imposed starvation and bloody communalism point the way forward. But for the workers to emerge as an independent revolutionary factor requires forging an internationalist vanguard party committed to leading the proletariat to the seizure of state power. By studying the dearly bought lessons of revolutionary Marxism, centrally that the working class and the bourgeoisie have no class interests in common, the nucleus of a Leninist-Trotskyist party will be cohered. Based on such a program, the future Indonesian Bolsheviks will break the chains of dependent capitalism, leading the proletariat to power at the head of all the oppressed. For workers revolution in Indonesia! For international socialist revolution! ■

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Imperialists...

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resources will only further sharpen as the global economic recession deepens. Meanwhile, the semicolonial masses of the “Third World” have been increasingly subjected to economic misery and imperialist repression and exploitation.

Washington’s chief rivals, Germany and Japan, are today in no position to militarily challenge U.S. dominance. But short of proletarian revolutions that sweep away the imperialist bourgeoisies, conflicts among them will ultimately lead to yet another interimperialist war, this time fought with nuclear weapons. In our interventions in protests against the imperialist war buildup and the attack on Afghanistan, sections of the International Communist League have stressed the urgent necessity of forging proletarian parties of the Bolshevik type to lead the fight for new October Revolutions around the world.

U.S. Imperialism: Enemy of the World’s People

As we wrote last issue in “Repression, Recession and War” (WV No. 765, 28 September), the attack on the World Trade Center (and the killing of plane-loads of innocent passengers), “however criminal from the vantage point of the working class and oppressed, doesn’t hold a candle to what the U.S. imperialists are now preparing to perpetrate against their enemies—internationally and *at home*.”

In a powerful condemnation of imperialist hypocrisy titled “The Algebra of Infinite Justice,” Indian author Arundhati Roy wrote in the London *Guardian* (29 September):

“In 1996, Madeleine Albright, then the US secretary of state, was asked on national television what she felt about the fact that 500,000 Iraqi children had died as a result of US economic sanctions. She replied that it was ‘a very hard choice’, but that, all things considered, ‘we think the price is worth it’. Albright never lost her job for saying this. She continued to travel the world representing the views and aspirations of the US government. More pertinently, the sanctions against Iraq remain in place. Children continue to die....

“The September 11 attacks were a monstrous calling card from a world gone horribly wrong. The message may have been written by Bin Laden (who knows?) and delivered by his couriers, but it could well have been signed by the ghosts of the victims of America’s old wars. The millions killed in Korea, Vietnam and Cambodia, the 17,500 killed when Israel—backed by the US—invaded Lebanon in 1982, the 200,000 Iraqis killed in Operation Desert Storm, the thousands of Palestinians who have died fighting Israel’s occupation of the West Bank. And the millions who died, in Yugoslavia, Somalia, Haiti, Chile, Nicaragua, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Panama, at the hands of all the terrorists, dictators and genocidists whom the American government supported, trained, bankrolled and supplied with arms.”

Along with the deadly economic sanctions against Iraq, the U.S. imperialists continue their terror bombing of the Iraqi

people on a regular basis. During the 1991 Gulf War and in the case of every subsequent imperialist attack, the ICL has called forthrightly for military defense of Iraq, while stressing that it is the task of the Iraqi proletariat to sweep away the bourgeois-nationalist regime of Saddam Hussein. Washington is currently tempering its war threats against Iraq for fear of antagonizing its Arab coalition partners, but it’s no secret that the gang in the White House is itching for a full-scale onslaught against Iraq. *U.S. hands off Iraq—Down with the starvation blockade!*

Commenting on Washington’s military options in Afghanistan, Roy observed that “dropping more bombs on Afghanistan will only shuffle the rubble.” The arrogant U.S. imperialists, having proclaimed a “one-superpower world,” think they can ride roughshod over anyone who gets in their way. But whatever the next military step the U.S. takes in Afghanistan, from the standpoint of America’s rulers, in the words of one administration adviser, “all options stink.” No one in the Pentagon is even talking of a full-scale invasion or occupation of this barren country. A commando raid by Special Operations units like the Green Berets or British SAS would face hostile terrain, limited means of supply or evacuation and fanatical guerrilla fighters who “will make a lethal foe for Western forces,” as one SAS veteran who had been attached to the *mujahedin* in the 1980s warned (London *Daily Telegraph*, 23 September). He recounted an example of what the *mujahedin* did to one captured Soviet soldier: “The torso had been mutilated. The limbs stomped into a mash of ruby red flesh and splintered bone. The head had been kicked off and used as a football.”

