

## Chinese CP Plans Liquidation of State Economy

# China on the Brink



Fred Scott

CCP chief Jiang Zemin (inset, seated left) announced plans to sell off state industry at September party congress. Capitalist restoration will bring destitution for Chinese workers and peasants.

### For Workers Political Revolution to Stop Capitalist Restoration!

China is moving rapidly toward a decisive crossroads. More than 15 years of "market reforms" have led to an ever-burgeoning capitalist sector, as more and more workers are subjected to brutal exploitation through direct foreign investment, "joint ventures" and profit-making "collective" enterprises. Now, at the 15th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) held in September, the Stalinist

bureaucracy has announced plans to sell off the bulk of state-owned industry.

*If implemented, this proposal would mean the liquidation of what remains of the planned, collectivized economy and the restoration of capitalism in China. This starkly underscores the urgent need for a proletarian political revolution which sweeps away the vile Stalinist bureaucracy, replacing it with the democratic rule of workers and peasants councils committed to the fight for socialist revolution throughout Asia and beyond.*

While holding on to key strategic industries which account for about half the output of the state sector, the Beijing regime intends to privatize the vast majority of the 300,000 state-owned concerns which form the core of the

*(continued on page 8)*

# Murderous Anti-Abortion Terror in Winnipeg

The attempted murder of Winnipeg gynecologist Jack Fainman, hit by a sniper's bullet at his home on November 12, is the fourth terrorist attack on an abortion provider in as many years. All have occurred on or around Remembrance Day. In November 1994, Dr. Garson Romalis was nearly killed by a gunshot as he ate breakfast in his Vancouver home. The next year, Hamilton physician Hugh Short was shot in the elbow and permanently maimed. In November 1996, butyric acid was dumped into the air vents of an Edmonton abortion clinic operated by the courageous Auschwitz survivor Dr. Henry Morgentaler. No one has been charged in any of these murderous attacks.

Speaking from his Toronto clinic, Dr. Morgentaler called the shootings "a terror tactic to spread panic among people who are providing abortion services," adding: "I will certainly not be deterred. I've had threats like this many times in my life." It was Dr. Morgentaler's years-long crusade for abortion rights which led to the removal of abortion from the Criminal Code a decade ago. But the current wave of terror attacks sends a clear message that abortion clinics and providers are still under bloody assault.

Since the shooting of Dr. Romalis three years ago, the number of doctors performing abortions in B.C. has fallen by more than ten percent. In many parts of the country, including large sections of Atlantic Canada, there is still no access to abortion at all. Meanwhile bigots like Preston Manning's Reform Party, now the official opposition in Ottawa, crusade to make abortion illegal once again.

Various feminist and "pro-choice" organizations look to the capitalist rulers and their state machinery of cops and courts to defend abortion rights. Relying on supposedly "sympathetic" governments like the federal Liberals and the B.C. NDP as "allies," they have pushed for police-enforced anti-picketing injunctions and "no-protest zones" around clinics as the way to stop the anti-abortion bigots. This is a futile and dangerous strategy which plays into the hands of the capitalist rulers and their cops against defenders of abortion rights. Two years ago a cop in B.C.'s Fraser Valley was caught handing over detailed personal information on abortion

clinic staff and patients to the anti-abortion Campaign Life Coalition. In the U.S., anti-picketing injunctions have been used against *defenders* of abortion clinics.

Looking to the capitalist rulers or their NDP agents to defend the rights of women and the oppressed is an utter



SC Photo

**TL contingent on 1995 protest against shooting of Dr. Garson Romalis in Vancouver.**

dead end. It has demobilized the struggle to defend abortion rights to the point where the attempted murder of Dr. Fainman produced almost no public protest across the country. The Trotskyist League calls for mass mobilizations, fighting to bring to bear the power of labor together with all defenders of abortion rights to defend the clinics. We fight for free abortion on demand, including in areas where it is currently unavailable, as part of our struggle for free, quality health care for all. This perspective is necessarily linked to a fight against the entire exploitative system of capitalism.

As we wrote three years ago in protesting the shooting of Dr. Romalis ("Defend Abortion Rights!" SC No. 101, January/February 1995):

"The oppression of women is rooted in the institution of the family, economic unit and guardian of capitalist private property. The very governments the feminists call upon to 'protect' abortion rights are the same governments that are closing down hospitals and starving the medical system for funds, notably including those of the NDP, ruling on behalf of the capitalist bosses. The cops they call upon are the same cops that shoot and beat blacks, Asians and Native people. The injunctions and laws they plead for are used against the left and workers movement.... We urgently need to build a revolutionary workers party to fight for socialist revolution which alone can lay the basis for women's liberation—and send the anti-abortion terrorists packing once and for all." ■

## SPARTACIST CANADA

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## Thousands March Against APEC Summit in Vancouver

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NOVEMBER 23—Vancouver has been turned into a virtual armed camp, with police snipers on roof tops and RCMP tactical units on alert, in preparation for the annual Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) summit. While rolling out the red carpet for their imperialist partners and other Pacific Rim heads of state, the Canadian rulers barred four anti-APEC activists from the Philippines and Nepal from entering the country. Several anti-APEC protesters at the University of British Columbia were also arrested in the lead-up to this summit of butchers. Close to 4,000 protesters marched through the city today, on the eve of the arrival by U.S. president Clinton, Indonesian dictator Suharto, Philippine strongman Ramos and other APEC rulers for their meeting on the UBC campus.

APEC is a trade grouping of 18 countries including the U.S., Japan and Canada, as well as China and the Southeast Asian capitalist "tigers" which are currently wracked by economic crisis and political turmoil. It is an instrument for further subjecting the workers and oppressed of the Pacific Rim to superexploitation and immiseration at the hands of imperialism and its murderous local agents. APEC is also an arena for interimperialist rivalry between Washington and Tokyo, and for furthering the drive toward capitalist restoration in China and the destruction of the remaining gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution. Trotskyists fight to defend these gains through workers political revolution against the venal Stalinist bureaucracy, which is today preparing a final sellout of the Chinese deformed workers state through mass layoffs and privatizations.

In a November 7 Op-Ed statement submitted to the UBC student paper the *Ubysses*, the Vancouver Spartacus Youth Club urged "workers and students to rally in militant, mass protest against the representatives of imperialism and their third world puppets when they arrive in Vancouver." Calling to end the ban on anti-APEC militants and to drop the charges against the UBC protesters, the SYC emphasized: "We oppose APEC from the standpoint of fighting to overthrow this decrepit capitalist system the world over, starting with our own rulers in Ottawa!"

This perspective is sharply counterposed to that of the organizers of today's demonstration. The People's Summit on APEC, among whose sponsors are the pro-capitalist union bureaucrats of the Canadian Labour Congress, calls to make "transnational corporations accountable" and "protect workers' rights" through "social clauses in trade agreements." But trade agreements among capitalist powers are necessarily *anti-working-class*. Their aim is to increase profits for the various national capitalists at the expense of their rivals, through ratcheting up the exploitation of labor and dismantling social programs. Just look at the devastating results of the North American Free Trade Agreement for the working class of the U.S., Canada and, especially, the workers and poor of Mexico.

Working people and the oppressed have never won any-



Stoody/CP

Protesters march in Vancouver, November 23.

thing by begging the powers-that-be for crumbs, or "social clauses," which at best can only mildly ameliorate the ravages of a capitalist system based on the raw exploitation of labor. Against the labor tops whose protectionist poison pits worker against worker around the globe in the fight to keep jobs in "their" country, we fight to build a revolutionary party based on a program of internationalist class struggle. In the words of the founders of modern communism, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workers of the world unite!"

Unlike the People's Summit, the rival No to APEC! Coalition claims to forthrightly oppose APEC. But the Coalition offers no better perspective for fighting capitalism's New World Order. In fact, it actively fosters dangerous illusions in Canadian imperialism. Coalition spokesman Jaggi Singh calls on the Canadian government to arrest Indonesian dictator Suharto, telling the *Ubysses*: "There is a Canadian law, war crimes legislation, that states that people who've committed war crimes...outside the country are allowed to be tried for those crimes in Canada." What Singh is calling for would, in fact, be an act of imperialist aggression. Moreover, Suharto's brutal repression of the people of East Timor and the Indonesian proletariat is committed *on behalf of imperialism*, not least Canadian-based multinationals like Inco.

