

Defiance by Army Reservists Shakes Zionist Bunker

All Israeli Troops, Settlers Out of the Occupied Territories!

No to U.S./UN Imperialist Intervention!

MARCH 4—As European and United Nations emissaries embarked on yet another round of “shuttle diplomacy” in response to the latest “peace” proposal in the Near East, Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon gave his reply in the language this mass murderer knows best. On February 28, he ordered his troops to invade Balata, the largest refugee camp on the West Bank, and another camp near the town of Jenin. The Gestapo-style raid began in the dead of night when American-made Apache helicopters knocked out electricity in Balata. At least 30 Palestinian refugees were killed and dozens of homes reduced to rubble.

Since the start of the current *Intifada* 17 months ago, Israeli occupation forces and their ultra-Zionist settler auxiliaries have slaughtered over 800 Palestinians, many of those children. Palestinian villages and camps in the Occupied Territories have been turned into virtual concentration camps, surrounded by military blockades, “strategic highways” and a network of despised army checkpoints where Palestinians are routinely humiliated and terrorized. Malnutrition is rampant as many Palestinians have been denied any access to a livelihood other than pitiful UN handouts. Palestinian Authority leader Yasir Arafat, despite his every attempt to conciliate the Zionist butchers and their American patrons, remains imprisoned in his Ramallah headquarters. Describing the plight of the Palestinian people, Columbia University professor Edward Said wrote in an article in *Counterpunch* (14 January):

“The result today is that the Palestinians are locked up in 220 ghettos controlled by the army; American-supplied Apache helicopters, Merkava tanks, and F-16s mow down people, houses, olive groves and fields on a daily basis; schools and universities as well as businesses and civil institutions are totally disrupted; hundreds of innocent civilians have been killed and tens of thousands injured; Israel’s assassinations of Palestinian leaders continue; unemployment and poverty stand at about 50 per cent—and all this



Reuters

Israeli soldier terrorizes Palestinian youth at West Bank checkpoint. Zionist rulers have turned Occupied Territories into virtual concentration camp.

while [U.S. “peace” envoy] General Anthony Zinni drones on about Palestinian ‘violence’ to the wretched Arafat, who can’t even leave his office in Ramallah because he is imprisoned there by Israeli tanks, while his several tattered security forces scamper about trying to survive the destruction of their offices and barracks.”

We demand the immediate removal of all anti-Arab fortifications in the Occupied Territories—the settlements and the apartheid highway network. All Israeli

troops, settlers out now! Defend the Palestinian people!

Cracks in the Zionist Bunker

The latest escalation in Zionist state terror came in response to a “peace” proposal by Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah, who has offered a “normalization” in diplomatic relations between the Arab regimes and Israel in return for withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza,



Reuters

Tel Aviv, February 16: 14,000-strong demonstration was first major protest by Israelis against Zionist rampage in Occupied Territories since start of *Intifada*.

which were seized by the Zionists in 1967. Abdullah’s plan intersects a deepening rift between the U.S. and its imperialist rivals in Europe. While the European powers and UN Secretary General Kofi Annan embraced the plan, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell initially dismissed it as a “minor development.” With Vice President Cheney preparing to visit Arab leaders in the region to try to strong-arm them into backing American plans for an invasion of Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, Powell upgraded the plan to an “important step.”

The new diplomatic flurry also intersects a growing polarization within Israeli society. Until recently, the Zionist rulers’ murderous onslaught against the Palestinians had deepened a chauvinist consensus among the Hebrew-speaking population. The liberal Zionist “peace camp” had all but disappeared. The bourgeois Labor Party, with which Arafat hoped to cut a deal, is firmly ensconced in Sharon’s bloody “national unity” government; indeed Labor defense minister Eliezer is the architect of the assault on the West Bank refugee camps. But fissures in the Zionist fortress are now coming to the fore.

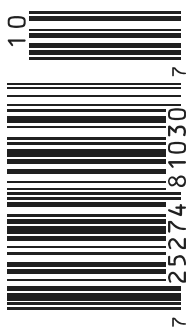
These fissures have been both reflected in and impelled by the defiant statement by more than 50 army reservists in January declaring their refusal to serve in the Occupied Territories: “We hereby declare that we shall not continue to fight this War of the Settlements. We shall not continue to fight beyond the 1967 borders in order to dominate, expel, starve and humiliate an entire people.” While hundreds of other soldiers have quietly refused to serve in the West Bank and Gaza over the past year and a half, this public statement of defiance by loyal, longtime officers and soldiers rocked the Zionist garrison.

Though the high command has suspended 48 reservists and imprisoned three, the number of signatories to the statement has surpassed 300 in the last five weeks. This comes on top of an earlier protest statement by more than 60 high school students declaring that they would refuse to take part in “confiscation of lands, arrests, executions without trial, destruction of houses, closure, torture and prevention of medical treatment.”

Remarkably, the “refuseniks” are supported by 26 percent of the Israeli public. Arie Arnon, a spokesman for the liberal Zionist Peace Now movement, declared: “There has never been such popular support for a movement of refusing to serve in the army or what the right-wing would call treason” (*Al-Ahram Weekly*, 21 February). On February 16, 14,000 demonstrated in Tel Aviv to demand, “Get out of the territories, get back to negotiations!”

The growing polarization extends right to the top of Israeli society. Exactly one

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Hunger Strike Against Isolation Cells Continues

Turkey: Free All Leftist and Kurdish Political Prisoners!

The longest hunger strike in history has now gone on for more than 500 days, as leftist political prisoners and their supporters continue their desperate protest against the blood-drenched Turkish police state. While the London *Guardian* (19 January) reported that 45 people had died in the death fast to date, spokesmen for a solidarity committee in Germany say that the death toll now stands at 85. Dozens more prisoners and supporters have been murdered by police rampages.

Initially involving over a thousand Turkish and Kurdish leftists, the hunger strike began in October 2000 to protest government plans under a new “anti-terror” law to move leftist prisoners from dormitory-style prisons where they had some solidarity and protection into new “F-type” prisons featuring “isolation cells,” where they can be tortured and killed with impunity by prison guards. Two months later, the government unleashed a bloody attack on 28 prisons—cynically code-named “Operation Return to Life”—using troops and police with

helicopters, tanks and bulldozers. Scores of prisoners were killed and many more injured, while survivors were dragged off to isolation prisons.

The government massacre was met with huge protests throughout Turkey. Coming amid the ongoing war of terror against the Kurdish population, and a year after the death sentence meted out to Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) leader Abdullah Öcalan, these demonstrations in solidarity with Turkish and Kurdish leftists represented a significant development. In cities around Europe, Turkish and Kurdish leftists likewise joined in protests against the Turkish regime’s bloody state terror.

More than 140 inmates and supporters outside the prison walls are currently engaged in the death fast—consuming only water, sugar, salt and vitamin supplements—and new teams join the protest every few months to replace those who have perished. While the regime callously rejects attempts to resolve the hunger strike, spurning a proposed compromise by the Turkish Bar Association that

April 2001 burial of Turkish militant who died on hunger strike in solidarity with leftist prisoners.



Demir/EPA

would have allowed prisoners to at least share a common area, it continues to terrorize all those who support the protest.

On November 5, police launched a massive military-style invasion of Kucuk Armutlu, a working-class suburb of Istanbul which had become a center of support for the hunger strikers. As helicopters flew overhead, armored vehicles crashed through street barricades and police fired into buildings housing hunger strikers. Four protesters were killed as their house was set ablaze. Eighteen others were arrested and face sentences of up to 22 years on charges of belonging to or aiding an illegal organization. Earlier, nine doctors who had spoken out against forced feeding of prisoners were threatened with ten years in prison. Another man faces a six-year prison sentence simply for writing a book about two daughters who died in the hunger strike. ***Down with the isolation prisons! Down with the anti-terror law! Free Abdullah Öcalan! Free all leftist and Kurdish political prisoners! Down with the ban on the PKK and left-wing political groups!***

The leftist groups organizing the death fasts in Turkey look to the example of the 1980-81 hunger strike by Bobby Sands and nine other Irish Republican prisoners in the notorious H-Block of Northern Ireland’s Long Kesh prison. The H-Block hunger strikers were also protesting onerous conditions imposed on political prisoners, demanding basic rights such as being able to freely associate with each other and to organize education and recreation and that their political status be recognized. But Conservative prime minister Margaret Thatcher—supported by the Labour Party—coldly watched Sands and his nine comrades go to their deaths rather than give in to their demands.

Today, the European bourgeoisies

weep crocodile tears at Turkey’s violation of “human rights,” using it as a pretext for refusing the country’s application for membership in the European Union (EU). But the imperialists, especially Germany and the U.S., have long backed the Turkish regime to the hilt because of its loyal services as a strategic NATO bastion, and many of these capitalist governments have themselves banned the PKK as well as immigrant organizations as part of the “war on terror.” In fact, it was as a result of EU pressure that isolation prisons were introduced in Turkey in the first place. The “F-type” prisons are modeled after the infamous “Stammheim” isolation prison built by Germany under the Social Democrats (SPD) in the 1970s, which was meant mainly for the Red Army Faction (two of whose leaders allegedly “committed suicide” while in isolation).

As our comrades in Europe have stressed at solidarity protests from the start of the Turkish hunger strike, the power of the multiethnic proletariat, particularly in Germany, must be brought to bear against the Turkish police state and its imperialist sponsors if these desperate protests are not to result simply in removing from the battlefield hundreds more devoted fighters for social liberation. Unfortunately, the unquestioned heroism of the groups organizing the hunger strikes—the Guevarist DHKP-C, the Maoist TKIP and TKP/ML, and the Kurdish nationalist PKK—is accompanied by the politics of petty-bourgeois reformism and nationalism that rejects the possibility of mobilizing the proletariat in the fight for socialist revolution.

A mobilization of labor’s social power in defense of the leftist prisoners and in opposition to the Turkish terror regime is not only necessary but distinctly possible.

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TROTSKY

The October Revolution and Women’s Liberation

At a time when women in the most “democratic” capitalist countries were denied even the right to vote, the October Revolution of 1917 brought unheard-of gains for women in all areas of public and private life. Today, women are still oppressed in myriad ways despite formal legal equality in the U.S. and Europe, while capitalist counterrevolution in the former USSR has led to a brutal rollback of women’s rights there and emboldened

anti-woman reactionaries internationally. As stressed by Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin in this 1920 commemoration of International Working Women’s Day, the struggle for women’s liberation is inseparable from the fight for international socialist revolution.

Even in the matter of formal equality (equality before the law, the “equality” of the well-fed and the hungry, of the man of property and the propertyless), capitalism **cannot** be consistent. And one of the most glaring manifestations of this inconsistency is the **inequality** of women. Complete equality has not been granted even by the most progressive republican, and democratic bourgeois states.

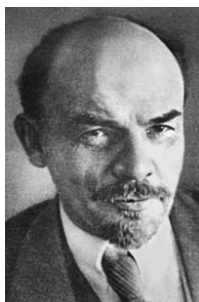
The Soviet Republic of Russia, on the other hand, at once swept away **all** legislative traces of the inequality of women **without exception**, and immediately ensured their complete equality before the law....

But the Soviet system is the last decisive struggle for the **abolition of classes**, for economic and social equality. Democracy, even democracy for those who were oppressed by capitalism, including the oppressed sex, **is not enough for us**.

