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Bulletin of the communist tendency

Australia prepares for war in Bougainville

Senator Gareth Evans has just announced a massive increase in military aid to Papua New Guinea. He said that the government has sent FN and M-16 rifles and other small arms and ammunition. He denies any link between the sending of arms and the killing of civilians. The PNG government has been embarrassed by recent reports of brutal atrocities by their troops against civilians. These reports have sort of spoilt the media's attempts to paint the Bougainville Revolutionary Army's leadership as brutal savage despots like "Idi Amin" on one hand, and the leadership of PNG (including Rabbi Namilau) as sensible and restrained on the other.

The Australian Government is preparing for war. So far it has made some intervention, but only, so it claims, "in defence of Australian citizens". It has built an aircraft landing strip at Panguna. Bob Hawke has denied any other intervention: "There will be no Australian troops going to PNG to take sides on the issue". However, since Rabbi Namilau has stated that Australian intervention was "always an option". The reality is that whilst the Australian government would prefer the fighting to be done by Papuans and New Guineans, they will not sit idly by if there is any serious threat to PNG or imperialist domination of it. There is simply too much at stake in terms of investment.

During January war was officially declared between the PNG government and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army. There have been some skirmishes and some local conflicts. The BRA burned down a supermarket. The PNG armed forces took over the BRA headquarters and claimed victory. This "victory" is merely a hollow propaganda claim. As with the NLF in South Vietnam, the BRA is everywhere and blends in with the local population- because it is part of the local population. The PNG armed forces are outsiders. They have different racial and cultural origins and speak a different language. Serious observers say they could be bogged down for years. That is, if they don't get assistance. Australia is the country most likely to provide it.

The Bougainville Revolutionary Army is the military wing of the Panguna people who are small farmers and landowners. They are demanding adequate compensation from CRA for the damage to fishing and crops by the Panguna copper mine. They want self- determination for Bougainville. The On the left within the green movement are the Democratic Socialist Party formerly known as the Socialist Workers Party. Their newspaper called Direct Action strongly attacked the Democrats. However they were prepared to share the Green Alliance ticket. In New South Wales and Victoria the position on the Green Alliance ticket was filled by a DSP member. The Green Alliance gave preferences to the Democrats. The green movement is just one of many that the DSP identify with that welcome the bourgeois into their ranks and with no objections from the DSP. The DSP is a playing into the hands of imperialism.

In Bougainville as elsewhere it is only the working class which can consistently fight imperialism - by fighting for proletarian dictatorship. They do this by taking up the legitimate grievances of sections of the middle class. On Bougainville the interests of small farmers are vital to the success of the revolution, It is up to class- conscious prolelarians - communists - to show that it is only by proletarian dictatorship that their demands can be resolved successfully. The small farmers deserve

adequate compensation. Without their farms they have nothing. The press reports proclaim CRA's generosity with their compensation. Well, we put it in a different way. How generous is the PNG government to allow CRA to make so much profit out of Bougainville land.

The Communist Tendency considers that the national question for Bougainville has a validity. Bougainville was only included in PNG thanks to the boundaries drawn up by imperialism. The local people were not consulted. Nor were they consulted when they were included within Papua New Guinea when the state was given formal independence. Some apologists for its inclusion have pointed to the role of the copper mine in the PNG economy. Well, why couldn't that copper mine be playing a similar role in the Solomons Island economy? By every criteria, Bougainville people are Solomon Islanders. They also could fully qualify as a nation in their own right. The Communist Tendency defends their right to do either. We support unity between nationalities, but to be meaningful, unity must be voluntary. We support their right to a separate nation. We don't advocate that nations separate.

The Spartacist League deny the validity of the national question because of Bougainville's relatively small population. But its population is of similar size to that of New Caledonia whose independence the Spartacist League defends. As well as this the views of the SL are at variance with Trotsky. In his Discussion on Greece (Writings Supplement 1929-33), Trotsky points out that even if the population of Slavs within Greece was only 80,000, this should be no barrier to autonomy. Well, likewise for the Bougainville people who are considerably more populous. An independent nation for Bougainville people is a feasible possibility. That is, if they don't choose to join the rest of the Solomon Islanders.

