

For Class Struggle Against Capitalist Rulers at Home!

Down With the Colonial Occupation of Iraq!

U.S. Out Now!

In launching their one-sided slaughter in Iraq, the deranged neocons in the Bush White House promised that the U.S. occupiers would be greeted as liberators by the Iraqi peoples. According to this scenario, occupied Iraq would serve as a beachhead for establishing more pliant regimes in the region, particularly in Syria and Iran. Today these fantasies—as pollyannaish as they were arrogant—are going up in smoke.

The “weapons of mass destruction” that were the ostensible *casus belli* have failed to materialize for the simple reason that they don’t exist. Bush is now busy trying to pass the buck. Some of the president’s coterie are blaming Ahmad Chalabi for hoodwinking them. Convicted of embezzling funds in Jordan, Chalabi has been the recipient of millions from the Bush and Clinton administrations for services rendered as their Iraqi front man. On May 20, his mansion in Iraq was raided and trashed amidst accusations that he was an Iranian spy.

Six days later, the *New York Times* felt compelled to finally confess that its articles retailing stories of Hussein’s supposed arsenal of weapons weren’t as “rigorous as [they] should have been.” The *Times* exonerates the Bush administration, blaming the false stories in its paper “at least in part on information from a circle of Iraqi informants, defectors and exiles bent on ‘regime change’ in Iraq” and lamenting that they, “along with the administration, were taken in.” Now CIA chief George Tenet, assigned the role of a fall guy, has resigned in the midst of a barrage of criticism of manipulated “intelligence” and recriminations over the September 11 attacks.

On the ground in Iraq, the U.S. military has sparked widespread resistance to its savage occupation. Hoping to pacify largely Sunni Falluja, the U.S. brought out of mothballs a former general in Hussein’s military and installed him as the commander of the puppet Iraqi forces in the area. More recently, the Americans have been scrambling to cut a deal with the Shi’ite forces in Najaf under



Reuters

U.S. occupation forces patrol Sadr City, Baghdad, April 5.

cleric Moktada al-Sadr. Over 800 American soldiers have died in Iraq, the overwhelming majority since the U.S. government declared military victory. With its forces in Iraq stretched to the breaking point, the military announced that it would stop soldiers in units scheduled to go to Iraq or Afghanistan from leaving service even if their enlistments were up. This has added to the already rising disgruntlement of many soldiers and their families. Now, the government has announced that it will be moving 3,600 troops from South Korea to Iraq this summer.

Their demented visions of establishing a pliant, stable Iraq in shambles, even the central architects of the invasion are be-

ginning to allow that maybe things aren’t exactly going according to plan. As Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was forced to admit: “If you had said to me a year ago, ‘describe the situation you’ll be in today one year later,’ I don’t know many people who would have described it—I would not have—described it in the way it happens to be today” (*Nation*, 17 May). Prominent neoconservative ideologue for the Bushites, William Kristol, now declares that Bush “did drive us into a ditch” (*Nation*, 7 June). This is a case of a rat deserting a sinking ship. After all, Kristol and his ilk gave Bush the road map into the ditch.

The horrors of the Abu Ghraib prison tortures have eroded support at home

for the occupation. With polls showing mounting opposition among the American population and the presidential elections only months away, the Bush administration has been scrambling to demonstrate that it has some semblance of control in Iraq. This arrogant war-crazed administration has even dropped its xenophobic ravings against the French like yesterday’s “freedom” fries, as Bush went hat-in-hand to “old” Europe looking for back-up to save face in Iraq. Specifically, the Bush administration wants their support for a United Nations resolution providing a “democratic” fig leaf for the continued neocolonial occupation of Iraq.

Much is being made by government pundits of the supposed hand over of “sovereignty” to an Iraqi interim government on June 30. Some “sovereignty”—the head of this government, Iyad Allawi, is a CIA asset! This puppet state will have “control” of everything except...the military and the economy! The 100,000-plus U.S. troops are slated to stay in the country for years. The U.S. has also imposed a law, unchangeable under the terms of the interim con-

stitution, opening Iraq’s economy to foreign ownership. Moreover, funds for “reconstructing” Iraq will be administered by the U.S. embassy headed by John Negroponte, who played a leading role in the funding and training of drug-running, sadistic torture gangs in Central America in the 1980s.

As we wrote in our article “Imperialists Carry Out Massacre in Falluja” (WV No. 824, 16 April):

“The colonial carnage will not end as long as the U.S. imperialist forces, from the ‘coalition’ allies to the 15,000 mercenaries and CIA agents, are in Iraq. They must get out, *now!* But the imperialists will not give up their domination of the region until they are forced to by

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Trotskyism and Anarchism in the Spanish Civil War

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Occupation of Iraq...

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working-class struggle, both at home in the imperialist centers and in the Near East.”

Down with the colonial occupation of Iraq! U.S. get out! UN stay out!

Break With the Democratic Party of Racism and War!

The occupation of Iraq is giving the Bush administration serious trouble, potentially a boost for the electoral fortunes of the Democrats. This is certainly what the liberals are pushing for with their “anybody but Bush” campaign. However, the fact of the matter is that the Democratic Party has been the historic party of war in the U.S., from two world wars, Korea and Vietnam to military interventions in Haiti, Somalia and the Balkans under Clinton. Because of widespread illusions that the Democrats represent the interests of working people and the oppressed, they are better posi-



AP

The only thing worse than being an enemy of the U.S. is being a “friend”: Donald Rumsfeld with Saddam Hussein in 1983 (left); with latest former ally, Ahmad Chalabi, in 2003.



AFP

tioned than the Republicans to sell U.S. imperialism’s military adventures to the American population.

The Iraq Liberation Act, which passed Congress almost unanimously in 1998 and laid the basis for a formal U.S. policy of seeking “regime change,” was a product of the Clinton years as were

the accusations that the Hussein regime was building up stockpiles of “weapons of mass destruction.” Today, presumed Democratic Party presidential candidate John Kerry simply argues that the Democrats would carry out the occupation in a more “responsible” way, looking for more support from other imperialist powers as well as the UN and deploying greater numbers of troops to Iraq. This is hardly surprising; Kerry voted for the war as well as the major provisions of the “war on terror.” Indeed, the Democrats are complaining that Bush is devoting insufficient resources to domestic “security,” i.e., racist roundups, domestic spying and other repressive measures aimed particularly against labor, black people and immigrants.

The Kerry supporters at the *Nation* are fretting that antiwar sentiment will translate into a vote for minor capitalist politician Ralph Nader. This house journal of American liberalism complains that Nader has shot up in the polls by openly criticizing the occupation, while Kerry’s numbers have remained steady. While striking a critical posture over the occupation, Nader simply argues that the U.S. should get out as soon as it is “expedient,” and wants the UN to take over the occupation. The UN has long provided “humanitarian” cover for the depredations of imperialism, particularly American, including during the first Gulf War and the more than decade-long imposition of sanctions that cost the lives of over 1.5 million people in Iraq. As he did in the 2000 elections, Nader is simply seeking to nudge the Democrats into providing a more liberal facade for U.S. capitalist rule at home and abroad.

As the U.S. imperialists launched their invasion of Iraq, we wrote in a March 19 statement of the Political Bureau of the Spartacist League/U.S.: “It is in the class interest of the international proletariat to clearly take a side in defense of Iraq without giving any political support to the bloody Saddam Hussein regime. Every victory for the U.S. imperialists can only encourage further military adventures. In turn, every humiliation, every setback, every defeat they suffer will serve to assist the struggles of working people and the oppressed around the globe” (WV No. 800, 28 March 2003).

Today, we have a side against the U.S. occupiers, their allies and Iraqi lackeys. Every blow struck against the American occupation forces is a blow struck against the enemy of workers and the oppressed all over the world. Those who take up arms against the occupation are waging a just and defensive struggle. At the same time, we do not lend any political support to the remnants of the former Ba’athist regime or the Islamic fundamentalists who appear to be leading much of the resistance. These forces are deadly enemies of the Iraqi working people. Communist attacks against Shi’ites and Kurds (and others)—like the March 2 suicide bombings that killed 170 Shi’ite pilgrims in Karbala and Baghdad—are entirely criminal from the standpoint of the international working class.

Former allies of U.S. imperialism in the struggle against “godless Communism,” the Islamic fundamentalist forces

now express anger that the U.S. has taken all the spoils, depriving them of the opportunity to exploit, oppress, torture and plunder their “own” masses. If a resurgent Iraqi proletariat were to pursue a politically independent struggle against the occupation of Iraq, it would likely find itself facing a united front of American imperialism and Islamic fundamentalism—much like the alliance against the Soviet Red Army’s intervention into Afghanistan in the 1980s.

Marxists seek to provide a proletarian axis of struggle against the imperialist occupation. But from the smashing of the Iraqi Communist Party by the Ba’athists in alliance with U.S. imperialism following the 1958 revolutionary situation to the UN-imposed sanctions, the workers movement in Iraq has been bled and is now decimated by the war and occupation. Unemployment in Iraq stands at around 70 percent.

This underlines the desperate necessity for international class-struggle actions against the occupation. Marxists seek to mobilize the oppressed masses behind the power of the proletariat in struggle, using workers mobilizations (strikes, hot-cargoing of military goods, etc.) in the service of a revolutionary perspective against both the imperialist occupying forces and their Iraqi lackeys. We are politically hostile to any other strategy as alien to our proletarian purpose.

It is in the direct interest of the U.S. proletariat to oppose U.S. imperialism—the same ruling class that occupies and rapes Iraq is also occupying the ghettos and barrios with their brutal cops, busting the unions, driving down wages, rounding up immigrants and eviscerating the democratic rights of everyone at home. American workers must understand that their interests and the interests of their rulers are completely counterposed.

But the trade-union bureaucracy obscures this understanding through its allegiance to the Democratic Party, which serves to shackle workers struggle and chain the working class to its class enemy. “Progressive” leaders of the ILWU longshore union, for example, are mobilizing double the number of union organizers to get out the vote for Kerry than they mobilized to galvanize labor support for the ILWU when it was locked out last year.

The working class needs a political party that fights for its class interests. It needs a party that will fight against the capitalist order that is the cause of oppression, exploitation and war today. The Spartacist League devotes all its efforts to educating the working class in the necessity of struggling to forge the revolutionary party capable of ending the rule of U.S. imperialism through victorious socialist revolution. ■

NOTICE

Workers Vanguard skips alternate issues in June, July and August. Our next issue will be dated July 9.

Class Collaboration and the Spanish Revolution

As explained by Felix Morrow below, the revolutionary struggles of the workers and peasants of Spain in the 1930s confirmed crucial lessons of the victorious 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and the failed German Revolution of 1918-19. The entry of the anarchists and the ostensibly Marxist POUM into bourgeois popular-front governments, and their collaboration in the suppression of the insurgent workers, paved the way for the



TROTSKY

victory of Franco’s reactionary forces. In the absence of a revolutionary party leading the working class in the fight for state power, capitalist rule was preserved through class collaboration.

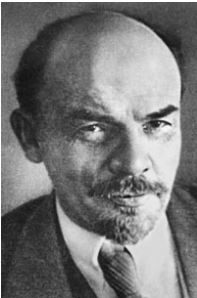
Yet, the fact is, despite the rise of dual power, despite the scope of the power of the proletariat in the militias and their control of economic life, the workers’ state remained embryonic, atomized, scattered in the various militias and factory committees and local anti-fascist defense committees jointly constituted by the various organizations. It never became centralized in nationwide Soldiers’ and Workers’ Councils, as it had been in Russia in 1917, in Germany in 1918-19. Only when dual power assumes such organizational proportions is there put on the order of the day the choice between the prevailing régime and a new revolutionary order of which the Councils become the state form. The Spanish revolution never rose to this point despite the fact that the real power of the proletariat was far greater than the power wielded by the workers in the Germany revolution or, indeed, than that wielded by the Russian workers before November. *Locally* and in each militia column, the workers ruled; but at the top there was only the government! This paradox has a simple explanation: there was no revolutionary party in Spain, ready to drive through the organization of soviets boldly and single-mindedly.

But isn’t it a far cry from the failure to create the organs to overthrow the bourgeoisie, to the acceptance of the rôle of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie? Not at all. In a revolutionary period the alternatives are poised on a razor-edge: either one or the other. Every day is as a decade in peacetime. Today’s “realism” becomes tomorrow’s avenue to collaboration with the bourgeoisie....

Without developing soviets—workers’ councils—it was inevitable that even the anarchists and the POUM would drift into governmental collaboration with the bourgeoisie. For what does it mean, in practice, to refuse to build soviets in the midst of civil war? It means to recognize the right of the liberal bourgeoisie to *govern* the struggle, i.e., to dictate its social and political limits.