It is obscene to look to the war criminals who run the Canadian capitalist state—the butchers of Somalia—as any kind of force for "democracy" and "justice." The RCMP who laid siege to Native militants at Gustafsen Lake (at the B.C. NDP attorney-general's request) and the Vancouver cops who recently beat up Guatemalan refugee Hugo Hernández are on hand to protect Suharto, not to bust him.

As the SYC concluded in its statement to the *Ubysses*:

"Any illusions in the tricked-out 'democratic' credentials of imperialist Canadian capitalism is death to effective struggle. It is necessary for the world's working people—especially here in the North American belly of the beast—to overthrow capitalism. The SYC says: Protest APEC!—Fight for world socialist revolution!" ■

**SYC Says: "The Main Enemy is at Home!"**

# U of T Students Protest War Criminal George Bush

More than a thousand students, teachers, campus workers and others protested outside the University of Toronto's Hart House as former U.S. president George Bush received an honorary degree on November 19. We reprint below a U of T Spartacus Youth Club leaflet distributed at the demonstration.

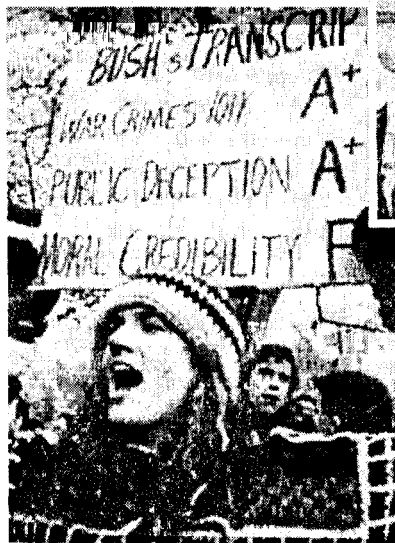
\* \* \*

While the capitalist rulers slam the doors to higher education in the face of working-class, minority and poor students, the University of Toronto is giving an honorary degree to former CIA chief, U.S. president and all-round war criminal George Bush. This is surely obscene, but it is hardly an aberration. The role of the Canadian ruling class—amply represented in the U of T administration—has long been to try to give a "kinder, gentler" face to the imperialist butchery of their senior partners in Washington. They honor Bush because they share the same aim: to increase their profit margin through the brutal exploitation of the world's working people and oppressed by whatever means necessary.

Bush should be met by massive, militant protest when he comes to collect his degree on November 19. But unlike most of the groups organizing this week's anti-Bush protest, who appeal to the "democratic" capitalists in Ottawa against the "thuggish" U.S. imperialists, we of the Spartacus Youth Club are animated by the understanding that the main enemy is *here at home*. The hands of Canada's imperialist rulers are every bit as dirty as those of George Bush.

With the wholehearted support of all the parliamentary parties, including the NDP, the Canadian capitalists backed Bush's Operation Desert Storm, which claimed the lives of 100,000 Iraqis in the 1991 Gulf War. To this day, Ottawa supports the starvation embargo against Iraq, which has killed 600,000 Iraqi children, the sick and elderly, far more than U.S. cruise missiles ever did. As CIA chief, Bush oversaw Murder, Inc.'s dirty wars against insurgent workers and peasants the world over, knowing that if need be "the Company" could call in the Canadians to give a "peacekeeping" veneer to its murderous aims. From Vietnam to Central Africa to the Near East, Canadian troops have been sent to police the imperialist status quo. The brutal reality of these so-called "peacekeeping" interventions was shown by the fascist-infested Canadian Airborne's murder mission in Somalia.

Yet the Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG) appeals to Ottawa's good graces, beseeching the government to "prevent Bush from entering the country" (*Varsity*, 3 November). The International Socialists point to "the many victims of the United States and George Bush" in their article titled "No Degree for the 'Butcher of Baghdad'" (*Socialist Worker*, 8 November), without even once mentioning the victims of Bush's imperialist allies in Canada. Those who simply take aim at the crimes of U.S. imperialism not only let their "own" imperialist rulers off the hook, they encourage nationalist animosity which divides and cripples the



Varsity photos

**George Bush addresses assembled worthies at November 19 U of T ceremony while protesters denounce honorary degree.**

struggles of the working class and oppressed. The SYC fights to build a revolutionary party that can unite the working people of North America in common class struggle against their common class enemies in the fight for socialist revolution. Anti-imperialism abroad means class struggle at home!

## Capitalism and its Universities

In an October 6 statement, OPIRG complains to the U of T administration that the Bush award will "seriously breach the integrity of this institution and the trust of the community." Here's an institution that for decades restricted Jewish enrolment, and until the 1970s banned women from Hart House, the "private club" where Bush will be capped and gowned. As one of Canada's elite universities, U of T has trained countless bourgeois politicians and "captains of industry" who have overseen the exploitation of working people at home and abroad. So exactly how does granting a degree to war criminal Bush "breach the integrity of this institution"?

In a similar vein, letters to the *Varsity* and the *Bulletin* call the Bush degree a "shameful" blot on U of T's reputation, stemming from "corporate influence." It's an open secret that Bush was invited because of his connections with Barrick Gold Corp., whose founding chairman and CEO Peter Munk recently made a \$6.4 million "donation" to U of T. (Munk himself is an open admirer of the economic "shock treatment" instituted by former Chilean dictator Pinochet, whose CIA-sponsored 1973 coup saw the murder of thousands of workers and leftists.) But universities under capitalism have never been "communities of scholars" which exist independent of the profit-driven, exploitative and warlike society they serve. Their function is to train the next generation of rulers, technicians and administrators.

Universities do the kind of science that industry wants,

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## Defend Cuba—U.S./Canada Hands Off! For Proletarian Political Revolution!

# Eyewitness Report from Havana Youth Festival

From July 28 to August 5, Havana and other Cuban cities hosted the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students, where some 12,000 youth from over 130 countries gathered in solidarity with Cuba. Despite the U.S. government's attempt to prevent young people from traveling to the festival, about 800 youths came from the U.S., making this the biggest foreign delegation (see our protest letter against this attempted exclusion in *Workers Vanguard* No. 672, 8 August). Other delegates came mainly from Latin America and West Europe, with large delegations from Asia and Africa. Two International Communist League comrades, one from the *Grupo Espartaquista de México*, and the author of this report, Charles from the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste of Canada, attended the festival and saw firsthand the intense economic pressures and extreme social contradictions facing the Cuban deformed workers state.

Cuba obviously suffers from three and a half decades of the cruel U.S. blockade. Havana, where I stayed, is in dire need of infrastructure repair. The fuel shortage remains acute, leading to a poor and polluting transit system and two- to three-hour power outages daily. Since there is a scarcity of buses, the government has converted giant trucks, formerly used to transport the sugarcane harvest, into buses called *camellos*. Waits are often as long as two hours. And many food products, like meat and fruit, are only available at expensive private markets. The average worker's monthly ration includes only four kilograms of rice, four kilos of beans and three kilos of coffee. This highlights the urgency of our demand: **Down with the U.S. imperialist embargo!**

I immediately noticed the economic disparity which is becoming ever greater. The Cuban festival organizers, centrally the youth group of the Communist Party, housed many foreign delegates, especially from big investor countries like Canada, in posh neighborhoods. My host was a computer programmer who delighted in telling me about the latest edition of Microsoft Windows and lived in Playa Miramar, a ritzy neighborhood with many foreign embassies. Cubans



SC Photo

World Youth Festival participants rally at University of Havana, July 28.

living there have access to dollars—through private dealings or otherwise. Their homes often have air conditioning, VCRs, computers. Some even have maids. When supplies are available, they buy fish, pork, good fruit. In other parts of town, however, I saw people living in cramped quarters and houses falling apart. On a state salary of 200 pesos (US\$9) a month or less, daily life for Cuban workers is a struggle, while those who have access to the newly legalized dollar economy—entrepreneurs, black marketeers or those with relatives abroad—can live more comfortably. The introduction of market mechanisms like legalizing the dollar has sharply increased inequality.

Through such “reforms,” the ruling Cuban bureaucracy is strangling the revolution and paving the road toward capitalist restoration. What is necessary is the construction of an **internationalist** Trotskyist party in Cuba to place political power in the hands of the workers through overthrowing the **nationalist** bureaucracy through political revolution. The ICL seeks to forge such a party as part of our struggle for international socialism, including—and especially important for Cuba—in the “belly of the beast,” the U.S. This is the only way to safeguard the Cuban Revolution.

