



Forge a Revolutionary Workers Party! ALP Union-Busting Austerity Sparks Resistance

Last autumn when the fake-left was in apoplectic campaign mode to get Keating's Labor Party elected, we told the truth:

"Both Labor and the Tories are bidding to administer capitalist depression in the context of 'New World Disorder.' This demands a massive increase in the rate of exploitation of the working class. The only road forward for the working class today is hard class struggle to turn back the tide of capitalist attacks. No vote to Labor! What is urgently

needed is the forging of a revolutionary workers party!"

—"Depression Elections,"
Australasian Spartacist
No. 148, Autumn 1993

The Labor government has stepped up its assault on the trade unions as part of its drive to solve the deep recessionary crisis of Australian capitalism through creating a "more flexible, competitive labour market" (read: low wage), savage cuts in social services and massive unem-

ployment. Those like the International Socialist Organisation (ISO) who embraced Keating's election as a "victory" are today further exposed as class traitors.

The latest attack from Keating and his industrial relations minister, Laurie Brereton, has been to extend "enterprise bargaining" to deals negotiated with non-unionised companies. While the ACTU tops have made some noises against this

particular measure, already they're "preparing to water down" their penny-ante "opposition." These hidebound bureaucrats serve to keep the lid on class struggle, to chain the unions to the bosses' state through the class-collaborationist Accord and Arbitration. From the New South Wales general strike in 1991 to the near general strike in Victoria in 1992, the likes of Halfpenny worked overtime to quash workers' militancy and discipline the trade unions in order to reelect Keating.

Working-class discontent with the Labor government (including the state regimes—Liberal and Labor alike, now implementing Keating's cuts) is now beginning to re-emerge. A series of one-day strike actions have erupted in Victoria, NSW and Queensland. On 16 July, NSW Government Cleaning Service workers staged a statewide 24-hour strike over job losses threatened by privatisation of the service. In the La Trobe
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Racist Backlash, Labor Perfidy over Mabo

Mobilise a Class-Struggle Fight for Aboriginal Rights!

On 3 June 1992 the Australian High Court ruled in favour of Eddie Mabo and four co-plaintiffs against the Queensland government. The *Mabo v Queensland* decision quashed *terra nullius*, the legal fiction which has underpinned over 200 years of colonial murder, theft, dispossession, terror and degradation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by the British "settlement" and its White Australia offspring. In its six-to-one decision the Court recognised that the Meriam people of the Murray Islands were "entitled as against the whole world to possession, occupation, use and enjoyment of the lands of Murray Island" and further recognised a restricted form of native title "in accordance with the laws and customs of indigenous people: where those people have maintained their connection with the land; and where their title has not been extinguished by acts of Imperial, Colonial, State, Territory or Commonwealth governments" (*Government Discussion Paper*, June 1993). Additionally, it held that titles and leases granted since the passing of the 1975 Racial Discrimination Act which were found in violation of the RDA could be rendered invalid and/or subject to compensation claims.

This simple statement of historical reality—that Australia was not uninhabited, empty land, land belonging to no-one at the time of the British landing in 1788 and severely restricted acknowledgment that therefore the indigenous peoples from whom the continent was



The Miner



ASP photo

Keating performs for mining bosses' top brass, 1993 (left); 20,000 Aboriginals and allies protest at Sydney's racist "Australia Day" celebration, 1988.

plundered have some rights—has unleashed a sustained, aggressive and vile racist backlash led by the likes of Western Mining Corporation's Morgan and rabid "states-righters." ("States' rights" has been the traditional rallying cry of the most reactionary sections of the Australian bourgeoisie against any

"interference" by Canberra, especially where it impinges at all on the question of Aboriginal rights on their turf.) Emboldened by the orgy of anti-Aboriginal filth spewing from these quarters, racist scum have stepped up their action on the streets.

Tasmanian premier Groom obscenely

announced that there was "certainly no policy of the deliberate extermination of Aboriginal people" (*Australian*, 18 June). This is reminiscent of the Big Lie "revisionist historians" who would deny the Nazi Holocaust exterminated six million Jews in the horrors of Hitlerite rule.

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Special Supplement, June 2

Racist Ban Defeated at Student Prince Hotel!

See pages 8 - 9

U.S. Restaurant Chain Hit By Protests Against Denny's Racism

On July 3, several hundred people joined picket lines at Denny's restaurants across America, demanding "Down with Jim Crow at Denny's! For equal treatment, good service and food for all!" The demonstrations were initiated by the Labor Black League for Social Defense in the San Francisco Bay Area and called by the Spartacist League and Labor Black Leagues at six locations around the country. In Los Angeles and the Bay Area, Chicago, Atlanta, the Washington, D.C. area and Boston, integrated protests were held at selected Denny's restaurants: after noontime rallies, demonstrators went in to eat, to insist on equal treatment for all.

Three decades after the civil rights movement supposedly ended institutionalized Jim Crow racism, a national policy of old-style segregation at Denny's non-union chain of some 1,400 restaurants aims to drive blacks out. Among Denny's outrageous racist tricks: charging blacks only "cover charges," demanding blacks and Hispanics "pre-pay" before getting their food, seating whites first, lousy service or no service for minorities, even closing down to avoid "blackouts" (management's racist term for too many blacks in the place).

"Denny's: Anti-Black, Anti-Latino, Anti-Gay," read one of the demonstrators' signs. Another declared, "Jim Crow Racism, Anti-Union Open Shop—Legacy of the Slavocracy." The Partisan Defense Committee carried signs saying, "No Confidence in Capitalist Courts—For Mass Labor/Black Action to Defeat Racist Attacks!" Organizers recalled the sit-ins against segregated lunch counters at Woolworth's in 1960-61: Cars driving past honked their horns in support. As the rallies concluded, protesters sang Civil War anthems of the struggle for black freedom.

"Fight This Racist Open Shop—Unionize Denny's!"

Significant support for the protests came from integrated unions. The Bay Area protest of over 150 picketers at the Denny's in Emeryville, California included members from more than a dozen local unions, including a group of BART transit workers from SEIU Local 790 (whose BART chapter endorsed the protest) and ATU Local 1555. Utility workers from AFSCME Local 444, another endorser, brought a union banner. Others included bus drivers, phone workers and postal workers. Alameda Central Labor Council delegate Willie Lee Bell came down, as did Daniel Farrell, president of the Oakland Black Firefighters.

Protesters' signs and chants underlined the close connection between the fight for minority rights and the struggles of labor—a tie which clearly struck a chord among blacks and workers. The bulk of the more than 26,000 leaflets that got out in the Bay Area were distributed by

trade unionists, minorities and anti-racist students.

In Chicago, where former Negro National Baseball League players "Smokin' Joe" Barnes and Bobby Robinson endorsed, 50 picketed outside the Denny's in suburban Oak Lawn on July 3. ACTWU local president Katie Jordan told the protesters: "If Rosa Parks had sat back and waited for someone else to do it, we'd still be at the back of the bus." She added, "The labor movement cannot very well say that it is

customers who are being discriminated against."

At the Chicago rally, Johnnie Jackson of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) commented tersely, "That little concession that they made with the NAACP yesterday doesn't mean a hill of beans. If we are treated inferior when we go into Denny's, how do you think the workers in there are treated? They need to be unionized." Jeffrey Raffo, a staff organizer for 1199 hospital workers in Kentucky, who spoke at the demonstra-



Workers Vanguard



McLaughlin/East Bay Express

Emeryville, California: Workers from more than a dozen unions came out on July 3. Jeff Higgins, Bay Area Labor Black League, addresses the crowd.

for working people unless it is involved in the whole idea of what happens to minorities who are outside of the union movement. The labor movement needs to put on a nationwide campaign to organize Denny's."

Denny's-NAACP Backroom Deal for Black Capitalism

Denny's management flew in spokesmen from their headquarters in Spartanburg, South Carolina who distributed statements publicizing their "historic" agreement with the NAACP for minority franchises, purchasing, marketing and managers. Spartacist spokesman Alison Spencer was quoted in the *Washington Afro-American* (3 July): "They signed an agreement with the Justice Department in April and there are still complaints against Denny's. A few token faces in high places and additional Black-owned franchises won't mean anything to the

tion, ended his remarks with the call, "Workers of the world unite!"

The fight to end Jim Crow at Denny's was also a fight for *revolutionary integrationism* vs. the NAACP's accommodation to the racist rulers. The restaurant chain ran a full-page ad in the *Amsterdam News* heralding "A New Partnership" and "A New Day at Denny's." More revealing was its question, "What's in it for Denny's?" Just who will this settlement benefit? Denny's claims it will spend over a billion dollars in the next seven years to promote black managers, develop minority franchisers, place ads in black-centered media, purchase supplies from black-owned companies, and hire black consultants. But for the workers at Denny's, who are still working at minimum wage without a union—not a red cent! This is a graphic illustration of the program of black capitalism, aimed at creating a narrow layer of

black entrepreneurs while the vast majority of the oppressed are driven further into devastation.

Racist Treatment of Customers and Employees

In a statement read at the Emeryville demonstration, Leon Harris, ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer, declared that "The International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union deplores and denounces Denny's Restaurants for its racist policies towards African Americans. The ILWU firmly believes that 'An injury to one is an injury to all'."

A woman going in to eat at Denny's in Lexington, Massachusetts told reporters about her own experience with the restaurant chain's pattern of racism nationally. At a Denny's in Florida, she said, "they didn't want to serve us our food, they made us wait an hour." A spokesman for the protesters commented, "You never saw faster, better service at Denny's than the day we ringed it with picket lines." When management tried to co-opt demonstrators in Atlanta with offers of free lemonade, demonstrators spurned this pathetic ruse and chanted "Free food for the homeless!"

At the Emeryville, California protest, one of the speakers was Aretha McCullum, who suffered discrimination at the same Denny's when they demanded she "pre-pay" before being served. "It's a crying shame that my parents and grandparents were walking the same lines 30 years ago for civil rights," she told the crowd.

At Woodbridge, Virginia, where 125 black members of the Martin Luther King Children's Choir had been refused service in May, Denny's brought in managers to wait on tables, perhaps wary of exposing their employees to calls for unionization.

Finish the Civil War!

"We chose the July 4th weekend to expose the hypocrisy of the so-called 'Liberty Weekend'," said Bernard Branche, spokesman for the Chicago Labor Black Struggle League, "What July 4th really means is racism and capitalist exploitation." In Los Angeles a sign said, "Rodney King Beating and Whitewash Trial, Waco Holocaust — There Is No Justice in Capitalist America!" There was a speaker from the committee for the outspoken barber who was wantonly killed by police in Pasadena. At Emeryville, speakers recalled another victim of racist police murder—Jerrold Hall, shot in the back by a BART cop who is still on the job, while Hall's companion Henry Owens is jailed on frame-up charges.

Denny's would like to portray its deal with the NAACP as supposedly wiping out racism at the restaurant chain, making all further protests and victims' complaints irrelevant. But even the government's own people weren't buying it—on July 8, the black Secret Service men who had been denied service at the Denny's in Annapolis, Maryland announced they were expanding their legal complaint into a class action suit, because of the flood of victims' complaints which

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Spartacist Forums

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY
Capitalist Counterrevolution Sweeps
Eastern Europe/ex-USSR, Stalinism is Dead —
For the Communism of Lenin and Trotsky!

Tuesday, 17 August

Smash Racist/Fascist Terror from
Berlin to L.A. to Johannesburg through Worker/Minority Action!
Build an International Multi-Racial Workers Party!
For Socialist Revolution!

Tuesday, 31 August

1pm, Carlslaw Lecture Room 6A

Close Keating's Concentration Camps!

Surrounded by barbed wire, between 400 and 600 people today languish in Keating's anti-immigrant detention centres. At the notorious remote Port Hedland site in Western Australia, some 300, mainly Chinese and Cambodian people including 35 children under the age of 18 are currently incarcerated, forced to rely on charity for clothing and receiving little or no education. Suffering months and even years of detention, accounts of strip searches and intimidation by officials, daily fingerprinting, dawn raids and deportations of inmates have bred despair and demoralisation in the camp and led to desperate hunger-strikes. An article in the *Australian Magazine* (12-13 December 1992) related: "Some mothers in the camp have reportedly tried to give their children away to Australians, with the intention of committing suicide and thus saving the orphans from deportation."

The Labor government which administers this white imperialist enclave in Asia has in force the most draconian anti-asylum laws in the world including mandatory detention for "boat people"—some incarcerated for more than three years. As one Darwin lawyer said "...for coming here without a visa, they have served at least the equivalent for the full non-parole period for the crime of manslaughter committed in the Northern Territory" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 June). In a letter to the *Weekend Australian* (17-18 July) the federal ALP immigration minister, Nick Bolkus, callously blamed the victims for their continued imprisonment "because they have sought to appeal against decisions on their refugee status."

Under attack for this brutal treatment of "boat people," Bolkus seized on recent events in the U.S. to defend the Labor government's policy. In early June, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) arrested nearly 300 Chinese immigrants who had managed to swim to shore after their freighter ran aground off the New York coast, threatening to deport them as "an example" to deter others. Criticising the U.S. for an ineffective immigration policy, Bolkus joined the racist, anti-Chinese scapegoating hysteria whipped up by the U.S. government and media with warnings about "sophisticated criminal movements of people" brought to Australia in "large numbers." The Spartacist League/U.S. demonstrated against this latest INS anti-immigrant attack, demanding "They got here! Let them stay here!"

have poured in since their case drew wide attention.

Democratic rights are indivisible. Racism at Denny's is just the tip of the iceberg of the racist reality of America today. This campaign got its power from the intersection of blacks, reds and organized labor. With the established black "leadership" under the sway of the racist, capitalist Democratic Party, along with the ossified, racist union bureaucracy, it is the communists—armed with a program of class struggle that can mobilize the power of labor—who defend elementary rights of the oppressed.

The protests got a lot of coverage from some of the capitalist media, which reflected both the depth of outrage over Denny's racist policies and their concern over this combination. Many ignored the union participation and downplayed the integrated character of the demonstrations.

Most of the self-proclaimed "socialist" groups which hover in the shadow of the Democratic Party proved indifferent or downright hostile to this basic act of political opposition to racism. Particularly telling was the response of the misnamed Revolutionary Workers League, which refused to endorse or even attend the demonstration in the Bay Area on the grounds that it was called by the

Stop Racist Deportations!

The defence of the rights of immigrant workers is a vital task for the working class internationally. In "Fortress Europe" capitalist rulers, aided and abetted by their fascist stormtroopers, are waging a racist war of terror, repression and deportations against foreign-born workers. Immigrant communities have become the target of triumphalist nationalism spurred on by the victory of bourgeois

de Lyon train station in Paris demanding "Down with Mitterrand-Balladur's Racist War! No Expulsions! Railroad Workers Have the Power: Stop the Expulsion/Deportation Trains!"

Here, with the Australian economy sinking deeper into crisis, the Keating government has launched a racist scapegoating campaign against immigrants. The Cold War policies allowing a tightly



A Sp photo

Melbourne, 3 July 1991: Spartacist contingent marches at anti-deportation demonstration.

counterrevolution in East Europe and the Soviet Union. Sections of the International Communist League have actively intervened in the struggle against racist attacks, calling for mobilising the social power of the proletariat to fight fascist terror and government attacks on immigrants. In Germany, where new government anti-asylum laws have given a green light to fascist rampages against immigrants, the Spartacist Workers Party organised an exemplary united-front action in defence of a large immigrant hostel in Berlin against fascist attack on 30 January. In France, government plans to load "illegal" immigrants onto deportation trains, raising vivid Vichy-era images of Jews being loaded onto boxcars, have been opposed by our comrades in the Ligue Trotskyiste de France (LTF). The LTF helped to build a recent 400-strong protest at the Gare

controlled influx of refugees in the war against "godless communism" are fading fast. "It just isn't possible to sell a large immigration program with 11 per cent jobless" cries the economics editor of the *Australian* (8 June 1993). The ruling class of this recession-ridden country do not want to increase the army of unemployed—already officially over 11 percent and much higher amongst immigrant communities and youth. Beazley, minister for employment in the Keating government, baldly stated "...we don't [want to] get into a situation where there are people in this country who are placed out of work because others have been brought in to do jobs that they could do" (*Australian*, 1 July 1993). From a high of 136,000 in 1988-9, immigration has been slashed to 78,000 for the coming financial year. Last year Hand declared that the days of Australian "goodwill" towards

Asian "boat people" were over. In November, 113 Chinese got a taste of Hand's new fast-track screening system when they were deported within nine days of arrival, having been denied access to legal counsel or the courts.

Last year the Australian government tried unsuccessfully to persuade Indonesia to turn back Cambodian refugees bound for Australia. In a 1990 letter to then-prime minister Hawke, the foreign affairs minister, Evans, agreed to a proposed \$1.5 million aid offer to the Indonesian government in an attempt to intercept Cambodian refugees on their way to Australia, stating that the arrival of Cambodian "boat people" was against Australia's "national and strategic interests."

Assisting the Keating government in its scapegoating of immigrants is the trade union bureaucracy which pushes vile racist protectionist poison and tougher immigration restrictions while enforcing the destruction of jobs and conditions in the working class as a whole. These labour lieutenants of capital have lifted not a finger to organise in the non-union sweatshops in which many immigrants and especially women toil. Meanwhile about 23,000 asylum seekers are denied social security, Medicare or the right to work. Next year new legislation will target all of the approximately 80,000 "illegal entrants" for detention unless they secure an as yet vaguely defined "bridging visa."