Thus it was that all the workers’ organizations, without exception, drifted closer and closer to the liberal bourgeoisie.

—Felix Morrow, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain* (1938)



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Protest Chicago Cop Killing of Activist May Molina!

We reprint below a leaflet issued by the Chicago Labor Black Struggle League on June 3.

They did it to May Molina, they'll do it to anyone—that's the chilling message the Chicago cops sent on May 24 when they dragged the 55-year-old grandmother and political activist from her wheelchair, threw her in jail on drug charges, and refused her life-sustaining medications, effectively condemning her to die in her cell. Molina, who suffered from diabetes, asthma, liver disease and a thyroid condition, was refused medical treatment despite pleas from her family and lawyer. By the early morning hours of May 26 she was dead. We in the Labor Black Struggle League (LBSL) condemn this sinister killing by the Chicago Police Department!

May Molina was an outspoken and courageous activist against police corruption and wrongful convictions here in Chicago. Co-founder of the groups "Families of the Wrongfully Convicted" and "Comite Exigimos Justicia" (We Demand Justice), Molina fought to free her imprisoned son, Salvador, and for dozens of victims of police brutality and frame-ups. For this she was in the cross hairs of the police. May Molina's killing is the domestic face of the government's bipartisan "war on terror." It's a war on blacks, immigrants, labor and all those who dare oppose this racist, capitalist state.

At bottom the capitalist state is an apparatus of repression consisting of the army, the courts, the prisons and the cops. Far from being neutral, it is a necessary tool with which the capitalists maintain control and carry out their class rule at home and abroad. The U.S. Army is in the midst of a bloody occupation in Iraq. Some of the sadistic guards at Abu Ghraib got their training here at home in prisons like SCI Greene where America's foremost political prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal, languishes on death row, framed up for killing a cop. The prisons are overflowing with black and Hispanic people targeted in the "war on drugs." And from coast to coast, the cops terrorize the ghettos and barrios. From Fred Hampton and Mark Clark to LaTanya Haggerty and Robert Russ to May Molina, we know too well what the Chicago cops do. None of these institutions can be reformed and made to work "for the people." Civilian review boards or the Chicago Police Review Board are offered up as a way to curb the rampant police

brutality and corruption. In truth they serve as sounding boards to circumvent the genuine outrage generated by these atrocities and enforce the lie that the real problem is the result of a few bad apple cops and lack of oversight.

This was the message hundreds of protesters got at the May 27 protest and meeting at the Chicago Police Review Board. Grotesquely, Reverend Slim Coleman called for the need to restore the credibility of the cops! Aaron Patterson, who was himself framed up and spent 17 years on death row, called on U.S. top cops to carry out a Federal investigation. Demands for Federal investigations push the absurd illusion that the "Justice" Department of John Ashcroft will conduct a fair and impartial investigation.

armed guard dogs.

What is necessary is for Chicago's powerful, multiracial labor movement to mobilize and protest this atrocity, providing the crucial link between organized labor and the oppressed. Our signs at the May 27 protest called for mobilizing labor power to protest racist cop terror. A massive show of force by the unions would go a long way in staying the hand of racist cops and give organized expression to the justified outrage that seethes through black and Latino Chicago. In fact, that's exactly what happened in 1985 when Chicago Transit Authority bus driver David Johnson was framed up on bogus charges, including seven counts of reckless homicide, in a tragic accident while driving his bus. Hundreds of



Fight Back!

May Molina

other party of war and racism. To win a battle you have to know who your friends are and who your enemies are. The Democrats may pretend to speak for working people and minorities or have more black and Hispanic officials but they, no less than the Republicans, are a party committed to the capitalist system. Just look at Chicago. For decades the Democratic Party has run "Segregation City" and it remains a racist hellhole with a legacy of police torture, killings and misery for the black and Hispanic population. Former police commander Jon Burge and his torture machine operated under Daley's watch. As bloodthirsty and dangerous as Bush is, electing a Democrat into the White House is no solution because the problem is the *capitalist system*, not the administration. Remember who bombed Iraq for eight years, who demolished welfare and who cranked up the death penalty—Democrat Clinton.

It's time to fight for what is necessary, not what others tell us is "possible!" It's going to take a workers revolution to establish an egalitarian society based on a socialist planned economy to truly address the horrors and wrongs of capitalist society. Working people need their own party, a multiracial revolutionary party, determined to fight for a workers government. To build that party requires a political fight against those who seek only to reform this rotting capitalist society. The Labor Black Struggle League, initiated by and fraternally allied with the Marxist Spartacist League, is part of the revolutionary movement of the workers and oppressed against the bosses and for socialism.

We will not forget May Molina! Drop the charges against Aaron Patterson and Robert Zajac, arrested at the May 26 Molina protest! For labor action to protest racist cop terror! Break with the Democrats! Build a workers party! Black liberation through socialist revolution! ■



WV Photo

Chicago Labor Black Struggle League at demonstration outside police headquarters protesting May Molina killing, May 27.

Andy Thayer (Chicago Anti-Bashing Network) told the audience to "come out in numbers" to make the cops and the city respond to demands and establish better procedures. Joan Parkin (International Socialist Organization supporter and coordinator of Enough is Enough) was full of moral outrage but offered no strategy beyond the usual pressure politics. Each of these strategies *politically disarms* protesters by pushing the dangerous illusion that the nature of the capitalist state can be changed by applying enough "mass pressure." There will be no end to police brutality short of the destruction of the system of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression which the cops serve as

his Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) brothers and sisters marched on Police Headquarters, forcing Daley (then Cook County state's attorney) to drop all charges against Johnson. That mobilization worked because of the power that stood behind it. The working class uniquely has the power to bring production to a halt—to stop the buses, to shut the auto plants, to close the ports. *That's* "no business as usual!"

The primary obstacle to unleashing this power is the current misleadership of the unions which instead turns workers into voting cattle for the Democratic Party, the

Letter

On Southern Race Relations and Marcus Dixon

30 May 2004
Chicago

Dear Comrades,

In the *Young Spartacus* article on the release of Marcus Dixon to a now uncertain future [*Workers Vanguard* No. 827, 28 May], I think we have an unfortunate formulation. In the fifth paragraph where we deal with the tinderbox of black male/white female relations we state: "Allegations of black men raping white women—overwhelmingly spurious—were a frequent pretext for lynchings." Why are those two words, "overwhelmingly spurious," even there? First off, the sentence would work just fine without them. Moreover, in the next part of the sentence we say that these allegations were used as a "pretext," i.e., it's garbage! "Rape" is beside the point because the racist terrorists don't need any actual crime to occur in order to murder black people. What some were "reacting" to mostly was just

the thought of consensual interracial sex. In the main however the racist terror meted out had as its purpose the continued subjugation of the black race-color caste. It was and is purely a tool of terror.

Comradely,
Vance

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Trotskyism and Anarchism in the Spanish Civil War

The following is a slightly edited presentation by Spartacist speaker Adrian Ortega at a Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth Club public educational in New York City on April 3.

PART ONE

Anarchism today has become fashionable among youth and left-liberal intellectual circles. Refracted in a myriad of ways, from “Green radicalism” to “Platformism,” these youth seek to oppose a social reality dictated by an economic system based on the production of profits for the handful of capitalists. The emergence of anarchism as a prevalent ideology among radicalized youth today is a reflection of what we Marxists understand as a global retrogression in political consciousness following the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 and the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet degenerated workers state and the deformed workers states of East Europe.

As the title of this forum indicates, this presentation will center on the counterposition between two political worldviews, Marxism and its contemporary continuation, Trotskyism, and anarchism, which played a decisive role in the events of the Spanish Civil War.

The Civil War (which lasted from approximately 1936 to 1939) represented the last opportunity for the proletariat to overthrow capitalism and open the road to socialism in Spain before the rise of the Francoist military dictatorship that would last more than 30 years and kill hundreds of thousands. In the key industrial center of Spain, Catalonia, armed workers organized militias and factory committees that shook the foundations of the capitalist order, private property and the state. But the most radical mass leaders of this movement (the anarchist FAI and the National Confederation of Labor [CNT] it controlled, and the centrist Workers Party of Marxist Unification [POUM]) along with the rest of the left (the Socialist Workers Party [PSOE] and the Stalinist Communist Party [PCE]) showed their political incapacity to lead the working class toward emancipation. It was only small groups (like the Friends of Durruti anarchists and the Trotskyist Bolshevik-Leninists) who sought during the barricades fighting in May 1937 to bring revolutionary leadership to the proletariat. But these groups were not able to over-



Agustí Centelles, Barcelona
Women's militia unit departing Barcelona for Aragon front to fight reactionary Francoist forces.

come their own limitations—centrally the Trotskyists' lack of authority among the proletariat and the Friends of Durruti's incapacity to break with an anarchist worldview—and lead the workers to power. Had there been a successful revolution in Spain, this would have drastically changed the shape of the world in which we live now.

This talk aims to explain why the strategic “mistakes” made by the anarchist leadership in the Spanish Civil War were not only “mistakes” but the logical conclusion of a program that inherently rests on class collaboration—i.e., a political alliance between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, which constrains and subordinates the workers and their struggles to the framework of capitalism. I would like to give a few initial considerations regarding the political foundations of both currents.

Anarchists claim to fight for a classless society, and some of them understand the centrality of the proletariat in such a task, just as we Marxists do. However, they reject any form of “authority” and consequently oppose the existence of *any state* (meaning the use of organized violence to protect the interests of the class in power). They also renounce concepts like leadership and centralization and counterpose to them “autonomy” or “spontaneity.” On the contrary, Marxists explain that “Authority and autonomy are relative

things whose spheres vary with the various phases of the development of society” (Friedrich Engels, “On Authority” [1872]). In other words, we don't blindly condemn authority as an abstract concept divorced from a certain social and economic reality. Most of the world today is based on the authority of a property-owning class, the bourgeoisie, exercised over the working masses through the instrumentality of a state, the capitalist state. We oppose and work to destroy that authority and the state that helps preserve it. But we welcome the authority of mass organizations of workers and other oppressed sectors in society, like workers councils (soviets), which would coordinate and centralize the proletariat's efforts to create a society based on workers democracy and prevent the destruction of the gains resulting from a social revolution—a workers state. Through eliminating the irrationality of capitalist production, economic planning under a workers state would allow the free development of productive forces and eliminate the material basis for social inequality. This would have to be a joint enterprise of the world proletariat and is the only way to eliminate the state and create a society based on “from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.”

The anarchist *abstract* condemnation of “authority” has concrete ramifications on the organizational level. Anarchist organizations are decentralized entities that claim to exercise no authority over their members. This in itself is a complete fallacy, which the events in the Civil War completely prove. Marxists, on the contrary, explain the necessity of a centralized, democratic organization of the working class that groups together the proletariat's most conscious elements, works to raise the consciousness of the working class as a whole and exercises leadership, including leading the decisive struggles for workers power; a vanguard party that embraces the highest levels of democracy in its internal life and intervenes in struggle as a unified, conscious political force.

The Spanish Revolution

On 17 July 1936, General Francisco Franco assumed command of the Moors and Legionnaires of Morocco under the banner of the Spanish monarchy and the

Catholic church. With the support of the most reactionary forces in Spain, Franco launched a military coup to overthrow the Republican government of president Manuel Azaña, which was a liberal bourgeois government, to replace it with a military dictatorship. This was to enforce through blood the interests of the propertied classes over the workers and peasants, and to put an end to decades of highly militant labor struggles in Spain. Azaña hid the advancement of Franco's army from the working class and made frantic and unsuccessful attempts to contact the military leaders and to come to an agreement with them. The Spanish proletariat, which had just gone through two years of harsh state repression under a right-wing government, distrusted the Azaña government and took matters into their own hands. They independently mobilized to gather weapons and build barricades to fight the bourgeois pro-monarchist reaction.

Some of the most epic battles between the Francoist forces and the armed proletariat started almost concurrently in major cities like Madrid, Valencia and Barcelona. I would like to read excerpts from Abel Paz's book, *Durruti: The People Armed* (1976), in his chapter “Barcelona in Flames”:

“On July 19, 1936, at 5 A.M. a new page in the revolution was beginning to the sound of gunfire, the crackling of machine guns which were mixed with the deafening sound of factory sirens, informing the people that the decisive hour had arrived. The seventh artillery regiment had left San Andres Park, divided, and was trying to reach the center of the capital by two different routes. But at the crossing of the ‘Diagonal’ the first detachment ran into a group of workers armed with grenades and pistols, which blocked its advance....