Washington’s current best option appears to be using the murderous, ragtag Northern Alliance forces to topple the Taliban. This, too, has its problems. The Northern Alliance consists of largely Tajiks (headed by Ahmed Shah Massoud until his assassination last month) and Uzbeks. To win support among tribal leaders of the dominant Pashtuns, the Taliban’s base, the U.S. has goaded the 86-year-old former king, ousted in 1973, out of his palatial retirement in Rome to serve as a symbol of “national unity.” But Afghanistan is not a nation, it is a region of several nationalities and of little coherent economy. There is little likelihood of stability in Afghanistan in any case; rather, the stage is being set for a rehash of the interethnic slaughter among the victorious *mujahedin* that ended in the overwhelmingly Pashtun Taliban faction’s rise to power in 1996.

Beating the ideological drums for the imperialist war against the Taliban is an array of liberals and feminists—and some fake socialists—who echo invocations of “women’s rights” in Afghanistan by anti-abortion bigots like Bush; 20 years ago, these same types abandoned Afghan women to the *mujahedin* cutthroats in order to tail imperialist anti-Sovietism. Journalist Jonathan Steele, who regularly reported from Afghanistan, remarked in the London *Guardian* (6 October): “Dur-

ing the Soviet period, I was in the small and unfashionable minority which came to the view that the Moscow-supported governments of Babrak Karmal and Najibullah were lesser evils compared to the ravages which the CIA- and MI6-backed mojahedin were likely to cause if they ever took power.”

Promoting the cynical hoax that the Northern Alliance are Islamic “moderates,” the *New York Times* (3 October) ran the glowing headline, “Education Offers Women in Northern Afghanistan a Ray of Hope.” They’re talking about a total of *eight* women who were allowed to attend university for the first time this year! More candidly, British journalist Robert Fisk wrote in the London *Independent* (3 October):

“US officials—who know full well the whole bloody, rapacious track record of the killers in the ‘Alliance’—are suggesting in good faith that these are the men who will help us bring democracy to Afghanistan and drive the Taliban and the terrorists out of the country. In fact, we’re ready to hire one gang of terrorists—our terrorists—to rid ourselves of another gang of terrorists.”

Fisk concludes that “what Afghanistan needs is an international force...to re-establish some kind of order,” noting this could be under the auspices of the United Nations. *The UN is a front for imperialist terror—from Korea in 1950-53 to Iraq in 1991!*

The only international force that could have brought social progress and order to Afghanistan was the Red Army. We Spartacists raised the call: Hail Red Army! Extend social gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples! The Soviet Central Asian troops who fought in Afghanistan saw there the face of the benighted past their grandparents had known before the October Revolution. Were it not for the Stalinist bureaucracy’s criminal withdrawal of Soviet forces in 1988-89, there would be no Taliban—or Northern Alliance—today. Scarcely a decade after capitalist restoration in the former Soviet Union, a world-historic defeat ushered in by the Kremlin’s treacherous pullout from Afghanistan, there is a leveling in the opposite direction, as Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan increasingly succumb to the misery and backwardness that defines Afghanistan.

When they seized Kabul in 1992, the forces that today make up the Northern Alliance imposed strict *sharia* (Islamic law): books deemed anti-religious were burned in the streets; women were ordered to wear “veils” covering their entire body; those caught

wearing perfume were deemed guilty of adultery, a “crime” punishable by being stoned to death. In a country as deeply backward as Afghanistan, which has no proletariat, social progress can only come from *without*. That was what the Soviet intervention posed. Today, the liberation of the hideously impoverished and oppressed peoples of Afghanistan hinges on successful proletarian revolutions in Pakistan, India, Iran and other neighboring countries where there are powerful proletarian concentrations.

Islamic Reaction and Imperialist Decay

In his column in the *Nation* (8 October), Christopher Hitchens opined that those who attacked the World Trade Center “represent fascism with an Islamic face.” Hitchens is not only an apologist for U.S. imperialist terror, as he was at the time of the 1999 war against Serbia, but ignorant to boot. The Islamic fundamentalists want to return to the caliphate of Muhammad, encompassing the Muslim peoples of all nations. Fascism, on the other hand, is an extreme expression of national chauvinism—and the irrationality of the capitalist nation-state—that abhors all supranational institutions, including religious ones. The rise of contemporary Islamic fundamentalism as a mass movement is a reactionary response to both the absence of a communist alternative and the manifest dead end of bourgeois nationalism in the semicolonial countries from North Africa to Indonesia.

