

## Shutdown Threat Provokes Government Crisis

# British Miners Under the Ax

David Rose

OCTOBER 25—Over a quarter million people, including tens of thousands of miners and their families, took to the streets of London today in the second massive workers demonstration in the British capital in five days. On October 13 the Conservative government of Prime Minister John Major announced that 31 of the country's 50 remaining coal mines would be shut down, leading to the firing of over 30,000 miners and threatening at least 100,000 other jobs. This amounts to a death sentence for the already economically devastated mining areas, practically eliminating the industry. The ensuing storm of opposition threatens to topple the Tory leader. Major's popularity has hit an all-time low, while even the main Tory newspapers have been baying for the government's blood.

The massive popular outcry over the government's announcement forced Major to ignominiously pull back last week, issuing a stay of execution for 21 of the pits. On October 21, the government barely defeated a Labour Party motion in Parliament opposing the closures, with the minor parties and a handful of Tory MPs (Members of Parliament) joining the opposition. But coming on the heels of last month's devaluation of the pound and an ever-deepening depression, the closure threat has placed the future of the short-lived Major government itself in question. With the Maastricht Treaty on European union coming up for Parliamentary approval on November 4, Major has threatened to call new elections if he loses the vote.

The Labour misleaders smell the prospect of a return to the government benches over the backs of the beleaguered miners. Even the Tory *Sunday Times* has mooted the possibility of a National government, harking back to the class-collaborationist coalition gov-



• For Workers Action Committees to Stop the Pit Closures and to Run the Country!  
• Dump the Labour Sellouts! No Coalition!

ernment led by Labour renegade Ramsay MacDonald in the early 1930s and Winston Churchill's coalition government during World War II. Meanwhile, National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) leader Arthur Scargill, formerly seen as the "radical" bête noire of the British bourgeoisie, has placed himself at the head of a cross-class coalition aimed

at pressuring the Major government. But as our comrades of the Spartacist League/Britain warn, in a leaflet distributed to the mass rallies, "It won't solve anything to have a few Labour behinds warming ministerial seats."

The massive marches "for the miners" were undertaken as a *pressure* tactic, a diversion from the necessary class-

struggle actions that would pose concretely the possibility of a proletarian solution to the crisis of decrepit British capitalism. The miners must not stand alone! With other key sectors of the labor movement joining them in strike action, they could bring the country to a halt and open up the possibility of a *revolutionary*

*continued on page 10*

## Pamyat Fascists Invade Moscow Newspaper

On October 13, more than a dozen black-shirted fascists stormed the editorial offices of *Moskovski Komsomolets*, formerly the official newspaper of the Communist Party youth group in the Soviet capital. They denounced the paper for "advertising homosexuality" and presented the editor with a

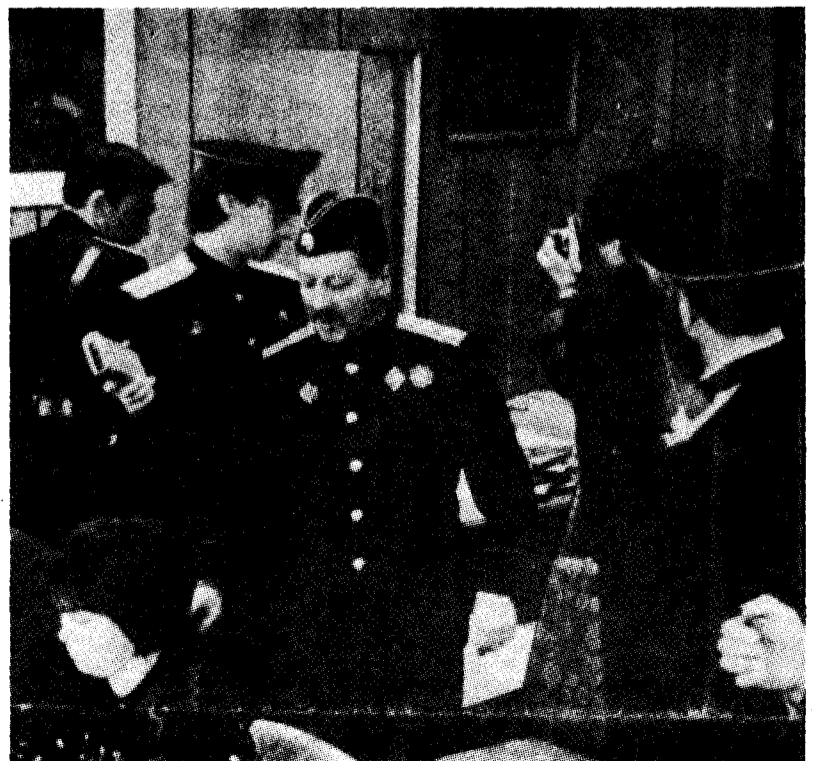
list of demands, including that he divulge the names and addresses of the journalists who wrote "anti-patriot" articles. As a Pamyat thug "ran his hand over the head" of the editor, their leader threatened to return in three days if their demands were not met: "We're still stroking you. Soon it will be other-

wise." At the same time, the fascist stormtroopers took photos of everyone and everything in the editorial offices.

The day before the attack, the black-uniformed anti-Semitic stormtroopers plastered a poster on the *Moskovski Komsomolets* building, showing a black boot with a swastika and SS symbol about to trample a copy of the paper. A Star of David was drawn under an image of the paper along with the scrawl "Masonic Communist Yid."

In reality, *Moskovski Komsomolets* has no more to do with communism than it has to do with the Masonic Order. The Komsomol leadership—a privileged elite of apprentice apparatchiks—was a stalwart support for Gorbachev's perestroika, which came to be a code word for bureaucratically controlled

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Moskovski Komsomolets

October 13, black-uniformed fascists storm offices of Moscow paper, terrorizing staff.

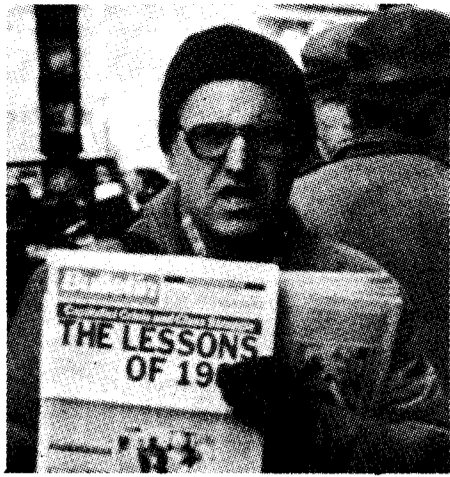


# Workers League: Freddy and the Mob

In the early 1980s, as the Reagan White House kicked off a full-scale judicial counterrevolution—aimed at gearing up the state's machinery of repression by shredding any semblance of democratic rights—it stepped up its legal vendetta against "the Mob." As we noted, "The Reaganites want to institutionalize the frame-up principle, and what easier target for a frame job than vicious parasites like gangsters?" ("Feds Frame Up Mob," WV No. 400, 28 March 1986). For the past ten years, the RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act) "conspiracy" law has been wielded for murderous frame-ups of the government's leftist opponents, wholesale attacks on labor, and general intimidation of the population.

So when the feds' RICO dragnet finally got John Gotti, the reputed New York "crime boss" who last summer was sentenced to life without parole, we responded with a straightforward statement based on the understanding that democratic rights are indivisible. As we observed in "Gotti, RICO and You" (WV No. 557, 7 August): "Civil liberties, if they mean anything at all, apply first of all to those perceived as really far out—whether they be Marxists, religious sects (recall Rev. Sun Myung Moon or Oregon guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh) or even in fact mobsters."

One would think that any self-proclaimed leftist, of whatever political persuasion, would by definition be opposed to RICO even if only out of self-preservation. But not David North's

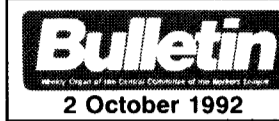


WV Photo

Workers League. A raving response to our article on Gotti by the Northites' vice-presidential candidate Fred Mazelis, titled "The Spartacists and John Gotti" (*Bulletin*, 2 October), doesn't even mention, much less oppose, the police-state RICO laws that were used to nail Gotti.

On the contrary, Mazelis takes umbrage that the "Spartacists go on to compare Gotti favorably to the leading spokesmen of US imperialism in the Democratic and Republican parties," citing our observation that: "If John Gotti were running with Noriega in this year's elections, they'd be the lesser evil." Mazelis is so insulted by the comparison of the Italian "mobster" and the Panamanian strongman with "his" imperialist rulers that he choked on quoting our next sentence: "Gotti's probably not nature's nobleman, but neither is the Arkansas executioner Bill Clinton nor George

Fred Mazelis (left) and Workers League *Bulletin* mum on RICO union-busting attacks.



**COMMENT**

## The Spartacists and John Gotti

Comment by Fred Mazelis

A recent comment by the Spartacist League on the conviction of Mafia boss John Gotti speaks volumes about the class character and political trajectory of this group of demoralized petty-bourgeois radicals. In the August Spartacist's bi-weekly *Workers League Bulletin*, the Spartacist's bi-weekly newspaper is not concerned with the role of the Mafia in society. Written in a style for which the Spartacist's bi-weekly newspaper is famous...



attention from the fundamental class conflict raging within capitalist society. The capitalist media plays a key role in this process by its glamorization of the Mafia. Hollywood has been working overtime on the subject in recent years. "Teflon Don" was the affectionate nickname coined by the tabloid press after Gotti obtained several acquittals on criminal charges. During his recent trial, the newspapers and television stations vied with one another in their daily descriptions of the "Dapper Don's" courtroom attire. These bul-

Bush, who regularly bombs small countries to rubble."

This, writes Mazelis, "is the language of politically deranged elements of the petty bourgeoisie." But somehow the oh-so-proletarian "Workers" League has been strangely mum on a law that has been the government's primary legal weapon against the unions. Sponsored by segregationist Arkansas Senator John McClellan, who presided over the witch-hunting Senate subcommittee in the 1950s that went after Jimmy Hoffa and produced the Landrum-Griffin Act outlawing "hot cargoing" in the trucking industry, the RICO laws were in fact intended to equate "organized labor" with "organized crime."

In the name of fighting "mob influence" in the labor movement, the gang of criminals that run this country invoked RICO to place the Teamsters under government trusteeship. Mine Workers, Longshoremen, Laborers and Hotel Workers number among the other unions to feel the RICO sting. And it is rare today that a picket line isn't met by the threat of RICO suits.

RICO's definition of "racketeering" is so elastic it allows the government to go after whoever they want, whenever they want, without any evidence of any crime. You're guilty until proven innocent and sentenced before convicted. The government has free rein to take everything you own, and without any assets it's pretty hard to find a lawyer to take your case. Attorneys' fees may be seized if the government claims these were paid with "ill-gotten gains." RICO's witch-hunting provisions were applied with a vengeance against the "Ohio 7," a group of leftist opponents of U.S. imperialism, who were met with wiretaps, dragnets, preventive detention, kidnapping and interrogation of children.

Mazelis' lips are sealed on all of this. But then again the Workers League would be hard pressed pretending to oppose government intervention in the labor movement or capitalist state

persecution of leftists. After all, the Northites have a wealth of experience in using the capitalist courts to disrupt, harass, frame up and otherwise try to bankrupt their political opponents. In their psychotic vendetta against the once-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, which they charge with being a government conspiracy, the Northites have pursued their own version of RICO.

In the late 1970s, a Workers League provocateur, Alan Gelfand, filed suit against the SWP demanding the court seize its membership lists, financial records and minutes. In 1988, the WL's *Bulletin* supplied the closing arguments for the bourgeois state's prosecution of a young SWPer, Mark Curtis, who was sentenced to 25 years in jail on frame-up charges of sexual abuse.

One of the most common means the government uses to nail people under RICO is the charge of using the mails or wire services for "fraudulent" purposes. The Workers League, which has made an international campaign out of condemning "The Mark Curtis Hoax," threw its support behind a court case filed by the father of the alleged victim claiming that Curtis' defense committee was engaged in an "international smear campaign," and demanding that the courts requisition monies raised in Curtis' defense for damages.