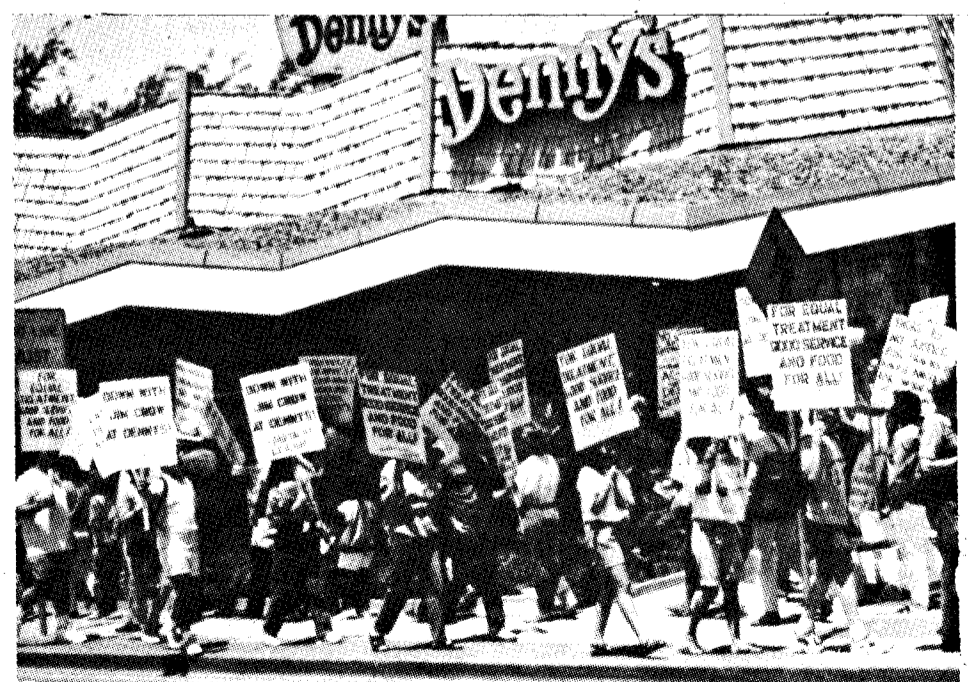
From the northern cane fields to the grimly oppressive sweatshops throughout the country, immigrants and "illegal entrants" have built this country. The social power of the multi-racial, organised working class must be brought to bear in massive campaigns to organise the unorganised workers, to fight racist government immigration policies and attacks on immigrants, to stop the deportations and shut down Keating's concentration camps! And it will take a revolutionary class-struggle leadership to break the working class from the racist Labor traitors.

We communists aggressively oppose the White Australia immigration laws and defend the rights of all immigrant workers against chauvinist persecution and deportation. We demand full citizenship rights for all foreign-born workers and their families. Our task is to forge an internationalist revolutionary party to fight for a racially-integrated workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia! ■

LBL, which is fraternally allied with the Spartacist League.

The bottom line is there can be no liberation of black people, or Latinos and other oppressed minorities, without socialist revolution. Today a whole generation of ghetto youth are facing a future without jobs or decent education. But while suffering pervasive de facto segregation as an oppressed race-color caste, blacks are integrated into American capitalism at the bottom, with black workers occupying a strategic position in the organized labor movement.

As Don Alexander of the Spartacist League summed up: "We in the Spartacist League have fought and are fighting to smash this viciously racist capitalist system that breeds racial oppression like spoiled meat produces maggots, and in which the working class is brutally exploited.... Why do black people have to continually fight for the most elementary democratic rights in the U.S.? Why are blacks outcasts in the so-called 'free world' of savage racial and class oppression? It is because we live under a democracy for the rich; and the Civil War of 1861-1865 was never finished.... It will take a third American revolution—a workers revolution—to finish the Civil War by smashing capitalist rule and building a revolutionary workers state



Workers Vanguard

3 July: Labor Black League and Spartacist League initiated demonstration protests Jim Crow racism at Denny's in California.

that will destroy racism and class exploitation root and branch."

A demonstration organizer noted, "Today's protests are a small example of how real gains are won in this racist society: through militant struggle, not

backroom deals with corporation lawyers." In the Bay Area, by the end of the rally four people had joined the Labor Black League for Social Defense.

Abridged from *Workers Vanguard* No. 580, 16 July, 1993.

The following article is reprinted from Workers Hammer No. 136 (July/August 1993), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain, British section of the International Communist League.

Here in Australia, the International Socialist Organisation (ISO)—co-thinkers of Tony Cliff's state-capitalist Socialist Workers Party—stand as the horrible example of anti-communist and Laborite "New World Order" socialism. Substantially weaker numerically than their British cohorts, the ISO nonetheless plays a particularly wretched role in diverting radicalised youth back into the fold of Keating et al., simultaneously cynically proclaiming themselves a "socialist alternative" to Labor. We print Workers Hammer's article in order to provide would-be revolutionaries with some background to and analysis of what makes the reformist Cliffites tick.

Over a year ago, Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party was self-admittedly suffering a bad hangover of "post-election demoralisation" following the fourth consecutive electoral defeat of the British Labour Party. Its "anti-Labour" pretensions to the contrary notwithstanding, *Socialist Worker* cried that, "The election result was a disaster for everyone who wants a better society." But by December, the SWP's journal *Socialist Review* was happily proclaiming "1992" as "the year that the tide turned for socialists":

"The depression felt by socialists and militants everywhere on election night and the morning after...has been dramatically undermined by events. The protests around pit closures have inspired millions of people and galvanized hundreds of thousands into action."

An organisation which found a cause "that should have every socialist rejoicing" in the victory of Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary forces that have brought poverty, mass unemployment and misery to the masses of the former Soviet Union, while finding a cause to make "socialists" sob in the defeat of Neil Kinnock's scabherding Labour traitors, obviously has a pretty twisted weathervane. Nonetheless it is one that is still opportunistically tuned to picking up shifts in the prevailing winds.

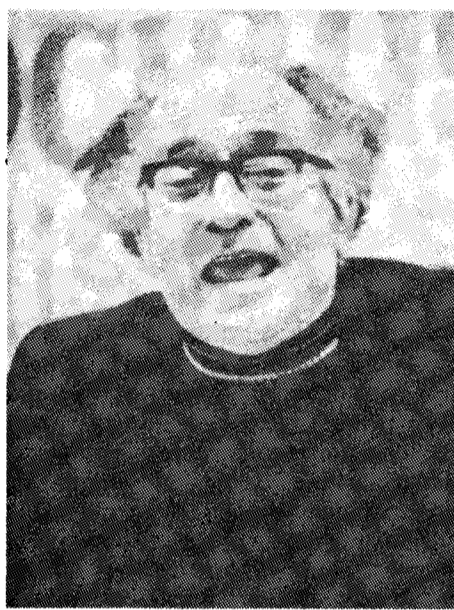
Capitalist Offensive Fuels Proletarian Struggle

The end of the Cold War ushered in not a stable imperialist "New World Order" but massive social unrest and turmoil. Escalating attacks on social programmes, jobs, wages and living conditions have propelled increased proletarian struggle across Europe. This has been accompanied by a wave of youth radicalisation, in particular in the fight against the tide of racist and fascist terror spawned by the counterrevolution sweeping Eastern Europe and the ex-Soviet Union, the heightened nationalism produced by intensified inter-imperialist rivalries and the generalised economic crisis in the West.

The Cold War Social Democrats thought they would cash in on the collapse of Stalinism. Instead they have been shunted aside by the capitalist rulers. As the European bourgeoisie moves to dismantle the post-World War II "welfare state" provisions which were used to ward off the "spectre of communism," they have correspondingly come to see less need for their anti-Communist labour lieutenants. At the same time, class conscious workers and militant youth are increasingly repelled by the right-wing social-democratic parties.

In Britain, when anger over mounting job cuts and vicious austerity attacks on virtually every layer of the population boiled over in the mass protests against the pit closures last autumn, Tony Cliff caught the scent for mass recruitment, intersecting radicalised youth who were genuinely searching for an alternative to mainstream social democracy. A party

"New World Order" Socialists— SWP: Counterfeit Anti-Labourites



Report

"The miners' strike is an extreme example of what we in the Socialist Workers Party have called the 'downturn' in the movement." (Tony Cliff, *Socialist Review*, April 1984)

"On the question of our steelworkers crossing picket lines. We have steelworkers in Redcar who cross picket lines. We have three steelworkers in Scunthorpe, they cross picket lines. We have a steelworker in Ravenscraig who crosses picket lines. We have a steelworker in Llanwern who crosses picket lines...." (Tony Cliff, London SWP public meeting, 23 August 1984)

SWP in action: crossing picket lines during heroic miners strike of 1984-85 and hustling votes for scabherder Kinnock during 1992 General Election.

which only six months earlier had responded to the Labour Party's electoral defeat by lamely asking "Where do we go from here?" now discovered that many workers and militant youth "have seen that Labour is no alternative."

So Cliff and his followers posed themselves as the replacement for the bankrupt Stalinists and enfeebled Bennites: "The collapse of the Communist Party and decline of the Labour left mean the responsibility for carrying this job through rests mainly on supporters of *Socialist Worker*" (10 October 1992). The SWP now boasts of a membership of 8000—over a third of which are reportedly new recruits.

It may seem remarkable that an organisation which, since the time of the Korean War, echoed the rhetoric of bourgeois ideologues against Soviet "totalitarianism" now self-consciously styles itself as the replacement for the (pathetic) British Stalinists. But it's really not. The SWP has always shared the popular frontist politics that came to define the Communist Parties in the West as they betrayed working-class struggle to the cause of "peaceful co-existence" with imperialism.

The SWP's pretension to being a "socialist" alternative to Labourite reformism is a patent fraud. Yet many of its newer members are not familiar with the real

record and programme of the organisation. Thus, those recruited since the collapse of Stalinism in the ex-USSR and Eastern Europe are often discomfited to discover that the "theory" of state capitalism meant in practice support to every capitalist counterrevolutionary force from Reagan and Thatcher's favourite "union" Solidarność to the bloodthirsty *mujahedin* in Afghanistan. Its anti-Labour rhetoric notwithstanding, the SWP has supported each and every Labour Party bid for office, no matter how overtly anti-working class its policies have been. While constantly preaching the virtues of "socialism from below," in the unions the SWP appeals to arch sellouts like Norman Willis or the Scottish TUC to lead general strikes. And like the old CPGB, it has willingly hired out as foot soldiers to build popular fronts—cross-class alliances—embracing everyone from Labour Party misleaders to outright liberals. Such was the case during the Gulf War, when the SWP quickly dropped its ostensible "anti-imperialism" to sidle up to the CND and Tony Benn, or with the Anti Nazi League (ANL) today, which cravenly appeals to the bourgeois state to ban the fascists.

Depressionists v Impressionists

In the meantime, Cliff apparently has been working to clean out a layer of cadre

Socialist Worker Inside ELECTION SPECIAL The party we need Who really rules

**Kick the Tories out
VOTE LABOUR
But build a socialist alternative**

who are said to stand as a "conservative block" to "shifting the party." Evidently, these comrades imbibed too deeply of Tony Cliff's last "theoretical" pronouncement on the state of the class struggle in Britain—the so-called "downturn theory." At the height of the 1984-85 British miners strike, the most militant and hard-fought class battle in decades, Cliff declared that this was "an extreme example of what we in the Socialist Workers Party have called the 'downturn'" (*Socialist Review*, April 1984)! Trained in this school, it is small wonder that there are cadre in the SWP who are having some trouble switching gears.

Other "far left" groups like United Secretariat affiliate Socialist Outlook and Workers Power have responded to the SWP's latest turn by arguing that it is based on a "catastrophic" analysis of the crisis of capitalism worthy of Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party—which was always predicting that the end was nigh and running its members into the ground to prove it. (A device which was also designed to make the membership more malleable to Healy's diktats.)

To be sure, the SWP is, and always has been, wildly impressionistic, its positions determined by whatever is the prevailing "trend" (and whatever trend was generally set by the imperialist rulers through the agency of the British Labour Party). In fact such were the origins of Cliff's tendency whose whole defining "theory" that the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries were "state capitalist" reflected nothing other than the prevailing pressure of imperialist Cold War I.

But now outfits like Workers Power polemicise against the Cliffites by trying to debunk any notion that there is a severe crisis in the capitalist world. A *Workers Power* article on the SWP titled "Britain on the verge of revolution?" (January 1993) reads like a public relations piece on the health of the international capitalist market place—replete with statistics to prove the continued, if flagging, economic growth of the imperialist countries. At the same time, they complain: "But what is left out of the SWP's scenario is that our side is pretty battered and shell-shocked and that our leaders are waving the white flag or sounding the retreat!"



Yevgeni Khaldei

May Day, 1945: Red flag over Reichstag; Soviet Red Army crushed the Nazi regime.

There is no doubt that in the face of the renewed capitalist offensive against the working class the trade union bureaucrats are "waving the white flag." This is hardly something new; the labour tops have long been lying prostrate as the capitalist rulers hack away at every and any gain of the trade unions. But since when have communists considered the trade union misleaders—who Lenin some 70 years ago aptly called the "labour lieutenants of capitalism"—to be "our leaders"? Workers Power's plaint that "our side is pretty battered and shell-shocked" reflects the overall demoralisation of the British left which, having made themselves the camp followers of Cold War Labourism, now partake of the latter's declining influence and find in the repeated electoral defeats of the Labour Party the demise of working-class struggle.

SWP "Hits the Pits"

When the pit closures were announced last autumn, the SWP uncharacteristically advanced the slogan of a general strike. This disturbed some of the denizens of the "left," who attacked this as "ultra-left" phrasemongering. But the SWP's "general strike" call was aimed at the TUC—the very body that knifed the heroic miners strike of 1984-85 and which is as likely to call a general strike as it is to fly to the moon. Far from a weapon of revolutionary class struggle, the SWP's "general strike" call boiled down to a pressure tactic to force the Tories out and put the other John—Smith—into No. 10.

Notwithstanding its occasional criticisms of the trade union misleaders, the perspective of the SWP was not qualitatively different from that of the bureaucrats, who claimed that you could "save jobs" by pressuring the state, through lobbies of parliament and court suits against British Coal. Speaking of the hundreds of thousands-strong protest in London against the pit closures, in an interview in *Socialist Worker* (23 January) Cliff opined:

"... if we had 15,000 members of the SWP and 30,000 supporters: the 21 October miners' demonstration could have been different.

"Instead of marching round Hyde Park, socialists could have taken 40 or 50,000 people to parliament.

"If that had happened, the Tory MPs wouldn't have dared vote with Michael Heseltine. The government would have collapsed."

In response, an article in *Socialist Outlook* queried, "Perhaps Cliff has visions of storming the Winter Palace?" Hardly. Despite the hot air rhetoric spewed out in *Socialist Worker* against "parliamentary reformism," that is exactly what Tony Cliff and the SWP ultimately put on offer. So in the face of a massive upsurge against redundancies, the task of a revolutionary workers party, with tens of thousands of members, would be to...lobby parliament! And Cliff might have added, to force new elections and get a Labour government. That is exactly the import of the endless Tory-bashing front-page headlines in *Socialist Worker* ("Sack Major", "Keep the Tories on the run", "Action now can beat the Tories", *ad nauseam*), as well as the chummy advice to Labour on how to get elected: "If Labour wants to win it should stop chasing the Tories and start addressing the concerns of most people" (*Socialist Worker*, 16 January).

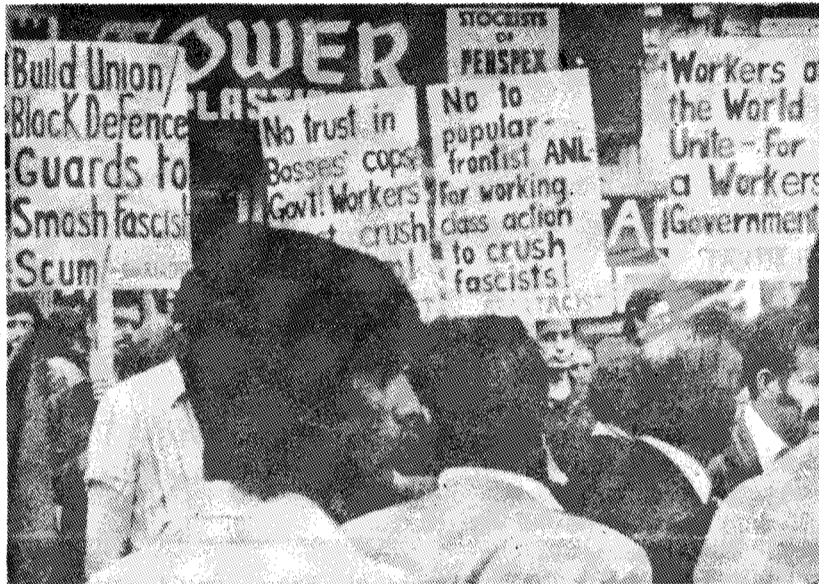
The massive protests against the pit closures could have been different. Instead of the diversions organised by the trade-union tops, embracing everyone from Arthur Scargill to raving racist Tories like Winston Churchill junior, the popular outrage demonstrated by the "marches for the miners" could have been galvanised into a class-struggle fight. As we wrote in our leaflet "For workers action committees to stop the pit closures and to run the country!" which was distributed in the thousands on the 21 October demonstration:

"This is a political onslaught which must be fought down the line by the trade unions and their allies. What is urgently called for is the mobilisation of the power of the organised working class—the miners along with workers in strategic industries such as rail, transport and power—to throw the

gauntlet back in the face of the profit-gouging bosses, their politicians and Labourite trade union lackeys.... This battle cannot be waged within the framework of Labourite parliamentarism, lobbies of the TUC, or any other sort of legalistic gimmicks. Decaying British capitalism cannot be reformed, lobbied, legislated into providing a decent living wage and life for the working people: it is necessary to smash the profit system root and branch."

—*Workers Hammer* No. 132,
November/December 1992

Workers Power rebukes the SWP for failing to recognise "the real reluctance of the rank and file when it comes to taking on the bosses and its government." But as has been more than manifest in the protests against the pit closures, the Timex strike and the one-day strike by miners, railway and London busworkers in April, the problem is not one of the will of the ranks to fight. On the contrary, as Leon Trotsky wrote more than 50 years ago in the *Transitional Programme*, the founding document of the Fourth International, the problem is "a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat"—to break the stranglehold of the reformist misleaders of the mass workers parties and trade unions and to lead the proletariat in the fight for



Workers Hammer

September 1978: SL contingent mobilises against fascist NF march through the Asian Brick Lane area of London (left), SWP-led ANL criminally held "anti-racist" carnival on other side of town (right).



John Sturrock (Report)

workers rule. Such a leadership is hardly on offer from Tony Cliff's SWP, nor could it possibly even make a pretence to such.

Cold War Renegades

Capitalist counterrevolution in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union has meant untold misery for the working masses of those countries—poverty, homelessness and starvation amid an onslaught of bloody nationalist fratricide. Europe—East and West—faces massive unemployment, the ominous rise of anti-Semitism, racist and fascist terror, attacks on women's rights—specifically the right to abortion from Germany to Poland. Now that the unifying thread of anti-Sovietism no longer mutes their rivalries, the imperialist ruling classes are trying to tighten the screws of exploitation on the proletariat at "home." At the same time, they try to sell the lie to the working class and oppressed that "communism is dead," that any attempt to overthrow this system of exploitation and oppression is condemned in advance, useless, even criminal.

