



Hayden/Hawke's answer: two more years of Fraser

Don't let the horror budget go unchallenged

**For a general strike now!
Let the ALP take power!**

Australian workers are smarting under the most vicious austerity budget in decades. On 15 August the Fraser government set out to boost capitalist profits with a series of arrogant and brutal attacks on poor and working people. Medibank -- the only significant reform of the Whitlam government -- abolished; workers' pay packets slashed by sharp tax rises designed to fall most heavily on low incomes; drastic cuts in already limping social services; a freeze on unemployment benefits while prices continue to rise; even a means test on further cost-of-living increases to the pittance doled out to old-age pensioners -- the message couldn't be clearer: the oppressed are to be mercilessly sacrificed on the altar of "business confidence". The bosses were over-



Continued on page two 10,000 attended 21 August anti-budget rally in Sydney.

ASp photo

Racist white rule in Rhodesia nears bloody end

The guerrilla war against Rhodesia's white colonial rule which began in the bush more than a generation ago is now spreading waves of panic among the residents of Salisbury's posh suburbs. Outside the capital, farmers nightly huddle over their machine guns in fortified compounds knowing that it may not be long before Salisbury begins to look like Saigon in the final frantic days before the Americans pulled out. Already white settlers are abandoning their swimming pools and tennis courts, leaving the country at the rate of 1000 per month. The sagging morale of the once-cocky colonialists was further weakened with the revelation that the chief of Rhodesian Customs Security and the Undersecretary for Defence, together with four businessmen, had been arrested for diverting millions of dollars in arms funds into Swiss bank accounts in preparation for a quick getaway.

The war is not yet over, however. On 29 July the desperate white-supremacist regime launched a vicious assault on the Mozambique base areas of

guerrilla leader Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU). Black troops commanded by white officers and backed up by jet bombers and helicopters swept over the border and destroyed what the Salisbury government called "ten terrorist bases". A school was hit in the attack and an undetermined number of men, women and children were killed. In the last such raid in November the Rhodesians claimed to have killed 1200 people. The only difference this time is that the murderous attack was undertaken by a regime supposedly moving toward "majority rule" and with the approval of black lackeys in the Rhodesian government.

Rhodesian leader Ian Smith pronounced the raid a success and was no doubt encouraged by the fact that while the bombs were falling in Mozambique, the American House of Representatives was preparing a small bombshell of its own: a vote to lift trade sanctions against Rhodesia if the elections promised by Smith and his three black front men are held as scheduled in December. The House

action was a vote of confidence in the shaky Salisbury "transitional government" produced by the 3 March "internal settlement" which brought Bishop Abel Muzorewa, tribal chief Jeremiah Chirau and ex-ZANU leader Rev Ndabaningi Sithole onto the four-man Executive Council with Smith. But while the House was acting to prop up the colonial settlers, the Carter administration, which has written them off as a lost cause, continued its efforts to forge a compromise between Salisbury and the Soviet-armed Patriotic Front Alliance of Mugabe's ZANU and the Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union (ZAPU) of Joshua Nkomo.

Ian Smith and his three stooges

The fraudulent nature of the "internal settlement" and the hollowness of the claim that it represents a genuine sharing of power in a country where blacks outnumber whites 19 to 1 was revealed by the fact that Muzorewa, Sithole and Chirau were not even told about the latest raid until after it had already begun! This, however,

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Port Kembla pig-iron boycott of 1938

... see page 6

Budget . . .

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joyed. The stock market shot up the day after the budget was announced. For these parasites what even the right-wing press called a "horror budget" was good news.

So callous were some of the budget's provisions that the press barons who had been urging Fraser to get tough on the economy muttered uneasily that he was going too far. After an outcry in the papers, Fraser grudgingly rescinded only one of the most provocative measures -- the deduction of children's earnings from family allowances. For three years Fraser has promised he was bringing down inflation and unemployment and restoring the economy. For three years unemployment has got worse, inflation has continued, real wages have fallen, a whole arsenal of anti-union laws has been used to intimidate striking workers. Now the myth of common sacrifice for

Defend anti-budget protestors!

Cops in Sydney and Brisbane arrested a total of 139 people following the anti-budget rallies in those two cities on 21 August. 129 of the arrests came in Brisbane, when 300 of the rally participants attempted to march in violation of Bjelke-Petersen's repressive ban. The ten arrested in Sydney were among some 200 demonstrators who had marched on the stock exchange following the insipid ALP/Labor Council rally in Town Hall Square. After the protestors occupied the ground floor of the stock exchange, Wran's police waded into the crowd gathered outside. A leaflet issued by a "Stock Exchange Ten Defence Fund" tries to "defend" two of the demonstrators from victimisation by despicably implicating all the demonstrators in police charges of damage. All the charges against the 139 must be dropped! The labour movement must be mobilised in their defence! Condemn Labor faker Wran!

