

IMPERIALISM BLITZES IRAQ

The imperialists are raining bombs over Iraqi cities. According to recent estimates twenty thousand Iraqis have been killed and of course many thousands more injured. This is no pinpoint precision raid on selected military targets. This is wholesale slaughter. George Bush intends to use Iraq to give the third world and, imperialised countries a message -- if you threaten our order you will be blown out of existence. This is what is at stake in this war. For this reason we must support military victory to Iraq - even if led by Saddam Hussein. The Iraqi working class, rank and file soldiers, and small farmers can have no faith in Hussein. They must remove him and his officers and take control of their war effort. The tasks in Iraq are defensive. Class conscious proletarians must expose the inability of the national bourgeoisie to defend Iraq properly. In Australia our task is to support imperialism's defeat - unconditionally. Those who let their criticisms of Hussein get in the way of taking an unequivocal stand cover for imperialism.

Paradoxically a victory to Iraq even under the leadership of Hussein would make it easier for the masses to remove leaders such as Hussein throughout the third world. For over a decade imperialism has not merely turned a blind eye but armed and supported Hussein whilst he attacked the Kurdish people and the Iraqi working class. The Iran - Iraq war was one of the bloodiest in world history. The imperialists supported Hussein then - because he was committed to maintain their order. Now that he has turned against them they have suddenly discovered that he is a "Hitler". The more imperialism is defeated, the easier it will be to remove dictators such as Hussein. The only people that we can entrust to remove Hussein are the Iraqi working class.

Meanwhile in Australia there have been mass protests. In Sydney on the whole these have been organised by the Bring the Frigate Home Coalition supported by the radical left (including the D.S.P, I.S.O. S.P.A. CPA(ML) and Socialist Alternative) and Arab organisations. However on February 10 a numerically strong demo of about 20,000 was organised by a rival front called Network for Peace. As the chairperson pointed out, this is no new organisation but a coalition of already existing groups. Whilst the constituents of this coalition are no doubt diverse, this coalition is consistent with the ideas of the more respectable stalinist groupings New Left Party and Association for Communist Unity. Or at least it is what these groups consider to be a principled anti-war coalition. This means a strong appeal to respectability and a strong disassociation from Iraq. One notable feature of the demo was that the Arab speaker Eddie Zaniniri spoke at the beginning of the demo where there was less media attention and separate from the main platform. The main rally was dominated by those such as Nonie Nazelhurst who promoted their utopian middleclass pacifism. Representing a trade The Communist Tendency pointed out the need for class struggle. The Moratorium not merely didn't develop workers action but demobilised those workers taking industrial action against the war. The slogan "stop work to stop the war" meant stop work to attend this demo and not industrial action. In fact the originators of the I.S.O. called Marxist Workers Group were formed out of those who saw the importance of the working class. The C.T. speaker pointed out that the "anti-imperialist" militancy of those such as Langer and Hyde was linked to Stalinism and had nothing to do with a principled working class opposition to pacifism. In fact Anne Picot's speech had no reference to the struggle against Stalinism what so ever. Nor did she indicate that there was a need to fight Stalinism in the existing anti-war movement.

It may be true that students under some circumstances can be more spontaneously militant than workers. This does not make them revolutionary. The point for Communists should be to politicise the working class and to change their consciousness. The reason why the working class were late on the scene in relation to anti-war solidarity was because of its misleadership. The reformists and Stalinists saw the working class as, at best, an appendage of the middle class protest. The I.S.O. appears to have this attitude also. The Di Fieldes method of mobilising working class action is to get them to respond to students throwing flour bombs. The I.S.O. are not merely nostalgic. They want to repeat their variant of militant popular front student politics again for solidarity work against the Gulf War.

Communist Tendency considers the International Socialist Organisation to be a middle class tendency for many reasons. Their anti-Marxist view that the Soviet Union as "state capitalist" and their anti-Marxist explanation for the long post-war capitalist boom being two significant ones for starters. However nothing exposes their class nature more clearer than this! No doubt they will carve

themselves a nice niche in the antiwar movement of attracting those who support militancy instead of respectability. Its ironic! I.S.O. started off as a healthy reaction to the middle class nature of the Vietnam solidarity movement. It is because of the failure of I.S.O. "Marxism" that they are now turning to the very middle class politics that they initially rejected! Future issues of Red will give more analysis on the revisionist method of LS.O.

Gay friends of the cops

The Lesbian and Gay Mardi Gras has become one of the most spectacular and prominent events on the Sydney social calendar. This year, the largest ever an estimated 200,000 people either witnessed or participated in the march along Oxford Street. The floats were creative and colourful. Whilst the political level (especially left wing) was not strong, contingents raised the question of access to the AIDS drug AZT (including the failure of Hawke government minister Brian Howe) and the question of gay immigration. These are important questions. However the only political organisation with a banner was the Australian Democrats. This is noteworthy as members of the New Left Party (notably Brian McGahen) were instrumental in establishing the Mardi Gras in its current format. The Mardi Gras is more than just a march. It is forums, films, entertainment and dances. A whole extravaganza!

The Lesbian and Gay Mardi Gras has gone a long way since 1978. Then it was met with police violence. The Gay demonstrators were then arrested and bashed (sometimes brutally) by the cops of the Wran Labor Government which was showing that it attacked demonstrators as efficiently as Joh Bjelke Petersen. The response of the Gay Solidarity Group was to depoliticise their march and make their peace with the state. The Gay Mardi Gras (as it was initially called) became an Oxford Street festival sponsored by Gay business. The name was changed to Lesbian and Gay Mardi Gras when Gay women justifiably objected to its male domination and its sexist stereotyping of the female role by drag queens. The Gay community has many of the same reactionary prejudices as the rest of capitalist society.