There is no way the Papua New Guinea government is going to allow the Bougainville Islanders self-determination. They have their debt to the International Monetary Fund to think of. If they let Bougainville go perhaps other parts of their unstable coalition might decide to leave also. The PNG government will defend her territory to the hilt. Australia will back them when necessary with arms and with troops. Australia still play no progressive role within the South Pacific. It is dominated by the US, Japan and Britain and has been given a sphere of influence within this region. It is both a colony and mini-imperialist power. In Australia it is the responsibility of the class-conscious proletarians to categorically oppose any intervention through strike action. We must start to serve notice on the government which is now just planning intervention.

In New Guinea it is a tragedy that the force fighting the government is the petty bourgeoisie (farmers) and not the working class. The emergence of a working class vanguard in Bougainville is a matter of urgency. The Communist Tendency warns against the anti-proletarian character of the BRA. The war, if it continues, will have repercussions throughout the PNG. In the cities, the state has been at war with proletarian squatters, kicked out of their villages with no jobs and nowhere to go. Out of the destabilisation a proletarian vanguard may well emerge and lead a successful revolution. We in Australia must do our utmost to ensure that the working class win and that Australia does not intervene to defend Papua New Guinea for imperialist domination.

...and the Left protests

There has been some protest coming from the Australian left at the threat of Australia's intervention in the Bougainville war. But will this be effective in fighting imperialism? All indications are - no! Many aspiring anti-imperialists may, no doubt, be sincere and militant. But their actions will not be

linked to a perspective which actually fights imperialism. The most blatant is Tribune, voice piece of the now dormant Communist Party of Australia. Tribune is a thoroughly respectable paper with illusions in bourgeois democracy. Their writer, Jim Endersby, who is part of the Tribune collective, writes as follows: "Only Australian public opinion can produce that change in the Australian government's attitude" (referring to Australia's priorities for intervention).

What a marvellous system capitalism is for Jim Enderby. When the people express their opinion, the government obeys. What faith in democracy Jim Endersby as. No, it doesn't work that way. Imperialists declare war because it is in the interests of profit. They will defend their interests by force. "War is carried out by other means" pointed out Lenin. And therefore, "only revolution can stop war" Therefore the only way to fight imperialist war in Bougainville is mobilisation of the working class.

We have to show the working class that they have a material interest in being opposed to Australian imperialism. In order to fight the bosses at home we must fight their plunder of the South Pacific and elsewhere

Odds are that the supporters of Tribune, whether they identify with the Communist Party or the New Left Party won't be the vanguard of building anti-imperialist solidarity. Their methods however, permeate the left. The problem is that the Democratic Socialist Party and Australian supporters of the US Socialist Workers' Party also have practice based on public opinion. But they disguise their reformism with more left rhetoric.

They will organise their demonstrations around the slogan "Australian Troops Out Now!" This, they will call a class struggle demand because it is effective at mobilising as many people as possible. Oh, yes, the ruling class are most welcome. Participation in such demos would, according to them, This according to them is "their contradiction, not ours". "Troops Out Now", they believe, is the best demand for developing contradictions within the bourgeoisie. All this seems impressive. But the problem is that in order to get these so-called contradictions, the DSP is prepared to repudiate class struggle.

Yes, sections of the bourgeoisie don't like some of the effects of their system. But in no way will they break from the system of exploitation. Pandering to this section of the bourgeoisie or their representatives (Australian Democrats) or to public opinion in general means surrendering class struggle. This is suicide for the fight against imperialism. Yet this is what the Democratic Socialist Party and the Socialist Party of Australia want. nor their El Salvador solidarity rally they invited Don Chipp of the Australian Democrats as guest speaker. For their solidarity movement with the people of Grenada they both opposed a Communist Left resolution calling for working class solidarity against U.S. imperialism. They are truly public opinion socialists.