Fraser and the NSW Liberal opposition seized on the "violent" demonstration at the stock exchange, which involved some minor property damage and a few slogans ("Make the rich pay") spray-painted on walls and doors, to deflect attention from the vicious budget and embarrass Hayden and Wran. They succeeded, as the latter two gentlemen indignantly joined in the denunciation of the cops' victims. In fact, said Hayden in Parliament, these anti-budget protestors were "closet members of the Liberal Party"! Liberals protesting against a Liberal budget outside the stock exchange? Rather peculiar, but Hayden had "evidence": the demonstrators carried a placard reading "Sack Hawke, Hayden and Wran".

In fact the placard read "Dump Hayden/Hawke/Wran - For a Revolutionary Leadership of the Labour Movement", and it was carried by the Spartacist League, which was neither responsible for organising the protest nor participated in the pointless and stupid actions that reportedly took place inside the stock exchange. But if some demonstrators may have been goaded into adventurist stunts, it was a direct result of the frustration engendered by Hayden's total failure to provide any lead to the rally. And in fact the only violence committed at the protest was that of Labor premier Wran's police.

"Closet Liberals", Mr Hayden? It is not the Spartacist League which aspires to administer the bosses state, denounces working-class protestors against the budget rather than the bosses' cops who arrest them or holds the portfolio as minister in charge of those cops. No - Mr Hayden and Mr Wran are the real "closet Liberals". That is why they and all their type must be ousted from the leadership of the labour movement through the struggle for a leadership committed to overthrowing capitalism, not defending it.

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the sake of economic recovery can no longer be maintained. The Murdochs and Fairfaxes objected only that Fraser should have been more discreet; the *Financial Review* (16 August) complained candidly that the "Budget will wound organised labour but only in a fashion which will anger it, not destroy it".

Already on shaky ground, at the same time Fraser's own credibility was eaten away by the murky "Withers affair". Fraser had sacked Senator Withers, his one-time right-hand man in the Senate, from Cabinet after a royal commission found he had "improperly" attempted to influence the naming of new electoral districts. Other ministers were appalled at the "ruthless" sacking for something which, after all, any one of them might have done. But then it emerged that Ian Robinson, the minister whose testimony had implicated Withers, had implicated Fraser as well; and with Fraser refusing to say whether or not he had asked Robinson to impugn his own testimony to keep Fraser clear, the image of stern propriety and moral authority so carefully husbanded by Fraser collapsed in tatters. The public opinion polls registered the combined effect: a swing to Labor big enough to put Labor back in if elections were held now.

The day after the budget speech in Parliament, builders' labourers in Melbourne and waterside workers in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide walked off the job in protest. Amidst calls from the coal-mining unions and the NSW Australian Railways Union for a 24-hour general strike, the union tops and parliamentarians moved quickly to exploit Fraser's soaring unpopularity and at the same time provide a harmless outlet for the ranks by organising mass rallies for the following week. But the thousands of working people who downed tools to attend these rallies clearly expected more. As it turned out, they could scarcely have got less.

Hayden's promise: after Fraser ... Peacock

In Sydney, maritime unions struck for the day of the rally, 21 August; others stopped work for the rally itself. Workers' marches from the city's most militant shops and unions converged on Town Hall. Close to 10,000 listened to federal opposition leader Bill Hayden and NSW's Labor premier, Neville Wran, denounce the horror budget. The air of expectancy was tangible as the rally waited for its "leaders" to suggest some course of action. In the end all Wran could say was that he hoped the people of Australia would not forget the budget at the next federal elections -- due in two and a half years' time! Hayden offered his belief there would be a new prime minister within two years -- not himself, but Fraser's foreign minister, Andrew Peacock! Finding even mass rallies a little too dangerous, Hayden has been happy to retreat to the parliamentary debating games, harping on the Withers affair.

Two days later, 8000 people in Melbourne were treated to more of the same from the ALP shadow treasurer, Ralph Willis, and Peter Nolan of the ACTU executive. ACTU president Bob Hawke stayed away from both rallies, content to issue statements that the workers, in his view, would not support strike action. When he finally moved into action a week later, it was only to arrange one of his specialty sellouts to defuse the potentially explosive Telecom strike.

The Liberal government and its policies stand clearly exposed as the dirty work of the profit-hungry big corporations, banks and private investors. Yet the misleaders of labour refuse to lift a finger to mobilise the working class in self-defence. Workers cannot afford to wait two years, nor is there any reason they should! *The ACTU must organise a nationwide general strike -- not a mere protest stoppage -- with the limited aim of reversing Fraser's policies, bringing down the Liberal government and forcing new elections.* The ALP has the support of the masses of Australian workers, who want Fraser out. Enough playing around in the cesspool of little parliamentary scandals -- *let the ALP take the power now!* But the ALP tops refuse to carry out the extra-parliamentary, class-struggle mobilisation necessary to take office themselves because they fear the challenge to capitalism, and to their own perks as its loyal servants, such a mobilisation would entail. We want them in office so that workers will be able to see in practice that these reformist bureaucrats have nothing to offer to the working class they claim to represent except capitalist slavery in a different guise. *Remember the Hayden budget of 1975 -- the first austerity budget of this recession was a Labor budget!*

Down with the Liberal austerity budget! Down with the anti-labour Liberal government! No more games in Parliament! For an immediate general strike organised by the ACTU to dump the Fraser government and call new elections! Expose the fakers -- let the ALP take the power now!