It is the chief task of the working women’s movement to fight for economic and social equality, and not only formal equality, for women. The chief thing is to get women to take part in socially productive labour, to liberate them from “domestic slavery,” to free them from their stupefying and humiliating subjugation to the eternal drudgery of the kitchen and the nursery.

This struggle will be a long one, and it demands a radical reconstruction both of social technique and of morals. But it will end in the complete triumph of communism.

—V.I. Lenin, “International Working Women’s Day” (4 March 1920)



LENIN

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8 March 2002

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spartcan@on.aibn.com

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Imperialist Hypocrisy Over Afghan Women's Rights

RAWA Afghan Feminists Back Imperialist Reaction

Manipulating outrage over the destruction of the World Trade Center to mobilize domestic support for the terror bombing of Afghanistan, America's imperialist rulers also cynically seized on the plight of Afghan women under the former Taliban regime. Laura Bush denounced the Taliban's "brutality against women," Secretary of State Colin Powell intoned that "the rights of the women of Afghanistan will not be negotiable" and, in the days immediately following the Taliban's ouster, the Western press was filled with accounts of the handful of women in Kabul who courageously ventured out without the obligatory head-to-toe *burqa*. But now that Washington has installed a puppet regime in Kabul, buttressed by thousands of United Nations troops, nary a word is heard about the supposedly "non-negotiable" rights of Afghan women.

Little wonder! The Pashtun saying that "a woman is best either in the house or in the grave" still captures daily reality in "liberated" Kabul. The new Afghan government, centered on the U.S.-backed Northern Alliance, is made up of the same gang of *mujahedin* warlords who turned the country into a nightmarish hellhole when they last took power in 1992, paving the way for the Taliban with intertribal mass slaughters (and are already at each other's throats again today). All the barbaric *sharia* (Islamic religious) laws remain, only slightly modified. A leading Afghan judge declared that those convicted of "adultery" will still be stoned to death...but with smaller stones. Women's rights marches are prohibited. Women remain subject to *pardah*, forcible seclusion in the home.

That the Bush administration, which would like to see every abortion clinic in the U.S. destroyed, could posture as "liberators" of Afghan women is certainly grotesque. Yet this cynical charade was aided by an array of leftists and feminists in the U.S. and Europe who beat the drums for imperialist intervention. Exemplifying such efforts was a "women's rights" demonstration in Paris on September 29, barely a week before the bombing began, which prominently featured portraits of assassinated Northern Alliance warlord Ahmed Shah Massoud and demands for the U.S. to put an end to the Taliban.

Especially prominent amid this hypocritical crusade about Afghan women was the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA). RAWA has been hailed by pseudo-Marxist and anarchist groups around the world and its spokesmen were invited to address leftist antiwar protests. At the same time, it has been embraced by Democratic Party politicians and the Voice of America in the U.S. and showered with imperialist "human rights awards" from France to Asia.

During the Taliban's reign, RAWA activists courageously taught in underground schools for girls and went into Afghanistan with cameras hidden under their *burqas* in order to capture video footage of Taliban atrocities against women. They even organized a demonstration in the *mujahedin* stronghold of Peshawar, Pakistan in defiance of mobs of armed Islamic fundamentalist cutthroats. But these self-styled Afghan feminists are neither revolutionary, leftist nor even genuine champions of women's rights. RAWA openly lobbied for UN imperialist "peacekeeping" forces in Afghanistan, and supports the reinstatement of the former king, Zahir Shah, who



McCurry/Gamma-Liaison

Above: Woman-hating *mujahedin* cutthroats backed by U.S. in 1980s against Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Below: Afghan women in 1980, as Soviet tanks and troops moved in, opening prospect of social emancipation.



Lochon/Gamma-Liaison



was ousted in 1973. In fact, a RAWA representative was invited to be part of Zahir Shah's delegation to the Bonn talks which set up the current imperialist-sponsored puppet government.

RAWA's Web site declares, "If you are freedom-loving and anti-fundamentalist you are with RAWA." The truth is that RAWA stood *with* the Islamic fundamentalists and fought *against* the Soviet military intervention that brought the only hope of emancipation to the hideously oppressed women of Afghanistan in the 1980s. And it is that record of allying with imperialist-backed reaction against the Soviet Union—and emancipated Afghan women—that RAWA trumpets to this day. This virulent anti-Communism is RAWA's calling card, opening doors in the corridors of bourgeois political influence and the wallets of Western feminists and liberals.

Those Afghans who are against religious fundamentalism and for women's liberation passionately wanted the Red

Army to mop up the imperialist-backed mullahs and khans who stood for the enslavement of women and murdered those who dared teach young girls to read. When Soviet forces moved into Afghanistan in December 1979, after repeated requests for military assistance from the Kabul government, the "leftists" who today embrace RAWA as fighters for women's rights joined with the imperialists in denouncing the Soviet "invasion." Not least because the struggle for women's emancipation is so central to the liberating goals of Marxism, we Trotskyists forthrightly declared: **Hail Red Army! Extend social gains of October Revolution to Afghan peoples!**

The Soviet military intervention was one of the few genuinely progressive acts carried out by the Stalinist bureaucracy, opening the vista of social liberation to the downtrodden Afghan peoples. In 1988-89, when then Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, in a vain attempt to appease the imperialists, withdrew Soviet

forces from Afghanistan, we denounced this as a crime against both the Afghan and Soviet peoples. Events have bitterly and amply verified our warning that this would mean a bloodbath for Afghan women and leftists. And the Stalinist bureaucracy's treachery in Afghanistan was the direct precursor to capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union itself.

Women's Emancipation and the Battle for Afghanistan

Afghanistan had been a Soviet client state for decades before the Red Army moved in, but the Stalinists had not disturbed the social order in this deeply backward country. At the same time, most of the tiny stratum that made up the Afghan intelligentsia were educated and trained in the Soviet Union, which they rightly regarded as a source of social progress. In 1973, officers loyal to the left-nationalist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) played a major role in overthrowing the monarchy and participated in the newly installed Daud government. When Daud moved right and tried to crush the PDPA in 1978, mass demonstrations of students and government workers erupted in Kabul. The PDPA military faction outgunned Daud's forces and he was killed. This was the so-called "April Revolution," essentially a left-wing military coup with popular support among intellectuals and government workers.

In power, the PDPA embarked on a program of reforms: canceling peasant debts, carrying out land redistribution, prohibiting forced marriages and lowering the bride price to a nominal sum. The PDPA's measures, particularly those aimed at freeing women from feudal tyranny, threatened the mullahs' stranglehold on social and economic life and immediately provoked a murderous backlash. Even the *New York Times* (9 February 1980) acknowledged, "It was the Kabul revolutionary government's granting of new rights to women that pushed Orthodox Moslem men in the Pashtoon villages of eastern Afghanistan into picking up their guns."

A decree allowing women to divorce was not officially announced because of the Islamic revolt. Most explosively, the PDPA made schooling compulsory for girls and launched literacy programs for women, building 600 schools in just over a year. The tribal insurgents denounced schooling for women as the first step in a "life of shame" and the earliest bloody confrontations were over women's literacy, as PDPA cadres and women literacy workers were driven from villages and killed.

With social development somewhere between tribalism and feudalism, there was no internal social base for the reforms pursued by the PDPA, much less for proletarian revolution. In 1978, out of a population of some 17 million, only 35,000 worked in manufacturing while the parasitic mullah caste numbered 250,000! The landlords and tribal khans controlled 42 percent of arable land as well as access to water, giving them life and death power over the landless peasants. There was almost no industry, no railroads, few highways, primitive sanitation and wretched health care. Life expectancy was 40 years and infant mortality about 25 percent; half of all children died before age five. Illiteracy was a staggering 90 percent for men and 98 percent for women.

The PDPA could not quell the *mujahedin* insurgency, which was heavily backed

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In Honor of Our Comrade Bill Moultrie

A memorial for our comrade Bill Moultrie was held on January 26 in Berkeley, California. A longtime member of the Spartacist League, Bill died on January 3 of complications following surgery for lung cancer. He was 74 years old. Nearly 100 comrades, friends and family members filled the room to remember and honor Bill's life and work.

Bill was born in 1927 in St. Louis. His family was desperately poor for most of his childhood. Later in his life Kat Burnham, his companion of 33 years, remembers Bill having difficulty reading *Angela's Ashes* because the grinding poverty, the charming alcoholic father, the strong but martyred mother were so like his own. Bill's childhood household contained not a single book, and the family attitude toward self-improvement was "Who do you think you are?"

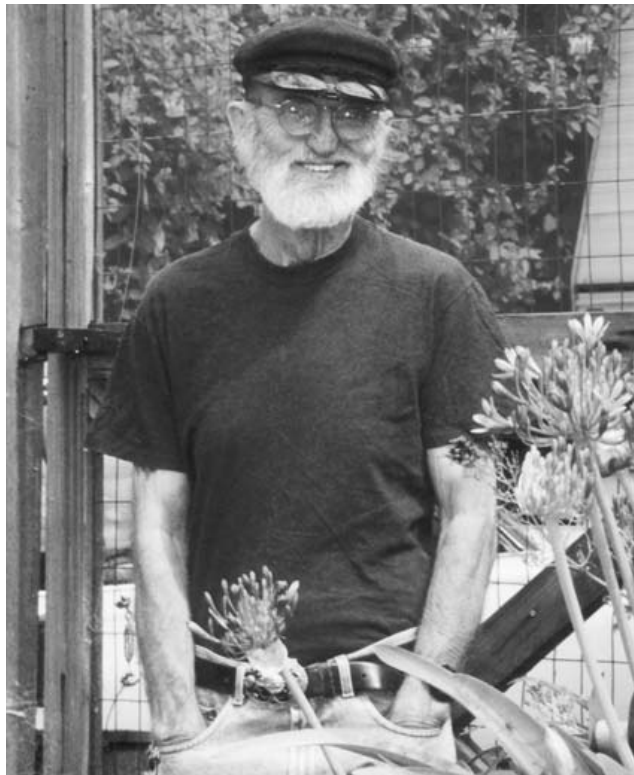
In 1943, at the height of World War II, in an attempt to escape the dead end into which he saw his life heading, Bill lied about his age in order to join the Merchant Marine. Before his first trip was over, he had decided that the war was a senseless waste of lives. After the war Bill literally grew up in the labor movement of the Detroit area, moving from one assembly line to another in this proletarian center of the Midwest before he went to work for Bell Telephone in 1958. He became a shop steward in the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and five years later, in unheard-of rapidity, was elected president of Local 4016.

Soon thereafter Bill's mettle as a union leader was put to the test in the 1968 nationwide phone strike. After the CWA International sold out the strike, Bill held the Michigan locals together in a wildcat strike. A statement for the memorial by Gene Herson described what Bill was up against in challenging both the company "which was bigger and more powerful than a number of countries...and a formidable union bureaucracy with a close working relationship with the CIA":

"The International bureaucrats hacked away at Bill's local, conducting mail ballots, splitting the local, putting it into receivership and so on. 'Ma Bell' cut off the dues deductions, strangling the local's finances. The International backed this, while doing a hatchet job on Bill's character and reputation. Eventually Bill was driven out of the industry. 'Most people would be demoralized and defeated after such an experience. But Bill didn't let them destroy him. He was able to learn from his defeat and go forward and contribute to the revolutionary workers movement.'"