The SWP presents itself as a fighting alternative. If there were any justice in this world, these Third Camp renegades should feel ashamed to even try to show their face in public! From Poland to East Germany to Moscow, they were among the foremost cheerleaders for the forces of counterrevolution that are now devastating Eastern Europe and the ex-Soviet Union. While most of the rest of the left followed suit, howling along with the imperialist wolves in championing any and every anti-Soviet "movement," the SWP not only supported some of the darkest forces of reaction but offered them as a model for struggle against Stalinist "totalitarianism."

So, for example, following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Cliff-

ites heralded the CIA-funded Islamic reactionaries who are now drowning any shred of social progress in that country in blood. *Socialist Worker* (4 February 1989) enthused that a "Mojahedin victory will encourage the opponents of Russian rule everywhere in the USSR and Eastern Europe"! By rights the SWP should now be pleased that just such "opponents of Russian rule," i.e., vicious nationalist reactionaries, fascist terrorists, women-hating clericalists, have been unleashed by capitalist counter-revolution.

Following the victory of Yeltsin's counter-coup in the Soviet Union in August 1991, *Socialist Worker* (31 August 1991) gleefully headlined, "Communism has collapsed—NOW FIGHT FOR REAL SOCIALISM." John Molyneux, the author of *Socialist Worker's* misnamed "Teach yourself Marxism" column, proudly wrote:

"For many years the theory of state capitalism could seem like an obscure and abstract exercise in name calling. Today it is the only theoretical foundation from which socialism can now be confidently advanced as the solution to the crisis of humanity."

We suggest that Molyneux try telling the

should we take sides?" (*Socialist Worker*, 10 April), Molyneux argues "it is precisely the viciously anti-working class nature of Yeltsin's free market 'reform' that makes him aspire to dictatorial powers in order to impose his programme. Consequently no socialist should now support Yeltsin"! This from a man who two years ago was singing Yeltsin's praises and promoting "state capitalism" as the "only theoretical foundation" from which to advance the cause of all humanity!

State Capitalism—a "Theory" for Capitulation

"State capitalism" is not really a "theory" at all, but rather an *appetite*. The purpose of all efforts to define the USSR as a new form of capitalism was nothing other than to create a justification for support to one's "own" bourgeoisie. Just as the onset of World War I led the opportunist "socialists" of the Second International to put aside their internationalist antiwar verbiage and enlist on the side of their own ruling class, the Cold War pulled self-described

masses of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union that nothing fundamental has changed—that they have always been living under capitalism!

SWP "theoretician," Chris Harman, writes that "the transition from state capitalism to multinational capitalism is neither a step forward nor a step backwards, but a step sideways." But if the Stalinist-ruled countries were "state capitalist," the transition to private capitalist ownership would be no more momentous than the replication on a large scale of, for example, the American business decision to diversify the phone company monopoly.

Instead, the social cataclysms engulfing these countries—from the murderous nationalist bloodbath in Yugoslavia to the wholesale destruction of industry in Eastern Europe to the general immiseration of the working masses from Warsaw to Moscow—are the product of the replacement of the centralised economies (albeit bureaucratically mismanaged) of the deformed workers states by "the magic of the marketplace." And you don't need to be a Marxist to understand that the mass unemployment, the rocketing rent and food prices, the destruction of childcare, the rise of racist and anti-Semitic violence in the former Soviet Union, is a step backward—pretty much right back to what existed before the Russian Revolution. Indeed, the regimes in Eastern Europe bear a strong resemblance to the repressive, anti-Semitic regimes that existed there in the interwar years.

In August 1991, the SWP argued that Yeltsin's victory had brought "the workers of the USSR closer to the spirit of the socialist revolution of 1917, not further from it." Today, John Molyneux is "teaching" a different "Marxist" appreciation. In his column, titled "Russia:

"socialists" into the "camp" of the "free world."

In 1950, when the Cold War got hot over the Korean War, Tony Cliff and his followers split from the Fourth International, refusing to defend North Korea against U.S. and British imperialism. This was a direct echo of the then-ruling Labour government, which had swung in behind the U.S., sending in troops to fight the North Koreans and later the Chinese also. Through the intermediary of these Cold War social democrats, Cliff's group capitulated to the British Empire and its U.S. imperialist allies.

The class-collaborationist appetites of Cliff's SWP could be seen yet again in its antics around the Persian Gulf war. On the eve of the war, John Molyneux declared in his column: "We call for the withdrawal of Western forces from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. And if war breaks out nonetheless we are for the defeat of America and the victory of Iraq" (*Socialist Worker*, 25 August 1990). That was the first and last that was heard of any mention of defence of Iraq against imperialism, as the SWP rushed headlong to join Tony Benn's Labour "left" in the CND's "Committee to Stop War in the Gulf." The Cliffites tailored their "antiwar" agitation to suit these Union Jack "pacifists"—whose alternative to war was the call for UN sanctions to starve the Iraqi masses.

This "antiwar" work was the cause for some exhilaration on the part of the SWP. In an article in the *New Statesman* (3 May 1991) leading SWPer Paul Foot enthused that during the war the SWP "had to make friends, link arms and speak on platforms with all sorts of people we would once have denounced as reformist trash." He boasted: "The CP in Britain has effectively been replaced

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Background to the Balkans: Imperialist Hypocrisy, Capitalist Counterrevolution

“Ethnic Cleansing” and Nationalist Wars



Historic city of Dubrovnik being shelled during savage nationalist warfare between Serbs and Croats.

Der Spiegel

The following article is reprinted from Workers Vanguard (WV) No. 580, 16 July 1993. The second part appeared in WV No. 581, 30 July 1993.

* * *

For the second time in this century, internecine Balkan wars are threatening to explode in a wider European conflagration drawing in the imperialist powers. Counterrevolution has unleashed an orgy of nationalist bloodletting. The Western capitalist media and governments launched a steady propaganda barrage denouncing Serbian “ethnic cleansing” to prepare public opinion for military intervention. This has had considerable effect among liberals and social democrats, as many veterans of past “peace” movements have become enthusiastic champions of sending in the troops. Yet as the imperialists vacillate, hesitating to jump feet first into the Yugoslav quagmire, they now are admitting that unspeakable atrocities abound on all sides.

The nationalist wars unleashed by the destruction of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are now entering their third year. Beginning with the withdrawal of the federal army from northwestern Slovenia after a few days of skirmishes in July 1991, the drive to cohere capitalist nation-states soon led to communal bloodbaths, as wide regions dominated by the Serbian minority sought to break away from the Croatian state proclaimed by fascist strongman Franjo Tudjman. After the fighting in Croatia reached a stalemate, a declaration of independence by the Muslim-dominated Bosnian government touched off a vicious three-sided communal war of Serbs, Croats and Muslims which has engulfed the region of Bosnia-Herzegovina for the past 15 months. Here as in Croatia, German imperialism was a key force pushing to dismember Yugoslavia.

For months, the United Nations was pushing the so-called “Vance-Owen plan” for a “multi-ethnic” Bosnia divided into ethnic “cantons.” But this diplomatic gambit shattered against Serbian military intransigence. On June 16, Croatia’s Tudjman and Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic announced they had agreed to a partition of Bosnia into three nominally federated Serb,

Croat and Muslim states. The plan was immediately rejected by Bosnia’s hardline Muslim president Alija Izetbegovic, but the European powers, UN negotiators and U.S. president Clinton are pressing hard for its acceptance. Western rad-libs rail against “rewarding ethnic cleansing.” But their solution of a “multi-ethnic” capitalist Bosnia is no more democratic, denying the right of self-determination for Croats and Serbs who have amply demonstrated they don’t want to live in the same state as the Muslims, or each other.

For months, the Western media have focused on Serbian war crimes and closed their eyes to atrocities committed by the Croats and the Bosnian Muslims. Belgrade’s nationalist leader Milosevic, whose drive for a Greater Serbia sparked the breakup of the Yugoslav deformed workers state, is portrayed as a new Hitler. (They seldom mention that the Serbian opposition led by Vuk Draskovic is no less nationalist, identifying with the Serb “Chetnik” cutthroats in World War II.) But as the U.S. backed away from sending troops into Bosnia, suddenly the press discovered Croat “death squads” wiping out Muslim villages, and belatedly printed reports of Muslim forces torturing their Croat prisoners to death last spring and now driving thousands of Croat villagers from their homes in central Bosnia.

And then, just as they report the Bosnian partition plan, the *New York Times* (17 June) finds fit to print that *this very same plan* was adopted in Lisbon on 18 March 1992, when leaders of the Bosnian Muslims, Serbs and Croats “agreed to partition the republic into three ethnically based cantons.” However, the plan was *torn up* by the Bosnian Muslim leaders on the urging of the Western powers:

“On returning to Sarajevo, Mr. Izetbegovic was encouraged by United States and European Community diplomats to choose instead a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina under his presidency, saying that was justified by the referendum on March 1 on independence. The problem with that referendum was that although the Bosnian Muslims and Croats overwhelmingly endorsed it, the Bosnian Serbs boycotted it, warning that it was a prelude to civil war. “After the European Community and the United States recognized the Izetbegovic Government, on April 6 and 7, 1992, the Bosnian Serbs attacked.”

That these basic facts have gone unmentioned for the past year and a quarter is a prime example of how the “free but responsible” press is manipulated by the imperialists for their bellicose aims.

Social counterrevolution has again turned the Balkans into the flash point of nationalist hatreds, and communal warfare in the former Yugoslavia could be the spark that touches off the tinder of generalized war as it inexorably spreads. When Clinton took office, he presented Bosnia as a test case of the ability of the U.S. to impose its will in the “New World Order.” Washington’s hesitation to commit ground troops reflects the fact that throwing their weight around in this powder keg of explosive communal tensions is not likely to be as easy as blowing away a warlord’s compound in Somalia, or rolling tanks across a desert in Kuwait. But just because imperialist military intervention would likely backfire does not mean that the nuclear-armed madmen who rule this irrational system won’t do it.

Marxists take no sides in the hideous nationalist/communal slaughter that is both a product and motor force of counterrevolution in the former Yugoslav (South Slav) federation. But imperialist military action against the Serbs would fundamentally change the character of the war. Already there are more than 25,000 “peacekeeping” troops under UN auspices stationed in Croatia and Bosnia, the Security Council has authorized air strikes on Serbian positions, and now the U.S. has dispatched some 300 troops to Macedonia on Serbia’s southern frontier. This is an unmistakable threat of war, a trip wire to trigger intervention by far larger American forces: how would Clinton like it if hostile “UN” troops were stationed along the Mexican border?

Should the fighting in Bosnia now spread to Kosovo or Macedonia, it could draw in Albania, which claims to be the protector of the Albanian majority in Kosovo, and Bulgaria and Greece, which both have claims on Macedonia. Meanwhile, Greece is expelling tens of thousands of Albanian workers, as Greeks in southern Albania are threatening secession. Military engagement by U.S. and/or European troops would further inflame national hatreds among the

Balkan peoples, intensify their exploitation by imperialism, and risk igniting a war in which interimperialist conflicts would come to the fore. We oppose all imperialist intervention, including the embargo (modeled on that of the Persian Gulf War) aimed at starving the Serbs into submission. In the event of war with the UN/NATO expeditionary force, an ever-growing threat, we would defend the Serbs, while calling on the working class throughout the former Yugoslavia to overthrow their bourgeois-nationalist leaders in an internationalist struggle for a Socialist Federation of the Balkans!

Imperialist Hypocrisy and “Ethnic Cleansing”

A recent special supplement to the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (21 May), the house organ of the Swiss bankers, on “Nationalism Today” begins: “A spectre is haunting Europe: its name is ‘nationalism.’” The imperialist financiers, convinced that the collapse of Stalinism signals the death of communism, see nationalist wars as the immediate obstacle to their “peaceful” conquest of the East European markets. An essay on “East European tensions” elaborates:

“The age of nationalism lies behind us. And it also may lie before us. Europe is on the verge of successfully clearing away the consequences of the Second World War, only to once again founder on the fateful legacy of the First World War. Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, two states whose birth certificates were issued in the Paris peace treaties, have already split apart. The Trianon Pact has increasingly come into the line of fire of the Hungarian nationalists.... Every day, Turkey increasingly harks back to its Ottoman past.”

From Lenin on, Marxists have characterized imperialism as the epoch of capitalist decay. Recognizing, if only empirically, that the course of historical development is going backwards, the *NZZ* essayist ends on a pessimistic quote from the 19th century Austrian Romantic dramatist Franz Grillparzer: “The path of contemporary education goes from humanity—via nationality—to bestiality.”

The ever-widening orgy of national chauvinism and communal slaughter from Central Europe to the Caucasus is an integral component of capitalist restoration. As we wrote in our two-part series “East Europe: Nationalism and Counterrevolution” (WV Nos. 547 and

548, 20 March and 3 April 1992): "Without the social base of a genuine bourgeoisie...aggressive nationalism has been both the driving force for capitalist restoration in East Europe and the Soviet Union, and a product of the counter-revolutionary drive." Friedrich Engels noted in his essay on "The Role of Force in History" (1887-88): "Since the end of the Middle Ages, history has been working towards the formation of large national states in Europe. Only such states are the normal political structure of the ruling European bourgeoisie...."

The bourgeois state is based on securing the dominant position for one nation and the oppression of all other nationalities within its borders. Moreover, in a country like Yugoslavia where the various peoples are heavily interpenetrated, the drive to consolidate homogeneous "national states" can only be carried out through savage persecution of rival nationalities competing for contested territory. A democratic and equitable resolution of the conflicting national claims in the Balkans can only be achieved under the rule of the proletariat, the only class without an interest in pursuing and augmenting national claims.

What is being called "ethnic cleansing" in the former Yugoslavia—communal massacres and forced population transfers—has provoked a chorus of indignant condemnation by the world's capitalist powers, who, posing as pious defenders of humanity against the barbaric Serbs, compare "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia to the Nazi Holocaust.

- A January U.S. government report declared that "so-called ethnic cleansing was practiced by Serbian forces in Bosnia on a scale that dwarfs anything seen in Europe since Nazi times."

- German Christian Democratic foreign minister Klaus Kinkel snarled about "bringing Serbia to its knees" as punishment for "ethnic cleansing," while the opposition Social Democrats' spokesman on Yugoslavia, Freimut Duve (who spearheaded the push to recognize Croatia which set off the breakup of Yugoslavia) compared it to "images of Hitler and Auschwitz." What *chutzpah* from the Fourth Reich!

- Israel, in a declaration before the UN last August, denounced "ethnic cleansing" and detention centers in Bosnia and Herzegovina as "abhorrent and despicable," also comparing them to Hitler's genocide of the Jews.

The grisly communal warfare in Croatia and Bosnia has killed tens of thousands and produced several million homeless and refugees. But to equate this with the horrors of Hitler's cold-blooded and calculated extermination of six million Jews along with hundreds of

thousands of Gypsies, millions of Slavs and others deemed to be *Untermenschen* (subhumans), amounts to whitewashing the Nazi Holocaust. What the Third Reich carried out was real *genocide*, an attempt to literally exterminate whole peoples. What is going on in the Balkans are nationalist wars for territory, whose goal is to push out ("cleanse") other nationalities rather than to annihilate them. The grisly mass murders, in this case, are intended to terrorize the population into fleeing. And this is hardly unique, but has been a common occurrence throughout this century, often on a scale far surpassing the gruesome events in Bosnia.

Despite their talk of genocide, the European powers have responded to the wave of refugees by tightening up their borders while fascists sow anti-immigrant terror. This, too, is not unprecedented. In the 1930s and 1940s the U.S. and European imperialists used quotas to throttle immigration by Eastern European Jews—and prominent U.S. Jewish leaders *opposed* opening America's doors to refugees fleeing the Nazi Holocaust. Meanwhile, German imperialism was massively "ethnically cleansing" what it saw as its *Hinterland* with a technology far beyond the reach of the mutually hostile populations of southern Europe. And the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb on Japan, obliterating hundreds of thousands of people in the blink of an eye.

At the heart of imperialist hypocrisy over "ethnic cleansing" is the fact that what is happening in Bosnia is a recurrent phenomenon in this epoch of capitalist decay, as imperialist barbarism intersects the barbarity of backward capitalist and pre-capitalist societies. The formation of the classic nation-states in West Europe of the 17th and 18th centuries was also a bloody, protracted process. But it was linked to the extension of trade, the development of the national market and the rise of the bourgeoisie. However, under imperialism, in relatively backward capitalist countries the development of the national economy and the emergence of a vigorous bourgeoisie are stifled by imperialist exploitation and domination. Thus national consolidation under capitalism has been reduced to its stark component of communal savagery to drive out or eliminate minority nationalities.

Legacy of Imperialist "Divide and Rule"

A recent article by George Kennan ("The Balkan Crisis: 1913 and 1993," *New York Review of Books*, 15 July) notes "the many and depressing evidences of similarity between what was occurring in the Balkans in 1913 and what is going on there today." The



Prentice/Hall

Palestinian Arabs flee Haifa in April 1948 during Zionist terror campaign "Operation Passover Cleansing."

Balkan Wars of 1912-13, which were the prelude to World War I, were waged with unspeakable atrocities on all sides. As Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro drove the Ottoman Empire out of Europe, they also drove out more than one hundred thousand Turks. Then, as they fell out over the allotment of Macedonia, the main prize of the victory over the Ottomans, tens of thousands more were forced from their homes as Bulgarians were driven from Macedonia by the Greeks, Greeks from Macedonia by the Serbs, etc. An article on "Racial Migrations in the Balkans" in the *Geographical Journal* of 1925 lists seven cases of forced population transfers during 1912-14.

Meanwhile, as the dying Ottoman Empire lost its European lands, the "Young Turks" in power in Constantinople consolidated on a program of Turkish nationalism, which meant ridding themselves of national minorities and turning the empire into a homogenous Turkish state. In 1915, the Young Turks ordered the deportation of the Armenian population, which was thoroughly interpenetrated with the Turkish population of East Anatolia. In practice, the deportations turned into an orgy of killing in which hundreds of thousands, perhaps as many as a million and a half Armenians died. Previously, the Armenians, led by the nationalist Dashnak Party, had launched an abortive drive for a "greater Armenia." It was, as historian Bernard Lewis put it, "a struggle between two nations for the possession of a single homeland, that ended with the terrible holocaust of 1915" (*The Emergence of Modern Turkey* [1968]).