The demands of the general strike must incorporate the real immediate needs of the working class in response to Fraser's attacks: Full restoration of Medibank and reversal of all the cuts in social services made by the Fraser government! Break the indexation wage freeze --

for major, across-the-board wage rises now, and full, unconditional monthly cost-of-living adjustments on all wages! For immediate implementation of a 30-hour work week with no loss in weekly pay! Smash the IRB and all anti-union legislation! Down with all penal powers!

Protest strikes are not enough

On 30 August a meeting of some 500-1000 job delegates in Melbourne convened by the Trades Hall Council (THC) overwhelmingly voted to call on the ACTU for a series of half-day nationwide strikes against the budget -- despite the opposition of the THC secretary, Ken Stone, whose motion for "a Special ACTU Congress to organise appropriate protest action" also carried. But just as with the 24-hour general strike over Medibank in 1976, Fraser will easily be able to ignore a series of protest stoppages designed simply to pressure the government to modify the budget. Yet the author of this proposal -- John Halfpenny, Amalgamated Metal Workers (AMWSU) state secretary and Communist Party (CPA) member, the man who sold out the militant LaTrobe Valley power workers last year -- had the gall to argue that Fraser could "ride out" a one-week general strike, but not a series of four-hour stoppages!

Originating from a meeting of 300 unionists in the LaTrobe Valley, the proposal for a national general strike of at least one week's duration became the focus for militants dissatisfied with Halfpenny's token "campaign". But this proposal still lacks a clear political perspective for victory, substituting for a general strike organised to win concrete defensive aims what remains merely a longer protest strike to be called off at an arbitrary set time.

A defensive general strike around the limited aims outlined above *can be won*. It would not immediately and directly pose the question of a battle for state power which, in the absence of a revolutionary leadership, could only lead to bloody defeat. At this time, only the ACTU can organise and call a general strike.

However, as one Waterside Workers delegate remarked at the Melbourne meeting, the ACTU is the "graveyard of disputes". Bosses' lackeys like Hawke and Halfpenny are certain to do their utmost to sabotage and sell out even a defensive, limited general strike. These fakers cannot be trusted! Strike committees of elected shop-floor delegates must be formed to conduct the strike; strike pickets and workers self-defence guards must be organised. The presence of a clear revolutionary alternative in such a situation of sharp class confrontation would threaten immedi-

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letter

Comrades,

The article in *ASP* 56 entitled "Smash homosexual oppression through workers revolution" was as a whole an excellent exposition of the bolshevik attitude toward the struggle against homosexual oppression which, though not a strategic question for the proletarian revolution, is nevertheless a crucial aspect of the proletariat's struggle against all forms of oppression, as the "tribune of the whole people" in Lenin's words. It is imprecise and therefore potentially misleading, however, to say that "gays are a small and generally petty-bourgeois layer" when of course homosexuals come from all classes of society (although undoubtedly some petty-bourgeois gays find "coming out" easier than working-class gays). The question is not the size or class composition of the homosexual population but rather that the classless, defeatist sectoralism of the gay movement is a petty-bourgeois political expression of the gay ghetto lifestyle -- an illusory and unsuccessful attempt to *escape* oppression, rather than a class-struggle solution.

Comradely,
P Naughten

ASP replies: Comrade Naughten's point is well taken. And we would only add that it is the reformists who in fact see gays as a petty-bourgeois layer, (the "gay community"), divorced from the real social power of the working class, and whose sectoralist politics consciously seeks to perpetuate this isolation.

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Saturday: 12 noon to 5 pm

Revolutionary literature

Stalinist invasion of Czechoslovakia "remembered" — Maoists rally for NATO

The trendy, small-"1" liberal *Nation Review* devoted its 11-17 August issue to commemorating the tenth anniversary of the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries. Among the contributors was one Albert Langer, described as a "political activist and part-time strategic analyst", who made the ranting anti-communism of the *Nation Review's* resident "Cold Warrior", Frank Knopfelmacher, sound positively pacifistic. Langer painted a picture of a "fascist" Russia, even more malevolent than Nazi Germany, and bent on world conquest. His "solution" was clear: make NATO and "Uncle Sam" stop their "dithering" and "appeasing" and prepare to wage World War III against the "Soviet threat".

What made the Langer piece of some interest was the (unmentioned) fact that he is the leading public spokesman and chief "theoretician" of the Maoist Movement for Independence and Socialism (MIS). The MIS and its associated "cadre-type" organisation, the Red Eureka Movement (REM), split last year from the Peking-loyal Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) (CPA[ML]), claiming that China under Hua Kuo-feng is on the "capitalist road". Langer's journalistic debut preceded an MIS forum and rally to commemorate the invasion and (in the words of an MIS leaflet) "to highlight the increasingly aggressive nature of Soviet imperialism".

While wanting to distance themselves from some of the more embarrassing aspects of the Chinese line for Australia (eg fervent support for Fraser's "positive side") the MIS/REM have from inception been intent on proving their anti-Soviet credentials. Last year, in an article entitled "Remember Czechoslovakia" (*Rebel*, 24 October 1977) the REM castigated "those" (meaning EF Hill and the CPA[ML] leadership) who "persistently dragged their feet in opposing Soviet imperialism". It endorsed "Mao Tse-tung's position that the ruling circles in western countries can be united with against the Soviet threat", concluding with the call to use the USSR's

"considerable unpopularity to unite all forces that can be united against it. We must not allow the Soviet Union to escape its isolation by dividing, disorienting or confusing the forces opposed to it."