Now Mazelis charges that our article "Gotti, RICO and You" is evidence of the "class affinity between the Spartacists and the mob." This is pretty rich coming from an outfit which is internationally renowned for its gangsterism and truly criminal financial deals with a whole variety of colonels, sheiks and despots in the Near East. Moreover, given that the Workers League claims to be the most proletarian, the most internationally connected, indeed the sole repository of Marxism on the face of the planet, what kind of protection racket do they have going that makes them feel so smugly secure against the repressive legal arsenal of this capitalist government? ■



### Fourth International: What's in a Name

Once again, Ernest Mandel has offered to renounce the Fourth International. Politically, the leader of the United Secretariat abandoned revolutionary Trotskyism four decades ago, when he went over to the liquidationist program of Pabloism. As for the name of the Fourth International, which he continues to abuse, Mandel 15 years ago offered to "get rid of" this "label" (as well as references to "a bearded man named Leon Trotsky") in



LENIN

"24 hours" if it would facilitate an opportunist lash-up. But for revolutionaries, precise labels are indispensable. In the mid-1930s Trotsky polemicized against those (led by R. Molinier and P. Frank, later part of Mandel's USec) who wanted to capitulate to "Socialist" attacks on the Trotskyists for "alienating the masses" with their "label" and their "number." As we seek to reforge a Trotskyist Fourth International, this name is a banner proclaiming our revolutionary program.

In the field of politics as in all other fields of human activity, it is impossible to proceed without "labels," that is, without denominations and appellations that are as precise as possible. The name "Socialist" is not only inadequate but absolutely deceptive, for everyone in France who has a mind to calls himself a "Socialist." By their name, the Bolshevik-Leninists say to each and all that their theory is "Marxism"; that it is not the denatured and prostituted "Marxism" of the reformists...but the true Marxism restored by Lenin and applied by him to the fundamental questions of the epoch of imperialism; that they base themselves on the experiences of October, developed in the decisions of the first four congresses of the Communist International; that they are in solidarity with the theoretical and practical work accomplished by the "Left Opposition" of the Communist International (1923-32); finally, that they stand under the banner of the Fourth International.

In politics, the "name" is the "banner." Those who renounce today a revolutionary name for the benefit of Blum and Company will tomorrow just as easily renounce the red flag for the tricolor.

—Leon Trotsky, "'Labels' and 'Numbers'" (August 1935)

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# Young Spartacus

## "Whites Only" Scholarships In, Minority Admissions Out

# Racist Backlash at UC Berkeley

As minority student enrollment has been sharply curtailed on college campuses across the country, accompanied by a rising tide of racist assaults, Bush's Department of Education has declared minority admissions "excessive" at the University of California's Boalt Hall School of Law at Berkeley. They claim this violates Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which ostensibly outlaws discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin). The department's "Office of Civil Rights" is now beating the racist refrain of "reverse discrimination," code words for stirring up a racist backlash against minorities. They charge Boalt Hall with filling "racial quotas" from separate waiting lists.

While affirmative action at Berkeley's law school is under attack, the university accepted a blatantly racist \$500,000 scholarship this fall earmarked for "very poor American Caucasian" students! This "David Duke endowment" is part of a drive to resegregate universities, making them the exclusive playground for the white upper class. As Andrew Hacker, author of *Two Nations*, said, "Do you think they're going to go to those poor kids from the decayed little trailer parks? No.... This is Berkeley saying, 'Hey look, all you people out in the San Fernando Valley, we haven't forgotten you'." Naturally, the Department of Education, which claims to be opposed to race-specific scholarships, has no objections to this one.

Berkeley's rad-libs are so busy stumping for Clinton (who proposes "boot camps" for black youth and a police corps for college grads to pay back student loans) that there have been no organized protests against either this racist scholarship or the attack on minority admissions. Grottesquely, among those defending the "whites only" scholarship is the president of the NAACP's SF Chapter, and a spokesman for the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund stated: "When you get down to it, all groups like the United Negro College Fund and National Hispanic Scholarship Fund are exclusive and discriminatory.... I don't see how anybody can be against it" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 19 September).

Regarding their admissions policies,



California Nazis hail racist Bakke decision.

## Fight for Open Admissions!

Boalt Hall officials have only whined that their policies have been "fully consistent" with the 1978 *Bakke* decision barring admissions quotas for minority students. Coming on the heels of the smashing of busing for school desegregation, the *Bakke* ruling was a landmark in the ruling class' drive to reverse the formal democratic gains of the civil rights movement. With Bush vituperat-

country which locked up 110,000 Japanese Americans in concentration camps during World War II, politically assaults minority students today by pitting Asians, Latinos and whites against each other to scramble for a share of a rapidly shrinking pie, while shoving blacks out of the race altogether. With mounting unemployment, the slashing of public school funding, and the skyrocketing

doors of universities to minorities and the poor. As we wrote at the time of the *Bakke* decision:

"[Racial quota admissions] cannot address the harsh realities of inferior education in America's rotting ghettos or the prohibitive costs of college which keep millions of minority and white working-class youth from ever setting foot on a university campus, let alone reach the level of professional school. Moreover, quotas are invariably minimal and easily reversible."

—*Young Spartacus* No. 58, October 1977

As we warned, even these minimal measures have been reversed.



WV Photo

April 30: Berkeley students demonstrate against racist acquittal of cops in Rodney King case.

ing on the campaign trail against "racial quotas," Democrat Clinton declared early on that his ticket is not " beholden" to "special interests"—i.e., is offering nothing to blacks and labor.

Meanwhile, the new bipartisan California state budget, which has slashed \$2 billion from the education budget and which will cut \$226 million from the UC system alone this year, is an attack on all working-class students, their parents and teachers, and is particularly devastating for minorities. Even before this, California ranked 48th in per capita spending on schools (see "California, the Cutback State," *WV* No. 561, 16 October). A generation ago, California's public university system was famous for its quality and low tuition. Now, a capitalist system which has no jobs seeks to simply discard a whole new generation of black and Latino youth, who daily face racist cop brutality and grinding poverty in the ghettos and barrios.

The Department of Education has launched a three-pronged attack against "quotas" in admissions and financial aid, and against the "diversity" standards which schools must meet for accreditation. This sets the stage for the resegregation of American schools at all levels. Across the country, minority recruitment programs aiming at student body "diversity" will be willingly sacrificed to avoid the wrath of the government. By targeting the liberal Berkeley campus, where white students are a minority of the incoming freshmen (being outnumbered by Asians), the Bush administration is going after blacks and other minorities.

The same racist ruling class of this

costs of higher education, universities have become ever more inaccessible to the working class. At Berkeley, the government intends to racially polarize a potentially volatile student body with its campaign against the "racial quota system" at Boalt Hall. In the absence of any protest, it ominously announced plans to "investigate" the admissions policy for undergrads and throughout the UC system.

The Spartacus Youth Club opposes the government witchhunt against Boalt Hall, which is part of a drive to ensure that higher education remains overwhelmingly white and upper-middle-class. We defend quota admissions in education to open access to universities for minorities, but quotas are not our program, and indeed they take racial discrimination in U.S. society as a given. Moreover, "affirmative action" programs in employment first arose as a divide-and-rule *preferential firing* policy for union-busting by the bourgeoisie in response to the mass black agitation and ghetto upheavals in the 1960s. This program was pushed by Richard Nixon to pit minority workers against the organized labor movement and gut hard-won union seniority rights.

While we defend affirmative action measures in education, they can't begin to overcome the legacy of centuries of racial discrimination perpetuated by the race- and class-divided school system. To combat the *systemic* race and class biases of education under capitalism, the Spartacus Youth Clubs fight for *open admissions* and *free tuition* and a *state-paid stipend*—that would really open the

These setbacks underscore the importance of understanding that even the fight for a basic democratic right like education requires a revolutionary perspective. Our fight for open admissions is necessarily linked to the need to upgrade the inferior ghetto schooling which prevents minority and working-class youth from acquiring the basic skills necessary for college. This requires an end to the racist "tracking" system and a struggle for genuine school integration, including the aggressive implementation of busing. But these urgent and necessary reforms will only be won as part of a revolutionary fight against the racist American ruling class, just as it took the Civil War to establish public education for black people in this country. Education is a right! Smash racist reaction at UC Berkeley! ■

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## Combined and Uneven Developments in the USec

It seems that the principal *raison d'être* for Ernest Mandel's rather shaky and morose "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec) nowadays is to resuscitate Kautsky's "party of the whole class." In a polemic against the British SWP of Tony Cliff, whose calling card for decades has been virulent anti-Sovietism, Mandel attacks them for using "the dogma of state capitalism to divide revolutionary organizations." Mandel then adds, "We are not fetishists of the Fourth International as it exists today" (*Quatrième Internationale*, May-July 1992).

Mandel has long been offering to renounce the "label" of the Fourth International, while fraudulently claiming that his organization is the continuity of Leon Trotsky's world party of socialist revolution. What is new here is that the bourgeois propaganda offensive over the "death of communism" has cut deeply into the demoralized cadre of the USec. And with the collapse of Stalinist rule in East Europe and the Soviet Union, it is a lot harder to peddle social-democratic "anti-Stalinism" as Trotskyism. With Mandel offering to broker a merger of the Second International with the Stalinist and ex-Stalinist leftovers from the Third, what purpose does his phony "Fourth International" serve anyway?

As the USec has begun to disintegrate, a new centrist constellation has surfaced. This is the "International Trotskyist Opposition" (ITO) of Franco Grisolia, a longtime oppositionist in the Italian USec; Peter Sollenberger, formerly of the American RWL; and Damien Elliott, principal spokesman of the French JCR, one of two youth groups associated with Alain Krivine's LCR. Sollenberger and Grisolia have been together under various acronyms since the early '80s, going back to the TILC ("Trotskyist International Liaison Committee," 1979-83) and the ITC ("International Trotskyist Committee," 1984-91). This spawned the "Left Tendency" of the USec (1991). Last January, Sollenberger-Grisolia's "International New Course Faction" split from the ITC to form the "Faction for a Trotskyist International." They were joined by the French in July to form the ITO.

But while their origins differ, this trio has one common denominator: virulent anti-Spartacism (see "The New Anti-Spartacists," on page 5 of this issue). This is what unites the certified scabherder Sollenberger and the trade-union bureaucrat Grisolia. Today, these consummate operators are appealing to young militants by talking out of the left side of their mouths. The JCR now discovers the danger of Krivine & Co.



The liquidator Michel Pablo (right) and his successor Ernest Mandel at 1988 Paris meeting.

"liquidating" into one or another offshoot of the SP and CP, as the Mitterrand regime stands exposed for a decade of vicious anti-working-class policies. Grisolia wags his finger at Mandel for "adaptation" to the "opportunist leadership" of Solidarność. Yet this posturing is belied by the long trail of opportunism by the different components of this rotten bloc, a history many of their supporters may not know. In the interests of political prophylaxis, we will review some salient low points.

### Grisolia in the Shadow of the Popular Front

Grisolia came out of the Italian Lambertiste group in the mid-1970s to form the Bolshevik-Leninist Group

(GBL), which then entered discussions with the international Spartacist tendency. He sought to join our tendency while calling for electoral support to workers parties in a class-collaborationist popular front, and while backing petty-bourgeois and bourgeois-nationalist groups, including condoning communal slaughter in Lebanon. We informed the GBL that for us these were principled questions precluding a fusion,

adding that the refusal to recognize this indicated a difference on the question of the revolutionary party as well. Grisolia then set up the TILC as what we called "a home for the Orphan Annes of pseudo-Trotskyism" (see "The Anti-Spartacists," *Spartacist* No. 29, Summer 1980).

"Notoriously," wrote the GBL in a letter to *Workers Vanguard*, "your organization holds the strange opinion that electoral support to a workers party involved or implicated in a Popular Front, or inclined toward it, equals capitulation to the Popular Front itself." This, according to Grisolia & Co., showed a "sectarian attitude toward the mass movement" (*Il Militante*, October 1976). Yes, the Spartacists had the "strange opinion" of refusing to give political support, however critical, to the Socialist Allende and his Unidad Popular in Chile, warning that this popular front would prepare the way for a bloodbath; nor did we support Mitterrand. Of course, myriad fake-Trotskyists like the USec and Grisolia "present this question as a tactical or even a technical maneuver, so as to be able to peddle their wares in the shadow of the Popular Front," as Trotsky wrote of their forebears in the 1930s.

In the mid-'70s Grisolia was calling for votes to the Eurocommunist PCI—even as it was supporting the Christian Democratic government of austerity and vicious anti-leftist repression—against the far-left Democrazia Proletaria slate (which wanted to pressure the PCI into a more left-wing popular front). In contrast, the founding cadres of our organization, the Lega Trotskista d'Italia, were

expelled from the Italian USec for opposing the PCI's "Historic Compromise." A few years later, Grisolia's *Bollettino Internazionale* (December 1981) enthused: "Mitterrand's victory inflicted a blow against the French and European bourgeoisies and encouraged the working class." Hand in hand with popular-frontism went anti-Sovietism, and Grisolia's group put out a leaflet, titled "No to the Stalinist Counterrevolution" (13 December 1981), equating Jaruzelski with Chile's Pinochet and calling for mass demonstrations in front of the Polish embassy.