March 1984: Bill at protest on behalf of Bay Area militants framed up during 1983 phone strike.



Kat Burnham

1927-2002

Bill joined the Spartacist League shortly after the strike, and he and Kat moved out to the San Francisco Bay Area. In a statement read to the memorial, Tweet Carter recalled her work with Bill in the 1970s and '80s:

"Bill's vast practical experience in the working-class struggle strengthened everything we did.... 'We led some real struggles in the working class in California. We frequently got a serious hearing for our program, and episodically a significant sector of the working class adopted an element of that program in struggle. Bill's contributions were instrumental to this.'"

In addition to the three scheduled speakers at the memorial, Benny Montgomery, Al Nelson and Wanda Rutland (who read a statement from Helen Cantor, one of the group that introduced Bill to revolutionary politics), a number of comrades came up to the podium to talk about Bill's contributions to the work of the party or to read statements from others who could not attend. Paul Costan, a longtime supporter of the SL who had worked with Bill in the '70s, presided. His remarks captured a quality in Bill that many others also remarked on:

"Bill detested self-inflation in others and tolerated none in himself. Yet I don't feel that this somewhat self-effacing demeanor was based on any lack of confidence.... He had a quick and sharp wit and used it to puncture the pompous, but mostly with a smile. He was a natural story-teller, and his stories were laced with wry lessons and asides."

Over the years Bill had also become an accomplished cabinetmaker, a skill which he used to good effect when the party occupied new headquarters in 1979. On behalf of the maintenance department, Corky Benedict wrote about the challenge we faced of re-leveling six oversized double-panel elevator doors that had to both slide back and forth and open out. "The rest of the maintenance comrades and I look at the repair work on those doors, still functioning some 23 years later, and think warmly of Bill's and Kat's work and care and their contribution to the safety of all comrades." Bill was very proud of his certificate from the SL, displayed at the memorial meeting, "to the finest red carpenter in the country." Indeed, those who spoke at the memorial did so from a podium emblazoned with a copper hammer and sickle that Bill made for the Bay Area branch over 20 years ago and that we still use today.

On the walls around the room where the memorial meeting took place were other displays of photographs and documents chronicling different periods: his wartime experience; his work at the Red Cross Blood Bank where he organized Detroit's first mobile blood unit; union cards from some of the many jobs he held in the Detroit area before being employed by Bell Telephone; "Class War in the CWA," when Bill was president of Local 4016, including photos of his children on the picket line of the wildcat strike; Bill's work at the California School for the Blind where he made deliveries on his heavy-duty supplies tricycle, cheering up the often multiply handicapped students. There were also displays showing Bill's parents and his siblings, photos of his children, and many of Bill and Kat together at different times over the last three decades, as well as of their trip to the Soviet Union in 1984. In addition to displays of his woodworking and beautiful pictures that Bill took himself, nine of Bill's "suncatchers"—wondrous structures of leaded glass—were hung in the windows and cast rainbows around the room.

Two of Bill's four children came to the memorial. His daughter Pam spoke very movingly for herself and her three brothers, Ray, Mike and Joe. She concluded:

"We'd like to thank all of you for letting us share this day with you. It means so much to us to be able to learn more about his life and about the way he tried to better the world. It's a side of him that we never knew. It warms us to know there are so many people that loved him, that looked up to and respected Bill."

One of Kat's two sisters, Kelly Hoerber, teamed up with Irving Bunton, a member of the Labor Black League, to sing a rendition in shifting harmonies of the medieval song "Dona Nobis Pacem" ("Give Us Peace"), which Bill liked very much.

Perhaps the finest tribute to Bill was the fact that a young black high school student, who came with his parents to the memorial meeting, was inspired to emulate Bill's life as a revolutionist and has now joined the Spartacus Youth Club.

* * *

We reprint below excerpts, edited for publication, of remarks by SL national chairman Jim Robertson and of the presentation by Al Nelson.

Jim Robertson: In the German Social Democratic Party before the division between the reformists and revolutionaries had become clear, at a time when Bismarck made the party illegal, they had a name: *vertrauensmann*, a trusted man. In that underground period, there was no police control, there was no political control, and the party did its best as the socialist party in Germany. The key between the leadership and the localities were the *vertrauensmänner*. And that's what Bill was like. He was somebody who also in our organization we had full trust in; he was a trusted man.

I'm really sorry that Bill never had a chance to get together and chat with Jim Cannon. I met Cannon a few times, but he rightly got my number as a snotty kid and was not very impressed. But I think he would have taken a more serious measure of Bill Moultrie.

Al Nelson: Bill Moultrie was a very unusual man, both personally and politically. When I got to know him better and learned more about his childhood, I was awed by what he had done with his life. Here was a man who was born with a cleft palate so severe that until he was 10 years old only his immediate family could understand him when he spoke. His family was so desperately poor that when he was a child his father took Bill with him as he went door to door asking for money for his family, calling attention to the child's disability to encourage donations. Yet this same person went on to become the president of Communications Workers of America Local 4016, the second-largest local in Michigan. In April of 1968 his forceful leadership, and the solid support of his membership, was crucial to keeping the entire Michigan unit of Bell Telephone—some 62,000 phone workers—out in a solid wildcat strike

after a bitter national phone strike was betrayed by the CWA International bureaucracy. He also became a powerful public speaker. He was a real workers' leader, not one of those lawyers in \$1,000 suits that pass themselves off as "labor statesmen."

Bill's first acquaintance with the Spartacist League was in January 1968 at the University of Iowa where we happened to have a small group of young comrades who had recently joined the SL. Bill was part of a group of 19 local presidents who had been hand-picked by the CWA International president, Joe Beirne, to attend a three-month leadership school. The idea was to take union leaders distinguished by their militancy and groom them for sell-out roles in the International bureaucracy. But it didn't quite work out that way.

These were politically charged times, right in the middle of mass protests against the U.S. war in Vietnam. Most campuses were seething hotbeds of radical and leftist politics. The previous year Army airborne troops (including a young Geronimo Pratt) had been sent into Detroit to quash a riot against racist police terror. Our comrades, including Kat, eagerly made contact with the unionists and got an invitation to make a political presentation to them. Soon about a third of these unionists were regularly going to leftist parties every weekend. A few months later every single one of them would actively oppose the national contract settlement by the International. But Bill wasn't dabbling. Soon he was having regular serious discussions with the Spartacist group there, and began devouring Marxist books of all kinds.

Bill's local of several thousand workers—which extended 100 miles north of Detroit and far to the west as well—was probably unique. Here there was no fraternization or socializing whatsoever with management. No chummy lunches, no selling out of grievances behind the backs of the members. A hard class line was drawn. The union represented the workers, and management was the enemy—it was a question of principle. And that tradition was shaped by Bill Moultrie. He was also responsible for the union taking up the defense of women workers, which was also unusual then.

Even before he came to Iowa, Bill had begun to realize that these hard class principles clashed with the pro-capitalist policy of class collaboration of the CWA labor bureaucracy and their purely legalistic strategy of relying on government intervention and Democratic Party electoral politics. Based on his own experience he had begun to reject this policy in favor of a position for the political independence of the working class. He came to the conclusion that workers needed their own political party and had buttons made up that proclaimed, "We need a labor party." Soon, reinforced by his bitter experience in the upcoming strike, he would draw the conclusion that the trade-union bureaucracy was the chief obstacle to class struggle in the U.S. and that there could be no lasting gains for any section of the working class short of a workers revolution, which required the leadership of an international revolutionary party.

It was during the wildcat strike or soon afterwards when the International was moving against him that I first met Bill. He wanted to talk with the leadership of the Spartacist League, so a secret meeting was set up. When I met Bill I said something like, "We're in no position to give you any advice that will help you in your present situation. What we *can* do is change your understanding of the world and show you the way forward for the workers to overthrow the whole capitalist system. If you can accept that then we can talk. Otherwise there isn't much we can do to help

you." There was a pause and then Bill said, "OK, let's talk." Bill had a million questions, none of them about trade-union work. What he wanted to talk about were things like the soviets, the workers councils, in 1917: how did they work, what will a workers government look like, how will the workers rule? What was the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 about? What's our attitude on Cuba?

Bill was a revolutionist until his last breath. He was unique in our party. But we can look forward to

own the very means of existence.

He discovered that the saying that we must all work together to make this a better world is a complete myth and a contradiction; he discovered that there are "classes" under this society, the working class and the ruling class and that the ruling class has one sole purpose, to exploit the working class to make money.

This story deals with all the contradictions that are now in the early 1970s becoming a subject of conversation and struggle throughout the world—the role of

Bill, a highly skilled craftsman, working on SL headquarters with his longtime companion Kat, 1980.



the next upsurge of mass struggle of the workers. There we will see other revolutionary workers like Bill Moultrie step forward to lead the working class in the final battle for the abolition of all classes.

* * *

In 1969 Bill began to write a book about his political transformation from trade unionist to revolutionist. He never finished it, although he wrote several chapters of memoirs that were gathered for the memorial into a binder for all to read. Comrade Larry Ackerson read the introduction to the book, which we reprint here, before the memorial meeting was concluded with the singing of the "Internationale."

This is the story of a man and the struggle for revolution. One might think: what revolution? The Russian revolution? Hungarian revolution? or Cuba? No, is the answer to all of these questions. This is the story of a man and the upcoming world wide revolution of the working class, and more importantly the story of a revolution in his way of thinking. One of Webster's definitions of revolution says "a complete change": this then is the story of a man and how he saw the world, both before the "revolution" took place in his mind and after.

After 41 years of struggling to justify and try to live within the system this man finally became bold enough to defy what he had always been taught was right. Through his own initiative, with the help of books, many many friends and a new look around him and his environment, he raised his consciousness to the level to realize that this system is wrong, only benefits the rich, oppresses the poor, the "blacks," women, children, all, save those who rule; those who

the church, the oppression of women, discrimination, the destruction of mankind in wars, pollution of the air, water and land and the immediate threat of total annihilation of the planet by use of nuclear weapons.

When one speaks of another being "brain washed" one immediately thinks of having the brain twisted into thinking and doing "evil" things.

This is the story of a man who readily admits to being "brain washed" and who would hasten to add that he means by that that his brain has been cleaned, all the dirt and filth that his parents, teachers, union leaders, government leaders and the ruling class have put there have been washed away. He is now able to see things clearly. His eyes are no longer blurred by blind patriotism, unquestioned leadership and disregard for his surroundings.

This then is the story of a professional revolution—This book was written specifically for those who must toil daily for their bread, who must bear the brunt of the oppression of the "rulers"; this book was written for the "working class of the world" and it is the dearest hope of the writer that they will follow him through his life story, his struggles and frustrations, and that they too will have their brain washed and join in the struggle of life or death because unless the working class recognizes this society for what it is, builds a world on a new foundation after destroying the old, he may not live long enough to read another book.

I dedicate this book to Kathleen, who without her patience, understanding and a fanatical feeling for the love of life and the working class, I might have died never knowing what kind of world I lived in and never have been able to help bring about the inevitable revolution of the working class against their oppressors.



Bay Area memorial meeting for Bill, January 26. Display chronicled his years as militant workers leader.



RAWA...