“One part of the Montesa regiment followed by important military units of engineers, managed to slip into Marques del Duero Avenue (Paralelo) but was checked by a strong barricade put up by the workers of the Woodworkers' Union....

“At the same time, near the Plaza de Palacio, the dockworkers of the Barceloneta district had routed the Montana artillery regiment....

“Towards noon after four hours of fighting the uprising appeared to be defeated. One by one, all the areas of resistance fell into the hands of the people....

“From then on the morale of the workers who were fighting, increased. In addition an important collection of weapons (guns and machine guns) fell into their hands. Barcelona began to have a new look.”

This period is known as the “July events” in the Spanish Civil War. Heroic actions sprang from the workers' barricades to become class-struggle history. Within a few days, all Catalonia was in the hands of the proletariat. Madrid had seen the Francoist forces defeated by workers armed with scant stores of arms—with cobblestones and kitchen knives in Valencia—in the face of the embargo on arms by the government. Most of these workers were members of the CNT or the POUM.

Asturian miners outfitted a column of 5,000 dynamiters for a march on Madrid, which arrived one day later to guard the streets. Armed workers committees displaced the customs officers at the borders, and a joint committee of the General Workers Union (UGT—affiliated to the PSOE) and the CNT took charge of all transportation in Spain. A union book or



Hoover Institution
Leftist militia in Spanish Civil War. Stalinist-led Popular Front suppressed anarchist CNT militants and centrist POUM in the name of capitalist “democracy.”

membership card from a leftist party was the only requirement to enter the country. The police, the Civil and Assault Guards, which had sided against the workers in the battles, had been replaced by workers militias that patrolled the cities. But how did workers get to this point? Let me back up a few years and make some clarifications.

Anarchism was the predominant ideology among the Spanish proletariat in the 20th century, in great part thanks to the country’s slow economic development during the previous three centuries. In the northern and eastern regions of Spain, like Catalonia and Aragon, the principal anarchist trade-union federation, the CNT, organized the most politically advanced workers in those provinces. The leaders of the CNT represented a trend inside anarchism called syndicalism. The syndicalists correctly recognized the industrial proletariat as the central agency for overthrowing capitalism. They believed, though, that trade unions would be the only instrument necessary to bring about a socialist revolution, and opposed, as all anarchists do, the idea of a vanguard party of the working class.

Given their relationship with the working class, anarcho-syndicalists sometimes had very good political impulses. During the First World War, when Spain’s neutrality meant that its production increased, a staunch opposition to the war within the Spanish left was found among the anarcho-syndicalists of the CNT, who, in some cases, according to Gerald H. Meaker in his book *The Revolutionary Left in Spain, 1914-1923*, “went beyond mere pacifism and instinctively favored ending the war by a popular revolution.” The revolutionary Marxist V.I. Lenin and the Bolshevik Party in Russia had forthrightly opposed the war from the first day and fought for the defeat of their own bourgeoisie through the seizure of power by the working class.

With the support of important sectors of the Russian proletariat and the oppressed, Lenin had called for a workers revolution in Russia to end the war, collectivize industry, nationalize the land and expropriate the bourgeoisie and the banks. In October 1917 (under the old Russian calendar), the Bolsheviks leading the soviets, organs of proletarian power, led a proletarian insurrection that established the first workers state in history. Workers democracy found its concrete expression in congresses of soviets and councils of workers, peasants and soldiers, which had begun to run the economy of the biggest country in the world.

I.P. Goldenberg, a member of the Mensheviks (a reformist party in Russia) had denounced Lenin as “a candidate for one European throne that has been vacant for thirty years—the throne of Bakunin!” for fighting for workers revolution. However, the truth is that anarcho-syndicalists in Russia and elsewhere, including Spain, like Joaquin Maurín and Andrés Nin (future leaders of the POUM), realized from the experience of the Russian workers the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Gerald Meaker speaks of an anarchist militant who wrote in the anarchist paper *Tierra y Libertad* (Land and Freedom):

“The Russian revolution, according to this militant, was not yet an Anarchist society, but it offered the ‘direct means’



Sergi i Octavi Centelles

Bus with CNT sign marking collectivization of Barcelona transport system (left); peasants with rifles work on collectivized land.



Interlink Books

by which to achieve one. All the Anarchists of the world would have to do as the Russian ‘maximalists’ had done: they would have to ‘*destroy authoritatively*... the present edifice based upon privilege and injustice in order to begin constructing the great city of happiness, Anarchy’.” [emphasis added]

The best of this generation of anarchists and syndicalists—like Victor Serge, the Marxist historian and Trotsky biographer; Alfred Rosmer, a leading anarcho-syndicalist in France who later became Trotsky’s close collaborator; and James P. Cannon, an anarcho-syndicalist in the American Industrial Workers of the World who became the founder of Trotskyism in the U.S.—were won to revolutionary

speech in Congress by a Trotskyist denouncing the colonial occupation in Iraq would have on both the American working class and the soldiers in Iraq. To Marxists, the question of whether or not to participate in elections is a tactical question based on concrete circumstances. At the same time, Marxists renounce in principle the taking of any executive ministerial post in any capitalist government because it could not mean anything other than the direct administration of the capitalist state.

Lerroux governed in coalition with the CEDA (Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Rightists) of José Maria Gil Robles, and, given the victory of Hitlerite

Azaña took office as president in May 1936 in the midst of a great wave of strikes. From June 10 to the first days of July, the number of workers striking against the deepening economic crisis had grown from half a million to over a million. Bourgeois democracy was starting to crumble.

Around the same time as Franco’s attempted coup and the workers uprising during the “July events” in 1936, big chunks of the bourgeoisie in Catalonia (the region that comprised 70 percent of the industry in Spain) had fled the country, leaving their factories, lands and properties behind. Once the reaction had been defeated, CNT workers began to seize the abandoned factories and create workers committees that organized production on a local level. A similar phenomenon occurred in the countryside. These workers committees, and the workers militias formed to fight against Franco’s army, became the basis for what we call a *dual power* situation, i.e., a temporary state of affairs in which both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie directly contest for power. It is necessary to study these workers cooperatives and militias, since they represent the *embodiment* of the anarchist economic and military program.

On July 20, with workers celebrating the defeat of Franco, Luis Companys, who was the president of the bourgeois Generalitat government in Catalonia, met with the leadership of the CNT-FAI—with García Oliver as the main anarchist spokesman. Companys was an astute bourgeois politician who had been at some point a lawyer for the CNT. Here is what he proposed to García Oliver and the rest of those in attendance:

“You have won and the power is in your hands. If you don’t need me and if you don’t want me as President of Catalonia, tell me now and I will be only one more soldier in the struggle against fascism. But if on the contrary you believe that in this job, where I would have been killed if there had been a fascist victory, I and my men, my name and my prestige can be useful in the struggle which has ended in Barcelona today, but whose outcome is still unknown in the rest of Spain, you can count on me. You can count on my loyalty as a man and a party leader who believes that a shameful past came to an end today, and I sincerely hope that Catalonia will be in the vanguard of the countries who are the most progressive in social matters.”

—quoted in Abel Paz, *Durruti: The People Armed*

And the anarchists went for it. García Oliver reports the results of the discussions in the CNT and the FAI as follows: “On July 21, 1936, a Regional Plenum of the Local Federations...took place in Barcelona. The situation was analyzed and it was decided not to speak about Libertarian Communism as long as part of Spain was in the hands of the fascists. *The Plenum decided for collaboration* opposed by only one delegation from ‘Bajo Llobregat’.... Any extreme position inspired by adventurism or inflexibility could have been a disaster because the revolution would have been exhausted...” [emphasis added]. With this, the anarchist workers were subordinated through their leadership to the will of the Generalitat government. Nine months later, Companys was on the phone calling for an air

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Historia 16

During the Civil War, anarchist leaders Juan García Oliver (far left) and Federica Montseny joined as ministers in Popular Front government.

Marxism by the living example of Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolshevik Revolution. Anarchism can’t lead to a successful socialist revolution, as the events in Spain show.

The Betrayal of the Popular Front

The 1933 Nazi victory in Germany propelled mass unrest throughout Spain, including a general strike led by the CNT and UGT in October 1934. That same month, miners and other sectors of the proletariat in the northern region of Asturias rose up in arms against the recently formed government of Alejandro Lerroux. The anarchists abstained in the elections won by Lerroux; but not on the basis of any principles (as we will see later). Their main reason was their “apoliticism,” an absurd rejection of participation in elections or parliament. But if you are serious about fighting for socialist revolution, would you waste any opportunity to let significant numbers of people know what you stand for? Imagine the effect that a

fascism in Germany, Lerroux’s regime was feared as representing the rise of reactionary, right-wing forces in Spain. The bloody defeat of the Asturian uprising at the hands of Franco-led forces (5,000 people killed and 30,000 arrested) paved the way for two years of increased repression against the labor movement.

In January 1936 (six months before Franco’s attempted coup) the popular-front coalition led by the Republican Left, the party of the liberal bourgeoisie, had come up with a program for the February elections which basically allowed a nominal restoration of regional autonomy for the Catalan region and offered to free political prisoners imprisoned during the prior two years. The program called also to guarantee respect for private property rights in the countryside and the cities, rejected any nationalization of the land and called to maintain capitalist control over industry and the banks.

The Republicans led an electoral bloc with Manuel Azaña at its head. The coalition included the UGT, the PSOE, the PCE and the POUM. And it was supported by the anarchists. This was a popular-front coalition, where the interests of the proletariat were subordinated to those of the capitalist class.

What was the POUM? The POUM was what we call a centrist party, i.e., a party that is revolutionary in words but reformist in deeds. It had emerged from the fusion between the Trotskyist Spanish Communist Left of Andrés Nin, and the BOC (Workers and Peasants Bloc) of Joaquin Maurín, which was a more right-wing centrist party that adapted to Catalan nationalism. Trotsky strenuously denounced the signing of the electoral pact by the POUM as a “*betrayal of the proletariat for the sake of an alliance with the bourgeoisie*” and broke political relations with them.



La Voz Leninista (Leninist Voice), newspaper of Trotskyist Bolshevik-Leninists of Spain. American Trotskyist Felix Morrow documented betrayal of Spanish Revolution by Stalinists, anarchists and POUM leaders.



Ukraine Con Game: Opportunism, Crime and Punishment

IG's Potemkin Village Idiocy Ad Absurdum

"In order to impress Tsarina Catherine with his self-promoting efforts at developing the barren Russian steppes in the 18th century, Prince Potemkin supposedly constructed elaborate facades of artificial villages for her to see when her carriage passed through the region. A 'Potemkin village' is what came to mind when we saw the first issue of the *Internationalist* (January-February 1997), a 64-page, two-color journal recently published by a handful of defectors from our organization who call themselves the 'Internationalist Group' (IG)."

—“Potemkin Village Idiocy,”
WV No. 663, 7 March 1997

That's what we wrote nearly seven years ago. In that time the little Potemkins of the IG have been busy constructing the facade that is their international. In cyberspace they present long, turgid articles in multiple languages intended to give the grand impression that they swim deep in the “boiling water” of the worldwide class struggle. On the ground, the reality is quite different.

A case in point: the “Revolutsionnaya Kommunisticheskaya Organisatsiya” (RKO—Revolutionary Communist Organization) of Ukraine. In July 2001, with much fanfare, the IG published a “Declaration of Fusion” between their “League for the Fourth International” (LFI) and the RKO. They solemnly vowed to “uphold Bolshevik-Leninism” and to “further the struggle to reforge an authentically Trotskyist Fourth International as the world party of socialist revolution.” Fine words, but there was one problem: the RKO never existed.

Last summer, after a two-year marriage, the IG declared annulment when it was revealed that (surprise!) their mail-order Ukrainian bride of a “section” was a bunch of con artists scamming Western leftists for money. The hustlers, who had long been the Ukrainian section of Peter Taaffe's “Committee for a Workers' International” (CWI), were able to sell themselves off as the “sections” of as many as ten different self-professed revolutionary organizations, including the grotesquely misnamed International Bolshevik Tendency (BT) and the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP).

As we explained in *Workers Vanguard* when the scandal broke (see “Chickens

IG declaration of fusion in Ukraine boasted that it was “preceded by more than a year of discussions and joint work on key questions.” Now IG cries, “We wuz robbed!”

Come Home to Roost in Kiev,” WV No. 808, 29 August 2003):

“We are not privy to the sleazy details, and we have no confidence in anybody's account of what happened. But by their own words these so-called ‘victims’ stand condemned as utter frauds and co-conspirators with their Kiev con men! Now they scream, ‘We wuz robbed!’ But they were more than happy to perpetrate their con on the left public by trumpeting their fraudulent Ukrainian sections.”