While the declaration of principles of the new ITO polemicalizes against "deep entrism," Grisolia has been so deeply ensconced in the Italian USec that his group hasn't had a public face since 1984. For years nothing was heard from him. His FTI was buried inside the AQI, the USec "association" inside Democrazia Proletaria; then last year the DP entered Rifondazione Comunista, the split-off of the remnants of the old PCI. Now Grisolia and his associate Marco Ferrando are members of the central committee of RC. The day after the October 2 rampage by cops and union goons against 100,000 militant workers in Rome, there was a national meeting of the RC current in the CGIL labor federation, Essere Sindacato (To Be a Union). Grisolia, one of 12 chairmen of the meeting, repeatedly applauded as Essere Sindacato leader Bertinotti echoed the cop slanders of militant workers as "groups that have political violence as a method."

Grisolia, as an official of an insurance workers union, is also a member of the national leadership body of the CGIL. But during the recent meeting of Rifondazione Comunista's political committee, he called for splitting the CGIL, saying "it is necessary to overcome the taboo represented by the problem of a split," and calling for constructing a "new, broad, class trade union." Such a maneuver amounts to abandoning the big contingents of the powerful Italian proletariat to the trade-union bureaucracy. Is this some kind of "red trade union" ultraleftism? Not at all. The CGIL tops are so hated today by the mass of the workers, that middle-level bureaucrats like Grisolia are afraid that they will be either driven out by the ranks or axed by the tops, so he and others are looking to protect their sinecures.

### Scabherder Sollenberger

Now for the American connection. Peter Sollenberger and his fellow ex-Harvard student and one-time sidekick Leland Sanderson hung around some SLers in Boston in 1969, but couldn't stomach Leninist democratic centralism. When next we ran across them, in the campus town of Ann Arbor, they were organizing clerical workers...to cross picket lines in a February 1977 campus workers strike. We denounced this violation of elementary labor principles, and when Sollenberger/Sanderson produced the first issue of their paper in 1980, the central article, "Picket Lines and Spartacists," was devoted to justifying scabbing, snottily remarking: "In early 1976 the SL invented the commandment: 'Thou shalt not cross a picket line.'" Trotsky called strike pickets "the nucleus of the proletarian army," and this "commandment" is recognized by millions of class-conscious workers the world over.

Sollenberger's treachery is not limited to strikes, but extends to the struggle against fascism and racist terror. When the Spartacist League in 1979 organized black workers in Detroit to stop a scheduled Ku Klux Klan rally, Sollenberger's outfit brought out a scurrilous leaflet denouncing this militant action as a "fraud." Then three years later, when the SL organized a 5,000-strong labor/black mobilization in Washington, D.C. to stop the KKK, Sollenberger's RWL grotesquely reviled the Spartacists as

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In 1988 demonstration, LCR honcho Alain Krivine (right) marching with ex-PCF social democrat Pierre Juquin, whose election campaign was pushed by LCR.

# Collapse of Stalinism Shakes Pseudo-Trotskyists

## The New Anti-Spartacists

The following is adapted from an ICL leaflet distributed at an October 23 meeting in London featuring USec leader Ernest Mandel.

On October 23 Ernest Mandel, leader of the so-called "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec), is scheduled to speak at a national rally of the Socialist Outlook group in Britain. The talk was initially titled, "75 Years of the Russian Revolution: In Defence of October." Those who know the track record of the USec would find that pretty rich. In every key event in which defense of the gains of the 1917 October Revolution has been posed, from Afghanistan and Poland at the beginning of the '80s to Yeltsin's August 1991 pro-capitalist counter-coup in Moscow, Mandel's outfit has been on the anti-Soviet side of the barricades. Now that imperialism and counterrevolution are reigning triumphant in East Europe and the Soviet Union, it's cheap to come out "in defence of October." But maybe not cheap enough: days before the event, the title was abruptly switched to the innocuous "Tories in Crisis—European Capitalism in Crisis."

When the USec joined the imperialist hue and cry over Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, we warned that these inveterate tailists, after years of chasing after every manner of popular front, were well on the way to becoming full-blown Cold War social democrats. In the spirit of the Reaganite '80s they not only declared "Solidarity with Solidarity" in Poland, but began running articles saluting Nazi collaborators like the Estonian "Forest Brothers" as "freedom fighters" in the "struggle against Stalinism." A whole faction of the USec openly hailed the imperialist *Anschluss* (annexation) of the East German deformed workers state. And now they are falling into lockstep with the German-orchestrated breakup of the Yugoslav deformed workers state. Erstwhile "red '68er" Alain Krivine, star of the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), recently signed an appeal calling on the imperialist Common Market "Europe of Twelve" to "act collectively" in Yugoslavia (*Le Monde*, 26 August).

Politically the USec has nothing in common with Trotsky's Fourth International, and it's hardly united in any case. Wherever it has supporters they are divided into publicly competing groups, submerged in reformist parties, and/or riven with multiple permanent factions. For a whole layer of USec cadres and ranks, the mask of social democracy has become the face. This is epitomized by Matti, leader of the faction which celebrated the Fourth Reich's annexation of East Germany. For some years Matti attempted to give an "orthodox" veneer to his rightist politics by calling for building the "International," in opposition to Mandelite liquidationism. But the "International" he was referring to was the "Second," not the "Fourth." Now Matti has taken this to its logical conclusion and is a de facto dual member of the LCR and Mitterrand's Socialist Party.

At the same time, the manifest bankruptcy of the USec in the face of the collapse of Stalinism has also produced leftward-moving oppositions for the first time since the mid-1970s. Among these is the Jeunesses Communistes Révolutionnaires, JCR-*l'Egalité*, the heterogeneous and increasingly dissident youth group of the French LCR. Originally, an influential part of the JCR leadership threw in their lot with Matti. But in the face of the counterrevolutionary

tide sweeping Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, together with the imperialist slaughter in the Persian Gulf, many of these youth have been propelled into leftist opposition. Their leadership, notably the JCR's principal spokesman Damien Elliott, seeks to keep them chained to Mandel's USec as a loyal (kept) opposition. But the collapse of Stalinism and the evident crisis of the USec and the rest of the fake-lefts

has been defined by capitulation to the popular front in Italy. As for militarily blocking with a wing of the Stalinist bureaucracy against the forces of counterrevolution, for Elliott this is purely hypothetical. As the LTF noted in a 27 July "Open Letter to the JCR-*l'Egalité*" about Elliott's position on the August 1991 Moscow coup: "In a soft way, he wants to be with the 'masses' who were on the Yeltsin barricades. He

avoiding practical conclusions, thereby rendering their criticism meaningless." Against the bankrupt leaders of the USec, Elliott has readily borrowed from—and blunted—our politics. But as Trotsky also noted, centrists direct their main fire not against the right, but against the Bolshevik-Leninists.

What really haunts Elliott, Grisolia & Co. is not the grotesque betrayals of the USec but the "spectre of Spartacism." Seeking to establish themselves as "leaders" of a centrist opposition within the confines of the USec, they are desperately trying to inoculate any leftward-moving elements against our politics. To this end, Elliott recently authored a document, entitled "Real Trotskyist Platform or Spartacist Platform," attacking a left opposition in the USec's Algerian section, the Parti Socialiste des Travailleurs. (Elliott's document and the LTF Open Letter are available in English in No. 7 of our bulletin series, *Hate Trotskyism, Hate the Spartacist League*, which reprints attacks on us by our opponents.)

Acknowledging that the USec "is undergoing a deep crisis marked by the political and organizational liquidation of numerous sections, with disarray among thousands of militants," Elliott warns that this could "benefit sects with a clearly more coherent program than that of the USec." Again Trotsky's description of centrism fits Elliott like a glove: "The centrist frequently covers up his dawdling by referring to the danger of 'sectarianism,' by which he understands not abstract propagandist passivity (of the Bordigist type) but an active concern for purity of principles, clarity of position, political consistency and organizational completeness."

Elliott obviously spent some time ransacking the publications of various renegades and deserters from the ICL for the fabrications he writes about our organization. Although he doesn't acknowledge it, he is particularly indebted to the "Bolshevik Tendency"—a collection of embittered ex-members who quit our tendency under the early pressures of Cold War II and who have since made a "political" career out of trying to smear and set up the organization they deserted. Elliott borrows from this "reputable" source to depict our organization as a

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### LTF and JCR Debate in Paris



Le Bolchévik

Podium at September 25 meeting-debate: Damien Elliott of JCR (left), Jean Thimbault and Gérard Loubiano of LTF (right).

has compelled them to address and confront the authentic Trotskyism of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

#### The Spectre of Spartacism

The ICL is well known for our intransigent opposition to the forces of capitalist counterrevolution in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Many members of the JCR-*l'Egalité* come from CP backgrounds; among these a number have long been repelled by the USec's capitulation to imperialist anti-Sovietism from Afghanistan to Poland. During the Persian Gulf War, some members of the JCR-*l'Egalité* were wearing badges reading "Sink Mitterrand and Bush in the Gulf!"—which was the headline in *Le Bolchévik*, the newspaper of our French section, the Ligue Trotskyste de France (LTF).

Last July at a JCR-*l'Egalité* day school, Elliott lauded the ICL for our principled opposition to voting for any of the parties of a popular front, in contrast to the capitulations of the USec. Elliott was also the author of a pamphlet entitled "From the Fall of Stalinism to the Formation of the CIS" (the stillborn "Confederation of Independent States" proclaimed by Yeltsin in December 1991). Here he claimed to support the position that Trotsky outlined in the Transitional Program of "the possibility, in strictly defined instances, of a 'united front' with the Thermidorian section of the bureaucracy against open attack by capitalist counterrevolution."

But for all his alleged opposition to the popular front, Elliott has recently found it expedient to join with the "Faction for the Trotskyist International," headed by the consummate political swindler Franco Grisolia, a small-time union bureaucrat whose USec career

thinks that Yeltsin is a counterrevolutionary, but he wants to 'fraternize' with his shock troops instead of smashing them!" And Elliott continues to defend the USec's support to Polish Solidarność—the counterrevolutionary, CIA-bankrolled "union"—against Jaruzelski's crackdown in 1981.

As Trotsky wrote in his article "Centrism and the Fourth International" (February 1934), centrism's "main arguments against the right it borrows from the Marxists, that is, first of all from the Bolshevik-Leninists, dulling, however, the sharp edge of criticism and

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# Anti-Spartacists...

(continued from page 5)

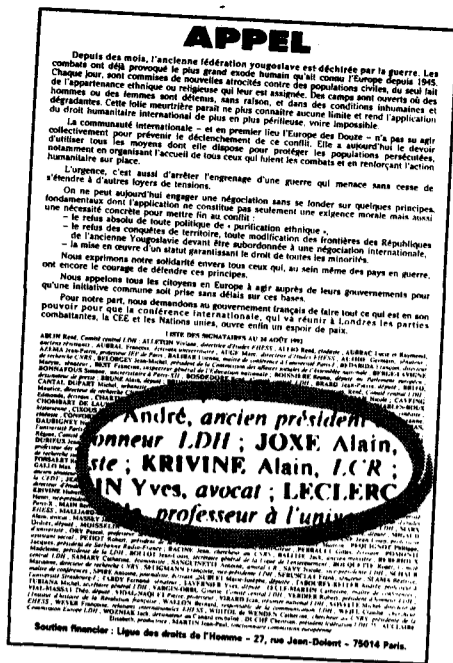
cult of senile and cynical Tukhachevskys who worship before portraits of General Jaruzelski. Certainly, no member of ours would recognize Elliott's portrayal of the ICL as the organization to which they belong.

Feeling the heat from the ICL's consistent Trotskyist politics, the JCR participated in a public "meeting-debate" with the LTF on September 25 on "The Russian Question and the Continuity of the Fourth International." At the debate, an Algerian woman supporter of the PST spoke powerfully from the floor: "I was expelled from the USec camp [in Portugal this summer] which I was legitimately attending, for defending my tendency and my document.... I also want to demonstrate the really outrageous manner in which comrade Damien Elliott responded to us, the faction, in Algeria. He is acting as a fingerman by refusing to debate with us and sticking a label on us that is very prejudicial."