Meanwhile, Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi, whose government includes real fascists, railed a couple of weeks ago about “the superiority of our civilization,” which is ordained to “conquer” the Islamic world, and urged Europe to “reconstitute itself on the basis of its Christian roots”—i.e., back to the Crusades, when the unwashed, illiterate knights of Christendom declared war on the great Arab civilizations of that era. In its epoch of decline and decay, capitalism has long since declared war on the Enlightenment rationalism that served as the ideology for the bourgeois revolutions of the 18th century. Following the defeat of the democratic revolutions of 1848 in Europe, when the proletariat appeared on the stage of history for the first time, the bourgeoisies went into a bloc with obscurantism. The American bourgeoisie did the same as it turned against the radical-democratic measures that followed the historic victory over the slavocracy in the Civil War, the Sec-

Domestic Terror...

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troops—who are on semi-permanent mobilization nationwide—for strike-breaking duty. In Orange County, California, striking sanitation workers were strong-armed back to work last week under threats of firing and scabherding.

A rally on the first day of the Minnesota strike began with the pledge of allegiance and the singing of “God Bless America,” while workers chanted: “Who does the work? We do. Are we patriotic? Yes.” But these initial patriotic sentiments will very quickly collide with National Guard strikebreaking in the bosses’ “national interest.”

If labor is to win some battles, it is necessary to understand that the interests of the capitalist class and the interests of the working people whose labor they exploit are irreconcilably counterposed. In the United States, where the forcible concentration of the majority of the black population at the bottom is a foundation stone of capitalist exploitation, the rulers have long played the race card to obscure the class divide between labor and capital. Pitting white against black, they also seek to pit all against the desperate immigrant. If labor is to free itself from the chains of capitalist exploitation, it must champion the cause of black freedom and actively

take up the fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants. This is not a question of defending helpless victims of racist oppression and degradation but of bringing to the fore those who will be central leaders of the revolutionary fight for the emancipation of the working class and all of humanity. Black workers—who comprise the most heavily unionized sector of the proletariat in this country—and immigrant workers, who often bring with them the class-struggle traditions of their homelands, can infuse the American labor movement with the vigor and leadership cadre to wage some militant class battles and win.

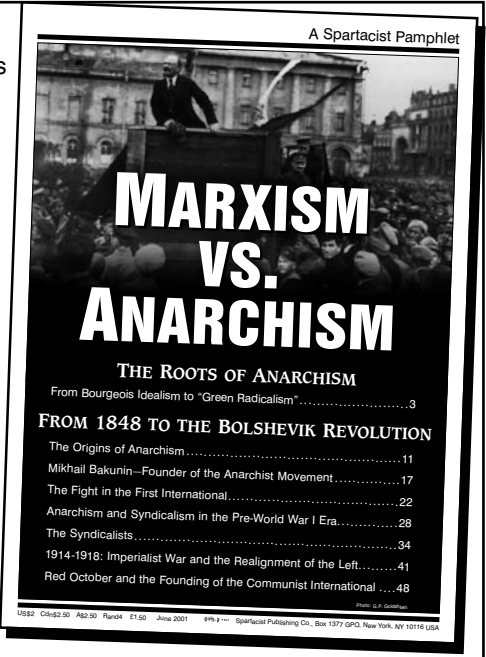
As they throw their military might around the world, the U.S. imperialists use the spectre of “terrorism” to legitimate their own terror tactics, their own consummately violent state and their own war against millions of proletarians, blacks, other minorities and the poor at home. The capitalist state—the cops, courts and armed forces—is the instrument for maintaining through force and violence the political and economic domination of the exploiting class over those they exploit and oppress. The workers need their own party to lead the revolutionary struggle to expropriate the bourgeoisie and establish *their* class rule—the first step toward the creation of a classless, stateless communist world where the tremendous wealth and resources of society are deployed to serve the needs of all, not to fill the coffers of the few. ■

This pamphlet presents a comprehensive historical analysis of the origins of anarchism and the views of its leading figures through the 1871 Paris Commune and the split in the First International. Later articles discuss the pre-World War I period and the impact of the war, the 1917 October Revolution and the founding of the Communist International on the anarchist and syndicalist movements.