This is certainly not "confusing". It is nothing but a call for "unity" with US imperialism, Fraser, resurgent German imperialism and its revanchist neo-Nazi elements, "Captive Nations" reactionaries, the Croatian Ustasha and other remnants of Hitler's Eastern Front extermination squads in a counterrevolutionary "holy" crusade



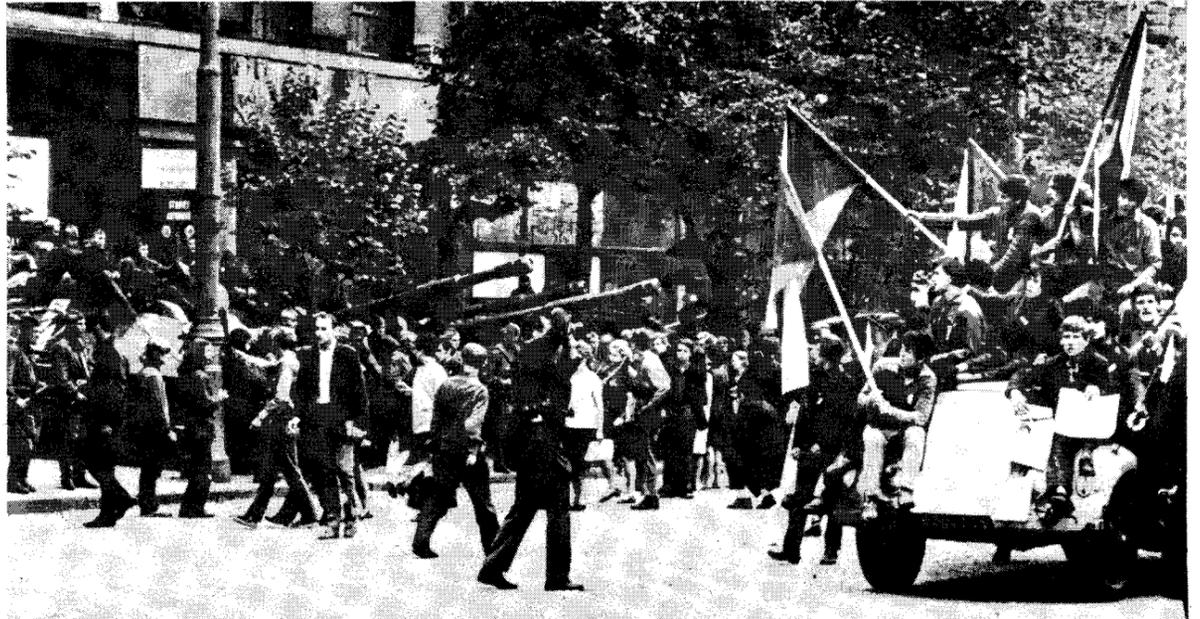
Pro-NATO Maoist leader Albert Langer featured in liberal weekly *Nation Review*.

against the Soviet Union. The MIS' 19 August Melbourne demonstration "against Soviet imperialism", which drew only 20 people was a rally of cheerleaders for a NATO version of Operation Barbarossa (Hitler's code-name for his 1941 invasion of the USSR).

The MIS insists that the invasion of "little" Czechoslovakia is incontrovertible "proof" that the USSR is an "expansionist, capitalist" power. Yet the heroic uprising of the Hungarian workers crushed by Soviet tanks in 1956 is condemned as a "fascist counterrevolution". Why? Because Mao and Chou En-lai played a key role in *that invasion*, urging Khrushchev (who, even then, the Maoists were to claim twelve years later, had already "restored capitalism") to smash the spon-

taneous development of workers councils that sought to throw off the Stalinist bureaucratic yoke while repulsing imperialist overtures; and in a 1963 polemic the Chinese condemned Khrushchev for wavering.

As part of its build-up to the 19 August rally the MIS held a forum on the nature of the Soviet Union on 12 August. That the three MIS speakers could not agree on the question themselves is



Prague, 1968: Czech students demonstrating against Soviet occupation.

suggestive enough of the cogency of the Maoist "theory". Indeed, Langer lamented the lack of "Marxist" analysis of the "fascist" USSR. After two decades, the Maoists have yet to work out their "line". Nor can they -- because their "theory" is a fraud, a cover for bureaucratic rivalry.

The Maoist "theory" substitutes for the Marxist materialist understanding of the state as "armed bodies of men" defending a *particular set of property relations* an idealist criterion as to whether or not the ruling bureaucratic clique has "socialist thoughts". The absurdity of this thesis is particularly evident with regard to Eastern Europe where in most cases there wasn't even a "palace coup" which the Maoists could try to palm off as the "restoration". The central leadership around Novotny in Czechoslovakia, Ulbricht in East Germany and Zhivkov in Bulgaria ruled through the Brezhnev, Khrushchev ... and Stalin periods! When and how did they stop having "socialist thoughts", cease being "good" Stalinists and become mere "capitalists" and "colonial lackeys" of a "fascistic" Kremlin? And at what point did these countries become "colonies"?