## Alibis for USec Support to Yeltsin Counterrevolution

In trying to exorcise the Spartacist spectre, Elliott's opposition to Mandel & Co. vanishes as he seeks to alibi their egregious anti-Sovietism. In his document to the PST, he argues: "It is a lie and a scandalous slander to claim that the USec 'clearly supported counterrevolution in the USSR'." Well, as Marx was fond of saying, "facts are stubborn things." Following the Yeltsinite countercoup in the Soviet Union, the USec's *Inprecor* echoed the imperialist celebration over "the Second Russian Revolution," while an authoritative article by Catherine Verla stated baldly: "It was necessary to unhesitatingly oppose the coup, and on these grounds, to fight at Yeltsin's side" (*Inprecor*, 29 August 1991). Elliott himself declares that "it was completely to the credit of the LCR that they published a press release delighting in the failure of the putsch" (while, for the record, "warning the workers against Yeltsin")!

As the old saying goes, the acorn never falls too far from the tree. Like his former tutor Matti, Elliott reduces his criticisms to chiding the USec for refusing "to construct the Russian section of the Fourth International." But on what program? While he admits that the Trotskyist program of unconditional defense of the USSR "meant the defense of workers' gains and frontal opposition to the maneuvers of Gorbachev and then Yeltsin," Elliott condemns the "Spartacist position making Yeltsin the main enemy in August"! If Yeltsin, who spear-



## LCR leader Alain Krivine signed August appeal to Common Market imperialists to "act collectively" in Yugoslavia.

headed the forces of capitalist counter-revolution, was not the "main enemy," then who was? Obviously, for Elliott the answer is...the pathetic coup plotters! While the coup committee wanted to pursue Gorbachev's policy for controlled, gradual capitalist restoration, they were eclipsed by the forces pushing to smash the Soviet workers state—both the imperialists and domestic counter-revolutionaries—who rallied to Yeltsin.

While he continues to offer backhanded support to Yeltsin, at the September 25 debate with the LTF Elliott charged that our position was one of "hypocritical support to the putschists." Certainly any serious opponent of capitalist counterrevolution would have looked hard, as we did, to determine if there was a basis for giving military support to the coup against Yeltsin's open counterrevolutionaries. But there was nothing to support: the coup committee refused to go after Yeltsin and told the workers to stay off the streets. We called on Moscow workers to clean out the rabble on the barricades in front of the Yeltsin "White House." But the coup plotters feared unleashing the forces that could have defeated the Yeltsinites, because that would have raised the possibility of civil war and the immediate prospect of proletarian political revolution.

As for "hypocritical support to the putschists," months after the victory of the Yeltsinite countercoup we find Elliott's centrist bloc partner Grisolia writing: "If sectors of the working class had rallied in support of the coup, wanting to struggle against austerity and other moves toward capitalist restoration, Trotskyists should have allied with

them" ("For a Workers' Emergency Plan to Combat the Crisis of the Soviet Union," *Bulletin of the Faction for the Trotskyist International* No. 1, March 1992). One could hardly find a more chemically pure expression of opportunism. If only the workers had moved against the counterrevolutionaries, then Grisolia would have moved with them. But the workers didn't...so Grisolia sidled up to the Yeltsinites instead!

While in his pamphlet on the Russian question Elliott talks abstractly of the possibility of making a military bloc with a wing of the Stalinist bureaucracy against open attack by capitalist counter-revolution, not only is there no concrete instance in which he would apply this "hypothesis," in his document to the PST he in effect dismisses Trotsky's position on this as null and void. Thus Elliott outlandishly claims that:

"all of Spartacist's politics concerning the workers states are an extrapolation of the hypothesis of a bloc with one Stalinist tendency against the others as envisaged in the Transitional Program. A hypothesis that was based on the existence of the 'Reiss faction,' that is, a revolutionary tendency in the bureaucracy. A tendency which was massacred the very year said program was written."

Trotsky understood that the Kremlin bureaucracy was the product of and reflected the contradictions of the degeneration of a workers revolution in a backward country surrounded by imperialism. This understanding of the dual nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy was fundamental to the Trotskyist position of unconditional military defense and the call for political revolution to oust the bureaucracy. Elliott's position is a perfect expression of the social-democratic Stalinophobia he was taught by Matti—that the Stalinist bureaucracies in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were "counterrevolutionary through and through." This he dates from the 1938 extermination of the Reiss faction. He would be hard put to explain how, close to 20 years later, in the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, the bulk of the ruling Communist Party went over to the side of the working-class insurgents. But in the debate with the LTF, Elliott tried to elude such thorny problems by declaring that the JCR-*l'Egalité* has no position on any event preceding 1979!

## "Solidarity" with Counterrevolutionary Solidarność

Of course, when decades of Stalinist betrayals and economic mismanagement drove millions of Polish workers into the arms of Solidarność counterrevolution, Grisolia & Co. readily "allied" themselves on the side of the Vatican, the CIA and the Western banks. In the debate, Elliott declared that Walesa's company union "posed a new theoretical

problem" because it wasn't clear to the "masses" what Solidarność was. In his document to the Algerian PST he writes, "It was only in 1984-85 that the underground leadership of Solidarność definitively dropped its mask," when they came out with an open program for Wall Street domination. So in line with the Grisolia school of "leadership," revolutionaries should have refrained from telling the truth to the Polish masses until it was obvious to all!

Already in the fall of 1981, with its first national conference, Solidarność consolidated around an openly counter-revolutionary program of "free elections," "free trade unions" and opposition to a planned economy. This program didn't come from nowhere, for the imperialists, as the whole world now knows, were massively bankrolling and brain-trusting Solidarność counterrevolution. Now Elliott writes that "With the advent of the Walesa government and the measures taken, the awakening is rather painful." We might point out that this "awakening" is rather more painful for the Polish working class, which is being ground down by unemployment, poverty and hunger under the Solidarność-led government, than for those "Trotskyists" who spent a decade cheering on Solidarność. Elliott cynically asks, "Should we conclude from this that the Spartacists were right and it was correct to support Jaruzelski?"

In the debate with the LTF, Elliott incredibly claimed that the imperialists didn't want Solidarność in power, but rather supported the maintenance of the Polish Stalinist regime! If that were the case, then how does one explain the millions the imperialists sank into financing Walesa's outfit? Even *Time* magazine, that mouthpiece for the American imperialist rulers, ran a front cover this year entitled "Holy Alliance—How Reagan and the Pope Conspired to Assist Poland's Solidarity Movement and Hasten the Demise of Communism"! In 1981, we recognized that the Solidarność leaders were traitors to the working class on behalf of NATO imperialism, and we urgently called to "Stop Solidarity's Counterrevolution!" When the attempted power grab by Walesa & Co. was spiked by Jaruzelski's countercoup, we supported this crackdown. As we wrote then:

"What do revolutionaries do when the Marxist program stands counterposed to the overwhelming bulk of the working class, a situation we of course urgently seek to avoid? There can be no doubt. The task of communists must be to defend at all costs the program and gains of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

—WV No. 289, 25 September 1981

## Chafing Under the Fourth Reich

In the debate with the LTF, Elliott conceded that "self-criticism" was called for on the question of the capitalist reunification of Germany. This is putting it mildly, since at the time he was allied with Matti, who called for breaking out "champagne" to celebrate the Fourth Reich's annexation of the DDR. Retrospectively, Elliott claims agreement with our call for a "Red Germany of Workers Councils." But this is simply the jumping-off point for an anti-Spartacist diatribe echoing the arguments made in his document to the PST, where he argues:

"The Spartacist policy [was] entirely oriented toward the attempt to split off a wing of the East German SED bureaucracy which they could use as a lever. Their attempt culminated in the anti-fascist demonstration at Treptow Park in Berlin, a 'united front' where they were manipulated by an SED which was looking for a smokescreen to conceal the central problem at the time: the demand by the masses that it leave."

Only a complete Stalinophobe could argue that the already fractured and disintegrating SED was "the central problem" in the DDR in January 1990. What about the forces of imperialist Anschluss—like Kohl's Fourth Reich and its social-democratic front men? In a remarkable feat, Elliott never once mentions the West German Social Dem-



JCR's newspaper *L'Egalité* headlines "USSR: Hope on the March," joining with Mandel and rest of USec in cheering counterrevolutionaries on Yeltsin's barricades, August 1991.

ocrats, who served as the spearhead for capitalist counterrevolution!

Elliott is all too happy to tail after Solidarność or even the Yeltsinite "masses," but he wants nothing to do with the 250,000 people who came out to the Treptow demonstration to protest the Nazi desecration of a memorial to Soviet soldiers. The German Spartacists initiated the call for this anti-fascist demonstration under slogans calling for "Workers and soldiers councils to power! For a Leninist-egalitarian party!" The speeches given by representatives of our organization, from the podium in front of the demonstration, were an explicit frontal assault on the Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country" and "peaceful coexistence," and warned of the Social Democratic SPD "Trojan horse." The Stalinist hecklers who tried to drown out our calls for independent workers mobilization certainly saw this as a threat to them.

For Elliott the question of anti-Soviet fascism was simply a "smokescreen." This was precisely the line of the social democrats and the West German imperialists, who hated and feared the Treptow mobilization. Seeing in this anti-fascist and pro-Soviet demonstration, a quarter million strong, the forces that could prevail against the drive to capitalist reunification, the bourgeois press attempted to smear the SED with responsibility for the fascist provocation, calling it a "Stasi trick." After Treptow, the campaign to stampede the DDR into reunification was massively geared up. The "demand" that the SED leave was realized, as the Stalinists completely capitulated. Now, as the resurgent German nationalism that accompanied the annexation of the DDR is being brought home in racist pogroms and utter social devastation, perhaps Elliott will discover a "painful awakening" in Germany too.

Today the German imperialists drag former Stasi chief Erich Mielke into court on charges stemming from the Nazi period. Erich Honecker, the cancer-stricken former head of the DDR, is to be tried for defending his country's borders. Yet Elliott charges that the Spartacists are "making a cult of symbols of the former DDR" because we intransigently defend Mielke, Honecker and the other targets of a massive witchhunt aimed at seeking revenge for the Red Army's victory over Hitler's Third Reich. Of course Elliott hastens to add that, unlike Matti who obscenely demands a "Nuremberg for the Stalinists," he would "deny the capitalist Kohl regime any right to judge Erich Honecker." Instead he calls for a labor auxiliary to the Fourth Reich's witch-hunt, demanding that Honecker "be judged by the German workers." With the SPD as prosecuting attorney?

To be sure, many of the Stalinist rulers and secret police were guilty of crimes against the working class. But they are being charged with the wrong crimes before the wrong class. What began as a nascent political revolution in 1989-90 was derailed by the intervention of the Fourth Reich of German imperialism, which cut across the whole question of working-class justice under a proletarian state. While the Matti wing of the USec championed the cause of German reunification and the Mandel wing accepted the imperialist annexation of the DDR with some "conditions," the ICL was the only organization which forthrightly fought against capitalist reunification.

Elliott, by sneering at the Treptow mass mobilization, is dismissing the very possibility of a proletarian political revolution which would have sent shock waves throughout Europe, East and West, in particular pointing the way forward to the beleaguered Soviet proletariat. Now he amnesties the reunified German imperialist state by objecting to our references to a Fourth Reich, claiming that the Spartacists are "thus placing themselves on the terrain of the French Stalinists of the PCF with their traditional anti-German xenophobia." Does this mean that our comrades of the Spar-

takist Workers Party of Germany are boche-hating French nationalists? No, it means that Elliott squirms at telling the truth about the reactionary consequences of the bourgeois "democratic" counter-revolution in Germany.

### Two, Three, Many Lines on Afghanistan

On Afghanistan, Elliott pretends to be for military victory of the Soviet forces and outrageously claims (in his letter to the Algerian PST) that the USec "early on took a courageous and correct position." Courageous, correct? He is cynically presuming ignorance among young comrades who have no personal knowledge of the USec's actual policies. While quoting some lines against Soviet withdrawal from one of the USec's typical mealy-mouthed, hedge-your-bets resolutions, he hides the fact that the Mandelite majority joined the imperialists in condemning the Soviet intervention. Meanwhile, a hefty minority (including a near-majority on the LCR central committee) had an openly defeatist position calling

hailed the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Elliott should likewise denounce as Stalinophilic American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon (whom he claims as a mentor) for stating, in a speech on the 25th anniversary of the October Revolution: "The Red Army that the world hails is an army created by a proletarian revolution."

