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The Fourth International and the Perspective of World Socialist Revolution: 1986–1995

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Mehring Books is pleased to announce that the paperback edition of *The Fourth International and the Perspective of World Socialist Revolution: 1986–1995* is now available for shipment. The book examines the history of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) following the split with the British Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) in February 1986.

In June, the WSWS announced that the book was available in epub format and for preorder in paperback. It also published the Introduction to the volume by Socialist Equality Party National Secretary Joseph Kishore. The introduction states:

The split with the WRP ranks among the most significant events in the history of the Fourth International. At stake was the survival of the Trotskyist movement and the continuity of its revolutionary internationalist program.

This book consists of lectures presented at the summer school of the Socialist Equality Party (US) held July 21–28, 2019. The volume's appendix includes several critical resolutions and documents cited in the lectures from the history of the ICFI.

The introductory lecture by David North places the split with the WRP and the present tasks of the ICFI in the context of the history of Trotskyism, going back to the formation of the Left Opposition in the Soviet Union in 1923. As national secretary of the Workers League in the US, predecessor of the Socialist Equality Party, North led the opposition within the ICFI to the national opportunism of the WRP.

The subsequent lectures address the development of

the ICFI after the split. As the introduction explains:

In the aftermath of the split, the ICFI confronted a whole set of complex problems under conditions of a rapidly changing world political situation. These included the deepening crisis and ultimate dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Stalinist regimes of Eastern Europe, the acceleration of the restoration of capitalist relations in China that followed the Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989, the rightward evolution of the bourgeois nationalist regimes and the proliferation of separatist movements aligned with imperialism, the full integration of the trade unions into the apparatus of corporate management and the state, and the eruption of American imperialism and unending war that began with the first invasion of Iraq in 1990–1991.

Confronting these challenges required the reestablishment and development of an international Marxist perspective. The political foundation for this perspective emerged in the course of the split with the WRP.

The lectures included in the book are:

- “The Political Origins and Consequences of the 1982–86 Split in the International Committee of the Fourth International,” by David North
- “The International Perspectives Resolution of 1988,” by Andre Damon
- “Trotskyism vs. Gorbachev’s Perestroika,” by Barry Grey

- “The Tiananmen Square Massacre,” by Peter Symonds
- “The Dissolution of the USSR and US Imperialism’s Unipolar Moment,” by Bill Van Auken
- “The International Committee and the ‘End of History,’” by David Walsh
- “Civil War in Sri Lanka and the Strategy of Permanent Revolution,” by Deepal Jayasekera
- “The Founding of the Socialist Equality Party,” by Joseph Kishore

In addition to these lectures, the book includes a series of fundamental documents produced by the ICFI during this period, which are essential reading in understanding the evolution of capitalism over the past four decades and the present crisis. They are:

- “What is Happening in the USSR? Gorbachev and the Crisis of Stalinism,” Statement of the ICFI
- “The Situation in Sri Lanka and the Political Tasks of the Revolutionary Communist League,” Statement of the ICFI (November 1987)
- “The World Capitalist Crisis and the Tasks of the Fourth International,” Perspectives Resolution of the ICFI (July 1988)
- “Victory to the Political Revolution in China,” Statement of the ICFI (June 1989)
- “Oppose Imperialist War and Colonialism!,” Manifesto of the ICFI (May 1991)
- “The End of the USSR,” by David North (January 1992)
- “After the Demise of the USSR: The Struggle for Marxism and the Tasks of the Fourth International,” by David North (March 1992)

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