

The

Fall 2001

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Internationalist



For Class War Against the Imperialist War

Defeat U.S. Imperialism!

Red Cross Building Destroyed by American Bombs, Kabul, 26 October 2001



Amir Shah/AP

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Front page photo: Red Cross ware-
house in Kabul bombed by U.S., 26
October 2001.

Subscription blank graphic based on a
poster by V.A. Rodchenko, *Books* (1925).

For Militant Labor Action to Defend the Charleston Five!

The Charleston Five are scheduled to go on trial the week of November 12. Members of the International Longshoremen's Association in "open shop" South Carolina, they face years in prison in a racist, anti-labor witch hunt launched after police rioted against unionists picketing a scab stevedore operation (see "Defend the Charleston Five!" *The Internationalist* No. 10, June 2001).

On October 15, a judge removed the 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. house arrest against the five unionists, but the prosecution is moving forward. State attorney general Charlie Condon has now tried to smear the Five as being like the terrorists who attacked the World Trade Center; this same right-wing yahoo has called for escalating racist deportations against immigrants.

The AFL-CIO tops have called a "National Day of Solidarity" for November 14, but are trying to squelch any real labor action. Meanwhile, the West Coast shipping bosses' Pacific Maritime Association is now issuing threats against calls for work stoppages "until the conclusion of the Charleston Five trial."

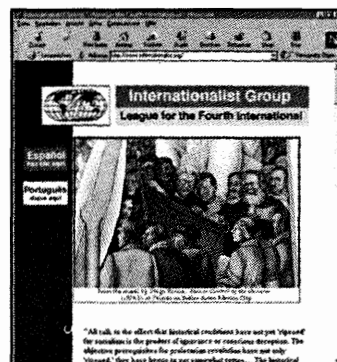
It is urgent that longshore workers on both coasts and internationally *shut down the ports* on the first day of the trial demanding *drop all charges now!*

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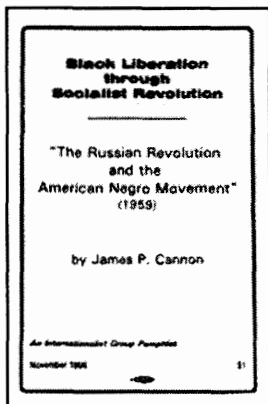
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No. 12



Fall 2001

For Class War Against the Imperialist War!

Defeat U.S. Imperialism!

Defend Afghanistan and Iraq!

American bombs started falling on Afghanistan on October 7. The imperialist rulers of the United States who call their system of rapacious exploitation "democracy" are laying waste to what is already one of the poorest and most devastated countries on earth. Next on their list is Iraq. Meanwhile, capitalist governments around the world are using this war to launch an assault on democratic rights and workers' gains. Police-state laws authorizing unrestricted state spying on the general population, "preventive detention" of immigrants and other dictatorial measures are being rammed through legislatures as the war drums beat. A regimented "strong state" at home is required to wage permanent war, which is what they intend.

In almost a month of non-stop bombardment some 1,500 Afghans have been killed, the vast majority of them civilians. Most of the population has fled the cities. Residential districts in the capital of Kabul, already in ruins after 20 years of attacks by U.S.-backed Islamic reactionaries, have been reduced to rubble. Hospitals have been hit in Herat and Kandahar, a mosque in Jalalabad. A United Nations agency was bombed in Kabul, and then a Red Cross warehouse filled with food supplies. A week later, the same warehouse (which had a huge red cross painted on the roof) was hit again in broad daylight. No mistake, no "collateral damage": this was deliberate. While the UN reports 6 million Afghans on the verge of starvation, U.S. planes drop a few thousand yellow packets of meals-ready-to-eat littering strawberry jam across the desert: "Pop tarts in the dust" are the "humanitarian" face of war being waged with hunger and bombs.

The state terrorists who proclaim themselves the defenders of Western civilization are systematically destroying any modern facilities in the country. Airports, power stations, dams and irrigation works are on the daily target lists. B-52s are carpet-bombing, cluster bombs are dropped on cities, AC-130 gunships fire 25,000 rounds a minute as they hover over "kill boxes," formerly known as "free fire zones." It wouldn't be hard to bomb Afghanistan "back to the Stone Age," as U.S. Air Force chief Curtis LeMay threatened to do to Vietnam – the isolated Central Asian country is already in ruins. The chiefs of the Pentagon intend to do just that. But their attempts to put a new government in Kabul have failed miserably, and they still can't find the men on their "wanted, dead or alive" list. Pentagon chiefs think they have banished the "Vietnam syndrome," yet news commentators are beginning to utter the dreaded Q-word: "quagmire."



Sayed Salahuddin/Reuters

Imperialist murders! Afghan man and his child killed by U.S. bombing of Kabul.

The warmongers in Washington and London, their NATO allies, Zionist junior partners and neocolonial satraps can be beaten. They won't be stopped by a few parades calling to "give peace a chance" or outbursts of Islamic fundamentalist frenzy. Neither pacifism nor "holy war": what's needed is *class war*, on the streets and in the factories, against the imperialist war on semi-colonial Asian countries and the working class at home. Peace pleas won't stop the generals, but millions of proletarians around the world have the social and economic strength to inflict a stinging defeat on the imperialist war machine. To do so requires the forging of a revolutionary leadership that can take the struggle from protest to a fight for power.

The Internationalist Group and the League for the Fourth International call to defeat U.S. imperialism, defend Afghanistan and Iraq, and fight for international socialist revolution.

U.S./NATO Terrorist "War on Terrorism"

The Pentagon's terror bombing of Afghanistan launched the "war on terrorism" that the leaders of U.S. imperialism vow will last "two years or more" (U.S. president George W. Bush) and whose effects are intended to last the "lifetime" of most adults (according to U.S. vice president Dick Cheney). It was initially called a "crusade" by Bush, igniting outrage in the predominantly Muslim countries of the Near East where the history of invasions by Christian crusaders in the Middle Ages is still vivid. First code-named "Infinite Justice" by the Pentagon, it was presented as a reprisal for the terror attack that demolished the World Trade Center in New York City. But this war has nothing to do with justice or fighting "terrorism."

To justify their war, the rulers of America are cynically exploiting the deaths of thousands of innocent working people in the despicable indiscriminate terror attack on the WTC. As always, the U.S. picks the easy targets first. To go after the Soviet Union and Cuba, Ronald Reagan invaded the tiny Caribbean island of Grenada. Airplanes are rammed into the twin towers in the heart of the U.S. financial capital; 14 of the 19 hijackers are reportedly Saudi Arabians. So naturally...the U.S. bombs Afghanistan, and prepares to attack Iraq. Why? Supposedly because "terrorist mastermind" Osama bin Laden is holed up in some cave there. But the U.S. has not produced one shred of evidence linking the hijackers to the Saudi millionaire. And Washington is not about to do anything to shake the dynasty in the Arabian kingdom that contains 40 percent of the world's known oil reserves.

This is the war that U.S. rulers have sought and prepared for ever since the counterrevolution that swept through the Soviet Union and East Europe during 1989-92. Following the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War against Iraq, President George Bush the Elder proclaimed a New World Order (NWO) dominated by the "one remaining superpower," the United States. (Consciously or not, he was echoing Adolf Hitler, who proclaimed a *Neue Ordnung* in a Europe under German domination.) State Department advisors proclaimed the "end of history." But the imperialist triumphalism was short-lived. What followed was a decade of worldwide disorder, with nationalist civil wars raging from Central Africa to Yugoslavia. Now in the reign of

Bush the Younger, a puppet president imposed by fiat of the Supreme Court, without a shred of pseudo-democratic legitimation, the same team is back to "finish the job" of nailing down the "NWO."

At the very outset, Bush Jr.'s top presidential counselor commented, "This is a defining moment. We have an opportunity to restructure the world." A few days later, British prime minister Tony Blair declared: "This is a moment to seize.... The kaleidoscope has been shaken. The pieces are in flux. Soon they will settle again. Before they do, let us re-order this world around us" (*New York Times*, 3 October). The scope of this war goes far beyond the Near East and Central Asia: it is indeed about reordering and restructuring the world.

Partly it is a "war for oil," though not in the simplistic way that some leftists claim. Yes, there was jockeying between an Argentine oilman and U.S. oil giants Unocal and Amoco. Yet no sane oil mogul would today contemplate building a pipeline through Afghanistan. Western capitalists seek to gain control over the oil fields of Central Asia now being opened up to imperialist exploitation, just as they pounced on the Baku oilfields at the beginning of the last century. But as in the Persian Gulf War, most of that oil will be exported to Europe, not the U.S. (which gets most of its energy imports from Western Hemisphere producers). The economics are subordinate to imperialist strategy: Washington wants to keep *its* hand on the oil tap in order to keep its rivals in line.

Ultimately this is a war for U.S. imperialist domination of the world, which is why some of the United States' European imperialist allies are increasingly unenthusiastic about it as the bombing drags on. Immediately after September 11 there was impressionistic talk of the beginning of *World War III*. Following the 1990-91 Gulf War and demise of the USSR, the Catholic Pope of counterrevolution proclaimed the end of the postwar period. Now we are in a *prewar period*. Just as the Balkan wars of 1908-13 fed into and touched off World War I, just as the Spanish Civil War, Japan's invasion of China and Italian imperialism's war on Ethiopia (Abyssinia) prepared World War II, the U.S.-led imperialist wars over the last decade against Iraq, Yugoslavia and now Afghanistan point to a third imperialist world conflagration growing out of the heightened rivalries between the major capitalist powers.

There is a lot of concern in Washington that the Taliban could get their hands on nuclear weapons. Yet the very real danger is that *the United States* has a vast arsenal of ABC (atomic, biological and chemical) weapons of mass destruction, and is contemplating using some of its experimental "tactical" arms in the present war. For the Dr. Strangeloves in the Pentagon, Afghanistan is a giant testing ground, an Asian Nevada. As the war goes on, it underlines anew that the alternative facing humanity is socialism or nuclear barbarism.

Afghanistan and the Struggle for Socialist Revolution in Asia

The Taliban regime that has controlled most of Afghanistan since 1996 has made the country a chamber of horrors, particularly for women. But so did the feuding warlords who preceded it,

the leaders of the Islamic *jihad* (holy war) who were financed, trained and armed by the United States to wage a proxy war in the 1980s against the Soviet Union and the Soviet-allied reform government in Kabul. Revolutionaries hailed the Red Army intervention in Afghanistan, one of the few progressive acts by the Stalinists, and one that went sharply against their strategy of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. The Soviets did not lose that war on the battlefield, but instead the Kremlin bureaucracy abandoned the effort in vain hopes of reaching a deal with Washington. The ignominious Soviet withdrawal in 1989 set the stage for the collapse of the multinational degenerated workers state. The devastation this produced is incalculable. From Moscow and Kiev to former Soviet Central Asia, working people have been reduced to paupers.

Afghanistan is an impoverished backwater, with feudal and even pre-feudal conditions in much of the country. Many regions high in the Hindu Kush and Pamir Mountains are largely sealed off from the outside. Yet because of its location in the center of the Asian continent, from the time of Genghis Khan in the 13th century it has been a crossroads and staging area for military campaigns aimed at Central and South Asia. The 19th century "Great Game" between Britain and tsarist Russia was one of several key battlefields for control of Asia. In the late 20th century, U.S. imperialists saw Afghanistan as a route for attacking the Soviet Union's "soft underbelly" in historically Muslim Central Asia. CIA chief William Casey organized expeditions of *mujahedin* (holy warriors) to penetrate Tajikistan, hoping to set in motion Islamic forces of counter-revolution.

Because of its extreme economic backwardness, the social forces within Afghanistan are too weak for a workers revolution to be carried out from within. That is a key reason why Soviet intervention to stave off the victory of Islamic reaction was necessary in the 1980s and why Trotskyists strongly supported it. But Afghanistan cannot be viewed in isolation from the surrounding region. The U.S. bombing campaign has set off considerable unrest among the millions of inhabitants of Pakistan's cities, though mostly led by Islamic fundamentalist forces, and there have been demonstrations against the war in many cities in India, led by the reformist CPI-M, in an attempt to pressure the government led by the rightist Hindu BJP. In Bangladesh, Egypt and elsewhere in the Near East as well as among Muslims in northern Nigeria there have been large protests against the U.S. attack on Afghanistan. The Saudi monarchy is worried about unrest. The war could touch off social upheavals throughout the region.

The key is what kind of social upheaval. Various leftists in the West have uncritically reported Pakistani demonstrations led by Islamic fundamentalist forces as "workers protests." Some even talk of an "anti-imperialist front" and "common action" with such reactionaries. Yet those religious zealots are virulent opponents of anything that has a hint of communism, socialism or even trade-unionism. Pakistani labor organizers are attacked on a daily basis by the fundamentalists. Egyptian leftist students who sought to protest against the U.S. bombing have also been set upon by fundamentalists. While com-

munists defend Afghanistan against the imperialist war, we call for *revolutionary* defensism, fighting to overthrow the Islamic fundamentalist Taliban and their reactionary rivals in the "Northern Alliance." And far from forming any kind of bloc with fundamentalist groups, socialists in the Near East face a civil war with Islamic religious reaction. In Israel/Palestine, communists fight for joint Arab-Hebrew workers revolution, an anathema to the Islamic right wing. In fact, U.S. and Israeli intelligence agencies systematically fostered the growth of such forces in order to crush the "communist threat."

As defenders of Leon Trotsky's program of *permanent revolution*, the League for the Fourth International emphasizes that in the imperialist epoch of decaying capitalism, no bourgeois force can carry out any serious democratic tasks, much less the social liberation of oppressed sectors. The fight for the liberation of women and national minorities and all oppressed groups requires above all a fight for the revolutionary class independence of the working class from *all* bourgeois forces, Islamic fundamentalist and nationalist alike. Revolutionary workers parties must be built to lead *international socialist revolution* throughout the region, and extending to the proletariat of the imperialist centers.

League for the Fourth International

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War on the Workers at Home

Yet the war is not going well for the U.S. They can't seem to track down bin Laden or Taliban leader Sheikh Omar. They can't form an opposition government in Afghanistan. On the home front, they have arrested 1,100 people in the United States, overwhelmingly immigrants of Near Eastern origin, but have yet to charge a single person with connection to the World Trade Center attack. And the FBI admits it hasn't a clue as to who is behind the poisoned letters containing anthrax powder sent to various government and media figures. But the Republican Bush administration has managed to pass the "U.S.A. Patriot Act" (with a 98-1 vote in the Democratic-controlled Senate) which goes a long way toward expanding police-state powers to regiment the population for war.

This draconian piece of legislation builds on the 1996 Effective Death Penalty and Antiterrorism and immigration "reform" acts pushed through by the Clinton administration. It effectively abolishes the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution against arbitrary search and seizure, by allowing police agencies to secretly search anyone's home, business or organizational offices. Police can tap phones, e-mail and Internet use with secret authorization from special courts. The supposed ban on domestic spying by the CIA is dropped. Immigrants (legal or "illegal") can be held without charges for periods of "six months" which can be indefinitely renewed. This is already happening: because of such secrecy provisions, there is almost no public information about what has happened to the hundreds of people arrested in the post-September 11 dragnet. We say free them now!

To push through the package of repressive measures, the government and media have whipped up a hysteria about anthrax, trying to link this to the September 11 attacks. Several letters with the deadly agent were mailed to a few leading politicians and media figures. As a result, several of their office staff and postal workers have contracted anthrax and two have died. The anthrax scare whipped up over this is vastly out of proportion with the actual number of casualties. Moreover, there is no evidence so far of a link to Near Eastern terrorists, while in fact domestic U.S. fascists and some anti-abortion zealots have long been touting anthrax. Planned Parenthood reported that its clinics have received more than 100 envelopes containing white powder since the World Trade Center attack. And it is curious that the main recipients of the threatening letters were journalist Dan Rather and the liberal Democratic head of the Senate.

The beefing up of police powers is not limited to the United States. Similar laws are being enacted in Canada, Britain, Germany, India and elsewhere. This is part of a general push toward a "strong state" as the bourgeoisie prepares for war. This also fosters the growth of ultra-rightist organizations. Already in Italy and Austria, the fascist parties of Giacomo Fini and Jörg Haider are junior partners in right-wing governments. In New York City, the budding bonapartist mayor Rudolph Giuliani tried (unsuccessfully) to get his term lengthened. However, these ominous developments do not signify a general "creeping fascisation," as some leftists have argued. Italy's right-wing media mogul and prime minister Silvio Berlusconi caused an uproar by proclaiming the "superiority of our civilization... in contrast with Islamic coun-

tries." But Berlusconi was sharply criticized by other European Union leaders for getting in the way of their attempts to portray the war on Afghanistan as non-racist.

In fact, the push for police-state measures has come equally from liberal Democrats like Clinton and social democrats like Blair in Britain and Gerhard Schröder in Germany. During wartime, the imperialist "democrats" can be quite as authoritarian as any dictator. The U.S. "internment" (concentration camps) for Japanese Americans is the historical norm, along with sedition and treason laws used against leftists. In NYC, the right-wing *New York Post* tried to whip up a red-hunt at City University by going after antiwar professors; a CUNY trustee labeled them "seditious." More McCarthyite witchhunting is to be expected. In the anti-Soviet Cold War the bourgeois liberals went along with it and were often some of the biggest witchhunters, particularly in purging leftists from the unions. This underscores the fact that the fight against them cannot be waged simply on a "democratic" basis. As always, it comes down to a class question.

In the 1930s, Leon Trotsky referred often to the drive toward bonapartism and a strong state as the spectre of war loomed. In his "Program of Action for France," he wrote:

"The bourgeoisie is starting to carry out its plan of the transformation of state power, to eliminate once and for all the resistance of the workers.... The bourgeois plan of the 'authoritative state,' directed against the exploited, must be ruthlessly attacked by the toiling masses....

"The task is to establish in this country the rule of the working people."

The would-be masters of the world are currently riding a wave of war hysteria. But the flag-waving, "God Bless America" chauvinism in the U.S. will dampen when the body bags of dead American soldiers start coming into Dover AFB in Delaware. Meanwhile, the bursting of the high-tech "bubble" economy driven by feverish stock market speculation is already sending shock waves around the world. Unemployment in the U.S. is now the highest in five years. Minnesota state workers, workers at the military contractor General Dynamics, meat packers in the state of Washington and Texas have gone on strike despite accusations of disloyalty. Argentina is on the verge of a social explosion with tens of thousands of jobless workers in the streets, blocking highways, while Wall Street bankers fret about default on the international debt spreading like wildfire through Latin America and Asia.

The fight against the Afghanistan war and the drive to a new imperialist world war must be waged together with the fight against attacks on democratic rights, minorities and the working class in the imperialist countries. Our small international organization, the League for the Fourth International, seeks to cohere the cadres to build the nuclei of revolutionary workers parties around the globe. From the Near East, South and Central Asia to Europe and the United States, such parties can only be built through relentless struggle against all sections of the bourgeoisie and the reformist and centrist forces who capitulate to them. This fight to reforge an authentically Trotskyist Fourth International is key to a genuine fight against imperialist war and repression. ■

After Indiscriminate World Trade Center Attack

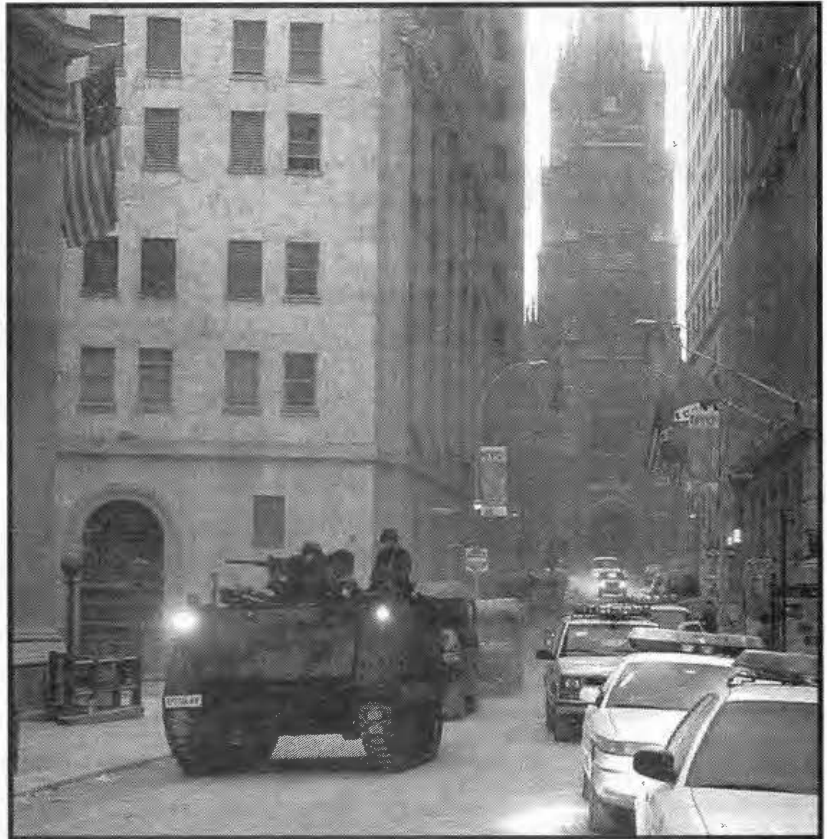
U.S. Whips Up Imperialist War Frenzy, Drives Toward Police State

The following statement by the Internationalist Group/U.S., section of the League for the Fourth International, was issued on September 14.

Newspaper headlines and editorials scream "War." Television networks proclaim in unison, "America Under Attack." The capitalist rulers of the United States are beating the drums for imperialist aggression and domestic repression following coordinated attacks on the morning of September 11, in which airplane hijackers slammed passenger jets into the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon outside Washington, D.C. The bourgeois politicians and media are marching in lock-step demanding bloody reprisals against whoever is designated the target of choice as the American empire strikes back. U.S. president George Bush Jr. vows to win a "new kind of war," and now top U.S. officials have called for "ending states who sponsor terrorism" and an ongoing "global assault" on anyone they label a supporter. Just as "human rights" was the war cry of the American and European imperialists as they terror-bombed Yugoslavia in 1999, today in the name of "anti-terrorism" the gang that carried out the 1990-91 "Desert Slaughter" against Iraq is preparing to obliterate semi-colonial countries as well as others where capitalist rule has been overthrown.

The Internationalist Group, section of the League for the Fourth International, calls on the working class throughout the world to fight to defeat the imperialist drive for war and repression. As the U.S. gears up to invade Afghanistan, revolutionaries defend it, Iraq and any other countries assaulted by the would-be global cops of the New World Order led by Bush & Co., who are far and away the biggest mass murderers of all. As the rulers of Israel seize upon the frenzy in Washington in their escalating war on the long-suffering population of the Occupied Territories, we must step up our defense of the Palestinian people. We demand: all U.S. forces out of the Near East and South Asia! And as war hysteria whipped up by the capitalist media in the United States and Europe leads to anti-Arab xenophobia and attacks on immigrants (and others who "look foreign"), we call on class-conscious workers to come to the defense of these vulnerable minorities against chauvinist attacks, including organized physical defense of their homes, shops and neighborhoods.

As the World Trade Center burned and collapsed, anguished working people across New York (many of them blacks and immi-



Tank patrols Wall Street.

Reuters

grants) frantically sought to find out if family members and co-workers were safe. Proletarian revolutionaries categorically oppose the indiscriminate terror used by the hijackers, who in grotesquely taking the lives of several thousand ordinary working people thereby equate them with the American government that oppresses workers and minorities in the U.S. along with peoples around the world. Far greater, however, is the danger to mankind posed by the U.S./NATO imperialists, who are responsible for millions of deaths of innocent people the world over to ensure their exploitation of the entire planet. These state terrorists are armed to the teeth with nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. While spouting talk of "democracy," U.S. rulers have used these weapons of mass destruction before and will use them again, at the same time as their forces of "law and order" carry out racist police terror at home.

The United States *alone* has used atomic weapons in war, wiping Hiroshima and Nagasaki off the face of the earth and incinerating over 200,000 innocent civilians in August 1945. This was after firebombing Tokyo (100,000 killed in a single raid), as well as Hamburg (50,000 dead) and Dresden (225,000 dead). None of these attacks were directed at military targets,

Bourgeois Press Screams "War" Following September 11 Attacks



but instead were openly intended to *terrorize* the civilian population. U.S. forces inflicted more than a million deaths on the Korean people during the Korean War. In the Vietnam War, the U.S. dropped vast quantities of bombs, napalm and Agent Orange, killing more than two million as it went down to humiliating defeat at the hands of the heroic Indochinese peasant and worker soldiers. In Iraq, the deliberate bombing of waterworks and electrical plants followed by a decade of brutal economic "sanctions" has led to the deaths of more than one million children. And while continuing to bomb Iraq on the pretext that Baghdad might develop chemical and biological weapons, it has now been confirmed that the U.S. not only has a huge arsenal of such weapons, but is engaged in developing more potent strains of anthrax and other deadly agents. U.S.-allied Israel, too, has chemical/biological weapons and is today the third-largest nuclear power in the world.

Imperialists Use "Anti-Terrorism" to Terrorize the Oppressed

As they prepare for war, America's rulers are first "securing" the home front. FBI "counter-terrorism" squads were deployed around the country, Mexican and Canadian border crossings closed off, combat fighter patrols deployed over major American cities. U.S. Army units were put into the streets of Washington, National Guardsmen in humvees with mounted machine guns "patrolled" the area around Wall Street and in Brooklyn. The civilian population, most of which has never seen the military deployed except for hurricane rescue and flood control – and suppressing ghetto revolts – has been given a taste of a state of siege. Cordoning off all of lower Manhattan, ostensibly to open up streets for emergency rescue vehicles (of which there were few), got middle-class whites used to living under police lockdown. The racist NYPD murderers of Amadou Diallo are now trying to cover their crimes with the cloak of "anti-terrorism."