Elliott recognizes that our proposal to organize an international brigade to Afghanistan at the time of the pullout of Soviet troops in February 1989 was the "logical conclusion" of our aggressive defense of Soviet intervention. At the LTF meeting-debate he denounced it as "adventurist" and "substitutionist" (unlike the financial aid campaign—to which Elliott contributed—for the civilian victims in Jalalabad which we conducted when our brigade offer was not accepted). In his letter to the Algerian PST, this becomes the occasion for a tirade against "Spartacist guru Robertson" and our supposed "cynicism" in proposing to recruit, not just "hard Trotskyists," but sundry radical

reactionary Polish Solidarność, cries "Stalinist manipulation" over the Spartacist-initiated mass anti-fascist pro-Soviet demonstration at Treptow, denounces our call to hail the Red Army fighting CIA-backed *mujahedin* in Afghanistan. But over the Persian Gulf War he is foursquare for a bloc with the Islamic reactionaries of the Algerian FIS. This is simply an extension of the traitorous policy of the USec which cheered on Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution" in Iran. And Elliott is quite forthright about this as he accuses the ICL of having "a vision of anti-imperialist struggle so narrow that it led them to sectarian abstentionism on such central questions as the Iranian Revolution." Of course, we hardly abstained but rather called for the mobilization of the powerful Iranian proletariat against the shah and Khomeini's mullahs. It is this that sticks in Elliott's craw as he lectures about the "anti-imperialist united front."

In justifying the call for a "Workers and People's Front" by the Algerian PST—that is, a popular front with Islamic

January 1990, East Berlin—Spartacists initiated 250,000-strong rally against Nazi desecration of Treptow Park memorial to Red Army liberators from Nazi scourge. JCR's Elliott echoes social-democratic slanders that Treptow was Stalinist "smokescreen."



for Soviet withdrawal. And the majority's "courage" rapidly evaporated, as it caved in to the imperialist furor and demanded Soviet withdrawal.

This raises the interesting question, to paraphrase Mao: "where do incorrect ideas come from?" Elliott tries to slide over this sticky point by pretending that "some sections" continued to support Soviet intervention, citing the American SWP. Even at the outset, the SWP tried to minimize the question of Soviet intervention, but by December 1980 Jack Barnes' outfit publicly came out for withdrawal of the Soviet forces. Barnes explained that seeing the "Spartacist sect" calling to "Hail Red Army" convinced him that the SWP was "off base." So one month after the election of Ronald Reagan, the quirky reformist Barnesites got back "on base" with the bourgeoisie. The Mandelite majority, in turn, came out for Soviet withdrawal in June 1981, one month after the election of Cold War "socialist" Mitterrand (who they supported). If the SWP was running scared, the LCR smelled opportunities in the social-democratic union bureaucracy.

Elliott then takes on our slogan "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" A typical example of "obtuse sectarianism," he claims, designed to separate the Spartacists from the rest of the left, in the service of "self-interest," rather than to "increase the consciousness of the masses." First of all, what separated us from the rest of the left is that they bowed to imperialist anti-Sovietism, while we were enthusiastically for the Red Army intervention, which not only defended the USSR's southern flank but also opened the possibility for social liberation in Afghanistan. Our slogan highlighted the temporary contradiction between the Soviet bureaucracy's act of self-defense and its overall counterrevolutionary policy of peaceful coexistence.

Elliott calls our slogan "Stalinophilic." The Stalinists, of course, never

elements internationally. Just as Elliott can't imagine the masses hailing the Red Army, so imbued is he with Europacifism that he can't conceive of leftist youth angry enough with the whole system to trek to Afghanistan to fight imperialism.

It's nothing but "pulling together ten lumpens that you were contemptuous of," he sneered contemptuously in the September 25 debate. What about the possibility of enlisting fighters from among the thousands of leftist Iranian exiles, or Latin American youth inspired by the internationalist example of Che Guevara? In India, masses of young Communists marched in support of the Kabul regime. Just who does he suppose joined the international brigades in Spain—plenty of footloose adventurous types flocked there to fight against Franco. Don't forget the "Red '48ers," exiled from Germany after the defeat of the 1848-49 revolution, who spread across the world, fighting in revolutions and civil wars from Poland to the United States.

And does Elliott give a moment's thought to the impact that a brigade of even a few hundred would have had, not only in Afghanistan but in the Soviet Union? Former Afghan vets, the *afgantsy*, actually petitioned the Soviet government to allow them to go back and fight on a volunteer basis. Consider the impact that an international brigade for Afghanistan could have had on subsequent events in the USSR. For that matter, consider the impact in Algeria, where Islamic fundamentalists sent volunteers to fight alongside the Afghan counterrevolutionaries. Things might look somewhat different in Algiers today if the shock troops of the FIS had been bloodied and defeated in Afghanistan.

### "Anti-Imperialist" Front with Islamic Reaction

Elliott can't stomach actually making a military bloc with the Stalinists against the bid for power by counterrevolu-

tionary forces—Elliott grotesquely attributes the "AUF" to Trotsky. But to accomplish this he has to resort to crude falsification, extracting a clause to give it a meaning counterposed to that intended by Trotsky. The quote he cites does not mention the words "anti-imperialist united front," nor does the article it is taken from; nor does Trotsky use this formula at all after the disastrous experience of the Shanghai massacre of 1927, which was prepared by Stalin/Bukharin's "bloc of four classes" with the butcher Chiang Kai-shek. Moreover, Elliott omits Trotsky's call for the proletariat to take power. What Trotsky really said was:

"But if the Indian revolution will develop on a basis of a bloc of the workers, peasants, and petty bourgeoisie; if this bloc will be directed not only against imperialism and feudalism but also against the national bourgeoisie which is bound up with them in all basic questions; if at the head of this bloc will stand the proletariat; if this bloc comes to victory only by sweeping away its enemies through an armed uprising and in this way raises the proletariat to the role of the real leader of the whole nation—then the question arises: in whose hands will the power be after the victory if not in the hands of the proletariat?"

—"The Revolution in India, Its Tasks and Dangers" (May 1930)

Trotsky summarizes here the program of permanent revolution, which is diametrically opposed to the USec's line on Iran, and on Algeria today.

Elliott raises this in the context of the Gulf War, saying that according to the ICL, "standing fast on Saddam's trenches was correct, but attacking the imperialist coalition from behind its own lines"—through "a bloc with the FIS or the FLN"—"would have been a popular-frontist betrayal." He is willfully confusing military and political support, the vital distinction which Lenin drew in 1917 between fighting on the side of Kerensky against White

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## Algerian Trotskyist Denounces USec Opportunism

# "We Won't Retreat From Demanding the Right to Abortion"

In his document, "Real Trotskyist Platform or Spartacist Platform," directed against a left opposition in the Algerian Parti Socialiste des Travailleurs (PST), JCR-*l'Egalité* leader Damien Elliott ridicules the demand for free abortion on demand and for 24-hour day care as "ultraleftist imbecility." In the September 25 debate with the LTF, Elliott sought to divert discussion away from the Russian question by harping on the JCR's current campaign against night work for women. This is also the major theme of the JCR's new bulletin, *Femme et Révolution* (Women and Revolution), whose title is taken from the International Communist League but whose politics certainly are not. In the debate, Elliott provocatively accused the ICL of being "harkis" (referring to the Algerian mercenaries who acted as torturers for the French colonial army) for the social-democratic CFDT union bureaucracy and the European Commission (Common Market).

The JCR's opposition to night work for women has the flavor of petty-bourgeois Parisian café "revolutionaries." The justification is that women especially, but also workers in general, shouldn't have to work nights and weekends so they can go out and enjoy themselves. But who will run the bars, the restaurants, the Métro, not to mention the hospitals? Who will bake the bread that shows up in the *boulangeries* in the morning? Who will provide the electricity at night? Banning night work might perhaps make sense to pampered youth whose material needs are provided by their parents, but it is antithetical to running a modern economy. Above all it is harmful to women, excluding them from whole sectors of social labor, and is typically raised by the most conservative union bureaucrats in order to keep women at home, to bear and raise children. The Spartacists fight for equal pay for equal work and making full access to employment possible for all.

In the debate, a woman member of the PST intervened powerfully against Elliott and his document. We print below a translation of her remarks:

First, I want to introduce myself. I am a member of the Algerian PST. I signed the document to which Damien Elliott responded. I remind certain comrades who weren't at the USec camp in Portugal that I was expelled from the USec camp, which I was legitimately attending, for defending my tendency and my document. I was expelled bureaucratically. I was expelled based on my document and full programmatic positions. I also want to demonstrate the really outrageous manner in which comrade Damien Elliott responded to us, the faction, in Algeria. He is acting as a fingerman by refusing to debate with us and sticking a label on us that is very prejudicial.

What I especially wanted to focus on is the woman question. The comrade just said, "Was this platform written in Tizi or in Paris?" I have been a militant in the PST in Algeria for five years, a woman militant, a woman in Algeria, like most of the signatories of the document. That is, in Tizi, in Algiers, in Oran and elsewhere concerning the woman question. We have demands which I believe are democratic transitional demands and which were put into practice—I would remind comrade Damien Elliott of this—in October 1917 in the USSR. They were valid for the USSR of 1917, which is about like Algeria as far as the situation of women. Why is it that these demands, democratic ones perhaps, are valid in the USSR of 1917 but not valid in Algeria?

Are you saying that Islam, the FIS, fundamentalism and the fear of fundamentalism should make us retreat from legitimate and completely normal demands, like the simple right to abortion? I don't know whether you are aware of the situation of women who have to have an abortion in Algeria,

but I don't advise you to try to take away that right. In relation to fundamentalism, you state that in our document we have no perspective on the woman question. So I tried to see what you have to offer Algerian women as a perspective. And I read in your documents: a renewal of the cooperative movement. What does that mean, "renewal of the cooperative movement"? Starting up specifically wom-

en's rooms, to rediscuss and resubmit platforms to the FLN?

I would remind you that a leaflet was cosigned by the PST, the Parti Socialiste des Travailleurs, member of the USec, together with Hamas, a fundamentalist movement, maybe a moderate one, but fundamentalist nonetheless, with everything that means for women. They are the ones imposing the veil on us, they are the ones imposing the family code on us, they are also the ones imposing all these restrictions, all these abominations on women. To be sure, the FLN defends religion, Islam, the state religion, but does not impose it on us in such a fascist manner as the fundamentalists in power would do.

So today I am asking you, Damien Elliott, is the FLN our main target, and

**JCR spokesman calls for "Workers and People's Front" in Algeria with "all anti-government forces," including Islamic fundamentalists who seek to impose the veil on women.**



Or, going further, are you saying that the program of the social-democratic party, the FFS, is correct on the woman question? And going even further (and one can go further, since at the end of your document you accuse us of betraying): for you the FLN is the main target in Algeria today, which means that the FIS is not a priori dangerous, it is secondary. But what is happening for a woman in Algeria is that the veil has been imposed on her by the fundamen-

en's rooms, to rediscuss and resubmit platforms to the FLN? Or, going further, are you saying that the program of the social-democratic party, the FFS, is correct on the woman question? And going even further (and one can go further, since at the end of your document you accuse us of betraying): for you the FLN is the main target in Algeria today, which means that the FIS is not a priori dangerous, it is secondary. But what is happening for a woman in Algeria is that the veil has been imposed on her by the fundamen-

if so, can one make a bloc, a "united front," with the FIS or any of the "moderate" Islamic parties, with these fundamentalist movements, to overthrow the FLN? I also remind you that revolutionaries in Afghanistan, in order to contact women, to talk to them, including about abortion and democratic rights and transitional demands in a more or less analogous situation, didn't hesitate to don the veil to contact these women. They didn't give up when faced with the mullahs.

## Anti-Spartacists...

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general Kornilov's attack, and making a political alliance with Kerensky's capitalist Provisional Government. To understand the principled difference between support "from behind the lines" and support "in the trenches," just read Trotsky on the Spanish Civil War, where he insistently calls for a common military front against Franco while denouncing any political support to the bourgeois Republican government.

Interestingly, on the Persian Gulf War, Elliott attacks the ICL for "proposing 'Victory to Iraq' as a slogan in all countries, including France and the U.S." As he knows only too well, our slogan during the Gulf War was "Defeat U.S. Imperialism! Defend Iraq!" The call for "Victory to Iraq!" was in fact the central slogan of the tiny "International Trotskyist Committee" (raised by the RWL in the U.S. and the RIL in Britain), formerly led by one Peter Sollenberger and Grisolia, Elliott's new bloc partner. So Elliott wants to pin on us the slogan of the former comrades of his new comrade.

As we noted at the time, the call for "Victory to Iraq" implied political sup-

port to Hussein's Ba'athist regime and more generally to Arab nationalism. But Elliott simultaneously denounces us for holding a position which we did not have and for our opposition to the mythical "Arab Revolution." The very notion that there is an "Arab Revolution" is an "anti-imperialist" alibi for the bloody-handed, imperialist-dependent bourgeois (and feudal) rulers of the Arab states

who have time and time again stabbed the besieged Palestinian people in the back.