In contrast, the various Stalinist Communist parties not only applaud Cuban president Fidel Castro's nationalism, but also the nationalist hype of their own bourgeoisies. Each delegation was identified by its national flag, so much so that the closing ceremony at Pan American Stadium resembled a World Cup soccer game. For its part, the American Communist Party declared that “the U.S. delegation carrying the [American] flag...sent an especially powerful message” (*People's Weekly World*, 30 August). Coming with the English-Canadian delegation (which was organized by the Communist Party), I had to make a point of refusing to carry the bloody Canadian flag! The Canadian CP supports the chauvinist crusade of the Canadian ruling class against Quebec's independence. And, in “fighting” against

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## Cuba...

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the U.S. Helms-Burton bill, which seeks among other things to ban representatives from companies which trade with Cuba from entering the U.S.; they join liberals in calling to "Defend Canadian sovereignty"!

Economic inequality also exacerbates race distinctions—Miramar, for instance, is overwhelmingly white, while most black people live in run-down neighborhoods. This is particularly egregious, as blacks (who constitute as much as half of the population) are among the strongest supporters of the revolution, while most of the counterrevolutionary *gusanos* (worms) who fled the revolution were white. That it is mainly the (largely white) relatives of these exiles back home who benefit from the U.S. dollars also aggravates racial tensions.

### Cuba in the Post-Soviet World

Although the U.S. embargo is certainly starving Cuba, the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union paved the way for the present dire situation there. As our pamphlet, *How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled* (1993), noted:

"The ascendancy of counterrevolution in the former USSR is an unparalleled defeat for working people all over the world, decisively altering the political landscape on this planet. The Soviet masses have been plunged into desperate poverty unknown since the darkest days of the war against Nazi Germany."

This also plunged Cuba—which depended on massive Soviet assistance and trade—into mortal economic danger,

as the Cuban economy shrank by *one-third* between 1991 and 1994.

But much of the liberal North American "Cuba Solidarity" milieu, even its supposedly "socialist" component, is willfully blind to the devastating impact of the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. The clearest and most idiotic example is provided by the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and its Canadian affiliate, the Communist League, who were among the biggest builders for the festival in North America. In its 25 August *Militant*, the SWP argues:

"The return of Hong Kong to China, opposition by workers and farmers to the capitalist demands for 'sacrifice' in Argentina, the United States, France and other capitalist countries, and resistance to the effects of 'market reforms' from Albania to Yugoslavia and Russia are signs of the weakness of imperialism.... The U.S. government is using its military might because it lost the cold war. It could not defeat the Soviet Union the cold way and has not been able to reestablish capitalism there yet."


The SWP absurdly denies reality because they *supported* counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, calling the breakup of the Soviet Union "one of the most progressive things that has happened in decades" (*Militant*, 11 November 1996). The *Militant* (6 September 1991) backed Boris Yeltsin's counterrevolution, exclaiming, "Soviet Workers Win Giant Victory by Defeating Coup." In contrast, the ICL called for proletarian political revolution to sweep away Yeltsin counterrevolution, and after the consolidation of a capitalist state, for socialist revolution.

The SWP's embrace of Castroism in the early 1960s was one of the decisive factors marking its break with Trotskyism, which we fought within the SWP as the Revolutionary Tendency, forerunner of the Spartacist League. Unconditional military defense of, and a perspective of proletarian political revolution in deformed workers states from Cuba to Vietnam still remain integral to our Trotskyist program. Today, the SWP seeks to attract radical-minded youth by proclaiming itself the most consistent defender of the Cuban Revolution. In fact, as its support to the counterrevolution in the Soviet Union makes clear, the SWP's politics are counterposed to genuine defense of the Cuban workers state.

### Defend Cuba Through Proletarian Political Revolution!

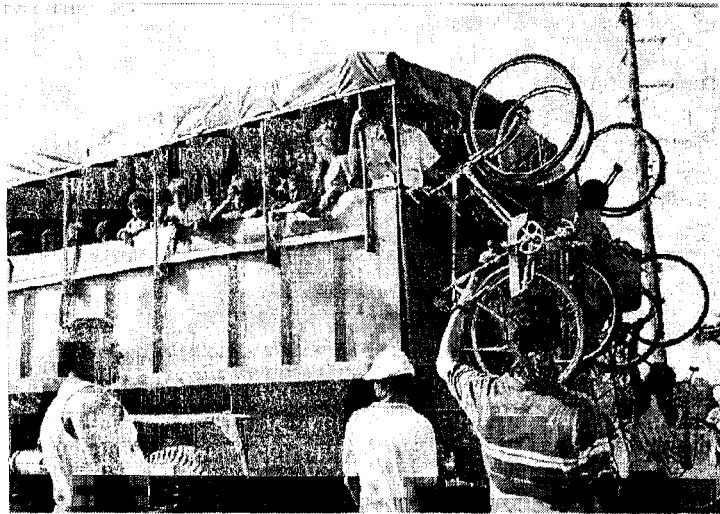
Everywhere I went, I saw billboards celebrating Castro's fallen comrade-in-arms, Ernesto "Che" Guevara, and the festival delegates snapped up thousands of Che books, T-shirts, posters, cigarette lighters, you name it. The foreign "socialists" who uncritically tail Castro lapped up this quasi-religious adulation of Fidel and Che. Castro's various appearances during the festival were greeted with chants of "Fi-del, Fi-del!" or "Fi-Fi-Fi, Del-Del-Del, Viva Fidel!" But Castro and the bureaucracy he heads are strangling the revolution, above all through their anti-revolutionary Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country."

The Cuban Revolution, on one small island 90 miles off Florida, could not survive for long in isolation. Following the 1959 Revolution, despite overtures by Castro to appease them, U.S. imperialism hard-lined it against the victorious 26th of July Movement. Castro and Che responded with sweeping nationalizations of the U.S.-owned sugar plantations, banks and other firms and by grabbing the lifeline offered by the Soviet Union, the other Soviet-bloc countries

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Time



Workers Vanguard

**Introduction of dollar economy has exacerbated economic inequality. While foreign tourists frolic (left), Cuban workers must wait hours for transportation in crowded trucks.**

and China. Consequently, they consummated the overthrow of the old dictatorship with a *social revolution*, collectivizing everything down to local ice cream vendors. Modeling itself on the Soviet Union and the Stalinist countries in East Europe, Cuba became a *deformed workers state*: the bourgeoisie was expropriated and the economy collectivized under central planning, yet political power rests in the hands of a Stalinist bureaucracy instead of the working class.

The elimination of capitalist class rule meant enormous gains for Cuba's working people. Aside from the necessary military defense against imperialism—and the bureaucracy's privileges—the resources of Cuban society were invested in a centralized, planned economy, with everyone guaranteed a job, housing, food, education. The Cuban health care system, despite the crippling effects of the U.S. blockade, is still the best among "developing countries." The revolution also greatly helped women: great attention is paid to prenatal care and the infant mortality rate is lower than in parts of the industrialized world, like Harlem. Cubans enjoy one of the highest literacy rates in the world. In fact, the Cubans' level of general culture—thanks to making education a basic right—is amazing. For example, my host had read all of the classics of literature, adventure and detective novels by the age of fifteen, when he turned to more "serious stuff" like politics and science. A friend of his, still in his mid-twenties, is fluent in Spanish, English, German, Russian and Polish. These are all results of a planned economy which, by eliminating private property and profit, lays the basis not just for satisfying basic human needs but also for developing human potential.

Similarly, the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, by placing the working class in state power, laid the basis for a planned economy and the tremendous development of Soviet productive forces. However, unlike the Cuban Revolution, which was led by a petty-bourgeois guerrilla movement seeking only democratic reforms, the Russian Revolution was consciously made by the Russian working class under Communist leadership. The Bolshevik leadership of Lenin and Trotsky fought to *extend* socialist revolution across the planet. Yet because of the great backwardness of Russia and the failure of revolutionary opportunities elsewhere, a bureaucracy developed in the new Soviet republic in the early 1920s. Represented by Joseph Stalin, it wrested political

power from the working class through a political counterrevolution, turning the Soviet Union into a degenerated workers state. The essence of Stalinism is summed up in its theory of "socialism in one country": that it is possible to create socialism, the abolition of class inequality, in an isolated and backward country.