The Communist Tendency urges direct working class solidarity against Australian intervention in Bougainville now!

revolt in Romania

It was only a matter of days. On December 19, conflict was confined to Timisoara where the security police were shooting at protesters. By Christmas, the people had organised, mobilised, divided the army and taken over Bucharest. Nicolai and Elena Ceausescu were captured and faced the firing

squad on Christmas day. There was some resistance from the Securitate, the security police. They escaped through tunnels and fired into the crowds like desperate cornered rats. Their demise, however, was only a matter of time.

Nickolai and Elena Ceausescu deserved the death penalty. They had committed serious crimes against the Romanian working class. They had built palaces for it while the people suffered from serious food shortages. They put millions into Swiss bank accounts. They built up a vicious security police, not to fight invasion, but to use against the people. They promoted chauvinist discrimination against the Hungarian minority'. All this was worthy of the death penalty.

However, there is one point Ceausescu made in his trial which we agree with. The trial should have been in front of the working class of Romania. It is not good enough to hate him as a person.

Important lessons have to be drawn about his rise and the consolidation of power by his family and clique. Ceausescu has been denounced as an antichrist. Whilst hatred for him is thoroughly deserved, religious denunciation shows the thorough and utter degeneration of marxism in that country. There is a material explanation for that dictatorship. In their hatred for "communism" the masses are gravitating towards religious obscurantism.

The masses hate the name of communism yet through their actions they have behaved in an exemplary revolutionary way . Their actions confirm the capacity for the working class for revolutionary action. The Roinanians have shown how revolution can be made elsewhere. In Romania a re vol ut on a ry party was not ii eceded

This was because Romania did not have an organisation for reconciling the working peoples' interests with the system equivalent to social democracy in capitalist countries. In Poland, the leadership of Solidarity has played a similar role putting a brake on working class struggle.

Whilst a revolutionary party was not needed for the overthrow of Ceausescu, it is needed for the consolidation of proletarian power. Al though factory committees were formed (during the overthrow), political power to these has not been consolidated. A National Salvation Front took power and is preparing elections. Due to mass pressure, including militant mass protests in Bucharest other parties now share power with the Front.

There has been anger at the participation of former members of the Romainan Communist party within the Front .The problem is that every Roumanian who aspired to get on joined the RCP as a way up the ladder of society or at least a way of avoiding suspicion.Roumanians are suspicious

. The problem with this upsurge without ideology is that due to no clear critique and no clear altcrnativc Stalinism will continue to fill a vacuum. Many no doubt, want capitalism hut its establishment is easier said than done, although there is a clear leaning in a capitalist direction. The Christian Peasant Party wants to turn Romania backwards towards religious obscurantism.

The capitalist media are jubilant at the overthrow of Ceausescu. What could be better for them than a mass rebellion against "communism"? They feign concern for the people of Roniania. Yet it is ironic! When Ceauscscu was in office he was honoured. He even received a knighthoodfrom the Queen of England! Part of the honour was for distancing Romania from the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. Part of the honour was for Romania paying back iLs foreign debt. This debt was paid

by the blood of the Romanian working class. The imperialists feign disgust for Ceausescu but they consider the Solidarity government of Poland and governments of third world countries such as Argentina economically responsible when they do the same. They will be happy to bankroll the new regime even though it will be less efficient at paying back the IMF than Ceausescu was. If the success of the new regime discredits the name of communism, Marx and Lenin, and national liberation fronts that identify with that tradition, they will consider the money well spent.

The Ceausescu regime has been exposed as barbaric and brutal. If there is a lesson to be learned it is that breaking from Stalinism requires more than severing ties to Moscow. The Ceausescu regime was seen as a principled pole by those distancing themselves from Moscow within the Stalinist movement. In Australia Ceausescu's Romania was favourably reported by the Communist Party of Australia CPA members frequently attended CPR congresses. After the break from Moscow the CPR was one of the Eastern European Communist Parties to send delegates to congresses of the CPA. In 1978 the CPA youth group honoured a Romanian youth delegation which included Nicu Ceausescu, son of Nicolai. He is now facing trial.