Elliott's convoluted polemic against the ICL over the Persian Gulf War reflects the fact that the JCR membership was powerfully attracted to the ICL's internationalist line on the Gulf War. In his "Real Trotskyism" document to the PST, he dismisses Spartacist "verbiage



ICL waged campaign on behalf of besieged Afghan city Jalalabad. WV Photo

about 'strikes' against the war and claims that our position showed "lack of confidence in the working class." This applies quite accurately to his own policies on the war. The JCR initially campaigned on the slogan of "immediate withdrawal of French troops" (*Autre Chose*, October 1990). This attempt to build a "united front" (really a popular front on a social-pacifist line) was modeled on the "antiwar" "coalition-building" of their USec comrades of Socialist Action in the U.S. Socialist Action took a cravenly social-patriotic line in the red-white-and-blue "peace marches," even condoning the wearing of yellow ribbons to "support our boys" (i.e., the imperialist troops) in the Gulf. Krivine's LCR followed a similar line in France.

Under the impact of the war, the youth in the JCR were impelled to take a more militant stance. After the LTF criticized them for refusing to call explicitly for defense of Iraq, in February 1991 the JCR published an article, "Hands Off Iraq—For Iraq," criticizing the "essentially pacifist" character of the antiwar protests and calling for "boycott and strikes" against the war. But this went hand in hand with talk of being in the same trench with the Algerian FIS and calling for Kuwait to be incorporated into Iraq.

Under the guise of the "anti-



# Swamp Things...

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"carpetbaggers," the epithet used by Southern racists against Northerners who aided in establishing black rights after the defeat of the Confederacy.

One of the hallmarks of centrists, as Trotsky pointed out, is the contradiction between their words and deeds. While the "ITO" declaration contains a few words against the popular front, Sollenberger joins Grisolia in supporting it in practice. Only on the politically more backward American terrain, he doesn't bother with the fiction of supporting the "workers parties of the popular front" but instead *directly supports a bourgeois candidate*. In the current U.S. presidential elections, Sollenberger's Trotskyist League is calling to "Vote for Ron Daniels!" (*International Revolution*, September 1992). Daniels is a leftover from black Democrat Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition, who echoes Jackson's "butter not guns" populist rhetoric with calls for *reducing* the Pentagon war budget by 70 percent and increasing taxes on big business.

## "Regenerating" Pabloism

The "International Trotskyist Opposition" offers at best a pale rehash of 1970s Mandelism. Their main programmatic document fetishizes the "transitional method" of "action programs" for "transitional objectives," and calls for "the building of well structured mass organizations" in "all mass movements." What this amounts to is raising left-sounding demands while pledging sub-



UPI  
Salvador Allende at mass rally (left), and before presidential palace (right) during Pinochet coup. Spartacist warned from beginning that Allende government with "constitutional" army would lead to drowning of workers movement in blood. Voting for "workers parties of the popular front" is not a "tactical" question but class betrayal.



New York Times

ordination to the leadership "structures" of reformist organizations and even bourgeois formations such as the American feminist organization NOW, not to mention Polish Solidarność. Grisolia's talk of "political regeneration and organizational reconstruction of the Fourth International" is an attempt to resuscitate the moribund United Secretariat with a leftist veneer. Politically it can lead nowhere except to where the USec has already arrived: a tail of the social democracy.

In the early 1950s, Michel Pablo, then head of the Fourth International, declared that under the objective pressures of a "generally irreversible pre-revolutionary period," the Moscow Stalinists would be forced into "roughly outlining a revolutionary orientation."

With this objectivist "theory" denying the need for an independent Trotskyist vanguard, Pablo set about liquidating the sections of the FI through a policy of "entrism *sui generis*" (of a unique kind) into the mass CPs (as well as into social-democratic and bourgeois-nationalist parties). The USec was founded a decade later on the liquidationist program of Pabloism, tailing the Algerian FLN and Castro's Cuba in the 1960s, Portuguese officers and Iranian mullahs in the '70s, hailing the Nicaraguan Sandinistas and proclaiming "solidarity with Solidarność" in the '80s, supporting every popular front from Allende to Mitterrand, and ending up vicariously climbing onto Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary barricades in Moscow in August 1991.

Built on a program of perennial tail-

ism, entrism and popular-frontism, the USec is heading straight to extinction. Today it can find no "mass movement" to tail except outright counterrevolution. But contrary to the reveries of imperialist ideologues, history and the class struggle have not come to an end, as shown by the explosion of the Los Angeles ghettos and barrios, the powerful German public workers strike and the militant, massive protests in Italy against the government and sellout union tops. And it is precisely the revolutionary consistency of the Spartacists which has drawn new forces toward us in different countries—notably Mexico, Canada, Ireland and Poland—in building a genuinely Trotskyist international party. We seek to reforge a Fourth International that Trotsky would have recognized as his own. ■

imperialist united front," Elliott blocks with Arab nationalism, seeing this as the only mass force siding with Iraq. The FIS actually was organizing brigades to go to fight in Iraq, just as they sent groups of *mujahedin* to fight against the Soviet-backed reform nationalist government in Afghanistan. But if Elliott had ever tried to get into a trench with these fanatical anti-communist reactionaries, they would have slit his throat. In contrast, the possibility of organizing antiwar action by the working class (rather than the unemployed lumpen base of the FIS) in the Maghreb was very real. And in Europe there were the beginnings of organized working-class action, with a de facto general strike in northern Italy and attempts by French rail and dock workers to stop the transport of arms and troops to the Gulf.

## Spartacism Is Real Trotskyism

As always, behind Elliott's war of lying words against the ICL stand more nefarious methods of seeking to "neutralize" revolutionaries. Last February, when the JCR-*l'Egalité* organized a "meeting-debate" of its own, their goon squad threatened and shoved militants of the LTF for protesting the JCR's glorification of Palestinian nationalist PFLP leader George Habash as a "hero of the struggle for Palestinian national liberation." And a subsequent reply to our comrades' letter of protest set us up for even more violent attack, accusing us of spreading "Mossad's slanders about Habash's 'indiscriminate terrorism'." In fact the PFLP in the past took credit for various indiscriminate terrorist attacks, and more recently has made a political bloc with the fundamentalist Hamas movement, which grew out of the arch-reactionary Muslim Brotherhood. At best the PFLP's nationalist strategy is an expression of the politics of despair and impotence in the face of brutal Zionist repression.

But for the JCR, this is the acme of the nationalist "Arab Revolution" which they hail. Behind this fig leaf, the USec has tailed behind the various kingdoms, sheikdoms and colonels' regimes in every Near East war. For them, as for

the petty-bourgeois PLO, this was the road to liberation for the Palestinian masses. Today Elliott accuses the ICL of "complacency toward Zionism," lyingly accusing the ICL of "refusing to defend self-determination for the Palestinians" and calling our revolutionary defeatist position in the 1948 Arab-Israel War a break with the Trotskyist position. In fact, the position of the Fourth International in that war *was* revolutionary defeatism. An article, written even before the entry of the Arab League forces, adamantly declared:

*"Make this war between Jews and Arabs, which serves the end of imperialism, the common war of both nations against imperialism!..."*

*"The only way to peace between the two peoples of this country is turning the guns against the instigators of murder in both camps."*

—"Against the Stream," *Fourth International*, May 1948

But swimming against the stream is anathema to the Pabloites, whose liquidationist revisionism destroyed the Fourth International. Instead they tail the Arab bourgeoisies who have historically connived with the Zionists to disenfranchise and destroy the Palestinian Arab nation. While Arafat embraces Jordan's King Hussein, the butcher of the Black September massacre of 1970, the USec embraces Arafat and his colleague Habash. We Spartacists say that it will take an intransigent fight against both Zionism *and* the Arab bourgeois regimes for the Palestinian people to achieve national liberation. What upsets Elliott is that we recognize the right of self-determination for *all* the myriad, interpenetrated peoples of the region, including the Hebrew-speaking people. The national question can only be resolved in an equitable and democratic manner through common class struggle for *socialist revolution* and a socialist federation of the Near East.

It is grotesque that, out of loyalty to the stinking corpse of the USec, Elliott goes to such lengths to seal off leftward-moving youth from Trotskyist internationalism. To the oppositionists in the PST, he says to embrace the Islamic reactionaries through a "Workers

and People's Front" including all "anti-governmental forces." This is the same treacherous line as in Iran, where the USec went from calling for "unity" of all opponents of the shah, to chanting "Allah Akbar!" ("God is great") along with the mullahs, to *seeing their own comrades arrested and executed by the Khomeini regime they helped put in power*. This is the suicidal logic of Pabloist liquidationism, abandoning the struggle for a Trotskyist proletarian vanguard in favor of tailing after "substitutes" led by alien class forces. Ironically, it was in Algeria that Michel Pablo reached the apex (or nadir) of his career, becoming a government adviser in the first FLN regime under Ben Bella.

To the youth of the JCR-*l'Egalité*,

Elliott/Grisolia offer only a rehash of 1970s-vintage Mandelism, which paved the way to support for Mitterrand and the current paralysis of the USec in the face of the "New World Order." Once again the USec school of opportunism is pushing leftist-minded youth into the arms of inveterate maneuverers like Grisolia, where they are learning how to use "left" criticisms to alibi their rightist Mandeliste leadership. The way out of this morass is to take up the fight to reforge a genuine Fourth International on Trotskyist politics. As Trotsky wrote in *The Lessons of October*, "Without a party, apart from a party, over the head of a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot conquer." ■

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# Miners...

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struggle for working-class power. The SL/B leaflet headlined the call: "Miners, rail, transport, power workers: strike now! For workers action committees to stop the pit closures and to run the country!"

## Scargill Enlists in the Anti-Strike Popular Front

The assault on coal miners is part of the British bourgeoisie's enforcement of capitalist austerity in the context of the Maastricht Treaty. The historically militant miners have been the target of a ruling-class vendetta for years. A miners strike in 1974 led to the downfall of the Conservative Heath government. The heroic yearlong 1984-85 miners strike nearly toppled Major's predecessor Margaret Thatcher. After imposing virtual martial law in wide swaths of the country in order to suppress the combative strikers, Thatcher unleashed a vindictive onslaught against the mining communities, slashing the workforce by more than half and turning entire sections of Wales, Scotland and northern England into wastelands. Now Thatcher's milquetoast Tory heir Major wants to finish the job.

But Major's attempt to prove himself no less brutal than the "Iron Lady" in cracking down on the working class backfired with a vengeance. The economy is already a shambles. Even aside from the pit closures, some 200,000 jobs are slated for the ax by the end of this year alone. Unemployment has nearly doubled over the past two years, with the jobless rate for men climbing to a postwar high. More significantly, the traditionally Tory Southeast has seen a *threefold* increase in joblessness.

Meanwhile, the Thatcherite wing of the Tory party has been out to get Major for displacing their idol two years ago in the wake of mass protests over the "poll tax." They also accuse Major of kowtowing to the Common Market gnomes of Brussels and the European "exchange rate mechanism" (ERM) from which Britain was forced to withdraw last month. Conservative right-wingers seized on the pit closure announcement to go into open opposition. Tory MP Winston Churchill, whose grandfather won his spurs by ordering troops out against a miners strike in the Welsh Rhondda Valley in 1910, obscenely proclaimed himself a guardian of the working man, denouncing the government for "throwing tens of thousands onto the slag-heap."

Church of England bishops across the country have been denouncing the government from their pulpits as "wicked" and "evil." The *Sun* railed against

a "bankrupt, clueless, lying, incompetent, arrogant administration." The right-wing *Sunday Telegraph* (18 October) declared: "We must not return to the ERM. We must not ratify the Maastricht treaty. If the defeat of the government over the miners is the readiest way to advance that cause, so be it."

This has set the stage for a "popular front" extending from the right wing of the Tory party and the C of E hierarchy to the wretchedly reformist Labour Party and NUM leader Scargill. Such a coalition of class collaboration is designed to chain the workers to sections of the bourgeoisie and *suppress* class struggle.

Today Scargill has abandoned any serious talk of strike action in favor of lame appeals for an "independent inquiry" to review the fate of the threatened pits. Meanwhile he is making unity overtures to the scab "Union of Democratic Miners," braintrustered by the Tories as a strikebreaking vehicle against the



British miners protest in London against Tory government's plan to gut mining industry. Sharp class struggle in Britain would have dramatic impact on workers from Rome to Moscow.

1984-85 strike. No wonder the bourgeois press applauds the "new, statesmanlike Arthur Scargill."