Ironically for the MIS, Pat Clancy's pro-Moscow Socialist Party of Australia, echoing the Kremlin, asserts that *Dubcek* was headed on the "capitalist road", pushing "through a petty bourgeois model of consumer socialism which would bridge the gap towards the restoration of capitalism" (*Socialist*, 23 August 1978). Langer and Clancy are comrades under the skin -- both share the same reformist Stalinist methodology. The view that the class character of a state can be changed without the state apparatus being smashed, as Trotsky pointed out, simply runs the film of reformism backwards. If Russia, Eastern Europe and now China can "go capitalist" through a "reform" process at the top then why can't a capitalist state "go socialist" in the same fashion?

Stalinism "with a human face"

But for all its concern to "remember Czechoslovakia" the MIS does not offer *any* political analysis of the "Prague Spring". Dubcek's "socialism with a human face" was neither a decisive break from Stalinist rule in the direction of proletarian democracy nor "capitalist counterrevolution", but rather one of the more dramatic of the periodic attempts at bureaucratic self-reform undertaken by the ruling castes in Eastern Europe. By 1968 the Czech economy was in crisis, after years of stagnation under the ham-fisted "orthodoxy" of Novotny. A "liberal" wing of the bureaucracy, led by Dubcek, *purged* Novotny and embarked on a program of economic reforms whose central features included speed-up and productivity deals in the factories, increased wage differentials for professionals and technicians and the introduction of various "socialist market" schemes pioneered by Tito in Yugoslavia and Kadar in Hungary -- archetypical "capitalist roadism" in Maoist terms. In exchange Dubcek was forced to tolerate a series

of significant political concessions, most notably the relaxation of political censorship.

But faced with workers' resistance to his policies Dubcek would inevitably have resorted to repression as did the once-"liberal" Gomulka regime in Poland in 1971. Every bit as committed as the Kremlin to accommodation with imperialism at the expense of the international proletariat and to "building socialism in a single country"

the Dubcek regime stood as an absolute barrier to the further advance of the working class in Czechoslovakia toward an international socialist society.

The primary impetus for the Soviet invasion was not fear of a military threat from West Germany (as the Kremlin claimed), much less the Maoist fantasy of a Soviet drive to maintain its "colonialist economic exploitation". Rather, Brezhnev feared the possibility of political revolution in Czechoslovakia which would mortally threaten his own position. As the 1956 Hungarian revolution eloquently demonstrated, the Stalinist bureaucracies -- precisely because they are parasitic excrescences rather than new, historically necessary, ruling classes -- are extremely brittle in the face of any real political upheaval.

The Spartacist tendency unambiguously condemned the Soviet invasion. To the Warsaw Pact troops Trotskyists would have explained, "You should be in Vietnam fighting the imperialists". While vigorously defending the nationalised property forms, Trotskyists would have fought for the perspective of political revolution to sweep away all wings of the bureaucracy -- a struggle which by its very nature could not have been confined to the borders of Czechoslovakia -- to establish workers democracy based on workers councils.

NATO "Marxist-Leninist"

In his *Nation Review* article Langer cited as proof of the "aggressive intentions" of the USSR the numerical superiority of Warsaw Pact troops, tanks and planes in Europe and the growth of the Soviet arsenal. He neglects to mention the record defence appropriations bill just passed in the US House of Representatives, US superiority in the development of missile guidance and inter-

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Trotskyism

versus

Maoism

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The coal strike of 1977-78 posed in its most dramatic form in recent years in the United States the central question of our epoch -- what Leon Trotsky referred to in the founding program of the Fourth International as the "crisis of proletarian leadership". The cynically treacherous conduct of the strike by the Arnold Miller bureaucracy of the United Mine Workers (UMWA) demonstrated, to anyone who is honest, that these self-styled union "reformers" boosted into office by the [US government] Labor Department and the liberal bourgeoisie are no more able and willing to defend the workers against the bosses than the Old Guard of the trade-union bureaucracy headed by the likes of George Meany.

Five years ago we were virtually alone in refusing to jump on the bandwagon of Miller's Miners for Democracy (MFD). But today, when thousands of miners are themselves demanding the ouster of the backstabbing UMWA president defending Arnold Miller is not a popular task. Most of the left which hailed his election in 1972 has simply sought to avoid the subject; none of these fake socialists has, to our knowledge, met the issue head on.

The SWP [US Socialist Workers Party -- co-thinkers of the Australian SWP] recently published in its *Militant* (23 June) a lengthy polemic by Shelley Kramer entitled "Socialists and the Miners' Strike -- Where Sectarians Go Wrong". Ostensibly directed at ultraleftists, Kramer's article is a thinly disguised apology for Arnold Miller and the trade-union bureaucracy. Kramer castigates the "sectarians" for attacking the UMWA leadership as the central obstacle to victory in the coal strike, for criticizing Miners for Democracy, even for advocating labor boycotts of coal and solidarity strikes with the miners. According to Kramer, this is what can be expected from "small groups well isolated from the working class", whose ideas ostensibly have nothing whatsoever to do with the real needs of the masses of working people.