Trying to maintain its privileged position, the Stalinist bureaucracy instead sought "peace" with imperialism, later dubbed "peaceful coexistence." It became extremely hostile to extending the Russian Revolution abroad, and in fact sabotaged such attempts and murdered those Bolsheviks, like Trotsky, who remained internationalists. The Stalinist bureaucracy built up a whole system of lies and repression against the Soviet working class. The working class was atomized and demoralized. After decades of slowly strangling the revolution, the Stalinists, more hostile to the workers than to capitalist restoration, stood by during—or actually led—capitalist counterrevolution.

### **Cuban Stalinists Open Gates of Counterrevolution**

At the festival, I got a snapshot of how the Stalinist politics of the Castro leadership has led Cuba into a dead end. The themes of many meetings—such as "Young Entrepreneurs" and "Young Religious Believers"—were far from what I expected at a leftist conference. The main slogan, "For Anti-Imperialist Solidarity, Peace and Friendship," explicitly left out any mention of socialism or the working class in its attempts to cuddle up to pro-capitalist forces. I personally attended a meeting at Havana's Capitolio Nacional where an official of the Cuban government, looking just like a Western yuppie, declaimed the necessity and irreversibility of the "mixed economy"—a bit of socialism and a bit of capitalism. Yet it is this counterrevolution on the installment plan which threatens the revolution.

Following the destruction of the Soviet Union, the Cuban leadership introduced mass layoffs and legalized private entrepreneurship, foreign capital investment and the use of the U.S. dollar. These policies are eerily reminiscent of those introduced by many East European and Soviet Stalinists during their terminal crises—e.g., the *perestroika* introduced by the last Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev. Castro proclaims

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that he hopes to avoid the "horrible experiences" that destroyed the deformed workers states in East Europe by slowly introducing these reforms, but this is undermining the fibre of the revolution.

Contrary to what Castro and his bureaucrats maintain, it is impossible to build socialism on a tiny island alone. As we wrote in "Cuba, Castro and Che: The Mystique of the Guerrilla Road" (*Workers Vanguard* No. 630, 6 October 1995): "The future of the Cuban Revolution hangs in the balance of class struggle outside the Caribbean island, and this fact underlines the urgent necessity for revolutionary struggle here in the U.S., in Latin America, and elsewhere." But like Stalin and his successors who sought only to maintain their own nationally limited planned economies, Castro is viscerally hostile to the struggle for socialist revolution abroad. In the 1980s, Castro warned leftist guerrillas in Nicaragua against "the Cuban road," advising them not to expropriate the Nicaraguan capitalists and landlords.

This in turn feeds cynicism within the Cuban working class. While I expected to encounter some illusions in capitalism, I was nonetheless appalled by the degree to which Cubans believe in the "wonders" of the capitalist world, especially in "friendly" countries like Canada. Cubans were shocked when I told them about the homelessness, racism and the general material misery of the capitalist world. The bureaucracy's censorship of international news and, more fundamentally, its appeals to world imperialism reinforce these illusions.

But while the U.S. pursues its gunboat version of imperialism toward Cuba, other imperialist countries, such as Canada, simply have a different plan for fomenting counter-



Bosio/Gamma-Liaison

**Castro advised Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega (right) against expropriating Nicaraguan bourgeoisie and creating "another Cuba."**

revolution. They think it more productive to work *through* the Cuban Stalinist bureaucracy, which is only too happy to oblige. Through tourism, mining and other industries, Western companies are making large profits on the backs of the Cuban working class. The chairman of the Canadian company Sherritt International, Corp., which now runs Cuba's biggest nickel smelter, declared that Cuba "is the best investment opportunity in the world."

Under the rubric of "solidarity," organizations such as the CP and SWP are in fact egging on the final demise of the Cuban Revolution. All youth who are genuinely interested in defending the gains of the revolution should understand this. Only the ICL's internationalist Trotskyist perspective can defend the Cuban deformed workers state. U.S./Canada: Hands off Cuba! Defend Cuba! For proletarian political revolution and international socialism! ■

## China...

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industrial economy and employ over a hundred million workers. The elimination of state subsidies means that many of these plants would be shut down outright or their workforces slashed in the interests of "profitability," effectively shattering the already cracked "iron rice bowl" of guaranteed lifetime employment and social services. Untold millions of workers would face destitution, losing not only their jobs but the housing, medical care, education and retirement benefits which are tied to employment in state-owned industries.

When China took over Hong Kong on July 1, we welcomed the removal of the British colonialists while warning that the maintenance of capitalism in this stronghold of the Chinese bourgeoisie would be a dagger aimed straight at the deformed workers state. Now, the plan to privatize a massive number of state industries on the mainland itself can only further strengthen those forces inside and outside China aiming to overturn the remaining gains of the 1949 Revolution.

The latest measures, announced as Chinese premier and CCP head Jiang Zemin prepared for a summit meeting with U.S. imperialist chief Clinton, have long been demanded by the World Bank and other imperialist agencies. The Clinton administration immediately declared it "salutes and wel-

comes" the privatization plan. Beijing has also moved to slash protective tariffs—further undermining the state monopoly of foreign trade—as part of its effort to join the imperialist-dominated World Trade Organization.

Since the introduction of "market reforms" under the late Deng Xiaoping, the corrupt "Communist" bureaucrats have taken every opportunity to enrich themselves and their offspring, the notorious "princelings," as they dream of becoming a new exploiting class in their own right. But there has yet to be a final reckoning with the working masses. While glowingly praising Jiang's privatization proposal, *Business Week* (29 September) warned that "considering the risks of worker unrest, it's a bold agenda." China, it wrote, "is actually living dangerously close to the edge."

The outpouring of workers during the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests posed the imminent possibility of a proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy. That uprising was bloodily suppressed. But in recent years there has been a rising tide of workers struggles against the effects of "free market" measures, initially centered on the capitalist "special economic zones" and now rapidly spreading to state factories in the country's industrial heartland.

Time has grown very short for the Chinese proletariat to defeat those who aim to throw the workers and peasants back to conditions of untrammled exploitation and servitude. But as we wrote earlier this year, "Acts of militancy on the economic plane are not enough to stop the counterrevo-





Chinese finance minister and vice premier Zhu Rongji welcomed at World Bank/IMF meeting in Hong Kong, September 22.

Independent

lutionary tide. It is necessary for the working-class to enter the political plane" ("China on the Brink—Workers Political Revolution or Capitalist Enslavement?" *Spartacist* [English edition] No. 53, Summer 1997). The International Communist League fights to forge the Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party needed to lead the Chinese proletariat in a political revolution to stop capitalist counterrevolution.

### Turmoil in the Heartland

The 1949 Revolution resulted from the victory of Mao's peasant-based guerrilla forces over the brutal Guomindang regime of Chiang Kai-shek. While overthrowing capitalist rule and liberating the country from the tyranny of landlords and imperialist subjugation, the revolution was deformed from its inception. The Chinese workers were bystanders in the revolution, which brought to power a nationalist, anti-working-class bureaucracy falsely claiming to be building "socialism" in a single, very backward country. With the egalitarian pretenses of the Mao years long since discarded, Jiang now resorts to doubletalk about "the primary stage of socialism" to justify the liquidation of the nationalized economy.

While foreign capitalist and domestic "collective" businesses have grown to account for almost two-thirds of China's output since "market reforms" were first implemented almost two decades ago, production and employment in state industry has up to now also continued to grow, although at a much slower pace. Lately, in a tentative and piecemeal way, China's central banks have cut funds to less "profitable" state plants, which have in turn taken to laying off workers, withholding wages and charging for previously free social services. This in turn has sparked a dramatic rise of struggles by workers in the aging state industries concentrated in central and northeastern China.

The year began with a dramatic uprising in the northeastern city of Harbin, when some 3,000 textile workers protested the withholding of four months' pay by occupying train tracks. With rail service paralyzed, local and national CCP leaders quickly reached a settlement with the workers. In March, 20,000 workers at a state textile factory in the town of Nanchong in Sichuan—China's most populous province—laid siege to the city hall and held the plant manager hostage until authorities came up with six months' back wages. Four months later, in the Sichuan city of Mianyang,

thousands of workers marched through the streets and built roadblocks to protest managers' embezzlement of unemployment benefits after three silk and textile plants closed. Some 80 workers were reportedly arrested and 100 injured after clashes with the People's Armed Police, a force created in the mid-1980s specifically to control mounting urban unrest.

