

How Low Can Mandel Go?

Ernest Mandel and his fake-Trotskyist “United Secretariat of the Fourth International” (USec) have over the past several decades played the role of cheerleaders for a variety of “mass movements,” ranging from the Cuban and Vietnamese Stalinists in the 1960s all the way to Khomeini’s theocratic “Islamic Revolution” in the late 1970s. In Eastern Europe the “mass movements” championed by the USec have often had an explicitly counter-revolutionary, capitalist restorationist leadership and program. This stands in flagrant contradiction to the Trotskyist position of *defense* of collectivized property against capitalist forces in societies ruled by Stalinist bureaucracies. But this has never posed a problem for the USec. After all, they figure, what are a few Trotskyist principles here or there compared to a chance to climb aboard a genuine “mass movement”?

The September 18 edition of the USec’s *International Viewpoint* (IV) takes this wretched opportunism to appalling new depths. IV reprints an article by one Herbert Lindmae of the Estonian Popular Front, praising “The armed struggle against Stalinism in Estonia” by the “Forest Brothers”—Estonia’s *Nazi collaborators*! Lindmae makes no attempt to conceal the fact that in 1941: “In the expulsion of the Red Army from the mainland and

islands of Estonia, Forest Brothers’ self-defense units participated along with the German armed forces.” He continues:

“The armed struggle against Stalinism was fundamentally a struggle of the Estonian people for liberation. In the summer of 1944, more than 90,000 Estonians participated in it. The fact that during the war people involved in it fought on the side of fascist Germany is strictly the fault of Stalinism.”

Lindmae complains that a recent ruling by the Estonian government annulling “extrajudicial mass re-pression” does not cover “traitors to the fatherland and members of nationalist bands and their satellites....Such persons must also be considered rehabilitated.”

IV defends this revolting article complaining that, “The Soviet central press continues to cry scandal about any defense of the ‘Forest Brothers,’ and this is an element in the intensified polemics about the Baltic peoples’ movements.” The Stalinist press has told many lies over the years but scandalizing these Hitlerite collaborators is surely no crime. By solidarizing with Lindmae’s defense of Estonia’s anti-Semitic Hitlerites, the USec reveals its complete political bankruptcy. ■