The Young Turks, led by Mustafa Kemal Pasha (Atatürk), then turned on their Greek population, burning down the coastal city of Smyrna in 1919 and massacring tens of thousands (after the Greeks had earlier militarily occupied the city and driven out the Turkish population through a wave of atrocities). At this point, the victorious imperialists stepped in and sponsored a program of massive population transfers among Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria. More than two million people were "exchanged" among Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey in the course of the 1920s, ripped from their homes, deprived of their property and brutally expelled—under the auspices of the League of Nations. In this way, Bulgaria got rid of its entire Greek population, Greece got rid of half its Bulgarians and almost all its Turks, and Turkey got rid of its Greeks (leaving the Kurds, who remain the victims of incessant warfare on the part of the Turkish government).

But the Balkans and vicinity are hardly the only place where such "ethnic cleansing" has taken place. At the close of World War II, the partition of India by the British imperialists in 1947—culminating 350 years of colonial "divide

and rule"—unleashed one of the ghastliest communalist slaughters and perhaps the most massive forced population transfer in history. Slicing across provinces where Muslims, Hindus and other religious groups were thoroughly interpenetrated (Punjab and Bengal), the partition into an 80 percent Hindu-dominated India and an Islamic confessional Pakistan provoked the slaughter of between one and two million Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus, and the forced migration of over eleven million people. Gigantic columns of hundreds of thousands of anguished refugees, fleeing the bloodletting, flowed across the new border in both directions.

A history of the period described the slaughter: "In India, Sikhs and Hindus prowled the cars of ambushed trains slaughtering every circumcised male they found. In Pakistan, Moslems raced along the trains they had stopped, murdering every male who was not circumcised" (Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, *Freedom at Midnight* [1975]).

Or consider the case of South Africa. The white-supremacist rulers did not seek to exterminate or drive out the blacks, because it was the merciless superexploitation of black workers which created the superprofits of the gold and diamond magnates. But Afrikaner nationalism was nourished by the guilty fear of seeing the black majority reverse the terms of oppression. The National Party came to power in 1948 on a program of *apartheid* ("separateness"), or forced segregation, which promised to "guarantee a national home for the Afrikaner nation," by driving all blacks into several ethnically grouped regions (to include the territory of the then British protectorates of Swaziland, Basutoland and Bechuanaland), pushing "coloureds" into a separate "coloured nation," and deporting the entire Indian population to India.

The ideologues of apartheid, largely educated in German universities of the 1930s and deeply influenced by the Nazis' racist rantings, were grouped in the Broederbond, the nucleus of the Afrikaner nationalist movement. They dreamed of ripping South Africa apart along racial lines and restructuring it as a diversity of separate "nations" in which white Afrikanerdom would be assured of its own separate nationhood with its own distinctive culture. But after coming to power, Nationalist leader D.F. Malan had to face the fact that "our whole economic structure is to a large extent based upon non-White labour" and that "territorial separation" would "have the result that the Europeans will have to perform all their labour themselves" (Brian Bunting, *The Rise of the South African Reich* [1986]).

The Nationalists in power instituted vast population transfers of the black population, setting up the wretched

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During 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, Zionists unleashed their allies in right-wing Christian militia to carry out massacre of hundreds of Palestinian men, women and children in Sabra and Shatila refugee camps.

2 June 1993



ASp photos

Unionists, Aborigines, Students Mobilise:

Racist Ban Defeated at Student Prince Hotel!

"I've always been on the other side ... outside the pub. But this time I was on the inside, on the winning side," was how an Aboriginal former BLF militant described the successful 26 May action of unionists, Aborigines and students. The integrated group of 40 people had forcefully broken a racist ban against the right of Aborigines to enter and drink at the Student Prince Hotel in Camperdown, Sydney. Amongst its number was a cross-section of unionists from over half a dozen industries including construction, maritime, printing and communications. There were students from nearby Sydney University, communists, Asians, Maoris and Aborigines from Redfern and the nearby Tranby Aboriginal college. They came prepared with a clear message: Sydney is a multi-racial union city and there is no place for racist bans or exclusions.

The united and integrated 26 May action was determined to ensure that everyone—regardless of the colour of his or her skin—got served and that the racist exclusion imposed by the Student Prince Hotel management was not repeated. Three members of the Redfern All Blacks rugby league team fronted up to the bar to be served. The other protesters made it clear that the bar would do no more business until they were. They were served. The group celebrated their victory with a toast to the success of their action. The plug was pulled on the juke box (over management protest) and hotel patrons listened while speeches were made.

Many of the Sydney University students and other clientele present that night expressed their solidarity with the action and applauded the speeches. A couple of young women came up to tell us that "we think this is really good, we think what you're doing is great." Sydney

University student and Spartacist League (SL) supporter, Shaun Russell who addressed the gathering in the hotel, was cheered. He pointed out that students have a side to take, alongside the working class and in defence of all the oppressed. An hour later the group left in good order.

The SL was proud to have initiated this small but significant example of integrated union/black/minority action. In a 27 May press release issued by the SL, distributed widely to the press, unions, student papers and Aboriginal organisations in NSW and across Australia, we asserted that the successful action at the Student Prince pointed to the centrality of working-class power in the fight against White Australia racism. But with the exception of a couple of lines in the 27 May Sydney *Daily Telegraph Mirror*, which wrongly said the protest was held *outside*, the bourgeois

media has studiously ignored the action. Undoubtedly they weren't keen to report an action where working people and the oppressed had decisively defeated a racist ban.

This action was modelled on the sit-ins by black and white students in the American South in the early 1960s to integrate lunch counters and other facilities long segregated under Jim Crow. The Student Prince Hotel, not far from the Redfern Aboriginal community, was becoming a popular drinking spot for Aboriginal youth when the hotel management established a racist, anti-black quota, enforced by bouncers at the door who began turning away young men and women with filthy racist epithets.

The issue became public on 11 May when the ABC 7.30 Report aired footage of two young Aboriginal women being excluded by white bouncers three nights

earlier. The ABC reporter told *Australasian Spartacist* that she had witnessed six other Aboriginal youth being denied entrance that night; one of the victims told us that she and some 20 other blacks were excluded within a one-hour period at an earlier incident on 24 April.

Down With Racist Australian Capitalism!

Barbara Davis, one of the Aboriginal women excluded earlier, joined the action and addressed the gathering inside the hotel:

"I'm no different from anyone else. I work hard, I support my family and I pay taxes. And I've got the right to go out and to be allowed into any establishment the same as everyone else in this country."

As a public interest lawyer John McKenzie, who appeared on the ABC 7.30 Report pointed out, "Aboriginal people make up the most numerous people as far as complaints go of racial discrimination." Their most common complaint is over the denial of access to services, such as hotels, clubs and accommodation. Shane Phillips, from the Redfern All Blacks rugby league team and one of the organisers of the 26 May action, speaking at the Student Prince Hotel said:

"In 1967 we became citizens of this country.... Our men served in the war, and we couldn't even drink in a hotel. And I thought that was a thing of the past. But it's alive and well, this sort of racism."

The successful 26 May labour/black action against the racist ban pointed the way forward and sent out a resounding message. The statement distributed that night expressed the protesters determination that: "racist bans will not be tolerated. And we know that for every one of us here, there are thousands more



ASp photo

"Way to go!" Sydney University students celebrate anti-racist victory at Student Prince Hotel on 26 May.

"Sydney is a Multi-Racial, Union City!"

unionists and other decent people who won't stand for this or any other racist ban. An injury to one is an injury to all."

While the Keating government issues hypocritical platitudes to the imperialist UN-sponsored Year of the Indigenous People, there has been a sharp rise in racist hysteria and murderous oppression of Aborigines. In 1987 the rate of black deaths in police custody was already 13 times higher than in South Africa. Since that time the jailing of Aborigines has increased 25 percent nationally and 80 percent in NSW. Police torture and killing of Aboriginal prisoners have increased accordingly. On 27 May, 20-year-old Aboriginal Troy Kemble was found dead in a jail near Windsor in outer Sydney. Earlier in May an Aboriginal man, William Bowden was brutally bashed by cops in the northern Victorian town of Robinvale, described as a "Rodney King-style beating" (Age, 21 May).

Aborigines in Cherbourg, just 170 kilometres north-west of Brisbane have been the recent targets of murderous Ku Klux Klan-style intimidation following the death of a white publican in a neighbouring town populated mainly by whites. Meanwhile the economic impoverishment of Aborigines deepens. The death rate of black children is now two and a half times that for white children; for adults the rate is three times that for white Australians. Preventable disease ravages Aboriginal communities, where TB has hit epidemic proportions.

For Union/Black/Minority Action to Fight Racist Terror!

The Student Prince action was an affirmation of the SL's fight for union-centred action to fight racist terror. The power of working-class struggle against racial oppression was demonstrated in February this year when meatworkers at Stuart Creek near Townsville, Queensland, struck for three weeks in defence of Aboriginal stockman, Eddie Alley. Alley was sacked for standing firm on the union principle of seniority and upholding union safety conditions. This racist anti-union attack was spiked and Alley reinstated by the meatworkers' solid action, which included a picket line supported by the local Aboriginal community. As we said in *Australasian Spartacist* No. 149 (Winter 1993): "This was a small but significant victory for all working people and the oppressed." It demonstrated that by rejecting the bosses' racist divide-and-rule tactics and playing a little hardball it is possible to win. The successful Student Prince action and the Stuart Creek workers' victory stand alongside key instances where the working class has, despite its racist Laborite leadership fought in defence of the rights of Aborigines. In 1946 Seamen's Union bans in support of striking Aboriginal stockmen in the Pilbara quickly won concessions from the bosses. In 1989 a large contingent of Sydney building workers downed tools and joined a demonstration against the police killing of Aboriginal David Gundy.

The SL was the only left organisation to respond to the racist atrocity at the Student Prince Hotel. The two Laborite

left organisations on nearby Sydney University, the International Socialist Organisation (ISO) and the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) ignored the issue altogether. The example of workers, blacks and the oppressed standing firmly against racist discrimination is sharply counterposed to all the dead-end reformist calls for the bosses' state to dispense justice. These calls are pushed by Laborites, government-backed Aboriginal "leaders" and the fake-left like the DSP, who in the eighties all called for a Royal Commission to investigate "black deaths in custody." The \$30 million, three-year Royal Commission set up by the Hawke Labor government in 1987, endorsed police and coroner verdicts of "suicide" and "death by natural causes" in all the 99 cases it investigated. *Not one killer cop was ever put behind bars!* The SL warned from the start that the Royal Commission could only result in a judicial whitewash.

Last year the ISO joined the bourgeois campaign to clean up the image of the bosses' cops with the demand to

"New World Order" Australia under Keating promises more union-busting capitalist austerity, attacks on Aborigines and all the oppressed, as the economy spirals deeper into depression and the bosses seek to drastically increase the rate of exploitation. The counter-revolutions in the former workers states of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the culmination of decades of imperialist destabilisation and Stalinist betrayal, have resulted in a wave of reactionary nationalism and fascist terror. Meanwhile growing inter-imperialist trade rivalries threaten a new imperialist war.

Around the globe our comrades of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) (ICL) have been in the forefront of the fight against resurgent racism and fascist terror. In Germany, our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party have initiated and mobilised workers defence of immigrant hostels against Nazi terror. In January in Vancouver, Canada, the Trotskyist League of Canada played a

war and exploitation has fuelled a wave of major class battles across Europe. This had its echo in Australia last year with the explosion of working-class anger and the strike wave in Victoria against the union-busting Kennett Tory government which spread nationally and had the potential to bust all the union busters from Kennett to Keating. The Laborite union tops worked overtime to sabotage last year's strike wave, channeling workers anger into electoral support to Keating's Labor and defence of the bosses' Arbitration courts. They are the chief obstacle to a desperately needed working-class fightback. The SL fights for independent working-class action. Smash Arbitration! The union tops peddle anti-immigrant racism and protectionism to line up workers behind their own bosses. Of late it has been used to target New Zealand-born immigrants. We say: Smash racist anti-immigration laws! Full citizenship rights for all foreign-born workers!

As SL spokesman, Chris McCarthy told protesters on 26 May, we fight to



ASp photos

Building workers (left) and Aborigines united to defeat racist ban at Student Prince. Their message: "We are an integrated group of Aborigines, union members, students, men and women determined to assert that in this multi-racial union city of Sydney there is no place for racist bans or exclusions."

"Sack all racist cops" (*Socialist*, March). This ludicrous demand amounts to a call on the state to police its own! Revolutionary Marxists point out that the cops, along with the army are the special bodies of armed men which are the chief instruments of bourgeois state power. The same cops who terrorise Aborigines are used to bust up picket lines. Their job is to defend the racist capitalist order.

Keating's Labor Government: Enemy of Workers, Aborigines and All the Oppressed!

The solid core of unionists who joined the Student Prince action were key to the event's success. Many of them represented decades of union struggle and were keen to be involved and fight to win one for a change. One militant wharfie bitter about the union-busting givebacks and job-slashing attacks under Labor told SL comrades, "There's not much leadership coming from the union. They've been too busy helping the ALP."

key role in a 3,000-strong labour-based mobilisation that successfully put the Nazis on the run. In Paris in response to a recent spat of cop killings of black African and Maghreb (North African) youth, our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France mass distributed leaflets calling on workers to mobilise to defend immigrant neighbourhoods. The ICL has uniquely been able to carry out such actions because we understand as Karl Marx said, labour cannot emancipate itself in the white skin, while in the black it is branded.

The new imperialist disorder of trade

forge a revolutionary workers party to lead the workers and all the oppressed, a Leninist party which is the tribune of the people, exposing and combating capitalist attacks on the rights of all sections of society. Such a party would mobilise the working class, drawing in all the oppressed in common struggle to smash this racist, decaying capitalist order through workers revolution. This means a political fight to break the multi-racial working class from the racist, pro-capitalist Labor party. For a racially-integrated workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia! ■

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Racist Backlash/Labor Perfidy Over Mabo

Mobilise a Class-Struggle Fight for Aboriginal Rights!

Where: MEWU Council Room
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Mabo...

(continued from page 1)

Within 75 years of British settlement the estimated 4000 black Tasmanians had been largely wiped out. Peter Fryer in *Black People in the British Empire* (1988) writes:

"Then the outcasts of the British social system were set loose to take the Tasmanians' land.... black Tasmanians were pitilessly hunted down, tortured and put to death. Men and boys were castrated and otherwise mutilated; women were raped, flogged and burnt with brands; children's brains were dashed out. Some black Tasmanians were tied to trees and used as targets for shooting practice. One old woman was roasted alive. Another woman had her dead husband's head hung round her neck and was driven in front of her captor as his prize. One settler kept a pickle-tub into which he tossed the ears of the black people he shot."

This describes well the "cultural superiority" of this former penal colony! Chief minister of the Northern Territory, Marshall Perron, announced that "they [Aboriginal people] really are centuries behind us in their cultural attitudes and their aspirations" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 July), National Party leader Fischer expounded on the failures of the Aborigines to develop "even a wheeled cart." Former chairman of the National Companies and Securities Commission Henry Bosch topped it all off with the blunt, nakedly racist statement that government was wasting its time with the "most backward 1 per cent of the population": "I have the utmost contempt for political correctness, the white-washing of Aboriginal people who are a Stone Age people.... I think we should forget completely about any concept of Aboriginal land rights and if that requires legislation, then let's do it" (*Australian*, 23 July). And the ever-present Hugh Morgan added:

"Australia will soon become a divided nation, no longer in undisputed possession of this island continent, and unable to face with any confidence the external dangers which history teaches us will, inevitably, one day threaten us."

—*Sydney Morning Herald*,
1 July.

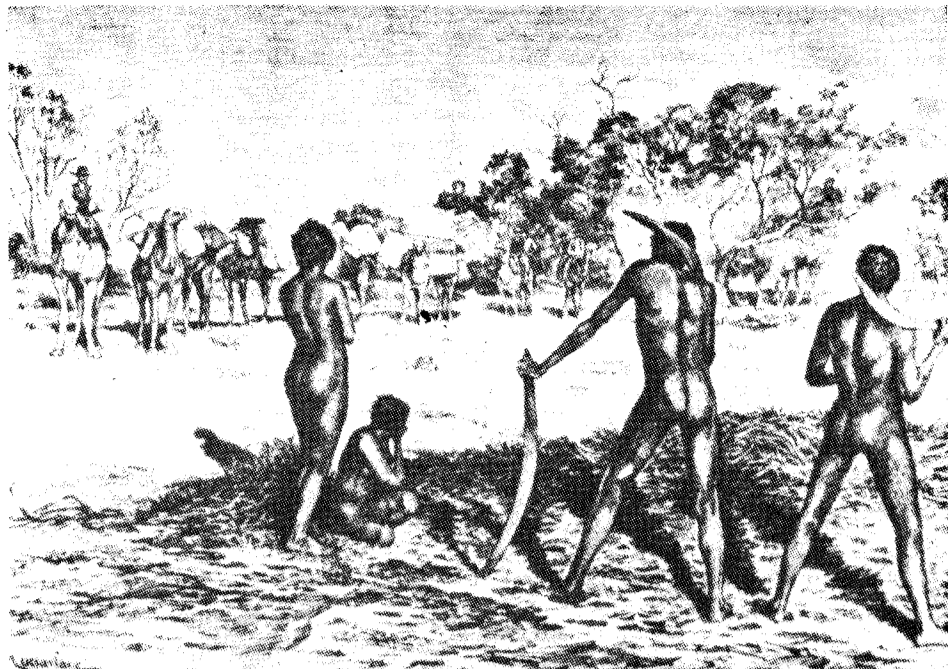
Meanwhile, Bonita Mabo, the widow of Eddie Mabo, and leading Aboriginal activist Charles Perkins have been targets of racist harassment and attack. Mrs. Mabo has been receiving threatening racist telephone calls at her home in Townsville. Perkins, of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Legal Service, was driving to Sydney from Newcastle in June with his wife and 14-month-old granddaughter when a man in a utility truck started chasing the car. According to Perkins: "He roared up right behind me with his lights flashing. We stopped at an intersection and when I tried to drive on he swerved in front of us and ran us off the road. Then he put his finger up to his head as if to say 'I'll shoot you bastards.'" Later, when the driver had slowed to a crawl in front of Perkins' car: "I tried to pass him but he swerved and ran us off the road again, and then sprayed turps all over us. We were scared out of our wits. We thought we'd be killed."