That the IG ended up in the embrace of a gang of brazen con artists should not come as a surprise to those who have followed its political trajectory. From its inception the IG has accommodated itself promiscuously to alien forces, seeking “regroupments” with politically distant elements as a substitute for the necessary struggle to forge a programmatically cohesive, Leninist international organization. In 1995-96, while still a member of our organization, Jan Norden (now the IG's supremo) sought a phony regroupment with elements of the Communist Platform of the German Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), claiming that the PDS maintained “attachments” to what was by then the long-since defunct East German deformed workers state. Indeed,

the Communist Platform/PDS had been junior partners with Gorbachev in the *sellout* of East Germany to the West German imperialists. Upon their defection from the ICL, Norden et al. linked up with the Liga Quarta-Internacionalista (LQB) in Brazil, an organization with which we had just broken fraternal relations when it became clear that they were simply trade-union opportunists. Subsequently the LQB went on to cross the class line repeatedly by suing a trade union in the bourgeois courts.

We recognize that revolutionary regroupment—principled splits and fusions with other tendencies in the workers movement—is an important tactic for constructing a Leninist vanguard, including on international terrain. The Spartacist League/U.S. emerged out of the Revolutionary Tendency, an opposition in the American Socialist Workers Party. Over the course of years we recruited from groupings that originated in ostensibly Trotskyist, Maoist, New Leftist, feminist and other tendencies. The essential basis for such regroupments has been a *common programmatic framework*—tested in practice through exemplary actions and involvement in social struggle; vigorous internal debate and rigorous cadre education.

But the purpose of Norden's LFI is not this but to impress the unwary with cyberspace boasting of “international connections.” Lofty statements are written for public consumption and to create an umbrella of “orthodoxy” to shield the very alien practices carried out on the ground. To believe the IG, Norden himself had little clue what his “Ukrainian section” had been doing for two years! The BT now claims to have recruited the IG's Dutch affiliate—which by the BT's account consisted of one individual (1917 No. 26, 2004)!

Mutual Amnesty

At the time of our previous article on what happened in Kiev, the IG had yet to comment on the con game. A response appeared in the October-November 2003 *Internationalist*. Notwithstanding the differences the IG claims with the state-capitalist LRP or the dubious Stalinophobic BT headed by the sociopath Bill Logan, Norden's response was virtually

identical. They all attempted to salve their wounded egos, pontificating that, after all, the Bolsheviks were infiltrated by Roman Malinovsky, a secret agent for the tsar, and the Trotskyist Left Opposition by Mark Zborowski (Étienne), a Stalinist agent. There is no relationship in these comparisons to what actually happened in Ukraine. Far from being a deep dark secret of the invisible espionage netherworld, the real nature of the Kiev scam artists was known to the Ukrainian left, and the IG were among the laughing stocks:

“Kiev left-radical circles ever since the mid-90s have been following with interest the scams of a group led by the well-known cde. V.... Since all of these political sects wanted a Ukrainian section for prestige, this group set up ties and easily passed itself off as co-thinkers.... ‘Oh, it's so easy to fool me, I myself wanted to be deceived’ [Pushkin].... This looks a little like provocation, but in Kiev no one would fall for it—it was all too obvious.”

—Indymedia.ru, Article #5744,
“Anarchist from Kiev,”
5 September 2003 (translated
from Russian)

Wouldn't any politically observant person have noticed that in the space of a few months, several political tendencies were acquiring Ukrainian “sections” in Kiev, including quirky groups like the De Leonists in the American Socialist Labor Party? The IG and others didn't ask questions because they didn't want to know the answer. Like Pushkin's love-struck fool, they refused to see what was there because they did not *want* to see.

When the Kiev hoax was exposed, the IG acted like pious politicians, who, when caught with their pants down in a den of iniquity, claim they were carrying out “their own independent probe.” They have the nerve to cite Victor Serge's excellent 1921 handbook, *What Every Revolutionary Should Know About State Repression*:

“In his conclusions, Serge wrote: ‘Provocation is much more dangerous in terms of the distrust it sows among revolutionaries. As soon as a few traitors are unmasked, trust disappears from within the organizations. It is a terrible thing, because confidence in the party is the cement of all revolutionary forces.’”

—“A Band of Political Impostors
and Swindlers in Ukraine,”
27 August 2003

In a revolutionary organization “trust” is based on *verification in common political work*. Bolshevism was born of a split over Lenin's insistence in 1903 that no one be extended the trust and responsibility of party membership without direct systematic work in a party committee. By being compelled to carry out systematic revolutionary work under the eye of the party, Serge wrote, “The agent provocateur is a policeman who serves the revolution in spite of himself. Because he must always *appear* to be serving it. But in this question there are no appearances.... There is no way you can be a member halfway or superficially.” For the Kiev con artists, their only “obligation” as members was to cash the checks as they came in.

Along with Zborowski, Malinovsky and other provocateurs, in its article on Ukraine the IG mentions the name of Raymond Molinier, a member of the French Trotskyists in the 1930s. The IG says that

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February 2000: Chechen capital Grozny ravaged by Russian army. IG's Ukraine fusion statement said nothing in defense of Chechens against Russia's genocidal onslaught.

Taaffeite CWI: From Yeltsin's Barricades to the Augean Stables

As many as ten self-styled revolutionary organizations around the world have boasted for several years about their supposed Ukrainian “sections.” Last July, the Ukrainian affiliates of these fraudulent Internationals went up in smoke. It turned out that the Ukrainian section of Peter Taaffe’s London-based Committee for a Workers’ International (CWI), led by one Oleg Vernik, had organized a cynical scam to defraud these groups for money by simultaneously pretending to be the Ukrainian “section” of all of them (see “Con Artists Get Conned—Chickens Come Home to Roost in Kiev,” WV No. 808, 29 August 2003, and article on page 6 of this issue). The CWI leadership protests that it had no responsibility for the swindle. But this operation, given its far-flung scope and glaring visibility before the Ukrainian and Russian left, would have been *impossible* unless the London offices of Peter Taaffe looked the other way.

Now the CWI leadership is engaged in damage control, admitting what it feels obliged to—and not a whit more. A “Statement from the International Secretariat of the CWI on the Ukraine Organisation,” dated 29 August 2003, informed the conned groups that six of the Kiev con artists had been expelled from the CWI. As for the others, the statement declared that “within the ranks of the Ukrainian organisation are some very good comrades, some of whom acquiesced to the dishonest methods!” Oleg Vernik himself was merely suspended, and his expulsion was referred to the next meeting of the CWI’s International Executive Committee (IEC). To our knowledge, no further information has been released by the CWI on their current relationship with Vernik.

The CWI clearly hoped to keep their Russian organization out of the spotlight and even mandated it to join in the cleanup of its Kiev mess. But a leader of the Moscow CWI, Ilya Budraitskis, was cited by three groups—the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP), the International Bolshevik Tendency (BT) and, reportedly, the Internationalist Group (IG)—as one of the con artists. The BT then posted a statement voted by the CWI’s IEC at a 19-24 November 2003 meeting, admitting that Budraitskis had, indeed, presented himself to the LRP, the



Corbis



Yeltsin’s counterrevolutionary rabble outside the White House in Moscow, August 1991. Russian Militant tendency newspaper *Rabochaya Demokratiya* (October 1991) boasted: “On the Barricades in Moscow...” “...And in Leningrad.”

BT and Workers Power’s League for the Fifth International as a member of their putative Kiev group. Assuring the world that Budraitskis “was not motivated by any desire to gain money” and that he is committed “to building the CWI on a principled basis,” they announced that he had been removed from leading bodies of the Russian CWI for at least six months.

The Russian Taaffeites’ real attitude—utter cynicism—is reflected on their Web site where they have carried on a dialogue with critics of their handling of the scandal. To one critic who protested, “You are wrong to think that people will soon forget,” the site administrator responded, “We don’t give a damn who, what or where is forgotten or remembered.” He continued: “No one but losers is interested in the fate of the ‘socialist activists of the BT’ and their ilk. After all, they regarded themselves as the most intelligent and advanced—so, they got what their intelligence and level of development were worth.” When the critic insisted to “know your position on the Ukrainian CWI,” the site administrator replied: “On what basis do you demand a reckoning from us? This is an internal CWI matter.”

The CWI on Yeltsin’s Barricades

The corruption of the Ukrainian and Russian CWI sections flourished in the particularly reactionary setting of the post-counterrevolution ex-USSR. We in the International Communist League fought to the end against the capitalist

counterrevolutions of 1989-92 in the former Soviet bloc on the basis of Trotsky’s program (see “Why We Fought to Defend the Soviet Union,” WV Nos. 809 and 810, 12 and 26 September 2003). A crucial part of our fight in the USSR was a ruthless exposure of the CWI’s prostitution of Trotskyism to counterrevolution.

These days Peter Taaffe claims the Militant tendency opposed Russian president Boris Yeltsin’s pro-imperialist counter-coup in August 1991 that ushered in the period of open counterrevolution, culminating in the creation of a bourgeois state and the restoration of capitalist rule. In a 2002 online publication, *Militant’s Real History*, Taaffe wrote: “We publicly distanced ourselves from the pro-capitalist Yeltsinites, some of whom flooded towards the defence of their hero at the White House in Moscow.” This is a *lie*. They were on Yeltsin’s White House barricades. The front-page headlines of their newspaper, *Rabochaya Demokratiya* (October 1991), trumpeted: “Where We Were,” “On the Barricades in Moscow...” “...And in Leningrad.” They wrote:

“I am a participant in the struggle for democracy. I would like to tell about how this all happened, what I saw with my own eyes.

“On the 19th, Monday...

“I went to the White House and helped build barricades around the monument to the martyrs of the 1905 Revolution.

“It was symbolic that the barricades of the 1905 Revolution stood on the same place where the barricades of the revolution of 1991 arose! Only then, the revolution ended in defeat, whereas, now, in Victory!”

The International Communist League fought for unconditional military defense of the Soviet workers state and its collectivized property forms. In our August 1991 statement, “Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!”, tens of thousands of copies of which were distributed throughout the Soviet Union, we wrote that workers mobilizations should have cleaned out the counterrevolutionary rabble on Yeltsin’s barricades, thus opening the road to proletarian political revolution to sweep the traitors away.

The adherents to Taaffe’s Militant tendency did not just climb on Yeltsin’s barricades—where they were, in any case, not needed. They went to the factories, where these social-democratic traitors tried to *head off* workers mobilizations against Yeltsin and Bush’s “democrats”:

“From the declarations of the [putschist State Emergency Committee] it followed that they were acting against the so-called

‘democrats,’ and that posed the danger of support to the putschists by workers organizations that did not share the principles of the ‘democrats’—the rule of private property and capitalist power. And that is exactly what happened. Some of the workers organizations were getting ready to send greetings of welcome, and at several factories the workers even tried to organize defense detachments in support of the putschists.

“From the morning on, all of our members explained to workers at their workplaces that the position of the Emergency Committee did not coincide with their interests. In addition to this, they connected up with worker activists of other organizations, in order to prevent hasty actions.”

—“Where We Were”

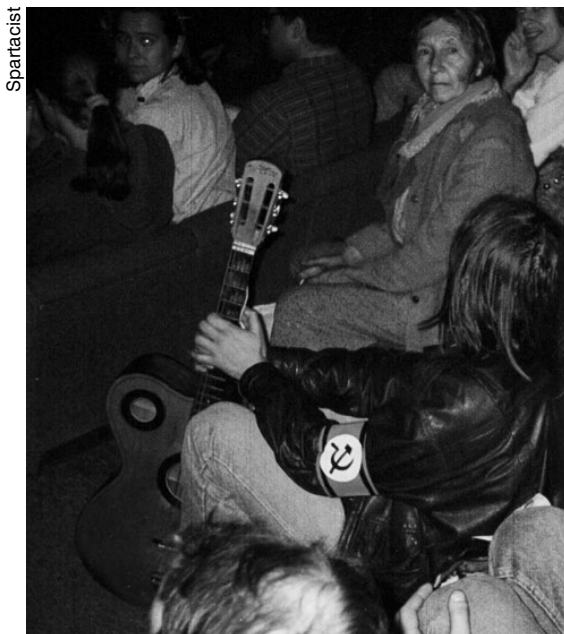
The impulse of these workers was far better than that of the Militant tendency, whose support to Yeltsin put it in the same camp as every imperialist power on the face of the globe. Unfortunately, the stodgy bureaucrats of the putschist “Emergency Committee” sought to prevent the workers from mobilizing against Yeltsin because they too were committed to a program of capitalist restoration and didn’t want in any way to antagonize the imperialist powers. As our August 1991 statement noted, class-conscious Soviet workers who saw the urgent need to halt the capitalist-restorationist forces would have been against Yeltsin but also would have had no illusions in the anti-Yeltsin coup. Pointing to a call by a workers conference that had been initiated the previous month by delegates from 400 major Moscow-area plants to form workers militias for the preservation of socialized property in solidarity with the “Emergency Committee,” we wrote: “A call for workers militias to smash the counterrevolutionary Yeltsinite demonstrations was certainly in order. But if the Emergency Committee had consolidated power, it would have attempted to disband any such workers militias, which would otherwise have inevitably and rapidly escaped its political control. The last thing these degenerate Stalinists wanted to see was the independent mobilization of the working class.”