It addresses radical youth today who, in an ideological climate conditioned by the so-called “death of communism,” are drawn to all variants of anarchism, Green radicalism and left liberalism. We fight to win a new generation to revolutionary Marxism, the communism which animated Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolshevik Party.

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and American Revolution.

In their overriding fear of proletarian revolution—and in their crusade to overturn the first victorious workers revolution in history, the Bolshevik-led October Revolution of 1917—the capitalists have made common cause with all manner of deeply religious forces over the years. These have included not only the right-wing Christian bigots who constitute the activist core of the Republican Party (who ought to acknowledge bin Laden’s Al Qaeda as a “faith-based initiative”) and Catholic reactionaries like Opus Dei but also those who would kill themselves and others for Allah. As for the latter, American Cold Warrior John Foster Dulles famously declared in 1950: “The religions of the East are deeply rooted and have many precious values. Their spiritual beliefs cannot be reconciled with Communist atheism and materialism. That creates a common bond between us.”

Regional Conflicts, Imperialist Rivalries

The cynical rebukes by other Western imperialist leaders of Berlusconi’s racist diatribe reflected their concern over maintaining the already shaky support of Arab and other Muslim regimes for the “war against global terrorism,” not least because they include the Gulf and Near Eastern states that sit atop most of the world’s oil reserves.

Pakistan, erstwhile patron of the Taliban and the base for U.S.-financed operations by the anti-Soviet *mujahedin*, is riven with all manner of fault lines. The U.S. agreed not to use Pakistani bases as a launch pad for the current military action in Afghanistan for fear of triggering an Islamic fundamentalist insurgency that could sweep away the Musharraf military regime. Moreover, a number of the ethnic groups in Afghanistan extend into Pakistan, notably the Pashtuns on whom the Taliban is based. Meanwhile, Pakistan’s historic enemy, India, complained that the U.S. omitted from its “terrorist” index the Pakistani-sponsored Jaesh-e-Muhammad group, which last week took responsibility for a suicide bombing that killed 40 people in Kashmir. Conflicting claims over this predominantly Muslim province occupied by the Hindu-chauvinist Indian bourgeois regime have triggered three wars between Pakistan and India, which both now have nuclear weapons.

As Washington strives to keep the Arab regimes of the Near East on board, Zionist Israel is learning that it is very much a *junior* partner of U.S. imperialism. To

Israel’s chagrin, Hamas (a woman-hating, anti-Semitic outfit initially nurtured by the Zionists as a counterweight to secular Palestinian nationalists) is also not on the U.S. hit list of Islamic fundamentalist organizations. Pentagon chief Donald Rumsfeld conspicuously omitted Jerusalem from his Near East itinerary as he hobnobbed with the emir of Oman and the oil-rich Saudi ruling clan. And when Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon evoked the Munich 1938 “appeasement” of Hitler and warned Bush to “not try to appease the Arabs at our expense,” White House spokesman Ari Fleischer bluntly denounced Sharon’s outburst as “unac-

serves only to stoke national antagonisms and regional wars.” Far greater yet is the danger posed by the escalation of rivalries between the U.S. and the other imperialist powers.

Those countries are signing on to Washington’s “global coalition” only to further their own, divergent regional and military ambitions. Japan, under ultra-chauvinist prime minister Junichiro Koizumi, has offered support aircraft for any military action against Afghanistan and is legislating new powers allowing the “Self Defense Force” to engage in combat action abroad for the first time since the end of World War II. A key focus of



Minnesota government workers at strike rally outside Capitol building in St. Paul, October 1.

ceptable.” As the Zionists step up their own murder of Palestinians, Yasir Arafat sought to prove his value to Washington by ordering his cops to gun down Palestinians protesting the bombing of Afghanistan.

Armed to the teeth by U.S. imperialism, in their anti-Arab frenzy the Zionist madmen are capable of triggering a holocaust in the region. From South Asia to the Near East, the burning task is the forging of internationalist parties to lead the proletariat, standing at the head of all the oppressed, in sweeping away all the murderous nationalist regimes. ***Defend the Palestinians! All Israeli troops, settlers out of the Occupied Territories! For a socialist federation of the Near East!***

As we noted in our last article, “The American bourgeoisie thinks it can rule the roost in any part of the world with a big stick and a bit of carrot. But far from imposing a stable ‘New World Order,’ from the Near East to the Balkans to South Asia, U.S. intervention

the imperialist rivalries between the U.S. and Japan in the Pacific Far East is who will come out on top if the Chinese deformed workers state is reconquered for capitalist exploitation. While the Beijing Stalinists have saluted the U.S.-led war drive against “global terrorism,” China is the prize ultimately sought by the various imperialist powers. For unconditional military defense of China against imperialism and internal counter-revolution! For proletarian political revolution to oust the treacherous Stalinist bureaucracy!