Clearly the airplane hijackers' suicide attacks played into the imperialists' hands, as U.S. rulers cynically exploit the heart-wrenching anguish of the bereaved families. Washington seeks to brainwash the population into supporting the war drive by claiming that "every American" is targeted by terrorist mad bombers. While hitting the center of U.S. military power, the Pentagon, and New York's twin towers, which the bourgeois press lyrically describes as "Icons of the American Dream," the fact is that more than 40,000 working people went about their jobs in commercial and financial enterprises in the World Trade Center every day. The attack on the WTC was timed to guarantee that a large number of these workers (including Arabs, Muslims and Asians) would perish in the inferno. Marxists have always opposed individual terror as a method of despair that can only hold workers back from mobilizing their tremendous class power against the exploiters. Beyond this, such an indiscriminate attack randomly striking the population at large is directed against the working class itself.

It also directly harms the Palestinian Arab people desperately fighting the Israeli military juggernaut with little more than stones and a few Kalashnikovs. It was reported in the first hours after the attack that some Palestinians on the West

Nick UYAP

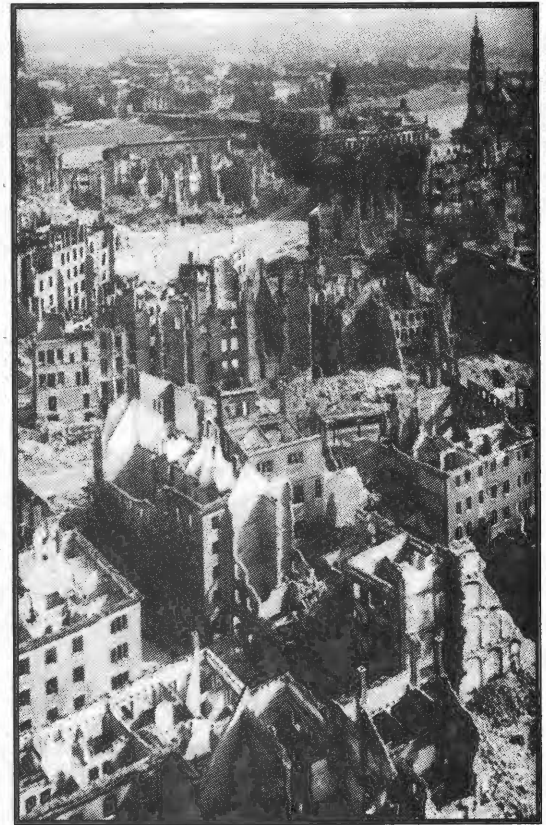


Napalm in Vietnam: U.S.' dirty imperialist war killed more than 2 million Vietnamese.

Bank cheered the crash into the WTC. After enduring months of lockdown and hundreds of children shot by Israeli soldiers in cold blood, on top of two and a half decades of brutal Zionist occupation, some members of this deeply oppressed people may welcome any perceived blow against the power they see standing behind their oppressor. But such a knee-jerk nationalist reaction is already being cynically used by Israeli leader Ariel Sharon (who was responsible for the 1982 slaughter of over 2,000 Palestinians in the Beirut refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila) to try to undercut international support for the Palestinians. In the same way, Israeli rulers exploit indiscriminate suicide bombings inside Israel to bind Hebrew workers to their exploiters. The anti-democratic, racist Zionist state must be brought down from within, through Arab/Hebrew class struggle, backed by international workers solidarity. The League for the Fourth International fights for an Arab/Hebrew workers republic in a socialist federation of the Near East.

Bin Laden – “Frankenstein the CIA Created”

Washington has now singled out Osama bin Laden as the “prime suspect” for masterminding the September 11 attack, while simultaneously claiming that any operation so elaborately coordinated had to have state support. What state? Bin Laden is reportedly holed up in Afghanistan. Since the withdrawal of the Soviet forces in 1989, a key factor in setting the stage for the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, this non-state has been fought over by an array of reactionary fundamentalist Islamic forces. It is currently dominated by the Taliban, a group of extreme fundamentalist mullahs sponsored by Pakistani military intelligence. U.S. rulers like to portray their adversaries as the personification of “evil” (as in Reagan’s designation of the USSR as the “evil empire”). Today it is bin Laden, whom they link to the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, 1996 attacks on Americans in Saudi Arabia, the 1998 bombing of U.S. embassies in Africa, the October



Bildarchiv Ulstein

U.S. and British firebombing of Dresden in 1945 slaughtered more than 225,000.

2000 attack on the U.S. destroyer *Cole* in Yemen, and now the World Trade Center/Pentagon attack.

Whatever role this Saudi millionaire and Islamic fundamentalist may have played, he was made what he is by the United States government. During the 1980s, as the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency recruited, trained, financed and armed reactionary forces in a decade-long war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, bin Laden was one of the CIA’s guys. Washington spent several billion dollars on its counterrevolutionary operation, while Saudi Arabia pumped in billions more. Islamic fundamentalists flocked to Afghanistan to join the *jihād* (holy war) against the Soviet “infidel.” Among them was bin Laden.

An article in the *New York Times* (14 September) euphemistically remarks that “the United States had worked alongside him to help oust the Russians from Afghanistan.” The fact is that the CIA built bin Laden’s camps in the mountains near the town of Khôst, the very same camps it hit with cruise missiles following the 1998 African embassy bombings (*New York Times*, 24 August 1998). In addition, “Osama Bin Laden was employed by the CIA as a chief recruiter, as was the Egyptian cleric, Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman, who was jailed for the 1993 World Trade Center bombing” according to columnist Eric Margolis (*Toronto Sun*, 30 August 1998). Following the 1989 Soviet withdrawal, the Arab “holy warriors” bin Laden recruited spread throughout the Near East and North Africa, now training their sights on Washington. “We created a whole cadre of trained and motivated people who turned against us. It’s a classic Frankenstein’s monster situa-

tion," lamented a U.S. official (*Guardian*, 17 January 1999).

In the decade-long war in Afghanistan, it was necessary to stand solidly on the side of the Soviet Army in its fight to defend the USSR against the U.S.-armed, financed and trained counter-revolutionary onslaught. While revolutionary Trotskyists declared "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" a host of social democrats, "Eurocommunists" and pseudo-Trotskyists joined the imperialist hue and cry. Following the victory of the CIA's *mujahedin*, Kabul was bombed to smithereens by the feuding Islamic reactionaries, the country beset by famine and mired in unfathomable poverty. Women who once studied in the university and taught in schools were shrouded in the *burqa*, the impenetrable head-to-toe veil, banned from working and condemned to the house arrest of *pardah*. The medieval *sharia* (Islamic law) was imposed by a regime of utter social reaction, non-Sunni Muslims were subjugated. These are the bitter fruits of the anti-Soviet war drive, and as Washington (in league with now-capitalist Russia) gears up to occupy Kabul in its "anti-terrorist" war drive, the U.S. will only plunge Afghanistan further into the misery it created.

The Afghan hell was made in U.S.A. We demand: U.S. get out.

War and Repression

The war machinery is in high gear. Fifty thousand military reserves are being called up. Never mind that they can't say what country to go after ("we've got to build a case first," says Secretary of State Colin Powell, who as Pentagon chief ordered the bombing of refugee shelters in the Persian Gulf War), the target-selection teams are hard at work. Congressmen demand that the supposed ban on assassination by U.S. spy agencies be repealed so CIA hit squads can do like the Israelis on the West Bank. With lightning speed, NATO invoked Article Five of the Atlantic Charter authorizing military action. Where? Anywhere Washington decides. A war powers act is being cooked up in Congress. Compared to the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin resolution that gave the green light to the escalation of the U.S.' dirty war in Southeast Asia, this will be an open-ended license for military marauding around the globe and at home. Soon the first Army Delta Force and Navy SEAL teams will be dropped, to be followed by assaults by AC-130 gunships, ground troops, aircraft carriers, A-10 and F-117 bombers.

A pervasive theme of the bourgeois media and politicians has been to compare the WTC attack to Pearl Harbor. The purpose is to bring back images of the "good war" (World War II) to blot out memories of Vietnam and bring jingoistic flag-waving hysteria to a crescendo. But despite all the talk of a "sneak attack," the fact is that Washington had plenty of warning of the December 1941 Japanese assault on the U.S. Pacific fleet. They needed a *casus belli* in order to enter the imperialist war. While defending the Soviet Union, the Trotskyists took a stand of revolutionary defeatism toward both imperialist camps in that war over colonies and world domination. Today we fight to defeat the new imperialist war drive and to defend the countries targeted by the U.S. and NATO.

U.S. leaders have made it clear that they will not stop with occupying Kabul. In August, a secret Pentagon war game

("Positive Match") was held which "tested whether the armed forces could decisively defeat one potential adversary, North Korea, while repelling an attack from Iraq" while "another event, such as terrorists attacking New York City with chemical weapons, took place at the same time" (*New York Times*, 7 September). The U.S. "won" the computer simulation. Bush's plans for a "missile defense shield" are in fact intended as a cover for invasion of U.S.-designated "rogue states" and to shoot down Chinese and/or Russian satellites in a military confrontation (for example, over Taiwan). Make no mistake - this is no "Star Wars" fantasy, the Pentagon is intent on breaking the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) arms control treaty because it actually intends to use this system for war (and military blackmail).

Ever since U.S. president George Bush Sr. proclaimed a "New World Order" following the Persian Gulf War, while the Soviet bloc deformed workers states crumbled, the U.S. imperialist "superpower" has been chomping at the bit to use its full military potential to lord it over downtrodden "Third World" peoples and to lay down the law to its imperialist allies/rivals in Europe and Japan. The Pentagon was haunted by a "Vietnam syndrome," the fear of another *losing* colonial war. Democrat Clinton tried to get around this by throwing the U.S. into one low-risk "peacekeeping" invasion after another, from Haiti to Bosnia and Kosovo. After the Kenya/Tanzania embassy bombing, they shot cruise missiles at a fertilizer factory in Sudan and the CIA-built "terrorist training camp" in Afghanistan. But now so-called "zero casualty" high-altitude bombing is out. "The constraints have been lifted," one U.S. military officer crowed.

The war propaganda barrage is a bipartisan effort of the partner parties of American capitalism. "We must strike back with unbelievable fury," foamed Vermont's Democratic senator Patrick Leahy, a reputed liberal "dove." In Congress, which last May sprang to the defense of Vietnam war criminal and former senator Robert Kerrey, the bourgeois politicians line up to swear fealty to the commander-in-chief, the president "elected" by a 5-4 vote of the Supreme Court. Lacking the slightest "democratic" legitimacy, Bush will now manufacture a "mandate" over the bodies buried in the rubble of the World Trade Center. There are "no parties" in Washington today (as Kaiser Wilhelm said of the German Reichstag in August 1914 as it voted war credits for the first imperialist world slaughter). Democrats and Republicans form only one party, the imperialist war party. "In this new kind of war," writes *New York Times* (14 September) analyst R.W. Apple, the government is saying "there are no neutral states and no clear geographical confines. You must choose sides. Us or them. You are either with us or against us." National unity is the watchword. Anyone who dissents, much less opposes the war drive, will be branded a traitor, and the laws are to be adjusted to deal with them.

The government is preparing to introduce a raft of police-state measures to regiment the country for war. The democratic freedoms supposedly guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights were always sharply curtailed when it came to dealing with "subversives," "enemy aliens" or the descendants of slaves. Even some of the big business press has reported how cries of "Pearl Harbor" brought the image of Japanese Americans in

Guinara Samailova/AP



Workers flee World Trade Center area after indiscriminate terror attack of September 11. U.S. exploits victims' deaths to launch war.

barbed-wire internment camps to the minds of many Arab Americans and others, who fear similar round-ups today. The Clinton government already greatly expanded the government's repressive arsenal, making hundreds of federal offenses subject to the death penalty under the 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act passed in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing, which also drastically curtails the right of death row inmates to appeal their sentences.

The fight against the racist death penalty is embodied in the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the former Black Panther and revolutionary journalist sitting on Pennsylvania's death row for the last two decades. Framed up on charges of killing a Philadelphia cop, Jamal has sought to appeal his conviction in a rigged trial. But despite the confession of a witness who admits to having shot the Philly policeman, a federal judge this August refused to admit this evidence of Mumia's innocence into the record. In fighting against the war drive, we must redouble our efforts internationally to *mobilize the power of the working class to free Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolish the racist death penalty.*

Now civil liberties are going to come under even heavier assault. Enough of the uproar over "racial profiling," cry conservative war hawks. Using airport security as an excuse, they are going to racially profile the population with a vengeance, starting with Arab Americans and extending it to blacks, Latinos and others. Every participant in major events will be subjected to individual video scanning, as was the case with the Superbowl football game in Tampa, Florida last January. Meanwhile, the apparatus for domestic military repression is being readied for full-scale action. Under the 1878 Posse Comitatus Act, the military is banned from carrying out police action inside U.S. borders. Already this has been undermined by the establishment of a string of Joint Task Force (JTF) units along the Mexican border in which military commandos join with a beefed-up Border Patrol to track down immigrant workers. Then in the last months of the Clinton administration, a new continental military command was set up, which has already carried out "anti-terrorist" military "ex-

ercises" with various federal, state and city police forces.

The blueprint for the domestic war operations was provided by the February 2001 report of the U.S. Commission on National Security (the Hart-Rudman Commission) which seeks to rewrite the National Security Act in the name of fighting "terrorism." It calls for converting the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) into a National Homeland Security Agency which would absorb the Border Patrol, Customs Service and Coast Guard. A National Crisis Action Center would be set up and the Joint Task Force for Civil Support expanded to include "several rapid reaction forces, composed largely of rapidly mobilizable National Guard units." Now these plans are being put into operation.

In the war frenzy following the WTC attack, large sections of the U.S. civilian population which has never known war except on TV are now con-

vinced that they are "under attack." The idea that Bush and Giuliani and the rest of the ruling class give a damn about the fate of the working people is manifestly ridiculous. For the capitalists, the scenes of horrible carnage are but grist to the propaganda mills of war. They seek to achieve something like the "Israelization" of the U.S., creating a climate in which a dominant nation presents itself as besieged when in fact the depredations of its own overwhelming military power have produced the rage that now lashes out against it.

While the population in New York City initially reacted with shocked calm following the WTC attack, the non-stop flag-waving propaganda is having its effect. Liquored-up yahoos can be heard screaming for bloody revenge. Bush and Giuliani hypocritically mouth platitudes about community harmony while their war drive inevitably produces racist atrocities, as was the case in the Persian Gulf War as well. In NYC, firebombs have been thrown against mosques, cab drivers of Near Eastern and South Asian descent have been threatened by screeching would-be lynchers, Indian Sikhs have been beaten because they wear turbans. Similar scenes are reported from around the country. Workers must come to the aid of beleaguered immigrant minority communities, as the Internationalist Group has taken the initiative in doing in parts of New York.

In France, the social-democratic government of Lionel Jospin has reinstated the "Vigipirate" security program harassing North African youth in the poor neighborhoods surrounding the major cities. The workers movement must mobilize against this program of state-enforced racist victimization. Ethnically integrated defense by working people of their class brothers and sisters can counter the threat of *pogroms* such as those that victimized Jews in tsarist Russia and today threaten Arabs and other minorities.

As the bourgeoisie beats the war drums in the name of "anti-terrorism," much of the left has shamefully joined in the hysteria. David North's World Socialist Web Site (12 September) article on

continued on page 33

From the Anti-Soviet War Drive to Today U.S. Sponsors the Enslavers of Afghan Women

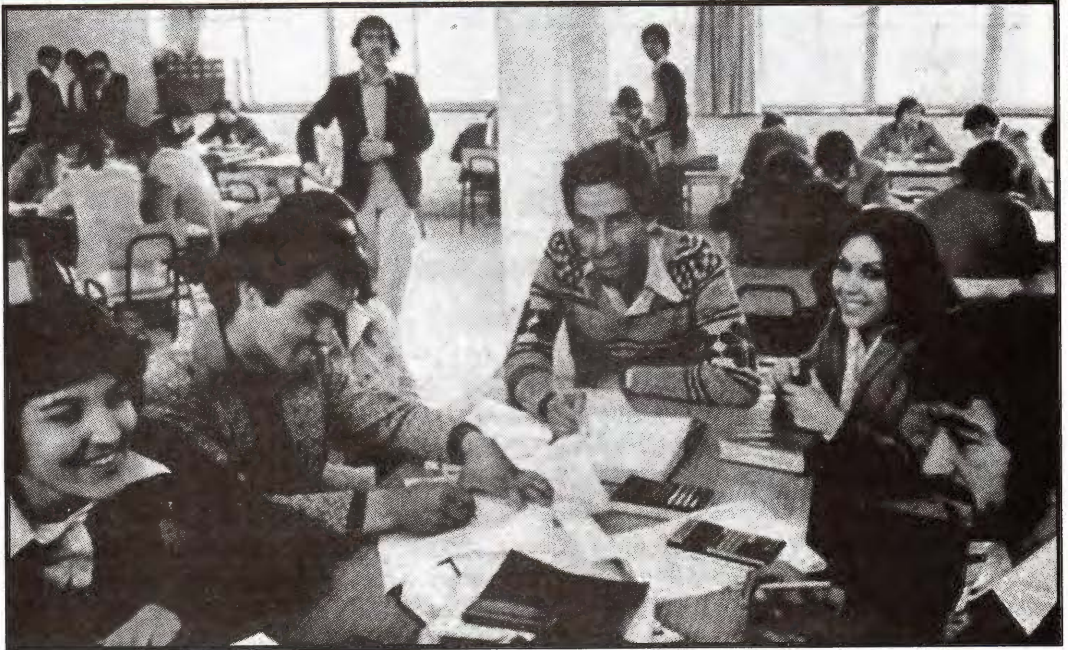
For the last quarter century, the status of women has been at the forefront of war in Afghanistan. Today, liberals and bourgeois feminists use the vicious oppression of Afghan women by the Islamic fundamentalist Taliban as a justification for Bush's terror-bombing of Kabul. Yet the Taliban took power in 1996 with the approval of the U.S., which saw this gang of murderous zealots as a force for "stability" (including for building an oil pipeline from Central Asia). In turn, the "Northern Alliance" now allied with Washington is a lash-up of Afghan war-

lords who waged two decades of counterrevolutionary terror in the cause of Islamic reaction and maintaining the enslavement of women. Not only the feudalist patriarchs on both sides but their imperialist sponsors who claim to be defending "civilization" are enemies of women.

Afghanistan's 1978 "April Revolution" launched by modernizing petty-bourgeois elements proposed to carry out a modest land reform and introduce some democratic rights, among them legal equality and education for women. The Soviet-allied government of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) was hardly "communist," as it is routinely described in the bourgeois press. Indeed, its program was much more limited than that of the bourgeois French Revolution of 1789. Nevertheless, its halting steps to bring Afghanistan out of feudal and pre-feudal conditions were immediately met by armed resistance from Islamic reactionaries, who were particularly incensed over any steps toward the emancipation of women.

The "revolution" did not go beyond limited reforms, but the ensuing counterrevolution which ultimately put in place the Taliban regime of clerical fundamentalism has plunged Af-

What They Destroyed: Kabul University in the 1980s – Most Students Were Women



Planeta Publishers

ghanistan into a medieval chamber of horrors. And behind this counterrevolution, from the beginning the driving force has been U.S. imperialism and its Pakistani military henchmen. Already in late 1978, as Muslim mullahs railed against a constitutional guarantee of women's rights and the feudalist khans revolted against land reform and debt relief for poor peasants, American agents were busily coordinating opposition while Pakistan supplied arms. By the next year, Washington was secretly funneling money and military supplies to the *jihād* (holy war). The CIA undertook the largest clandestine operation in its history, ultimately costing more than \$6 billion.

When the Soviet Union intervened in December 1979 to stave off a collapse of the embattled Afghan government, U.S. president Jimmy Carter responded by launching Cold War II. For the next decade, under Democrat Carter and his Republican successor Ronald Reagan, Washington's propaganda mills churned out anti-Soviet war propaganda while praising the woman-hating *mujahedin* (holy warriors) as "freedom fighters." The Reaganite Cold Warriors were joined in their howling by most of the left, which accused the USSR of trampling on

No to the Veil – For Women's Liberation Through
International Socialist Revolution!

Bitter Fruit of the Anti-Soviet War Drive:
Afghan Women in Burqas (1996)

Sebastião Salgado



“fiercely independent Afghanistan.” The fact that under the Soviet-allied PDPA, for the first time in history Afghan women were freed from the suffocating head-to-toe *burqa*, that girls could become literate, study in schools and universities and become teachers and scientists, was never mentioned.

**Soviet-Allied Afghan Regime
Made Gains for Women**

Upon taking power in a military coup, the PDPA proclaimed a 20-point program including calls for equality among Afghanistan’s numerous peoples, expropriating the biggest landowners, canceling the debts of 11 million peasants, extending the state sector of the capitalist economy while aiding small businesses, and universal education for both sexes in their native languages. Women were promised minimal democratic gains: polygamy was outlawed, a cap was put on the bride price, legal equality was established. But what really incensed the reactionaries was when the new regime launched a literacy drive particularly aimed at educating young girls. Teachers and literacy workers were denounced as communists and shot. At the outset, 99 percent of Afghan women were illiterate, but in the next decade 1.5 million people passed literacy exams.

Even a source generally hostile to the PDPA and broadly sympathetic to the mujahedin had to admit the gains for women during the period of the Soviet intervention:

“The Soviet Union invades Afghanistan. The emancipation of Afghan women moves quickly. There are greater opportunities for education, employment, and professional training, especially for women in the cities.... Women students outnumber men at the Universities.... The Communists legally guarantee the equal rights of women and men. More and more women hold positions in business, government, the diplomatic corps, the police, the army, and in Parliament. Women are teachers, nurses, entertainers, doctors and lawyers. Education and employment for

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Afghan women, their gains under attack, volunteered for women's militia organized in 1989 by Soviet-allied Kabul government.

women becomes more acceptable through much of Afghan society.”

– Deborah Ellis, *Women of the Afghan War* (Praeger, 2000)

Health care was made available to women for the first time, with village and neighborhood clinics. *Purdah*, the forcible seclusion of women in the home, was considerably weakened. In 1978, only 5,000 women in all of Afghanistan held jobs, but by the late 1980s there were 245,000 women wage workers, including 11,000 teachers. Most teachers were women, and most members of the PDPA were teachers. In 1989, as the Kremlin treacherously withdrew Soviet troops, the Kabul regime armed all party members and set up a women's militia.

While the reformist left joined Washington in denouncing a “Soviet invasion,” revolutionary Trotskyists (then represented by the international Spartacist tendency) proclaimed “Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!” and called to “extend gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples.” We pointed out that the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan ran counter to the Stalinist bureaucracy's program of seeking “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism. And indeed, as it was besieged by the CIA-funded, armed and trained terrorist bands, the PDPA began backtracking on women's rights as it sought to form a coalition government with “moderate” Islamic fundamentalists. But the anti-woman feudalists were not placated – they demanded the abolition of every gain made by women under the reform regime.

Today, Western liberals exclusively blame the Taliban for the hellish conditions besetting Afghan women. But the Taliban did not take power until four years after the fall of the Soviet-allied PDPA government, and during those four years women's rights were systematically rolled back by the victorious *mujahedin* who are now once again Washington's allies. The anti-Soviet source quoted above summarizes the events of 1992:

“The Communist regime of Najibullah falls, and the Islamic State of Afghanistan takes over the country. The constitution is thrown out. Although women continue to work and

go to school, they are urged to dress modestly. The government declares that women should cover their hair, refrain from wearing make-up, and should not laugh in public.... Women are killed for being related to men wanted by the various Mujahideen groups. Others are killed for resisting rape or abduction. Many young women are abducted to be wives of Mujahideen commanders. Some are sold into prostitution. Some are stoned to death. Some just disappear.”

– *Women of the Afghan War*

Feminists Unite With Imperialism Against Afghan Women

By 1993, the Supreme Court of the Islamic State decreed that women could not wear clothing similar to men's and must be completely covered by the veil when they leave their houses, that girls should not be taught to write and should only be instructed in the home by fathers or brothers in the rudiments of Islam. This was all before the Taliban took over.

It is often said that wearing the all-encompassing *burqa*, the Afghan Islamic veil, is a “cultural” or individual matter. Thus the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) states, “We believe wearing the veil is a cultural issue, not a religious one.” RAWA adds that, “To wear, or not to wear, the Islamic veil is a completely personal issue and no one has the right to interfere with this decision or impose the veil on us,” and “As far as we are concerned, we will NOT wear the veil as far as security and social discretion allow us, for we regard rejection of the veil as a symbolic form of resistance and defiance of the fundamentalists.” But under the feudalistic and even pre-feudal conditions prevailing in most of Afghanistan, the question of the Islamic veil is decidedly *not* a matter of individual choice. Any woman who “chooses” not to wear this oppressive garment risks death.

We are not talking here about Muslim school girls in France subject to racist harassment for wearing a *hijab* (Islamic head covering), but rather about Afghan woman who are imprisoned behind the head-to-toe *burqa* or *chadori* (which doesn't even leave an opening for the eyes, only a screen), whether this is the result of the decision of an Islamic court or of brutally enforced “custom.” RAWA activists are courageous women who have often braved death to teach young girls in the refugee camps dominated by the *mujahedin*. Moreover, security is a real and difficult issue in how the fight against the Islamic veil is waged. However, what RAWA is saying here is that for themselves and in urban conditions they reject the veil, but that in the isolated

rural strongholds of reaction they are not for a fight to say no to the veil. Thus they condemn the vast majority of Afghan women to further isolation and oppression.