One of the central targets of Kramer's attack is the Spartacist League. We are not the least bit surprised at her charges; indeed, as Trotsky observed, the accusation of sectarianism, coming from reformists and opportunists, is most often a compliment. We welcome the opportunity to demonstrate anew that our program for the coal strike, far from being sectarian, addressed the burning questions of the hour and found at least a partial echo in the working class. It is rather the SWP, which has supported one of the vilest labor traitors of all time, whose positions must be put on trial here.

Is Arnold Miller a trade-union bureaucrat?

With the exception of one or two sentences (out of a two-and-a-half-page article) of mild criticism of Miller's conduct during the strike, designed to provide the SWP with a cheap left cover, Kramer's diatribe is directed at leftists, particularly for daring to attack Miller during the strike. Kramer writes:

"But to target Miller as the enemy, as the sectarians did, could only steer the miners away from the real, immediate threats to the very existence of their union."

It is common enough for union bureaucrats to accuse those who criticize their misleadership of a strike as "disrupters". Very often the union hacks and their apologists are able to convince a number of strikers that this is the case. But this time Kramer has bitten off more than she can chew. Does she really think that she can get away with characterizing those who felt that the Miller bureaucracy was the fundamental obstacle to winning the strike as a small band of wild-eyed ultraleftists sitting on the sidelines of the class struggle?

That is a gross insult to the coal miners themselves, who repeatedly demonstrated their disgust for Miller's policies:

-- They held out on strike for almost four months, repeatedly voting down Miller's sell-out deals. And when they finally returned to

work, scores of miners made clear to the press that they accepted the final settlement not because they liked it, but because they thought they could get nothing better under the present leadership.

- The miners held mass rallies in the coal-fields, as well as outside UMWA headquarters in Washington, denouncing Miller and his contracts.
- Thousands of miners signed petitions demanding Miller's recall during the heat of the strike.
- Miller himself, realizing how isolated and hated he was, took to hiding out in obscure hotels in West Virginia, packing a pistol, and surrounding himself with bodyguards.

constructs a phony amalgam between the [Healyite] Workers League and the SL. Aha, says Kramer -- pointing to the Workers League's idiotic position of backing Boyle supporter Lee Roy Patterson in the last UMWA election -- the McBrides, Boyles, etc are "lesser evils for the sectarians". Of course Kramer knows full well that there is no correspondence between the wildly gyrating opportunist positions of the WL and those of the Spartacist League. In fact, the political bandits of the WL supported Miller in 1972 and Sadlowski in 1976 -- policies which it held in common with the SWP!

Eventually Kramer trips over her own contradiction. The real danger, she asserts, comes

Reformists defend strike betrayers

US coal miners: Hate Miller, hate the SWP!



How reformist SWP makes pictures lie: placard at coal miners' demonstration attacks Miller as "company man" (left); SWP's *Militant* crops same photo to delete offending slogan criticising traitor Miller (right).



Does Kramer also think that 100,000 miners were "sectarian" for demonstrating their hatred of Miller during the strike?

The SL's press coverage of the strike focused on the stark contradiction between the fighting aspirations of the miners and the sellout policies of the UMWA bureaucracy. We sought to intersect the justified disgust of the miners at their leadership by raising the slogan of a democratically elected strike/bargaining committee to replace Miller and company in conducting the strike. In contrast, the *Militant* did all it could to cover up the militancy of the miners -- barely alluding to the roving picket lines that shut down scab coal -- while systematically glossing over the treachery of the Miller gang: labeling the defeated strike a "victory", playing down the anti-Miller sentiment among the ranks, even going to such lengths as cropping photographs so as to eliminate strikers carrying anti-Miller placards (see photo this issue)!

The reason why the SWP felt compelled to cover up for Miller during the strike is simple; namely, it regularly gives political support to Miller and his ilk. It is instructive to note that nowhere in her long polemic does Kramer refer to the necessity of building left-wing oppositions in the unions based on the Trotskyist Transitional Program. Nor is this an accidental oversight. For the reformist SWP, bureaucratic "reformers" like Arnold Miller and steel "rebel" Ed Sadlowski -- who are actually bought-off lackeys of the Labor Department and the liberal bourgeoisie -- represent a genuine alternative to the Meanyites. The SWP denies the need to build a communist leadership in the trade unions, instead viewing its own role as being advisers and lieutenants of the liberal bureaucrats.

Kramer tries to slander her opponents by implying that those who oppose the Sadlowskis and Millers necessarily support their reactionary bureaucratic rivals -- Steelworkers president Lloyd "no strike" McBride and Miller's gangster predecessor, Tony Boyle. To prove this, Kramer

from "those who are in reality undermining trade-union independence and democracy -- the Tony Boyles, Lloyd McBrides, George Meany, and Douglas Frasers". (Noticeably absent from this list are such "progressive" labor fakers as Sadlowski, Miller, etc.) But then Kramer makes the mistake of providing us with an orthodox description of what trade-union bureaucrats do:

"The trade-union bureaucracy enforces restrictive labor laws, crushes the initiative of the union ranks, concludes contracts and social pacts sacrificing the workers' interests, and imprisons the union within the bosses' political parties. In short, the bureaucrats act as 'political police' for the capitalist class."