(continued from page 3)

by the U.S., Pakistan and Iran (where the Islamic theocracy under Ayatollah Khomeini had come to power in early 1979). Repeatedly and urgently, the PDPA asked the Soviet government for military aid, including troops. Concerned above all to pursue the chimera of détente with imperialism, the Kremlin temporized. But toward the end of 1979, the Soviet high command watched anxiously as U.S. warships were positioned in the Persian Gulf and reports emerged that Washington might invade Iran. The U.S. was already bankrolling the Afghan *mujahedin* and trying to foment Islamic counterrevolution in Soviet Central Asia.

In December 1979, fearing the PDPA regime was about to collapse and with Afghan president Hafizullah Amin reportedly making approaches to the U.S., the Soviet Union sent in 100,000 soldiers to combat the Islamic reactionaries. The imperialists seized on the Red Army intervention to launch a renewed Cold War drive. As the CIA undertook its biggest covert operation ever, Afghanistan became the front line of the imperialists' relentless drive to destroy the Soviet Union. In 1998, Zbigniew Brzezinski—national security adviser to the Democratic Carter administration that launched the CIA's campaign—boasted: "That secret operation was an excellent idea. It had the effect of drawing the Russians into the Afghan trap."

The threat of a CIA-backed Islamic takeover on the USSR's southern flank posed pointblank unconditional military defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state. As we wrote at the time:

"A victory for the Islamic-feudalist insurgency in Afghanistan will not only mean a hostile, imperialist-allied state on the USSR's southern border. It will mean the extermination of the Afghan left and the reimposition of feudal barbarism—the veil, the bride price. Moreover, the Soviet military occupation raises the possibility of a social revolution in this wretchedly backward country, a possibility which did *not* exist before."

—*Spartacist* (English-language edition) No. 29, Summer 1980

The Soviet intervention was unambiguously progressive, underlining the Trotskyist understanding that despite its degeneration under a Stalinist bureaucratic caste, the Soviet Union remained a workers state embodying the historic gains of the October Revolution of 1917, centrally the planned economy and collectivized property. These were enormous gains, not least for women and the historically Muslim peoples of Soviet Central Asia (today Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan), where conditions before the Bolshevik Revolution had been as backward and benighted as in Afghanistan.

A Red Army victory posed the extension of the social gains of the October Revolution to Afghanistan through a prolonged occupation and the country's integration into the Soviet system. Though undertaken purely for defensive geopolitical reasons, the Soviet military intervention cut against the grain of the nationalist Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country." The Red Army troops, many of



Protest in Islamabad, December 1998. Last year RAWA openly appealed for imperialist "peacekeeping" forces in Afghanistan.

them recruits from Soviet Central Asia, who fought against the CIA-backed *mujahedin* genuinely believed they were fulfilling their "internationalist duty." And so they were! This military intervention in defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state opened up the possibility not only of tremendous gains for the hideously oppressed Afghan peoples but offered the prospect of reanimating the Bolshevik program of proletarian revolutionary internationalism in the Soviet Union. As we stressed at the time, a genuinely internationalist perspective toward Afghanistan required a political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and return the Soviet Union to the road of Lenin and Trotsky.

What They Fought for: RAWA Embraces Mujahedin

Formed in 1977, RAWA opposed the PDPA government from the start, denouncing the PDPA in crude anti-Communist terms as Soviet "stooges." When the Red Army moved in, RAWA joined the imperialist-sponsored insurgency. RAWA founder Meena Keshwar Kamal declared at that time, "To fight against the Russian aggressors is inseparable from struggle against the fundamentalists. Nevertheless for the time being we should give priority to the former" (*Arizona Persian Bulletin* [Web site], 10 October 1997). In October 1981, Keshwar Kamal was invited to attend the congress of French imperialist president François Mitterrand's viciously anti-Soviet Socialist Party as a representative of the "Afghan resistance," and from there toured other European countries on behalf of the *mujahedin*.

RAWA said it was fighting for "the independence of our homeland" while the imperialists screamed about the Soviet Union's violation of Afghanistan's "national sovereignty." This sanctimonious concern by the blood-drenched imperialists for "national rights" was bogus to the core. Afghanistan is not (and was not then) a cohered nation, but an artificial state whose borders include and cut across a mosaic of ethnic and tribal groupings. It was under the Soviet presence that the murderous ethnic and tribal differences started to break down, while among the *mujahedin* they intensified. But Marxists would have supported the Soviet intervention even if Afghanistan had been a homogeneous nation. For

proletarian internationalists, the cause of social revolution (and, at the time, defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism) stands higher than the bourgeois-democratic right of national self-determination.

What did it mean to back the *mujahedin*? The tribal khans and mullahs that the RAWA feminists signed on with got *billions* of dollars from the U.S. government. Favorite *mujahedin* targets were schools and teachers. By 1985 they had destroyed over 1,800 schools and by 1987 they had slaughtered 2,000 schoolteachers. The *mujahedin* committed blood-curdling atrocities against captured Soviet soldiers, hacking off limbs and genitals before murdering them. In the first four years of the war, only *eight* living Soviet soldiers were turned over to the Red Cross. In Pakistan, the "holy warriors" threw women and children into their jails and torture cells.

Despite massive financial and military support from the imperialists, the *mujahedin* did not militarily defeat the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, as the imperialists and their fake-left apologists assert. By 1984, the Red Army and PDPA forces had practically won the war and the CIA's "holy warriors" were shattered and demoralized. The government's modest reforms, though scaled back from even the moderate program the PDPA first put forward, were winning support in the countryside.

But in November 1986, in a vain attempt to placate U.S. imperialism and strike a "peace" deal with Ronald Reagan, the Kremlin Stalinists under Gorbachev declared they would pull all Red Army troops out of Afghanistan in two years. By 1989, in a move that imperiled and betrayed both the Afghan and Soviet peoples, the troops were completely withdrawn, thus handing over hundreds of thousands of Afghan women, leftists and workers to be tortured, dismembered and beheaded as "infidels." In solidarity with the Afghan masses who were waging a bitter struggle for survival in the wake of the Soviet withdrawal, on 7 February 1989 the Partisan Defense Committee (the class-struggle legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League/U.S.) formally proposed to the Afghan government "to organize an international brigade to fight to the death" to defend "the right of women to read, freedom from the veil, freedom from the tyranny of the mullahs and the landlords, the introduction of medical care and the right of all to an education."

This offer was declined, but at the request of the government, the PDC and its fraternal organizations internationally organized a fund drive to aid the civilian victims of the all-out *mujahedin* offensive against the city of Jalalabad. In two months, over \$44,000 was raised, overwhelmingly from small donations from tens of thousands of people, many of them immigrant workers throughout West Europe, Asia and North America and women in Muslim communities. The siege of Jalalabad was defeated. The PDPA hung on for another three hard-fought years until 1992, when the *mujahedin* finally took Kabul.

For four years, the various tribally based *mujahedin* forces carried out a vengeful war of mass murder, torture and

rape of rival ethnic populations which left at least 50,000 people dead in Kabul alone. *Sharia* law was reimposed, books deemed anti-religious were burned in the streets, women were driven back into the total seclusion of *purdah* and in Kabul the price of *burqas* soared as terrified women found themselves again at the mercy of the fanatical *mujahedin*.

RAWA's Falsification of History

While prating of their new-found concern for the rights of Afghan women, the *New York Times* and other imperialist mouthpieces bury the genuine advances achieved during the Soviet presence under a mountain of lies, grotesquely blaming the Red Army intervention for the current status of Afghan women. Promoting this Big Lie campaign, Tahmeena Faryal, recently on a RAWA speaking tour of the U.S., has outrageously claimed that "the tragedy began in Afghanistan with the Soviet invasion" (*Z Magazine*, January 2002). Given to extravagant falsifications, RAWA claims that "the situation of women in Afghanistan was beginning to improve in the early 20th century. During the reign of the former king or during the first president...women had the very basic right of education and the right to work. We had women in government."

In the early part of the 20th century, a modernizing king, Amir Amanullah Khan, did attempt to carry out measures aimed specifically at liberating women. Friendly to the Soviet Union, and the first king to visit Moscow, Amanullah was deposed and driven out by the social equivalent of the contemporary *mujahedin* with whom RAWA solidarized. The last decade of Zahir Shah's reign, from 1963 to 1973, was a period of some political ferment. But the slender rights achieved then were won through struggle, not the "good offices" of this reactionary monarch. In 1968 when Zahir Shah's parliament threatened to prevent women from studying abroad, hundreds of young women protested. In 1970, when Gulbuddin Hekmatyar—later one of the most barbaric *mujahedin* leaders and the recipient of the largest amount of CIA funding—sprayed acid at unveiled women and shot at their legs, 5,000 young women took to the streets in protest. The PDPA and the Democratic Organization of Women of Afghanistan (DOWA) campaigned for the right to vote, to study abroad and to work outside the home, and four women from the DOWA were elected to government in the 1970s.

To secular-minded Afghan women who had finally gained a degree of emancipation following the Red Army intervention, RAWA would have had little appeal. RAWA's secular pretensions are really a tissue-thin cover for flagrant conciliation of religious reaction. Sehar Saba, a particularly foam-flecked RAWA spokesman, ranted that the Soviet Union "tried to force change on us. They told men they should shave their beards, and that women shouldn't wear scarves, when for centuries they have followed those customs. They forced women and men not to pray" (*She Said It*, August 2000 [Web site]). In a like vein, Tahmeena Faryal raved that the Soviet forces "were trying to give some rights to Afghan women that are obviously okay in Western societies, but are not acceptable in our societies.... For example, they wanted to give so-called liberties of having a boyfriend or dancing in a nightclub, which are not acceptable in our society" (*Z Magazine*, January 2002).

How contemptible! What do RAWA leaders think of Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasreen, who had a death sentence on her head because she wrote frankly and openly about sexual matters and women's oppression and opposed bloody anti-Hindu communalism? In Iran, the mullahs' military guards use *razor blades* to remove cosmetics from the faces of women who have taken this "so-called liberty." In Jordan, Turkey and Pakistan, young women are murdered by fathers and brothers for taking the "so-called liberty of having a boyfriend."



Following Soviet intervention, Afghan women took up arms to join fight against Islamic reactionaries.

RAWA's homage to Islamic strictures stands in contrast to the experiences of young women who came to adulthood and received an education during the Soviet period. "Life was good under the Soviets," recalled Saira Noorani, a young woman doctor. "Every girl could go to high school and university. We could go wherever we wanted and wear what we liked" (*Observer*, 30 September 2001). Another account, in the 1988 book *War in Afghanistan* by journalist Mark Urban, who was far from friendly to the Soviet forces, powerfully testified to the stakes for Afghan women:

"There is no doubt that thousands of women are committed to the regime, as their prominent participation in Revolutionary Defence Group militias shows. Eyewitnesses stated that militant militia-women played a key role in defending the besieged town of Urgan in 1983. Four of the seven militia commanders appointed to the Revolutionary Council in January 1986 were women."

By 1989, confronting the treacherous Soviet withdrawal, all PDPA women members were receiving military training and arms and some 15,000 women had joined the militias, taking up arms to defend not only the rights they had won but their very lives.