Strikes and social protests have continued to mount. Many of these have been directed against the flagrant corruption of local officials. While news of social turmoil is slow to leak out, in the month of September alone there were reports of a demonstration by angry workers in

Sichuan trying to eke out a living after being forced into early retirement and a mass protest in Guangdong province—against the regime's draconian "one-child" policy—which was put down by 1,000 troops and paramilitary forces. Social tensions have also been stoked by widening income disparities between centers of economic expansion along the eastern coastal areas and the rest of the country.

The bureaucracy has tried to keep an iron grip on society as it plunges ever deeper into the "free market." Last year, over 6,000 people were condemned to death, some for crimes as petty as stealing chickens. The barbaric death penalty is part of the bureaucratic arsenal of terror designed to keep the working people and impoverished peasantry in line.

The brittle bureaucratic caste is well aware that it is sitting on a social powder keg. While unemployment officially stands at 3 percent, this figure is not believed by anyone. The mainland Chinese magazine *Outlook* reports that the urban jobless rate is 7.5 percent while "China's rural areas have about 175 million surplus laborers, representing an unemployment rate of 34.8%" (*Asian Wall Street Journal*, 5 August). Much of this enormous "surplus" workforce, which was spawned by the destruction of collectivized agriculture in the early 1980s, roams the townships and cities in search of work, often leading to bitter conflicts with longtime city residents.

Labor costs are so low in China that many capitalists now prefer to invest there than in bourgeois countries in the region. This has been a factor in the currency crisis now wracking Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. At the same time, as China becomes increasingly integrated into the Southeast Asian economies dominated by the offshore Chinese bourgeoisie—the source of most of China's foreign investment—such events could have a major effect on the mainland economy itself. This only serves to underscore the need for an internationalist perspective, linking the fight of the Chinese masses against capitalist counterrevolution to class struggles throughout East and Southeast Asia, particularly reaching out to the proletariat of Japan, the industrial powerhouse of the region.

### Chinese Stalinists Prepare Final Sell-Out

The question is whether the Beijing regime can enforce mass layoffs and cutbacks on a working class which has

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## China...

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been taught that the revolution was made for the benefit of "the people." The Stalinist bureaucracy lives in mortal fear of the spectre of the Tiananmen uprising. Popular discontent in 1989 was largely fueled by rising inflation and the flagrant, filthy corruption of the officialdom. With anger over corruption and economic insecurity growing once again, the bureaucracy is ever-mindful to ward off any possibility of social protest. Many "princelings"—including Deng's son-in-law, head of the mammoth Poly Group conglomerate—were kept off the new Central Committee. And shortly before the congress, the government announced that a former Beijing party chief and Political Bureau member would face trial and possible execution on corruption charges. A well-connected Chinese writer observed: "The leadership was very nervous people would take to the streets with anti-corruption slogans" (*South China Morning Post*, 11 September).

At the same time, the CCP leadership signaled it would brook no loosening of political controls. Several open letters, including one ostensibly written by former premier Zhao Ziyang—who lost his position for opposing the 1989 crackdown—called on the congress to "revise" the party's depiction of the Tiananmen student protests as an attempt to overthrow CCP rule. All these petitions were dismissed out of hand, and the congress purged former intelligence chief and Politburo member Qiao Shi, who also called for a softer line toward the Tiananmen events. Such calls do not necessarily come from the left. They are often linked to demands for "free elections" and the "rule of law," echoing the imperialist spokesmen who insist that moves toward capitalism must be consolidated through the establishment of a bourgeois regime.

For all of its ostentatious corruption and evident identification with rich investors, the Stalinist bureaucracy remains a brittle caste which continues to rest on the economic foundation, however attenuated, of the deformed workers state. Beijing has time and again announced capitalist measures only to back off in the face of threatened social unrest. The government first announced it would "smash the iron rice bowl" in 1987. Yet it took almost ten years before any serious effort to cut back the labor force in state plants was begun.

The CCP bureaucracy hopes to transform itself into a new exploiting class through a "cold" transition to fully fledged capitalism. They have certainly gone a long way down this road, much further than the Soviet Stalinist regime had before its downfall. Yet despite differences of degree, what Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky wrote in his definitive 1936 work analyzing the Stalin regime, *The Revolution Betrayed*, holds true in its essentials for the Chinese bureaucracy today:

"It is recruited, supplemented and renewed in the manner of an administrative hierarchy, independently of any special property relations of its own. The individual bureaucrat cannot transmit to his heirs his rights in the exploitation of the state apparatus.... Its appropriation of a vast share of the national income has the character of social parasitism. All this makes the position of the commanding Soviet stratum in the highest degree contradictory, equivocal and undignified, notwithstanding the completeness of its power and the smoke screen of flattery that conceals it."

Capitalist restoration in China would require the consolidation of a *new, counterrevolutionary state apparatus*, with an attendant legal system codifying private ownership of the means of production. This would necessarily be a bloody process that would throw China into chaos, very possibly including the breakup of the country into regional fiefdoms. It would also turn China into an arena of hot imperialist competition. Moreover, unlike the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, in which the Russian bourgeoisie was destroyed as a class, the Chinese capitalists were able to flee the mainland in the late 1940s, keeping their cohesion as a class. Thus, the Chinese masses now face a powerful predator in the offshore Chinese bourgeoisie.

### For a Leninist-Trotskyist Party!

To forge an internationalist, egalitarian-communist party in China requires a political struggle not only against the Stalinist misleaders but also against those who would lead the workers into the camp of "democratic" counterrevolution. Some Tiananmen-era dissidents have been engaged in efforts to organize trade unions opposed to the regime's All-China Federation of Trade Unions. Such activists can be very heroic, going up against capitalist entrepreneurs and their Stalinist police protectors. However, Marxists warn against any ties to pro-capitalist "dissidents" such as Tiananmen veteran Han Dongfang. Han regularly appeals to the U.S.-sponsored International Confederation of Free Trade Unions—which originated in the Cold War against the Soviet Union—for action against the Chinese regime, while his Hong Kong-based *China Labor Bulletin* (January 1997) baldly admits that its chief editor had been featured on the U.S. imperialists' *Voice of America* and *Radio Free Asia*.

Such appeals for (bourgeois) "democracy" are echoed and embraced by various "socialist" groups in the West. The most brazen of these is the tendency led by Tony Cliff's British Socialist Workers Party, including the Canadian International Socialists. Ever since Cliff's expulsion from the Trotskyist Fourth International in 1950 for refusing to defend China and North Korea during the Korean War, the hallmark of this group has been tailing after "democratic" imperialism. This has included cheering such thoroughly *anti-democratic* and flagrantly reactionary forces as Lech Walesa's Vatican-sponsored Solidarność in Poland and the anti-woman *mujahedin* cutthroats in Afghanistan. More recently, Cliff's outfit sided with the political heirs of Guomindang butcher Chiang Kai-shek, who run the brutal capitalist Taiwan regime. As U.S. warships plied the Taiwan Strait last year in a provocation against Beijing, the Cliffites proclaimed that "China's claim to Taiwan is a colonialist one. We would oppose any Chinese invasion of Taiwan as an act of imperialist aggression" (*Socialist Review*, April 1996).

In a lengthy article on "China: from Mao to Deng" (*International Socialist Review*, Summer 1997), U.S. Cliffite leader Ahmed Shawki dismisses China as a "state capitalist" society which has "nothing to do with socialism" and makes not one mention of the gains of the 1949 Revolution. Even the bourgeois *Los Angeles Times* (10 August), in an article headlined "How China Beat India in Race for Success," acknowledges that "particularly in the early stages of Communist rule, in the 1950s, the country benefited from the land redistribution, introduction of compulsory universal education, adoption of simplified Chinese characters that led

to greater literacy, and the introduction of health and welfare policies and other reforms.”