Months before the '84-'85 strike Scargill was crucified by a cabal of right-wing Labour Party and Trades Union Congress (TUC) leaders and Fleet Street Tory tabloids for rightly denouncing the Polish company "union" Solidarność as "anti-socialist." The Tories and the Labour/TUC chiefs have been out to get Scargill ever since for refusing to bow to their strikebreaking dictates.

Yet speaking at today's mammoth demonstration in London, Scargill openly appealed to his new anti-Communist bloc partners, comparing opposition to the Major government to the counter-revolutionary overthrow of Stalinist

regimes in East Europe and the Soviet Union: "If people power can bring down governments and change society in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the former Soviet Union, it can turn back a government who's lost all credibility here in Britain."

Joining Scargill on the platform were not only insipid right-wing Labour Party leader John Smith and TUC chief Norman Willis, whose strikebreaking efforts eight years ago were so blatant that militant miners lowered a noose in front of his face, but also church leaders and Paddy Ashdown of the bourgeois Liberal Democratic Party. Meanwhile Scargill and the Labour/TUC tops have been pushing vile protectionism, grotesquely bragging how cheap British coal is (as a result of massive speedup and low wages!).

The SL/B leaflet warned: "Every effort is being made by Labour and its hangers-on to turn the popular outrage over the pit closures onto the road of

parliamentary adjustments. It could not be more clear that the Labour traitors and their trade union misleaders are the main obstacles to the necessary struggle against not just a discredited and wretched government, but the *capitalist system* which has led inexorably to the deindustrialisation of these isles and the vindictive attack on the militant miners."

## For a Bolshevik Party in Britain!

At the time of the 1984-85 miners strike, the SL/B called for joint strike action by a "fighting Triple Alliance" of miners, dockworkers and rail and other transport workers to launch a general strike. This would have shut down the country, raising the possibility of a rev-

olutionary struggle for power and posing the question: which class shall rule? Broad sectors of the population, particularly among the oppressed Irish, Asian and black communities, rallied behind the miners in hopes of bringing down the vicious Thatcher government.

In contrast, the various pseudo-revolutionary outfits who orbit around the Labour Party appealed to the TUC tops, who were openly knifing the miners, to "call a general strike" with the aim of placing a Labour government in office to administer decaying British capitalism. Today they repeat this treacherous recipe. Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party blares "Don't Let the Tories Off the Hook—GENERAL STRIKE NOW! TUC Must Act" (*Socialist Worker*, 24 October).

Workers Power likewise calls for a general strike, and the only word of criticism of the Labour Party is to bemoan its "new found faith in market forces." New found? The Labour Party has been wedded to capitalism since its inception, including in its "golden age" when Attlee nationalized the coal pits in 1946. Indeed, the decimation of the coal industry shows the bankruptcy of social-democratic schemes to reform capitalism.

Meanwhile, the small centrist Revolutionary Internationalist League pushes the British fake-lefts' bankrupt "make the lefts fight" line, demanding that Scargill and the Labour Party "lefts" stop "collaborating with 'Tory rebels'...and mobilise real working class action." To do what? To go "to parliament for a militant mass lobby." So what the RIL program boils down to is "militantly" begging the bosses' government.

What this new popular front seeks to do is *save* British capitalism, which has become so ramshackle that even bourgeois commentators speak of a "rentier economy," while the Tory Churchill moans: "We can't just survive on Kentucky Fried Chicken and playing the money markets." But neither a "renovated" isolationist Tory government nor another Labour government of betrayal can save this bankrupt system. If they are to save their livelihoods and communities, the British miners must put their experience of class-struggle militancy at the service of a revolutionary program.

We said at the conclusion of the miners strike in 1985: "The key lesson of this strike is the burning need to forge a revolutionary workers party so that the next battle can end in victory" (*Workers Hammer* No. 67, March 1985). It is necessary to forge a Bolshevik party in the course of sharp class struggle, splitting the working-class base from the pro-capitalist tops of the Labour Party. ■

# Pamyat...

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restoration of capitalism. When the Stalinist bureaucracy disintegrated to a point where it lost control over Soviet society, the Komsomol yuppies went over to the counterrevolutionary Yeltsinite camp, which also embraced the fascists. Now, in response to the Pamyat attack, the *Moskovski Komsomolets* editors are appealing to anti-Communism. In a letter to Yeltsin, published in the paper the next day, they compared this act of fascist gangsterism to the botched coup by Kremlin conservatives in August 1991.

"Fascists Burst into Editorial Board—Who Defends Democracy?" ran the headline of *Moskovski Komsomolets* the following day. Yet, far from seeking to organize a united-front defense against the fascists, even on a democratic basis, the editors tried to contact top Pamyat boss Dmitri Vasilyev and spoke to his adjutant. They then published verbatim this fascist's ranting against homosexuality, Masonry and anything that contradicted the Russian Orthodox faith. They even printed the names of journal-

ists whom Pamyat threatened to "punish" personally!

Pamyat's invasion of the newspaper office comes in the context of a sharp rise in racist terror against dark-skinned people in Russia, particularly Central Asians, and African and Vietnamese students (see "African Student Murdered by Yeltsin's Cops," *WV* No. 558, 4 September). Yet even in the wake of this flagrant fascist provocation, the entire range of self-styled "socialist" or "communist" groups in Moscow refuse to lift a finger against the deadly Pamyat terrorists. From the time Pamyat first raised its head, the International Communist League has called for independent workers mobilizations—drawing in Soviet soldiers, Jews and other minorities—to crush the black-shirted fascist gangs.

The Pamyat attack on *Moskovski Komsomolets* is a further sign of the fissuring of the counterrevolutionary camp between the direct agents of the Western bankers, represented by acting prime minister Yegor Gaidar, and more nationalistic elements grouped around vice president Aleksandr Rutskoi and Arkady Volsky's Civic Union, representing industrial managers. Pamyat is now serving as shock troops for the latter, while

Vasilyev (along with many competitors) has his own ambitions to become the *Führer* of all Russia.

Yeltsin originally did much to legitimize Pamyat when he was still Moscow Communist Party boss under Gorbachev. In 1987, he held a well-publicized meeting with Vasilyev & Co., whom he praised for "patriotism for our motherland." And after taking power in August 1991, would-be tsar Boris told an American television audience: "I've had dealings with Pamyat for quite a long time."

Now Yeltsin's lieutenants are voicing alarm that their Russian-nationalist opponents will dominate the Congress of People's Deputies, due to reconvene on December 1. Mikhail Poltoranin, deputy prime minister in charge of information, told a group of foreign correspondents: "We are seeing the ripening of not just serious opposition but of the open and strongest preparation for a coup d'etat" (*London Financial Times*, 19 October). At the same time, there is much talk that Yeltsin is planning another counter-coup, this time directed against the Russian parliament, in order to establish "strong" presidential rule in the name of "democracy" and the "free market."

The privileged children of apparatchiks and intellectuals who formed the core of Komsomol activists believed that capitalist restoration would instantly afford them the lifestyle of American and West European yuppies. Instead, the Yeltsinite counterrevolution has brought the pauperization of Russia and the other former Soviet republics at the hands of Western bankers, amid the rise of murderous nationalism and fascism.

Already in 1987 we warned that the rightward slide and disintegration of the Kremlin bureaucracy under Gorbachev created an opening for the growth of Russian fascism:

"Fascists in Red Square—in a country where 20 million died defending the land of the October Revolution against the Nazis! The working masses must deal with the fascist excrement, as part of the struggle for the return to genuine revolutionary communism in the Soviet Union."

—"Pamyat: Russian Fascists Raise Their Heads," *WV* No. 434, 7 August 1987  
Today, only the struggle for genuine communism can save the working people of Russia, the Ukraine and other former Soviet republics from the ravages of neocolonial exploitation and fratricidal nationalism. ■

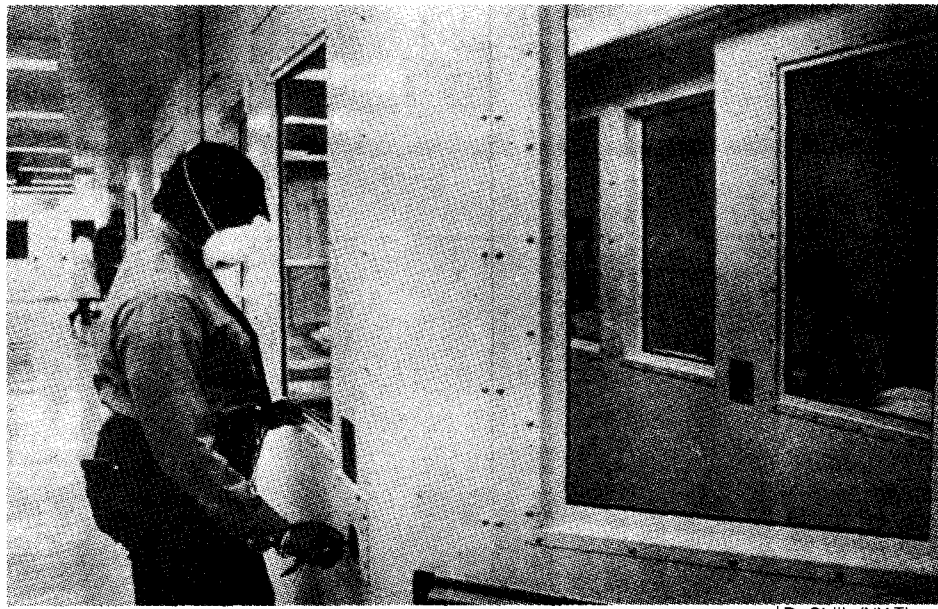
# TB Epidemic...

(continued from page 12)

famous novel *The Jungle* also exposed the hideous conditions breeding TB in the proletariat at home and on the job. The "white plague," which kills by eating away its victim's lungs, festered among the working poor, whose bodies were giving out with overwork, malnutrition, lack of sunlight and fresh air. At times of social dislocation such as war or depression, leading to homelessness and increasing impoverishment, the TB rate would soar, as happened across Europe after World Wars I and II.

Unhealthy working conditions are a key cause of the spread of the disease. Among miners and textile workers, for example, already at higher risk of lung disease because of the filthy, dusty air they breathe on the job, TB rates are higher than in the general population. Migrant farm workers live and work in such poor conditions that TB is considered an occupational hazard. In a report to the American Society for Microbiology on a case of a shipyard worker in Bath, Maine who spread TB to over 400 coworkers, Dr. Ban Mishu said that "cramped working conditions inside the vessels at the shipyard and dust helped spread the infection" (*New York Times*, 18 October).

The tubercle bacillus thrives in dark, moist, still air; sunlight and good ventilation thwart it. While the disease is infectious, it is not highly contagious, and spreads primarily as a result of prolonged contact with sick people in overcrowded, unhealthy places like prisons, homeless shelters, slum tenements and...hospitals. Steadily dropping for



DeChillo/NY Times

Isolation room at New York's Rikers Island prison.

chest clinics around the country.

Most infected people do not come down with the active disease, but harbor small pockets of the bacillus which can produce illness as a result of later immunosuppression (resulting from old age or another illness—AIDS patients are especially vulnerable to the TB bacillus). Before the outbreak of multiple-drug resistant TB, both latent infections and active cases could be entirely cured through a strict regimen of drugs taken regularly for up to 18 months. Thus the basic medical facts—long known to health authorities and utterly uncontroversial—mandated vigilance in tracking and treating every active and dormant case of this terrible disease in order to root out all infections. Incomplete treatment fosters deadly multiple-drug resistant TB.

try in the world, and of course prisoners don't get much health care at all.

Generally, efforts to combat TB have focused above all on scapegoating "problem patients" as the main difficulty in controlling the disease. The *New York Times* has headlined "Grappling With the Care of Problem TB Patients," "Recalcitrant Patients a Threat as TB Returns" (14 April) and "TB Carriers See Clash of Liberty and Health" (14 October). In fact, government authorities have put every imaginable obstacle in the way of tuberculosis patients, from shutting down the clinics to jacking up treatment costs to cutting staff for community outreach programs. Day after day, patients must wait for hours in filthy clinics, often having to travel miles from their homes.

Isolation of infectious TB patients

of vicious bigotry against the sick is frighteningly real.

In the early decades of the century, wealthy TB patients got to go for rest cures at Saranac Lake or the Swiss Alps. While the vast majority of patients entered sanatoriums voluntarily, thousands of the poor were clapped in manacles and delivered up to primitive, overcrowded state "hospitals" where their chances of being cured were greatly reduced. Black patients were often barred from sanatoriums and hospitals: for example, in 1923, only 12 of the 29 TB institutions in Pennsylvania admitted blacks—and some of the 12 segregated them into special wards. Those poor patients, black and white, who did get well were sent home to the same slum tenements and sweatshops that made them sick in the first place.