Moreover, the claim that wearing the *burqa* is a customary matter is a whitewash of the anti-Taliban Islamic fundamentalists. In an article on the assassination of Northern Alliance leader Ahmed Shah Massoud, the *New York Times* (16 September) noted:

"As the Taliban grew internationally notorious, banning television, sheathing women head-to-toe and amputating the hands of thieves, Mr. Massoud presented himself to the West as a 'reasonable' Muslim. 'I am for the rights of women,' he said. 'Women can work. Women can go to school.' But once asked if his own wife wore the head-to-toe burqa, he smiled sheepishly and replied, 'Yes, this is the custom'."

As for women attending school, the *Times* (3 October) triumphantly reported that "in territory under the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance, 8 young women were allowed to join 300 young men studying at the university for the first time last year." The fact that many thousands of young women used to study in Afghan universities but were forcibly driven out by the very same Northern Alliance when it was in power is not mentioned.

Vituperating against "multiculturalism" and other "politically correct" trends at American universities which argue that Western culture is not inherently superior to Islamic culture (which preserved crucial cultural and scientific achievements while Europe was plunged into the Dark Ages of Christian obscurantism), the ideologues of U.S. imperialism are quite content to condemn Afghan women to the veil on the grounds that this is the local culture. The same argument has often been used in the past to justify female genital mutilation, polygamy in feudal societies and other forms of oppression of women.

With similar reasoning, a number of Afghan feminists have been arguing that everything was much better before "the Communists" (i.e., the petty-bourgeois reformers of the PDPA) took power and how great everything was under the king, now slated by Washington to be the new ruler of Afghanistan. In fact, RAWA itself declares: "As a matter of principle, RAWA is not a monarchist organization. However, the majority of Afghan people whole-heartedly support the former king. That is why RAWA prefers Zahir Shah to the other self-styled jihadi [mujahedin] and Taliban leaders." Using the arguments of opportunists everywhere, these monarcho-feminists who still adorn their propaganda with Maoist-style images of heroic women fighters today line up behind U.S. imperialism's designated ruler of post-Taliban Afghanistan by claiming this is the choice of "the majority of Afghan people"!

RAWA has made clear that its fundamental class loyalties are with capitalist imperialism. Like the several Afghan Maoist groups, following the "Moscow-directed coup d'état of April 1978" and "and particularly after the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in December 1979," rather than defending the beleaguered Kabul government against the forces of feudal and imperialist reaction, "RAWA became directly involved in the war of resistance." Thus they ended up in the refugee camps

in Afghanistan run by supporters of Gulbuddin Hekmatyr, the Islamic fundamentalist who received most of Washington's millions during the war. During the 1970s, Hekmatyr and his cohorts used to throw acid on the faces of unveiled women students at Kabul University for recreation. And in 1987, Hekmatyr's assassins murdered the founder and leader of RAWA, Meena, in Quetta, Pakistan.

By lining up with imperialism and the "moderate" Islamic fundamentalists, a whole layer of petty-bourgeois and bourgeois feminists, both in Afghanistan and the United States and Europe, have lined up squarely *against the interests of oppressed Afghan women*. The experience of the last quarter century underscores that women will not be liberated through simple bourgeois-democratic reforms and declarations of legal equality. The crime of the PDPA regime was not that it went too far, but rather that its half-hearted reforms left the social base of reaction intact. Such a weak petty-bourgeois government in a country with a minuscule working class (no more than 30,000 workers in 1978) could not on its own undertake a genuine social revolution which alone can guarantee the emancipation of Afghan women. This required a force from outside Afghan society.

No Better Fighters for Communism Than Women Workers of the East

In contrast, the Trotskyists of the League for the Fourth International fight for the *liberation of the women of Afghanistan as well as Pakistan, India and the former Soviet republics of Central Asia through international socialist revolution*. By laying the economic foundations for socializing household labor, child care and other tasks that have for centuries oppressed women, by extending universal education and combating religious obscurantism, a federation of revolutionary workers and peasants governments throughout the region would also undercut the death grip of clerical reaction. In the early Soviet Union, the heroic fight of Central Asian Bolshevik women and men to smash feudal counterrevolution ultimately required the intervention of the Red Army to smash the Basmachi rebellion. That laid the basis for the tremendous advances for Uzbek, Tajik, Kirghiz, Turkmen and Kazakh women, gains which are now being reversed in a decade of counterrevolution following the destruction of the bureaucratically degenerated Soviet workers state.

The Kremlin Stalinists' ignominious withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 was a key step in opening the floodgates of counterrevolution in the USSR itself. But this tragic result was not foreordained. As Leon Trotsky wrote in 1924 of Muslim women of the Soviet East:

"...the Eastern woman, who is the most paralyzed in life, in her habits and in creativity, the slave of slaves, she, having at the demand of the new economic relations taken off her cloak, will at once feel herself lacking any sort of religious buttress. She will have a passionate thirst to gain new ideas and new consciousness which will permit her to appreciate her new position in society. And there will be no better communist in the East, no better fighter for the ideas of the Revolution and for the ideas of Communism than the awakened woman worker."

The Left and the Imperialist War Drive

The following article is reprinted from the 27 September special supplement to The Internationalist.

The shock waves from the coordinated September 11 attacks on New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon have spread throughout the world. Aircraft carriers steam toward the Indian Ocean, the largest air armada since World War II is being assembled to strike at Afghanistan, the killer elites of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions are on the move. In the United States, the Bush administration has already set up a "Homeland Security Agency," government and airline officials "racially profile" anyone with a Near Eastern appearance while racists have

besieged mosques and murdered at least three individuals who "looked like" Arabs. In New York City, anguished relatives and friends who put up pictures of thousands of missing people on walls all over Manhattan have seen their hopes extinguished of finding survivors in the rubble of the WTC.

American propaganda mills. The U.S. always gives high-sounding names to its wars: WWI was supposed to be a "war for democracy," WWII a "war against fascism," when in fact both of these imperialist conflagrations were about controlling colonies, economic resources and world domination. The "war on drugs" is a cover for tightening U.S. hegemony over Latin America, and the vehicle for besieging the ghettos and barrios in the U.S. On an even broader scale, the "war on terrorism" will be a means for regimenting the entire population of the United States. Indefinitely.

It is a war on Arabs, Asians and all immigrants, who are being victimized and deprived of rights.

It is a war on black people, who are facing a resurgence of racist "profiling" by the authorities.

It is a war on working people, who are being thrown out of their jobs by the hundreds of thousands while the benefits of those who remain are slashed.

It is a war on democratic rights, as the capitalist rulers generalize police-state controls on everything from e-mail to national ID cards. Before long the bourgeoisie will be declaring workers' strikes a form of "terrorism."

"Peace" Groups Buy Into War Rhetoric

"Public opinion" manufactured by the mass media is dutifully responding to the war propaganda: polls show 89 percent support for Bush (the highest ever for a U.S. president) and 92 percent in favor of military strikes against countries deemed to be culprits. Yet, remarkably, the drumroll of jingoism has not succeeded in intimidating all opposition to the war drive. At colleges and universities across the country, demonstrations and teach-ins against war have spread like wildfire. And in response to racist attacks on Arab Americans there has been considerable opposition to xenophobia.

The London *Observer* (16 September) noted early on, "Peace Protesters Take to New York Streets." When the *New York Times* finally reported the proliferation of peace symbols in Union Square, the cops quickly moved in to erase them and put up fences. Yet the next day, thousands of peace demonstrators marched on Times Square. The event was completely blacked out in the media.

While the protesters object to Washington's ominous war moves, the politics of the peace demonstrations are infused with illusions in American bourgeois "democracy."

At a September 20 "Teach-In to Stop the War" sponsored by the International Socialist Organization (ISO) and others at New York University, professor Bertell Ollman — a prominent representative of "academic Marxism" — recalled a motto of previous antiwar protests: "speak truth to power." The very idea that speaking truth to those who hold the power in capitalist America could change their policies is a dangerous liberal illusion, antithetical to everything Marx wrote about the ruling class. But Ollman's message was even worse: he argued that today it is necessary "to make our truth digestible" — that is, acceptable to the media-manufactured "public opinion."



But for the United States government, the aftermath of the indiscriminate terror attack is a golden "opportunity to restructure the world," as a top advisor of President George W. Bush put it (*New York Times*, 22 September). The commander in chief of U.S. imperialism has proclaimed the "first war of the 21st century." Waging it, he declared, will be "the purpose of this administration." Government spokesmen talk of a "war against terrorism," when in fact the immediate aim of the murderous strikes they are preparing is to terrorize the populations of the Near East and South Asia into submission. Afghanistan itself is so "target-impoverished," with little of consequence left to bomb (no electricity plants, oil refineries, or even hospitals), that many in the administration are pushing to declare Iraqi strong man Saddam Hussein to be the henchman of Saudi millionaire Osama bin Laden, Washington's current chief nemesis.

Bush & Co. refuse to give proof of the alleged connections of bin Laden, Hussein or anyone else with the WTC attack, so as not to "compromise intelligence sources." And who needs proof, anyway, since this "new kind of war" is not about "stopping terrorism" or any of the other claims of the

Ollman stated frankly what all the antiwar groups are doing. By front-loading their appeals with "anti-terrorist" rhetoric, they are accepting the premise that Bush's war drive really is a response to the September 11 attacks. It is not. Every one of the moves Washington is making today was prepared long in advance. A national security review early this year called for a global war on terrorism. The munitions to be used against Afghanistan were ordered moved from Europe to Diego Garcia Island in the Indian Ocean last month. The World Trade Center gave the government just the handle it needed to put into action its plans to "reorganize the world."

By their rhetoric, the protest organizers are positioning themselves as the *pacifist wing of the war drive*. In adjusting their "truth" to what is digestible by the powers that be in U.S. bourgeois politics, it is revealed as a lie. They appeal to "all people of conscience to come together" to stop the war declared by "our" government. (Even the "Anti-Capitalist Convergence" which is sponsoring events in Washington on September 29 says, "We demand that no more terror or violence be perpetrated in our name.") Yet a key lesson to be driven home is that the Pentagon, White House, Congress and the courts are *the government of, by and for the ruling class*: they are the machinery of the *capitalist state*, which rests on the police and military, the armed bodies whose job it is to "preserve and protect" the interests of the exploiters. And their war drive will not be stopped by a bunch of peace marches, however numerous.

"War and racism are NOT the answer!" is the title of a leaflet of the International Action Center (IAC), led by the Workers World Party (WWP), calling for a September 29 national rally in Washington, D.C. What the flyer does not say is that war and racism are an integral part of capitalism, and it is impossible to get rid of these evils without overturning the system that engenders them. No. 1 among the signers is Ramsey Clark, who as Lyndon Johnson's attorney general oversaw the murderous war on the Black Panther Party.

"Justice yes, war no!" chanted demonstrators at the September 21 NYC march. A meeting of "peace activists" held at the Local 1199 union hall two days earlier raised as one of its key "points of unity" for an October 6 march that "terrorism" must be dealt with by "international law." Yet international law is a myth under capitalism. What do they mean by "justice," The Hague tribunal? Those "judges" sitting on a former military base in the Netherlands are nothing but the "judicial" auxiliary of the NATO imperialist forces that terror-bombed Yugoslavia in 1999.

Do they want United Nations sanctions against Afghanistan? That's what many "peace" protesters demanded against Iraq, following Saddam Hussein's invasion of the family-owned oil sheikdom of Kuwait in 1990. And they got them. UN sanctions were the stepping stone to the Persian Gulf War, and they have continued ever since, condemning a generation of Iraqis to misery, disease and death. Revolutionaries defended Iraq and Yugoslavia against imperialist attacks, while giving no political support to their murderous, anti-communist leaders. Today it is the duty of all class-conscious workers and socialists to defend Afghanistan, Iraq and all those countries under attack by U.S. imperialism, at the same time as we fight

for socialist revolution to overthrow their bloody rulers, most of whom are former allies and flunkies of Washington.

Many of the organizers of today's budding "peace movement" are veterans of earlier such movements over the Persian Gulf War and the Vietnam War. If they seek to make a profession of leading antiwar movements, at least they have the promise of steady employment. For as Russian Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin noted in his book *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, capitalism in its epoch of decay ceaselessly produces war and new economic crises. But as Lenin also remarked, imperialism is *the epoch of wars and revolutions*. The key is forging a proletarian revolutionary leadership.

Labor Under the Gun in Capitalist Economic Crisis

The September 11 WTC attack had an immediate effect on the U.S. economy. From the minute the opening bell sounded at the New York Stock Exchange on Monday, September 17, prices of shares in leading corporations plunged. It was the worst-ever point loss on the Dow Jones stock index and by the week's end the accumulated stock market losses added up to a drop of 14 percent, the worst week since the depths of the 1930s Great Depression. In five days over \$1.2 trillion in paper wealth was wiped out, quite a chunk in a capitalist economy for which the drive to accumulate "shareholder value" is the word of Moses and the prophets.

The crisis in the real economy is no less severe. U.S. airlines have announced 100,000 layoffs, a quarter of the entire workforce in the industry. Another 100,000 jobs are expected to be eliminated in New York City due to the WTC collapse. Hotels, restaurants and the tourist industry have laid off well over 100,000 nationwide. The International Monetary Fund has now officially announced the U.S. to be in a "recession."

Of course, this is not all the result of airliners crashing into buildings in an indiscriminate terror attack. The U.S. economy was already declining sharply after the longest expansion in history. The decade-long boom was limited to the capitalists: the poor got poorer, hundreds of thousands of industrial workers lost their jobs, the middle class barely held even, while multimillionaires and billionaires raked in fabulous profits. But it was only a matter of time until the speculative bubble burst. And now that it has, the underlying weak underpinnings of American capitalism are as starkly exposed as the wreckage of the Twin Towers. The United States has been living off of imported capital for years, running an annual balance of payments deficit of over \$400 billion, more than three times its monetary reserves. The minute foreign investors lose confidence in the U.S. economy or the dollar, the resulting financial crisis could be cataclysmic.

In such times of crisis, the government is revealed for what it is, the executive committee of the capitalist class. Suddenly, the top U.S. economic officials began pouring in tens of billions in "liquidity." The airline executives with their million-plus salaries got a \$15 billion hand-out from the feds. Thereupon, they turned around and fired tens of thousands of workers while refusing to pay contractually "guaranteed" severance payments. When the unions complained, the phony "friends of labor" of the Demo-



U.S. terror bombers hit Belgrade, 1999.

cratic Party agreed to “forgo” any guarantees for workers.

In the face of the escalating economic crisis, a number of union leaders sense that labor is under the gun in the new war drive. While AFL-CIO chief John Sweeney called Bush to state his “full support for him in this time of crisis,” there have also been a number of calls for “peace” from labor officialdom. But these timid statements invariably emphasize their fundamental loyalty to capitalism, and to American capitalism in particular. Thus the United Electrical Workers issued a September 14 statement criticizing “military adventures that can lead only to more carnage and senseless loss of life,” at the same time emphasizing that “after Pearl Harbor...UE mobilized to win the war for freedom....”

In the California Bay Area, the San Francisco Labor Council issued a statement saying, “We reject the idea that entire nations should be punished for the actions of a few. Bombing raids and military strikes will only fuel an endless cycle of revenge.” The SFLC then cited Samuel Gompers, the founder of the AFL, saying “that labor wants more justice and less revenge.” Gompers was a rabid supporter of the U.S. in the first imperialist world war. Local 10 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) voted to send a letter to Congresswoman Barbara Lee “commending her for her courageous sole vote against the war.”

In justifying her dissenting vote Lee made it clear she was defending what she understood to be the national interest of capitalist America. She objected not to the so-called “war on terrorism” itself but to the open-ended nature of the use of force resolution, because it “significantly reduces Congress’s authority,” and she worried that things could “spiral out of control.” To make her stand clear, the Democratic representative also voted in favor of the \$40 billion emergency financing bill which includes a blanket authorization (amount undefined) for “intelligence activities.” So much for defending the “authority” of Congress.

The Local 10 meeting also discussed attempts by the bosses’ Pacific Maritime Association to blacklist longshoremen by “security” checks following the September 11 attack. This poses a direct threat to the union hiring hall, a gain of the 1934 SF dock

strike. Rather than hiding behind a capitalist politician, what is clearly called for here is working-class action against the war drive and its consequences for labor. Class-conscious workers must emphasize that the impending war will slaughter countless working people abroad, as did the Vietnam and Persian Gulf wars, while the government launches a frontal assault on civil liberties at home; and that what’s needed is to mobilize workers struggle against the U.S. war drive, defending the targeted semi-colonial countries against U.S. attack while defending working people at home, for example against the attacks being pushed by the maritime bosses.

For Revolutionary Class Struggle Against Imperialist War!

It is axiomatic in the Marxist movement that wars and revolutions are the ultimate test of any party or leadership. This was true in the First World War (1914-18) when the large majority of the social-democratic parties of the Second International lined up behind “their own” bourgeoisies in the imperialist slaughter. The current crisis is no exception. While various reformists want to get in on the action of a new antiwar movement, these pseudo-socialists are careful to pitch their appeal in liberal terms. Thus along with ILWU Local 10, the reformists of the Communist Party and WWP also hailed Congresswoman Barbara Lee’s vote against the war resolution. *Workers World* (27 September) hailed her as the “Hero from Oakland,” while the CPUSA’s *People’s World* (22 September) headlined its article, “Lee shows courage with vote for peace.” This was a replay of the line taken by the CP and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the 1960s movement, when they chased after Democratic Party “doves,” in order to wage their “peace” campaigns in the framework of a class-collaborationist popular front with bourgeois politicians. In 1965-66, they hailed senators Wayne Morse of Oregon and Ernest Gruening of Alaska, the only ones to vote against LBJ’s Gulf of Tonkin resolution.

Another important “player” in the peace scene is the International Socialist Organization. While calling for a different U.S. policy, these small-time social patriots would not defend Afghanistan any more than they would defend Yugoslavia or Iraq against imperialist attack. The ISO points in a special supplement, “Don’t Turn Tragedy Into War” (*Socialist Worker*, 14 September), to how the CIA trained bin Laden, noting that when the *mujahedin* (Islamic holy warriors) were fighting Soviet troops in Afghanistan, Ronald Reagan called them “freedom fighters.” What the ISO doesn’t mention is that it howled along with the Reaganites, declaring “We totally condemn the Russian invasion of Afghanistan” (*Socialist Worker*, January 1980). And when the Soviets pulled out nine years later, the ISO salivated: “The Mojahedin victory will encourage the opponents of Russian rule

everywhere in the USSR and Eastern Europe" (*Socialist Worker*, 4 February 1989).

In fact, the Soviet Army withdrawal did encourage counterrevolution internationally, which culminated in the destruction of the USSR and bureaucratically deformed workers states throughout East Europe. The working people there, who are suffering the ravages of capitalist restoration, and the women of Afghanistan, once again enslaved by the veil, will have accounts to settle with these pro-imperialist social democrats who cheered the victory of the Islamic fundamentalist cutthroats.

In the face of the traumatic impact of the September 11 attack, a variety of left groups seek in different ways to feed off the sentiments of powerlessness and the thirst for vengeance whipped up by the bourgeois media. A 14 September statement by the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) emotes: "As the dust clears from our eyes, the people in the most powerful country in the world find ourselves held hostage..." – what is this, some kind of right-wing tract? While it goes on to say that what "we" are "held hostage" to are "the inevitable repercussions of the actions of this U.S. power structure and their bloody military machine," what the RCP is appealing to here is a sense of imperialist superiority.

In turn, the League for the Revolutionary Party (LRP) simultaneously declares that "American workers are right to hate their enemies and to seek revenge for the massacre," and that the terrorists responsible for the attacks "aimed a blow against imperialism," although "their contempt for the loss of innocent life reflects their disregard for the lives of all people." This schizophrenic quality accurately reflects the politics of the LRP, which seeks to appeal both to the chauvinism of the union bureaucracy and labor aristocracy in the imperialist countries and to "Third World" nationalists who see no difference between the U.S. government and American workers. Such contortions are to be expected from a group which like the Maoist RCP joined the anti-Soviet Cold War chorus (calling the USSR "capitalist"), while trying to maintain a leftist veneer.

Another group of self-proclaimed "revolutionary communists," the Progressive Labor Party (PLP), issued a leaflet headlined "Condemn All Terrorism." Covering over the fact that U.S. imperialism is by far the most powerful terrorist in the world, the PLP "evenhandedly" declares that the working class "is caught between two terrorists, the cowardly suicide bombers and the vicious U.S. ruling class." In its newspaper *Challenge* (3 October), which praises "great Communist leaders like Stalin and Mao," the lead article declares, "Our job is to



Stock market crash, 1929. Capitalism engenders economic crisis and war.

fight all the rulers, not to mobilize our class to choose sides among them," whether in Afghanistan or the U.S. Some "communists," who refuse to choose sides with the victims of "their own" imperialism as it bombs semi-colonial countries!

Genuine communists defend semi-colonial countries against imperialist attack as we fight for socialist revolution against their bourgeois and, in the case of Afghanistan, feudalistic leaders. During the 1930s, Leon Trotsky and his supporters in the Fourth Internationalist movement defended Ethiopia against attack by Italian imperialism, without for a minute giving political support to the emperor Haile Selassie. And today it is crucial to stress defense of the remaining deformed workers states (China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba) against imperialism and internal counterrevolution.

The Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League (SL/ICL), for many years upheld the Trotskyist banner. The ICL correctly called to "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan," and to extend gains of the October Revolution to the peoples of this impoverished Central Asian country. The Internationalist Group/U.S., section of the League for the Fourth International, was founded by long-time leading Spartacist cadres, and the IG/LFI continue to uphold these revolutionary Trotskyist politics as the ICL plunges deeper into centrist confusion.

Thus the SL put out a statement dated September 12 with the innocuous title, "The World Trade Center Attack." While a superhead called to "Oppose Domestic Repression, Imperialist 'Retaliation,'" the beginning of the statement focuses on denouncing the terrorists, as does most of the end of the statement. Nowhere does the SL statement call to *defend* the countries (notably Afghanistan and Iraq) which were already targeted by Wash-

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While WV Again Hails Democrat Barbara Lee

ICL Refuses to Call for Defeat of U.S. Imperialism, "Anti-American" Baites the Internationalist Group

It is common when once-revolutionary organizations turn toward opportunism that they seek to cover their tracks by smearing and slandering those who continue to uphold the Marxist banner. In the five years since leading cadres of the Spartacist League and other sections of the International Communist League were bureaucratically expelled, the SL/ICL has heaped one lie and invention upon another in its frantic attempts to discredit the Internationalist Group and the League for the Fourth International.

Now it is wartime, and the ICL is worried. So it lashes out at the IG/LFI with a new and sinister smear. In the article published below, "SL Flinches on Afghanistan War" (25 October), we reported how the Spartacist League refused to call for defense of Afghanistan against imperialist attack right up to the moment bombs started falling, and how the SL had an internal discussion which decided *not* to call for the defeat of U.S. imperialism in this war. This had been a subject of heated discussion between IG and SL members in numerous marches, protests and meetings against the war in previous weeks.

Now the SL has responded. An article in *Workers Vanguard* (No. 767, 26 October), titled "The Internationalist Group: Centrist Pathology," confirms that the ICL does *not* call for defeat of U.S. imperialism in this war. Instead, it accuses the IG of "Playing the Counterfeit Card of Anti-Americanism" and being soft on Islamic fundamentalism. Indeed, *WV* accuses us of playing to an audience of "'Third World' nationalists for whom the 'only good American is a dead American.'" What a monstrous lie!

Think about that for a moment. What does it mean to accuse Trotskyists of "anti-Americanism" in wartime? The Stalinists did it at the outbreak of World War II, and as the hammer of capitalist state repression came down, 18 leaders of the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party were jailed for their courageous opposition to the imperialist war. Today, amid the war hysteria against Islamic fundamentalism, the American bourgeois press is filled with articles denouncing "anti-Americanism" in Europe. A generous interpretation of the SL's latest frenzied smear is that it is desperate to get out of the line of fire, saying to the bourgeoisie, "It's not us."

Certainly not. Using supposedly "left" arguments, the SL pounds on the same themes as the imperialist warmongers. And it's not the first time. In recent years the ICL has echoed the bourgeois press on China, Tibet, Kosovo, Puerto Rico and other issues. But as U.S. bombs fall on Kabul, the glare of the blasts sharply reveals this opportunism for what it is: capitulation to the ruling class. *WV* argues:

"The IG's call to 'defeat' a particular imperialist drive toward war partakes of the view — which the reformists like the WWP and the ISO are pushing for all they are worth — that imperialism is a 'policy' which can be altered by means of pressure, presumably by some 'movement' on the streets."

This exercise in sophistry "partakes of" sophomoric debaters' tricks. The IG repeatedly denounces the idea that imperialism is a policy or that the war can be defeated by a "peace movement." Moreover, anyone can see there is a world of difference between calling to *defeat* the U.S. and calling to change Bush's foreign policy.

The *WV* article continues: "From a Marxist perspective, however, there is no way to 'defeat' the inevitable drive toward war by the capitalists short of their being expelled from power through victorious workers revolution...." So since it will take nothing less than socialist revolution to defeat the general capitalist drive toward war, the Spartacist League does not call for the defeat of "its own" bourgeoisie in *this imperialist war of predation!*

As Leninists, we call to defeat imperialism in this war as part of the fight "For International Socialist Revolution!" as we proclaim in red on the front page of the *Internationalist* special supplement (27 September). As opportunists, the ICL cynically uses this subterfuge to abandon the Bolshevik program to fight against imperialist wars.

As if to underscore the point, *WV* continues to praise black Democrat Barbara Lee, the Congresswoman from the California East Bay area, for casting "the sole vote against the resolution giving Bush a blank check for war" (*WV* No. 765, 28 September). They have yet to inform their readers that this same capitalist Representative voted *for* the \$40 billion emergency war budget that literally *gave a blank check to the CIA* to step up its spying and dirty tricks.