The SWP/I.S.’s “theory” of state capitalism—which is counterposed to any Marxist analysis of capitalism—is simply a fig leaf for virulent anti-Communism. Nobody, but nobody—from bourgeois Western ideologues to hard-pressed Russian workers—would buy the Cliffites’ idiotic view that the counterrevolution in the USSR in the early 1990s simply involved a shift from one form of capitalism to another. Expropriation of the bourgeoisie and creation of a planned economy is the prerequisite for any development toward an international, classless socialist society. It was on the basis of China’s planned economy that workers, peasants, women and national/ethnic minorities made huge strides forward. Trotskyists call for unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialism and counterrevolution. Political revolution is premised on the need to defend the socialized property forms through overthrowing the nationalist bureaucracy which acts as a parasite on the planned economy and today prepares to bury it for good.

Two Hong Kong organizations more or less closely associated with the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec) of the late Ernest Mandel—the *October Review* group and the Pioneers—share the Cliffites’ affinity for “democratic” counterrevolution. In separate statements on the reversion of Hong Kong to Chinese rule, both groups bemoaned Beijing’s threat to the thin veneer of “democratic” trappings installed by the last colonial administration while not once calling for opposition to the growing threat of capitalist counterrevolution in China.

Striking a pose to the left of such overt social democrats is the British Workers Power (WP) group and its League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI). Workers Power is an object lesson in Trotsky’s description of-centrism as “crystallized confusion.” In its *Trotskyist International* (July-December 1997), the LRCI calls for “the Trotskyist programme of proletarian political revolution as the only alternative to capitalist social counter-revolution.” Yet another article in the very same issue insists that “in China, as in Eastern Europe, there are no grounds for expecting workers to mobilise in defence of what remains of post-capitalist property relations”!

What forces, then, are going to make a proletarian political revolution?! Behind WP’s Trotskyist verbiage is a deep-seated affinity for social-democratic Labourism. These cen-

trists cannot conceive of breaking the proletariat from its existing consciousness and winning workers to the cause of revolution. Thus, for Workers Power the call for political revolution has simply been a cover for tailing whatever reactionary force it deemed to be a “lesser evil” to Stalinism. In Poland in 1981, WP supported Solidarność even while admitting that this CIA-backed movement stood for capitalist restoration. Likewise, Workers Power called for a “united front” with Boris Yeltsin as he headed the forces of counterrevolution in the USSR in August 1991.

In sharp contrast, the International Communist League has fought tooth and nail against capitalist counterrevolution. At the time of the Walesa/CIA/Vatican power bid in Poland in late 1981, we raised the call: Stop Solidarność counterrevolution! In 1989, we mobilized all the resources of our international organization to intervene in the turbulent events in East Germany in opposition to capitalist reunification and for a “red Germany of workers councils,” calling for political revolution in the East and socialist revolution in the West. And immediately after Yeltsin’s power grab in Moscow in August 1991, the ICL distributed tens of thousands of leaflets in Russian calling on Soviet workers to “Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!”

If Chinese working people are not to suffer the devastation and bloodletting experienced by the masses of East Europe and the former Soviet Union, they must be won to the authentic communism of Lenin and Trotsky. The Stalinists’ rush to open the road to full-scale capitalist restoration makes ever more urgent the need to forge a Trotskyist party to lead the workers and peasants in struggle. As we wrote in *Spartacist*:

“The program of political revolution is needed in China today if the workers and impoverished peasant masses are to emerge victorious in the class battles that lie ahead. As part of our fight to reforge Trotsky’s Fourth International, the International Communist League seeks to build an egalitarian-communist party based on the program of Lenin and Trotsky’s Bolsheviks and the early Chinese Communist Party. Such a party would link the struggle against the corrupt Stalinist bureaucracy in China with the class struggles of the militant Indonesian and South Korean workers against their capitalist rulers, and with those in the imperialist centers such as Japan. Only through extending socialist revolution to these countries will the threat of capitalist re-enslavement be eliminated once and for all and the basis laid for the development of China in a socialist Asia.”

—Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 675, 3 October

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## Bush...

(continued from page 4)

and promote the ruling ideology of the bourgeoisie. "Interlocking boards of directors" among industry, finance and education are the norm. Thus the chairman of U of T's governing council is also president of the Bank of Montreal, while university president Robert Prichard sits on the boards of Imasco Ltd., Onex Corp. and other big corporations. While OPIRG et al. call on such pillars of the bourgeoisie order to uphold U of T's "integrity," the SYC calls for **abolition of the administration** and for **worker/student/faculty control of the university**.

For working-class youth and others, increasingly condemned to ignorance by capitalism, freeing education from "corporate influence" can only mean a struggle to overthrow this system based on private profit and the exploitation of labor. Around the world, the 1990s have seen a crescendo of government austerity attacks on workers and the poor, together with racist scapegoating of oppressed minorities. As part of this global assault, the capitalist ruling classes are making higher education ever more a privilege of wealth. They only want to invest as much in education as they can eventually realize back in profit, and see no need to educate a generation of working-class and minority youth for whom they have no jobs. Only a rationally planned socialist society can make education a right for all, striving to raise the cultural level of humanity as a whole. The SYC demands: **Open admissions and free tuition! Living stipends for all students! Free, quality education for all!**

### George Bush, Anti-Soviet Cold War and the Left

This period of sweeping austerity attacks was ushered in by the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, the product of the world's first socialist revolution led by the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky in 1917. Despite its later degeneration under Stalin's police-state rule, the capitalists saw the very existence of the Soviet Union as a threat to their sacred "right" to profit. We Trotskyists called for unconditional military defense of the USSR and the deformed workers states of East Europe—which embodied historic gains for the working class and oppressed minorities—against imperialism and counterrevolution. At the same time, we fought for workers political revolution to oust the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies, whose search for "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism undermined the workers states and paved the way for their destruction.

In sharp contrast, most of the "left," including groups protesting against Bush this week, **lined up behind George Bush & Co.** in backing counterrevolution. Like its fellow social-democratic parties around the world, the NDP was front and center in promoting the return of capitalism to the Soviet bloc. They in turn found a "left" echo in the Interna-



**Afghan cutthroat murders schoolteacher. Anti-Soviet I.S. hailed reactionary war against Red Army.**

tional Socialists. The I.S. hailed Solidarność, a Vatican-inspired, CIA-funded "union" which led capitalist counterrevolution in Poland. In contrast, we Trotskyists said "Stop Solidarność counterrevolution!"

The I.S. also cheered on the Islamic fundamentalist *muja-hedin* in Afghanistan—armed and equipped by the CIA—who fought against the Soviet Red Army in a "holy war" to murder unveiled women and schoolteachers for the "crime" of teaching girls to read. Recognizing that Soviet intervention offered a future to the deeply oppressed women of Afghanistan, we proclaimed: "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" and called to "Extend social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples." When the Red Army was withdrawn, in a direct prelude to counterrevolution in the Soviet Union itself, the I.S. gloated that "a defeated Russia will spur the struggles of the oppressed nationalities in Eastern Europe and inside Russia itself" (*Socialist Worker*, March 1989). Tell that to the women, national minorities and leftists living in the utter hell of the Taliban's rule in Afghanistan today!

When Boris Yeltsin's seizure of power in Moscow in 1991 opened the floodgates for the destruction of the Soviet Union, we called on Soviet workers to "Defeat Yeltsin/Bush counterrevolution!" In contrast, the I.S. hailed this as a "new Russian Revolution," gloating: "Communism has collapsed.... It is a fact that should have every socialist rejoicing" (*Socialist Worker* [Britain], 31 August 1991). Today, throughout the former Soviet Union and East Europe we see mass unemployment, bloody ethnic wars, the rise of fascist bands and unrelenting terror against women and minorities. These are the devastating consequences of the "democratic" counterrevolution orchestrated by George Bush and his ilk and cheered on by the social-democratic "left" from the NDP down to the I.S.

As the student/youth group of the Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste, the Spartacus Youth Club fights to win young people to the understanding that imperialist capitalism cannot be "reformed" but must be overthrown through socialist revolution. That requires building a revolutionary vanguard party, part of a reformed Fourth International, which can make the working class conscious of its historic role of sweeping away capitalism internationally—from Ottawa and Bay Street to Washington, Wall Street and beyond. Only then can there be some measure of historic justice for the countless victims of war criminal George Bush and the bloody system he represents. ■

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## Meech Lake, Charlottetown, Calgary Declaration...