We fought to oust the Stalinist traitors through a proletarian political revolution based on the defense of the gains of the great 1917 Russian Revolution that remained embodied in the Soviet Union despite its degeneration. The Militant’s opposition to the Stalinist coup-makers flowed directly from their line that anything, including capitalist restoration, was preferable to “Stalinist totalitarianism.”

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Taaffeites welcomed fascists of National Bolshevik Party to their 1998 May Day Moscow forum (right). Above: National Bolshevik Party depiction of “ideal” member, modeled after Hitler’s stormtroopers.



(continued from page 6)

Molinier “came up with one opportunist gimmick after another, and made his living through bill collecting,” and then mentions that he was expelled from the Fourth International. But contrary to the impression left by the IG, that was not the reason for Molinier’s expulsion. No charges were ever presented against him on these grounds. Perhaps the reason Norden does not give the straight story on Molinier is because he bears some political resemblance to the latter. Molinier was a political adventurer who was all too willing to cut corners programmatically for short-term organizational advantage. Despairing of the hard political struggle which had to be waged against popular-frontism in France, he set up his own newspaper in 1935 and was expelled for this by the Trotskyists. When the Molinier group launched its fake “mass paper” which promised to “speak the language of the factories and the fields,” to “tell of the misery which reigns there,” to “express its passions and rouse to revolt,” Trotsky had the following scathing comment:

“This is a very laudable intention, although the masses know perfectly well their own misery and their feelings of revolt (stifled by the patriotic apparatuses with the aid of the [centrist] Pivertists). What the masses can demand of a newspaper is a *clear program and a correct orientation*.”

—Leon Trotsky, “What Is a ‘Mass Paper’?” (1935)

IG Spits on Revolutionary Continuity of ICL

Stalin noted that paper would take anything printed on it, but the IG was so anxious to rush through a fusion that they didn’t even bother to check their putative marriage partner’s paper positions. The Fall 2001 *Internationalist* ran a graphic captioned, “RKO posters raised LFI’s call for Arab/Hebrew workers revolution.” The accompanying fusion declaration boasted: “Late last year, as courageous Arab youth armed with nothing but stones were being slaughtered in the West Bank and Gaza, the LFI and RKO coordinated our participation in protest actions denouncing the Zionist murderers, including putting out posters calling to ‘Defend the Palestinian People’ and ‘For Arab-Hebrew Workers Revolution! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!’” But the placards appearing in the graphic contain neither the slogan “For Arab-Hebrew Workers Revolution!” nor “For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!” Now, *after* the scandal has been publicized, Norden acknowledges that his bloc partners “did send us leaflets they claimed to have issued in antiwar protests, but they did not have the position of the LFI on Israel-Palestine, which had been a subject of considerable discussion.” A little late!

But at least they had a formally correct line on Chechnya, right? After all, military defense of Chechnya against the Russian-led bloody colonial war is the cutting edge issue for Marxists in the region. Russia’s war against the largely Islamic population in Chechnya has been central to ideologically reinforcing Great Russian chauvinism, which is a key prop for the new capitalist regime. This ideology asserts itself as well in much of eastern Ukraine, where centuries of tsarist Russian domination had far deeper roots

than in western Ukraine, and where today a substantial Russian population resides. But the IG’s fusion statement not only failed to take a stand on the side of the Chechens’ just war against Putin’s genocidal onslaught, it said *not one word* on the war at all!

At the time of their Ukrainian fusion, the IG boasted that it was the “first realization” of their perspective of international revolutionary regroupment. Indeed! While the IG occasionally likes to claim that it stands on the work of the ICL when their leaders were members, their fusion statement with the RKO was premised on the rejection and disappearance of the ICL’s proud history in the former Soviet Union, including Ukraine. The fusion statement proclaimed that the RKO was composed of people who “publicly announced their intention to establish the Fourth International section” in 1989. But the IG could not, and did not, say what the members of the “RKO” were doing at this time, a period in which the ICL was actively fighting against counterrevolution and for the program of revolutionary Trotskyism. In the summer of 1989, spontaneous strikes which erupted in the Soviet coal fields against the ravages of Gorbachev’s “market socialism” dramatically demonstrated the potential for militant working-class struggle. A year later, two comrades of the ICL intervened at a conference of Soviet miners held in



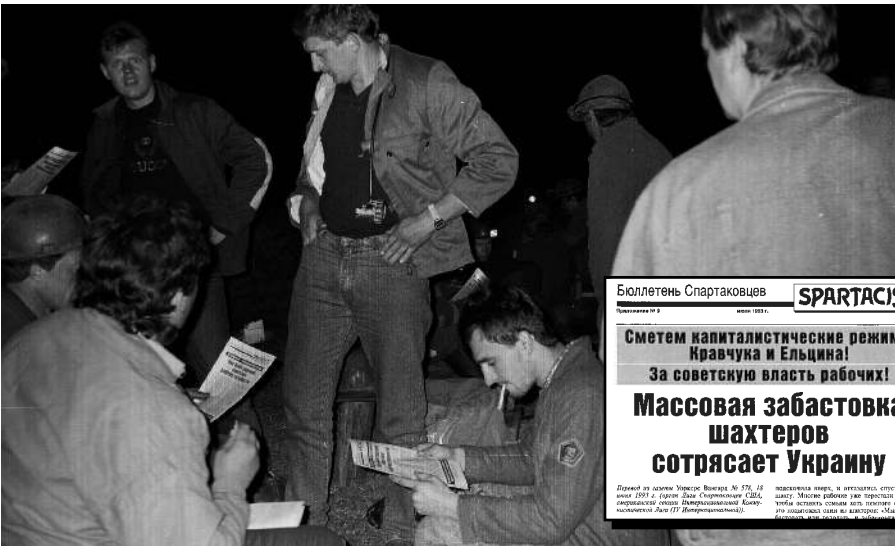
WV Photo

Martha Phillips 1948-1992

Donetsk, Ukraine. Politically it was the ICL on the one side and, on the other, British embassy representatives, the AFL-CIO’s Freedom House, the Russian fascist NTS and the scab British “Union of Democratic Miners” (UDM), an anti-Communist outfit formed and financed in an attempt to break the British coal strike of 1984-85 led by Arthur Scargill’s National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). The ICL spiked an attempt by the UDM and their imperialist advisers to get the Soviet miners to denounce Scargill.

When the hour of mortal danger to the USSR arrived in August 1991, the ICL was unique on the left in seeking to mobilize the Soviet workers against the counterrevolutionary coup of Yeltsin and George Bush Sr. As capitalism consolidated itself, we sought to drive home to the working people of the ex-USSR the lessons of this catastrophe. In June 1993 the ICL intervened in a massive strike of coal miners and other workers in Ukraine, selling over 2,400 pieces of Spartacist literature at one rally alone at the peak of a strike that represented the first proletarian challenge to the capitalist states erected in the wake of the counter-revolutionary destruction of the USSR.

The IG concluded its fusion statement with the empty boast that in Ukraine it



Spartacist

ICL Moscow Station distributed Russian-language supplement titled “How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled” at June 1993 Ukraine miners strike. Spartacist supplement on miners strike (inset).

would “continue the work of the tens of thousands of Bolshevik-Leninists who fell under Stalinist, fascist and bourgeois-‘democratic’ repression.” Shamefully, the statement made no mention of the murder in February 1992 of Martha Phillips, the ICL’s leading spokesman in Moscow. The authorities stonewalled while we tried in vain to find out who killed our comrade. Nor does the IG say anything about the ICL’s expulsion from Ukraine in 1995. The ICL was lyingly accused by the Ukrainian government of seeking “the overthrow of the government” and our members were banned from the country. The banning of the ICL was splashed across television screens and the press throughout Ukraine and Russia. This was done not only to muzzle us but to further intimidate the left and workers movement. We organized international protests, urging leftists and workers organizations to take a stand in defense of our rights and theirs.

Presumably the leaders of the IG, who were members of our organization throughout this period, ought to have at least been interested in what their bloc partners had done in response to this state repression of the ICL, and in fact this would be one way of testing the authenticity of any group that claimed to have been Trotskyist since 1989. But the IG fusion statement was smugly silent on this, as it was on the other work of the ICL in Ukraine. As irony would have it, the Ukraine hustlers of today were then, as the Ukrainian section of the CWI, the ICL’s main leftist opponent in Kiev, where we were engaged in regular political debate at Kiev University. They not only did not protest our expulsion, but they were somehow able to continue their operation at Kiev University, where longtime CWI honcho Oleg Vernik is evidently now an assistant lecturer, without a hitch for almost another decade!

In the fusion statement the only comment made by the “RKO comrades” about the ICL and its work is that we allegedly refused “to debate programmatic questions.” No one who has ever met with a member of the ICL would believe this statement! What this really shows is that the IG blindly embraced these dubious elements precisely because they *denounced* the ICL!

“League for a Fraudulent International”

The IG’s methods are hardly new, as attested by their very origins in breaking

from the ICL. A case in point was their embrace of Luta Metalúrgica (LM), now the LQB, as they were departing the ICL. LM had originated as a proletarian formation with a militant history in the steel industry center of Volta Redonda (near Rio de Janeiro). But future IG leader Norden and his sidekick Negrete sought to undermine our struggle with LM for programmatic clarity from start to finish, from the September 1994 Declaration of Fraternal Relations to their constant attempts to obstruct political fights, to their ultimate bloc with LM’s amorphous centrism against the ICL.

The 1994 declaration—wholly drafted by Norden and Negrete, who went on to become *líder mínimo* of the IG—was deliberately cast to portray a broad, deep and synthetic programmatic agreement that simply did not exist. At the same time it virtually ignored issues such as permanent revolution, the Trotskyist program as it applies to countries of combined and uneven development. This meant that the declaration did not probe areas in which one might likely discover differences, such as possible adaptations to Latin American nationalism or, for that matter, insufficient vigor in opposing the depredations of imperialism. Had we accepted the methodology of Norden and Negrete, we would have accommodated to a bogus “internationalism” in which claimed political agreement is simply a cover for the various national sections to carry out whatever opportunist line they see fit, varying according to the differing terrains on which they do work. As Trotsky noted:

“By its very nature opportunism is nationalistic, since it rests on the local and temporary needs of the proletariat and not on its historical tasks. Opportunists find international control intolerable and they reduce their international ties as much as possible to harmless formalities....”

—“The Defense of the Soviet Republic and the Opposition” (September 1929)

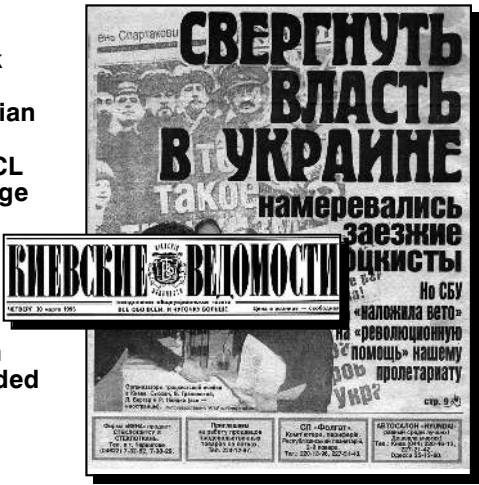
The idea that fraternal relations are a testing process for solid programmatic agreement, requiring ongoing political struggle, was completely alien to Norden. For more than a year after we initiated fraternal relations with LM, there was no progress toward a programmatically based fusion. We then invited a leading representative of LM to an authoritative January 1996 meeting of our International Executive Committee. LM agreed on the need to transform itself from a trade-union fraction without a party into a Trotskyist propaganda group in Brazil, through an agenda of common work—publishing a party propaganda organ, extending LM’s presence to a major metropolitan center and seeking to win new recruits from the younger generation. At this meeting we learned that a municipal workers union whose leadership was braintrustered by LM included a substantial proportion of cops. Indeed LM’s slate in the union had received the vote of the majority of these same cops. We fought with LM to wage a campaign to get the cops out of the union and invested significant resources to maintain an ICL representative in Brazil.