Now the SL holds that Lee's action represents "cracks in the bourgeois edifice," and that it "reflected the lack of enthusiasm for this war from many black workers and youth." So here we have a bourgeois politician acting as the voice of discontent among black working people! This is the self-same line presented by the Communist Party and Workers World Party reformists. This alone shows the emptiness of the SL's pretensions of building a revolutionary workers party.

Hero from Oakland

Lone standout on war resolution

By JENNIFER ROBERTSON



Barbara Lee, a congresswoman from Oakland, Calif., is the only member of the House of Representatives to vote against the resolution giving President Bush a blank check for war. She is shown in a photo on the right of the article.

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WWP (above), SL and CP all hail Democratic "dove" Barbara Lee.

In fact, Lee has been fêted by the entire "antiwar" popular front in Berkeley-Oakland for her vote, as the *New York Times* (22 October) reports in an article titled "Bastion of Dissent Offers Tribute to One of Its Heros." The *Times* article noted that "nowhere has that one vote been more popular than in her own district, a bastion of left-liberal politics where the two-party system means Democrats and Greens."

We have challenged the SL to explain why it was correct to call to defend Iraq, as the then-Trotskyist Spartacist League did in 1990 even before the bombs started falling on Baghdad, and why it is supposedly wrong to call to defeat the U.S. imperialist war today even after the bombs are falling on Kabul. In 1991, *Workers Vanguard* repeatedly headlined "Defeat U.S. Imperialism! Defend Iraq!"

Or maybe they are rethinking that one, too. If so, they might read the article in *WV* No. 510 (21 September 1990), titled "The Left and the Persian Gulf: Desperately Seeking Imperialist Doves," which takes the WWP et al. to task for seeking to "avoid defending Iraq in a war with the U.S." A caption sums it up: "Reform vs. Revolution: Reformist left seeks bloc with Democratic 'doves' to cut losses for U.S. imperialism. Spartacists call for defeat of American bourgeoisie, oppose imperialist blockade."

Or look at *WV* No. 512 with the front-page headline, "Defeat U.S. Imperialism!" And there it is again in *WV* No. 513, this time on a Spartacist banner, "Break the Blockade of Iraq! Defeat U.S. Imperialism!" So what changed? What changed is, first, the Persian Gulf War was hotly contested before the shooting began, whereas this time around U.S. rulers have whipped up a real war frenzy; and second, today the Spartacist League capitulates to and even buys into the hysteria.

The SL accuses the LFI of...insufficient fervor against Islamic fundamentalism. Unlike the ICL, the LFI has intervened in actual struggle fighting against both Islamic fundamentalism and bourgeois nationalism (see "Algeria: Kabylia in Revolt," *The Internationalist* No. 12, Summer 2001). The ICL line that Islamic fundamentalism is ascendant throughout the historically Muslim world, in contrast, means it has *nothing to say* to anti-fundamentalist youth and workers in Algeria who are confronting a bloody army-based regime locked in a civil war against Islamic

fundamentalists.

The ICL's latest sharp turn to the right is a dramatic development: renouncing a cornerstone of Leninist politics in the midst of a war. But it is a part of a pattern of its recent capitulations. Calling for an independent soviet Tibet when "free Tibet" becomes all the rage in rad-lib circles (dropping it a year later when Clinton invites the Dalai Lama to the White House). Renouncing its long-standing call for independence for Puerto Rico even as U.S. imperialism escalates its use of its Caribbean colony as a bombing range and launching pad for invasions. "Barbara Lee, yes – colonial independence, no" might as well be the ICL's slogan today.

Now on Afghanistan, the ICL's main emphasis is that it was the first to fight against Islamic fundamentalists like the Taliban, while it refuses to defend Afghanistan until the shooting starts. This reflects trends within a certain liberal bourgeois milieu. A recent book by Pakistani journalist Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban* (Yale University Press, 2000), quoted an article from the *Washington Post* about a 1999 Hollywood Oscar party by the Feminist Majority to honor Afghan women: "The Taliban's war on women has become the latest cause célèbre in Hollywood. Tibet is out. Afghanistan is in."

Today, while the IG/LFI call for class war against the imperialist war, the SL/ICL calls only for "Class Struggle Against Capitalist Rulers At Home." This could mean just about anything, including simple wage strikes, and in the context of the SL's new line, the emphasis on "at home" is counterposed to the call to defeat the imperialists *abroad*. Yet the history of proletarian struggles around the world underlines that defeats for the imperialists in their aggression abroad foster class struggle within the imperialist heartland, and it is when workers in the imperialist countries come to understand the need to defeat their rapacious imperialist rulers that they can achieve genuinely internationalist class consciousness. The SL line amounts to *nationalist, economist social-pacifism*.

While we're at it, we challenge the SL/ICL to name one colony in the world today where they call for independence. We've asked several SL cadres, and their response was, "I don't know." They obviously don't care much either.

SL/ICL Flinches on Afghanistan War

OCTOBER 25 – Over the course of the last month and a half, following the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon and the imperialist war on Afghanistan by the United States and NATO, many organizations on the U.S. left have reacted true to form. The reformists of the Workers World Party (WWP) and Internationalist Socialist Organization (ISO) predictably set up competing "peace" coalitions, mini popular fronts whose purpose is to head off real struggle against the war by tying protesters to bourgeois political figures such as former U.S. attorney general Ramsey Clark. The Communist Party U.S.A. as usual wrapped itself in the stars and stripes. A slew of smaller groups issued "me too" statements "against terrorism," in effect begging to be admitted into the imperialists' "anti-terrorist" crusade. They only want to "give peace a chance" to accomplish

the same aims as the war unleashed by U.S. president Bush and his deputy sheriff, British prime minister Tony Blair.

One group which made a notable shift is the Spartacist League, U.S. section of the International Communist League (SL/ICL). For three decades the Spartacist tendency upheld the program of revolutionary Trotskyism. In the Vietnam War in the 1960s and early '70s, the Afghanistan war and Central American civil wars of the 1980s and the Persian Gulf War of 1990-91, the SL/ICL called for *defeat* of U.S. imperialism and stood on the side of the countries and insurgencies Washington was attacking. But following its turn toward centrism in the mid-1990s (carried out in conjunction with the expulsion of a number of long-time Spartacist cadres), September 11 produced a new and highly significant line change by the SL. We have pointed out that its

first statement, under the empty headline "The World Trade Center Attack," called neither to *defend* the countries targeted by the U.S. for attack nor for *defeat* of the mounting imperialist war drive. At most they called to "oppose" eventual U.S. "reprisals," which is no more than the WWP/ISO did.

The next issue of the SL's *Workers Vanguard* (28 September) had the equally insipid headline, "Repression, Recession and War," and was overwhelmingly dedicated to the domestic U.S. situation (an accompanying article did the same for Europe). This time they called for U.S. "hands off" Afghanistan and Iraq, and buried in the fine print they said "defend Iraq" (but not Afghanistan), which again was no more than the reformists were calling for. Indeed, *WV*'s front page could easily have been mistaken for *Workers World*. The resemblance was even more striking because *Workers Vanguard* joined the WWP and CPUSA in praising black Democratic Congresswoman Barbara Lee of Oakland, saying that "to her credit" she was the only Representative to vote against "giving Bush a blank check for war." Not only does *WV* not make a single criticism of Lee, it doesn't mention that even as she voted against the "use of force" resolution, the Congresswoman *voted for the \$40 billion emergency war credits bill that included a blank check for the CIA!*

In line with this, *WV* failed to mention how the reformists typically try to find some Democratic "dove" to line up behind in building their popular-front "peace" coalitions. Compare the SL's recent articles with the *Spartacist* supplement (July 1971) titled "Against NPAC Pop Fronts: For Class Action Against the War". The article pointed out the role of opportunist leftists in shoring up bourgeois ideology in the working class and hailing "anti-war" capitalist politicians, and emphasized:

"Workers see their most sophisticated enemies ([Eugene] McCarthy, [John] Lindsay, [Vance] Hartke) lauded by the supposed 'Marxists,' cheered on by the labor parasites who serve the bourgeoisie within the workers' own organizations."

But today *WV* joins in the uncritical lauding of Democrat Barbara Lee. After all, among its other revisions the SL has now decreed that there can be no such thing as a popular front in the U.S. And how should it distinguish itself from the ISO/WWP when in practice the SL imitated the dueling reformists (front-load attacks on "terrorism," hail Barbara Lee and her "no blank check for war" vote, and merely "oppose" reprisals rather than wage a revolutionary fight against "their own" bourgeoisie)? The main difference *WV* cited was the fact that it correctly said "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" in the 1980s, whereas the ISO then hailed the CIA's *mujahedin*.

Finally, after U.S. bombs started raining down on Kabul beginning October 7, the SL came out for defense of Afghanistan. But still there was a curious absence: the *WV* (12 October) article does not call for defeat of U.S. imperialism and its war. It turns out this is no mere slip. We have learned that the ICL had an internal discussion on slogans in which it decided not to call to defeat imperialism in the war. This was no doubt at least partly in response to our special issue of *The Internationalist* (27 September) prominently headlined "Defeat the

U.S./NATO War Drive!" More on this below.

What about defense of Afghanistan? *WV* snidely remarks that "the IG objects because we didn't join them in their call to defend a country that was not yet under military attack." Oh no? During the previous weeks we several times challenged SLers to defend their non-defense of the countries in the Pentagon's cross-hairs. What about the fact that there are three aircraft carrier battle groups off Pakistan, we asked them; what about the fact that teams from the 82nd and 101st Airborne were already operating inside Afghanistan since mid-September; what about the war powers resolutions voted by the U.S. Congress, NATO and UN, etc.? The SLers lamely responded that just because the U.S. fleet is there doesn't mean they're going to hit Afghanistan and they didn't know what the U.S. special forces hit teams were up to (they certainly weren't playing Parcheesi!).

We pointed out that during the period from August 1990 to January 1991, when the U.S. fleet and army were lining up for the Persian Gulf War, the SL called to defend Iraq and attacked the reformists for their refusal to do so. (SLers lamely replied that there was a UN blockade of Iraq at the time, but what about UN sanctions against Afghanistan in force for the last two years?) The SL's new conditions for defending one of the poorest countries on earth under attack by the world's greatest imperialist superpower are so hairsplitting that it was like they were making a legal brief invoking Article 7 (§b) of the UN charter, more difficult even than getting the proverbial camel through the eye of a needle (Matthew 19:24). And if Afghanistan wasn't under attack why didn't they inform the Afghan population, which had been fleeing Kabul in droves since September 11? If the SL/ICL didn't know that Afghanistan was under attack prior to October 7, they were the about the only ones on the planet who didn't. The real explanation for their line is "duck and cover," and its political content is economist social pacifism.

Take *WV*'s reference (28 September) to "the American bourgeoisie, whose only 'patriotic' commitment is to its bottom line." Perceptive *WV* readers must have done a double-take over that line, a staple of social democracy which complains that the capitalists have no national loyalties. Some of that "anti-globalization" rhetoric seems to be rubbing off on the ICL. Another significant "tilt" is the emphasis the SL has given in its statements and slogans. First there was the focus on "terrorism" in its initial declaration rather than denouncing imperialism's war drive. Subsequently, in signs and slogans at "antiwar" demonstrations and in its forums, the SL presents itself as the vanguard fighter against Islamic fundamentalism, making George Bush some kind of Johnny-come-lately. A flyer for an SL forum at Columbia University headlines "Afghan Women Enslaved by Islamic Reaction," only afterwards mentioning this is "Product of U.S. Imperialism's Anti-Soviet War." This is while New York Democratic Representative Carolyn Maloney is getting up in Congress dressed in a *burqa* (the head-to-toe Afghan "veil") to make war propaganda over the Taliban's vicious oppression of women!

But most significant is the SL's new opposition to calling for the defeat of "their own" bourgeoisie in an imperialist war. All



Congresswoman dons burqa, using “anti-Islamic fundamentalist” theme for war propaganda.

talk of socialist revolution comes down to “pie in the sky in the sweet bye-and-bye” if you don’t come out four-square for the defeat of “your own” bourgeoisie in an imperialist war. As V.I. Lenin wrote in July 1915 amid the carnage of the first imperialist world war, “During a reactionary war a revolutionary class cannot but desire the defeat of its government.” He added, “This is axiomatic, and disputed only by conscious partisans or helpless satellites of the social-chauvinists” who supported the war (see his article, “The Defeat of One’s Own Government in the Imperialist War”). Lenin returned to this over and over, writing for example in his pamphlet *Socialism and War*: “A revolutionary class cannot but wish for the defeat of its government in a reactionary war, and cannot fail to see that the latter’s military reverses must facilitate its overthrow”; and in a war of Morocco against France, or of India against Britain, “any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressor, slave-holding and predatory ‘Great’ Powers.”

This has been a settled question for Marxists since World War I. Centrist “social pacifists” such as Karl Kautsky who claimed to oppose the war in words while refusing to break from the “social-patriotic” supporters of the war in deeds bitterly opposed Lenin’s policy of revolutionary defeatism. Today *WV* quotes from Trotsky on imperialist war, it does not cite the section on the struggle against imperialism and war in the 1938 founding document of the Fourth International where Trotsky wrote:

“The imperialist bourgeoisie dominates the world. In its basic character the approaching war will therefore be an imperialist war. The fundamental content of the politics of the international proletariat will consequently be a struggle against imperialism and its war. In this struggle the basic principle is: ‘the chief enemy is in your own country,’ or ‘the defeat of your own (imperialist) government is the lesser evil.’”

This is all the more true in a war where revolutionary socialists are duty-bound to defend a semi-colonial country under attack by imperialism. The SL/ICL now, belatedly, says it is for defense of Afghanistan, but is it for the defeat of the U.S.? Not (so far) in the pages of *WV*.

Since its lurch toward centrism in the mid-’90s in demoralized reaction to the counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet Union and the bureaucratically deformed workers states of East Europe, the SL/ICL has abandoned a series of fundamental political positions. We have documented in *The Internationalist* how the ICL leadership has rejected Trotsky’s analysis of the nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy and declared that the central conclusion of the Transitional Program, that the crisis of humanity is reduced to the crisis of revolutionary leadership of the proletariat, was outdated in the face of a supposedly qualitative regression in the consciousness of the working masses. What has made a “great leap backwards” is not the consciousness of the masses, however, but that of the SL/ICL.

Many of the line changes in *WV* over the past five years have had a zigzagging character typical of centrists: for example, suddenly discovering feudalism in Mexico in order to accuse the IG of rejecting permanent revolution, then just as abruptly undiscovering this anti-Marxist notion; calling for an “independent soviet Tibet” when Hollywood and Washington were in the heat of a “free Tibet” campaign, then abandoning this a year later. It is noteworthy that many of the SL/ICL’s gyrations are over its attempts to defend itself against the Internationalist Group and LFI, that is against the Trotskyist politics the SL once championed. They also reflect its inability to put forward a revolutionary line every time there is a new development in the class struggle. But there is a “pink thread” going through a number of the SL’s key line changes: the Spartacist League of today has a problem in fighting against its own bourgeoisie.

When the U.S. bombed Iraq in 1997, the SL ridiculed us for calling for workers action against the war. (So much for SL’s call during the Vietnam War for workers strikes against the war!) The next year the SL abandoned the call for independence for Puerto Rico, a position it had held since its inception, following the line of Trotsky’s Fourth International, instead calling only for its “right” to independence. (This is the same line the French CP leaders took when they abandoned the call for independence for Indochina and Algeria in the 1930s.) It disingenuously calls the IG/LFI “nationalist” for insisting on independence for all colonies, a key point for admission to the Communist International under Lenin and Trotsky. In the present war, the SL has taken a real dive. First it refused to call for defense of Afghanistan until the bombs started falling, and now it still refuses to call for defeat of U.S. imperialism’s dirty war. We will see how they attempt to defend this line in print.

A side point: *WV* (28 September) comments that “the reformist left adapts to the bourgeoisies of their respective countries. In West Europe, this takes the predominant form of anti-Americanism and support for the social democrats who today administer many of the imperialist states.” Quite true, and a genuinely internationalist leadership must fight such chauvinist currents, as we also fight in heavily Muslim countries against Islamic reaction and bourgeois nationalism. And in the United States today, one form of adaptation to the bourgeoisie is joining Washington’s chorus against anti-Americanism and Islamic fundamentalism

continued on page 33

Declaration of Fusion Between the

League for the Fourth International (LFI) and the

Revolutsionnaya Kommunisticheskaya Organisatsiya (RKO) of Ukraine

The League for the Fourth International and the Revolutsionnaya Kommunisticheskaya Organisatsiya of Ukraine announce the fusion of our two organizations to further the struggle to reforge an authentically Trotskyist Fourth International as the world party of socialist revolution. This fusion is preceded by more than a year of discussions and joint work on key questions facing the working class internationally and in the Ukraine. Together we take our stand on the 1998 founding statement of the LFI.

In *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International* (1938), Leon Trotsky wrote that "The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership.... the crisis of the proletarian leadership, having become the crisis in mankind's culture, can be resolved only by the Fourth International." The LFI and RKO affirm that the past six decades of class struggle only underscore the validity of this central thesis of the Transitional Program.

Yet this key conclusion, which is the heart of the founding document of the Fourth International and was the very reason for its founding, is today denied by the vast majority of organizations, reformist and centrist alike, who falsely claim to represent Trotskyism. In different ways, they capitulate to or openly embrace the bourgeoisie's lying propaganda about the supposed "death of communism."

Thus the struggle to uphold Bolshevik-Leninism today includes the fight to unmask and politically defeat the host of opportunist currents who betray its revolutionary internationalist content. We affirm that *communism lives*, in the struggles of the workers and oppressed and in the Trotskyist program, the basis for the proletarian vanguard we fight to build.

I

The dramatic impoverishment of the population of Ukraine during the last decade is a direct consequence of the restoration of capitalism that accompanied the destruction of the Soviet Union. The living standards of the working people have been slashed by more than half. The health system is in ruins, hundreds of factories have closed, millions of workers have been thrown out of work, particularly women who have also seen their health care destroyed, while those who continue to toil in run-down plants are paid starvation-level wages, when they are paid at all. The general immiseration is accompanied

by a growth of national-chauvinist attacks by marauding Ukrainian and Russian fascist gangs. Those who proclaimed freedom and independence for Ukraine have produced misery and oppression for its people.

The October Revolution was the key event of modern history, representing the first time that the working class was able to throw off the chains of capitalist exploi-

tation and undertake the tasks of socialist revolution. The Bolshevik leadership under Lenin and Trotsky insisted that while the revolution had begun in the economically backward tsarist Russian Empire, it must spread to the advanced imperialist countries to survive and achieve socialism, a classless society based on abundance for all.

The usurpation of power by a conservative nationalist bureaucracy headed by J.V. Stalin in 1923-24, coinciding with the illness and death of Lenin, was soon followed by the abandonment of the internationalist program of Red October. Stalin proclaimed the anti-Marxist dogma of building "socialism in one country," seeking to coexist peacefully with imperialism. The Bolshevik Party was gutted, as careerists replaced vet-



V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky



Early Soviet posters call on women workers to arm themselves (left) during the Civil War against White counterrevolutionaries, proclaim "Long Live the Third International" (right).



eran cadres. The Trotskyists were expelled, and then jailed and murdered in the bloody anti-Communist purge of the middle and late 1930s, as was the entire remaining Bolshevik leadership of 1917, including Stalin's own supporters.

Trotsky analyzed the effects of this political counterrevolution in *The Revolution Betrayed*. When this book was published in the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, those class-conscious workers and intellectuals who were able to read it (including the comrades who came together to form the RKO) immediately recognized in his analysis the decaying Stalinist regime that remained in power at the expense of the workers. Miners, factory workers and university students first became acquainted with Trotsky's Marxist analysis of the dual nature of the bureaucracy, seated atop the collectivized economy of a workers state and depending on it for their obscene privileges while constantly undermining it.

Trotsky insisted on the duty of proletarian militants and revolutionaries around the world to defend the USSR from counterrevolution, despite years of degeneration, while fighting for political revolution to drive out the parasitic bureaucracy. In 1939-40, a petty-bourgeois opposition led by M. Shachtman in the U.S. Trotskyist party broke with Trotskyism by abandoning Soviet defensism as the first shots of the second imperialist world war were being fired. Trotsky's unflinching defense of the homeland of October together with James P. Cannon [leader of the American Trotskyists] represents a legacy that could not be wiped out by the vile assassination of the founder of the Fourth International by a Stalinist agent in 1940. The Trotskyists stood at their posts at the crucial hour. Today Trotskyists stand for military defense of the

remaining deformed workers states (China, Cuba, Vietnam, North Korea) and fight for proletarian political revolution to oust the bureaucracies which endanger their gains and indeed their very existence.

Despite Stalin's sabotage of the Red Army and his faith in his pact with Hitler, the Soviet working people and Red Army men and women threw back the German imperialists at a terrible cost of 27 million dead. The Stalinists promoted Russian nationalism, appealing to reactionary elements including the church. But Hitler's invasion would not have been defeated without the collective energies only possible in conditions of a workers state. After WWII, with the onset of a Cold War by Stalin's former "Allies" (the Western imperialists) against the USSR, a new group of renegades led by Tony Cliff in Britain broke from the Fourth



Poster for early Soviet labor unions stresses need for workers unity.

International refusing to defend North Korea in the Korean War. This was the concrete expression of Cliff's anti-Marxist line that the Soviet Union was "state capitalist." During the Indochina War, culminating in the heroic Vietnamese victory in 1975, many on the left (like the Cliffites) tried to pretend this was simply a colonial war in order to hide that this was the front line of defense of the degenerated/deformed workers states against imperialism.

Soviet defensism came to the fore once again with the onset of the second Cold War in 1980 as the Soviet army intervened to prevent the toppling of a weak bourgeois government in Afghanistan by Islamic *mujahedin* (holy warriors) aided by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. Most of the larger self-proclaimed Trotskyist currents (including E. Mandel's United Secretariat and the current led by P. Lambert in France) joined Washington's hue and cry in denouncing Moscow's intervention; the Latin American-based current led by N. Moreno supported the *mujahedin*, calling for the extension of the Islamic reaction to Soviet Central Asia. In contrast to these frauds, genuine Trotskyists called to "Hail the Red Army in Afghanistan" while calling for extension of social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples. The Soviet intervention cut across the Stalinists' line of seeking deals with Washington, and soon Moscow retreated, ultimately carrying out a shameful withdrawal in 1989, which was a key contributing factor to the demise of the Soviet bloc and the destruction of the USSR.

The rise of the anti-Soviet Polish nationalist Solidarnosc movement in 1980-81 produced a counterrevolutionary front extending from the CIA and the Vatican to the pseudo-Trotskyists, all calling for "solidarity with Solidarnosc." Trotskyists called instead to "Stop Solidarnosc Counterrevolution" in late 1981, and for political revolution to oust Jaruzelski, pointing out that this phony "union" that included bourgeois and even fascist elements was an instrument financed and advised by Reagan and Thatcher, the biggest strikebreakers in the West. As U.S. imperialism stepped up its anti-Soviet military and economic offensive, the pipe dream of peaceful coexistence with imperialism went up in smoke. Decades of Stalinist sabotage in the name of "socialism in one country" (culminating in Mikhail Gorbachov's "perestroika") opened the door to counterrevolution. Under relentless imperialist pressure, the Soviet bloc Stalinist regimes collapsed one after another. The bureaucracies shattered, with large segments openly embracing capitalism: Boris Yeltsin became U.S. president George Bush's man in Moscow, and Leonid Kravchuk followed suit in Kiev, proclaiming Ukrainian independence. The subsequent history of bourgeois restoration has demonstrated the bankruptcy of capitalism and the need for socialist revolution throughout the former Soviet bloc.



Italian carabinieri riot cops charge demonstrators after killing anarchist activist Carlo Giuliani outside G-8 meeting in Genova, July 2001.

II

The series of counterrevolutions in the Soviet bloc during 1989-92 led directly to the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War orchestrated by U.S. imperialism under the symbolic cover of the UN and NATO, and to the proclamation by American president George Bush I of a "New World Order." Far from achieving even a few years of counterrevolutionary "stability" under the domination of the sole imperialist "superpower," the last decade has been marked by a sharp escalation of national and ethnic wars, along with increasing inter-imperialist rivalries. For now the latter are mostly economic, but historical experience shows that trade wars lead to shooting wars.

Now under the Bush II government, U.S. imperialism is rapidly escalating its military provocations, declaring its intentions to break "arms control" treaties with Moscow and launch a supposed missile defense shield that is a cover for achieving nuclear first strike capacity. Far from being directed against those Washington declares "rogue states" like Iraq and North Korea, who have no nuclear arms, this offensive weapons system is designed to shoot down Russian satellites and to obliterate smaller nuclear forces (like China's). The new anti-Moscow hard line in the Pentagon aims at turning Ukraine into a spearhead against Russia; the so-called "partnership for peace" is actually a pact of imperialist subjugation for war. The RKO and LFI call for breaking all ties to the NATO imperialist alliance.

The most important recent development of the "post-Cold War world" has been the appearance of the so-called "anti-globalization movement." The imperialist bourgeoisies have responded to these demonstrations with massive police-state repression and now outright murder with the killing of a radical protestor in Genova in late July. At the same time, this "movement" has posed a test for the various left tendencies, most of whom have responded with shameless tailism. This disparate conglomeration stretches from ostensible communists to bourgeois nationalists, but everywhere the predominant element in

these class-collaborationist coalitions is that of nationalism. In the imperialist countries this takes the form of support for protectionism: in the United States, while anarchist “black blocs” break windows of coffee houses and clash with police, the anti-Communist AFL-CIO labor bureaucrats push for restrictions on Brazilian steel and Mexican truckers while attacking “Red China” with “evil empire” rhetoric taken straight from Ronald Reagan. In France, left- and right-wing supporters of French imperialism unite to support protectionist European agricultural policies while denouncing American fast food chains.