# I.S. in Camp of "National Unity," Again

In September, the nine English Canadian premiers and two territorial leaders cranked out the so-called Calgary Declaration. This latest federalist manifesto is the soft-cop counterpoint to the Chrétien Liberals' hardline Plan B against Quebec sovereignty. Alongside Ottawa's threats to partition Quebec and its appeal to the Supreme Court to declare illegal any unilateral declaration of independence, the Calgary Declaration "generously" offers to acknowledge the "unique character" of Quebec. Asked what this might mean, Ontario premier Mike Harris replied straightfaced, "We're not saying anything specific, I don't believe, other

### **Independence for Quebec!**

than we love you and we want you to stay in Canada" (*Globe and Mail*, 15 September).

Like the failed Meech Lake and Charlottetown accords, the Calgary Declaration is an attempt by the English Canadian rulers to shore up the oppressive status quo. It aims to reinforce the unitary, Anglo-dominated Canadian capitalist state by winning popular support for a constitutionally entrenched *denial* of Quebec's national rights. This has not, however, prevented one left organization, the International Socialists (I.S.), from rallying to the premiers' initiative. "But of course," they write, "all in the workers' movement should support recognition of Quebec's unique character. Of course this should be in the constitution" (*Socialist-Worker*, 27 September).

The I.S. claims to stand for the right of self-determination for Quebec, "up to and including the right to secede." In the real world, however, their support for the Anglo rulers' Calgary Declaration places them squarely on the side of "Canadian unity" reaction. This is not the first time the I.S. have pitched their tents in the camp of anti-Quebec "national unity." In the late 1980s, they echoed Tory prime minister Brian Mulroney over Meech Lake, supporting his gambit of constitutional recognition of Quebec as a "distinct society." And in 1992, the I.S. supported Mulroney's Charlottetown referendum, praising the fictitious "rights" it offered to Quebec and Native people. In contrast, we Trotskyists declared:

"The capitalist rulers in Ottawa and the provinces want to use the October 26 constitutional referendum to rally the population to 'save Canada.' They are seeking a vote of confidence in order to 'resolve' the question of Quebec independence and shore up the reactionary status quo of a 'united' imperialist state in the face of looming global trade war. Behind their endeavor stands a grotesque popular-front alliance embracing the Maple Leaf social democrats of the NDP and Bob White's Canadian Labour Congress. We call on the working people coast to coast to reject this bosses' accord with a resounding No vote!"

—"Charlottetown Discord," *SC* No. 90, Winter 1992/93.

The national oppression of the Québécois is a cornerstone of Canadian capitalism. Dominating all aspects of political life, the national schism between English Canada and Quebec

serves to tie the workers of both nations to their "own" exploiters, thus undermining the prospects for united class struggle against capitalism. We advocate *independence for Quebec* in order to fight the dominant Anglo chauvinism, and as the means to cut through the barrier which sets worker against worker along national lines, thereby laying a basis for bringing the decisive class questions to the fore.

In contrast, the I.S. explicitly opposes Quebec independence. In the words of their central leader Paul Kellogg:

"We do not advocate the separation of Quebec. We defend the right to negotiate any relationship Quebec sees fit with English Canada. But we do not believe separation is inevitable, desirable or a step forward."

—"Quebec Referendum—The Tasks of Socialists," I.S. *Pre-convention Bulletin* No. 1, 1994

Instead they embrace the Anglo capitalist rulers' various tokenistic schemes aimed at "resolving" the Quebec question through constitutional tinkering. This has led them to share the sheets with some pretty unsavory bedfellows.

Accepting the framework of continued capitalist rule, the I.S. seeks to pressure the ruling class to make things better for workers and the oppressed. Thus during the 1995 Quebec referendum campaign, they wrote: "We must demand that our government negotiate with Quebec in good faith. We must demand that Martin and Chrétien abandon all threats and agree to a new economic and political association" (*Socialist Worker*, 4 October 1995). The fact that self-proclaimed socialists could portray the Anglo-chauvinist rulers in Ottawa as "our government" just about says it all. *Socialist Worker's* plea for Chrétien to "negotiate" a "new economic and political association" was simply a call to refurbish the existing, necessarily oppressive capitalist state.

It is the same faith in the "democratic" credentials of the capitalist rulers that led the I.S. to embrace imperialism's drive for counterrevolution in the former degenerated/deformed workers states of the ex-Soviet Union and East Europe. While opposing independence for Quebec, the I.S. joined with Ottawa and Washington in calling for independence for the so-called "captive nations" of East Europe. This was a transparent cover for fomenting capitalist counterrevolution throughout the region. The devastating consequences of capitalist restoration can be seen today in the economic ruination, bloody ethnic terror and nationalist wars which are ravaging much of East Europe and the former USSR.

### **I.S. in Bed with Chrétien and Manning**

*Socialist Worker* (27 September) claims, "To refuse to recognize Quebec's unique character is to open the door to the anti-Quebec chauvinism which has been fuelled massively by both Chrétien and the Reform Party." But both the federal Liberals and Preston Manning's Reform bigots *support* the Calgary Declaration! For the I.S., pointing to the Anglo chauvinists of Reform as the root of all evil has long been an excuse for lining up with the Tories, Liberals and NDP,

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## Ontario Tories...

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And the International Socialists circulated a petition at the November 8 rally, held while the union tops were busy scuttling the teachers' strike, which beseeched the OFL to "call a province-wide strike" nine days later, when the legislature was scheduled to reopen. Seldom has there been a clearer example of how these pseudo-socialists' chatter about a "province-wide strike" only provides a "militant" cover for the betrayals of the union bureaucrats and social democrats.

We reprint below a November 5 Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste leaflet, which was widely distributed to striking teachers and other workers.

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### Victory to the Teachers Strike!

**Free, Quality Education for All!  
Those Who Labor Must Rule!**

---

The Ontario teachers' strike is a battle the labor movement can and must win. A victory for the teachers in their defense of education, jobs and working conditions would deal a big blow to the right-wing offensive led by Mike Harris against Ontario's working people, youth and poor. On the other hand, defeat would open the door even wider to austerity attacks on social programs and union rights, far beyond the school system and the public sector.

The Tories want to ax another billion dollars and 10,000 more teachers' jobs from the school system, in order to finance their 30 percent tax cut for the rich. Meanwhile, postsecondary education is increasingly inaccessible to working-class youth, who face the prospect of going tens of thousands of dollars into debt to get a degree or diploma. Seeing the teachers' struggle against education cutbacks as their own, thousands of parents and students have joined picket lines and strike rallies around the province.

Education should be a right, not a privilege of wealth! But the capitalist rulers of this society only want to spend on education what they can eventually realize back in profit. They don't need educated working-class and minority youth, because there aren't any jobs for them, or McJobs at best. The labor movement must fight for **free, quality education for all**, including the abolition of postsecondary tuition and other fees, together with open admissions and a living stipend for students.

While ravaging education, the Tories are also ripping apart medicare, welfare and other vital social programs, which they portray as unnecessary or unsustainable "overhead expenses." To prevent effective resistance to this all-sided assault, the rulers seek to "divide and rule" by setting working people at each other's throats along national, racial, linguistic and other lines, while scapegoating immigrants, the Québécois and other minorities for the poverty and unemployment which are endemic to capitalism.

Importantly, the teachers' strike has won support from immigrant and minority workers, for example in Toronto's working-class east end, where immigrant parents have been prominent on the picket lines. To rally all the oppressed in struggle, labor must demand **full citizenship rights for immigrants and refugees**. Chauvinism against Quebec has long been used to undermine class struggle by tying the

workers of English Canada to their own capitalist rulers. The workers movement must support **independence for Quebec** in order to break the grip of chauvinism and lay a basis for joint struggle against the English Canadian and Québécois capitalists.

The teachers' battle has further demonstrated in action the potential strength of a **unified teachers' union**, cutting through the current situation of five different unions based on sex, language and religion. The strike also provides an opportunity to take up the call for fully funded, mandatory public education against all state funding of religious education. There should be a single, secular school system—bibles and prayers have no place in the classroom!

For labor and the oppressed to win some victories, the starting point has to be an understanding that the society we live in is divided between two contending classes—workers who must sell their labor power for wages, and capitalists who exploit their labor for profit. The differences between these opposing classes are irreconcilable. The capitalist ruling class has at its command a monopoly of the means of violence, its political and bureaucratic apparatus, its enormous wealth and connections, and its control of education, the mass media and all other institutions of capitalist society. Its apparatus of state repression includes the courts, jails and police. Last year, the government turned loose its cops against OPSEU pickets at Queen's Park; today Harris is looking for a strikebreaking court injunction or back-to-work order to smash the teachers' strike.