After months of intensive discussion, it became clear that what LM/LQB wanted

WV Photo



1995 New York City protest against Ukrainian government witchhunt of ICL (left). Front-page Ukrainian newspaper (30 March 1995) smear: “Overthrow Government in Ukraine, Intended Touring Trotskyists.”



CWI...

(continued from page 7)

Finding itself in the camp of imperialist-inspired counterrevolution was nothing new for this outfit. They opposed the Soviet Red Army intervention in Afghanistan against CIA-backed Islamic reaction, hailed the clerical and anti-Semitic Solidarność “union” in Poland that sought to overthrow the Polish deformed workers state in 1981, and advocated the capitalist reunification of Germany in 1989-90 (see Spartacist pamphlet *Militant Labour’s Touching Faith in the Capitalist State* [1994]).

From “Democratic” Counterrevolution to the “Red”/Brown Swamp

As Yeltsin’s “democratic” capitalist *social counterrevolution* descended into economic collapse and ethnic slaughters, Russia’s new ruling capitalist gangs increasingly portrayed these horrors as a *national degradation* inflicted by the usual suspects: foreigners, Jews, minorities, etc. This was the ideological basis for the emergence of the “red”/brown opposition coalition that encompassed everything from fascists and monarchists to so-called leftists. The International Communist League answered the rising brown tide by publishing an issue of our Russian-language *Byulleten’ Spartakovtsev* especially devoted to the role of a Leninist party as the people’s tribune, defending women, gays, Jews, minorities and oppressed nationalities, all the targets of the returning medievalist bigotry of Russia’s benighted past. The Russian Militant swam *with* the brown tide, tailing after the main bastion of the “red”/brown coalition, the grotesquely misnamed Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF), which was Russia’s largest party.

Spartacist



More recently, commenting on the 7 December 2003 Russian Duma (parliament) elections that handed the KPRF a severe defeat, the CWI’s Rob Jones posted on their English-language Web site: “We...called on workers and youth to not support any of the parties supported by big business—including the CP—but called on workers to organise their own independent class organisations, to assist working class struggle” (“Election Victory for Pro-Putin United Russia Party,” 10 December 2003).

This is another lie. The real position of the Russian Taaffeites, currently named “Socialist Resistance,” is captured in their June 2003 Russian-language declaration, “Parliamentary Elections in Russia: The Orientation of Socialist Resistance.” There the Russian Taaffeites hid behind the fact that there are two tiers of candidates in the elections, party-slate and individual. While for the party-slate tier they declared that “there is no way we could call for a vote to such a party” as the KPRF, for the individual candidacies they *endorsed voting for KPRF “worker” candidates*: “In each area, after candidacies are put forward, worker candidates (if there are such) will be selected from trade unions, the Russian Labor Party, the RKRП, *the KPRF* or other parties, that Socialist Resistance will support” (emphasis added).

Their declaration also reveals that the Russian Taaffeites had a standing policy of giving support (direct or indirect) to the KPRF:

“In the previous Duma elections of 1993 and 1998, our slogan was, ‘Not one vote to the Right!’ This meant a call to not vote for bourgeois, that is, rightist parties, and logically, *to vote for a leftist party*. But how to determine what party is leftist? We answered as follows. Since you have made the conscious choice to not vote for bourgeois parties, make a second conscious choice. *If you believe the KPRF is a leftist party—vote for it. And better yet, join it* and verify if that

is really the case.... We ourselves after all have no illusions in these parties; we believe that it is necessary to vote for a genuine Labor Party. There is no such party? That means it is necessary to build it! But today on the so-called left there in fact remains only one party—the KPRF.” (emphasis added)

Electoral support to the KPRF is not a tactical question. The KPRF is on the other side of the class line. From its inception in 1993, the KPRF was always an outright bourgeois party, hostile to working-class actions. It was the main channel for diverting anger away from capitalist counterrevolution to racism and anti-Semitism—the “socialism of fools”—at home and behind Russian imperial ambitions abroad. In October 1998, when prominent KPRF leader General Albert Makashov repeatedly declared, “I will round up all the Yids and send them to the next world!” the KPRF-dominated Duma refused to even consider rebuking him. When the Chechen people won de facto independence by defeating Yeltsin’s barbarous colonial-style First Chechen War of 1994-96, the KPRF *spearheaded opposition* to the Peace Treaty as a disgrace to Russian regional imperial ambitions in the Caucasus and Central Asia. By 2001, the KPRF ruled most of the Russian regions, and in 1998 a KPRF member was first deputy prime minister in Yeltsin’s cabinet. The KPRF’s party slate candidates in the 2003 Duma elections included one billionaire and 16 millionaires; among them were barons from Russia’s then-largest oil giant Yukos, including the former chairman, Sergei Muravlenko! No class-conscious worker would have *ever* called for a vote to the despicable, bourgeois KPRF.

The Russian and Ukrainian CWI: In Bed with Fascists

The Taaffeites’ adaptation to plebeian Russian nationalism led them far beyond

the electoral arena of the KPRF. They courted and consorted with fascists in Russia and Ukraine! Peter Taaffe proclaims that the CWI is leading a movement *against* the National Bolshevik Party (NBP) fascists in Russia, because he *knows* how scandalous the CWI’s real connection to them is. So Taaffe presents himself to the world on the Internet as having been a target of NBP disruption when he gave a speech in Moscow on May Day 1998:

“The CWI at the time were heavily involved in an anti-fascist campaign whose main target was the so-called National Bolshevik Party led by Limonov—a right-wing nationalist organization which attracted a lot of youth by using radical, apparently left symbols such as Che Guevara but whose main ideologues were fascist. They use for example the Nazi armbands, the only difference being they have replaced the swastika with the hammer and sickle. When some of this group turned up at the meeting the Chair announced they would not be allowed to speak. Half way through the meeting they started heckling, accusing us of being Jews.”

—Peter Taaffe, *Militant’s Real History*

Actually, Taaffe’s problem at that meeting was not with the NBP, but rather with the fact that one of our comrades in attendance denounced the presence of the fascists and walked out in protest. The NBP was clearly invited. As we noted in our article “‘Little England’ Labourites Embrace Russian Fascists” (WV No. 696, 11 September 1998), the CWI distributed on May Day 1998 a grotesque appeal in *Levy Avangard*, the paper of its Russian group, titled “How to Understand the NBP.” This sickening piece appeals to the fascists, “In which world do you want to live, my dear friend?” It then expresses “pity” for those fascists who want to preserve “everything in the form of an ever-rotating swastika.” To those fascists who want to live “in a world of true Man, acknowledging reality,” the article concludes with the invitation, “why are you still not with us?”

Taaffe now disputes our exposure of how they welcomed the fascists at their 1998 May Day forum. Here is an independent account of the incident, which was published in an anarchist journal:

“After the session began, [G.], who was attending as a guest (representing a competing Trotskyist tendency, the ‘Spartacists’), began to openly express indignation at the presence in the hall of members of the NBP. Calling them reactionaries and ‘semi-fascists’ (the only thing unclear was why only ‘semi’), he declared that he was leaving the hall, not wishing to be in the same room with them. To our astonishment, the wrath of

continued on page 10

was a Potemkin village “International” which would finance and otherwise support their unprincipled trade-union maneuvers, including an LM leader’s position as an unelected “adviser” to this cop-ridden union. (See “A Break in Fraternal Relations with Luta Metalúrgica,” WV No. 648, 5 July 1996.) But for the IG the idea that we would break with a Latin American group with a “base” in the trade unions on the basis of principle was unthinkable.

Pabloites of the Second Mobilization

In their article on the Kiev fiasco, the IG asserts: “The appearance of shady characters is particularly frequent after a defeat of the proletariat, when the workers movement is in a phase of decomposition. This is the situation today in the countries of the former Soviet Union.” It is indeed likely that there is a link between what happened in Kiev and the fact of capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR. But since its inception, the IG itself has made it a cardinal point of principle to deny the enormous negative impact that the restoration of capitalism in the former Soviet Union and East Europe has had on the consciousness of the working class of the world.

Our aim is the fight for new October Revolutions. But the disproportion

between this purpose and the current political consciousness of the working class, youth and the left internationally is great. Today the mass of workers and even most leftists do not connect their struggles with the goal of proletarian revolution. For Norden, the gap between what we strive for and the current consciousness of the working class became a yawning abyss, leading him to defect from our organization.

In a letter to Norden a couple of months before his exit from our ranks, comrade Joseph Seymour pointed out:

“I believe you do not accept that, beginning in the late 1970s, there has occurred a *historic retrogression* in the political consciousness of the working class and left internationally. This development both conditioned the counterrevolution in the Soviet bloc and has been reinforced by it. That’s why we now encounter anarchists rather than ostensible Trotskyists or Maoists among the mainstream of young radicals in France.... “The main point is that organizational affiliation follows from and is based on political understanding and agreement, which cannot be achieved at an arbitrary or forced-march pace. Stop trying to get rich quick. It ain’t that kind of period.” —“Norden’s ‘Group’: Shamefaced Defectors from Trotskyism,” *International Bulletin* No. 38, June 1996

Norden evidenced a deepening pessimism about the ability of our organization and its revolutionary program to have

any impact in the post-Soviet order, expressed in ever more frequent broadsides against the ICL’s supposed “abstract” or “passive” propagandism. In reality Norden saw elements of communist consciousness where none existed, leading to an increasingly desperate chase after alien social forces.

We have described this as “Pabloism of the second mobilization,” referring to the liquidationist current that destroyed the Fourth International in the early 1950s. Faced with the onset of the Cold War and the creation of Stalinist-ruled deformed workers states in East Europe, the Pabloites denied the need to construct Trotskyist parties and instead sought to pressure the Stalinists to outline a “roughly” revolutionary course. Norden’s latter-



ICL banner raised in Moscow at 1991 demonstration on anniversary of October Revolution. Historic ICL leaflet mass-distributed in USSR proclaimed: “Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!”

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CWI...

(continued from page 9)

the gathering fell not on the heads of the ‘Natsbols’ [National Bolsheviks], but on the ‘disrupter of the peace.’ On the faces of Trotskyists of other tendencies appeared smirks, and taunts of ‘good riddance!’ broke out; Mark, the comrade in arms of the historian Rogovin ([North-ite] ‘International Committee of the Fourth International’), declared, ‘Good Bye!’ One of the ‘Limonovites’ clearly said, ‘Leprous Yid!’ There was not the slightest reaction to this. There was no protest whatsoever from [leaders of the Russian CWI] Shibanov and Jones, who responded to the fascists’ outburst with complete indifference. But then, when [G.] returned to the hall to take a couple of pictures of the National Bolsheviks in the hall, Shibanov jumped up and made for him, possibly wanting to seize the film. But the ‘Spartacist’ left the gathering in time.”

—Vladimir Sirogin, “May Day à la Trotskyists (Notes of an Eyewitness).” *Naperekor*, Summer 1998

The May 1998 meeting was not an isolated instance. Last year, the CWI conducted an ongoing dialogue with the NBP on a discussion page of the Russian CWI Web site titled “Question by a Natsbol to Marxists.” When the NBP physically attacked local Taaffeites at a Revolution Day demonstration on 7 November 2003 in the city of Yaroslavl, the Russian CWI responded by opening yet another new discussion site, “Questions to Members of the

NBP.” Seeking a truce and a continuation of the online dialogue, the Taaffeites’ postings included an assurance to the NBP: “We are not about to start up any wars.”

This came amid escalating fascist attacks. Within days of the NBP attack on the Taaffeites, a dormitory at Moscow’s Lumumba University erupted into flames (see “Racism and Capitalist Counterrevolution—Moscow Foreign Student Dorm Fire Kills 43,” WV No. 818, 23 January). The students were under constant assault by skinheads, and many of them say the skinheads started the fire.

The Russian Taaffeites’ pursuit of fascist youth may have yielded them no more than humiliation and beatings, but the Ukrainian CWI “Workers Resistance” (RS) *actually collaborated openly with the fascists!* On 15 February 2003, the day of coordinated international protest against the U.S. war in Iraq, the Ukrainian CWI posted on their official Web site a statement signed by them and, among others, the fascist Ukrainian Brotherhood (Odessa) [Bratstvo]. There is no ambiguity about the nature of this group. The Russian Taaffeites themselves, in a Web posting dated 6 April 2004, call Bratstvo “a fascistic organization,” the Ukrainian analogue of the Russian National Bolshevik Party.