In semi-colonial countries as well, the “anti-globalization movement” encourages blocs with bourgeois reaction. The South American Common Market (Mercosur) is presented as a counterweight to a U.S.-dominated Free Trade Agreement of the Americas, while in fact this regional trade pact is rent by feuding between Brazil and Argentina and the tottering Argentine economy threatens to set off a new international crisis. In Mexico, protectionist cries are raised against Chinese imports. In the former degenerated/deformed workers states, as was seen in the demonstrations in Prague in September 2000, the “anti-globalization movement” is used by the forces which supported capitalist restoration and the 1999 war on Yugoslavia (including quite a few self-proclaimed socialists) to blame the current misery of the masses on “free trade” and to channel anger into empty protests against the international economic agencies when real power rests with the masters of Wall Street and Washington, and their lesser imperialist allies/rivals.

The “anti-globalizers” pretend that recent economic developments represent a fundamentally new phenomenon. On the contrary, Karl Marx noted already in the 1850s “The tendency to create the *world market* is directly given in the concept of capital itself” (*Fundamentals of the Critique of Political Economy*). In the midst of the first imperialist world war, Lenin published his work *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916), noting “Capitalism long ago created a world market.” He underlined that the appearance of giant monopolies (today inaccurately called “multinational companies”), the massive export of capital for production and the carving up of the world among the capitalist associations marked the beginning of capitalism’s period of decline. Even quantitatively, statistics refute the claim that this is a new phenomenon: on the eve of World War I, international investments by the main developed countries were equal to their combined gross national products, while in 1990 foreign investments represented only 12 percent of their GNPs.

In fact, in response to the “threat of communism” the leading imperialist countries introduced “wel-

fare state” measures that increased the share of national production. This is what the social-democratic “left” anti-globalizers want to bring back, ignoring that the bourgeoisie undertook these measures in large part as a tactic in the anti-Soviet Cold War. Following the destruction of the Soviet Union, the various bourgeoisies seek to increase their declining profit rates by eliminating such “drains” on profits. The answer to the sharp increase in the capitalists’ rate of exploitation that underlies talk of globalization is not the reformist utopia of expanding national welfare states, but *international socialist revolution*, including the semi-colonies in the throes of industrialization and the imperialist centers with their declining industrial base.

The LFI and RKO do not join or politically support the “anti-globalization movement” with its backward-looking nationalist/protectionist program. But since many radical youth and others may be attracted by the “anti-capitalist” rhetoric of some components of this amorphous popular front, we seek to acquaint them with our revolutionary Trotskyist analysis and program. And we energetically protest the vicious repression by the armed guardians of capital. We note that in recent years, the armies and police of both the imperialist and “Third World” capitalist countries have changed their armament and strategic orientation to prepare for “urban warfare.” While loudly proclaiming the “death of communism,” their actions show they have far from banished the spectre of proletarian revolution.

III

Currently one of the most active flashpoints in the “New World Disorder” is the Near East, where provocations by the rulers of the Zionist state of Israel provoked a new *intifada* (uprising) by the Palestinian youth in the Occupied Territories. After months, in which well over 500 Arab protesters have been shot

Сионистские убийцы!

Арабские и еврейские рабочие, объединяйтесь!

Израиль - вон с Западного Берега!

Революційна Комуністична Організація
Київ-001, п/с 113, В.Д., E-mail: rcorganiz@yahoo.co

Защитим палестинский народ!

Израильская армия, поселенцы - вон с купированных территорий!

Рабочие, арабы и евреи, соединяйтесь - защитим палестинцев от сионистских погромов!

Революційна Комуністична Організація
Київ-001, п/с 113, В.Д., E-mail: rcorganiz@yahoo.co

RKO posters raised LFI's call for Arab/Hebrew workers revolution.

down in cold blood and dozens murdered by Israeli assassination squads, in addition to the many thousands seriously wounded by Israeli fire, the Zionist military is now poised for all-out war against the Palestinian Authority, the pseudo-government set up by the 1994 Oslo "peace" accords. 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!"

The imperialist press (that part of it that isn't blatantly pro-Israel) lyingly presents events in Palestine as if they reflect "disputes" between two peoples who can't get along, whereas in fact the Arabs are subjugated by the Israeli occupation. More fundamentally, there is a contradiction involving two peoples with the right to national existence occupying the same tiny area with few resources. As well, the creation of the Zionist state of Israel was the product of the "democratic" imperialists' barring of Jewish refugees from Hitler's Holocaust, before, during and after World War II. While recognizing the right to self-determination of both the Palestinian Arabs and the Hebrew people who live there, and the right of return of the Palestinian refugees driven out by the Zionists in three wars, we point out that this democratic right cannot be equitably carried out under capitalism, which necessarily pits one nation against another in competition for scarce resources including land and water. Against the bourgeois ideology of nationalism, only proletarian revolutionary internationalism provides a program for emancipating the oppressed Palestinian people, breaking Hebrew-speaking workers from the Zionist rulers and uniting the toilers of the entire region in socialist revolution.

Numerous self-proclaimed Marxists and pseudo-Trotskyists have long tailed after Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization and more radical Arab nationalist groups in the PLO. In the 1990s, many supported the phony U.S.-sponsored Oslo "peace" process which only gave a "legal" cover to Israeli occupation. Both positions are a dead end for the oppressed Palestinians and offer no perspective to those Hebrew working people who do not want to live in a permanent garrison state. As Trotskyists we fight for an Arab-Hebrew workers republic led by a multinational Trotskyist party, as part of a socialist federation of the Near East, the only framework in which the myriad national conflicts can be resolved involving interpenetrated peoples in the region (in particular the Kurdish people, carved up among six capitalist countries and repressed by all of them). The Israel-Palestine question is made all the more urgent by the fact that Israeli rulers have the third-largest nuclear arsenal in the world, surpassing that of Britain and France, and are fully capable of using these weapons.

The importance of adopting a clear working-class stance on the Near East was recognized and embraced by the RKO, which has proceeded to put these perspectives into practice. This can make a significant contribution to the fight for Trotskyism in Palestine and in fighting resurgent anti-Semitism in Ukraine, Russia and other countries of the former Soviet bloc. Events in Israel/Palestine will also be significantly affected by upheavals else-

where in the region, including the current revolt in Algeria in which the LFI has intervened with Trotskyist propaganda.

IV

The restoration of capitalism and declaration of independence, far from resolving national questions in Ukraine has exacerbated them. The existence of a Ukrainian state with a clear (60 percent) majority of native Russian speakers is bound to produce tensions, with some areas in the west overwhelmingly Ukrainian-speaking and the east overwhelmingly Russian-speaking, and other mixed areas. As in various East European states, the new bourgeois rulers have whipped up nationalism, seeking to establish homogeneous capitalist states (initially without capital) on ethnically or linguistically heterogeneous populations. The imposition of Ukrainian in official documents and in schools is widely resented in Russian areas. Individuals have been beaten in the street by Ukrainian nationalist thugs for not knowing Ukrainian. We demand "absolutely no privileges for any one nation or any one language" (Lenin, "Critical Remarks on the National Question"). We demand equal rights for Ukrainian, Russian and other languages spoken by the population.

In addition, there is the case of Tatars unjustly expelled from the Crimean peninsula by Stalin in 1944 and exiled to Uzbekistan. Many of those now returning have been denied citizenship, the right to their homes or to work by Stalinist local authorities. In the south along the Danube there is a mixture of populations including Ukrainians, Russians, Romanians, Moldovans, Hungarians, Jews, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Albanians and others. The Soviet Union, despite Stalinist Great Russian chauvinism, was a multinational state and the numerous cases of interpenetrated peoples can only be resolved in the framework of a voluntary socialist federation resulting from workers revolution extending beyond the borders of the individual former Soviet states. An internationalist policy on the national question in Ukraine would immediately affect intractable conflicts such as in Trans-Dniestr. As the Soviet degenerated workers state was collapsing, the imperialists sought to use



AP/Efrem Lukatsky



Demonstrators protest against president Leonid Kuchma in Kiev, February 2001. Fake-Trotskyists joined this U.S.-backed Ukrainian nationalist popular front.

the nationalism of non-Russian peoples as a counterrevolutionary tool. Many pseudo-Trotskyists actively participated in this, calling for an independent Lithuania, Ukraine, etc. Authentic Trotskyists defended the right of Soviet peoples to form independent workers states but opposed the use of the right of self-determination as a cover for counterrevolution. The RKO and LFI consider that Trotsky's call for an independent *Soviet* Ukraine in 1938-39, while principled, was inappropriate under the circumstances.

Subsequently, Ukraine has become the focal point of a drive by U.S. imperialism to encircle Russia. In recent years, the country became the third largest recipient of U.S. aid after Israel and Egypt. President Leonid Kuchma, head of the party of Ukrainian industrial "oligarchs" who was once seen as Washington's man, came increasingly in the Russian orbit after Vladimir Putin took over from Yeltsin in 1999. This led to a drive to oust Kuchma that had tacit support, if not direct encouragement from the United States. The government of Bill Clinton indicated its preference for now former premier Viktor Yushenko, and in January 2001 anti-Kuchma demonstrators encircled parliament. Protest organizers talked openly of having "another Belgrade" in Kiev, i.e., toppling a government that had fallen out of favor with U.S. imperialism through a putsch disguised as "people power" and replacing it with a pliant client regime.

The protests were led by a Ukrainian nationalist coalition that took the form of a "sliding scale of popular frontism." The main grouping was called "Ukraine without Kuchma" and was sponsored by the bourgeois Socialist Party of Ukraine (SPU) of Aleksandr Moroz, together with smaller "social-democratic" parties and Ukrainian fascists such as UNA/UNSO. After initially

participating in this lash-up, the Russian chauvinist Communist Party of Ukraine (KPU) pulled out to form its own coalition, "Ukraine without Kuchma and Yushenko," that included CP satellite organizations and Russian fascistic outfits. A coterie of pseudo-Trotskyists formed its own bloc, "Ukraine without Bourgeoisie and Fascists," initiated by the MRM (Young Revolutionary Marxists) which describes itself as fraternally related with the Stalinophobic International Bolshevik Tendency, and enthusiastically promoted by the RV (Workers Power), which is part of the LRCI led by the British Workers Power group.

Despite its pretense of independence from the bourgeoisie, this lash-up was simply a fig-leaf to cover their "critical" participation as a component of the anti-Kuchma popular front. They were joined by

Ukrainian supporters of the CWI (Committee for a Workers International led by Peter Taaffe), ITO (International Trotskyist Opposition), IWC (International Workers Committee), the British Workers Liberty group led by Sean Matgamna, the Argentine Partido Obrero of Jorge Altamira, the Argentine PTS and others of the more than 20 Ukrainian grouplets posturing to the left of the Communist Party.

In early February, the encampment of hundreds of anti-Kuchma protesters in Independence Square was attacked by hundreds of Ukrainian fascists of Trident, a group on Kuchma's payroll, who clashed with the fascistic Russian National Bolshevik Party. As Kuchma sought to wait out the protests, SPU leader Moroz went to Washington to gain support. Eventually the "movement" dwindled from 10,000 to a few hundred and then disappeared as the U.S. lost interest. Instead, in June U.S. "defense" secretary Rumsfeld traveled to Kiev for six hours on his way to a NATO meeting, giving orders to Kuchma who since switched prime ministers. The pseudo-Trotskyist bloc fell apart as the MRM/IBT issued a self-criticism for launching a "bloc for propaganda," which in reality was a popular-frontist coalition to facilitate their participation in the anti-Kuchma front. The RV/LRCI called for joining even closer with the bourgeois forces.

The Revoliutsionnaya Kommunisticheskaya Organizatsiya refused to join this circus of class collaboration, insisting on the Trotskyist principle of refusing to give political support to any popular front. The RKO points out that these tendencies that falsely claim to be Trotskyist in fact were swimming in the wake of U.S. imperialism; many of them did so a year earlier as well over the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia. Against the incestuous "family" of pseudo-Trotskyism in Ukraine, the LFI and RKO call for the building of an indepen-

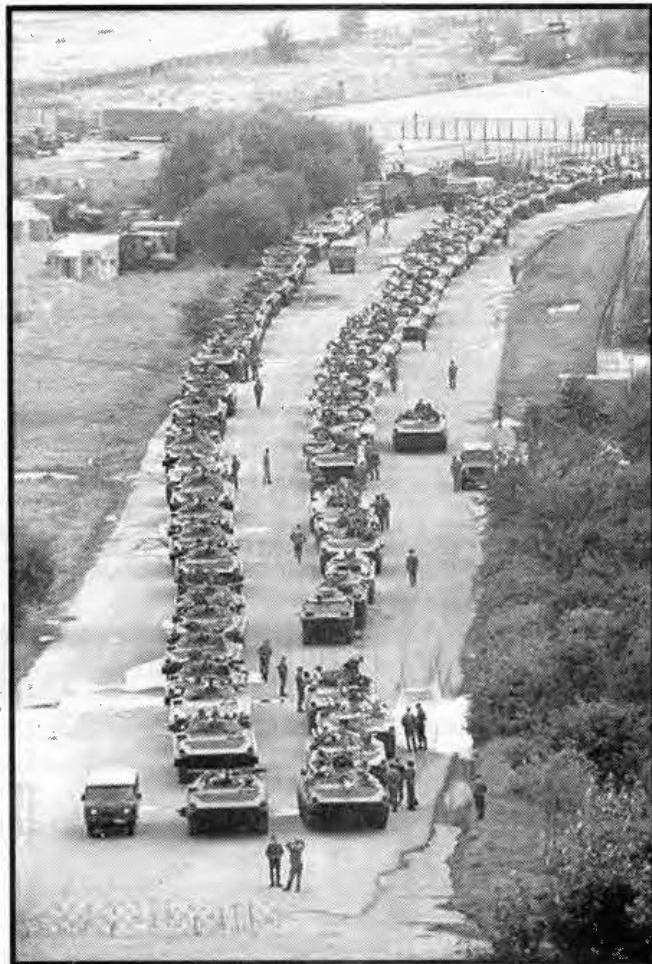
dent Trotskyist vanguard party in the fight to reforge the Fourth International. We fight for revolutionary workers governments in Ukraine and throughout the former Soviet states, and in particular extending to the advanced industrial imperialist countries of West Europe, Japan and the U.S.

V

The acute crisis of revolutionary proletarian leadership, from the explosive Near East to the catastrophic economic and social conditions of the former Soviet bloc countries, requires the construction of Leninist-Trotskyist parties that return to the internationalist heritage of the Bolshevik Revolution. The Stalinist identification of Bolshevism with Great Russian chauvinism did incalculable harm to the Leninist cause, including by enabling the imperialists to whip up counterrevolutionary sentiment in the guise of opposition to national oppression by the bureaucracy. This harm continues after the destruction of the Soviet Union with the proliferation of various "national Bolshevik" Stalinist and fascistic groupings. The RKO of Ukraine seeks to build a Leninist vanguard party of the proletariat, a party of professional revolutionaries rather than a social-democratic talk shop, a party which acts as a "tribune of the people" mobilizing the power of the proletariat against all forms of social oppression, as Lenin elaborated in his 1902 work *What Is to Be Done?*

In addition to fighting for an internationalist policy on the national question in this multinational state, Trotskyists fight vigilantly against every act of discrimination and victimization of the Jewish population. Anti-Semitism has long been the cutting edge of counterrevolution in Ukraine. The tsarist Black Hundreds murdered thousands of Jews from Kishinev to Zhytomyr. During the 1918-20 Civil War, the White Armies and the Ukrainian bourgeois armies under Symon Petlyura carried out widespread pogroms against Jews with the same vengeance with which they slaughtered Bolsheviks. The Grigoryev forces then allied with the anarchist leader Nestor Makhno also carried out anti-Jewish pogroms. In World War II, the Hitlerite imperialist invaders whipped up popular anti-Semitism with their hate propaganda against "Jew communists," and slaughtered more than 35,000 Jews among the 100,000 citizens of Kiev who were buried in the killing grounds of Babiy Yar. During the war and after, the fascist bands of Stepan Bandera staged pogroms.

The Stalinists refused to recognize the specifically anti-Jewish nature of the Nazi genocide, as well as the extermination of Roma (Gypsies), homosexuals, ethnic minorities, Slavs and anyone else the fascist Aryanzers considered "subhuman." Stalin made use of anti-Semitism in the struggle against Trotsky, and subsequently particularly in the period from 1948 to 1952 culminating in the infamous "doctors' plot." At the same time Jews made up a significant section of the Stalinist apparatus, including A. Vishinsky who presided over the Moscow trials. Discrimination against Jews continued up to the end of the Stalinist regime, particularly concerning positions in university education. The Zionists whipped up an international campaign to "save Soviet Jewry" which utterly distorted the Jewish question in the Soviet Union and made symbols of the likes of Nathan Shcharansky, who was guilty of passing



Boris Yurchenko/AP

"Emergency Committee" called out tanks in August 1991, but kept them away from Yeltsin's "White House."

defense secrets to Western journalists and others.

Since the restoration of capitalism and Ukrainian independence there have been periodic fascist attacks on Jewish sites, including a number of incidents of desecration of Jewish cemeteries. Trotskyists call for united-front working-class defense against anti-Semitic fascist attacks. Although homosexuality was decriminalized in 1991, gay groups still face government harassment, there is considerable anti-homosexual prejudice, gays are subject to hostility from the Stalinists (who preach traditional "family values" Reagan-style), and homosexuals are targets of the hatred of fascists, such as the Ukrainian nationalist UNA/UNSO thugs who attack leftists in Lviv and elsewhere. Communists uncompromisingly defend full rights for homosexuals and resolutely fight against victimization of gays.

Particular attention must be paid to the woman question. Women have been among the hardest hit sections of the population by the consequences of capitalist restoration. Unemployment has disproportionately affected women, and many services such as day care are only available to those who can afford them, if they are available at all. A Leninist party must make particular efforts to recruit women comrades, who as history shows will be some of the most committed fighters in the coming class battles. Communists fight for free abortion

on demand as part of a system of high quality free medical care for all; against the wholesale elimination of maternity benefits; for free, 24-hour day care; for equal pay for equal work and the opening of all occupations to women. For women's liberation through socialist revolution!

VI

The decisive element in the fight to mobilize the proletariat against the ravages of counterrevolution and capitalist oppression is the construction of an international, genuinely Bolshevik-Leninist party. In particular it is necessary to defeat the liquidationist politics of Pabloism, named after Michel Pablo who responded to the post-WWII expansion of Stalinism by abandoning the struggle for an independent Trotskyist vanguard. Instead the Pabloists tailed after a host of non-proletarian, anti-revolutionary forces, first the Stalinists (of Moscow, Belgrade and Beijing), followed by Cuban Castroites, Algerian bourgeois nationalists, Latin American petty-bourgeois guerrillas, Portuguese military officers, Iranian mullahs, and then howling with the imperialist wolves over Afghanistan and Poland in the second anti-Soviet Cold War. By the time of the collapse of the Soviet bloc, the Pabloists had long since accustomed themselves to making common cause with counterrevolution.

General proclamations replete with quotes from Trotsky are the common currency of the two dozen grouplets who seek to occupy the political terrain to the left of the rightward-moving CPU. They and many of their mentors simultaneously engage in an endless dance of combinations and recombinations, of coordinating committees, liaison committees, parity committees to rebuild, reconstruct, or reconstitute the Fourth International. What this means in practice is gluing together bits and pieces left over from the implosion and crumbling of the various groupings claiming to be the continuity of the party founded by Leon Trotsky. The RKO and LFI, in contrast, insist that a necessary revolutionary regroupment through a process of splits and fusions must be based on the authentic Trotskyist program, not temporary diplomatic agreements.

General principles are tested in the class struggle, and a key event in the former Soviet states is August 1991 in Moscow, which marked the point at which open counterrevolution gained the ascendancy in the land of the October Revolution. Frustrated Gorbachev lieutenants in the "State Emergency Committee" (GKChP) staged a half-hearted coup in the name of maintaining the USSR (but *not* stopping the restoration of capitalism), only to be ousted in Yeltsin's counter-coup backed by imperialism. At this decisive moment, the potpourri of pseudo-Trotskyists sided with counterrevolution in the name of "anti-Stalinism." Some, like the USec Mandelites proclaimed Yeltsin progressive compared to the GKChP in the name of supposedly classless (bourgeois) democracy. They and the LRCI current led by British Workers Power literally climbed onto the Yeltsin barricades.

The British "Militant" group, out of which Taaffe's CWI emerged, headlined in its paper (*Militant*, 30 August 1991) "Coup Smashed"; an editorial wrote of "elements of the political revolution" in the "struggle to stop the hard-line bureaucrats."* Morenoites joined with Cliffites in hailing Yeltsin's counter-revo-

* Quotation retranslated.

lutionary counter-coup as a new "Russian Revolution." The latter-day Shachtmanites of the LRP directed their fire against "Stalinist hard-liners" in Moscow, while criticizing Yeltsin for having "pseudo-democratic policies" – presumably the LRP is for "real" (bourgeois) democracy. The Argentine PTS crowed, "The revolution began in the Soviet Union in August 1991," praising the "vanguard sector of the mass movement, which joined the struggle against the [GKChP] coup." Other groups were more circumspect in putting forward a similar line. In Argentina, J. Altamira's Partido Obrero declared that the "imperialists supported the [GKChP] coup" in the USSR and hailed the "people's victory against the coup" as being of "revolutionary dimensions". These currents are present in Ukraine today, and their present opportunist politics are utterly predictable from their stance in 1991. What is supporting Yushenko against Kuchma in the inter-bourgeois squabbling, for example, for people who joined the bourgeoisie in knifing the Soviet Union?

A superficially different case, which actually comes down to the same thing, is that of the IBT, which tried to hide its Stalinophobia by adopting the phony posture of calling for "military support" to the GKChP. But "military support" to a force which undertook no military action against Yeltsin is not resistance to counterrevolution at all. In fact, the IBT used the August 1991 events to declare the Soviet degenerated workers state dead and gone, and to wash their hands of any further pretense of Soviet defensism. For genuine Trotskyists, however, it was crucial to look for openings for proletarian resistance as the Yeltsin gang proceeded to dismantle the Stalinist regime and cohere the central elements of a new bourgeois state.

The International Communist League (ICL) led by the Spartacist League of the U.S. correctly called in August 1991 to mobilize Soviet workers to smash Yeltsin/Bush counterrevolution. The ICL, which for three decades represented the continuity of revolutionary Trotskyism internationally, had forthrightly fought for revolutionary Soviet defensism in Afghanistan, Poland and elsewhere, and mobilized internationally to intervene in East Germany (DDR) against capitalist reunification and for political revolution against the Stalinist heirs of the Ulbricht/Honecker regime, who following Gorbachev's lead capitulated to the West German imperialists, handing over the DDR to them on a platter. In Moscow in August 1991, while giving no support to the half-hearted coup attempt the ICL correctly held open the possibility of a military bloc with "recalcitrant elements of the bureaucracy" should they have used their arms against Yeltsin's putsch, but the GKChP "gang of eight" parked their tanks and didn't even cut the phone wires leading from the White House in Moscow to the White House in Washington.

Today, however, the ICL declares in polemics against the League for the Fourth International that the Stalinists "led the counterrevolution in the DDR and USSR. This claim is directly counterposed to Trotsky's analysis of the dual nature of the bureaucracy, is contrary to actual events (Yeltsin broke from the bureaucracy, the entire DDR Politburo ended up in the jails of the Fourth Reich), and contradicts what the ICL wrote at the time it was fighting against counterrevolution. Simultaneously, the ICL denounces the LFI for upholding

Trotsky's statement that the historical crisis of humanity is reduced to the crisis of revolutionary leadership of the proletariat. The ICL writes in its reformulated 1998 Declaration of Principles that this key thesis of the Fourth International "pre-dates the present deep regression of proletarian consciousness," which they also point to as the key element leading to the collapse of the degenerated/deformed workers states.

Thus rather than emphasizing the crisis of leadership and fighting to resolve it, they blame the working masses for this world-historic defeat. With the line it has today on the Stalinist bureaucracy, the ICL could never have done what it did ten years ago in fighting against counterrevolution. Likewise, it has abandoned Trotsky's position on popular fronts (claiming they are impossible in countries without mass workers parties) and renounced the basic Comintern position of demanding independence for all colonies. As it sinks further into left centrism and abstentionism, the ICL is incapable of leading new revolutionary struggles tomorrow.

VII

The League for the Fourth International was formed in 1998 by former members expelled from the International Communist League in the United States, Mexico and France together with the Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil, with which the ICL broke fraternal relations in the course of fleeing from a key class battle in the fight to oust the police from the unions in that country. In its founding declaration, the LFI stated that it is "a tendency in formation. It will draw to its ranks those who seek to defend and extend the program of authentic Trotskyism, and to apply it in the struggle of the working class and the oppressed." The declaration continued:

"The reforging of the Fourth International requires defeating Pabloism and all other currents which betray the revolutionary Trotskyist program. An important component of this fight, and of the struggle to overcome the disparity between the tasks we face and our limited forces, will be the tactic of revolutionary regroupment on the program of Leninist internationalism. We foresee a series of splits from revisionist organizations and fusions with those genuinely seeking to be communists, in building the vanguard party."

This fusion between the LFI and the RKO of Ukraine is a first realization of this perspective.