The strength of the working class lies in its numbers, its organization, and above all the fact that through its labor it uniquely makes the wheels of profit turn in capitalist society. That is why it has the potential power to smash the unrelenting attacks of the ruling class. Real support for the teachers by the broader labor movement must include **solidarity strike action** against any attempt to break the strike, jail its leaders or fine strikers and their unions. In particular, the leaders of the CAW and CUPE, who have vowed to stage such solidarity strikes, must put their money where their mouth is. If every CAW-organized auto plant and CUPE-organized municipal job site in Ontario shut down in response to Tory strikebreaking, Harris and his crew would "rethink" Bill 160 in a hurry.

A week and a half into the strike, there are rumors that the teachers' union leaders are on the brink of caving in and calling for a return to work, even though nothing has been won and the government is pushing ahead with its legislation. This would amount to rolling over and dying in the face of the Tory onslaught. It would be a betrayal of the fight that has been joined by so many.

The working class is held back by a leadership that pushes the bankrupt idea of a "partnership" between labor and capital. From the teachers' union tops to Ontario Federation of Labour chief Gord Wilson to supposed "militants" like the CAW's Buzz Hargrove and CUPE's Sid Ryan, the bureaucrats atop the union movement accept the interests of capitalism as legitimate, and try to confine the class struggle within the parliamentarist limits imposed by the class enemy. When the labor tops do organize protests, like the recent "Days of Action," their aim has been to allow working people to vent steam against the Tories, while reviving illusions in the NDP for the 1999 elections.

The Tories' "Common Sense Revolution" isn't simply the barbarous program of a particularly right-wing regime, an

"agenda" which can be "amended" through a judicious combination of mass protest and polling booths. It is part of a global offensive by the capitalist ruling classes who, following the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, have proclaimed the "death of Communism" and stepped up their drive to destroy social programs, drive down wages and rout the unions. This drive for "lean and mean" capitalist exploitation reflects heightened rivalry among the big imperialist powers, pointing the way—as twice before in this century—to interimperialist war for redivision of world markets.

The Harris Tories are at the forefront of the capitalist offensive in this country, but they are far from alone. The federal Liberal government has slashed billions from social programs. And the NDP, which the union bureaucracy portrays as labor's "political arm," has hiked tuition, shut hospitals, cut welfare and axed public sector jobs from the provincial government benches in Saskatchewan and B.C., just as it did earlier in Ontario under Bob Rae.

Students, teachers and other working people must have no illusions that replacing Harris with the NDP's Howard Hampton or Liberal leader Dalton McGuinty will end or even ameliorate the austerity attacks mandated by Bay

Street. McGuinty is an anti-labor politician who leads the other party of the bosses. As Rae's attorney-general, Hampton jailed striking postal workers for defending their picket lines. This right-wing social democrat is also a vocal admirer of British Labour Party prime minister Tony Blair, who is today administering the austerity diktats of British capital against workers and the poor while upholding the anti-union laws of the former Tory government.

The fight for free, quality education as well as free universal health care and other basic social programs requires a fight to sweep away the entire profit-driven capitalist system and create a socialist society based on meeting human needs. For this, it is essential to forge a new, revolutionary leadership of the labor movement. The Trotskyist League/Ligue trotskyste fights to construct a revolutionary party which, in the course of class struggle, can make the working class conscious of its historic task of overthrowing the rule of capital. Through the struggle for a new, egalitarian society, where those who labor rule, the working class can rally all of the oppressed to do away once and for all with this bankrupt system of poverty, racism and oppression. **Smash the capitalist war on workers and the poor! Victory to the teachers' strike!** ■

## "National Unity"...

(continued from page 13)

for example over the Charlottetown deal. So when Reform announced its support for the Calgary Declaration, it must have seemed to the I.S. like a crime against nature.

Caught, as it were, *in flagrante delicto* with Preston Manning, *Socialist Worker* squirms to explain away Reform's "surprising nod" to the premiers' "effort to amend the Constitution in Quebec's interest" as an "opportunistic strategy to buy votes." Allegedly, Reform's Quebec-bashing has "failed miserably," and Manning has been "forced to back off on his anti-Quebec message" because "The truth is, Quebec bashing is not winning English Canadian workers to the Reform Party ranks."

"The truth" is very different. Manning & Co. support the Calgary Declaration because it is the farthest thing from an "effort to amend the Constitution in Quebec's interest." Replacing the sop of "distinct society," the even vaguer notion of Quebec's "unique character" is rendered utterly meaningless by the Declaration's prominent assertion of the "equality of status" of all provinces and its insistence that "If any future constitutional amendment confers powers on one province, these powers must be available to all provinces." This provoked Quebec premier Lucien Bouchard to quip: "What a stroke of inspiration! Quebeckers are unique.... 'Unique' like the SkyDome, Cape Breton, Labatt Blue or Wayne Gretzky. This expression would render us both socially unique and a political eunuch" (*Globe and Mail*, 17 September).

Reform swept the West and became the official opposition in parliament in the last election on the basis of a campaign of flagrant anti-Quebec bigotry. The New Democrats have also openly played to this anti-Quebec chauvinism, notably in B.C. where NDP premier Glen Clark claimed Reform's sweeping federal victory reflected "legitimate B.C. concerns." With Clark now hedging on his support for the Calgary Declaration, *Socialist Worker* complains, "Tragically,

the leadership of the NDP, the party best placed to forge a united workers movement among English Canadian and Québécois workers, is positioning itself to take the most reactionary role in the current negotiations."

"Best placed"? The anti-Quebec bigotry fostered by the NDP has been instrumental in rallying the workers of English Canada behind their "own" exploiters and in driving Québécois workers deeper into the arms of the bourgeois-nationalist Parti and Bloc Québécois. Of course this hasn't stopped the I.S. from calling to "Vote NDP" in election after election—even in Quebec, where the thoroughly Anglo-chauvinist New Democrats understandably have zero support among the working class.

In combating Anglo chauvinism and supporting Quebec independence, we Trotskyists seek to redirect the workers' consciousness and struggles against their respective national capitalist exploiters in the struggle for socialist revolution. Not so the I.S., whose support to Meech Lake, Charlottetown and now the Calgary con game has repeatedly thrust them into the arms of the worst enemies of workers and the oppressed. ■

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Tony Brock/Toronto Star photos

Ontario teachers' strike in defense of education, jobs and working conditions won massive public support.

# Ontario Tories Devastate Education, Social Programs

## Union Tops Pull the Plug on Teachers Strike

The largest teachers' strike ever staged in North America ended in a blatant capitulation by the union bureaucrats, as 126,000 Ontario teachers were sent back to work November 10. The teachers walked out two weeks earlier to protest Bill 160, a draconian program of education cuts by Mike Harris' provincial Tory government. Their strike was immensely popular among parents and students as well as other trade unionists. On November 6, 25,000 strikers and supporters turned out for a huge strike rally outside the Queen's Park legislature in Toronto. Only five hours later, leaders of three of the five striking unions appeared at a televised press conference to announce an unconditional surrender.

These union officials were afraid to show their faces on the speaker's platform at another Toronto rally on November 8, which featured sizable contingents from other unions. The day before this rally, a meeting of more than a thousand Toronto-area public school teacher union members had

erupted in anger, with screams of "betrayal," demands for a membership vote and vows to stay out. The other two unions, representing secondary school and Catholic teachers, soon caved in and announced a return to work.

Calling the strike "illegal" because it was not over purely contractual issues, the government moved to get a court injunction to force the teachers back to work. But faced with enormous support for the strike, including threats of solidarity action by the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) and Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), the bourgeoisie instead relied on the workers' misleaders to end the walkout. Amid all the militant rhetoric emanating from rally platforms during the strike, the main emphasis of the various union tops was to "get rid of this government" by returning the social-democratic NDP—or even the bourgeois Liberals—to office in the 1999 provincial elections.

The labor bureaucrats were echoed by various self-proclaimed socialist organizations, who sell the lie that the thoroughly pro-capitalist NDP can be an instrument that meets the workers' needs. Thus the Socialist Action group called on the Ontario Federation of Labour tops to launch a province-wide strike to "force an election, and bring to power an NDP government committed to a Workers' Agenda."

(continued on page 14)