In Full View of the State

The impunity with which the CWI’s Ukrainian franchise was able to carry out its scams is highly suspicious. The Rus-

sian, and especially the Ukrainian, bourgeois states persecute opposition movements with a vengeance. As we wrote, this is something we experienced directly: “We fought to the last barricades against Yeltsin-Bush capitalist counterrevolution and fought to build a real organization in the USSR. And we paid the price. The Kremlin bureaucracy and then the capitalist regimes that replaced it knew the ICL was for real and witchhunted us with a vengeance. Our comrades were arrested, terrorized, attacked and hounded by the fascists and Stalinists alike. In 1992 the senior leader of the ICL’s Moscow Station, Martha Phillips, was murdered at her post; the authorities stonewalled while we tried in vain to find out who killed her. In 1995, we were repressed and officially banned from Ukraine.”

—“Con Artists Get Conned—
Chickens Come Home to Roost in Kiev,” WV No. 808, 29 August 2003

The Ukrainian political police even carried out an old-fashioned book-burning of the Russian-language edition of Trotsky’s *The Communist International After Lenin* that we published and extensively distributed throughout the former USSR. The ICL received statements of solidarity against our banishment from Ukraine from as far away as South Africa. But next door in Moscow, the CWI said nothing, and from its Ukrainian section, the silence was even more deafening.

Today the Ukrainian Security Service is at it again. This time it is not the Trotskyist ICL, but a murky “red”/brown youth organization in Odessa and Niko-

laev that is charged with, among other things, plotting to overthrow the existing order. The eleven Russian and Ukrainian citizens rounded up in December 2002 have been subjected to such heinous tortures that four of them have attempted suicide, and one died of his injuries in November 2003. Yet Vernik and his ilk were able to operate with impunity for over 12 years in full view of the bourgeois state. What explains that? Either the *politics* of the Kiev CWI are as gentle to the Ukrainian bourgeois state as Peter Taaffe’s call for control of the police by “democratic committees” in London, and/or their politics and practices are known to be fraudulent in multiple ways.

The corruption unearthed in the Taaffeites’ Ukrainian and Russian groups is a damning indictment of the real program behind their orthodox-sounding phraseology. The cynicism of the Kiev con artists did not simply fall from the sky. It was nurtured by the CWI’s pursuit of imperialist-backed “democratic” counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union. It is just as much a product of the CWI’s systematic prostitution of Trotskyism as is their conciliation of openly fascist elements like the Russian National Bolshevik Party and Ukrainian Bratstvo. Exposing the Taaffeites’ embrace of the forces of capitalist counterrevolution in the land of the October Revolution is part and parcel of the International Communist League’s fight to reforge Trotsky’s Fourth International. ■

Spain...

(continued from page 5)

strike against the CNT-FAI headquarters. The essence of this pathetic episode and the anarchist betrayal is perfectly described by Felix Morrow in the following quotation from his book, *Revolution and Counterrevolution in Spain* (1938):

“Class collaboration, indeed, lies concealed in the heart of anarchist philosophy. It is hidden, during periods of reaction, by anarchist hatred of capitalist oppression. But, in a revolutionary period of dual power, it must come to the surface. For then the capitalist smilingly offers to share in building the new world. And the anarchist, being opposed to ‘all dictatorships,’ including dictatorship of the proletariat, will require of the capitalist merely that he throw off the capitalist outlook, to which he agrees, naturally, the better to prepare the crushing of the workers.”

Even one of the most radical anarchists, Buenaventura Durruti, a prominent military leader, expressed his desire “to accept the agreements only provisionally, that is to say until the freeing of Saragossa.” When the plenum ended, the anarchists proposed that Companys create a Central Committee of Militias, which included representatives from the CNT and UGT trade-union federations, the PSOE and the POUM. However, it also included representatives from bourgeois parties like the Catalan Esquerra (Companys’ party) and the Republican Union.

The Committee became, then, a tool for class collaboration and ultimate control by the Catalan government over the

militias. A Marxist revolutionary party would have fought to *expel the bourgeois representatives from the Central Committee of Anti-Fascist Militias and for the centralization of the militias under the command of workers and soldiers committees*. Durruti and his anarchist collective “Nosotros,” inside the CNT-FAI, were aware of the dangers of class collaboration inside the Anti-Fascist Committee. However, they decided to follow its orders and, as promptly as July 24, a militia column, with Durruti at the head of it, was dispatched to the city of Saragossa to fight against the right-wing forces headed by Franco. In that way, Companys and the CNT bureaucracy got rid of the anarchist elements that could have caused problems for their alliance in Catalonia.

But what about the workers collectives? In Barcelona, workers collectives were created in thousands of enterprises, from key industries like shipping, mines, electric power, transportation, gas and water to others like perfumeries, breweries and small workshops. These workers collectives achieved outstanding economic goals, particularly in the industries that supplied munitions for the militias. But how did these cooperatives work? Gaston Leval, a prominent CNT militant and French anarchist, notes in *Collectives in the Spanish Revolution* (1975):

“Too often in Barcelona and Valencia workers in each undertaking took over the factory, the works, or the workshop, the machines, raw materials, and taking advantage of the continuation of the money system and normal capitalist commercial relations, organized production on their own account, selling for

their own benefit the produce of their labour....

“There was not, therefore, true socialisation, but a workers’ neo-capitalism, a self-managment straddling capitalism and socialism, which we maintain would not have occurred had the Revolution been able to extend itself fully under the direction of our Syndicates.”

—quoted in “Leninism and Workers Control,” WV No. 162, 17 June 1977

In other words, these autonomous committees functioned under the premise of competition for markets and suppliers. Those factories that had inherited advanced technology and abundant raw materials had better opportunities to compete in the market than did others which didn’t have those conveniences. Such economic relations ultimately tended to recreate *the conditions of a primitive form of market capitalism*.

These collectives were also centralized organs on a local level. In each workplace, an assembly of workers elected a committee, which would elect a manager to oversee the day-to-day running of the workplace. Within each industry there was an Industrial Council which had representatives of the two main unions (CNT and UGT) and representatives from the local committees, where the CNT and UGT were also prominent. However, bourgeois representatives from parties like the Esquerra and the Republican Left were part of these councils also. It is important to understand that in the absence of a planned, socialized economy, run by mass workers organizations (i.e., soviets), where left political parties could have full representation, what the CNT and UGT were doing was at best administering the workers collectives on behalf of the bourgeois popular front. Meanwhile, the government got ready to take the factories away from the anarchists and social democrats at the next opportunity.

Moreover, some of these committees depended heavily upon credits from banks and government subsidies. Nonetheless, the anarchists didn’t have any plan to take control of the banks and *they didn’t do it*, which meant condemning those collectives dependent on bank credits to their ultimate disappearance. At the beginning of 1937, the government and the banks practically strangled these collectives, resorting to economic sabotage. The supply of raw materials was denied which ultimately stopped production in these factories.

As I said before, the CNT and FAI

didn’t see the phenomenon of workers management in the factories as a temporary condition, but as the realization of the anarchist economic ideal, autonomous productive units. In contrast, *true revolutionaries would have resolutely defended workers management as a kernel of dual power. But they would have also called to oust the bourgeois representatives from the management of the collectives, while explaining that true socialization was only possible through a centralized, planned economy*. A small group of Trotskyists called the Bolshevik-Leninist Section of Spain, affiliated to Trotsky’s Movement for the Fourth International, issued a leaflet in January 1937 titled “Hail the Workers, Peasants and Combatants’ Committees!” in the midst of the economic boycott against the committees. The leaflet read:

“The bourgeois offensive against the committees must be responded to by strengthening them, forming them where they don’t exist, extending their influence and coordinating between them in assemblies or congresses that study and resolve, independent of the bourgeois political power, those problems...posed by the necessities of the war and revolution.

“It is fundamentally necessary that the committees resolve the problems of nationalization and centralization of the private banks, unified command and military discipline....

“The committees...will take over leadership of the country, annulling the organs of the capitalist state...and establishing in their place the proletarian state based on the committees and on socialized property; establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie.”

—Agustín Guillamón, *Documentación histórica del trotskismo español (1936-1948)* (Ediciones de La Torre, 1996)

The Bolshevik-Leninists propagandized for a perspective to transform the workers committees into mass organs of workers power at a national level, as incipient organs of workers rule—i.e., soviets—where political debate would be open to all left tendencies. The situation of dual power couldn’t last indefinitely; it had to be solved on the side of the workers or against them. The Bolshevik-Leninists had the program to solve it on the side of the proletariat. However, in January 1937 they were brand new and by May had only 30 people, without enough authority among the working class as a political tendency, although most of their leaders had fought in the POUM militias.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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German Spartacists Give Critical Support to Taaffeites in Rostock Elections

We reprint below a 27 May leaflet issued by the Spartakist Workers Party, German section of the International Communist League.

In the local elections in Rostock we Spartakists say: **Vote SAV/Slate Against Social Cutbacks! No vote to the SPD and PDS!** In the important issues of this election, the SAV [Socialist Alternative, German affiliate of the Committee for a Workers' International (CWI) of Peter Taaffe] is running as an independent proletarian alternative to the bourgeois workers parties PDS [Party of Democratic Socialism] and SPD [Social Democratic Party of Germany]. Their election campaign is oriented to the real needs of workers, refugees, leftists and also partially those of immigrants, and it draws a crude class line. A victory for the SAV/Slate Against Social Cutbacks is in the interests of all Rostock workers, leftists, unemployed people, women, immigrants and refugees. For example, they demand work and job training for all and a struggle against social cutbacks and sweatshop wages. They demand voting rights and equal rights for everyone who lives here. In their election statement they write, correctly: "No matter whether in Rostock, MV [Mecklenburg Vorpommern] or Berlin—everywhere the PDS is in government, they participate in cutbacks and layoffs." And regarding the PDS they say: "The PDS is not a socialist opposition."

The SAV candidacy in Rostock differs in one centrally important respect from their candidacy in Hamburg in February. In Rostock they draw a class line between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and give workers the chance to vote in their own class interests. That is why, in spite of criticisms, they are worth supporting. By contrast, in Hamburg the SAV ran together with the PDS and the petty-bourgeois ex-Green formation, Regenbogen [Rainbow], and subordinated themselves to Rainbow's anti-working-class program. Making deals with petty-bourgeois or even bourgeois formations is a trademark of the SAV and its co-thinkers internationally. In the elections in the U.S.A., they call for a vote to the bourgeois politician Ralph Nader, who has absolutely nothing to do with the working class. In Nigeria they are members of the purely bourgeois National Conscience Party (NCP). In fact, such "broadness"—achieved by unprincipled deals with anti-worker forces—cripples class struggle.

CORRECTION

In "Free Anarchist Sherman Austin!" (WV No. 821, excerpted in *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*, Spring 2004), we wrote about a 24 January 2002 invasion of Sherman Austin's home by the L.A. Joint Terrorism Task Force, the FBI, the Secret Service, the LAPD and L.A. sheriffs. We stated, "The warrant also contained information detailing Austin's participation in demonstrations dating back to when he was 14 years old." In fact our source (*Revolutionary Worker*, 26 October 2003) stated that the warrant "described Sherman's participation in protests and demonstrations and contained information about him from when he was 14 years old!" It did *not* state that Austin participated in any political demonstrations dating back to when he was 14 years old.

Rostock is a city which has been devastated by the capitalist counterrevolution which destroyed the DDR [East German] deformed workers state 14 years ago. The SAV election statement outlines the desperate social situation: "The lights are going out in Rostock...." Mass unemployment is officially at 18.6 percent, and the future promises working people even more layoffs, social cutbacks and deeper poverty and degradation. And many of the SAV candidates are themselves affected by this. Who bears responsibility for the capitalist reunification in 1990? The SPD drove forward the counterrevolution in the East, while in West Germany they tried to prevent class struggle.

The [ruling Stalinists of the] SED-PDS attempted to hinder independent proletarian mobilization in the East and then went along with Gorbachev, then Soviet president, who at the end of January 1990 gave the green light to capitalist reunification. On January 30, the SED-PDS prime minister of the DDR, Hans Modrow, issued the government declaration "Germany United Fatherland." In 1989-90 in the DDR, we and the SAV were on opposite sides of the barricades. We fought for a proletarian political revolution in the DDR, for workers councils to take power. We said *no* to capitalist reunification. The SAV/CWI supported capitalist counterrevolution, e.g., with "SPD: Go on the offensive!"

The SAVers like to argue that this was only a mistake by their leadership of that time. But their current attitude to the DDR reveals this as an excuse. The counterrevolution in 1990 doesn't exist in the SAV election statement. The only time the SAV mentions the DDR they denounce it as having been a "Stalinist state." This means nothing other than equating the DDR deformed workers state with the Stalinist bureaucracy, which in the end choked it to death. The Stalinists were a parasitic bureaucratic caste; they didn't own the factories, which were the property of the working class. Today the SAV refuses to defend the deformed workers states of China and North Korea against capitalism.