Fake Leftists Sided with Islamic Reaction Against Red Army

Socialist-minded youth in the West might try to imagine that they are at the University of Kabul in 1979 as the Soviet Army rolls in to beat back the CIA's Islamic rebels. Look across the border to Soviet Central Asia: there are schools, factories and hospitals. Women, regarded as human beings instead of property, are not bought and sold in marriage. They are doctors, engineers and political leaders. No matter what indices you check—life expectancy, infant mortality, literacy—the differences between the two societies are measured in centuries, not decades. Do you don a *burqa* and follow Meena Keshwar Kamal into Pakistan to join the Islamic insurgents based there, or do you join a militia to drive out and destroy the *mujahedin* enslavers of women? Do you defend the Soviet Union, or support imperialist counterrevolution? Are you for or against the liberation of women from feudal barbarism?

The gut-level response of radical leftists should have been the fullest solidarity with the Red Army. Instead, most left groups—including those that had supported the PDPA before the Soviet intervention—and most feminists joined the anti-Communist, anti-woman outcry against the USSR. Today they weep over Afghan women, but when there was actually a chance to throw off the veil, achieve literacy and break the power of the mullahs, the despicable fake leftists were on the side of their own capitalist governments' support for the *mujahedin* cutthroats.

Among the most vociferous of those tailing the imperialist anti-Soviet crusade was the International Socialist Organization (ISO), at that time affiliated with Tony Cliff's British Socialist Workers Party. When the Red Army came to the assistance of Afghan women and leftists, the British *Socialist Worker* (12 January 1980) screamed, "Troops Out of Afghanistan!" In Australia, the Cliffites joined a vile anti-Communist action in Melbourne, baldly declaring in a leaflet, "We call for the victory of the Afghan rebels in their war against Russian occupation." The Cliffites went on to champion reactionary, anti-Semitic Solidarność in Poland, the only "union" Reagan ever loved, funded by the CIA and the Vatican for the sole purpose of spearheading capitalist counterrevolution.

When the Soviets began withdrawing troops in order to appease the imperialists, the ISO's *Socialist Worker* (May 1988) cheered: "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." It did "give heart" to the forces of capitalist counterrevolution that in the next few years succeeded in destroying the Soviet Union

and the deformed workers states of East Europe, turning these countries into devastated hellholes racked by mass unemployment, homelessness, hunger and bloody ethnic slaughters, not to mention a brutal rollback of women's rights.

The openly anti-Soviet Cliffites were far from the only self-styled socialists who lined up behind the imperialists' anti-Soviet war drive. The late Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat (USec), though formally claiming to defend the Soviet Union, joined in screaming for Soviet troops out of Afghanistan and in hailing counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarność. Last September, the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, the USec's star section, was the central organized presence behind the pro-imperialist rally "for Afghan women" in Paris. The USec's capitulation to Islamic fundamentalism in Afghanistan is continued in



Le Bolchéviek

Collection in Paris suburb (above), June 1989. International PDC fundraising campaign for Afghan city besieged by *mujahedin* was publicized in London immigrant press. Thousands in Jalalabad celebrated breaking of siege.

Algeria, where the struggle for women's liberation is a strategic and explosive question. The ICL's fight for women's right to abortion in Algeria was denounced in 1992 as an "ultraleftist imbecility" by Damien Elliott, then a spokesman for the USec left wing. Last year, the Algerian USec section, the Parti Socialiste des Travailleurs, even withdrew its formal opposition to the anti-woman Family Code in order to maintain an alliance with village committees in the Kabylia region that exclude women and trample on women's rights.

Anti-Communism is the common bond bringing together the various fake leftists—from the ISO and the social-democratic *Z Magazine* in the U.S. to the Scottish Socialist Party, the Communist Party of Great Britain and the Japanese USec group, the Revolutionary Communist League—that today lionize RAWA. A case in point is the *Northeastern Anarchist* (Fall/Winter 2001) in Boston, which published an article, "Supporting the Revolutionary Women of Afghanistan," explaining why "anarchists should critically support" RAWA. Central to their tribute to RAWA is that "they have fought against the Soviet occupation in 1979" and "against the rise of the US-supported fundamentalist reaction which followed." Driven by hatred for communism, these anarchists support pro-imperialist "feminists" who support the Afghan monarchy! For its part, *Northeastern Anarchist* refused to defend Afghanistan against U.S. imperialism's terror bombing.

Our aim is the proletarian conquest of state power internationally. Despairing of this outcome, the fake lefts were and are walking sponges for imperialist anti-Communism. Thus these supposed fighters for women's rights allied with the bitterest and most barbaric foes of women's emancipation and social progress against the Soviet intervention.

Feminism: Obstacle to Women's Liberation

Bourgeois feminists like the National Organization for Women and the Feminist Majority, who today pose as allies and benefactors of Afghan women, likewise lined up behind U.S. imperialism's "holy war" in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Their recent concern for the plight of Afghan women dovetailed with a policy shift by

the Clinton administration in the late 1990s, as Washington began denouncing its erstwhile Afghan "freedom fighters" as "Islamic terrorists." That these feminists are animated by the interests and concerns of the U.S. imperialist rulers is hardly surprising. Their central purpose is to secure equal opportunity for petty-bourgeois and bourgeois women within the framework of capitalist class society.

Women's oppression is rooted in class society, centrally through the institution of the family. Even in the most advanced bourgeois societies only the overthrow of capitalist class rule can lay the material basis for the full emancipation of women in an egalitarian, international socialist society. But in those countries where bourgeois revolutions never occurred, the question of women's liberation is literally one of life and death—a fight for such



WW/Le Bolchéviek photo

basic needs as literacy, education, an end to forced marriages, freedom from the veil and the enforced seclusion and subjugation it represents.

As the Red Army swept through Central Asia in the early years after the 1917 Russian Revolution, the Bolsheviks undertook the enormous task of trying to liberate women in that historically Muslim region. When they spoke of "martyrs fallen on the women's liberation front," they were talking about the dedicated and heroic activists from the Department for Work Among Women (Zhenotdel), who put on the veil to bring to the women of the Muslim East news of the new Soviet laws and programs that would change their lives. Many of these women lost their lives at the hands of enraged husbands, fathers and brothers in these regions. In fact, it was the dismembered corpses of these Bolshevik women fighters that persuaded the Soviet government to reinstate the death penalty specifically for murders of this type, although the death penalty had already been abolished in general.

A political counterrevolution leading to the consolidation of the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy separates the liberating ideals that animated Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks and the courageous Zhenotdel women from the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Nonetheless, the Soviet Union remained a workers state and the Red Army troops offered the prospect of liberating Afghan women from feudal

barbarism and enslavement. RAWA stood on the other side. Today it continues to look to the imperialist powers as the agency for bringing some modicum of freedom to Afghanistan.

Imperialism cannot and will not bring Western-style democracy to Afghanistan or any of the colonial and semi-colonial countries. The development of advanced industrial economies and parliamentary democracy in the West was accompanied by, and to a large extent based on, the exploitation of the colonial countries. The imperialists' continuing subjugation of the "Third World" requires that they maintain and reinforce the indigenous forces of social and cultural backwardness.

Twenty-two years ago, the promise of liberation for the Afghan peoples lay in a prolonged Soviet occupation. Today, after capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet

Union, the key to the social liberation of the peoples of Afghanistan and the region is in the proletariat of countries like Pakistan, Iran, India and the former Soviet Central Asian republics. Concentrated in manufacturing, transport and other industries, Pakistan's proletariat numbers nearly ten million, with millions more agricultural workers. Iran has a sizable working class that was, until the 1979 victory of the Ayatollah Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution," historically pro-Communist. The despotic bourgeoisies that rule these countries are beholden to the imperialist exploiters, whose dictates they enforce.

To achieve social and national justice requires the seizure of power by the proletariat, standing at the head of all the oppressed and led by internationalist revolutionary vanguard parties. As Leon Trotsky stressed in advancing the perspective of permanent revolution, only proletarian revolution can break the imperialist yoke over such countries and, with the workers' seizure of power in the advanced capitalist countries, end imperialism forever. And as Trotsky noted in a 1924 speech to the Communist University for Toilers of the East, as the extension of Bolshevik power brought the prospect of liberation to the women of Central Asia, "There will be no better communist in the East, no better fighter for the ideas of the revolution and for the ideas of communism than the awakened woman worker." ■

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(continued from page 12)

In return for its obsequious bowing to the U.S.-led “war on terror,” the CCP regime hoped to gain the imperialists’ acquiescence to its efforts to quash resistance in China’s minority regions, most importantly against Turkic Uighur separatists in Xinjiang province. Although they have carried out sporadic attacks against Chinese officials and soldiers, the separatists pose no substantial threat currently to CCP rule in Xinjiang. Nonetheless, Beijing is intent on cracking down on any signs of unrest in this region, which is of significant strategic importance. Xinjiang is thought to contain vast oil reserves and is a route for oil and gas pipelines from Central Asia. Last year, China joined with Russia and four Central Asian countries to form the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, whose aims include cracking down on Islamic militancy in Central Asia and undertaking massive



Boccan-Gibod/Sipa

development projects in Xinjiang.

Through greater economic penetration, political subversion and increased military pressure and threats, the imperialists are intent on the restoration of capitalism in China. We Trotskyists of the International Communist League fight for unconditional military defense of China against imperialism and domestic counterrevolution. What is needed is the forging of an authentically communist—i.e., Leninist-Trotskyist—party to lead the combative Chinese proletariat in a political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucratic caste that undermines the workers state and the gains of the 1949 Revolution.

Beijing helped set the stage for the current wave of renewed imperialist aggression through its collusion with the U.S. against the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Working in tandem with the CIA, the CCP regime under Deng Xiaoping provided arms to the *mujahedin* cutthroats. The Soviet Army entered Afghanistan in defense of and at the request of a modernizing regime whose reforms sought to mitigate the power of the landowning oligarchy and,

The ignominious withdrawal of the Soviet Army in 1988-89 by the bureaucratic caste then led by Mikhail Gorbachev contributed not just to the re-enslavement of Afghan women but to the disintegration of the Soviet Union itself. The Gorbachev regime's retreat from Afghanistan, where the Red Army had not been militarily defeated, was fully in the service of appeasing imperialism. The Moscow bureaucracy subsequently handed over East Germany to the forces of capitalist counterrevolution. Finally, counterrevolution destroyed the Soviet Union itself, the most powerful and dominant of those societies where capitalism had been overthrown. This world-historic defeat reduced the working people of



UP

In Afghanistan in the 1980s, which was so backward that it lacked even a proletariat, the Soviet Army presence in support of the modernizing government provided the possibility of liberating the society from extreme backwardness and oppressiveness. Six decades before, it was the Red Army's defeat of counterrevolutionary "White" forces in Central Asia that

From Afghanistan in the 1980s to the Yeltsin-led counterrevolution in 1991-92 to China today, the USec was and is *on the other side of the barricades*. At a public forum in Tokyo in November, a Pioneer spokesman made this clear by declaring that his group would *defend capitalist Taiwan* in a war with China, falsely claiming that China has become a capitalist state. The flimsiness of this rationale for Pioneer's anti-Communism can be gauged in the fact that even if China were capitalist, it would have the right to claim Taiwan on the basis of national unification. Against such coun-

**Declaration of Principles and
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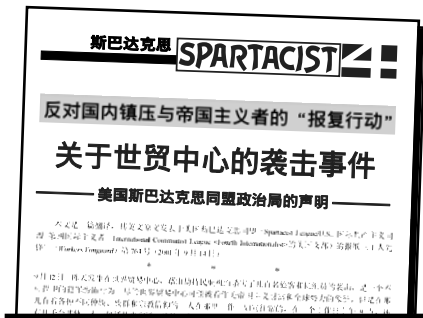
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The World Trade Center Attack

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“the ruling caste is no longer capable of thinking about tomorrow. Its formula is that of all doomed regimes: ‘after us the deluge’.”