On the whole, CPA reporting on Romania although not uncritical, was favourable.

Take the article by Judy Munday, then CPA president, on her trip to Romania, headed Romania Advancing Human Values (Tribune, February 13, 1980). She makes a number of points: First, "Romania favours mutually advantageous relations between states, non-interfering and independence, liquidation of foreign bases, withdrawal of foreign troops, an end to military blocks". This is the Stalinist theory of peaceful coexistence. It is reactionary and utopian. In fact, Romania's version is to the right of Moscow. A workers' state must under some circumstances form military blocks to survive. The question should be: on what principles is the block made? For Ceausescu all blocks are reactionary. This disarms any workers' state. The ruling class will not give up their blocks so we mustn't give up ours. The CPR at least invited both the Russian and the Chinese Parties to the Congress. At least they were not siding with one post-capitalist country, promoting national antagonisms which could have led to war.

She goes on: "Slogans and signs about the Congress were everywhere, reflecting emphasis on self-management.. There was widespread knowledge about policies, aims of the five-year plan and other matters to be debated...There were inconsistencies in the decision making processes but the knowledge and involvement of people in planning is unknown in Australia." She then claims the public transport system has improved and they have improved housing, eliminating the Dickensian standards of the past. She also praises Romania's "impressive conservation scheme".

She is, though, critical with regard to the position of women: "Almost one third of the delegates were women. They comprise only 28% of party members. The main report spent considerable time on the need for improving the Social position of women ...but this conflicts with the policy on population growth perceived to be in the national interest". She concludes her article: "One feels that in Romania the positive features of the industrial world can be incorporated into a society where human values play an important place".

Is this for real? The impression that one is led to believe from this article and others by CPA members is that Romania whilst being a bit flawed was on the right track. It is very hard to reconcile this with the information coming out about Romania today. The Communist Party of Romania is so

apologetic about its own existence that it (barely) surface even in a more liquidated form. In other Eastern European countries some of the Stalinist parties do have some grass roots support. All reports suggest more gut hatred for the Communist Party in Romania than elsewhere. The Tribune article was written in 1980 just before debt repayment was enforced on Romanians.

Did the people actually participate in this decision? Their hostility to Ceausescu probably was not as great then even with the Securitate and the Ceausescus planning their palaces. The reports about the total cynicism of the CPR are at odds with the article by Judy Munday. A half-healthy, albeit a bit flawed party would at least hold some influence over sections of the working class. Students in Beijing raised the banner in Tienanmen Square. Yet Ceausescu has less support than Stalin.

Even if we concede Judy Munday's impressions (that's what she claims they are), what it shows is, marxism is required and not impressionism in explaining the post-capitalist states. If there was a degree of democracy it was only subject to the wishes of the bureaucracy. The bureaucrats give them (1) the bureaucrats take away. It is clear that even if the participation was real at the time, when it came time to honour the imperialists' debt, democracy became expendable. What it shows is that the CPA impressionistic, human values analysis of Stalinism covers for the bureaucracy. When bureaucrats show a bit of "human face" they get CPA accolades. It must be stressed that this is not an isolated article. In 1978 and 1980 Joe Palmada wrote articles with a similar message.

Those who do not learn from history are condemned to repeat it. The CPA made some heartfelt self-criticisms of their being apologists and press agents for the Moscow bureaucracy. Yet less than ten years later they became press agents for the bureaucracy in Bucharest. It shows that, contrary to Denis Freney and others, the CPA had not made a fundamental break with Stalinism. Now that the CPA has liquidated, attacking it is like flogging a dead horse. Coming to grips with Stalinism is still relevant. It cannot be over-emphasised - this must be done in a marxist fashion if the interests of the working class are to be defended.