Germany, which seized on the U.S.-led NATO war against Serbia two years ago for its first combat role since 1945, is now the chief occupying force in Macedonia and has likewise offered combat units to join in the war against the Taliban. But, as the *New York Times* (7 October) reported, Washington has made clear its intention “to make it as much as possible an all-American campaign.” As in the case of the 1991 Gulf War and the 1999

Balkans War, the U.S. is out to assert to its imperialist rivals that its massive military arsenal makes it top dog.

The imperialist bourgeoisies are in agreement only when it comes to tightening the screws of repression against working people, immigrants and other minorities in their own countries. With unemployment already running as high as 10 percent in West Europe, the capitalists are seeking to push through drastic cuts in social programs and living standards in order to maintain their profit levels in the face of the world recession, while imposing even tighter border controls around racist “Fortress Europe.” In the U.S., where welfare and other social programs have already been axed over the past several years of “prosperity,” jobless claims reached a nine-year high last month even before the hundreds of thousands of layoffs announced after September 11. The draconian repressive measures being pushed now by both the Democrats and Republicans, which target immigrants in the first instance, will lead to a massive increase in state terror against black people and are ultimately aimed at suppressing any outbreak of struggle by the multiracial proletariat.

The “national unity” preached by the capitalists and their labor lieutenants in the trade-union bureaucracy means that the bosses profit while the workers pay. Thoughtful working people and youth already see clearly that they are being asked to “sacrifice” in the interests of Bush and Wall Street, but what is lacking is a revolutionary leadership with a program to bring down capitalism. The only road forward for the proletariat is the road of class struggle against the capitalist system, which in its epoch of decay holds out nothing but immiseration, repression and imperialist war. Today it is all the more necessary to build a proletarian vanguard party to render the proletariat conscious of its historic task as the gravedigger of the capitalist system. As we fight to reforge the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution, the ICL reasserts what Trotsky wrote in the 1940 *Manifesto of the Fourth International on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian World Revolution*:

“The great historical problem will not be solved in any case until a revolutionary party stands at the head of the proletariat. The question of tempos and time intervals is of enormous importance; but it alters neither the general historical perspective nor the direction of our policy. The conclusion is a simple one: it is necessary to carry on the work of educating and organizing the proletarian vanguard with tenfold energy. Precisely in this lies the task of the Fourth International.”■

Paris...

(continued from page 2)

have the blood of Afghan women on their hands!

The central organized presence behind the September 29 Paris demonstration “for Afghan women” was the LCR, which provided the marshals and furnished the loudest sound system to lead the chanting of the main slogan, “Neither Taliban nor bombs!” A contingent of about 250 supporters of the LCR and its youth group marched. The leaflet issued by the LCR in its own name does not claim to oppose imperialist military action in principle, but criticizes the targeting of the civilian population. In a barely veiled call for imperialist intervention, the leaflet complains that the Taliban “has so far benefited from the active support of Pakistan and the criminal neutrality of the Western powers, particularly France.”

The LCR has also signed an “Appeal to Public Opinion” which states: “It is as part of international law and the United Nations charter that everything must be done in order to identify, arrest and judge the authors of the attack [of September 11].... The undersigned organizations appeal for the citizens to mobilize, without waiting any longer, against any attempt at an escalation of the war, and for the French and European gov-

ernments to act in this direction.” The LCR along with numerous other opportunists are thus seeking to unite with what they like to call “broader” forces (this means capitalist politicians and other pro-imperialist elements who are willing to posture about “democracy” and even “women’s rights” when it suits them) in a supposed “antiwar” movement which begs for “cleaner” methods (no indiscriminate bombings, please) even as it endorses the war aims of the U.S. imperialists, such as ousting the Taliban and installing the Northern Alliance.