In the context of a world economic recession, China’s entry into the WTO may well lead to chaos, particularly in the countryside, where 70 percent of the population lives. The nation’s farmers cannot match the productivity of agriculture in more advanced societies and, with the worldwide contraction of trade, it is unlikely that China’s industrial products will be hot sellers on the world market. Further imperialist economic penetration, with accelerating unemployment and immiseration for China’s masses, may well be the short-term outcome. In an article in the *Nation* (4 March), Jiang Xueqin, who recently traveled through China, wrote that “contrary to Western perceptions that the common people are benefiting from the free market, the Chinese see their government and the nation’s elite as conspiring to sell them out to imperialists, *aka* the Americans.”

It is a measure of the overwhelming and fatuous egotism of the CCP leadership that it has formally approved Jiang Zemin’s plan to open the doors of the party to capitalists. For the moment, the bureaucracy has refrained from actually implementing that move (although it has begun classes for entrepreneurs aspiring to CCP membership). Under the economic “reforms” initiated by Deng, the CCP regime has already invited offshore Chinese capitalists to re-invest on the mainland. Many in the top echelons of the party have moved to secure their own place at the top of society in the event of capitalist counterrevolution, although tens of millions of other CCP members would be, at best, discarded by a successful counterrevolution, as their counterparts were in East Europe and the USSR. Many of these same top bureaucrats have also secured their ticket *out* of China by having their children establish foreign citizenship. Premier-designate Hu Jintao’s daughter now has both American citizenship and a lucrative post at J.P. Morgan.

The roadblock in the way of the forces of capitalist restoration is the Chinese proletariat, which has repeatedly shown



Reuters

Pratt & Whitney CEOs open joint venture in China. Workers protest layoffs and official plundering at Beijing factory; banner reads, “Where Is 150 Million Yuan Worth of State Property?” CCP’s “market reforms” have generated massive proletarian resistance.



Front Line

its determination to defend its livelihood against the ravages of “market reforms.” This was exemplified by the February 2000 revolt in northeast China of some 20,000 miners and their families, who battled police and army units called out to smash their protest against the closing of a state-owned molybdenum mine. An article in the *Japan Times* (11 January) on an internal CCP document issued last year reported “more than a few hundred incidents of disgruntled workers demonstrating against the loss of jobs or non-payment of salaries while peasants protested against dues exacted by the local authorities. The document recorded only those incidents that involved more than 10,000 people, and did not mention many other smaller-scale ones.”

In deathly fear of the proletariat, the bureaucracy seeks to prevent any sign of opposition to its rule. At the same time, it seeks to pacify the masses by sowing the nationalist illusion that “market reforms” are necessary for building a modern, powerful China. Reflecting the growth of nationalist sentiment, it was reported in the immediate aftermath of September 11 that Web sites in China posted statements voicing approval of the attack on the World Trade Center as just retribution for the crimes of U.S. imperialism. That heinous attack—resulting in the deaths of several thousand ordinary, working people of all nationalities and races—was

entirely criminal from the standpoint of the international working class. Whoever perpetrated it embraced the same mentality as the racist rulers of America, identifying the working masses with their capitalist exploiters and oppressors. For the U.S. rulers, the attack served as a pretext for unleashing their military might around the world and, along with the bourgeoisie everywhere else, carrying out a war on the home front against immigrants, minorities and the entire working class.

At the outbreak of the war against Afghanistan, ICL sections internationally raised the call, “For class struggle against the capitalist rulers at home! Defend Afghanistan against imperialist attack!” We publicized the example of Japanese dock workers at Sasebo port who refused to load armaments and supplies onto Japanese navy ships headed to assist the war against Afghanistan (see “Japanese Longshoremen Refuse to Load Warships,” WV No. 770, 7 December 2001).

The road forward for the Chinese working class lies not in retrograde nationalism but in proletarian internationalism. The all-around modernization and development of China—providing the basis for a decent life for all its inhabitants—requires access to the kind of advanced productive forces possessed by Japan, the U.S. and West Europe, and that at bottom requires the overthrow of capi-

talist class rule in those countries. The struggle for proletarian political revolution in China must be linked to the fight for socialist revolution in the imperialist centers.

Against Reactionary Separatism and Han Chauvinism

It is more than ironic that Jiang Zemin now assists the U.S. imperialists in Afghanistan in order to legitimize his efforts to crush separatist sentiment in Xinjiang province. It was the efforts of his predecessor, Deng Xiaoping, in support of the CIA-backed *mujahedin* that propelled Uighurs and others to seek training in “holy war” in Afghanistan and opened the border to the arms and influence of the mullahs. The pullout of the Soviet Army from Afghanistan and subsequent disintegration of the USSR inspired some in Xinjiang to dream of their own “Islamic republic.”

Unlike the “Free Tibet” forces around the Dalai Lama, who have long been supported by the CIA, the Xinjiang separatists seem to have little following outside the exile circles who fled China after resistance to CCP rule died out in the province in the early 1950s. We oppose reactionary separatist movements that wield the call for “national independence” as a bludgeon against the 1949 Revolution, which brought enormous

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Korea...

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aim, and that of the giant *chaebol* conglomerates that dominate South Korean capitalism, is to undermine the North Korean deformed workers state, in part through economic penetration, in pursuit of capitalist reunification with the South. But it is Seoul’s U.S. imperialist overlords who call the shots, guaranteeing their domination with more than 37,000 American troops stationed in South Korea.

Since 1945, U.S. troops in Korea and in Japan have been crucial to the pursuit of American domination of the Pacific Rim region. Under the fig leaf of a United Nations “police action,” the U.S. invaded Korea in 1950 and over the next three years killed close to *four million* people in the Korean War, raining bombs and napalm throughout the peninsula. But U.S. imperialism’s attempt to overrun North Korea was turned back by the combined forces of the North and the Chinese People’s Liberation Army. The Korean peninsula was divided with the establishment of the Demilitarized Zone, which is packed with more weaponry per square inch than any other place on earth. The DMZ is a *class* line between the capitalist South and the North, where a bureaucratically deformed workers state issued out of a social revolution that overthrew the capitalists and landlords. *For unconditional military defense of North Korea against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution!*

From the outset, the U.S. military presence in Korea has been a dagger at the throat of the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states. It has also been

wielded against challenges by the South Korean masses to the *chaebol* bourgeoisie, from suppressing numerous peasant uprisings in the 1940s to supporting the South Korean military’s crushing of the May 1980 uprising in the city of Kwangju, in which some 2,000 people were massacred. U.S. troops were instrumental in maintaining the military dictatorship in Seoul that lasted until the late 1980s.

The struggle against imperialism and the *chaebol* bourgeoisie must be waged as a fight for socialist revolution in the South, whose proletariat is one of the most combative in the world. Shortly after Bush’s visit, electricity and rail workers organized by the Federation of Korean Trade Unions went on a three-day strike against privatization plans, later joined by tens of thousands of auto workers at Hyundai and Kia. Coming at a time when the imperialists are increasing pressure on the South Korean government to rein in labor militancy, these strikes were met with brutal repression. Dan Byong Ho, president of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, has been seized and some 36 other strike leaders are threatened with arrest. The labor movement internationally must demand: *Free Dan Byong Ho! Hands off all strikers!*

The key political obstacle standing in the way of the South Korean proletariat’s road to power is the nationalism that serves to bind the working class to its “own” capitalist class. Reinforced by the history of Korea’s subjugation by Japanese and U.S. imperialism, nationalist ideology is prevalent among South Korean student left groups, some of which politically support the Stalinist North Korean regime. Nationalism is fostered as well by the trade-union bureaucracy, feeding illusions among the

workers in a “progressive” and “anti-imperialist” wing of the South Korean bourgeoisie, which in fact is completely under the thumb of imperialism. The proletariat can only go forward on the basis of class independence from the Seoul bourgeoisie, whose talk of “friendship” with the North is a means of bringing about a united *capitalist* Korea.

The North Korean foreign ministry responded to Bush’s diatribes by stating that his comments represented the “gangster-like logic of a typical rogue and a kingpin of terrorism.” That description certainly fits Bush and his unhinged Cold Warriors in Washington. While the imperialists have maintained a starvation embargo against North Korea, it was with the destruction of the Soviet Union through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92 that the North Korean economy lost its lifeline and was sent into a devastating tailspin. However, beginning in the mid 1990s China has supported North Korea with subsidized power and food shipments. In recent years, rhetoric aside, Pyongyang has bent over backward to accommodate nearly all the imperialists’ demands, from shelving missile tests to freezing its nuclear energy program. Smelling blood, the Japanese imperialists

have stepped up their provocations, sinking a “suspected North Korean spy ship” in Chinese waters in December, killing 15.

Far from seeking proletarian struggle to overthrow the South Korean bourgeoisie, the North Korean Stalinists call for “peaceful” reunification. This perspective, offered first under Kim Il Sung and now under his son and successor Kim Jong Il, flows from the nationalism of this particularly bizarre bureaucracy, whose autarkic program of *juche* (self-reliance) is an extreme variant of the Stalinist dogma of “socialism in one country.” The International Communist League fights for the *revolutionary reunification of Korea*—through socialist revolution in the South and proletarian political revolution in the North.

Korean workers must embrace an internationalist perspective, linking their struggles with those of the Chinese workers against the threat of capitalist counterrevolution there and of the proletariat in the imperialist centers, particularly Japan and the U.S., against their capitalist exploiters. To lead the fight for a socialist Asia, we fight to build revolutionary Trotskyist parties, sections of a reformed Fourth International. *All U.S. troops out of Korea now!* ■

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Israel...

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year ago, a much-publicized conference of leading figures from the defense and political establishments called for mass expulsion of Palestinians from the Occupied Territories. Now the Council for Peace and Security—a group of 1,000 reserve generals and senior officers and ex-officials from the Mossad and Shin Beth intelligence agencies—has announced a campaign for unilateral Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and part of the West Bank, including the dismantling of most settlements.

What is animating such sentiment was captured by Nahum Barnea, a leading Israeli commentator and columnist for *Yediot Ahranot*: “After 17 months of intifada, we must admit that the Palestinians have not been broken. Despair has only steeled them. Economic and human distress has only pushed them to acts of madness.” While the Zionist rampage in the Occupied Territories continues unabated, the Palestinians have inflicted significant blows against Israeli troops and settlers.

What really shook the Zionist rulers was the destruction in February of a Merkava 3 tank by a handmade land mine. As the *New York Times* (16 February) noted: “The stark evidence that even the Israeli flagship tank—the Merkava 3, one of the toughest tanks in the world—was vulnerable to Palestinian weapons fanned fears today that Israeli forces were facing the same kind of punishing war of attrition in the West Bank and Gaza Strip that they fought so long in Lebanon.” It was in response to the 1982 invasion of Lebanon—under the command of the butcher Sharon—that the military “refusenik” organization Yesh Gvul (There Is a Limit) was first formed.