Nor is it simply leading figures associated with Aboriginal rights and the *Mabo* case who have been targeted. In Mossman, a small town in far north Queensland, even police confirmed "Aborigines in the town were systematically caught, bashed and kicked by whites who were wearing heavy work boots, some metal tipped. They used heavy hardwood 2x1 inch stakes which eyewitnesses said could easily have killed" in a planned assault on Aborigines frequenting the Exchange Hotel, across the road from the "predominantly white" Mossman Hotel on the main street in early June ([Brisbane] *Sunday Mail*, 6 June). Earlier, Aborigines in Cherbourg, 170 kilometres north-west of Brisbane, were targets of murderous Ku Klux Klan-style intimidation; 22-year-old Cedric John Dellachy of Townsville was found dead in the Ross River on 13 November last year after being chased and attacked by a racist mob.

Labor prime minister Keating's main contribution (publicly— rather than in the back rooms with the mining companies) to date was to grandstand with a call-in radio show in June where he fielded the diatribes of stone-cold racists with empty platitudes against "prejudice." Keating, and before him Hawke, have presided over ten years of escalating state terror against Aborigines. The Labor Party's forebears in the Federal Labor Party adopted as its objective in 1905: "the cultivation of an Australian sentiment based on the maintenance of racial purity and the development in Australia of an enlightened and self-reliant community" (Humphrey McQueen, *A New Britannia* [rev. ed., 1970]). Hawke was the witting agent of the same mining, pastoral and states rights forces which combined in the mid-1980s to ward off any encroachments on "their" land.

Today, administering capitalism for the bosses, the Keating Labor leadership wants to clean up Australia's image for international consumption. The republic by 2001, Aboriginal "reconciliation," the bid for the Olympics in Sydney—this is all part of the "New World Order" Australia. The division evident within the bourgeoisie expresses different solutions to the fundamental problem of Australian capitalism: as the imperialist world moves increasingly toward trade blocs that threaten to leave Australia out in the cold, Australian capital is caught between the rival Japanese-dominated Asian Pacific bloc and the U.S. Keating's "modernisation" is geared to the same end as the Dark Age rantings of Morgan et al.: to gird Australia against its international competitors, particularly in South East Asia.

An article in the *Australian* (8 June) hoped that in *Mabo* there would be "a solution Australia can hold up to the international community and, most importantly, our regional neighbours, as confirmation of this country's standing as a free and mature participant in the resolution of the problems of others." As jackal junior partners of U.S. imperialism in the region, the Labor governments of Hawke/Keating have lorded it over the exploited and oppressed from the South Pacific to Gareth Evans' intrigues against



La Trobe Collection — State Library of Victoria

The lie of "terra nullius." Central Australia: Aborigines depicted in alarmed reaction to intruding settlers' camel team.

the Vietnamese deformed workers state in Indochina. To this day Canberra arms and braintrusts the murderous blockade by its Papua New Guinea neocolony over the Bougainville people. "White Australia" capitalism has always rested on the historic genocide and subsequent vicious dispossession of the Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders. If today sections of the bourgeoisie see fit to note the existence of these people, it is to better arm themselves to "compete" within South East Asia.

Marxists and Mabo

We Marxists are not indifferent to the legal recognition of the existence of the Aboriginal people prior to the British colonisation and the quashing of *terra nullius* contained in the *Mabo* ruling. Australia was "unique" among the Crown colonies—colonies in which murderous and genocidal war was carried out against many indigenous peoples—in its pretence that no-one lived here and thus those who most obviously did live here had no rights. This is the country where Aboriginal people were not so much as counted in a population census or allowed to vote until 1967—in the land their ancestors had occupied for over 40,000 years. Author Henry Reynolds put it in *The Law of the Land* (1987):

"The truly amazing achievement of Australian jurisprudence was to deny that the Aborigines were ever in possession of their own land, robbing them of the great legal strength of that position, and of compensation which should have been paid following resumption by the Crown. Various jurists described the country as being 'waste and uninhabited', 'waste and unoccupied', 'desert and uninhabited', 'unpeopled'. This assessment was given even greater status by the Privy Council in a case in 1889 when it determined that at the time of settlement Australia was 'practically unoccupied without settled inhabitants'. What was even more extraordinary than this judgement by an English law lord who knew little about Australia or the Aborigines was that it was binding on Australian courts as late as the 1970s and even now its status is not finally determined."

Despite the messages of the Laborites on the one hand that "native title" will affect no one at all and the hysteria of the right lunatic fringe on the other that upper-class white Aussies will be ceding their swimming pools and probably the Sydney Opera House itself to massive Aboriginal "land grabs," the fact is that exactly what claims for land and/or compensation may be possible under the ruling remains unclear and untested. The sober assessment of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (17 June) was that the "amount of land subject to native title under the *Mabo* decision is enormous—including between one-third and half of Western Australia, about one-third of Queensland and three quarters of the Northern Territory."

The reality is that, on its own terms, the decision leaves coastal, urban and other Aboriginal peoples long since driven from their lands with little or nothing. Of the recently concluded Eva Valley gathering of 400 Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander leaders demanding a tougher stance from the Keating government—including veto rights over mining projects on land granted to them under *Mabo*—the *Financial Review* (6 August) wrote pointedly: "The tough stand taken by the Aborigines...has one major flaw. It is a negotiating position taken when the negotiations on Mabo are all but over."

We support any attempts by the Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders to claw back some of the land which has been stolen from them as well as to whatever compensation can be wrested under the tight-fisted High Court ruling. However, elementary justice—not only for the dispossessed Aboriginal people, but for all the exploited and oppressed—demands not some limited, ultimately reversible, concessions in the bosses' courts but the *expropriation* of industry and agriculture by proletarian revolution. In another context, we explained the Marxist position on the questions raised by *Mabo* here. Our article "Torture of Native Women in Canada" (*Women & Revolution* No. 42, Spring/Summer 1993) put it:

"The options for Native people are often presented as a choice between 'traditional culture' and racist capitalist society. But this is a false choice, not least because the vibrant pre-European culture is irreparably lost. The real choice is between the perpetuation of the crimes of the past—centuries of racist genocide and wholesale destruction of the Natives' way of life—or the creation of a future in a society not based on brutal exploitation and all-sided racism. The unremitting proletarian defence of Native people's lives and rights as equal citizens is part of the fight of the multiracial working class to overturn this whole brutal and violent capitalist system. We defend Native land claims, and in those cases where claims have run up against socially useful developments like railways, hydroelectric projects and oil pipelines, the Native peoples should receive generous compensation for deprivation of land or disruption of activity, based on completely consensual agreement. We are fighting for a socialist world in which the diversity of human cultures will not be an excuse for contempt and violence, but a source of enrichment."

We seek to mobilise the social power of the integrated, organised labour movement to champion the rights and address the special oppression of the Aboriginal people on the road to the destruction of capitalism. There have been recent examples pointing in this direction. In February, Australian Meat Holdings in Townsville sacked 58-year-old Aboriginal stockman Eddie Alley; the 350 members of the Australian Meat Industry Employees Union (AMIEU) struck in Alley's defence, picketing the plant and facing down scabs and an army of strike-breaking cops sent by the Goss state Labor government. The Aboriginal community joined the picket, collecting funds, providing food and entertainment and mobilising support in the local community. Spurning an Arbitration recommendation for a return to work and "negotiations" the workers hung tough, refusing to return without Alley's reinstatement. After three weeks on strike,



Aboriginal stockmen in the 1960s: demands for equal wages sparked strikes in the Northern Territory.

the integrated union won Alley's reinstatement.

In May, a Spartacist League-initiated action broke the racist ban at the Student Prince Hotel in Sydney which had refused service to a number of Aboriginal people. As we noted in the special *Australasian Spartacist* supplement ("Unionists, Aborigines, Students Mobilise: Racist Ban Defeated at Student Prince Hotel!", pages 8-9) "The solid core of unionists who joined the Student Prince action were key to the event's success." Key, too, was a communist leadership capable of mobilising a united action—not to appeal to the racist ALP and its henchmen for "justice"—but to fight.

"White Australia" Capitalism and Aboriginal Oppression

The reaction over the *Mabo* decision testifies to how profound and deeply rooted in Australian capitalism is the oppression and dispossession of the Aboriginal people. The grim statistics of black deaths in custody, health, infant mortality, education, wage disparity, inequality under the law, only begin to paint the picture. Eddie Mabo's story is a case in point. Originally from Murray Island, Mabo, like many others, went to the mainland in order to work. In 1969 he was refused permission to visit his dying father because local authorities considered him a "trouble-maker." This was a man who, according to the *Australian* which named him "Australian of the Year" posthumously, was never "in trouble with the police" except for being arrested once in Townsville after being refused service at a bar. (He successfully defended that case as well.)

Mabo's story echoes the stories of thousands—and it is by no means the worst. John Pat's murder in 1983 was a catalyst for the struggle over Aboriginal deaths in police custody. Sixteen-year-old John Pat died in the Roebourne police lock-up on 28 September: "Witnesses gave evidence that they had seen Pat hit by four policemen and one police aide during the fight, dragged to a van and thrown in 'like a dead kangaroo'" (Lorna Lippman, *Generations of Resistance* [2nd ed., 1991]). The police involved were acquitted, providing a green light for similar racist atrocities. An avalanche of deaths of black youth in Australia's jails followed the acquittals. Robert Walker was killed with a chokehold by cops in Western Australia on 28 August 1984; Charlie Michael on 9 October 1984; Tony King, 31 October 1985. Of Charles Michael's death, we are told:

"...two warders handcuffed him, pulling his hands over his head and behind his neck. The prisoner's ankles were tied together with a belt; another belt was looped between the handcuff chain and ankle straps. He was wrestled to the floor, face downward, by up to five warders.... A baton was found and laced through the belt between the ankle strap and handcuffs and then twisted by two warders to tighten it, bending the prisoner back like a banana....

"Michael's death, like his life, was one of unrelenting persecution and hopelessness. Taken away from his parents at the age of five, he was sent to a mission and returned to them at eight. His first court appearance came at the age of twelve on various charges of dishonesty and his life became a continuous history of offending.... By the time he died in 1984, Charles Michael had spent thirteen years and five months in custody."
—Lorna Lippmann, *ibid.*

As we warned at the time, the Royal Commission investigating these deaths was a flagrant white-wash which endorsed police and coroner verdicts in all 99 cases before it. In the four years since the Royal Commission began the level of Aboriginal imprisonment rose by 25 percent nationally (for Aboriginal women it rose by 63 percent) and a staggering 70 percent in Victoria and 80 percent in New South Wales. Aborigines face an incarceration rate 29 times that of the rest of the population.

Aboriginal people are fined and arrested for nothing more than having a beer in a park. Infant mortality has been

the largest in the world. Not only are Aboriginal people paid grossly unequal wages, but to top it off the state has garnished their wages! "State robbed black workers: minister" was the headline of a recent article in the *Australian* (6 July): "...until 1966 many Aborigines were required by law to pay a compulsory levy on their wages in addition to normal taxation to fund the operating costs of undertakings and relief to Aborigines."

The Maralinga nuclear test site on the lands of the Tjarutja people is a spectacularly gross tale from the first Cold War. In 1950, British Prime Minister Clement Attlee requested and received permission to test British nuclear weapons in Australia. Months later, according to John Pilger's account, a one-paragraph announcement was published advising that "an atomic weapon" would be tested in Australia "in conditions that will ensure that there will be no danger to the health of people or animals". This, of course, excluded the Aborigines who, unlike sheep, were not counted in the census" (*Distant Voices* [1992]). Thus, while prosecuting the dirty colonial war against the workers and peasants of Korea, the Australian and British imperialists irradiated the land inhabited by this Aboriginal people. This site continues to be contaminated with plutonium; recently the British imperialists have offered the princely sum of \$45 million to clean up Maralinga.

Black and Red

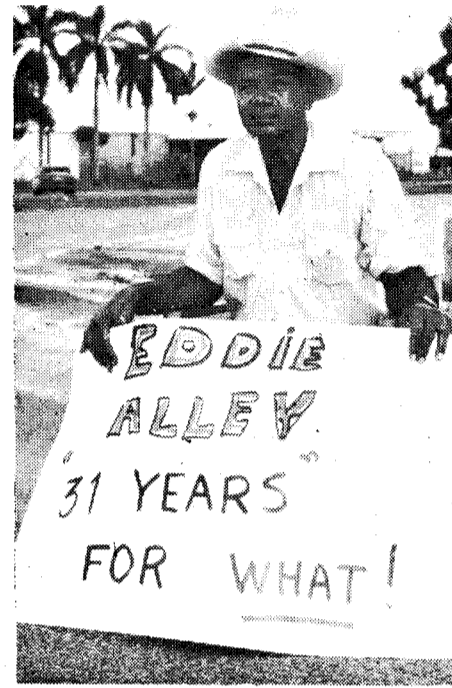
It was Queensland's Joh Bjelke-Petersen who said of the *Mabo* case in its early stages that it was "a communist long-range plan to alienate Aboriginal lands from the Australian nation so that a fragmented north could be used for subversive activities by other countries..." (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 July). The spectre of "red agitators" at work when the fight for Aboriginal rights comes up against the bosses is a testament to the fact that this question is an acid test for any authentic communist party in Australia.

The first great strike of Aboriginal workers took place in the Pilbara in 1945 when they struck against wretched wages of ten shillings a week plus blankets and clothing which were then paid for cattle station work. "The Aboriginal groups were assisted by a non-Aborigine, Don McLeod, who was promptly accused of Communist stirring. To an outside inquirer, however, one of the Aboriginal leaders commented: 'We talk about wages and places to stay, and squatters and police keep saying Communist.'" When McLeod and two Aboriginal leaders were jailed for three months, the Aborigines marched on the jail; McLeod was freed. The Pilbara strike was supported by 19 unions in Western Australia, seven federal unions and four Trades and Labour Councils. The West Australian branch of the Seamen's Union refused to handle wool from stations involved in the strike.

In 1966 the Gurindji stockmen in the Northern Territory struck against the Vestey group and walked off Wave Hill station in protest against intolerable living conditions and paltry wages, setting up a camp at Wattie Creek where they had traditional ties; earlier the Yirrkala people had fought against the mining company Nabalco in the Gove peninsula case (where in 1971 Justice Blackburn used *terra nullius* to strike down their claim to the land). The then Minister for Territories Paul Hasluck stated that the Communist Party had "seized on this issue and is assiduous in trying to misrepresent what has happened." And when the tent "embassy" was set up in 1972, Minister for the Interior Ralph Hunt suggested the land rights campaign was part of a plot by "Communist elements and left-wing union leaders."

It was not until the period of 1928-31 that the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) unequivocally denounced the

policy of "White Australia" and perforce undertook special work among Aborigines. Despite its wretched reformist program and the outright racist chauvinism displayed by the Communist Party in World War II—where it embraced the criminal A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with the cartoon caption "Jappy Ending"—elements of the CPA did carry out real, and often selfless, work among the Aboriginal people in the post-War period as well. Its program, "Full Human Rights for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders," adopted by the 21st Congress of the CPA in 1967, combines sub-reformist cant and illusions in the federal government with some semblance of a grappling with the special



Twin Cities Advertiser

Townsville: militant meatworkers' strike won reinstatement of Eddie Alley against company racist, union-busting attack.

questions posed by Aboriginal oppression: "The problem is a two-fold one: the problem of workers suffering exceptionally bad conditions, and the problem of peoples fighting for the right to exist as such." At least a little of Lenin's writing on the national question is evident in the CPA's opposition "to both compulsory assimilation and enforced segregation."

It is particularly sinister that the Northite Socialist Labour League (SLL), who see nothing defensible in the *Mabo* decision, write of Aboriginal land rights: "This demand was not the outcome of some movement by the Aboriginal people. It was fashioned by a section of the radical protest movements, and the Communist Party" (*Workers News*, 16 July). Echoing the worst reactionaries, the SLL lectures: "Land rights, property in land, is not a legal concept which comes from Aboriginal society. This society did not recognise property in land, any more than it had a concept of wages, rent, profit or interest." Unfortunately for the "colour-blind" scribblers of the SLL, the colonial conquerors did have a very precise concept of property, "in land," which they proceeded to steal outright. This has provoked some outrage from those who were robbed, and if the Northites want to paint this as a "Communist plot," the company they keep speaks for itself.

Pandering to the most backward prejudices the Northites conclude that what's really going on is "the government is cultivating a very thin layer of middle class Aborigines, who sit on bodies such as the land councils and ATSIC, to enforce its oppression of Aboriginal people" ("The fraud of Mabo," *Workers News*, 11 June). For the political bandits of the SLL, the real question posed by the *Mabo* decision is the ability of some "middle class Aborigines" to line their pockets in a bid for—wait for it—a "black capitalist future"! These self-appointed spokesmen for "the working class" not only have, in the infamous words of the American Federation of Labor's Samuel Gompers "nothing special to offer" the black people, but in fact nothing to offer whatsoever! Read their *Workers News* coverage on this

issue and the striking fact is that there is plenty about "Benefits for a middle class minority" but zip, zero, nada addressing the special oppression of Aboriginal people under capitalism.

We also think it's pretty rich coming from Nick Beams's SLL to read about the "old adage": "follow the money trail"! This is the one and same Nick Beams up to his neck in blood money from oil-rich Near Eastern despots and, as part of the SLL's turn to "commercial enterprise," funds duly received to print *The Bell of Saigon*, organ of fascistic Vietnamese thugs.

The Northites' line is a very convenient one in order to cozy up to the racist Labor Party leadership and its cronies sitting atop the trade unions. While the SLL has adopted—in words—a denunciation of the Labor Party as bourgeois through and through and have decided that *trade unions* are no longer workers organisations, their obedience to the misleaders of the working class remains constant. As we noted in *Workers Vanguard* (16 July) of the SLL's American counterparts: "Writing off the unions' potential to act in pursuit of the class struggle and kowtowing to the pro-capitalist bureaucracy are flip sides of the same coin. Both variants exclude a communist political struggle within the unions."