In the short time of its existence, and despite its extremely limited forces, the LFI has already achieved some modest successes. In Brazil the LQB sparked the first work stoppage (in April 1999) demanding freedom for American death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, renewing the tradition of international labor defense. In Mexico, the Grupo Internacionalista made an exemplary intervention in the ten-month National University (UNAM) strike in 1999-2000 which was instrumental in the formation of workers defense guards of hundreds of electrical and university workers that arrived at a crucial moment to block army/police occupation of the struck campus. In the U.S., the Internationalist Group has uniquely fought to bring the communist program to immigrant workers who represent an infusion of combative new forces into the bureaucratized labor movement. The LFI now has publications in five languages.

The RKO of Ukraine was formed by comrades who as early

as 1989 publicly announced their intention to establish the Fourth International section in Ukraine. It first came together as a circle oriented to Trotskyist politics in 1992. Bringing together former students and workers who had eagerly read the first of Trotsky's works published in Russian since he was exiled in 1929, the RKO sought international contact including with the ICL during the period that the latter had a Moscow station. But the ICL's refusal to debate programmatic questions led RKO comrades to see a gap between the ICL's words and its deeds. By 1997 the RKO began the construction of a party organization seeking to carry out Leninist norms, recruiting to its ranks young miners who had come to political life in the 1989 coal miners strike. Taking up contact early in 2000, the LFI and RKO have arrived at common agreement on issues discussed above. In the course of these discussions, the RKO organization has grown significantly, integrating new militants of diverse backgrounds.

As a section of the League for the Fourth International, the RKO will participate in a democratic-centralist international tendency, enabling the fused organization to increase the impact of our interventions. The RKO adopts the perspective of the early publication of a modest newspaper in both the Ukrainian and Russian languages reflecting struggles on the national terrain and key international questions in the press of the LFI. A second project is to publish a select series of Trotsky's texts in pamphlet format to make them accessible to worker and student contacts with limited resources. It will seek to undertake sales at key factory and other locations in Kiev and lay the basis for extension of its propaganda to other key districts in eastern and western Ukraine. The RKO and LFI also recognize their responsibility to propagate the program of authentic Trotskyism elsewhere in the former Soviet states and East Europe.

In the wake of capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union, the first workers state in history, and East Europe after decades of Stalinist sabotage and under the hammer blows of imperialism, many reformists and centrists have adopted a program of open defeatism, whether in the form of increasing opportunism or through abandonment of the struggle for revolutionary leadership of the class struggle, or both. In contrast, for revolutionaries it is necessary to draw the revolutionary lessons of these historic defeats for the workers' cause.

Any militant worker who has been through a tough strike knows this process, and that many fall by the wayside. But those who remain and those who are drawn into the struggle are not thrown back to the period before 1914, i.e. before the Russian Revolutions of 1917, as the revisionists now claim. On the contrary, we stand on the shoulders of those who fought before us, including the Trotskyist analysis of Stalinism, which is a key element to future victories. We continue the work of the tens of thousands of Bolshevik-Leninists who fell under Stalinist, fascist and bourgeois-"democratic" repression. It is the genuine Trotskyists alone who have a program to lead the workers and oppressed in the former Soviet states to revolutionary victory that will extend across the face of the planet and offer a future of socialism to mankind instead of the barbarism we can already see before our eyes.

Kiev, 26 July 2001

Imperialist War Frenzy...

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"The political roots of the terror attack" goes into paroxysms of anti-terrorist rhetoric before these cyber-pseudo-socialists end with a mild criticism of "the policies of the United States" driven by the "ruling elite." A Freedom Socialist Party statement "On Political Terrorism and the September 11 Assaults" talks "sadly" of how "the country searches for answers," worrying that there may be a "crackdown on radicals, peace activists" with only the tiniest hint that Washington is in the process of launching a war on Asian and Near Eastern peoples. The Progressive Labor Party headlined its statement "Don't Let Terrorist Attacks Lead Us to Support a Police State." The reformists of the Communist Party USA and the International Socialist Organization rival each other in their effort to be indistinguishable from garden-variety Democratic Party liberals.

Meanwhile, various "anti-globalization" and "anti-sweatshop" groups talk about canceling scheduled events, since "the terrorist attack was a rude awakening" that will "change definitively the direction of history." The common thread running through all of this is that these left and activist groups, faced with massive bourgeois pressure for "national unity" against the "terrorist threat," are jumping on board the bandwagon for war. Certainly, they will make some noises about concerns for civil liberties, anti-Arab racism, etc., and may even mildly criticize the war drive, join candlelight vigils and sign petitions for "peace," but their overriding concern is to make clear that they too pledge allegiance to "their own" bourgeoisie amid the war frenzy – the continuation of their politics of class collaboration in "normal" times. As the government declares it's "us or them," they are enlisting as the "left" wing of the "Anti-Terrorist Holy Alliance."

Marxist revolutionaries stand intransigently opposed to the bourgeoisie's "national unity." The enemy of the working class and oppressed minorities is the racist imperialist ruling class and its capitalist state, covered with the blood of millions. Amid the hysteria, the Internationalist Group and League for the Fourth International call to stand on the side of the victims of imperialism. We fight to build Trotskyist revolutionary parties that can swim against the stream, upholding the banner of workers internationalism as Lenin's Bolsheviks did during the first imperialist world war, enabling them to carry out the 1917 October Revolution. The IG/LFI fight today to reforge the Fourth International as the authentic world party of socialist revolution, the only way to prevent the ruling class from plunging the planet into a wasteland of imperialist barbarism and war. ■

Left and the War Drive...

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ington in the first hours after the WTC/Pentagon attack. For that matter, it doesn't even call to *defeat* the mounting war drive, only to "oppose" it. This is no minor difference: as Lenin emphasized against "social pacifists" like Karl Kautsky in World War I, at issue is whether you are calling for a different policy for the imperialists or taking a stand for their defeat. Challenged by In-

ternationalist Group supporters, SLers have repeatedly been unable to defend their statement, sometimes lamely saying it should be read together with past ICL statements, at other times lapsing into embarrassed silence.

While the U.S. imperialists cynically exploit the suffering of working people over the loss of family members, relatives and friends in the Trade Center attack, using their grief to whip up war hysteria and a drive toward a police state, it is the job of genuine revolutionaries not to speak "digestible truth" to power but to "tell the truth to the masses, no matter how bitter" as the rules of the Fourth International state. In the war that has been proclaimed by the imperialist rulers, communist internationalists must know how to struggle inside the imperialist juggernaut, to break through the chauvinist war propaganda to defend our embattled class brothers and sisters around the world against the greatest state terrorists of all, the U.S. imperialists, who are also the direct oppressors of the U.S. workers, minorities and poor.

The truth is that the endless wars, racism and economic crises will not end until capitalism is overthrown through international socialist revolution. It is urgent today to win workers and youth to the need to build a revolutionary workers party to lead that struggle. ■

ICL Flinches...

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while not simultaneously taking a clear position for the defeat of U.S. imperialism.

Historically the defeat of imperialist countries waging colonial wars has had a tremendous effect in favor not only of the colonial subjects but also for the working class in the metropolitan country. Look at the example of France and Algeria. The French defeat at the hands of the Algerian independence fighters culminating in 1962 demoralized the French bourgeoisie and helped lead to the worker-student revolt of 1968, which posed the first potentially revolutionary crisis in Europe in years. Were the U.S. to get bogged down in drawn-out fighting in Afghanistan, setting off unrest throughout the Near East and South Asia, this could have tremendous revolutionary impact throughout Asia while throwing a wrench into attempts by the American and European bourgeoisies to intensify exploitation and police-state measures against the working class.

To take advantage of such opportunities requires the intervention of a Trotskyist vanguard fighting for *class war against the imperialist war*. Looking to the example of Lenin's Bolsheviks, this is what the Internationalist Group, U.S. section of the League for the Fourth International, fights for today. Only such a vanguard will be able to dispel pacifist illusions, while fighting Islamic fundamentalism and bourgeois nationalism in the semicolonial countries. A party which fails to fight for defeat of the most vicious state terrorists of all, the rapacious U.S. bourgeoisie and its blood-soaked military machine, is no vanguard at all. And, needless to say, it will certainly never be able to arouse the toilers of Asia against the false leaders they look to today. ■

K-T Clay Workers Fight for Union

South Carolina Clay Miners Appeal for Solidarity

OCTOBER 4 – For 20 months, workers at the Kentucky-Tennessee Clay Company have been waging a bitter fight to unionize the company's mining and processing operations in Langley, South Carolina. With three open-pit mines and an extensive processing plant, the Langley site produces kaolin, a clay widely used in construction materials, ceramics and paint. In this small company town near the Georgia state line, the K-T Clay workers are fighting for union rights in the same Deep South state that is the scene of the "Charleston Five" labor defense battle. Like the Charleston longshoremen's fight against union-busting and racist repression, the K-T Clay workers' struggle shows the need for an all-out labor offensive to organize the South, where bosses wield a virtual anti-union dictatorship under the banner of the "right to work" and the "open shop." Ever since the K-T workers' union won a representation vote over bitter opposition from the company, management has flatly refused to negotiate or even discuss a union contract.

The Langley mine is part of the far-flung business empire of the Imerys corporation, which acquired Kentucky-Tennessee Clay in February and is one of the world's most powerful mineral processing firms. Headquartered in Paris and with operations in France, Britain, Belgium, Italy and New Zealand, the company also has plants in Mexico and across the southeastern United States. Two years ago, Imerys faced protests from European unions when it sought to bust the union at its Sylacauga, Alabama plant. Despite heavy-handed intimidation tactics like outfitting hefty anti-union leafleters with T-shirts proclaiming "Goon Squad," the company suffered a setback in Sylacauga this February, when it was forced to sign a union contract there.

Hard-Line Management Tramples Workers Rights

Yet up until now, the company has managed to keep its union-busting campaign at K-T Clay in South Carolina out of the spotlight. If it gets away with this anti-labor attack in a small Southern town, it will be emboldened to go after workers elsewhere. It has already come out that Imerys wants to shut its large



K-T Clay workers (above) in South Carolina are fighting hard-line management.

warehouse in Ravenna, Italy, in the center of that country's extensive tile industry; this may be only the tip of the iceberg. In the recent wave of international acquisitions by industrial conglomerates, a frequent tactic has been to "consolidate" by buying up plants and then shutting down entire units.

Against attempts to surround them with a wall of silence and isolate them from their brothers and sisters around the world, K-T Clay workers are appealing for international workers solidarity. In an interview with *The Internationalist*, their union leader Myron Renew told how 20 months of firings, harassment and pay cuts have failed to break the Langley miners' will to fight for their union rights. The mine bosses "act like overseers on a plantation" and try the age-old tactics of divide and conquer, threats against union supporters and blatant favoritism towards anti-union elements, but black and white workers at the mine are standing fast in their determination to win a union contract, said brother Renew, president of Local D-598 of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers' affiliate United Cement, Lime and Gypsum Workers. "We need assistance and solidarity from workers at Imerys plants everywhere, and other workers too," he emphasized.

"It all started in late 1999, when the company fired 16 people at the same time as they tried to downgrade wages to \$8 an hour," says Renew.

"Most people at the mine only make about \$11 an hour, and the company tried to bring the pay even of skilled workers – who have a big pay gap from the rest – down towards a poverty level.... Meanwhile they had been working people 12 hours a day seven days a week, for three years. Guys were getting sick and hurt, but the insurance is terrible. Not many folks working at \$11 or \$12 an hour can afford to pay \$3,500 out of pocket for medical care."

In contrast, the unionized Dixie Clay plant across the street pays \$3-\$4 more per hour and has much more affordable health care. "It was clear that the only way we could survive was to get a union in," Renew recalls.

As soon as a union organizing campaign got underway in December 1999, the arsenal of phone threats, informers, firings

and intimidation was unleashed against the K-T Clay workers. A union supporter was fired in January 2000, others were "rolled back" to lower-paying jobs and anti-union employees were hired to vote against the union. On 15 March 2000, when the union recognition vote was held, the company held a tire raffle with a big "Vote No" sign at the polling site – but the union won the vote, and three fourths of the workforce is now signed up with Local D-598. Renew told *The Internationalist*:

"The day after the election, the mine supervisor, who was later promoted to plant manager, said he would do everything he could to decertify the union.... They were so mad about losing the union representation vote, they fired our union trustee Pat Scott and another union man, they laid off five pro-union workers, they carried out a whole wave of demotions and they took our union vice president, Brother Odell Glover, and myself to federal court.

"They made up false charges of vandalism and intimidation against the union. They stepped up the anti-labor propaganda and had members of the maintenance crew wear anti-union stickers. They got so dictatorial that they even tried to ban workers from talking or gathering together on their breaks."

K-T Clay/Imerys management has used the company's enormous resources to bog the Langley unionists down in endless court fights, turning even "favorable" rulings by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) into a dead letter while using the board's dismissal of some charges by the union as a springboard for stepped-up harassment at the workplace. In August the Langley plant manager, accompanied by three supervisors, confronted union president Renew in the plant's clay-bagging department, where a federal inspector was testing for dangerous dust levels. The manager yelled "You are not the miners' representative" and ordered him off the floor. "This is my plant, there is no union here," the same manager stated previously when firing union trustee Scott. Now, reports Renew, "the operations manager just told some workers here, 'You have to be able to stand on your head and chew peanut butter if I tell you to.' That's the kind of attitude we're up against."

Miners Face Dangerous Conditions, Management Abuse

For K-T Clay workers, safety is a crucial issue. The company has been written up repeatedly for safety violations by federal inspectors, workers have been seriously burned and injured by falling pieces of equipment, and there are dangerous extremes of cold and heat from the huge burners used to dry the clay.

"At the processing plant, we have real heavy equipment like conveyors, augurs, slicers to slice up the clay. In the mining operation we have heavy four-wheel John Deere tractors, with three-pan pullers behind them. There's a dangerous situation with the track hoes where the truck drivers actually back their dump trucks up an embankment, get on the track hoe, load their own dump truck, climb back the embankment and get in their truck, working 11-hour days with a lot of fatigue, and one of the walls could give way. In fact, there were five accidents last year in a period of six to eight months. Two dump trucks collided, a track hoe sank, a tractor-trailer and a bulldozer

collided, a tractor was wrecked. These are just some of the kind of safety problems we've seen here."

"We have a three-man union safety committee, but the company completely ignores it," says Renew. Companies' blatant disregard for workers' lives was demonstrated yet again by the death of 13 coal miners in gas explosions on September 23 at the Jim Walter Resources (JWR) Blue Creek No. 5 Mine in Brookwood, Alabama. Officials at JWR – which had been repeatedly fined for safety violations at its mines – ignored workers' warnings of dangerous methane levels. A crucial demand for miners and all other workers is for union safety committees with the power to *stop* dangerous work.

K-T plant management has insisted that vote or no vote – and despite official certification of the union victory by the NLRB – they do not recognize the union at the Langley mine. While the labor bureaucracy pushes faith in the labor board, together with the Democratic Party, the experience of the K-T Clay workers underlines that workers must rely on their own class power and solidarity, not on the bosses' parties and government agencies. (In fact the NLRB exists to subordinate the labor movement to the dictates of the capitalist state.) Union president Renew says:

"We have a president in this country who got elected by one vote – in the Supreme Court – and gets right into office while workers voted for a union twenty months ago and still can't get a contract. If we approached politicians from the Democratic Party or the Republican Party about our situation here at K-T Clay, I believe they would shun it. Those parties don't represent the working man or woman. What they do represent is the corporate interests that are taking everything away from the workers here and all over the world."

In a state heavily dominated by right-wing Republicans, labor officialdom has repeatedly turned to the Democrats, only to be kicked in the teeth by this capitalist party (see "Defend the Charleston Five!" in *The Internationalist* No. 10, June 2001). The Internationalist Group emphasizes that the labor movement must break from the Democrats, Republicans, and all the bosses' politicians. The workers need their own party, one that fights for all the exploited and oppressed the world over, to take power away from the capitalist owners and put it in the hands of the international working class.

"An Injury to One Is An Injury to All"

Local D-598 is calling on unionists and supporters throughout the area to fill the courtroom at the County Council Building in Aiken, South Carolina, at 10 a.m. on October 17, when they will be facing the company's latest legal challenge to the union's right to represent K-T Clay workers. As the old labor motto says, "An injury to one is an injury to all."

Ever since the March 2000 vote, K-T Clay management has flatly refused to negotiate with the union; not a single bargaining session has been held. Imerys' upper management is portrayed as enlightened by social democrats in Europe, "where the company has emphasized 'social partnership' with unions," as the Brussels-based International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM) noted in a protest against the company's previous union-bust-

ing drive in Alabama. Such appeals for harmonious class collaboration never stopped any company's ruthless drive for profits; their only purpose is to try to fool workers into believing labor and capital can be "partners." Imerys has reiterated that it fully backs its representatives in Langley in the face of repeated letters and protests from the workers there.

Despite company stonewalling, K-T Clay workers continue the struggle, holding regular union meetings and fighting for a contract, against poverty wages, the big pay gap between different sectors of workers at the mine, the lack of affordable health care, and the harassment and discrimination used by the company. The fight for workers rights is inseparable from the fight against all forms of oppression and discrimination. This is clear as day in a state where the January 2000 police riot against longshore unionists in Charleston was bloody vengeance for a march of tens of thousands protesting the Confederate flag of slavery at the state capitol. K-T Clay unionists have come out in support of the Charleston Five, seeing an important parallel to their own situation. They are also closely following the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the black journalist who has spent nearly two decades on death row in Pennsylvania as a result of a racist frame-up. Renew states:

"Mumia Abu-Jamal should be free, that's what we believe. The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal is an injustice. It is particularly serious since they're trying to silence and execute this brother who is a journalist; people need to be able to write what they believe and say what their cause is. I'm also very concerned with this issue because I am completely opposed to the death penalty."

Labor Solidarity Actions Needed Now

The power of international workers solidarity must be brought to bear in defense of the K-T Clay miners! Class-struggle solidarity actions on a global scale can be a powerful weapon against union-busting and anti-labor attacks. This is particularly crucial today, when as the U.S. government prepares to rain death and destruction on working people abroad, big business has unleashed mass layoffs against workers at home.

"The workers are the backbone of all industries, they can't be run without us," stresses union president Renew.

"The workers, especially the lower and middle-paid workers, need to wake up and realize what the corporate decision-makers are doing to them. We need to form an international alliance of as many brothers and sisters as we can to resist the attempts to enslave a whole world of workers. Otherwise, we will all be ground down into poverty, we'll all lose our jobs, our homes and all our rights, everything the working man and woman have fought for here and in all the other countries."

To defend the K-T Clay miners and beat back union-busting attacks, unionists throughout the Imerys empire – backed up by class-conscious workers in other key industries – should use their power in coordinated actions (such as a one-day strike of all the company's operations internationally) for victory to the Langley, South Carolina miners.

Similarly, a fight for strike action in all U.S. ports in defense of the Charleston Five is key today in the struggle to

unionize the South. Such measures are clearly essential – the fact that the hidebound labor officialdom fears them like the plague testifies to the urgent need for a new, class-struggle leadership. The struggle of the Langley miners is one of a number of labor battles that have broken out in the Deep South in the recent period and which have been highlighted by the struggle to defend the Charleston Five.

A victory in these struggles will deal a blow for hard-pressed workers and minorities throughout the region and beyond, many of whom work for companies that employ workers on several continents. Among these are the huge, non-union factories strung along the "industrial autobahn" on the I-85 corridor, which in South Carolina alone includes BMW, Michelin, Amoco, Fuji, Hoffman-LaRoche, Nucor, Bose and others.

A real fight to unionize these plants requires an all-out offensive headed by a class-struggle leadership that links the fight to organize the South with the struggle for black liberation and the defense of all the exploited and oppressed. Such a fight would unleash workers power from the Charleston longshoremen to the hundreds of glass and clay workers in the Aiken and Sandersville areas, nearby Savannah River building trades workers, South Carolina's 4,000 unionized Bell South workers and the IBEW power company workers. It should bring out the 1,000 Mack Truck workers in Winnsboro (who face the threat of a plant closing in late 2002) and their brothers and sisters in UAW-organized plants in neighboring Georgia, together with the countless overworked, underpaid working men and women at giant corporations throughout the region.

Pro-business union leaders talk about the goal of unionizing the South "some day" while fearing the powerful class struggle this would require. In a similar way, they pay lip service to international labor solidarity, but they cannot genuinely put it into practice since their ultimate loyalty is always to "their own" national capitalists. In contrast, for class-conscious workers, internationalism is a call to action. As we noted in our call for "Victory to K-T Clay Workers!" (*The Internationalist*, No. 11, summer 2001), "The workers movement must come to the aid of these courageous fighters for labor's cause, as part of a class-struggle drive to unionize the South."

"What we're fighting for are the basic rights and needs of all workers everywhere," says union leader Renew. "We need the support of our brothers and sisters to win this fight." The time is now for international workers solidarity actions for victory to the K-T Clay workers!

– Internationalist Group, 4 October 2001

UPDATE

Delegations from Charleston longshore and other unions attended the October 17 hearing, where K-T Clay was cited for a range of labor violations. Showing that court rulings won't stop it, the company has lashed out yet again, launching a new attack on workers' pensions.

TO CONTACT THE K-T CLAY MINERS, write to:
Local D-598 President Myron K. Renew
258 Sand Rockway, Trenton, SC 29847
or call brother Renew at (803) 641-1479.

New York Greengrocer Union Drive at the Crossroads

Unionization and Full Citizenship Rights for Immigrant Workers – Mobilize Workers Power!

Imperialist war abroad and economic crisis at home have brought heightened threats of repression and unemployment against immigrant workers across the United States. In New York City, an untold number (probably in the hundreds) of “undocumented” immigrants died in the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center. The real number may never be known because their relatives and co-workers are afraid to come forward given the threat of deportation. Now their families face destitution, showing once again the vicious hypocrisy of the government’s crocodile tears for the victims.

Already at least 6,000 members of the hotel and restaurant workers union in NYC have been laid off, and the *New York Times* (15 October) reports that, “One national union estimates that a third of its 265,000 members, most of whom are Hispanic immigrants, have been dismissed since the attacks.” But the “recession” which has hit service industries and light manufacturing firms hard began well before September 11. These are precisely the sectors that in recent years have drawn over 225,000 immigrants from Mexico and 150,000 from Ecuador alone to the New York area. While the capitalist government pours billions into corporate bailouts, these workers fear being thrown out on the street, out of the country, and into outright starvation.

The savage repressive legislation rammed through Congress by George W. Bush and the Republican/Democrat war party aims, among other things, to make life a living hell for this young and dynamic, but highly vulnerable, sector of the U.S. working class. While the Bush administration’s request for indefinite detention of immigrant “suspects” was turned down, it was replaced by a provision for seven-day detention without charge which can be repeatedly renewed for six-month periods! Immigrant workers are an increasingly important part of the labor movement in the U.S., and now more than ever it is urgent to mobilize this dynamic force in the fight to forge a class-struggle leadership, and to raise

the banner of *full citizenship rights for all immigrants*.

The heightened stakes of the struggle for immigrant rights underline the need to draw lessons from the drive to unionize workers in New York-area “greengrocer” stores which sell fresh fruit, vegetables, deli items and flowers. This campaign, which began three years ago, has received considerable public attention and drawn support from young student activists with an orientation to the labor movement. The potential to organize

this workforce – consisting largely of young men from impoverished rural areas of the Mexican state of Puebla – was symbolized by a demonstration of hundreds of greengrocer and deli workers through lower Manhattan last March 28. Marching from one store to another, they seethed with defiance against brutal super-exploitation, daily abuse on the job, and the efforts of immigration authorities (the hated *migra*) to silence them through fear of



Cop riot against unionists, students at East Natural deli, 1 May 2001.

deportation. The most popular chants were “*La lucha obrera no tiene fronteras*” (The workers struggle has no borders) and “*Arriba, abajo, la migra al carajo*” (loosely, Migra go to hell).

“A key goal of the greengrocer unionization campaign has been to publicize the situation of immigrant workers in real sweat-shop conditions in this and other service industries right here in New York City and across the United States,” José Schiffino, organizer with Local 169 of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE), told *The Internationalist*. Union organizing meetings have drawn large numbers of workers who braved a wave of firings and constant intimidation.

Brutal Exploitation, Daily Abuse and Violent Union-Busting

It is no easy task to unionize an industry that consists primarily of small stores employing relatively unskilled and easily replaceable workers “without papers.” Such an effort



Internationalist photos

Greengrocer workers and supporters demonstrate for unionization. At left, IG sign in Korean and Spanish reads "Asian, Latin, Black and White – Workers of the World, Unite!"

requires above all the deployment of organized workers' power on the picket line, as well as posing a range of social questions, from the fight against racism and *migra* terror to the need to combat attempts to divide the working class along national and ethnic lines; from the triple oppression of women immigrant workers to the desperate poverty and social upheavals in U.S. imperialism's Latin American semi-colonies.

The greengrocer campaign has made some advances, winning union recognition at several stores and contracts at seven markets, as well as tens of thousands of dollars in back pay for various groups of workers. Today the unionization drive stands at a crossroads symbolized by the abrupt transfer of the organizing drive from UNITE Local 169, which ran the campaign for three years, to United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1500. Beyond this typical example of bureaucratic horse-trading, it is clear that "bread-and-butter," pro-Democratic Party business unionism cannot win a decisive victory in a struggle such as this, which requires militant, mass mobilization of the young and volatile immigrant workforce – with the active participation of powerful allies in the rest of labor – and is rife with potential radicalism. What is required above all is a *class-struggle program and leadership*.

Greengrocer stores have become ubiquitous in New York; their number has grown to over 2,000 over the past decade, employing an estimated 14,000 workers, most of them "undocumented" immigrants. Made to work 12 or more hours a day, six or even seven days a week, for as little as \$3 an hour – far below even the miserable minimum wage – without overtime pay, vacations or sick days, employees are told they are lucky to make \$250 for a 72-hour week. While workers constantly face injury from laboring long hours with sharp knives, carrying heavy boxes and remaining on their feet all day, they have no health coverage and since they are paid in cash they are not eligible for disability or unemployment insurance.