The recent cracks in Israeli society reflect a common perception that Sharon has delivered neither the peace nor the security he promised when he was elected last year. Since December, his approval rating has dropped from 70 percent to 42 percent. The *Jerusalem Post* (18 February), a right-wing government mouthpiece, wails that Israel’s “resolve” is cracking and a “chorus of defeatism can be heard in the land.” But Sharon’s latest

Sharon’s 1982 massacre of Palestinians in Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon was preceded by disarming of PLO fighters by UN intervention force.

UPI



provocations in the Occupied Territories, followed by a Cabinet decision to further intensify the war of terror against the Palestinians, underline that the Israeli government could well yet seek to implement a cataclysmic “peace of the graveyard.” When Foreign Minister Shimon Peres told the Knesset (parliament) that “we can’t just expel 3.5 million people from their homes,” a right-wing parliamentarian shot back, “Yes we can, yes we can.” A leading member of the Israeli Cabinet, Tourism Minister Benny Elom, is an open advocate of the forcible “transfer” of the Palestinian population out of the territories, a genocidal “final solution” supported by 35 percent of the Israeli population, according to a February 15 poll by the Israeli paper *Ma’ariv*.

Following a sniper attack on one of the hated checkpoints yesterday that killed seven soldiers and three settlers, a spokesman for the Aksa Martyrs Brigade said, “This is our new slogan now: Break the siege and remove the checkpoints.” The attacks against army checkpoints and bases and against the heavily armed settler auxiliaries are directed at the military forces of the oppressive Zionist occupation. In contrast, the suicide bombings of Israeli civilians at shopping malls and discos, carried out by Islamic groups like Hamas and the secular nationalist Aksa,

are reprehensible and criminal from a proletarian standpoint. Such indiscriminate terror, deeming all Jews to be enemies, mirrors the anti-Arab chauvinism of the far more murderous Zionist rulers and serves to drive Hebrew-speaking workers into the arms of their capitalist exploiters. But while the Palestinian attacks on the Israeli army have helped fuel sentiment for a withdrawal, the Palestinians cannot prevail in a military conflict with the Zionist juggernaut.

At bottom, the military struggle of the Palestinian nationalists is aimed at pressuring the imperialists and the Arab bourgeoisies. Looking to the Arab regimes to aid the Palestinian cause is a suicidal strategy. The result of this strategy was seen in the 1970 “Black September” massacre of thousands of Palestinian fighters by the Jordanian monarchy. That the reactionary Saudi monarchy is now embraced by Arafat and others as a guardian of Palestinian national rights is a travesty. After the 1991 U.S.-led Gulf War, Saudi Arabia joined Kuwait in brutally expelling hundreds of thousands of Palestinian (and Yemeni) laborers, and Palestinians are still excluded from entering Saudi Arabia. Only through the overthrow of not only the Israeli bourgeoisie but of the Jordanian monarchy and the other Arab ruling classes can the right of national self-

determination for both the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking peoples and the many other peoples of the region be equitably realized. *For a socialist federation of the Near East!*

The fissures in the Zionist bunker pose opportunities for revolutionaries to drive a wedge between the Hebrew-speaking proletariat and its chauvinist exploiters. Adding to the growing war-weariness of the Hebrew-speaking population is the economic impact of the war against the Palestinians. As the conflict drags on without apparent end, the sharp losses in tourism and construction have begun to mean cuts in jobs and social services for Israeli workers, and there have been a number of strikes recently.

As revolutionary Marxists, we seek to smash the Zionist garrison state *from within*. As we wrote recently, “We have no illusions that it will be easy to shatter the intense anti-Arab chauvinism of the Hebrew-speaking working class. But it is the task of revolutionaries to utilize every opportunity, every strike, every action that pits the working class against the Zionist capitalist rulers to emphasize the necessity for joint struggle by the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking workers. In the course of such struggles will be forged the internationalist Trotskyist party which champions the national rights of the Palestinians as part of the fight to place the proletariat in power” (WV No. 771, 28 December 2001).

“Remember Sabra and Shatila—Don’t Trust the UN!”

The fight for proletarian state power throughout the Near East is the only road forward for the Palestinian people. The petty-bourgeois nationalists of Arafat’s Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) see no other road than to beg the imperialists to pressure the Zionist butchers for “peace.” This is also the plea of the reformist and centrist left organizations in the West which, rejecting the possibility of proletarian revolution, cynically peddle the lie that their own bourgeoisies can bring national justice to the Palestinians.

Given the overt hostility of the Bush administration toward the Palestinians, and the even more foam-flecked support for Sharon by Democrats like Hillary Clinton, the reformist *Workers World* (10 January) in the U.S. limits itself to

China...

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gains in health, living standards and education to the minority peoples.

Our proletarian-internationalist defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against counterrevolutionary separatists is counterposed to the nationalism of the ruling bureaucratic caste, which favors the Han Chinese who constitute over 90 percent of the population. Thus, while the 1949 Revolution provided the basis for social advancement for all, the policies of the bureaucracy for the most part have tended toward Sinification, frequently supplemented by efforts to submerge minority regions in a sea of Han émigrés. Mongolians now make up less than a fifth of the population of Inner Mongolia, while the Uighur proportion of Xinjiang’s population has dropped from three-fourths to less than half, about equal to the Han population there. As in Tibet, state officials and party cadres in what is officially known as the “Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region” are overwhelmingly Han Chinese and Mandarin is the official language, making government virtually inaccessible to the native populations.

Over the last two decades, massive unemployment in the Chinese heartland engendered by economic “reforms” has accelerated Han emigration to minority regions in search of jobs or rudimentary business ventures. As investment funds from the central government begin to pour into Xinjiang in order to develop its mineral resources, Han managers and entrepreneurs prefer the better-educated,

“more reliable” and Mandarin-speaking émigrés, while the native peoples become more resentful. Indicative of the Chinese Stalinists’ own chauvinism against Islamic minorities is Beijing’s hailing of capitalist Russia’s suppression of the Chechen people’s just struggle for independence.

The deep grievances of Xinjiang’s minorities under the Han-chauvinist officialdom can be gauged by the fact that they used to regularly flee to the Soviet Union. In 1962 alone, tens of thousands of Xinjiang Muslims undertook a mass exodus across the border into Soviet Central Asia. Although the Soviet bureaucracy was imbued with Great Russian chauvinism, its conduct was conditioned by the fact that Russians were but a slight majority within the Soviet state. In order to integrate the peoples of diverse national and ethnic backgrounds that made up the Soviet Union, the bureaucracy retained a more democratic heritage in regard to the nationalities question than Mao’s China. Even under the administration of the bureaucracy, the USSR’s planned economy served to greatly modernize and develop the Central Asian Soviet republics, to the benefit particularly of women.

The economic and social policies of the CCP bureaucracy provide all the fuel necessary to light the fires of secession. A successful proletarian political revolution would instantly move to provide China’s minority regions with a maximum of self-rule while providing all the technical, educational and financial resources necessary to redress the backwardness and misery endemic in those areas. Under such a regime, China’s minority regions would become a beacon

in the struggle for social liberation of national and ethnic minorities in Central, South and East Asia.

The Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy has placed the 1949 Revolution in grave danger. Simultaneously, its policies have sparked the social protests and working-class resistance that are the necessary tinder for proletarian political revolution, a harbinger of which was seen in the 1989 uprising that began with students in Tiananmen Square and quickly drew the

working class into the struggle. Critically lacking then, and now, is a Trotskyist party that links defense of the collectivized foundations of the Chinese workers state to the spread of socialist revolution throughout Asia and internationally, particularly in the centers of imperialist power. The ICL is dedicated to resolving the problem of revolutionary leadership as we fight to reforge Trotsky’s Fourth International—world party of socialist revolution.■

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enthusing that support “has been growing dramatically” for “nationalist, left and Islamic Palestinian organizations”—which includes the anti-Semitic, anti-woman Islamic reactionaries of Hamas. It goes on to laud the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) as “the largest Palestinian Marxist organization.” In fact, the PFLP is simply a petty-bourgeois nationalist group which has long relied on Syrian patronage and was notorious in the early 1970s for airline hijackings and other indiscriminate terror attacks. Like Arafat, PFLP leader Ahmad Saadat looks to the UN, as he said in an interview in *Al-Hadad* last year, to “force Israel to implement United Nations resolutions.”

In Europe, where the capitalist governments do strike a posture of opposing the Israeli onslaught against the Palestinians, the fake left explicitly appeals for imperialist intervention in the Near East. And nowhere is this more the case than in France, whose bourgeoisie is the most vocally critical of the U.S. A demonstration in Brussels on February 27 and a previous one in Paris on December 19, both promoted by the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), were centered on the call, “For an international peace and protection force!” This has long been the position of the LCR. In November 2000, it called for “a political fight directed at the European Union and the French government so that they respond positively to the pressing demands of the Palestinian national movement” (*Rouge*, 7 December 2000).

Lutte Ouvrière (LO) strikes a different pose, writing in its journal *Lutte de Classe* (January/February 2002), “The only possible perspective is a real coexistence, a fraternal cooperation between the peoples. But for this the only solution is to put an end to the imperialist presence in the region and to the oppression not only by Israel but by all the states and possessing classes in the region, who in various degrees are the agents of imperialism.” LO’s talk of “anti-imperialism” isn’t worth the paper it’s printed on. Last year, LO signed on to an appeal to France and the European Union (EU) to intervene in the Near East, and LO mobilized its forces for the pro-imperialist demonstration in December. Meanwhile, the anarchists of *Courant Alternatif* (February 2002), notwithstanding their profession of opposition to all state powers, join in the chorus of appeals for an “international protection force in the Occupied Territories.” Such appeals parallel calls by Arafat and Arab bourgeois regimes for a United Nations “peacekeeping” force in the Occupied Territories.

Intervening into a protest organized by Palestinian and Maghrebin (North African) organizations in Paris on March 2, a contingent of the Ligue Trotskyste de France, section of the International Communist League, marched under a banner reading, “Defend the Palestinian People! French/UN/U.S. Troops Hands Off the Near East!” Our slogans were directly counterposed to calls from the podium for imperialist economic sanctions against Israel. Many Arab youth, in their desperation over the plight of the Palestinians, see no alternative to imperialist intervention. Nonetheless, particularly striking a chord among many of the protesters was an LTF sign reading, “Remember Sabra and Shatila—Don’t Trust the UN!”

In 1982, faced with constant Israeli bombing raids over Beirut, Arafat begged for imperialist intervention to protect Palestinian refugees and PLO fighters in Lebanon. U.S., French and Italian “peacekeeping” troops moved into Lebanon to *disarm* the PLO militants, overseeing the transfer of many to Tunisia. With the PLO fighters gone, in September 1982 Israeli troops surrounded the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in West Beirut, and then Israeli defense minister Ariel Sharon let loose the fascistic Lebanese Christian militias for a 36-hour orgy of killing, rape and torture. More than 2,000 people—mainly women, children and the elderly—were slaughtered, shot at close

range. Now Sharon complains that he was not able to kill Arafat as well at the time.