Sounds like a perfect description of Arnold Miller to us!

- "Enforcing restrictive labor laws": like demanding that anti-strike court injunctions and Taft-Hartley be obeyed?
- "Crush the initiative of the union ranks": how about suppressing wildcat strikes?
- "Concluding contracts ... sacrificing the workers' interests": even Kramer agrees that "behind closed doors, Miller agreed to a series of disastrous provisions and then tried to sell several contracts to the ranks".
- "Imprison the unions within the bosses' political parties": how about Miller's support to Jimmy Carter, his kowtowing to strike-breaker Carter during the strike and Miller's own history of running on the Democratic Party slate?

The fact is, it is impossible to even come close to the Leninist definition of the trade-union bureaucracy -- as a caste within the workers movement which reflects the ideology of the capitalist class, and indeed functions as the "political police" of the bourgeoisie -- without including in its purview the Millers, the Sadlowskis, etc.

Kramer's attempt to defend Miller's and Miners for Democracy's use of the bosses' government

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against its opponents in the UMWA similarly ends in a shambles. While paying lip service to the principle of trade-union independence from the state, the petty-bourgeois SWP entirely subordinates this to some classless conception of "democracy". For Kramer, the Trotskyist position that the achievement of genuine workers democracy is *integrally linked* to the struggle for trade-union independence is dismissed as "sectarian".

The MFD and the government

Thus, Kramer attempts to ridicule this position as follows:

"But not by the sectarians' logic. According to their rule book, the trade union struggle must proceed in two distinct stages. First comes the fight for trade-union independence. Then, and only then, are workers allowed to fight for democracy in their unions. "'The precondition for union democracy,' according to Workers Vanguard, 'is the fight for independence of the workers movement from the capitalist state'."

Ultraleft? Sectarian? Here's what Trotsky wrote on this issue in "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay":

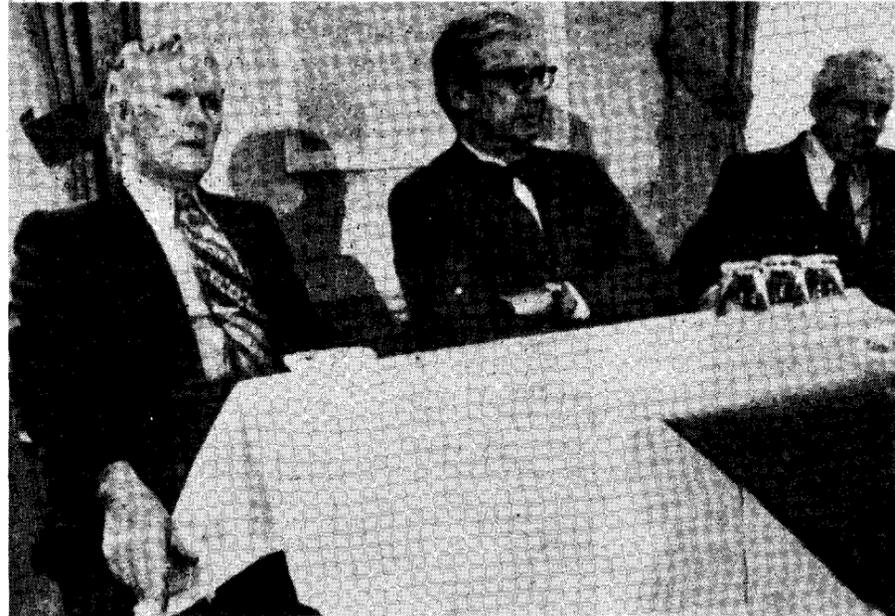
"The second slogan is: trade-union democracy. This second flows directly from the first and *presupposes* for its realization the complete freedom of the trade unions from the imperialist or colonial state." (our emphasis)

Thus, in addition to the SL and thousands of coal miners who hate Miller, Kramer may as well add to her list of "sectarians" Leon Trotsky.

It is in fact not the SL but Kramer and the SWP who have a stages conception of trade-union work -- who believe that independence of the trade unions and the other key principles of the Transitional Program can be jettisoned in favor of the reformist slogans of liberal bureaucrats like Miller and Sadlowski. Kramer takes as good coin the claims by Arnold Miller that he instituted democracy in the UMWA. Her proof? Miners have the right to ratify their contract. Of course, revolutionaries do defend this right, but its existence is hardly proof that union democracy is flourishing. East Coast longshoremen [wharfies] in the ILA and members of the Teamsters [truck drivers] have the right to ratify their contracts; does Kramer believe that Teddy Gleason and Frank Fitzsimmons run democratic unions?