Then we have the Cliffite International Socialist Organisation (ISO) whose line may be succinctly described as begging Keating to do the right thing. Despite its verbiage against the Labor traitors ("the *Mabo* decision has to be defended from both the Liberals and Paul Keating") the ISO's "Mabo Petitions" give the game away. Their petition in NSW reads in part: "We call upon Prime Minister Keating to guarantee the right of Aborigines to make claims for native land title in the spirit of the *Mabo* decision. To do otherwise would be blatantly hypocritical and deceitful of the Keating Labor government." They have another petition for Victoria condemning Kennett and begging their man in Canberra to put Aboriginal people before "the rapaciousness of mining companies"! (Not to be outdone the "green" yuppies of the Democratic Socialist Party [DSP] have their very own petition similarly beseeching the Labor government.) For these reformists, the question of Aboriginal rights posed by the furore over the *Mabo* decision is but one more opportunity to "campaign" for better Labor policies against the "right."

We communists stand for a class-struggle fight for the rights of *all* the exploited and oppressed. We fight for complete legal equality—including in the realm of land rights; we fight for jobs for all and equal wages; we fight for massive health and education programs to address the oppression of the Aboriginal people on the reserves, in the wretched "fringes" and inner cities; we fight to mobilise the power of the integrated workers movement against the state terror which continues to reign against the Aboriginal people. We fight to build a vanguard party to lead the proletarian revolution that will put an end to the system of private property and capitalist exploitation. Such a party will be, in V.I. Lenin's words, a tribune of the people, targeting every instance of the racial and national oppression endemic to capitalism. As we wrote in *Women & Revolution*: "The inauguration of the era of socialist development can ensure the all-sided voluntary integration of Native people into a new society, on the basis of the fullest equality and will meet the special needs created by centuries of injustice and oppression." ■

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"Ethnic Cleansing" ...

(continued from page 7)

bantustans in order to limit and regulate the presence of blacks in the cities and white regions. They deepened and hardened the existing system of strict racial separation through a vast panoply of racist laws designed to totally regiment the black workforce in order to squeeze out increased profits. South African blacks were turned into migrant laborers, uprooted from their homes, stripped of their birthright and declared foreigners in their own country. "Unproductive" blacks—the elderly, women, children, disabled and unemployed—were dumped into the barren bantustans. Since 1948, from four to eight million blacks have been forcibly transferred—evicted from urban areas, thrown off the land or driven from one wretched township to another (Elaine Unterhalter, *Forced Removal* [1987]).

Elsewhere in Africa, the entire Asian (largely Indian) population of Uganda, some 50,000 people, was forcibly expelled in the fall of 1972 by the bloody dictator Idi Amin. The British imperialists had originally brought the Indians to East Africa in the 1890s to build the East African Railroad. The Indians evolved into the dominant force in the country's retail trade—for which Amin attacked them as the "brown Jews of East Africa." The expulsion of the Asians triggered an orgy of plundering of their stores, homes and property by an aspiring black petty bourgeoisie composed of army officers and their cronies. As we wrote of Amin's expulsion of Asians and massacres of rival tribes: "Nationalism in power, even the nationalism of a formerly oppressed people, strives to compact a racially homogeneous state through the brutal methods of bourgeois nation-state building: forced assimilation, expulsion or genocide of racial and national minorities" (WV No. 118, 16 July 1976).

When various African and other Third World nationalists attempt "nation-building" in this epoch, they are blocked by the legacy and continued domination of imperialism. Leon Trotsky's theory and program of permanent revolution explained that in the colonial and neo-colonial countries, the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, including the just and democratic resolution of the national question, can only be accomplished under the dictatorship of the proletariat, led by a Bolshevik party.

Racism and "Ethnic Cleansing"

To read the imperialist press, one would get the impression that "ethnic cleansing" is only carried out by backward tribal peoples motivated by "ancient feuds" and national rivalries. Actually, the rise of nationalism accompanies the spread of capitalism, and forced population transfers are carried out by some of the most "civilized" nations. Recently, as the Soviet Union was breaking up, the capitalist West was seized with sympathy for the cause of the Christian Armenians fighting with the Muslim Azeris over control of the mountainous region of Nagorno-Karabakh in the Caucasus, one of the most nationally diverse and interpenetrated areas of the world. There was plenty of publicity for the grisly pogrom against Armenians in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, but almost nothing about the systematic "ethnic cleansing" by the Armenians.

This war broke out in 1988 as Gorbachev's perestroika fueled national conflicts across the borderlands of the Soviet Union, with the more economically advanced areas following the logic of the capitalist market in seeking to gain advantage at the expense of their less-developed neighbors. (Similarly, the breakup of Yugoslavia was spearheaded by the economically more prosperous Slovenia and Croatia.) One quarter of the population of the mainly Armenian

enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, an autonomous region in Azerbaijan, was Azeri, but they have now been entirely driven out as both sides have waged a gruesome war of burned villages, mutilations and massacres. In the five years of fighting, more than half a million people have been driven from their homes throughout Armenia and Azerbaijan.



Imperial War Museum, London

Communist-led Yugoslav Partisans, May 1944. Tito's anti-Nazi struggle which overthrew capitalism laid basis for unity of the peoples of Yugoslavia.

The fighting is by no means limited to the disputed enclave. Last April, the Armenians seized a wide swath of territory, driving tens of thousands of Azeri villagers from their homes as they established a northern corridor to Nagorno-Karabakh, in effect annexing it. But the Armenians' fire is not directed solely against the Azeris. In May 1992, Armenian forces opened a southern corridor to Nagorno-Karabakh by taking the village of Lachin. When Lachin was burned to the ground by Armenian troops, buried in the press reports was a scant mention of the fact that this town was the center of the *Kurdish* population in the region. Jonathan Steele reported in the *London Guardian* (25 May 1992) that the Armenian foreign minister had issued "an extraordinary statement...claiming that Lachin's 'Kurdish population' agreed to open the corridor to Armenia." If this were true, observed Steele, "local Kurds might have been expected to welcome the Armenian liberators. There were none in sight."

It's not so extraordinary as all that, however. This echoes the Israeli Zionists' claim that in 1948 the Palestinian Arabs abandoned their homes of their own volition. In reality, this was a classic case of "ethnic cleansing" on a massive scale. Through a campaign of massacres and atrocities designed to terrorize the Palestinian Arabs and drive them off the land, the Zionists depopulated some 350 Arab towns and drove out 700,000 Palestinian refugees. Zionist leader Ben-Gurion called it "the cleaning up of the Arab settlements" (Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949* [1987]).

The UN partition resolution of 29 November 1947, which envisaged dividing Palestine into a Jewish and a Palestinian Arab state (in which the Zionists, who owned only 6 percent of the land in Palestine, were supposed to get about 55 percent of the country), touched off a communal war between the Arab and Hebrew-speaking peoples for control of the same territory. In May 1948, as the British withdrew from Palestine, a second war, overlapping with the communal conflict, broke out between Israel and the Arab states. The war between the Zionists and the Arab states was prepared by a series of meetings between the Zionists and the Hashemite monarchy of Trans-Jordan, ensuring that the most substantial Arab force, Trans-Jordan's Arab Legion, would not infringe on the lands allotted by the UN for the Zionists.

In the communal war, the Zionists had from the start an overwhelming military

advantage over the Palestinian Arabs. The British had tolerated the existence of the "official" Zionist units of the Haganah and Palmach, even training and arming them in 1937 to help smash the 1936-39 Arab Revolt, and again during World War II. The Arab village militias had no training or arms stocks, and got scant support from the Arab League,

typhus and other diseases "will break out heavily in April and May among Arabs" (Erskine Childers, "The Wordless Wish: From Citizens to Refugees," in Ibrahim Abu-Lughod (ed.), *The Transformation of Palestine* [1971]).

"Operation Passover Cleansing" (*Bi'ur Hametz*) was the name the Haganah gave to its April 1948 drive to expel the 70,000-strong Arab population from the mixed city of Haifa. This name refers to the Jewish tradition of burning all leaven (*hametz*) found in the house on the night before the Passover festival. The orders given to the 22nd Battalion (Carmeli Brigade) were "to kill every [adult male] Arab encountered" and to burn "all objectives that can be set alight." In a scene reminiscent of today's Sarajevo, Zionist artillery and sniper fire rained down from Mt. Carmel and Haifa's heights onto the terrified Arab residents. While loudspeakers shrieked their "horror sounds" and buildings were bombarded around them, the panicked population raced toward the port area as countless old men, women and children were trampled in the panic or caught in the hail of Zionist gunfire.

An article by Guy Erlich in the Tel Aviv paper *Ha'ir* (6 May 1992) cites the former director of the Israeli army archives, Ariyeh Yitzhaki, who, based on his unique access to government documents, estimates that in the 1948 war the Israelis committed "at least 20 large massacres" of more than 50 people and about one hundred "small massacres." Yitzhaki goes on: "For many Israelis it was easy to cling to the false claim that the Arabs left the country because that was what their leaders ordered. That is a total lie. The fundamental cause for the flight of the Arabs was their fear of the Israelis' violence, and that fear had a basis in reality. From almost every report which appears in the army's archives about the occupation of Arab villages during May-July 1948, the height of confrontations with the Arab villagers, there comes the smell of a massacre."

For Proletarian Internationalism!

"Ethnic cleansing" is simply the implementation of the program inherent in all nationalism. As Marxists, we oppose all forms of nationalism and fight for proletarian *internationalism*. With regard to the Arab-Israel war of 1948, the Trotskyist program is for revolutionary defeatism in the fighting between the Arab and Zionist armies, and for self-defense of villages and settlements under attack. In the ethnic-nationalist wars wracking the former Yugoslavia, we likewise take no side. But the victory of Tito's Partisans after World War II

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which was just as opposed as the Zionists to the creation of a Palestinian Arab state. The Zionist military "Plan D" (Plan Dalet), which was put into operation as the British began to withdraw, was a green light for field commanders to carry out "ethnic cleansing" on a massive scale. Here are some key provisions:

"Destruction of villages (setting fire to, blowing up, and planting mines in the debris), especially those population centers which are difficult to control continuously. "Mounting combing and control operations according to the following guidelines: encirclement of the village and conducting a search inside it. In the event of resistance, the armed force must be wiped out and the population must be expelled outside the borders of the state."

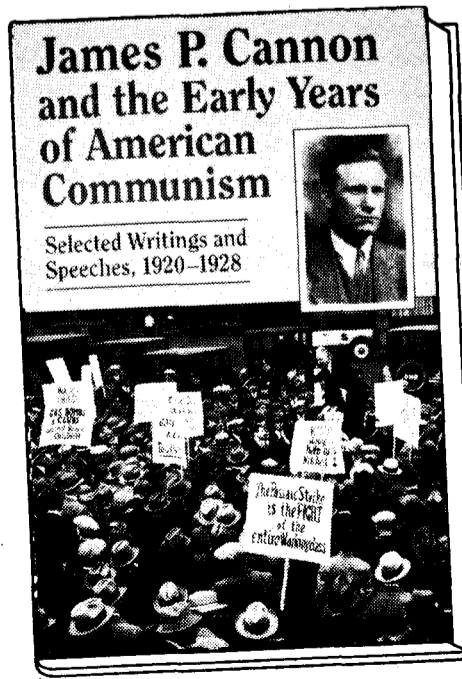
—*Journal of Palestine Studies* (Autumn 1988)

Zionist attacks on Arab villages were carefully coordinated with "psychological warfare" tactics designed to sow terror among the Arab population. Haganah loudspeaker vans were invariably used during attacks, broadcasting what one Israeli officer described as "horror sounds"—shrieks, wails, sirens and anguished moans of Arab women—interrupted with cries in Arabic of "Flee for your lives! The Jews are using poison gas." Free Hebrew Radio broadcasts contained threats in Arabic that cholera,

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China...

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However, it is clear that the abandonment of central economic planning, the selling of large chunks of coastal China to the imperialists, and other market measures generating vast disparities in wealth have enormously strengthened the forces for capitalist counterrevolution. The contradictions of the "socialist market economy" will be resolved either by the intervention of the working class to stop capitalist restoration and extend socialist revolution to the rest of Asia, or by the destruction of the workers state and the transformation of China into a superexploited neocolony completely subordinated to world imperialism.

The Masses Raise Their Heads

Following Deng's 1992 Guangdong tour, authorities called on state factories to "crack the three irons"—inflexible wages, permanent jobs for officials and lifetime jobs for ordinary laborers. A leading official in the Labor Ministry recently called for dismantling the "traditional labor employment system" in favor of "market-oriented employment mechanisms." The National Coal Corporation has already laid off 100,000 workers and plans to get rid of another 300,000 in the next two years. The giant Wuhan Iron and Steel works has announced plans to lay off two-thirds of its 120,000 employees.

Adding insult to injury, millions of workers recently had up to a month's wages docked to "buy" government bonds whose interest rate was too low to attract investors. A new burden on the working class is the destruction of the *dang wei* (work units) in the factories, schools and countryside. A worker who is laid off now loses not only his job but the health care, housing and other social benefits that came with it. Women workers, who have made tremendous gains since 1949, are being especially targeted for dismissal by managers who don't want to pay for maternity leave.

Politically atomized, the working class is lashing back in any way it can. In late March, 300 workers at the Canon copier plant in the Zhuhai SEZ in Guangdong struck for three days to win pay increases, though the company finally granted a raise far below the inflation rate. When a state ball-bearing plant in Harbin was turned into a joint venture with a Hong Kong firm, workers demanded early retirement by getting certificates of mental illness! Since the State Council authorized state enterprises to decide their own wages and work rules last July, there has been a steady stream of strikes, sit-ins, protests, disruptions of production, and attacks by dismissed workers against managers and equipment. One Wuhan factory manager was killed by laid-off employees, another at a Liaoning province oil refinery was stabbed by a worker, the head of a Shanxi province factory was shot, etc.

The workers' outrage has reportedly led the authorities to stop promoting the slogan of "cracking the three irons." Cities like Shanghai are now implementing special funds to help offset inflation, and a new regulation orders state factories to place laid off workers in new jobs. As the deputy secretary general of the Wuhan municipal government remarked, "We can't just throw people into the streets.... If they can't move from one iron rice bowl to another, we have to at least give them a rice bowl made of mud" (*New York Times*, 11 May). At the same time, the bureaucracy has reportedly made "secret plans to quell worker unrest," issuing a directive that "security work should be strengthened at factories, oilfields, mines and other key state projects to prevent people with ulterior motives from stirring up workers to riot" (*Chicago Tribune*, 15 October 1992).

Reported widespread peasant unrest adds a powerful mix to the seething anger in the working class. Even Deng

has warned that the peasants' "burden has already surpassed the limits of their endurance." Due to government investment policy, which since the mid-1980s has been directed away from rural areas and toward the cities to develop industries attractive to foreign capital, as many as 80 million peasants have flooded into the cities to get jobs as low-paid day laborers.

Peasant incomes average half of urban incomes and continue to drop. While most city residents pay no taxes, peasants are subject to arbitrary levies by local officials to finance pet projects or simply to add to their personal wealth. So now tax collectors are being attacked throughout the country. The Renshou county riots erupted after the local government tried to collect taxes to finance a road construction project. Peasants in central Henan disrupted traffic on a new rail line to protest building costs, while in Guangdong several thousand peasants blocked a highway with their trucks in June to demand more compensation for land taken from them along the road.

Along with unemployment and a growing gap between haves and have-nots, "market reforms" have brought a whole range of social scourges which had been wiped out after the 1949 Revolution. Corruption has become a way of life particularly among the despised *taizidang* children of the bureaucracy. Crime is booming in coastal areas, where police get their take from smuggling consumer items. The suicide rate is on the rise, while the number of mental patients has doubled in the last decade. The slave trade in women has been revived, as 19,000 young women were reportedly kidnapped last year and sold to peasants as "wives." A *Boston Globe* (16 May) article on "The Great Boom of China" noted:

"Corruption is at levels inconceivable in the days when true believers in communism and socialism dominated the country, and it is spreading wildly. So are financial and real estate speculation, prostitution and begging in the streets."

Also tearing at the fabric of the Chinese deformed workers state is the regionalism spawned by a decentralized economy. It was the "market socialism" introduced by Tito in multinational Yugoslavia that spurred secessionist appetites in the economically more advanced regions of Slovenia and Croatia, touching off the nationalist bloodletting which destroyed the deformed workers state. In China, the main threat may be from regional "economic warlords" who could care less what directives Beijing issues. Local officials take part in joint ventures with foreign capitalists, and some are building up their fiefdoms by selling state property outright. Cantonese-speaking Guangdong, home to 50 percent of foreign capital investment in China, is economically and culturally bound to capitalist Hong Kong. To the north, Fujian province is dominated by Taiwanese capital. At the same time, the old clans have been making a comeback. A political crisis in Beijing could tear these areas away from the center.

The lure of private enterprise has also infected the People's Liberation Army (PLA), which "now amounts to a highly diversified corporate conglomerate with ventures ranging from hotels to motor works to herbal medicines" (*Boston Globe*, 17 May). A recent article in Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post* (7 July) pointed to the growing rift between army commanders busily enriching themselves and demoralized rank-and-file soldiers who are on the outside looking in. On the occasion of the PLA's 66th anniversary in late July, its two top commanders warned in a major article in the *People's Daily* of "a growing tide of corruption, money worshipping and hedonism." While the PLA may be the last centralized component of the Chinese state, its command structure is divided regionally. The headline in the 3 July *Liberation Army Daily*, "Strictly Control the Army," shows Beijing's fear of these centrifugal forces.

There are also genuine national ques-

tions among the Mongol, Tibetan, Turkic and other minorities, whose rights to autonomy are acknowledged by the constitution but have never been fully honored. In May, Tibet was wracked by protests against inflation that quickly took on political demands against the central government, as 4,000 Tibetans attacked police and Han Chinese businessmen who have flocked to this remote mountain area in search of quick riches. North of Tibet, the Muslim Uighurs of Xinkiang are closely related to the peoples of the former Soviet Central Asian republics, now facing rising Islamic fundamentalist forces.

There is yet time for an aroused proletariat to enter the political field and pose a socialist alternative to the chaos that lies ahead. A revolutionary workers and peasants government would expropriate foreign capital and reverse the disintegrating effects of the decentralized economy by establishing genuine workers democracy as the basis for reviving the planned economy. It would grant full rights of self-determination to the country's national minorities and would come to the aid of beleaguered Vietnam, making amends for the criminal invasion launched by China in 1979 as a cat's paw for U.S. imperialism.

Most importantly, it would promote the struggle for socialist revolution throughout the region, from the capitalist statelets of Hong Kong and Taiwan to Russia, South Korea and the imperialist industrial powerhouse of Japan. Only through integration into a socialist Asia can real modernization for both the cities and the countryside be achieved, and living standards raised to the highest level.