The LCR youth group (JCR-RED) carried the slogan, “Neither Taliban nor Bombs, Freedom for the Afghan People.” Thus they equate the motley Taliban with the nuclear-armed U.S./NATO imperialists, the biggest terrorists on the planet, without whose massive support to the “holy war” against “godless Communism” the Taliban would never have come into existence. In their leaflet for the September 29 demonstration, the JCR-RED makes a bloc with any and all anti-Taliban forces, presumably including the Northern Alliance and the former king of Afghanistan. They denounce the prospect of U.S. air strikes as counterproductive: “Their intervention will not go in the direction of defending democracy and supporting those who struggle against the Taliban regime; on the contrary, it runs the risk of reinforcing national sentiment

favorable to the power in place which is supposedly resisting the U.S.” Suddenly discovering the plight of the women, they cry, “They have locked up the women at home, without the right to move around, with no right to health care, the women are walled in—this is the Taliban!” Yes indeed, it is the Taliban; it is also the Northern Alliance and every other faction of the bloodthirsty *mujahedin* who fought the Soviets in order to stop Afghan girls from learning how to read.

The anarchist CNT, which issued a call for the September 29 demonstration, marched in a contingent of about 100. Their intervention illustrated the fact that despite the anarchists’ sometime pretensions of standing to the left of the “pro-government left,” their fundamental politics differ little from the parliamentarist reformists. The CNT banner declared, “Neither Imperialism nor Fundamentalism, but Social War,” which like the official slogans of the demonstration puts the imperialists and the Taliban on the same plane. Sharply denouncing American imperialism, the CNT leaflet portrays French imperialism as capitulating to the U.S., writing about “the Americans and the states who have obediently followed them for decades” while saying nothing against the SP-led Jospin government which administers imperialist France today.

The fake-Trotskyist group Lutte

Ouvrière (LO), for its part, stopped short of endorsing the demonstration but participated with a small contingent. With no banners, and seemingly without raising any chants to try to separate themselves from the dominant politics of the event, LO’s presence in the march shows that to LO their own headline, “No to Imperialist Intervention,” is anything but a question of principle. While LO sometimes postures to the left of the LCR, which openly supports the Jospin government, LO has managed not to say a word in its press about defending minority youth against Vigipirate state repression in the weeks since the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. LO’s typical economism, ignoring all social oppression apart from the exploitation of labor by capital, is particularly convenient in the present political climate, when restive North African-derived youth facing mass unemployment, racism and police brutality are more than ever susceptible to being painted as dangerous “terrorists” in the bourgeois media.

Comrades of the LTF did not mind being attacked for “dividing the movement” on September 29; we have no intention of joining a “movement” which champions Massoud as the “leader of the Afghan resistance against the Taliban militias” and which puts forward Western imperialism as the savior of “democracy” and “women’s rights” in Afghanistan.■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Spartacus Youth Clubs Say:

Only Workers Revolution Can End Imperialist War!

The September 11 attack on the World Trade Center in New York was a godsend for the U.S. ruling class and its barely elected president. They have gleefully seized on the death of thousands of civilians to rally the populace 'round the flag for military "retaliation" against anyone they designate as "supporters of terrorism" and to push their bipartisan crusade of repression, racism, anti-immigrant frenzy and attacks on the working class. In response, reformist organizations on the left, seizing on the legitimate fear of war among the population, have organized vigils and rallies pleading with the imperialist rulers for "peace."

On October 7, as U.S. air strikes against Afghanistan were launched, protests were held across the country, including in New York City where 8,000 people came out to a protest dominated by preachers and liberal pacifists. These politics were completely in line with the demonstrations that were held in major American cities on September 29. In San Francisco, 12,000 people came out to a demonstration organized under the call "War & Racism Are Not the Answer!" by

Young Spartacus

International ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism), the latest coalition formed by the Workers World Party (WWP). Participants included not only many youth who worry that they could be sent off to fight and die in America's latest foreign conflict, but also whole families of Japanese Americans who remember well that 120,000 people of Japanese descent, most of them American citizens, were uprooted from their homes and locked up in concentration camps during World War II.

But the organizers of these demonstrations have no "answer" to offer to those who do not want to see Afghanistan bombed by the U.S. government or who oppose the now officially sanctioned "racial profiling" that targets Muslims, immigrants and all minorities, particularly the black population. Appealing to the U.S. government to pursue its aims without "violence," they preach the idea that this capitalist state can be made to serve the people of the world—the working people and oppressed masses who have been impoverished and brutalized by the most deadly terrorists of all, the U.S. imperialists.