Protests began in May 1998 with a march of 100 workers and family members through the Brighton Beach area of Brook-

lyn, called by the Asociación Mexicana Americana de Trabajadores (AMAT – Mexican American Workers Association) against conditions at the "green sweatshops." Later that year, UNITE Local 169 won a union representation election at a Brighton Beach deli, and decided to target greengrocer markets on Manhattan's Lower East Side, scene of a May Day march of unionists, deli workers and student activists in May 1999. A popular sign read: "Salad: \$4.99/lb. Wages: \$3.50/hr."

The union gained a small foothold through a four and a half-month strike in late 1999 at the Adinah's Farms market, where it won back wages, basic health coverage and other benefits, and raised wages to approximately \$380 a week in comparison with the previous \$180. Widespread sympathy in the largely Hispanic neighborhood played a role in winning a contract. However, consumer boycotts launched against stores in more upscale yuppie neighborhoods drew more tepid support. There are times when boycotts can play an auxiliary role to real labor action, but when put forward as a strategy they depend on the "good will" of atomized consumers rather than the solid class interest and solidarity of a mobilized working class.

Boycott lines at a large market (Valentino) in a downtown university area did win union recognition and a contract, while the owners of a competing store across the street (East Natural) went on an all-out anti-union drive, firing workers for wearing union hats. Pro-union protesters chanted: "What's disgusting? Union-busting! What's outrageous? Sweatshop wages!"

East Natural's owner embarked on a costly campaign of dirty tricks and anti-union propaganda, and hired crowds of lumpen rowdies to harass workers and customers at its unionized competitor while cursing, spitting on and physically assaulting union organizers and supporters. UNITE organizer Schiffino was repeatedly set upon by these anti-union goons who punched and even bit him and threatened his life. On May Day 2001, leftist and student marchers in front of East Natural were attacked and arrested by NYPD cops in a genuine police riot. The store has since closed up shop after the owners were

cited for half a million dollars in back wage violations.

The organizing drive was also the object of anti-union sniping from the Asociación Tepeyac, a Catholic Church-sponsored nationalist group devoted to organizing Mexican immigrants under the banner of the Virgin of Guadalupe. The clerical-nationalist Tepeyac has been the object of fulsome praise in the Mexican bourgeois press. A recent *New York Times* advertisement by the most important employers associations in Mexico, supporting the U.S. government as it launched its imperialist war against Afghanistan, expressed "our special appreciation to groups such as the Tepeyac Association..." Ironically, this ad was published on the anniversary of the Tlatelolco Massacre in Mexico City (2 October 1968), in which the Mexican capitalists' army – blessed by the rabidly anti-communist Church hierarchy – massacred hundreds of protesters against the bloody regime of the "Institutional Revolutionary Party" (PRI).

For Class-Struggle Mobilization!

At meetings and marches of the unionization campaign, supporters of the Internationalist Group (IG) have stressed the need for an all-out class-struggle mobilization based on genuine workers internationalism. This means opposing all manifestations of nationalism – a weapon capitalists use to subordinate and exploit workers of their own nationality and divide the working class along national and ethnic lines. The point is particularly crucial given how the bourgeois press (including New York's Spanish-language papers) delighted in claiming the unionization campaign was a "fight between Latino and Asian immigrants" – since many of the owners of the stores are Korean.

Pointing out the importance of combating anti-Asian racism, IG members also contacted a range of Korean and other Asian American groups. Right-wing Korean-language papers and employers' groups sought to brand as a "traitor" any Korean American who came out in support of the greengrocer workers (a substantial number of whom are Korean themselves). To its credit, one Korean community group, Nodutdol, organized a public forum and a radio show to publicize the workers' unionization struggle.

Unchaining labor's power requires a fight against its subordination to the capitalist politicians of the Democratic Party (Local 169's union hall now doubles as a campaign headquarters for Democratic mayoral candidate Mark Green) and illusions in the supposed neutrality of the capitalist state. While suits for back wages and against flagrant abuse of workers can sometimes wrest concessions from recalcitrant employers, *relying* on the bosses' government can only be a recipe for defeat. What wins real victories is hard class struggle of the exploited against the exploiters and their state.

The greengrocer drive also saw a dirty campaign by Local 1964 of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) to sabotage the union drive by signing blatant sweetheart contracts with a series of deli owners. This came on the heels of the ILA tops' grotesque sellout of the bitter two-year strike by Domino Sugar workers in Brooklyn. Notoriously, UNITE itself has made a number of sweetheart deals in parts of the New York garment trade. While UNITE appealed to the AFL-CIO Executive Board against the ILA, some left/liberal sup-

porters of the campaign muttered about the possibility of using the bosses' courts – and even the sinister RICO "conspiracy" laws – against Local 1964. Class-struggle militants stress that labor must clean its own house – capitalist courts and cops *out* of the workers movement!

"The Policy of the Class Struggle"

A piecemeal strategy of targeting a few shops at a time for boycott protests is not going to break the back of well-organized, hard-core anti-union employers' associations. What's key is bringing into play the muscle of the union movement. The potential for massive and militant actions by super-exploited greengrocer workers – determined to wage a hard struggle against desperate poverty and unending abuse – has been repeatedly shown at key points during the greengrocer campaign.

Mass pickets, combined with strike actions, could draw powerful support in New York City from the multiracial transit, hospital, Teamster and construction unions; janitors who have waged bitter strikes in blizzard conditions; phone and UPS workers who have hung tough in strikes against some of America's most powerful corporations; as well as garment and other sweatshop workers in desperate need of unionization themselves.

Yet from the beginning, the organizing drive launched by UNITE Local 169 was hamstrung by the visible lack of support from the UNITE International leadership. This was so clear that it rapidly became a weapon in the hands of the most powerful employers, who told smaller retailers, as well as workers, that the unionization drive did not even have real backing from the union as a whole.

Writing of an earlier generation of "labor skates," James P. Cannon, founder of the Trotskyist movement in the U.S., wrote that in reality they did not know how to organize workers, "They knew how to disorganize them." He noted: "They know how, sometimes, to let the workers into the unions when they break the doors down. But to go out and really organize the workers, stir them up and inspire them with faith and confidence" – that is not the bureaucrat's function, "It is not even his ambition." In contrast, in the great Minneapolis strikes of 1934 in which Trotskyist militants spearheaded mass unionization of trucking and warehouse workers:

"Our people didn't believe in anybody or anything but the policy of the class struggle and the ability of the workers to prevail by their mass strength and solidarity. Consequently, they expected from the start that the union would have to fight for its right to exist; that the bosses would not yield any recognition to the union, would not yield any increase in wages or reduction of the scandalous hours without some pressure being brought to bear. Therefore they prepared everything from the point of view of class war. They knew that power, not diplomacy, would decide the issue. Bluffs don't work in fundamental things, only in incidental ones. In such things as the conflict of class interests one must be prepared to fight."

– "The Great Minneapolis Strikes," in *The History of American Trotskyism* (1944)

"Amnesty" Is Dead – Fight for Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants!

Historically known for their nauseatingly jingoist "Buy American" ad campaigns, the garment unions that merged to form UNITE found themselves faced with the need – if they were to maintain a dues base – to organize the immigrant and "undocumented" workers who made up an increasingly predominant part of the workforce. The AFL-CIO leadership made a turn towards unionizing such workers and began making speeches about immigrant rights. In reality, the objective of these loyal "labor lieutenants" of American capitalism was to recruit immigrant workers and use *them* for protectionist campaigns against competition from overseas. In pursuit of this goal they helped sponsor groups "against sweatshops" and joined coalitions calling for an "amnesty" – for groups of workers *already* in the U.S., which could then be used against *future* immigrants.

The Internationalist Group has consistently exposed the real intentions of the labor fakers (see, for example, "Mobilize the Working Class to Smash Anti-Immigrant Offensive!" in *The Internationalist* No. 1. January-February 1997). Against the liberal/reformist slogan begging the racist government to "amnesty" workers for the supposed crime of coming here to earn a living, we insisted on a struggle to take what is rightfully due all workers; a struggle for *full citizenship rights for all immigrants*.

After September 11, "amnesty" is dead. In the present chauvinist atmosphere, even the most deluded reformist must understand today that there is no way George W. Bush, his "homeland" repression czar Tom Ridge and their Democratic partners are going to go for this. Reflecting this, many immigrant organizations are in a state of paralysis. Only a revolutionary-internationalist leadership whose program expresses the real needs of the entire working class – not what is "acceptable" within the limits of capitalist profit – can mobilize workers power in defense of immigrants.

This fight is inseparable from the struggle against black oppression, which intersects *every* basic social and political issue in this deeply racist country. This is shown yet again by the fact that Ridge, who together with Confederate enthusiast attorney general John Ashcroft is in charge of the vicious persecution of immigrants, was the Pennsylvania governor who signed death warrants against Mumia Abu-Jamal, the radical black journalist on death row. The struggle to unionize immigrant workers, against deportations and for full citizenship rights can only succeed if it is based on a program for defeating the entire capitalist system of racism, poverty and war – through socialist revolution here, in Latin America and Asia (where Korea's combative working class has waged major struggles like that at Daewoo Motors) and throughout the world.

Clearly, such a struggle will not be undertaken by labor tops who prostrate themselves before George W. Bush, the Democrats and their murderous machinery of imperialist war and repression. The Internationalist Group has participated in fights for unionization and immigrant rights on the basis of our program for a revolutionary workers party as part of a reformed Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution.

All Out to Unionize Greengrocer Workers!

Today, the New York greengrocer unionization campaign is in the hands of Local 1500 of the United Food and Commercial Workers. The UFCW includes many thousands of grocery store workers in the New York metropolitan area, and this power could be brought into play were it not for the union tops' class-collaborationist strategy and program. The UFCW International is still remembered by many unionists for stabbing the Hormel meatpackers' strike in the back in the mid-'80s, part of the chain of labor defeats during the Reagan years. Local 1500 says it is going forward with the unionization drive among immigrant workers in the New York area, and has won union recognition through "card checks" at four markets. But neither the UFCW nor UNITE have ever suggested undertaking the kind of all-out struggle that is needed.

The UFCW says it is trying to get enough stores under recognition to be able to seek an overall greengrocer industry contract. It has apparently put marches and public protest actions on hold. Meanwhile, workers at some of the stores with UNITE union contracts (which expire in June 2002) have been subjected to renewed anti-union propaganda, facilitated by the confusion and demoralization caused by the sudden bureaucratic switch of the unionization campaign from UNITE to the UFCW. Clearly, the need for a full-scale unionization campaign is stronger than ever. It is crucial that the organizing effort over months of rallies, meetings and marches not be allowed to dissipate. There must be no illusion that hard-line anti-union bosses can be rendered "reasonable" by establishing or accepting limitations on unionization efforts.

Young immigrant workers who turn to the union movement are capable of great self-sacrifice and hard struggles which can galvanize and inspire workers of every national origin throughout key sectors of labor. Ken Loach's recent movie *Bread and Roses*, dramatizing the struggle of immigrant Los Angeles janitors, bore witness, however partially, to the impact this dynamic sector of the proletariat can have when engaged in real struggle. But above all they must be won to socialist consciousness, the program of international workers revolution and the struggle to build a revolutionary party of the international working class.

The fight for a class-conscious labor movement capable of unionizing the masses of immigrant workers and seizing their most fundamental rights from a capitalist class hell-bent on super-exploitation and racist oppression is a revolutionary task in the fullest sense of the term. It can be won only with a leadership that puts into practice the motto "Asian, Latin, black and white – Workers of the world, unite!"

Victory to the greengrocer unionization campaign!

"To defend immigrant rights requires using the *power* that organized labor has. This means a class-struggle fight to oust the misleaders, whose loyalty to the capitalist system means they refuse to mobilize that power.... A serious effort for labor organizing in the sweatshops requires a leadership and program which can defeat the institutions of racist capitalism, mobilizing the workers and oppressed in class struggle that does not bow to the bosses' dictates."

– from *The Internationalist* No. 1 (Jan.-Feb. 1997)

Class War vs. Imperialist War...

continued from page 48

generates war and economic crises. This is the proof. The ruling class knows it. Bush was almost gleeful in announcing the "first war of the 21st century." What you need is to struggle for international socialist revolution to get rid of that system, and that's why our key task is to build a revolutionary workers party to lead it.

The "peace movement" wants to moderate the behavior of the U.S. government. Various self-proclaimed socialist groups call for "hands off" Afghanistan and Iraq. But in an imperialist

Mexican Bourgeoisie Signs Up for the Imperialist War Drive

We print below translated excerpts from the October 2001 supplement to El Internacionalista (edición México), published by our comrades of the Grupo Internacionalista/México. The full text in Spanish and English is available on our Internet site (www.internationalist.org).

As soon as the Bush administration launched its war cry that "you are either with us or against us" in the new war to restructure the world, the businessmen's government of Mexican president Vicente Fox stressed once again that it is a faithful lackey of its imperialist masters. It not only justified U.S. imperialism's attacks on semi-colonial countries but offered the United States "all the oil it needs" to carry out bombings of Afghanistan and any other country chosen as a target of this imperialist war.

This is no accident. The shock waves of the September 11 attacks have reached capitalist Mexico, and the government is preparing to back up the imperialists in the war. In the Second World War, the Mexican government not only made itself an unconditional provider of raw materials and labor for its Washington overlords, but participated militarily in the inter-imperialist slaughter, sending Squadron 201 to join in air combat in the South Pacific. After declaring war on the Axis powers, the government of then-president Manuel Ávila Camacho proceeded to arrest Japanese citizens, especially in northern Mexico, where it even built concentration camps. This is the real face of Mexican bourgeois nationalism, from the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) and its offspring the PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution) to the PAN (Fox's National Action Party).

Today history is repeating itself. In less than a month, 81 immigrants of Arab origin have been arrested in Mexico. Immediately after the attack on New York's World Trade Center, the National Immigration Service (INM) arrested 41 Iraqis. Since then, immigrants from Jordan, Pakistan, Yemen and Lebanon have been arrested, as well as 14 more Iraqis (*La Jornada*, 2 October). Every year, many thousands of Central American immigrants on their way to the U.S. are arrested and deported to their impoverished countries of origin.

Thus the Mexican bourgeoisie "does its part" to whip up anti-Arab xenophobia (which in the U.S. goes hand in hand with racism against Latin American immigrants – a considerable number of whom today are going along with the campaign of imperialist jingoism). Both in Mexico and the U.S., revolutionary Marxists demand: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Immigrants of Arab origin are facing the alternative of

war against semi-colonial countries, it is a matter of principle to *defend* the countries under attack, Afghanistan and Iraq; we *defend* the deformed workers states targeted by imperialism, North Korea, Vietnam, Cuba and China; and we call to *defeat* the imperialist war drive.

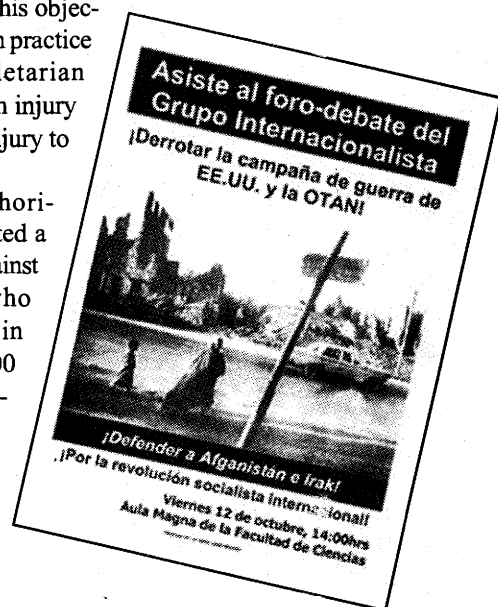
It's not about "globalization," it's about capitalism, which has been globalized from the outset, as European empires conquered and exterminated Indian populations in the Americas and brought millions of black slaves from Africa to the "New World." Imperialism is not a policy but a system. You can't just endlessly fight the consequences, you have to fight the causes.

spending a long period rotting in the Mexican immigration cops' cells, or being deported to their countries of origin where they will also be subjected to repression. It is crucial to demand that they be freed immediately.

At the same time that the U.S. government shored up the "home front" by launching a wholesale attack on democratic rights and intensifying repression against ethnic minorities, immigrants, workers and the poor, Fox demands "national unity" while pledging to maintain "peace" in Mexico. What this means is that domestic repression will be raised to new heights. Already before the September 11 attack in the U.S., the Mexican bourgeoisie had begun a witch hunt against leftists. After some firecrackers went off at three Banamex bank branches in Mexico City, causing light damage, an "anti-terrorist" campaign was launched which culminated in the lightning detention of five people who the authorities claimed were suspected members of the FARP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of the People), an organization which claimed responsibility for the incident.

The Grupo Internacionalista demands: Freedom now for the prisoners of bourgeois repression! Drop all charges against those accused of "terrorism"! It is the duty of the working class to mobilize for this objective, putting in practice the old proletarian motto that "an injury to one is an injury to all."

The authorities have started a witch hunt against students who participated in the 1999-2000 UNAM student strike. More than 100 students were reportedly arrested on October 2, the day of the annual



Poster for Grupo Internacionalista forum to "Defeat U.S./NATO War Drive."

march commemorating the 1968 Tlatelolco Massacre. The police of the Federal District, governed by the PRD's Andrés Manuel López Obrador, harassed students at several schools and arrested dozens at the UNAM-affiliated Prepa 5.

Not only was "vigilance" beefed up at border crossings, but PEMEX (Mexico's state oil company) and electrical power plants will be under police guard. These "precautions" against terrorist attacks are aimed in the final analysis at preventing any upsurge among the working class, which has been under constant assault from the government's starvation policy and the catastrophic fall in living standards.

Protests against the imperialist war have already taken place in Mexico, but their outlook has not gone beyond the limits of bourgeois nationalism. Some meetings called by left groups like the Partido Obrero Socialista (Mexican followers of the late Argentine pseudo-Trotskyist caudillo Nahuel Moreno) have whipped up the most bald-faced nationalism, insisting

"this is not a Mexican war" (*"esta no es una guerra de los mexicanos"*). They simultaneously call for the removal of foreign minister Jorge Castañeda, showing that at bottom they seek only to suggest a different course for Fox's bourgeois government. The struggle against imperialist war requires a policy of internationalist class struggle, counterposed to the pure and simple bourgeois nationalism the pseudo-socialists capitulate to (in particular when represented by the party of repression led by Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas [the PRD]).

The only way out is to struggle against capitalism, which means war, racism, the oppression of women and economic crises. This means taking the path of workers revolution and its extension to the south and to the north, beyond the Río Bravo (Rio Grande) to the United States. This perspective requires forging, in the heat of struggle, national sections of a reformed Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution.

Ukraine: Nationalist Popular Front Against the War

KIEV, October 23 – "Antiwar" activities in Ukraine are increasing as sectors of the working class and youth join in rallies and pickets. Some 2,500 protesters attended an antiwar demonstration in Donetsk in the Donbas coal mining region. More than half of them were miners, who went into the streets without permission of the official union. On October 15 there was an important student demo in Dnipropetrovsk, which was supported by the workers of the huge military enterprise Yuzhmash. The official media mainly hide news about such protests, as the Ukrainian bourgeoisie swears allegiance to imperialism in the war against Afghanistan. Ukraine has authorized use of its air space to transport U.S. military forces involved in the Afghan campaign.

But events in Kiev are undoubtedly the most significant. On October 14 there was the largest "antiwar" action so far, attended by about 4,000 participants. It was dominated by the banners of the Stalinists, different environmental organizations, radical Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists and fake Trotskyist groups. However, some sectors of workers and students also were independently present at the rally and picket. Since then, there have been a couple of smaller events.

The Communist Party of Ukraine (KPU) and its subsidiary organization, the All-Ukrainian Workers Union, are clearly trying to use protests against the war to increase its electoral strength in upcoming parliamentary elections. Middle-level KPU bureaucrats have increased their anti-American rhetoric, declaring wholehearted political support to the Taliban and bin Laden. In interviews, KPU leader Petro Simonenko virtually equates American workers with U.S. imperialism.

Even more Russian chauvinist than the KPU itself is the KPRK (Communist Party of Workers and Peasants) which, rejecting any semblance of class analysis, says the attack on Afghanistan is a conflict of Western and Eastern civilization. The KPRK declares that the Slavic peoples, due to their "geopolitical interests," should unite with Islamic peoples against the West. KPRK members, generally of pensioners' age, wave green Islamic flags in the demos.

Also giving virtually unconditional political support to the Taliban and bin Laden are such hard-line Stalinists as the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, the Party of Communist-Bolsheviks of Ukraine, and the Union of Communists of Ukraine.

Ukrainian nationalists generally take a pro-U.S. line. Among those claiming to be leftists, the Socialist Party of Ukraine (SPU), one of the main forces in protests last February against Ukrainian president Leonid Kuchma, takes an openly pro-American position, instructing its members to stay away from antiwar protests. The Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine (PSPU) calls for ending the war with appeals to United Nations conventions and "international law."

Bourgeois organizations such as the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists, the Party of Reforms and Order and the "Our Ukraine" movement led by former prime minister Victor Yushchenko have taken a pro-U.S. position, calling for a "crusade against world terrorism." However, various marginal semi-fascist and fascist Ukrainian nationalists lean toward supporting the Taliban in "opposition to the present political unity of Russian and American imperialism."

Various pseudo-Trotskyist and other left groups are active in the "antiwar" campaign. The Ukrainian group of the LRCI (led by the British Workers Power), RV-MRM, once again, as during the squabble last winter between two bourgeois clans in Ukraine, harped on the need for a "united front." At the moment, the only groups attracted to this "antiwar united front" are various small anarchist and environmental groups, such as the Rainbow Keepers, Kiev Vegetarian Association, the Movement for Defense of Animals as well as some Russian and Ukrainian nationalists, notably remnants of the "Ukraine without Kuchma" popular front.

The RV-MRM acted then as the "left" tail of this Ukrainian bourgeois nationalist lash-up initially supported by the U.S. at a time when Washington was critical of Kuchma for courting Russian leader Putin. They were joined by the Ukrainian sympathizers of the IBT (International Bolshevik Tendency), who today again take their place in a front with bour-

geois organizations. The Revolutionary Workers Organization, supporters of the latter-day Shachtmanites of the COFI (led by the U.S. League for the Revolutionary Party), say they will join the "united front" only if it adopts its theory that the Soviet Union represented "statified capitalism."

We of the Revoluționnaya Kommunisticheskaya Organizatsiya (RKO) of Ukraine, section of the League for the Fourth International, have sharply delineated ourselves from these fakers. We see this "united front" for what it is, a classic

Brazil: Lula and Cardoso Back U.S. War on Afghanistan

RIO DE JANEIRO, November 2 – As U.S. imperialism geared up to rain death on Afghanistan, it received fulsome support from Brazil's two most prominent public figures: President Fernando Henrique Cardoso and the leader of the popular-front "opposition," Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Cardoso – the Sorbonne-educated sociologist and bourgeois "social democrat," former darling of the Third Worldist left – is now in his second term, presiding over the worst unemployment since the '30s and a growing economic crisis. Boasting of his personal audience (by phone) with imperialist chief George W. Bush, Cardoso declared that "in the case of a U.S. attack on Afghanistan, [the U.S.] will have Brazil's support," while lauding Washington for getting international "legitimation" of the war (Agência Estado, 1 October).

On the home front, the Brazilian president authorized the establishment of an office in São Paulo for the CIA, notorious in Brazil as godfathers of the bloody 1964 coup which initiated 21 years of military dictatorship, enforced with widespread torture and murder by CIA-trained operatives. Together with the U.S. spy agency, the Federal Police are going after people of Arab descent in Brazil's south. Dozens have already been arrested – while Cardoso cynically recycles the cherished myth of Brazil's "racial democracy," gushing: "Brazil's great contribution as a nation has been to provide harmonious coexistence between cultures, races and religions."

Closing ranks with Cardoso is Lula of the reformist Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT – Workers Party), who declared he is "rooting for the American government to strike those guilty of terrorism" (*Folha de S. Paulo*, 6 October). As he prepares for his fourth run for Brazil's presidency, Lula is eagerly putting an equal sign between his policies and those of Cardoso, who he backed in the 1980s. The PT's former partner in the Frente Brasil Popular, the PSTU (the Morenoite United Socialist Workers Party), begs to differ, opposing the war while calling on "Lula and the PT to become part of a Class Front and change their current course."

The same issue of the PSTU's *Opinião Socialista* (23 October) reprints an article from the American ISO (International Socialist Organization) on "peace" demonstrations in the U.S. The affinity is no accident. The PSTU paper states: "The United States no longer has the all-powerful Soviet Union around to invade countries, as occurred with Afghanistan"! What this bizarre claim seeks to cover is that like the ISO (which says the USSR was "state capitalist"), the Morenoites were on the same side as the U.S. imperialists during the Cold War II

example of a class-collaborationist popular front, tying workers and youth to sections of the bourgeoisie. During the demonstrations and in our ongoing work in factories and universities we have distributed the materials of the LFI calling for proletarian struggle to defeat the imperialist war and in defense of Afghanistan and Iraq, the semi-colonial countries attacked by the U.S./NATO. We have received a very positive response to our internationalist call amid the nationalist ravings on all sides.

battle over Afghanistan. Both of these pseudo-socialist currents fulsomely supported the CIA-backed "holy warriors" against the Soviet-backed Kabul government which provided education for women.