Lessons of the Tiananmen Upheaval

China's working class showed its capacity for militant struggle during the 1989 Tiananmen events. As we noted at the time, it was the entry of the workers into the student democracy protests that threw the Stalinist regime into crisis, opening up the possibility of proletarian political revolution. This was despite the hostility of student leaders who sought to bar workers' delegations from the main protest area in Tiananmen Square. We noted that the repression following the suppression of the protests, including the meting out of dozens of death sentences, was aimed particularly at worker militants:

"The Western media usually describes the oppositional forces in China as 'the student movement for democracy.' But it was the beginnings of a working-class revolt against Deng's program of 'building socialism with capitalist methods' which gave the protests their mass and potentially revolutionary nature. Organized workers' contingents started to participate in the marches, and it was the threat of a general strike which led Li Peng to order martial law in mid-May."
—"Defend Chinese Workers!"
WV No. 480, 23 June 1989

Now a new book confirms that it was the mobilization of the proletariat which drove the regime into a frenzy and led to the crackdown:

"There was no massacre in Tiananmen Square on the night of June 3. But on the western approach roads...there was a bloodbath that claimed hundreds of lives when the People's Liberation Army found its path blocked by a popular uprising that was being fueled by despair and rage.... What took place was the slaughter not of students but of ordinary workers and residents—precisely the target that the Chinese government had intended."

—George Black and Robin Munro, *Black Hands of Beijing* (John Wiley & Sons, 1993)

Pro-socialist workers often carried placards with portraits of Mao Tse-tung. The meaning was clear: while things got pretty crazy in Mao's time, at least they had jobs, rice and housing, and everybody wasn't out to get rich by screwing the next guy. Even today, a Beijing resident viewing an exhibit honoring the 100th anniversary of Mao's birth commented: "Mao is still revered by the ordinary people. But most of his ideas have been abandoned—class struggle, egalitarianism and a collective life and economic and diplomatic self-reliance."

Actually, Mao's policy was always based on class collaboration and nationalist autarky. But just as the Russian yuppies who flocked to Yeltsin's counter-revolution were the heirs to Brezhnev, so too Mao's China led to Deng's "open door" to imperialism, spawning the *taizidang* would-be exploiters of the Chinese masses. Despite the enormous gains of the 1949 Revolution, the Chinese workers state was deformed from its inception, ruled by a nationalist bureaucracy that prevented the worker and peasant masses from exercising political power. After it took power, the CCP initially banned strikes and for several years maintained a "coalition government of four classes" including representatives of the bourgeoisie.

For many years, "Communist China" was the bête noir of American imperialism. Pentagon hardliners urged nuking the "Chicom" during the Korean War. During the 1960s, as nationalist antagonisms between the Stalinist regimes in Moscow and Beijing grew, Khrushchev's Kremlin sought to ingratiate itself with Washington in the name of "peaceful coexistence," while Mao struck a more militant posture. But as we noted then, Maoism was "Khrushchevism under the gun," and in the historic long run, the Soviet Union was the fundamental obstacle to imperialist designs to reconquer all the deformed workers states.

Based on the Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country," Mao's rule blocked the socialist development of China by aligning with so-called "progressive" capitalist regimes, ultimately embracing an alliance with U.S. imperialism. Even as American B-52s rained death on the Vietnamese people, Mao toasted war criminal Nixon in the Great Hall of the People. In this criminal alliance with the U.S., Mao allowed the CIA to establish "listening posts" along the Soviet border. Deng was simply following in Mao's footsteps when China invaded Vietnam in 1979, only to be ignominiously defeated. Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Beijing played a key supporting role in the biggest CIA operation in history, supporting the reactionary *mujahedin* cutthroats against the Soviet-backed Kabul government.

On the economic front, Mao's attempt to achieve rapid industrialization of this backward peasant country on its own through the "Great Leap Forward" led directly to economic collapse and the starvation of millions of peasants in the early 1960s. The misnamed "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution"—in reality a faction fight by Mao and the PLA leadership under Lin Biao to regain supremacy in the party—wreaked havoc from 1966 to 1976, shutting down high schools and universities and greatly depoliticizing the population. Today foreign corporations are setting up special programs to train technicians and managers among the "lost generation" of barely educated people in their mid-30s to mid-40s.

A truly revolutionary communist party will look nothing like Mao's party. Socialist militants can look instead to the early years of the Chinese CP, founded in 1921 by revolutionary intellectuals and workers inspired by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. From a handful of militants, the party grew by tens of thousands as class struggle broke out, for example the 1922 Hong Kong seamen's strike and general strike, the first labor strikes against imperialist exploitation in China. In 1925, a strike against the foreign concessions in Canton immediately spread to Hong Kong, shutting down the finance center and signaling the beginning of the Second Chinese Revolution. In contrast, today the CCP acts as compradors for British, U.S. and Japanese capital, promising to maintain capitalism after Britain's lease on the Hong Kong colony runs out in 1997.

Mao's party was the product of the defeat of the Chinese proletariat in 1927, prepared by Stalin's policy of subordinating the CCP to the bourgeois Kuomintang of Chiang Kai-shek, who turned on

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ALP Union-Busting...

(continued from page 1)

Valley on 29 July, some 1200 power workers, facing the loss of more than 500 jobs, went on 24-hour strike, earning a warning from state premier Kennett that "the electricity industry in the La Trobe Valley would not survive if the labour force continued to resist efficiency reforms" (*Age*, 29 July). Strike action by both bus and tram workers in Melbourne has been averted only by the grovelling local bureaucrats. In Queensland, the 30,000-strong Teachers Union announced its first strike in more than a decade—again only for one day. Labor premier Goss's minister for education "condemned the teachers' decision as 'industrial action of the worst kind'" (*Weekend Australian*, 31 July-1 August). The Queensland Nurses Union as well have threatened industrial action over budget cuts and jobs. Meatworkers at Townsville who struck in defence of sacked Aboriginal union brother Eddie Alley and won his reinstatement last February (see "Stuart Creek Workers Spike Racist Anti-Union Attack," *ASP* No. 149, Winter 1993) have just returned to work after another strike protesting the assault on a union member by a company foreman.

The ACTU tops aim to channel anger at the vicious anti-union offensive into endless rounds of talks with the government over enterprise bargaining and Accord VII. Thus far, the stirrings of working-class resistance to Keating et al. have been contained to one-day strike actions which for the bureaucrats serve at best as a pressure tactic for negotiations and generally as a mechanism to let off steam at the base. But it doesn't have to go that way. What's needed is a leadership committed to waging hard class struggle and throwing the gauntlet back in Keating, Kennett, Goss and Fahey's faces. For real strike action and mass, militant mobilisations against the whole gamut of attacks on the working class, oppressed and poor!

Labor is presiding over an unemployment level officially well over one million; in Tasmania and Victoria the unemployment figures are now at 12.8 and 12.4 percent respectively; youth face unemployment of up to 45 percent. Working women have been amongst the hardest hit by Accord givebacks and social service cutbacks. It is the responsibility of the organised working class to use its social muscle to fight for *jobs for all—for a sliding scale of wages and hours—30 hours work for 40 hours pay!* For full unemployment compensation at a living wage! Only some 30 percent of the workforce in the private sector in Australia is

now unionised with immigrant workers among those most exploited in non-union sweatshops: *organise the unorganised!* The ACTU tops have joined with the Labor government in vile racist, anti-immigrant protectionism (see article, page 3): *Down with racist protectionist poison! Full citizenship rights for all foreign-born workers!* For a massive wage hike across the board just to begin to make up for the years of Accord wage slashing! The labyrinth of anti-union legislation, including that outlawing secondary strike action, and the whole corporatist edifice tying wage negotiations to the bosses' courts is aimed at stifling the ability of the trade unions to struggle. *For the complete independence of the organisations of the working class from the bosses and their state! Bury Arbitration!*

In order to wage a class-struggle fight it is necessary to break with the pro-capitalist Labor Party leadership and dump the Laborite bureaucrats sitting atop the trade unions. A revolutionary leadership determined to mobilise the power of the multi-racial working class not only against the current round of attacks but against the whole rotting capitalist system must be built in political struggle *against* the Laborite bureaucracy.

Reformism: A Dead End

Whether Keating's Labor Party or Hewson's Liberals rule in Canberra, working people still get the shaft. For its part, Labor offers its greater ties to the trade unions as an "efficient" way to heighten the exploitation of the workforce as opposed to the overt brute force on offer from the Tories. As we wrote in "Depression Elections":

"Labor came to power under Hawke as U.S. imperialism's loyal ally in anti-Soviet Cold War II pledging to use its 'special relationship' with the unions to bolster the bosses' profits by holding down wages. On both counts Hawke surpassed all expectations. Under the class-collaborationist Accord, industrial disputes dropped to the lowest level in decades. When anyone got out of line the ALP government, assisted by the ACTU, carried out open union busting—the BLF in 1986, the pilots in 1989."

Hawke's successor Paul Keating's election took place in the wake of the collapse of Stalinism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and the imperialists' proclamation of a "New World Order"—where the order of the day is untrammelled, rapacious drive for profit, military aggression against and IMF-imposed misery upon the peoples of the Third World, heightened inter-imperialist conflicts and the tightening of the screws against the working class within the Western capitalist countries and Japan. Caught in the vice of growing inter-imperialist rivalries between the U.S. and Japan, Australian capitalism not only seeks a niche as a junior lackey imperialist power and trading partner in the

region but is forced to extract ever more "sacrifices" from the working class at home.

Dispensing fatherly advice to the Keating government on "Workplace reform," the *Australian* (27 July) editorialised:

"If this develops into a test of strength between the Keating Government and the ACTU then the Government must prevail. 'The Government must proceed with the reforms outlined since April by Mr Keating and his Minister for Industrial Relations, Mr Brereton. If the Government buckles the credibility of its micro-economic reform will be at risk. It would jeopardise the good work it has done in deregulating the labour market.'"

In plain English: while the union tops grumble about their "payback" for saving Keating's electoral arse, this bourgeois mouthpiece feels constrained to remind its mates in the ALP that their job is to administer a leaner, meaner capitalism.

This they have been doing with a vengeance. A recent series in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (17 July) took up "the human cost of the recession": "No work, no hope, no escape...this is the prospect facing a growing number of Australians. Call it a welfare society, a workless class or an underclass, it is the same: a group of people excluded from the mainstream, working society." The article noted:

"The generational aspect of unemployment is growing. The ABS figures prepared for the *Herald* reveal that second-generation unemployment is no longer uncommon and has risen rapidly in recent years. There are now 12 per cent of unemployed people aged 15-24 who live at home with an unemployed parent. This compares with 7 per cent three years ago."

A youth services manager quoted in the series reports *three generations* of unemployment in the Fairfield area: this "is referring to generational unemployment amongst typical Anglo-Australian families. But Fairfield also has a high population of newly arrived migrants.... unemployment in the Asian community in Fairfield is *one-in-two*, while it is *one-in-three* in the Arabic community" (emphasis ours).

This "human cost" of increasing immiseration of the population is the inevitable by-product of the *capitalist system* in crisis. No amount of parliamentary tinkering, lobbying or "pressuring" the government—Labor or Liberal—will change the iron-clad rule of this system: the exploitation of labour for profit. This reality has grown increasingly stark in the New World Disorder as the respective national bourgeoisies increase their dog-eat-dog competition, relieved of the political imperative to try to "buy off" a section of the workforce in order to maintain "stability" and relative class peace "at home." We have noted in Europe that as the bourgeoisie moves to dismantle the post-World War II "welfare state" provisions which were used to ward off the "spectre of communism," the subsequent attacks on social

programs, jobs, wages and living conditions has brought forth class battles and a wave of youth radicalisation, accompanied by a growing hatred of the old right-wing social-democratic parties. Here, the bourgeoisie figures it still has a use for the "modernising" Keating Labor mob. It is crystal clear that the working class and oppressed *don't*.

Break With The Labor Traitors—For a Real Communist Party!

In this context, the sub-reformist pabulum pushed by Labor-loyal leftists such as the ISO is nothing short of criminal. Having pulled out all the stops for Labor in every election, we are told in their "Enterprise Bargaining: A no-win game for workers" broadsheet, that: "The sacrifice workers have made over the last ten years of Labor's Accord has been for *nothing*. While profits are up 75% on last year, investment by the employers are the lowest they have been for thirty years. Australian industry is uncompetitive because the bosses themselves have no confidence in their own system!" Perhaps the ISO have some particular advice they'd like to offer to the Australian imperialists about how to make industry more "competitive"? As it is, they offer to the working class only the demand for an "immediate \$8 increase" and plans to petition and lobby the ACTU Congress at the end of this month. Their "model motion" says nothing about *any kind of strike action*, but instead enshrines corporatist "awards" as "the best system for protecting wage levels and all other rights and conditions." "Most ordinary workers have had a gut full of sacrifice and a gut full of Keating" wails *The Socialist* (June/July 1993). How true! But the ISO water-boys for Keating themselves bear responsibility for what the working class has suffered throughout the Labor years—"awarded" if you will through the very "system" to which the ISO is so slavishly loyal. In fact, the ISO's statement is a chemically pure one of fealty to bourgeois democracy.

The possibility of a class fight against Keating's union-busting offensive is palpable. The will to struggle among the multi-racial working class is not in question; what's lacking is the necessary *leadership* to draw together proletarian power in alliance with all the oppressed. As we wrote in our special supplement "From Kennett to Keating, Bury the Union Busters!" distributed at the time of the November 1992 mass strike in Victoria: "What's necessary is to forge a Leninist/Trotskyist party in the course of sharp class struggle, splitting the working class from the pro-capitalist tops of the Labor Party. For revolutionary class struggle on the road to a racially-integrated workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia!" ■

China...

(continued from page 13)

the Communist workers and butchered tens of thousands in Shanghai. Its proletarian base shattered, the CCP under Mao was rebuilt in the countryside as a peasant-nationalist party and guerrilla army. But some dozens of party cadres, including former CCP general secretary Chen Tu-hsiu, were won to the Left Opposition of Leon Trotsky, which alone fought Stalin's disastrous policies. In 1952, the Mao regime rounded up the Chinese Trotskyists, many of whom had led strikes against capitalist employers in defiance of the Stalinists' policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie (see Wang Fan-hsi, *Chinese Revolutionary* [1957]).

For an Internationalist Communist Vanguard!

During the Tiananmen events, student protesters erected a "goddess of democracy" and showed evidence of considerable illusions in the West. Today many of these privileged student veterans

of Tiananmen have made their peace with the Deng regime. As one told the *Washington Post* (23 June): "My friends and I don't even talk about politics anymore. There's no use. Money, that's what we want." Like their earlier Russian counterparts, these would-be yuppie ex-"dissidents" entertain illusions that full integration into the imperialist world market will provide them a life of luxury and turn their country into an advanced economic power. But as the fate of the ex-USSR demonstrates, what the imperialists have in mind in fomenting counter-revolution is not the development of new capitalist competitors but the creation of low-wage neocolonies to expand their own arenas for exploitation.

Now that the former Soviet Union has been destroyed, the imperialists have begun shifting away from their earlier benign and supportive attitude to China's regional "great power" ambitions. At the height of Mao and Deng's despicable anti-Soviet alliance with U.S. imperialism, we warned that Washington would quickly go after the far weaker Chinese deformed workers state if the Soviet Union was defeated. That is now

happening. The ASEAN countries, Southeast Asia's analogue to NATO's European Community, have been clamoring about an increased military threat posed by China. Japan's foreign minister recently mooted the possibility of developing a nuclear arsenal.

Now sections of the U.S. bourgeoisie, like the *New York Times*, scream for punitive measures against China, putatively in the guise of "humanitarian" concern over its use of prison labor for producing exports. The provocative sale of advanced F-16 fighter jets to Taiwan last year "reflected the Pentagon's belief that the United States needs to do something to confront and rein in China's growing military power. U.S. defense sources say that over the past two years, since the breakup of the Soviet Union, there has been a growing tendency among some Pentagon officials to treat China as a potential enemy" (*Los Angeles Times*, 15 June).

The only road forward for China lies in internationalist revolutionary struggle. A workers political revolution really would send peals of thunder out of China. It would electrify the massive

Japanese working class, which for the first time in postwar history is confronted with the threat of serious unemployment, and provide a beacon to the proletarian masses throughout capitalist Southeast Asia and the Pacific Rim, who chafe under the stranglehold of robber-baron police-state regimes. For years, the Stalinist regime tolerated Hong Kong—which controls 60 percent of China's foreign trade—as a capitalist enclave on its periphery, a staging ground for the revanchist ambitions of the Chinese bourgeoisie. But this gateway for imperialist expansion into China can also be an avenue for bringing revolutionary propaganda to the Chinese working class.

While the Chinese proletariat suffered a defeat at Tiananmen, it was not crushed. What the International Communist League said in June 1989 holds every bit as true today: "The central lesson of the Beijing spring and the urgent task which stands before the Chinese workers is the forging of an authentic communist party, an internationalist vanguard."

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 582, 13 August 1993

SWP...

(continued from page 5)

by the Socialist Workers Party—the only organisation on the left to have survived the 1980s with any confidence.”

Anti-Labour Name, Labour-Loyal Game

As Trotsky noted, the British Communist Party became nothing other than a third-rate version of the Labour Party, organised independently but programmatically indistinguishable. Ditto for the SWP. The Cliffites left the Labour Party in 1968 for purely opportunistic reasons. Cold War I had worn off, it was the height of the New Left radicalisation around the Vietnam War, and Labour prime minister Harold Wilson—a flunkey for the U.S.—was not exactly popular with newly radicalising youth.

Tony Cliff caught which way the wind was blowing, opting to take his followers out of the Labour Party. Realising that their Cold War pro-imperialist line over Korea was hardly going to sell to young militants in the Vietnam antiwar movement, the SWP manufactured a difference between the two wars in order to come out in support of the Vietcong. Since the British never sent any troops to Vietnam, it was cheap to strike a leftist pose. But a year following its departure from the Labour Party, the SWP once again grovelled to British imperialism with its support to the Labour government's dispatch of troops to Northern Ireland: “The breathing space provided by the presence of British troops is short but vital.”