## For Free, Quality Health Care for All!

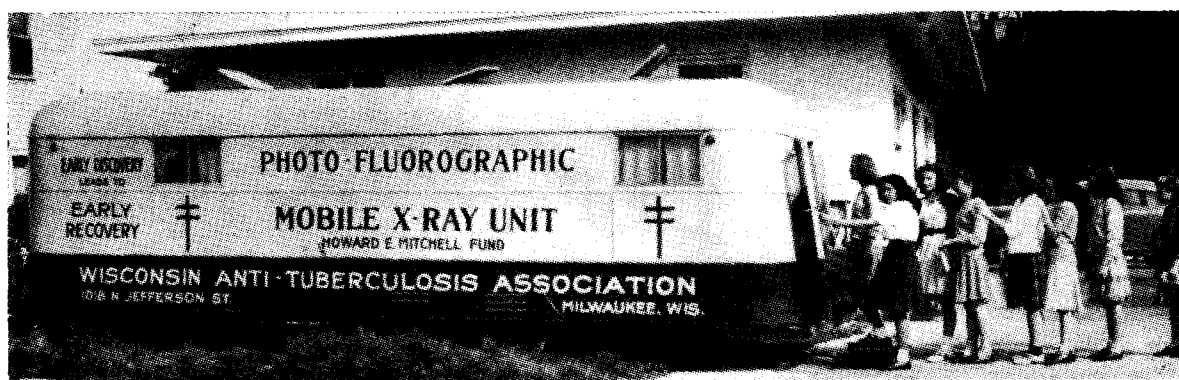
There are no prescriptions for treating despair bred by a society that doesn't care if you live or die because you're black or non-English-speaking or old or use drugs and alcohol. To the capitalist class, for whom profit is the means and end, the poor and oppressed are just "surplus population" swelling the Social Security rolls and no longer even needed for the "reserve army of the unemployed."

The "new" TB shows that this bankrupt ruling class can't even implement the discoveries of science, which in the long-gone days of capitalism's progressive era was the crowning achievement of an Enlightenment fighting benighted religious superstition. In 1882 the great German bacteriologist Robert Koch identified the TB bacillus. Such discoveries opened up a potential future of science and medicine overcoming bigotry and fear in the face of the terrifying forces of nature. But the capitalist system of inequality founded on social exploitation means that the benefits of modern medicine are rationed by class, race and sex. Insofar as decent health care and working and living conditions ever existed for the working class of this country, they were fought for and won through intransigent class struggle.

Resurgent epidemic disease in this New World Disorder of intensified exploitation and imperialist rivalry only underscores the necessity for a socialist revolution which will lay the basis for a society where all necessary resources can be allocated to conquering diseases like tuberculosis and AIDS. As we wrote in "The Debate Over 'Socialized Medicine': Wealth Care USA" (*Women and Revolution* No. 39, Summer 1991):

"In this complex industrial society, it will take worldwide planning based on scientific knowledge to establish both public health and the best care for the individual.... What we need is free, quality health care for all—communist medicine, where the wealth of resources on our planet go to the service of the people, not to production for profits.

"When the workers of the world are in charge of this planet, the only limits of human health will be scientific—and these will be constantly enlarged by thoughtful, energetic research." ■



Newsweek

TB diagnosis unit in the 1950s. Antibiotics and aggressive public health effort had largely reduced incidence of TB.

decades as a result of improved living conditions and treatments, TB rates plummeted after World War II with the discovery of powerful antibiotics capable of completely curing a patient. Moreover the resources of society were mobilized in an all-out effort to combat the disease—from a massive public education campaign to the opening of

It's "a catastrophe that simply should never have happened," said Dr. Barry R. Bloom, a senior researcher at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and a TB specialist. "We had everything we needed. All the knowledge, the skills, the medical expertise necessary to eliminate this disease. Instead, this country chose to very nearly eliminate the health care programs people with this disease need most" (*New York Times*, 11 October). While the number of chest clinics plummeted, research into new treatments stopped some 25 years ago. Drug companies even cut back on manufacturing the standard TB drugs, producing acute shortages in the impoverished countries of the Third World, where TB is still the leading killer among infectious diseases: three million people die every year, and eight million new cases are discovered. The reason for the drug cuts? According to the World Health Organization's Tuberculosis Control Programme report (1991), "Anti-TB drug production...is not a big profit-maker."

## "Public Health" Cops

Lately compelled to take some action against the epidemic—too little and too late—New York City health authorities are pouring hundreds of thousands of dollars into...building isolation cells for TB-infected prisoners at the whopping cost of \$450,000 apiece at Rikers Island prison! It's quite a statement about the priorities of the capitalist ruling class that prisons are the front-runners in treatment of TB! This vindictive, vicious society has a larger percentage of its population behind bars than any other coun-

until the infection is under control (generally a fairly brief time) is simply necessary. TB, unlike AIDS, is "casually transmitted" by the patient's germ-laden cough. But medication ends this infectious period within a few weeks, and a patient can finish his course of treatment with no fear of endangering others. Enforced quarantine of willfully uncooperative patients may occasionally be warranted; public health authorities need the political mandate to act in emergencies. But these onerous measures are necessary only because a crime against humanity was committed by a bankrupt ruling class, which after letting a preventable epidemic flourish, now locks up the poor by order of the Health Department. The danger of a backlash

## Corrections

A photo caption accompanying the article "Ex-CP 'Committees of Correspondence'—Conference of the Living Dead" (*WV* No. 557, 7 August) identified black scholar Manning Marable as a vice chairman of the DSA (Democratic Socialists of America). That is no longer the case; Marable departed the DSA some years ago. According to the person on phone duty at the New York DSA offices, the cause of his departure was apparently the inadequate support given by the DSA to Jesse Jackson and his Rainbow Coalition.

A reader has brought to our attention that Woody Allen did not direct the movie *The Front*, as was stated in a letter to the editor in *WV* No. 559 (18 September), although he did act in it. *The Front* was directed by Martin Ritt, who also directed *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold*, *Hud*, *Southern*, and *Norma Rae*. We reviewed *The Front* in *Young Spartacus* No. 49 (December 1976).

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## Disease of Poverty Ravages Ghettos

# TB Epidemic: Crime of Capitalism

Tuberculosis, an ancient killer presumed in recent years to be a disease of the past in the United States, is re-emerging in a deadly epidemic. Fueled by poverty and homelessness, TB's recent victims are predominantly the black and inner-city poor—people the ruling class couldn't care less about. But now that the epidemic is "out of control" and spreading in virulent strains resistant to many of the drugs long used to cure it, even the *New York Times* saw fit to run a five-part front-page series on it. *TB is back because of the devastating immiseration of working people and the criminal abandonment of already inadequate public health measures by the bankrupt, vicious ruling class of this capitalist country, where dollars count far more than human lives.*

It's a manmade epidemic which has led to thousands of new cases, especially targeting the most vulnerable layers of society already subject to bigotry: immigrants, ghettoized blacks and Hispanics, AIDS patients, alcoholics and drug users—precisely the people with little or no access to decent health care. The disease will result in at least 50,000 new cases a year within a decade if it is not fought by major new efforts, according to the American Lung Association. And without new treatments, 50 to 80 percent of victims of active multiple-drug resistant tuberculosis will die.

This capitalist-created horror is only the most egregious example of a "health care" system in collapse. Medicine for profit, USA, means the rich can go to the fancy clinics and get access to the best medical technology in the world,

while the working people pay through the nose for basic health care, and the poor get a few roach-infested, dark, under-equipped clinics with harried, overworked staff. At least 37 million people have no health insurance, and millions more are stuck on Medicaid and Medicare where, increasingly, medical "care" is rationed. Budget cuts in key public health programs like immunization of children have resulted in outbreaks of other preventable diseases like measles, while the AIDS epidemic is treated with a policy of malign neglect by a ruling class which doesn't mind if gays and drug users die.

For years, repeated urgent warnings by experts that TB was threatening to explode were shrugged off by government authorities. In 1980, after TB rates in Harlem jumped 50 percent in one year, a New York City task force concluded that the city's public health efforts to control TB were "so grievously inadequate as nearly to amount to dereliction and default." It warned that unless the city vastly expanded its program it would face a public health disaster (*Washington Post*, 9 March). The warnings were ignored; city funding was slashed. Squeezing every dollar from social programs in order to fund "Star Wars" killing machines to smash the Soviet Union, the Reagan administration canceled the federal TB control program (aided by the Democratic-controlled Congress, which restored the program but gave it no funding). Between 1982 and 1989, the Centers for Disease Control annual funding for TB dropped to as low as \$1 million from a 1960s

**Homeless family outside Grand Central Station. New York City cut public health dollars even as TB cases soared.**



Perez/El Diario-La Prensa

average of some \$20 million.

Meanwhile, America's urban working-class neighborhoods were transformed into death zones of wish-they-were-working people reduced to homelessness and poverty by the bosses who deindustrialized the country. Among other things, the multiple social pathology of ghetto life in urban America today is a Petri dish for epidemics like TB. In 1970, TB rates in central Harlem were nearly 20 times the national average; in 1991, Harlem rates were 35 times the figure for the posh Upper East Side. But when last year a New York prison guard died of multiple-drug resistant TB he caught on the job, suddenly TB made headlines and government authorities started to pay attention—especially after

two Wall Street workers were found to be infected.

Incredibly, federal health authorities are trying to alibi their criminal neglect of the tuberculosis threat by saying that all the money and research talent went into fighting the AIDS epidemic! Tell that to the homeless AIDS patients who've endured a government policy that amounts to sheer abandonment of the sick to their grim deaths. This conscious neglect is even clearer with TB than with AIDS (for which there is no treatment and no cure) because the medical expertise necessary to eradicate TB existed, yet was not implemented. But it's the same policy.

Bush and Clinton, the two executioners vying for the White House, care more about asserting their fervent support for the death penalty and unleashing the cops in the terrorist "war on drugs" than they do about addressing the collapse of the health care system. To the Democrats and the Republicans, the two right-wing "property parties," the problem with health care USA is that it's "too expensive"—health care for working people is "too high" a "social overhead" for them. But now the government authorities are grudgingly admitting that they might have to "do something" about tuberculosis, and they bitterly regret their folly—only because now it's going to cost much, much more money.

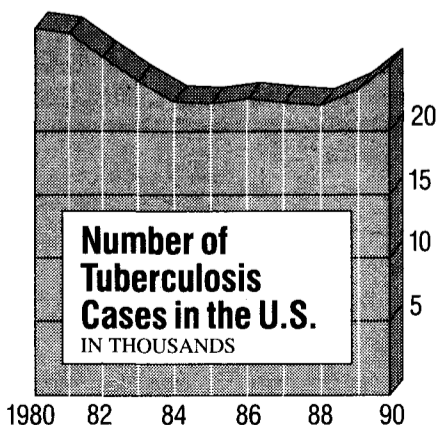
### Tuberculosis: "Captain of All the Men of Death"

More than any other infectious disease, tuberculosis is a disease of poverty, spread by desperate living and working conditions. For decades, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, it was the industrial world's leading killer, racing through crowded tenements and sweatshops in the working-class slums. While known mainly for muckraking of the filthy meatpacking industry, Upton Sinclair's

*continued on page 11*

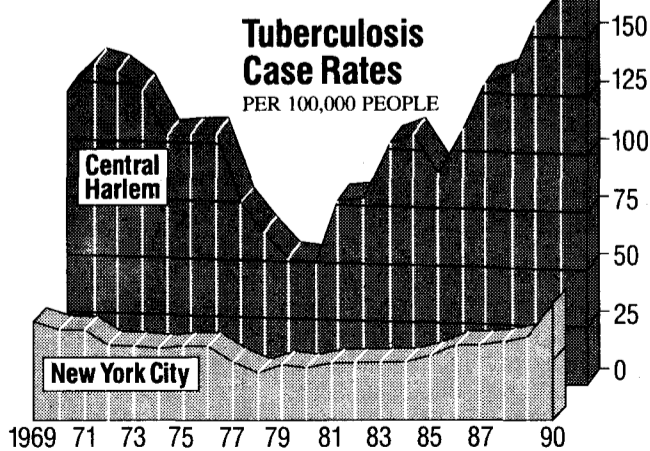
### On the Rise

After decades of decline, the number of TB cases in America is increasing.



### Skyrocketing in the Ghetto

TB has always hit hardest in poor areas. Few have been harder hit than central Harlem.



SOURCES: K. BRUDNEY AND J. DOBKIN; NYC DEPT. OF HEALTH

Newsweek graphs adapted by WV

The plague of tuberculosis is exploding at an exponential rate.