The Partido da Causa Operária (PCO – Workers Cause Party) noted that the World Trade Center attack was an "indiscriminate massacre of defenseless people" while simultaneously characterizing it as an example of "Arab terrorism" that is a manifestation of "the struggle of the entire Arab people...for its liberation" (PCO statement of 27 September). This is grist to the mill of the imperialists, who are eager to associate genuine mass struggles against oppression, such as the Palestinian Intifada, with the grotesque murder of thousands of innocent civilians at the WTC.

Attempting to outdo the PCO in Third World nationalism, their former comrades of the Liga Bolchevique Internacionalista (LBI) circulated a statement by Argentine co-thinkers which grotesquely refers to the WTC attack as being against "yuppie financiers" and an expression of "the right of revenge" against imperialism. What is really manifest here is these fakers' identification with nationalist "strongmen" and petty-bourgeois contempt for the multiracial working class of the U.S., including the large numbers of workers of all national backgrounds who perished on September 11.

Against the reformists and rabid nationalists who masquerade as representatives of Marxism, the Liga Quarta-Internacionalista do Brasil (LQB), section of the League for the Fourth International, fights for revolutionary internationalism. Comrades have sold large numbers of a special LQB pamphlet against the imperialist war drive, while intervening in the current wave of strikes among public employees, university workers, oil workers and others.

At a state-wide assembly of Rio de Janeiro teachers on October 18 amid a two-week statewide teachers strike, an LQB spokeswoman called for internationalist class struggle for the defeat of the imperialist war and defense of Afghanistan. She also stressed the need to unite the struggles of teachers and federal workers (now more than 70 days on strike), divided by reformist leaders from Lula's popular front. LQB comrades have been invited to address striking federal workers in Rio on the revolutionary-internationalist fight against the imperialist war.

Down with Cardoso's racist repression – Defeat the U.S. imperialists and their Brazilian bourgeois partners! Forge a revolutionary workers party!

Japan: Protests Push General MacArthur's "Peace Constitution"

NOVEMBER 1 – Prime minister Junichiro Koizumi traveled to Washington and New York following the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon to pledge Japanese support for the U.S.-led war against Afghanistan. The ruling coalition in Japan's Diet (parliament) consisting of Koizumi's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Komeito (a populist Buddhist party) and Conservative Party nationalists is sweating, worried that the U.S. recession will trigger even worse conditions in the Japanese economy, which faces record unemployment and stock market lows since the high-tech bubble economy burst. Using the excuse that "this time Japan must show its flag" (referring to Japan's "purely monetary support" to the 1991 Persian Gulf War against Iraq), the Japanese ruling class is beating the drums to use the weaponry bought with the largest military budget in the world.

But first it was necessary to override the Japanese Constitution's Article 9, which says: "The Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes." The revision of this law was supported by the ruling coalition and Communist Party (JCP) members of the Diet. The Social Democratic Party (SDP) voted "no" to a three-part "anti-terrorism" bill that calls for overseas deployment of the Japanese Self Defense Forces (SDF) in the name of "collective security," "paving the way for a full-scale SDF deployment abroad at a time of military crisis" (*Daily Yomiuri*, 3 October). Yet the SDP was part of the previous coalition government with the LDP, leading it to overhaul its platform to accept the SDF and the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

Since Koizumi's visit with George Bush there have been regular protests against the war in front of the Diet and in major cities across Japan. On October 21 peace gatherings and marches were organized in 33 locations. An antiwar network, revived by former Vietnam antiwar organizers, has focused on petitions to channel support into defense of the Constitution and thus for the SDP and New SDP. "Make the Peace Constitution the World's Constitution," "War Is Not the Answer" and "Bread not Bombs" were the slogans in Tokyo and several other cities.

The main slogans of the Antiwar Peace Action Coalition are "Against Terror, Against Retaliation," which accepts the "anti-terrorist" premise of the imperialist war drive, and "Stop Japanese Participation in the War" – i.e., let's keep Japan's hands

clean. At a Japanese military base in Hamamatsu, protesters handed a letter to the SDF officials, asking them "do you really think that it is necessary right now to give military support to the American forces in the war for retaliation against terror?"

The popular-front protests have focused on opposing changes to the so-called "peace constitution" (written by that great pacifist, General MacArthur!) to keep the Japanese military from being deployed overseas.

Two feuding "far left" groups with a historic base in the student movement issued similar statements. The Japan Revolutionary Communist League – Revolutionary Marxist Faction (known as "Kakumaru") raved in an 8 October declaration: "The 'anti-American Jihad' on September 11th...must be seen as an epoch-making event that meant a challenge, and its success, of Islamic resurrectionism against imperialist America's scheme for world domination." Kakumaru's rivals in the JRCL-Chukaku rant: "We must make it clear that the events of Sept. 11 are in essence an all-out resolute guerrilla warfare against US imperialism waged by the oppressed people determined to death" (*Zenshin*, 15 September). Behind the crazed enthusiasm for "anti-American" attacks no matter how indiscriminate lies capitulation to *Japanese imperialism*. Both groups took shape on the basis of adaptation to the rulers' virulent anti-Sovietism; Chukaku raises as its premier slogan "Overthrow Imperialism and Stalinism – causes of neocolonial domination and war!"

For its part, the Japanese Socialist Workers Party, a "far left" group with an idiosyncratic theory of "state capitalism" (it has no relation to the British SWP of the late Tony Cliff), noted the Japanese bourgeoisie's desire to be seen as "a powerful member of the world imperialist Great Powers." Yet its denunciations are aimed first and foremost at Japan's historic rival and (for now) "ally," the United States.

Denizens of the nationalist Japanese "far left" join their reformist big brothers in focusing their agitation on support for the imperial constitution under the slogan, "Smash the Emergency Legislation and Revision of the Constitution." Revolutionary Trotskyists certainly oppose measures that open the door to use of the Japanese military in imperialist adventures overseas, but we do so on the program of proletarian class war against imperialism, not support for an "independent" imperialist Japan and the phony "peace" constitution of Japanese capitalism.

South Korea: KCTU Spreads Pacifist Illusions

SEOUL, October 30 – For the last two weeks, the Kim Daejung regime has been "drilling" South Korea against "terrorism" by sending Special Forces squads in ski-masks rappelling down the face of the Korea World Trade Centre in Samseongdong, and having a biological warfare unit investigate the mysterious white powder (which turned out to be flour) in a public park.

But South Korea is no stranger to real terror. Last year, for example, the U.S. base at Yongsan in the heart of Seoul dumped poisonous formaldehyde into the Han River, source of drinking water for 10 million residents of the South Korean capital. There are the repeated murders of Korean "bar girls" by U.S. army men in Itaewon. And of course the infamous massacre under the

bridge at No-gun Ri in 1950. This was only one of many slaughters of civilians by U.S. forces during the Korean War.

And it's not only the U.S. military occupation forces. The KCIA is notorious for its brutal methods in enforcing military dictatorship, and South Korean troops were guilty of some of the bloodiest massacres when they acted as auxiliaries in the U.S.' dirty war on Vietnam. One of the biggest mass murders in history was jointly carried out by U.S.-trained Korean troops on Cheju Island off South Korea in 1948-49. The island, a leftist stronghold, boycotted the elections which brought the capitalist "Republic of Korea" into existence. In reprisal, ROK police and militias carried out a systematic house-by-house mas-

sacre, killing upwards of 30,000.

So it was no surprise when after the beginning of the so-called "retaliation" against the long-suffering people of Afghanistan, the Kim Daejung regime bleated its total solidarity with "our closest ally." While the tweedledum, tweedledee bourgeois parties in the National Assembly (the Grand National Party and Millennium Democratic Party) both supported the U.S. war drive, opinion polls in South Korea showed strong opposition to the war in the population.

The acting president of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) issued an "even-handed" statement, "Oppose Terrorism! Oppose War!" (KCTU president Dan Byung Ho is currently in prison for leading a general strike against the government's economic policies last June.) While the KCTU declaration recalls the massacre at No-gun Ri, and calls the September 11 terror "the bitter fruit of U.S. policy," it includes the plaintive appeal: "we do hope that the Kim Daejung government will not lose cool reason and just perspective." It concludes with a call for the U.S. to apologize...for not allowing Korean troops on U.S. bases after the attacks!

This statement was jointly signed by the KCTU and the Democratic Labor Party along with a coalition including the Greens, the Korean Christian Action Organization and the Pan-Korean Alliance for Reunification. This faithfully reflects the popular-frontism of the KCTU leaders who seek collaboration with "progressive" bourgeois forces. Not so long ago their favorite "progressive" was none other than Kim Daejung.

A lot of good the respectable bourgeois signatories did: the conference called to issue the statement was broken up by riot police. Trade unionists, Catholic priests and monks were piled into a police bus near the U.S. embassy and dumped in the suburbs. Meanwhile, some 663 unionists have been arrested by the "liberal" Kim Daejung regime, mainly in connec-

tion with the "illegal" general strike, outstripping the anti-labor repression of the previous arch-conservative military-dominated government. We demand freedom for Dan Byung Ho and all the victims of the government's anti-labor and anti-communist repression!

A week later there was a "requiem" for the victims of the terrorist attacks sponsored by the KCTU in Myeondong. Only about a hundred union leaders watched the shaman's dance and handed out chrysanthemums while chanting, "No to terrorism, no to war, yes to peace!"

But there is no peace in Afghanistan, or Korea. Although spokesmen for Kim Jong Il's North Korean bureaucratically deformed workers state were quick to condemn "terrorism," and explicitly aligned themselves with the South Korean position on the New York atrocities, Washington has made it very clear that North Korea is still on the Pentagon's potential target list. In fact, the U.S.-ROK "2000 Foal Eagle Exercises" which began on October 24 are being held right along the "demilitarized zone" between North and South Korea.

Contrary to the Stalinists' illusions of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism, there will be no peace in Korea until Korean capitalism and its imperialist sponsors are swept away by the powerful and militant working class. While the KCTU tops hobnob with bourgeois politicians, priests, monks and shamans, what's needed is a fight for a Trotskyist leadership of the Korean proletariat, North and South.

A revolutionary workers party must be built that fights for power on both sides of the DMZ, through revolutionary reunification of the peninsula, for proletarian political revolution from Pyongyang to Beijing and socialist revolution extending from Seoul to Tokyo and throughout Asia. This, and not pacifist illusions, must be the perspective of a *class* war against the imperialist war, from Afghanistan to Korea.

Germany: PDS Rides "Peace" Popular Front

HAMBURG, November 2 – Antiwar protests in Europe reflect the inter-imperialist rivalries which remain latent behind the façade of unity in "defense of the civilized world." This is also true for Germany, despite Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's fulsome declarations of "unlimited solidarity" with the USA. Important sections of the ruling class feel that this is not Germany's war, setting the stage for a social-patriotic "peace movement" not at all opposed in principle to imperialist war in the interests of the *German* bourgeoisie. Reformists like the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) exploit pacifist sentiment among the masses and their revulsion to U.S. terror bombing of Afghanistan for electoral purposes, while harnessing them to "their own" imperialist bourgeoisie under the cover of appeals for UN "peacekeeping."

The current situation has been compared to the 1991 Gulf War, in which Germany was a reluctant minor player in the imperialist onslaught against Iraq. But ten years later, Berlin's war machine has gone into action, having bombed Belgrade in 1999. The conservative *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* enthused that with US imperialism's attention turned to the Middle East, "Europe" "must itself be responsible for keeping order in its backyard." This means in particular the Balkans, where

NATO troops under German command have turned Macedonia, like Kosovo, into an imperialist protectorate. What they have in mind emerged from an "informal" meeting of European Union war ministers in Brussels on October 12, which decided to organize a "credible rapid intervention force" within two years and to build up the capacity to mobilize up to 60,000 soldiers for a one-year intervention.

The government which boasts that it has broken down the post-World War II "taboos" against German military action is a coalition of the Social Democracy (SPD) with the Greens, the erstwhile party of petty-bourgeois protest. The Green foreign minister Fischer blusters that no "zones of disorder" can be permitted internationally. Ex-New Leftists like Fischer made their peace with the bourgeois order in the '80s by championing the cause of Islamic reactionary *mujahedin* in Afghanistan against the Soviet Red Army.

It is the task of another former "leftist," Interior Minister Otto Schily, to prepare the package of "security measures" which will secure the "home front" in the war drive. These include annual security checks of all employees of airlines and airports, beefing up the paramilitary *Bundesgrenzschutz* (bor-

der police), registration of the religious affiliation of all foreigners and deportation of refugees (even those few officially recognized as victims of political persecution) who are merely suspected of participating in criminal acts. The state will dissolve Islamic religious organizations as it sees fit, and any organization with a majority of non-Germans (such as the Kurdish PKK) can be banned if its activities run counter to the "diplomatic interests of Germany" (e.g., Berlin's support for NATO ally Turkey). Already, university students from predominantly Muslim countries are being screened in Germany's version of "racial profiling."

In this situation, in which even some spokesmen for the ruling parties are emitting reserves about *American* terror bombing, the PDS is functioning as the "loyal opposition" to Schröder's posture of support for U.S. imperialism. The PDS had its origins in the SED, the party of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the DDR, and now functions as the East German variant of social democracy. In a parliamentary vote in Berlin on September 19, the PDS was the only party in the Bundestag which did not approve the governmental declaration of "solidarity" which pledged NATO participation in Bush's crusade. Yet five days earlier, PDS chairman Gabi Zimmer signed a declaration by the six parties in the Bundestag calling a protest at the Brandenburg Gate against the September 11 attacks, described as an "attack on the entire civilized world."

While the PDS is taking the lead in antiwar demonstrations, its star spokesman and Berlin mayoral candidate Gregor Gysi has reassured the bourgeoisie: the PDS is indeed in favor of "limited military action" against states alleged to be supporting "terrorism," but only refuses to give Bush a "blank check" (*Berliner Zeitung*, 18 September). Gysi told a PDS congress on October 7 that "international cooperation" against "terrorism" was key. "This includes as well international collaboration by police forces, including information about threatening structures or dangerous situations. This must be developed...." A PDS position paper called for "improving internal security measures," i.e., backhanded support to the German bourgeoisie's police state measures.

On October 14, some 50,000 people marched in Berlin in the largest "peace" protest to date over the Afghanistan war. But the tone was resolutely "moderate," thanks to the PDS which has the whip hand in this popular front for "peace." In the 1970s, pseudo-socialist reformists in the U.S. harnessed protests against the Vietnam War to Democratic Party "doves" like presidential candidate Gene McCarthy, vowing to keep marches "clean for Gene." In Germany today, this function is performed by the PDS under the motto, "Go easy, vote Gysi."

All eyes then turned to the local Berlin elections, in which the PDS received almost half (47 percent) of the vote in former East Berlin and achieved a breakthrough in West Berlin, particularly among youth. It is clear that this electoral success was in large part due to the PDS "peace" stance. The PDS was ready and willing to form a coalition with the SPD and/or the Greens in order to help administer austerity and racist terror in the capital of the Fourth Reich. As the PDS election program put it, "We say clearly: painful budget cuts will be unavoid-

able, many things will change." But fortunately for the PDS' pretensions of being a party of "social protest," SPD war chancellor Schröder vetoed their participation in a Berlin coalition as bad for Germany's international image.

The PDS parliamentary motion on September 19 resorted to the party's traditional subterfuge of calling for imperialist intervention with a United Nations figleaf. Just as the bloody imperialist war against Korea in the '50s was conducted under UN auspices, UN intervention in Iraq meant the terror bombing of Baghdad and its decade-long embargo has condemned hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children to death by starvation.

Groups like the Sozialistische Alternative Voran (SAV), part of the pseudo-Trotskyist Committee for a Workers International, and their cousins in Linksruck, both currently sojourning outside the ranks of the SPD, are working overtime to channel the outrage of youthful protesters into a class-collaborationist "peace" movement, leading them back into the arms of the Greens, the SPD and the bourgeoisie via the PDS. Individual members of Linksruck pretend that they are for defense of Afghanistan against imperialist attacks. Yet their press serves up bourgeois liberal rhetoric about bread instead of bombs for the Third World as the means to "really" combat "terrorism." Not so long ago, Linksruck (followers of the late Tony Cliff, who joined in the anti-Soviet Cold War claiming that the USSR was "state capitalist") howled with the imperialist wolves against Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and enthused about "revolutionary" tendencies in Islam. Now that the imperialists have the Taliban in their gun sights, these pale pink social democrats drop their former Islamic fundamentalist heroes like a hot potato.

The RSB (Revolutionary Socialist League), supporters of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec), claim to "stand for the defeat of the imperialist aggressor states, as we did in the war against Iraq and Yugoslavia" (leaflet "No to Terror! No to War!", 11 October). Behind the left rhetoric, the RSB has a classic "Third Camp" position, as the title of the leaflet suggests. As to the RSB's claim to have been for the defeat of U.S./NATO imperialist forces in Yugoslavia, this was *not* its line at the time. In fact, the overwhelming majority of this group lined up behind the imperialist propaganda about self-determination for the Kosovo Albanians at a time when the UCK was being equipped and trained by American and German imperialists.

The Kommunistische Plattform praises the PDS as an "antiwar party" and explicitly refuses (in Sahra Wagenknecht's declaration of November 2) any confrontation with Gysi and others who support imperialist military intervention. This demonstrates once again that the main function of these so-called "communists" in the PDS is to provide Gysi with a "left" fig-leaf. Meanwhile, the semi-anarchist "Autonom" milieu has been thrown into disarray by the war, with its most prominent organ, *Interim* (October 2001), declaring that "there is no basis in this struggle for division of spoils between global, regional and local exploiters to show understanding for, much less take any side."

German labor officialdom, meanwhile, has predictably lined up behind its own bourgeoisie. The DGB (German Labor Federation) tops have endorsed Schröder's participation in the war. But as sentiment against the war on Afghanistan grows among Ger-

man workers, the metal workers union IG Metall has timidly come out against the bombing, while appealing to the European Union for "political solutions for new state order in Afghanistan"! Germany has a powerful proletariat with a strong Turkish/Kurdish

French Left Joins the Imperialists' "Anti-Terrorist" Crusade

PARIS, October 2 – In France as elsewhere in Europe, the police raids have begun in the Paris suburbs, heavily populated with North African immigrants. There are reinforced patrols by cops and paratroopers in the metro, the train stations and airports. The North African community is rightly afraid of the "Vigipirate" plan (for "security") and everything behind it. There is a whole campaign against "dormant Islamic fundamentalist networks." The message is, behind every "Arab" and behind every Muslim, there is an Islamic fundamentalist "terrorist" sleeper who is just waiting for the right moment to plant his bomb. And of course the most dangerous are supposed to be the most "normal" looking.

It is a campaign designed to whip up psychosis and racist hysteria. The "Vigipirate" plans also serve to accustom the whole of the population to see the armed police and the army patrolling as in wartime. They are also going to intensify immigration controls on the borders of the "Schengen zone" (European Union). In short, they are reinforcing "strong state" measures in "Fortress Europe."

Judging from the reactions from left to right, the French bourgeoisie overall wants to avoid anything which might put at risk its interests in North Africa and the Near East. The Gulf War syndrome: "solidarity" with the U.S., but no blank check. As a spokesman for president Chirac told *Le Monde*, the government agrees to "aid" and "go along with" the United States, "to the extent that the action they are undertaking also corresponds to the interests of France." It also wants to avoid airing divergences within Europe, in order to constitute a "European front" with sufficient strength to avoid being sucked into the wake of the enormous military and financial power of its U.S. rival.

The imperialist conflicts of interest leave a margin of maneuver for the "far left," which hopes to play a role in pressuring their social-democratic friends who are in power in much of Europe. The Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR) has once again begun building an antiwar popular front in order to prevent, in the words of *Rouge*, "any engagement of French troops alongside American imperialism." A popular front in particular together with the Greens (who were particularly warmongering during the Persian Gulf War) and the chauvinist "antiglobalists" of Attac. The CGT and SUD union federations are ready to join them.

As for the Communist Party (PCF), it calls for a "thought-through response" against the "terrorists," a posture that is barely less warlike than [Socialist premier Lionel] Jospin! Since it is part of the capitalist government, the PCF is not formally part of the antiwar front, but is in "permanent contact" with it. In exchange, the LCR soft-pedals any criticisms of the disgusting line of the PCF, having received the "great honor" of being invited to be on the platform at discussion forums of the Fête de *L'Humanité*, the annual fair of supporters of the PCF paper.

component. This working class must be mobilized on a *class* basis, in defense of Afghanistan and for the defeat of *all* the imperialists (rather than pressuring the German bourgeoisie to keep its hands "clean" this time).

The "antiwar" bloc called a demonstration in Paris on September 29, originally organized in defense of Afghan women. The demo only brought out 2,000 people, and what was notable is that there was *not one banner* opposed to the war drive or the racist Vigipirate plan. On the contrary, the PCF added to its banner the slogan of the imperialist campaign against Afghanistan, "No to Terror!" The LCR "evenhandedly" demanded: "Neither Talibans nor Bombing, Freedom for the Afghan People." Neither Lutte Ouvrière (LO) nor an anarchist contingent had slogans against the war. The French bourgeoisie and their social-democratic managers in the government got the message: the "far left" will not present hard "opposition" in the case of war or French involvement.

In fact, half of the joint "Appeal to Public Opinion" which the LCR signed together with Attac, the Greens, SUD, the PCF and others is dedicated to "anti-terrorist" rhetoric and the other half puts forward the illusion of an imperialist world with a "human face," with "international institutions in the service of the fight against inequality and cooperation of all the nations of the world," the usual ballyhoo of the "anti-globalists." (Talk of "equality" and "cooperation" is typical of a secondary imperialist power seeking to preserve its interests in the face of U.S. "hegemony.")

This popular-front bloc calls on "the French and European governments to act... against any attempt at war escalation." This is a barely veiled appeal on the European bourgeoisies not to let themselves be tied to the tank of U.S. imperialism. At the same time it says, "Within the framework of international law [!] and the United Nations charter, everything must be done to identify, arrest and try the authors of the attack" of September 11. Just like in Yugoslavia, right? In fact, the "pacifism" of these popular fronts is very fragile, depending on the interests of the moment of "their own" bourgeoisie. It can easily turn into "left-wing" warmongering, as in the 1999 NATO war on Yugoslavia, when today's "antiwar" doves were pro-war hawks in the name of self-determination for Kosovo.

The International Communist League (ICL), which claims to be the Trotskyist alternative to this swamp, is in a very awkward position to polemicize against these opportunists, whether American or European. To distinguish itself from the Pabloists of the LCR and others, it raises the demand "the main enemy is at home." But to make clear what this means, Lenin's Bolsheviks added *defeat* of one's own imperialism. Yet the ICL has "prudently" failed to put forward any call for the defeat of imperialism nor of the present war drive.

The League for the Fourth International, in contrast, calls on the proletariat of all countries to fight for the *defeat* of the imperialist war and repression by class war, and for *defense* of the immigrant populations, the working people and the oppressed countries who are the targets of the imperialist onslaught. ■

Not Popular-Front "Anti-War" Coalitions But: Class War Against the Imperialist War!

In the face of the war drive launched by the United States, an "antiwar movement" has sprung up in the U.S., West Europe and elsewhere. Modeled on protests against the Vietnam War in the 1960s and early '70s, this movement seeks to tie radical-minded youth and militant workers to elements of the capitalist ruling classes in a "popular front" for "peace." By limiting its program to the lowest common denominator demands to "unite all people of good will" – i.e., those that are acceptable to the bourgeois liberals – reformists ensure that mobilizations against the war don't "get out of hand" and threaten the imperialist system that generates such wars along with economic crises.

In contrast, from the time of World War I, revolutionary communists have insisted that what is required is an proletarian struggle for international socialist revolution. The Communist International under V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky insisted that in an imperialist war, proletarian revolutionaries stand for the defeat of "their own" bourgeoisies. Moreover, when such wars are directed at countries oppressed by imperialism, class-conscious workers must defend the colonial and semi-colonial countries under attack, independently of the nature of their domestic governments.

Today as the United States and its NATO allies (and imperialist rivals) unleash massive devastation on Afghanistan, one of the poorest countries in the world, how to fight against the imperialist war is a burning question. We print below remarks by a spokesman for the Internationalist Group, U.S. section of the League for the Fourth International, at a meeting of antiwar activists in New York City on October 2. Following that are reports from supporters of the LFI on the struggle against the war in several countries around the world.

I am speaking on behalf of the Internationalist Group. The key point is that you won't stop this war, or any war, with an "antiwar" movement.

It didn't stop the Vietnam War. Despite the "stab in the back" myth of the right wing and the mythology of the New Left, that war was won on the battlefield by the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese army.

The antiwar movement said "Bring our boys home," and when U.S. troops were withdrawn by Nixon in 1973, the movement disappeared overnight, even though the war went on for



Internationalist photo

Internationalist Group banner at October 27 New York march against U.S. war on Afghanistan.

two more years. We said that "our boys are the Viet Cong," and that all Indochina must go communist. We hailed the Vietnamese victory.

Even when you get massive antiwar sentiment, for example during World War I in Germany, the only way to end the war is through military defeat or insurrection. That's what the Bolsheviks carried out in October 1917, and that's what effectively ended the imperialist war.

Many of the recent "peace" marches accept the claims by the U.S. government to justify the war. "Justice, yes – War, no" is one of the popular chants. But the war drive has nothing to do with "justice" over the indiscriminate attack on the World Trade Center.

The United States government wanted a war. They wanted *this* war. They were already calling for a "global war against terrorism" as soon as the Republican Bush administration got into office. Even before that, the Democrat Clinton issued a secret directive in 1995 authorizing the assassination of bin Laden. The weapons they will use against Afghanistan were pre-positioned on the island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean in August.

Just as in World War II, they needed the attack on Pearl Harbor to make possible U.S. entry into the war, maybe they got more than they bargained for. But this is not about *reprisal*, it's a *war drive*, and to fight it you need to fight its origin, which is the capitalist system.

Communists have always said that imperialism inevitably
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