Despite having existed outside the Labour Party for the past 25 years, the complete sham of the SWP's anti-Labour posture was captured in an article by Socialist Organiser's Sean Matgamna (*Socialist Organiser*, 19 November 1992). Although Matgamna's point was to attack the Cliffites from the right for its failure to build the Bennite “left” within the Labour Party, he does a nice job in exposing the Cliffites' abject hypocrisy,

using longtime SWP spokesman Paul Foot as his foil:

“In the 1979 General Election the SWP while proclaiming itself ‘the socialist alternative’ to the Labour Party, declined to put up candidates, backed the Labour Party!... It fell to Foot, in a much-quoted interview in the *London Evening Standard*, to express the SWP's dualism, the approach which left the political labour movement to the right wing, in all its crassness. He said:

‘For the next three weeks I am a strong Labour supporter. I am very anxious that a Tory government shouldn't be returned, and I shall be going around to meetings we are having telling everyone to vote Labour’ (9 April 1979).’

Matgamna concludes: “In his role of SWP ambassador to the bourgeoisie and the media, Foot often blurted out the truth about the SWP's politics, without the usual ‘socialist’ obfuscation and phrasemongering. Michael Foot's nephew Paul is thus a useful man to have around.”

The 1979 General Elections followed five years of the Wilson/Callaghan government in which wage controls (the “social contract”) had been imposed on the working class, and army and police strikebreakers were used against firemen, ambulance workers and Glasgow dustmen. In this period, in an effort to help the labour bureaucracy “maintain unity” against the Tories, the SWP stopped running even token campaigns in parliamentary elections, and they have not done so since. When workers' rage exploded in the “winter of discontent” of 1978-79, the Spartacist League called for a general strike, pointing out that defence of the interests of the proletariat meant toppling the Labour government through class struggle, with the perspective of fighting for workers rule. This slogan had no takers from the SWP and the legions of the fake left, who are perfectly happy to call for a “general strike” as long as it is not “their” (Labour) government which is in office.

In the spring 1979 elections there was a large section of militant workers, including those who had struck during the “winter of discontent,” who hated the Tory candidate Thatcher, but didn't want

to vote for Labour. The SL gave no support to Labour, and called on the unions to run candidates against Labour, on a full revolutionary programme. In contrast, the SWP campaigned for Labour on the particularly grotesque slogan of “defend the unions—keep the Tories out,” notwithstanding the fact that the unions had been pounded by the Labour government for the past five years, and that Labour had been in a corridor coalition with the Liberals. Thus, at a time when a section of the working class could have been politically broken from the LP, the Cliffites sought to steer them back into the Labourite fold.

At times it is principled for Marxists to offer critical electoral support to bourgeois workers parties like the LP, when it is running independently of the bourgeois parties and is not decisively identified with openly anti-working-class or pro-imperialist policies. The tactic of critical support presupposes running open communist candidates against Labour, resources permitting. As such it can be a useful tactic in forging a Bolshevik party through splitting the working-class base from the pro-capitalist tops of the Labour Party. But the SWP's ritual support to Labour—including to scabherder Kinnock in 1992—as well as its refusal to challenge Labour, manifestly constitutes a political loyalty oath to the LP.

For Revolutionary Regroupments! For Lenin's Communism!

As the workings of capitalist imperialism create millions of new subjective communists across the globe, the absence of genuinely communist leadership is felt by many. But what kind of “leadership” is being offered by Tony Cliff's SWP?

To militant miners and their allies in Britain they offer bigger parades on Parliament, combined with appeals on the TUC labour traitors to call a “general strike,” and pusillanimous letters to Norman Willis asking “What have you done, Norman?” In their “Miners' Open Letter to the TUC Leader,” the SWP bleats that “The history of the trade union movement is littered with acts of betrayal and cowardice. If you don't act now, your place in this roll call will be secure.” But Willis' “place in this roll call” was already secure, as was demonstrated when striking miners hung a noose by his head during the 1984-85 coal strike.

To militant youth who want to fight against fascist terror, the SWP offers the resurrection of its “Anti Nazi League.” Originally set up in the 1970s, with the endorsement of Liberals, church leaders and Labour Party politicians like Neil Kinnock, this outfit should have more appropriately been called the “Avoid the Nazis League.” In 1978, close to 2000 fascists marched through the Asian-populated Brick Lane area of London. Despite repeated appeals by immigrant groups in the East End, calling on the ANL to mobilise to stop the fascists, some 60-100,000 people were mobilised instead for an “anti-racist” rock carnival on the other side of town.

At the time Cliff argued that if they had gone to Brick Lane “the result would have been”... the “disintegrating of the ANL,” i.e., the disintegration of the SWP's popular front alliance. Today, the ANL is simply making straight out appeals to capitalist rulers to clamp down on the very fascist forces that their decrepit system has spawned.

In any case, what kind of “revolutionary alternative” could be offered by an organisation which championed the forces of capitalist reaction in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union? Now the SWP promises an anti-capitalist fight-back. Are you going to buy it?

The International Communist League fights for a communist leadership worthy of the name—for a world party of socialist revolution, the Fourth International founded by Leon Trotsky. Contrary to the SWP “state capitalists,” the counter-

revolutionary tide sweeping Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union today only underscores Trotsky's fight for the unconditional defence of the gains of the October Revolution against imperialist attack and internal capitalist restoration.

In opposition to conservative Stalinist bureaucracies, we actively fought for the restoration of the proletarian internationalist understanding of the founding Bolsheviks, that an isolated workers state could not survive indefinitely under the pressures of world imperialism. Over Afghanistan, where the Soviet Army was pitted against the forces of Islamic reaction, we declared “Hail Red Army in Afghanistan! Extend social gains of October to Afghan peoples!” In 1981, the ICL stood alone on the left in calling to “Stop Solidarność counterrevolution in Poland!”

When the Berlin Wall was opened, we intervened intensively in the DDR with all the forces we could muster. This intervention was capped by our initiation of the massive anti-fascist mobilisation in Trepow Park in East Berlin in solidarity with the Red Army which smashed Hitler, where our speakers took the podium to call for the organisation of workers' and soldiers' councils to oppose capitalist reunification and carry out political revolution. In August 1991, we called on the workers of Moscow to smash the forces of Yeltsin-Bush counterrevolution—a mobilisation which would have been a point of departure towards proletarian political revolution to preserve and regenerate the gains of October.

Our forces are small and our achievements modest. To resolve the disproportion between this and our task of building genuine communist parties on every continent, we fight to win subjectively revolutionary elements to the programme of Leninist internationalism. Without a revolutionary party, there can be no workers revolution—and what this country needs is proletarian revolution. As we wrote in our article launching the International Communist League:

“We take our stand on the authentic communist tradition of the Bolsheviks who made the Russian Revolution. We choose the communism that had Lenin as its greatest teacher in the imperialist epoch. We choose the communism of Lenin's comrade Trotsky, who beginning as early as 1923 understood the main lines of what needed to be done. We choose the communism that Stalin utterly betrayed as he deliberately destroyed the Third International. We choose the communism of a new Fourth International that will do away once and for all with the exploitation of man by man and establish a socialist society based on a new vision of the continual expansion of human freedom in all spheres: in politics, economics, culture and in every aspect of personal life.”

— “International Communist League Launched,” *Spartacist* No. 43-44, Summer 1989 ■

“Ethnic Cleansing”...

(continued from page 12)

showed that, despite centuries of ethnic conflict and the vivid memories of the recent history of communalist massacres by Croatian Ustasha and Serbian Chetniks, unity of the South Slav peoples and other inhabitants of Yugoslavia was possible, on the basis of proletarian state power.

However, Tito's regime was a bureaucratically deformed workers state, and the Stalinist bureaucracy's nationalist perspective of “socialism in one country” prevented the national question from being fully resolved. Tito's “market socialism” reinforced glaring regional dis-

parities, such as between backward Kosovo and relatively developed Slovenia, fueling the rise of nationalist forces within the bureaucracy. As we wrote in the conclusion of our two-part series on “The National Question in Yugoslavia” (*WV* Nos. 106 and 110, 23 April and 21 May 1976):

“The bankruptcy of Titoism and its failure to resolve the national questions only serve to demonstrate that even in those exceptional circumstances where they have overthrown the bourgeoisie, the Stalinists—of all stripes—are incapable of fully solving even democratic revolutionary tasks. Tito's acquiescence in Stalin's sabotage of the Greek revolution has left a quarter million or more Macedonians under capitalist oppression. Moreover, the inability to wage any but an isolated nationalist struggle against Kremlin overlordship meant that the 1948 break with Moscow effectively shelved all hopes for a Balkan federation. The divided Albanian and Macedonian populations are today pawns in the inter-bureaucratic squabbling of Moscow, Peking and Belgrade.


“Now even the great achievements of the Yugoslav revolution—the overthrow of capitalist property relations and the overcoming of bloody national conflicts which racked bourgeois Yugoslavia—are themselves threatened by the bureaucracy's fostering (largely against its own will) of centrifugal forces. The conditions are being accumulated for a bloody civil war in Yugoslavia, and, given the regional economic differences, one which may well be cloaked in the form of a ‘national liberation’ struggle. This is the legacy of Titoism, of Stalinism ‘with a human face.’ It is a legacy that the working masses must overcome by constructing a Trotskyist vanguard party capable of carrying through a workers political revolution to oust the Tito bureaucracy and thereby create the conditions for international extension of the revolution.”

With the bloody demise of the Yugoslav deformed workers state, genuine communists must fight for socialist revolution against all the capitalist regimes, on the basis of an internationalist program for a Socialist Federation of the Balkans within a Socialist United States of Europe. ■

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“Free Market” Misery Fuels Exodus Explosion Builds in China

The dramatic sight of a ship jammed with Chinese emigrants disgorging its human cargo as the *Golden Venture* ran aground off New York City in June highlighted the plight of the many thousands fleeing the effects of capitalist market “reforms” in the People’s Republic of China. The smuggler ship’s name aptly captures the aspirations of the new Chinese millionaires and foreign investors who see a clear field for exploitation in the country’s burgeoning “free market.” But the cracking of the “iron rice bowl”—the guarantee of lifetime employment and social welfare ushered in by the 1949 Revolution—has meant untold misery for hundreds of millions of workers and peasants in the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state.

A couple of months ago, it seemed as if every major U.S. newspaper featured a “special report” on China’s booming economy. Long gone are Western recriminations over the bloody suppression of the Tiananmen uprising four years ago. Hailing “China: The Emerging Economic Powerhouse of the 21st Century,” *Business Week* (17 May) gushed that “The Chinese are rushing toward prosperity—and there seems no stopping their momentum,” and urged the Clinton administration to embark on “A New China Policy for a New China.” The *New York Times* (23 July) headlined: “China, Barreling Along the Capitalist Road, Now Posts Strict Speed Limits.” And the mouthpiece of the Swiss bankers, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (23 March) asked, “China’s Economy as a Model of Reform?”

By dismantling central economic planning, loosening monetary controls and opening huge swaths of coastal China for foreign exploitation over the past 14 years, Deng Xiaoping’s “socialism with Chinese characteristics” had seemingly created a fifth “Asian tiger,” potentially dwarfing Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and the Philippines. To keep population growth down, the bureaucracy imposed mandatory birth control and sterilization policies, restricting families to one child each. The International Monetary Fund and the CIA now rank Deng’s China as the world’s third largest economy, trailing only the U.S. and Japan. Disgruntled ex-bureaucrats in the former Soviet Union and imperialist spokesmen alike see in the “Chinese road” of creeping capitalist restoration tightly controlled by the ruling Communist Party apparatus a positive model in contrast to the chaos of Yeltsin’s Russia.

The London *Independent* (30 November 1992) remarked last year: “As Russia’s economy sinks deeper into crisis, many are now looking with envy at Peking’s successful reforms.” But eight months later, the same paper wrote, “As Russia stumbles to its feet, the ‘Chinese model’ is collapsing” (*Independent*, 22 July). What is behind this shift?

The steady accumulation of enormous contradictions in China’s economy and society has turned the country into a pressure cooker waiting to explode. Deng’s injunction that “to get rich is glorious” has fueled the rise of a layer of greedy speculators and entrepreneurs, most of them drawn from the *taizidang*—the “prince’s party” of privileged off-

spring of top bureaucrats who are well-situated to rake in payoffs for their *guanxi* (connections) in the apparatus. Deng’s “open door” policy, grotesquely recalling the imperialist encroachment at the turn of the century, has turned much of the coastal region into “special economic zones” rife with corruption and exploitation. This in turn has exacerbated skyrocketing disparities between town and country and from area to area, leading to the growth of regional “warlordism.”

Seething unrest among the peasantry has erupted in more than 200 disturbances in the past year alone, including a virtual revolt by 10,000 farmers in Ren-

working people after the 1989 crackdown, is rapidly diminishing among regional officials, who chafe at new restrictions on spending and investment while attempting to lure foreign capital into joint ventures. As a London *Independent* (2 July) columnist noted:

“Fear of widespread social unrest may be growing in the corridors of power. The 1989 democracy movement won support from people furious with inflation and corruption. This time both problems are accompanied by far bigger regional disparities in wealth and much broader dissatisfaction among the peasants. Added to that, poorly paid state industry workers are losing the old life-long benefits of the ‘iron rice bowl’ system and becoming more strident.”

The fate of the Chinese Revolution

For Workers Political Revolution!



Neal Ulevich—AP

Coal miners in Tangshan: proletariat can halt march toward capitalist restoration.

shou county last June. Laid-off workers have taken to attacking and even killing their factory directors. At the same time, frustration is growing among small-time speculators scrambling to get on the gravy train. In one incident last August, 50,000 would-be investors rampaged through the southern city of Shenzhen near Hong Kong when they were cut out of an advertised release of new stocks. Capital flight surpassed \$30 billion last year, up two-thirds from the year before, while the trade deficit doubled over two months this spring. Inflation is running at 21 percent in the cities, and a cash shortage in the countryside means that workers’ remittances to their hard-pressed peasant families are being “paid” with worthless chits.

Worried bureaucrats in Beijing are now scrambling to halt the *guo ri* (overheating) of the economy which could make the boom go bust in short order. At the beginning of July, Communist Party head Jiang Zemin announced a new effort to slow down the runaway economy and fight corruption among state officials. Liberal deputy prime minister Zhu Rongji, who some call “China’s Gorbachev,” took over direct control of the People’s Bank. Zhu threatened to “cut off the heads” of bureaucrats who withheld cash from the peasants, and dispatched “investigation teams” throughout the country to whip local bureaucrats into line. But the party’s authority, almost nil among the

hangs in the balance, and the situation is moving very quickly. Since a burgeoning workers revolt was headed off by bloody repression in June 1989, the situation in China has only worsened. Today more than ever, only the overthrow of the sellout nationalist bureaucracy through political revolution by China’s powerful proletariat—uniting behind it the hundreds of millions of poor and displaced peasants and linking up with proletarian struggle in Korea and Japan—can halt the march toward capitalist restoration and anarchy. The task for revolutionary intellectuals and militant workers who want to fight for a socialist future in China is the building of an authentically Leninist vanguard party, part of a reborn Trotskyist Fourth International.

Chinese Stalinism at a Dead End

The looming crisis in China is the direct result of more than a decade of “market socialist” reforms. Following the anarchy of Mao Tse-tung’s “Cultural Revolution” and the subsequent purge of the “Gang of Four,” the Deng Xiaoping regime sought to achieve the “Four Modernizations” (in agriculture, industry, technology and the military) by discarding central economic planning for a hybrid mix of state industries and privately owned plants dominated by foreign capital. State industries were subjected to “profit” accountability with the aim of increasing efficiency. Agricultural com-

munes were liquidated and private commerce encouraged in the countryside. Millions of dislocated peasants flocked to the new “special economic zones” (SEZ), reminiscent of the foreign concessions held by colonial powers in prerevolutionary China, to slave up to 16 hours a day with no union protection and at wages well below those in Hong Kong and Taiwan. In a highly publicized January 1992 tour of the booming SEZs of Guangdong province, Deng voiced his approval by calling on “reformers” to “do it faster.”

As China’s economy continues to expand by more than 10 percent annually, the Stalinists in their Zhongnanhai compound have become the envy of former Soviet bureaucrats (and are seen as a model by the beleaguered Stalinist regimes in Hanoi and Havana). Unlike Yeltsin’s Russia, Deng’s China is attractive to investors, especially Chinese capital in Hong Kong and Taiwan, who seized on the country’s literate but low-paid workforce to turn coastal China into a “production platform” for the “little tigers” of Southeast Asia. To the Chinese Stalinists, a steadily booming economy meant they could buy off the population with rising incomes, hoping to avoid the fate of their Soviet counterparts. Right-wing American journalist Robert Novak enthuses about the “new China”: “Somber old Shanghai is returning to its prewar splendor as the Paris of the Orient. The people, dressed in a riot of color, endlessly pursue the profit motive” (*Washington Post*, 19 July).

But the “miracle” of Deng’s “socialist market economy” is an illusion waiting to be shattered. The outdated physical plant and machinery of China’s state industries simply cannot compete head to head with new plants built by Taiwanese or Japanese capital, which moreover don’t have to pay the same social overhead expenses like pensions and schools for workers’ children. The result is that state industries are faced with massive “restructuring”—i.e., layoffs and cutbacks in social programs—while foreign investment is skyrocketing. Japanese investment grew by 250 percent in 1992 alone, and American firms from the Big Three automakers to AT&T have been piling into the Chinese market.

Today, centrally controlled state-run industries account for no more than 50 percent of all economic activity, and their share is shrinking fast. Regionally and locally run enterprises make up one-third of output; the rest comes from privately held capitalist concerns. The “socialist market economy” has been enshrined in the constitution, and government spokesmen now talk of moving to a full-fledged market economy by the year 2000 (when Beijing hopes to host the Olympic Games). The old Chinese bourgeoisie, their mainland holdings expropriated in the wake of the 1949 Revolution but allowed to move operations to Taiwan and elsewhere, is returning with a vengeance. This year, Beijing held its first official talks with representatives of the offshore Nationalist regime. Symbolizing the new rapprochement, the general who commanded Chiang Kai-shek’s last stand in Shanghai in 1949 was recently welcomed back to oversee a Taiwanese investment project.

Despite the fact that its rate of privatization of industry is far higher than that of Russia, China remains a deformed workers state. The Stalinist bureaucracy and the Communist Party remain firmly entrenched in power, while the People’s Liberation Army remains intact and has embarked on a modernization drive centered on massive arms purchases of sophisticated weaponry from Russia.

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