It is fashionable to attack Stalin from the right and to attempt to equate Stalinism with Leninism. It is therefore high time to assert the revolutionary anti-bureaucratic traditions which Lenin stood for. It is also relevant to the minor democratic reforms praised by the revisionists which give Gorbachev his credentials. These reforms barely scratch the surface. We will let Lenin speak

"Creative activity of the masses is the basic factor of the new public life. Let the workers set up workers' control at the factories. Let them supply the villages with manufactures in exchange for grain. Account must be taken for every single article because what socialism implies is keeping account of everything. Its spirit rejects the mechanical bureaucratic approach. Living, creative socialism is the product of the masses themselves".

Reply to question from the Left Socialist Revolutionaries Collected Works Volume 261

"I hope very much that we shall expel 100,000 Communists who have attached themselves to the Party and are not only incapable of fighting red tape and bribery but are even a hindrance in this fight." (Second Congress Political Education Department Collected Works Vol.331

"Failure to grant right of recall from the Constituent Assembly is the failure to elicit the revolutionary will of the people, it is usurpation of peoples' rights...The people were told that the Soviet is a plenipotentiary organ! They believed it and acted on that belief. The process of democratisation

must be carried forward and the right of recall introduced. The right of recall should be given to the Soviets as the best embodiment of the idea of state power, of coercion. The transfer of power from one party to another may then take place peacefully by more re-elections". (Report on the Right of Recall Collected Works Vol.26, pp.338 - 401

"Workers must enter all the government establishments so as to supervise the entire government apparatus. And this should be done by the non-party workers who should elect representatives at non-party conferences of workers and peasants. They must come to the aid of communists who are being overtaxed by the tremendous burden they have to bear...We shall tackle this job and accomplish it and thus drive the red tape out of our institutions. The broad non-party masses must keep a check on government affairs and must themselves learn to govern". [Speech in BlagushaLefortova District Collected Works Vol.30, pp.350-511

"We are on the lookout for every worker who is at all fit for managerial work. We are glad to have him and give him a trial. If the Party has no confidence in the working class and does not allow workers to occupy responsible posts it ought to be ousted". Tenth Congress of the RCP(B) Collected Works Vol.32, p.205

is this tradition of Lenin., the tradition of working class power and workers democracy, which must be reinstated throughout the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc. Throughout Eastern Europe the so-called communist parties are debating how to run away from communism. In Poland the PUWP has voted to liquidate, the Socialist Unity Party of the GDR (East Germany) has voted to identify with social democracy as opposed to "Marxism Leninism". Bureaucratic one-party monopoly control or parliamentary democracy are the two poles of the current debate within the Eastern Block. The point that's missed is that Lenin fought for the leading role of the party in the context of working class power - a true working class democracy. Soviet power must be reconstructed throughout the Soviet Union and established throughout Eastern Europe.

This requires a real political revolution. One tendency, the Communist League, actually thinks that the upsurges going on in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union constitute a "political revolution". They, or their co-thinkers, must have their head in the sand. 'There is mass hostility against Stalinism. The upsurges are linked to all sorts of ideologies including reform Stalinism, religious obscurantism and outright support for capitalism. There is mass hostility to "communism" which is identified with Stalinist tyranny. There is no coherent pole calling for the establishment and maintenance of soviet power. To be called a political revolution, a proletarian pole must emerge. It is the job of real communists - Trotskyists to establish such a pole. Reality will expose the Communist League's rose-coloured glasses analysis very shortly.

by how Romania will be resolved remains unclear. There is a bitter struggle between the National Salvation Front and those who are its members.

There has been talk of bureaucratic

repression and human rights abuses.

There is to be a United Nations supervised election on May 20. There is

a Strong hatred of the name of communism. Should the masses choose capitalism, the Communist Tendency will blame Nikolai Ceausescu and Joseph Stalin.

lies about Trotsky

Revolutionary Communist is the publication of the Melbourne—based Committee for a Revolutionary Communist Party in Australia. The cover features bold pictures of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tse Tung. It is clearly opposed to the current regime in China but Mao is honoured as a great revolutionary to such an extent that the CRCP considers itself Marxist— Leninist— Maoist in Mao's honour. Previously this group considered itself Marxist-Leninist. This bulletin is unashamedly Stalinist. And therefore obliged to publish a vehement attack on Trotsky. In the of Revolutionary Communist No.1 August 1989. there is an article entitled Trotsky against The Bolsheviks.