The anti-Communist anti-Stasi [political police of the DDR] witchhunt of the '90s served to smash DDR industry; all leftist resistance to the destruction of millions of jobs was to be strangled. The SAV didn't defend a single individual against this witchhunt! We defended not only rank-and-file SED members or leftists, who were to be swept out of the way because they wouldn't eat crow. We also defended the ex-DDR bureaucrats because they were charged with the wrong crimes by the wrong class. The capitalist class brought charges against them because they represented the workers state which arose out of the Red Army smashing the Nazi regime. In its election program, the SAV reaches into the social-democratic bag of dirty tricks when it attacks Lochotzke, not as a capitalist but as an ex-member of the Stasi. The ugly campaign against supposed "DDR killer commandos" in the (then West German) DKP [Communist Party], which is being dredged up again, shows how dangerous the anti-Communist witchhunt is. This campaign is intended to intimidate the entire left. We say: Defend the DKP!

If life in socially devastated Rostock is bad for the residents in general, for refugees it is hell. The SAV election statement demands "Voting rights and equal rights for everyone who lives here" and

"No deportation of foreigners from this city or anywhere else." For us, this is also an important reason why workers should vote for the SAV/Slate: to be able to fight for its own interests, the working class must actively fight the racist poison which is used by the capitalists to divide them. That's why we intervene into strikes and social protests with the key demand for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and against the racist "war on terror," which is directed first against immigrants of Muslim background.

In its electoral program, the SAV calls for: "Not an inch to the fascists; instead, mass mobilization against Nazi parades by trade unions and anti-fascist organizations." But for them, mobilizations of the working class against the Nazis are not counterposed to rotten appeals to the bourgeois state to take action against the Nazis. So they are capable of explaining, just one paragraph earlier: "But the city, along with administrative-legal steps, should above all mobilize the Rostock population to prevent Nazi parades." The city or city administration is part of the bourgeois state, whose core is made up of the police, army and courts, as Marx and Lenin explained. It is not neutral. It serves the capitalist class. The Nazis serve the capitalists as a reserve army in case an insurrectionary proletariat threatens to slip out of social-democratic control and be no longer controllable by police and army. That's why the capitalists' state cannot be used to stop the Nazis.

The Nazi pogrom in the Rostock district of Lichtenhagen in the summer of 1992, under police protection, brutally demonstrated this. In their paper last year, the SAV supported cop "protests" in Hesse out of the same illusory faith in the class neutrality of the bourgeois-democratic state. As we explained, better working conditions for the police (like more brutal truncheons, better arms, larger cannons...) are squarely directed against the interests of workers, leftists and refugees who, after all, are directly repressed by these cops. Likewise, the SAV doesn't take a position against the racist campaign for a headscarf ban in Germany. In the March issue of *Solidarität* they report on their opposition to the headscarf ban in France, but take no position against it in Germany. But the same sort of racist campaign is taking place there as it is here. And especially in the quite anti-religious East, this progressive impulse of many workers and women is channeled into support for this racist law. The SPD, Greens and PDS hypocritically claim that their racist campaign against Muslim women has something to do with the separation of church and state, while in fact the state is very closely connected with the Catholic and Protestant churches.

On April 3, 500,000 people nationwide took to the streets against the social attacks by the capitalist SPD/Green government. In Berlin many were also against the SPD/PDS city government. Just one year earlier, there were mass protests against the U.S. war on Iraq. Instead of linking the protests last year against the Iraq war with a struggle against the imperialist government in Germany, they were criminally channeled by the trade-union bureaucracy and the fake left into support for the SPD/Green government. The result: On 14 March 2003, the day of the five-minute DGB [trade-union federation] action treacherously supporting the SPD/Green government, which, for its own imperialist motives, came out

against the imminent U.S. attack on Iraq, Schröder announced Agenda 2010. But in the entire electoral statement of the SAV, imperialist war—a life and death question for the working class—plays no role, let alone the presence of Bundeswehr [German army] troops in Afghanistan and the Balkans. This considerably weakens their electoral campaign's political opposition to the SPD and PDS. You see black-red-gold [colors of German flag] SPD posters everywhere with "Power for peace—new strength." And the PDS proclaims: "Europe at the side of the UN, not in the shadow of the U.S.A." This foul chauvinist poison, which sells German imperialism as something better than its U.S. rivals, is intended not least to encourage acceptance of the government's social attacks and to justify the current colonial deployments of the Bundeswehr in the Balkans and Afghanistan.

The protests on 1 November 2003 and then on April 3 express the anger against the government attacks by the SPD and PDS. That's why we think it's important that the SAV candidacy in Rostock, with its crude line of class independence against the SPD and PDS, be successful so as to impel forward workers breaking away from the SPD and PDS to the left. But to really be able to fight in the interests of the working class, it's not enough just to be discontented with the anti-working-class politics of the SPD/PDS. The working class needs a revolutionary party and that means a revolutionary, internationalist and multiethnic workers party. We'll only be able to forge a party through a politically based split of social democracy. The SAV says in its election statement:

"A new mass party of workers and youth would be a great step forward, *even if at first it didn't stand for a consistent socialist program*. It would give masses of workers and youth the chance of organizing independently of the bourgeois parties and of speaking up for their interests. The SAV stands for the unity of the working class and will support attempts at new, broad workers parties." (our emphasis)

This two-stage theory of the SAV for building a "socialist party" means in reality sucking up to the anti-Communists and other class traitors who are playing around in the diverse electoral alternatives to the SPD. This only leads us and the working class back into the social-democratic dead end which we're seeking a way out of.

The SAV election campaign against the SPD and PDS in Rostock represents a step in the right direction. That's why, for all our differences with the SAV, we say: **Vote SAV/Slate Against Social Cutbacks! No vote to the SPD and PDS!** ■

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Freedom Now for All the Detainees! Drop the Charges!

Mexico: Protest Police Repression Against Guadalajara Demonstration!

We print below a 2 June protest statement issued by the Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League.

While the imperialist rulers of Europe and the lackeys of imperialism that head the capitalist governments of Latin America gathered in the city of Guadalajara [in the state of Jalisco], surrounded by a 100-meter-long and 3-meter-high steel fence, the repressive bodies at their service engaged in an orgy of violence against some of the 5,000 demonstrators who had gathered to protest against the Third Summit of Governments and Heads of State of Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union. In the May 28 demonstration, the day the Summit concluded, several hundred riot police attacked the protesters with batons and shields, also using pressure hoses and releasing pepper gas, tear gas and toxic foam. Later, at nightfall, the police corps under the command of the local and federal PAN [National Action Party] governments launched a hunting spree to arrest whomever they could. After intoning triumphantly, “They’re screwed. We won,” the Public Security minister of the state [of Jalisco] told the press that 97 people had been arrested. As of now, the Guadalajara Independent Media Center reports that at least 49 people are still under arrest. Forty-five have already been sent to the federal maximum-security prison of Puente Grande (where Erika Zamora, a youth whose only “crime” was teaching indigenous people in Guerrero to read, remained imprisoned for years) and four minors were taken to a juvenile detention center. Bails to release the detainees go up to 200,000 pesos [more than US\$17,000] (*La Jornada*, 2 June). Meanwhile, eight foreign protesters have already been deported to their home countries. The police are harassing hundreds of demonstrators who are still in Guadalajara demanding that their comrades be released. The Grupo Espartaquista de México demands: **Freedom now for all the detainees! Down with the charges! No to deportations—Down with reactionary Article 33 of the Constitution!** [Article 33 prohibits political activity by foreigners in Mexico.]

The Summit—whose objective was for the European imperialists to get their share in the plunder of Latin America and the Caribbean (traditionally the fiefdom of U.S. imperialism)—with breathtaking hypocrisy passed a resolution in which they claim to be “horrified by the recent evidence of mistreatment of prisoners in Iraqi jails.” Hours later, however, the holding cells at the State of Jalisco Department of Justice became the stage for torture acts reminiscent of some of those that have characterized the colonial occupation of Iraq, in dungeons like Abu



Guadalajara, May 28: Riot police brutally attack demonstrators protesting summit meeting of European and Latin American heads of state. La Haine

Ghraib. According to *La Jornada* (30 and 31 May), the detainees have been continuously beaten, kept awake (those who fall asleep are kicked until they wake up again) and deprived of food and water. Women were stripped, insulted, threatened and forced to do leg squats before the uniformed thugs watching over them. During the previous days, the authorities had already orchestrated several provocations against demonstrators and arrested three of them, who were later freed. The Mexican rulers have two objectives: on one hand, they want to show their imperialist masters their resolve to keep Mexico a safe place for capitalist investment; on the other, they want to warn those who oppose the depredations of capitalism (and especially the powerful unions which have demonstrated against privatizations and the attacks against the retirement funds of the IMSS workers [the public health service for workers in the private sector]) that they’re willing to resort to all kinds of violence to defend their interests and those of their imperialist masters.

The bourgeois PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution], trying to groom its “friend of the people” credentials, hurried to condemn “energetically the abusive use of public force” (resolution of the 16th Plenum of the 5th National Council). This takes a lot of cynicism, given that the May 28 operation against demonstrators is similar to the one that the [PRD] López Obrador government used in Mexico City to repress the October 2 demonstration [commemorating the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre] in 2003. That day, after observing the protest actions, the police initiated raids which, along with

the people that had been kidnapped earlier that afternoon, ended with 75 people arrested. And, just like in Guadalajara, they were kept incommunicado and tortured in police stations and police vehicles. This underscores that besides being a rats’ nest of corruption, as was evidenced by the recent scandals [involving top functionaries of the Mexico City administration], the PRD (just like the PAN and the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party]) is a party irrevocably committed to defending the capitalist order and, therefore, to using the most brutal repression against those who question its crimes.

Furthermore, as has happened before, the media and the organizations around the PRD, like *La Jornada* and its slimy correspondent Jaime Aviles, have accused those who resort to anything more than cries and appeals to the imperialists of being provocateurs: “The provocateurs were clearly identified as members of the Frente Popular Revolucionario [Revolutionary Popular Front] and the Consejo General de Huelga [General Strike Council] of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). They violated the agreement reached on Thursday night between the Jalisco government and the unions and groups that took part in the peaceful, joyful and festive demonstration...” (*La Jornada*, 30 May). We strongly defend all those groups and individuals that mobilize in opposition to imperialist oppression against state repression and the slanders of those who strive to keep the protests within limits acceptable to the capitalists, despite the many political differences we have with such activists.

Some youth, frustrated by the futile

appeals to the capitalists, resort instead to so-called “direct action” (direct confrontations with the repressive bodies of the state). These actions show a healthy hatred of the existing state of things and a heroic will to change it. However, as militant as they might be, they will never succeed in defeating the police, a force infinitely better trained and armed than any group of protesters. Furthermore, and more fundamentally, militant tactics cannot substitute for a strategy that offers a radical solution to eradicate oppression and exploitation forever. Misery and war do not come from a series of policies (whether they’re called “globalization” or “neoliberalism”) that can be modified, but from the everyday functioning of imperialism—the highest stage of capitalism, which has become more rapacious and dangerous since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union. To bring imperialism to an end, what we need are not isolated confrontations with state bodies, but to destroy the *entire* state machinery of repression through a proletarian revolution, to replace it with a workers state in which those who labor rule. Only through the establishment of a planned economy worldwide can the needs of the population be satisfied and every kind of oppression be eradicated for good. **For the defeat of imperialism through world socialist revolution!**

To achieve this aim, it is necessary to build parties of the working class around the world, independent in every way from the agencies and parties of capitalism, as part of a reformed Fourth International. These parties must act as “tribunes of the people,” fighting to defend the interests of women, homosexuals, immigrants, indigenous peoples and the oppressed in general.

In Mexico, the main obstacle to the construction of such a party is nationalism, promoted overtly or covertly not only by the PRD, but also by the union tops (especially those of unions like the SME [electricians union] or those grouped in the UNT [an important union federation]) and most of the “revolutionary” left. In the struggle against imperialism, the oppressed in this country have no common interest with their Mexican exploiters, but there is instead the potential for them to forge a solid alliance with the proletariat and the oppressed in the imperialist centers, especially with the multiracial American working class.

With this perspective, we call for protests in support of the demonstrators who were repressed, and we especially call on the working class of Mexico and the world (the class with the objective interest and social power to defend all the oppressed and, especially, to bring the capitalist order to an end). **An injury to one is an injury to all! ■**