The hypocrisy of the French bourgeoisie’s more sympathetic posture toward the Palestinian Arabs is exposed not only by France’s history of brutal colonial subjugation and torture in Algeria but by the racist persecution of the large Arab minority in France today. The government of Socialist Party premier Lionel Jospin seized on the U.S.-declared “war on terror” after September 11 to reinstate the dreaded Vigipirate campaign of police roundups of immigrants and youth of North African origin. Yet LO remains silent when it comes to anti-Maghrebin Vigipirate terror. Notably, with the exception of the LCR and the anarchist CNT, the bulk of the French left boycotted the March 2 demonstration organized by Maghrebin and immigrant groups.

As one of the LTF placards on March 2 declared, “The Fight Against French



Le Bolchévik

Ligue Trotskyste contingent in March 2 Paris protest. Banner reads: “Defend the Palestinian People! French/UN/U.S. Troops Hands Off the Near East!”

Imperialism Abroad Means Class Struggle at Home.” Maghrebin workers form a key component of the multiethnic industrial proletariat in France. At an LTF public meeting in Paris the week before the demonstration, our speaker stressed: “A protest strike against Vigipirate and the repression against the Arab population in France would do more for the Palestinian cause than 10,000 people in Brussels.”

Near East: Cockpit for Interimperialist Rivalry

The LCR, among other left groups, calls for European delegations of civilian observers in the Occupied Territories. While some idealistic youth might see this as a way to deter Israeli army terror, in fact such “moral witness” tactics are aimed at securing imperialist “peacekeeping” intervention. In a similar vein, groups like the U.S. International Socialist Organization and the British Workers Power push for a consumer boycott of Israeli exports or “divestment” of Israeli stocks. Such impotent appeals to Western consumers are at bottom a ruse for pressuring the imperialists to impose economic sanctions, which is the only way “divestment” can be realized. All such approaches are premised on portraying the Western imperialist powers as enforcers of democracy and justice, behind which lies a direct capitulation by the fake left to the imperialist appetites of their own bourgeoisies.

The attempt of the French and other EU governments to put themselves forward as “peacemakers” and wrest some influence from the U.S. among the Arab states reflects a longstanding conflict of interest between American and European capitalism: the economics of world oil. The world oil market is dominated by American companies like Exxon-Mobil, which effectively control Saudi Arabia, while the core countries of the EU—Germany and France—are not major producers or distributors of oil.

The Europeans have significant trade with and investment in Iran, and the French have been negotiating for several years to invest in the Iraqi oil fields but cannot do so as long as the U.S. maintains the embargo. The furor provoked in Europe by Bush’s talk of an

“axis of evil” including Iraq and Iran is an expression of these particular conflicts in the Near East. More broadly, the European imperialists are frustrated that Washington’s overwhelming military superiority impedes them from pursuing their own ambitions.

In calling for the Jospin government to intervene in the Near East, groups like the LCR line up behind the French bourgeoisie in its growing competition with the U.S. and other imperialist powers. French imperialism is intent on regaining its former sphere of influence in the region, where it had been the colonial overlord of Syria and Lebanon (not to mention much of North Africa). U.S. opposition to the 1956 Anglo-French invasion of Egypt aimed at reconquering the Suez Canal—carried out in alliance with the Zionist state—signaled the decline of French and British influence and the ascendancy of American imperialism

in the Near East. The EU is already the largest trading partner for Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Israel. But, as Belgian foreign minister Louis Michel put it, “The EU does not want to play an economic role only, but also a political one” (*Al-Ahram Weekly*, 14 February).

The European and American imperialists, as well as the Arab bourgeois regimes, are utterly opposed to a genuine realization of Palestinian national rights. The Saudi proposal currently embraced by the EU would offer, at best, the kind of bantustan-style mini-state envisioned by

Turkey...

(continued from page 2)

In November, the leftist DISK union federation and other trade unions organized a protest of up to 10,000 people in Istanbul against unemployment and the attack on Afghanistan; demonstration speakers declared their solidarity with the imprisoned hunger strikers. In Germany, hundreds of thousands of ethnic Turkish and Kurdish workers are a strategic component of the working class and can be a living bridge between class struggle in Turkey and in the industrial heartland of Europe. Labor protests and political strikes in Germany in support of the leftist prisoners could strike a powerful blow for their freedom and push forward united

the U.S.-sponsored 1993 Oslo accord between Israel and the PLO. While headlining its editorial on the accord “Toward a ‘Bantustan’,” the LCR enthused over “a new dynamic” and called it the “first stage of a process that could radically change the situation” (*Inprecor*, October 1993). Its sister section in Israel went further, demanding that the Israeli government follow through with “the exact implementation of the agreements” (*The Other Front*, 5 September 1994). The “dynamic” hailed by the LCR has proven to be one of ever more suffocating imprisonment of the Palestinians in an Israeli-dominated ghetto.

As we warned at the time, far from offering even the most deformed expression of self-determination, Arafat’s deal placed “the PLO’s seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses” (“Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto,” *WV* No. 583, 10 September 1993). At best, the “two-state solution” being pushed by the imperialists, the “left” Zionists and Arab nationalists would mean an impoverished Palestinian statelet under the stranglehold of the Zionist state and with no viable economy. Moreover, it would permanently consign the millions of Palestinian refugees to the camps in Lebanon, Jordan and elsewhere where they now languish.

The answer to the plight of the Palestinian people lies not in petty-bourgeois nationalism but in an internationalist proletarian perspective. The Palestinians, spread throughout the Near East, suffer national oppression not just in the Occupied Territories but within Israel itself as well as in Jordan and Lebanon, which have large Palestinian concentrations. National and social liberation will only come through workers revolutions against all the capitalist regimes of the region and the creation of a socialist federation of the Near East. The Hebrew-speaking proletariat must be broken from the reactionary chauvinism of the Israeli rulers and won to the defense of the oppressed Palestinians, and the Palestinians and other Arab workers must be broken from petty-bourgeois nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism. If the Zionist madmen are not to ultimately unleash their nuclear arsenal and engulf the whole region in a holocaust, the Hebrew-speaking proletariat must join with Arab workers in sweeping away the entire rotten edifice of capitalist class rule in the Near East. ■

struggle by the working class against the anti-labor offensive of the capitalists and the ruling SPD.

It will take socialist revolutions to sweep away the Turkish police-state regime and the anti-immigrant, anti-working-class imperialists who back it. The International Communist League fights to build Leninist-Trotskyist parties, sections of a reborn Trotskyist Fourth International, which will be tribunes of all the oppressed.

It is urgent that trade unions, leftist organizations and all fighters for social justice join in an outcry of protest in solidarity with the leftist prisoners in Turkey’s dungeons. The Partisan Defense Committee has sent a letter of protest to the Turkish government and we urge other organizations and individuals to do the same. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Beijing Bureaucrats Conciliate Imperialism Over Afghanistan

China and the U.S. “War on Terror”

Defend Gains of 1949 Chinese Revolution!

As the U.S. devoted its military efforts to tracking down Islamic “terrorists” throughout the world after September 11, the Bush administration was diverted from its central aim of building up American military power in the Pacific targeting the People’s Republic of China. But as Bush made clear in his trip to East Asia last month, the imperialist warriors in Washington are intent on renewing their military buildup in the Pacific Rim area around China. Addressing the Japanese parliament only weeks after his deranged State of the Union speech lashing out at North Korea as part of an “axis of evil,” Bush proclaimed a “Pacific Century,” committing American military power to “a forward presence in this region.” Bush also reasserted American plans to forge ahead with a “missile defense” system supposedly aimed at “rogue states,” i.e., insubordinate countries like North Korea that do not have nuclear weapons.

But while the imperialists clearly have the North Korean deformed workers state lined up in their cross hairs, the chief purpose of the proposed “missile defense” is to facilitate a nuclear first strike against China, the largest remaining deformed workers state and one which does have a nuclear arsenal. In his Tokyo speech, Bush pointedly reaffirmed Washington’s commitment to Taiwan, which has been maintained as an anti-Communist fortress ever since the 1949 Revolution drove the Chinese bourgeoisie off the mainland.

Bush’s subsequent meeting with Chi-

nese president and Communist Party (CCP) leader Jiang Zemin in Beijing occurred 30 years to the day after Mao Zedong greeted Richard Nixon. Mao’s obscene embrace of Nixon as U.S. imperialism carpet-bombed Vietnam sealed a counterrevolutionary alliance aimed against the Soviet Union. A few years later, Beijing supported apartheid South Africa’s war against Soviet-backed Cuban troops in Angola and, in the 1980s, the U.S.-sponsored *mujahedin* war against Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Beijing’s alliance with Washington provided crucial support to the imperialists’ drive to smash the Soviet Union and overthrow the October Revolution of 1917. The Chinese Stalinists thus greatly endangered the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution, as the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 removed a key obstacle to imperialist depredations around the world.

Now, for the second time in as many decades, Beijing has allied with U.S. imperialism in Afghanistan. As American planes bombed Afghanistan, a State Department spokesman declared in Beijing in December, “We’re pleased with the cooperation we have received from China.” The Beijing Stalinists might think that they are winning the hearts of the imperialists by supporting the “war on terror,” but Washington’s easy win in Afghanistan has only emboldened the world’s most rapacious imperialist power to assert its readiness to employ military force



Chinese president Jiang Zemin hosts Bush in Beijing as U.S. imperialism renews military buildup in Pacific Rim. AP

against any and all who would dare defy its aspirations to dominate the planet.

Some 650 Special Forces troops are now deployed in the Philippines ostensibly to aid in suppressing Islamic rebels. But as the *New York Times* (4 March) wrote, the Philippines is propped up by the U.S. largely to serve “as a counter to China.” The Bush administration is also moving to resume military aid to Indonesia, bypassing a Congressional ban imposed in 1999. The U.S. has also now established a military foothold in the former Soviet republic of Uzbekistan, to China’s west. The U.S. military presence in the region surrounding China, centered on more than 80,000 troops in South Korea and Japan, is not least a threat to, if necessary, assist the forces of capitalist counterrevolution. *All U.S. troops out of East and Southeast Asia, Central Asia and the Persian Gulf!*

Bush used his visit to Beijing to peddle the Republican right’s push for “religious freedom” in China, where a range of religious movements—from the reactionary Falun Gong sect to the proliferating “underground” Christian churches—provide breeding grounds for domestic counterrevolutionary forces. He also promoted the Dalai Lama, long a CIA tool, and pro-imperialist “dissidents.”

While balking at Washington’s arrogant demands that China end its arms sales to “enemies” of the U.S., the Chinese Stalinists are intent on pursuing “partnership” with American imperialism. From their narrow nationalist perspective, the bureaucrats were doubtless pleased that their collaboration with Washington helped seal China’s entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) last fall with nary a peep being

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U.S. Troops Out of Korea Now!

On his Asia trip last month, U.S. imperialist chief Bush stood at the Korean “Demilitarized Zone” and touted the “freedoms” supposedly enjoyed in the thinly veiled police state that is capitalist South Korea. Meanwhile, police in Seoul were brutalizing and arresting scores of protesters, thousands of whom had taken to the streets to demand, “Bush go home!” *Free all the arrested protesters! Drop all charges now!*

While the South Korean government normally follows along with every pronouncement by its Washington patrons, the Kim Dae Jung regime has voiced consternation at Bush’s “axis of evil” tirades against North Korea, fearing that such saber rattling could wreck its “sunshine policy” toward the North. Kim’s

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Imperialist chief Bush at Demilitarized Zone separating capitalist South Korea and North Korean deformed workers state. February 9 protest outside U.S. embassy in Seoul. Reuters