What is striking about this attack is its frivolity. There's no attempt to analyse any historical context to the dirty linen quotes they dig up. There were strong polemics between Lenin and Trotsky. For a long period before 1917, Trotsky did not understand the Leninist party. This has not been hidden. It has been fully acknowledged by Trotsky. Nevertheless Lenin's seriously considered opinion of Trotsky' was:

'Comrade Stalin, having become Secretary-General, has unlimited authority concentrated in his hands and I 'in not sure whether he will always be capable of using that authority with sufficient caution. Comrade Trotsky, on the other hand, as the struggle on the (function of the Peoples' Commissariat for Communications has already proved, is distinguished not only by his outstanding ability. He is personally the most capable man on the C.C. but he has shown excessive self-assurance and shown excessive pre-occupation with the purely administrative side of work.'

Lenin then goes on: "I shall not give any further appraisals of the personal qualities of other members of the C.C.. I shall recall that the October episode with Zinoviev and Kamenev was, of course, no accident, but neither can the blame for it be laid upon them personally any more than non- Bolshevism can upon Trotsky." | Letter to Congress December 25, 1922.1

It is clear that despite heated Criticism during some tactical disputes, Lenin recognised Trotsky as a leading Bolshevik. Trotsky joined the Bolshevik Party in 1917 and was a leader of the Red Army. The faith shown in him can be vindicated by the fact that two important books he wrote, 'terrorism and Communism and Between Red and Black were commissioned by the Party. Both of these played an important role in the struggle against Kautsky. Should Trotsky have been deficient in his understanding on the role of the Party he would hardly have been given responsibility for such important writings. If Trotskyists have exaggerated his role it is in face of wholesale attempts to liquidate his record even to the extent of falsifying photographs!

Revolutionary Communist gives credit to Stalin for fighting Trotsky. He did more than that. Thanks to Stalin, not just Trotsky but a whole layer of Bolsheviks were physically liquidated. Bukharin, with whom Stalin was allied with for seven years, became a running dog with Trotsky in the service of fascism!

The purpose of Revolutionary Communist is to continue this lie machine. It asserts with a fly in the face of history that Trotsky was in the service of fascism. This is a disgusting, outright lie. It was Stalin who drew up the Hitler-Stalin pact. It was supporters of Stalin (under his direction) who permitted Hitler

to come to power in Germany and Trotsky who warned of the consequences. The working class paid the price of Stalin's policies in blood.

Revolutionary Communist does not deal with the issues of difference between Stalin and Trotsky. Slander and misrepresentation are substituted for politics. This article does not have sufficient space to deal with the issues thoroughly. These were covered by Trotsky in many volumes of his writing. This article will only give a summary to give readers some indication of the issues involved:

- 1) How was the Stalinist strategy for China compatible with Lenin? For Lenin, imperialism was the highest stage of capitalism. It is the stage where the partition of the world by the imperialist powers has been completed. He argued that imperialism was moribund capitalism. The bourgeoisie could no longer play a progressive role. For Stalin and Mao, the strategy for China was the "block of four classes". This meant in practice that the Communist Party of China liquidated itself into the Kuo Min Tang. The class character of the KMT is best illustrated by the fact that it is now the ruling party on the island of Taiwan. It is thoroughly bourgeois. In other words, not only did the Stalinists effectively argue that the bourgeoisie could play a progressive role, they were prepared to liquidate the interests of the working class for them to do it. Joining the KMT meant surrendering to its discipline. The KMT was then, as now, an anti-

Last century, before the bourgeoisie became moribund, Karl Marx argued:

"But they themselves must do the most for their eventual victory by enlightening themselves as to their class interests by adopting an independent position as soon as possible and by never allowing themselves to be misled concerning the independent organisation of the proletarian party by the hypocritical phrases of the democratic petty bourgeoisie. Their battle cry must be the revolution in permanence. (K. Marx and F. Engels Address to the Central Committee of the Communist League March 1850)

It is from this that the expression Permanent Revolution was developed by Trotsky. Trotsky's whole line on China was merely an application of the principles of Marx. Marx would have considered the liquidation of the party of the working class into a party of the national bourgeoisie a very great crime indeed.