In the weeks since September 11, the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Clubs have intervened in meetings, teach-ins, demonstrations and speakouts, seeking to win youth and workers to the understanding that the only way to end imperialist war is by organizing class war to smash capitalist class rule. As Leon Trotsky, one of the leaders of the Russian Revolution, wrote in 1932:

"To condemn war is easy; to overcome it is difficult. The struggle against war is a

struggle against the classes which rule society and which hold in their hands both its productive forces and its destructive weapons. It is not possible to prevent war by moral indignation, by meetings, by resolutions, by newspaper articles, and by congresses. As long as the bourgeoisie has at its command the banks, the factories, the land, the press, and the state apparatus, it will always be able to drive the people to war when its interests demand it....

"The essence of pacifism is a condemnation, whether hypocritical or sincere, of the use of force in *general*. By weakening the willpower of the oppressed, it serves the cause of the oppressors."

—Leon Trotsky, "Declaration to the Antiwar Congress at Amsterdam" (July 1932)

At the San Francisco demonstration, the SL/SYC organized a revolutionary contingent that marched under the banner:



October 7: As bombs began falling on Afghanistan, Spartacist contingent at NYC protest fought for perspective of class struggle against U.S. capitalist rulers.

"Imperialism Means War Abroad, Repression at Home—For Workers Revolution!" The task of revolutionaries is to fight for the defeat of U.S. imperialism, to oppose the bourgeoisie's "national unity" campaign, to wage class struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie at home, to organize and build a workers party to fight for a workers revolution that sweeps away the entire system of capitalist imperialism.

As the bourgeoisie demands "national unity," the American reformist left throws itself into "coalition"-building, which always means building a base for capitalist forces willing to profess support for peace, racial harmony or other good things. In this country, that has always meant the Democratic Party: from supposedly "peace-loving" politicians during

the Vietnam War to black Democrats like Jesse Jackson or Al Sharpton. Similarly, Ralph Nader's "third party" candidacy, which many youth saw as an alternative to both ruling parties, was simply an attempt to refurbish the tarnished liberal credentials of the Democrats. At this juncture, the "new antiwar movement" will find that "antiwar" Democrats will be few and far between as they all wave the flag for Bush's war moves and the accompanying domestic repression with scarcely a demur. But this does not change the perspective of groups like WWP and the International Socialist Organization (ISO), which want to build an "antiwar movement" ready and waiting for any class enemy of the working people who may apply. This means building a "movement" to channel discontent back into the system of exploitation, racism and war by spreading illusions that evils and "excesses" of capitalism can be curbed by mass pressure. It means a "movement" that subscribes to the war aims of the imperialists and seeks to convince the rulers that these aims can be more effectively pursued by other means.

A very clear example is the "San Francisco Town Hall Committee to Stop War and Hate," which includes leading spokesmen of the ISO, Socialist Action and Socialist Alternative. Their leaflet for a "Stop the War Teach-In" says that "war is not an effective strategy" (!) because "terrorists do not present large targets that can be hit militarily to inhibit their ability to carry out future attacks." By this logic, they would support military attacks by the imperialists on such "large targets" as Iraq or Serbia, for example. While they might not have gone so far as to overtly support the imperialist bombing of Serbia, these groups echoed the imperialists' cynical cries over "poor little Kosovo," and to a man refused to defend Serbia against the U.S.-led NATO attack, which destroyed the entire infrastructure of that country.

The "Town Hall" leaflet further calls on the U.S. to "work with the international community to identify & locate all responsible & bring them before a court of law." What "international community" do they have in mind? NATO, perhaps? Or maybe the UN, that den of imperialist thieves, their lackeys and victims? And whose "court of law" do they look to? (Maybe they could ask Mumia Abu-Jamal what can be expected from the courts of the bourgeois injustice system.) Thus the ISO-backed "peace" group grants the U.S. imperialists a license for their "war against terrorism," parroting Bush's own claims that the purpose of Washington's war moves is to "bring Osama bin Laden to justice"! And, as the imperialists began raining down bombs on Kabul, ISO honcho Ahmad Shawki, speaking at a Chicago protest demonstration, could only complain that Bush was acting "unilaterally" without providing evidence of bin Laden's guilt.

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Fake Lefts Pray for Peace



Workers World's "antiwar" coalition at September 29 San Francisco rally (left), ISO at October 7 NYC protest.