Today the Mardi Gras is so immense that no government Liberal or Labor will touch it. After all it is backed by millions of dollars of financial clout. For some Gay people this is hitting the jackpot. So much so that they are prepared to forget about the attacks by the system and the state. On page 43 of the glossy brochure there is a truly obscene advertisement for the New South Wales Police Force. Four cops, two male and two female are pictured arm in arm in front of the Albury Hotel, which is a Gay hotel in Oxford Street, Darlinghurst. These cops are apparently committed to defending Gay people against attack. It's staggering how such an ad can be stomached given the record of the cops in bashing and even murdering Gay people. Remember Dr Duncan dumped into the Torrens River Adelaide in 1971! No doubt many can't. But these people are clearly isolated and condemned to silence whilst the "respectable" section dominates. No doubt this section will tell us how not all cops are the same and some cops are learning. It has to be stressed that it is not only Gay people who are brutally attacked but young people in Sydney's western suburbs (cops killed Tsakos!) and Black people who are murdered in and out of custody and have their houses bashed in Redfern. Are we supposed to "forget" about this because a few cops decide to be decent to Gay people - even if they do! What about the rest of the cops who continue their Gay-bashing ways.

The reality is this! The whole Police force is an instrument which polices capitalist social relationships. And capitalist social relationships are anti-gay. No matter how much the system may be tolerant to Gay people in their ghetto. They are only tolerant so long as they remain in their ghetto. All bourgeois parties are committed to maintaining the family which is an important pillar of maintaining capitalist stability. There is no way that homosexuals will be allowed to interfere with that. Irrespective of whether homosexuality is formally legal or not there are all sorts of laws that can be brought out that talk about "indecent" that will be used to keep Gay people in their place. And it will be policed by Gay bashers who are taught by the system to police its "morality". And now there is the AIDS disease to reinforce reactionary prejudices. The system will always teach that heterosexuality is moral and that homosexuality is inferior. And this means degradation, humiliation and violence to millions of Gay people. The Gay ghetto is an understandable response to social oppression. It is however a response by those with material means including capital. But social relations have not fundamentally changed. Gay liberation can only be considered successful when same sex relationships are treated with the same honour and respect as those between people of different sexes. It will be successful when men or women can hold hands walking down the street in any suburb or in any pub with their partner with the same dignity as heterosexual couples.

The Gay movement is a bourgeois response to homosexual oppression. However it is a response to a major failing. The organisations of the working class have not taken up the question of homosexual liberation. It is only when it is taken up as a class question that bourgeois morality can be broken through. Working class people must be shown that they have a class interest in taking up the Gay question as the bourgeois moral offensive is against all exploited and oppressed. A class

conscious working class fighting attacks on Gay people by bashers, thugs and fascists is the best way of undermining the Gay friends of the cops.

WHY WE NEED A FIFTH COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Communist Tendency stands for the construction of a Fifth Communist International. This is not a position that we take lightly. It is the purpose of this article to explain the splits in the Trotskyist movement and why there is no international revolutionary movement today.

Communism without internationalism simply isn't communism: Without an international, communists will inevitably succumb to the pressures of the national bourgeoisie. An international of some sort ' therefore has to be built. The Second International, since the turn of the century, has been a stinking corpse – a "socialist" cover for imperialist exploitation blatantly exposed by its support for the imperialists during the First World War. In no way can principled proletarians identify with such an "international" even to the extent that it formally exists.

The Third International has been dissolved also. That International founded by internationalists such as Lenin and Luxemburg degenerated as it became an appendage of Stalin's counterrevolutionary foreign policy. "Socialism in one country" meant selling out the revolution - worldwide. In China and Indo-china Stalinists sold Out the banner of the proletariat to stand behind the banner of the bourgeoisie in the form of "national liberation fronts" In Vietnam, they Stalinists, led by Ho Chi Minh smashed revolutionary working class mobilisation. In Spain, the Stalinists supported a bourgeois government smashing working class organisation. In Germany, the Stalinists allowed Adolph Hitler and the fascists to come to power at the bloody expense of the working class and millions of Jews. In France the Stalinists sabotaged a strike movement for the benefit of Charles de Gaulle. These hideous betrayals were not accidental but part and parcel of the liquidation of international communism. The whole strategy of the Stalinists amounted to a total betrayal. By dissolving the Comintern in 1947 Stalin was pursuing the logic of socialism in one country.

Under these circumstances Trotsky was not merely correct in establishing the Fourth International - he had an obligation to found the Fourth International. The subsequent demise of the F.I. does not make this decision wrong. Trotsky had this obligation even with the limited forces that he had. The Fourth International was in no way immune from degeneration or failure. On the whole, the sections of the Fourth International lacked roots in the working class

The Second World War was to put a massive strain on the F.I. Important cadre were killed either by the fascists or the Stalinists. However the fundamental failure of the F.I. was one of Marxism. Just before his death Trotsky took part' in an important struggle within the U.S. section of the F.I. the Socialist Workers Party. Under the pressure of the threat of world war (it hadn't started yet) a middle class section led by Max Schachtman and Martin Abern declared that they the defense of the Soviet Union did not flow from its class character and that the Soviet Union should be defended " subject to the reality of living events" At this time Stalin's Red Army was invading Finland. Trotsky and the Fourth International defended the Red Army not because it was doing anything progressive but because of the class character of the Soviet state. The Schachtmanites in their conditional defense broke from Marxism. They consciously rejected the Marxist method of dialectical materialism arguing that it was not related to concrete political questions.