- 2) How was Stalinist strategy for Spain compatible with the rhetoric of Revolutionary Communist? During 1937 there was a revolutionary upsurge. The response from the Communist International, led by Stalin and the Communist Party of Spain was:

The Praesidium of the E.C. of the C.I. approves the political line of the Spanish C.P. which is mobilising its followers and the popular masses for the struggle against the fascists who want to install a fascist dictatorship. It approves the line followed for this and states that the parliamentary democratic republic, the Republic of the Popular Front which guarantees the rights and liberties of all Spaniards in which the fascist base is challenged and where there will be no place for fascism and in which the people can express their own choices and decide their own future for themselves".

(Cited W. Held Stalinism and the POUM in the Spanish Revolution translated Ted Crawford Revolutionary History Vol.1 Number

Here we have it through a parliamentary government Spanish people can express their own choices and decide their own future. That is, if you believe the Communist International.

Revolutionary Communist has a different line which it bluntly puts as follows: "ELECTIONS ARE A SHAM. How can this be? 1-How can the political system in a country like Australia be really a mask for the role of monopoly capitalists over the workers and the oppressed? After all, doesn't the right to choose political leaders by voting mean the people run the country? In a word, NO!" Yes, indeed, and this was true for Spain in 1937 as well as for Australia today. The tragedy was that in Spain the Communist Party had faith in democracy. In fact they defended democracy by joining the Negrin government in suppressing the organised working class, jailing and even murdering militants. Revolutionaries raise democratic demands to sharpen the struggle against the bourgeoisie to expose the class character of the capitalist state. We do not raise democratic demands to legitimise the bourgeoisie. Revolutionaries stand for parliament as a platform for revolutionary ideas as part of the political struggle against the Labor Party.

The Spanish Communist Party joined the capitalist state against the working class. The French Communist Party in the '40s also identified itself as a party of government. Charles De Gaulle acknowledged their role for opposing strike action.

3) Why did the block between Stalin and Bukharin last seven years? Bukharin was a right winger within the Bolshevik tradition. He opposed the state monopoly on foreign trade, he supported an orientation towards the peasantry as opposed to the working class. He believed in the law of value as a progressive aspect of capitalism to be introduced (during the period transitional to socialism). Stalin attacked him, but only after blocking with him for seven years. In that period it was the Left Opposition including Trotsky who fought Bukharin's revisionism.

Does Revolutionary Communist note that it was Trotsky who led the struggle against Bukharin whilst Stalin remained silent? This is not a trivial question. Gorbachev is using Bukharin to establish his Bolshevik credentials. Had Bukharin been thoroughly discredited Gorbachev would not have been able to claim continuity.

4) Why were Maoists unable to warn against the degeneration of the Vietnamese revolution? When Trotskyists warned that the class nature and program would have this consequence we were accused of dire pessimism. However, when the Vietnamese Stalinist leadership the CPA(M-L) expressed "thorough going agreement" with Chinese leader Deng in equating the Vietnamese leadership with the US imperialist puppets Ky and Thieu. The CRCPA are not the CPA(M-L) but undoubtedly they share similar views.

But why did the degeneration occur? The Trotskyists have given an answer based on marxism. The invasion of Kampuchea was no surprise to us. Once again the Communists liquidated into a National Liberation Front under the banner of the national bourgeoisie. Once again they based themselves on the nationalist peasantry and not the working class. In both Vietnam and Kampuchea, the Stalinist counterposed their own national liberation to the struggle in the other country. In 1954 the Vietnamese imposed Prince Sihanouk as head of the State of Kampuchea, who proceeded to jail members of the Kampuchean Communist Party. It was "good teacher" Ho Chi Minh who permitted Vietnam to be divided in half. The Maoists accuse us of taking advantage of revolutions turning sour but it is Maoists that make them turn sour.

5 Why is it that Pol Pot and the Kampuchean Stalinists are now fully subordinated to Prince Sihanouk? The Kampuchean government Pol Pot was head of state. Vietnam invaded. Now to get popular support the Stalinists must bow to a feudal prince. Because Pol Pot led a blood thirsty antiproletarian regime is the reason. Capitalism will probably be restored in Kampuchea whoever wins the war. The CRCPA will probably blame the agents of "Soviet social imperialism" but if the Pol Pot regime was truly revolutionary, the Vietnamese would have been repelled just as the US was when it invaded Vietnam. Reports vary but most suggest at least equal support to the Vietnamese-sponsored regime. Thanks to the Stalinists the workers and peasants of Vietnam and Kampuchea have been bathed in blood

Revolutionary communist attacks Trotsky for allegedly being against the Leninist party. This is another lie! Trotsky built the Fourth International committed to building Leninist parties internationally. Stalin liquidated the Third International. Revolutionary communist quotes Deutscher as their authority. But in 1970, the date of their quote Deutscher had broken with both the idea of a Leninist party and the Fourth International.

This article only scrapes the surface. The magnitude of the Stalinist betrayal is thoroughly immense. The blood of millions is on their hands. It was spilt, not in the war against capital, but in defence of bureaucratic privilege in the Soviet Union and in selling out world revolution. Their record is truly horrendous. Revolutionary Communist is in continuity with Stalin's lie machine. Its revolutionary sounding rhetoric cannot conceal this thoroughly rotten political record.

racism in Bulgaria

Last year there were reports about the treatment of Turks in Bulgaria. Thousands were fleeing Bulgaria for Turkey,

complaining of prosecution because of their religion, humiliation because of their practice of circumcision and being forced to change their name to make it sound Bulgarian. Their anguish received considerable coverage from the Australian media. Their entrance into Turkey boosted the credentials of the Ozal regime. The Ozal regime is known for bloody repression of the Kurdish people. This is not reported in the capitalist media. They only have a vested interest in reporting national oppression in the so-called Communist block. Many Bulgarians of Turkish descent have returned to Bulgaria. However it was pretty disgusting that they were forced to leave in the first place. The majority remain in Turkey.

This year, the bureaucracy liberalised its attitude to the Turkish minority and was greeted with hostility. "Bulgaria for the Bulgarians" was chanted through the streets of Sofia. But Bulgaria is not in danger of being conquered. What was meant by the chant was - no rights for Turks! The bureaucracy was not giving the Turks full equality, just some recognition, but even this was too much for chauvinist Bulgarians. The bureaucracy feels damned whatever it does. The problem is that for decades it has used Bulgarian chauvinism to maintain social stability. Bulgarian hostility to the Turks goes right back to the Turkish empire: But the Turkish empire is no more, Turkey has been reduced to semicolonial states by the imperialist powers. It should have been the responsibility of real communists to have given workers a Marxist analysis and shown them that their interests lie in unity with the Turkish working class and to fight for meaningful unity between the Bulgarian and Turkish people within Bulgaria. This can only be done by recognition of the right of the Turkish

people to their own culture, religion and language. Whilst the reactionary features of Islam have to be fought, the way to do this is not through bureaucratic suppression.

The bureaucracy cannot combat Bulgarian chauvinism or religious backwardness because it wasn't established by mobilising the working class. Bulgaria was occupied by the Red Army who nationalised its economy and imposed on the people a bureaucratic regime modeled on, and in solidarity with, Stalin's Russia. Not only did this regime not fight chauvinism and racism, it perpetuated to maintain power. The liberalisation process sweeping Eastern Europe is also affecting Bulgaria. The Communist Party has now offered to share power. However, with the democratic sentiments, racism is again being unleashed. The bureaucracy will be embarrassed but they have only themselves to blame for failing to make chauvinism politically redundant with the Bulgarian people.

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