The absurdity of abstracting a particular supportable demand from the context of the class struggle is shown by the miners strike itself. The strike was, in fact, conducted in an extremely *undemocratic* fashion by the Miller leadership of the UMWA. Bargaining was conducted, as Kramer admits, behind closed doors; the ranks had no power to choose their negotiators or to formulate strike strategy and strike demands. Eventually, after 100 days of a heroic battle and after rejecting two of Miller's sellout proposals, the miners exercised their right to ratify -- by voting for a deal that gave up their miners' health card and still did not include the right to strike. (This rotten contract, *worse* than the 1974 sellout which sparked three years of wildcats, was termed a "victory" by the SWP, incidentally. In the UMWA this view is held by almost nobody outside the dwindling number of Miller supporters.) Why did miners vote for this contract they despised? Because they had no confidence that their leadership could win anything better, and they saw no way to replace this leadership.

As Trotsky continually emphasized, the fight for workers democracy is *inseparable* from the fight to build a class-struggle leadership of the unions. The labor bureaucracy, which is wedded to the maintenance of private property, must *inevitably* seek to stifle the militant instincts of the rank and file. In the UMWA, the decisive issue has been the MFD's reliance on the bour-



Arnold Miller (left), Democratic Party patron Joe Rauh (centre), former Miller-type "dissident" in US seamen's union, James Morrissey (right).

geois state. From the time Miller was boosted into power by the Labor Department in 1972, he has assiduously demonstrated his fealty to the capitalist legal order, repeatedly demanding that wildcats be stopped in accord with anti-strike court injunctions. This culminated in the current contract battle, when Miller and the majority of the UMWA district officials literally took their marching orders from Carter and the Labor Department.

In order to carry out their policies, Miller and the UMWA bureaucrats have time and again clashed with the ranks. Does Kramer wish to deny the considerable evidence of the bureaucratic suppression of democracy in the UMWA:

- Redbaiting of opponents and militants.
- Formulation of the notorious ten-point program designed to discipline participants in wildcats.
- Attempted suppression of one wildcat after another, including dispatch of goon squads to dismantle picket lines.
- Expulsion of the left press from the 1976 UMWA convention.
- Behind-closed-doors contract bargaining, both in 1974 and 1977-78; attempted railroading of sellout deals. No provisions for elected strike committees, etc.

None of this matters to Kramer and Arnold Miller. According to them, miners can vote on contracts and therefore there is "democracy" in the UMWA. As for the SL, we have no intention of allowing the union hacks and their "left" lackeys to claim



Dunne brothers -- Trotskyist leaders of 1934 Minneapolis strike. SWP today maligns that militant history.

that Miller's pistol-packing strong-arming thuggery, secrecy, redbaiting and strikebreaking add up to workers democracy!

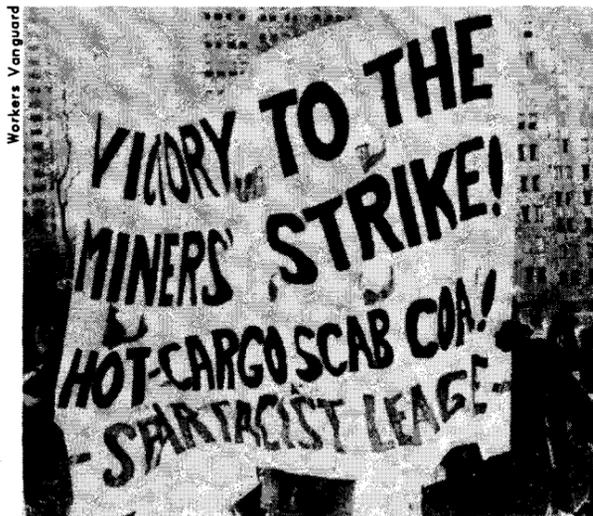
The SWP goes to considerable lengths to find a precedent for suing the unions. Accompanying Kramer's article in the *Militant* is a box entitled "Minneapolis Teamsters and the Courts", which boasts that the Trotskyists made use of Minnesota governor Stassen's "slave-labor law" against Teamster president Dan Tobin. At that time Tobin was raiding the Minneapolis truck drivers, who had just disaffiliated from the [conservative, craft-union based] AFL Teamsters and affiliated with the [newly formed industrial-union federation] CIO. The raid was part of a vicious witchhunt launched by Tobin's master in the White House, Franklin Roosevelt, which culminated in the famous Minneapolis sedition trial of 1941 and the imprisonment of 18 Trotskyist leaders. As one could readily surmise from the circumstances, the appeal to the courts and the government against Tobin was doomed to failure (a fact which the *Militant* neglects to mention).

The injunction sought against Tobin, though incorrect and contrary to the Trotskyist program, was a minor incident in the history of the SWP's work in the Minneapolis Teamsters. Nor was it the only mistake made by the party in this work; Trotsky, for example, more than once criticized the Teamster fraction for adapting itself to the politics of the pro-Roosevelt trade-union "progressives". But such criticisms in no way vitiate the revolutionary core of the Minneapolis Teamster organizing of the then-Trotskyist SWP.

At its high point, such as the 1934 general strike, Trotskyist leaders mobilized the workers directly in the face of the vigilantes, cops and National Guard [troops]. Today, the degenerate, reformist SWP chooses to make its points about the character of the capitalist state not by pointing to such struggles, but by eulogizing a two-bit court suit against the Tobin bureaucracy.

As a matter of fact, the SWP, before it abandoned the Trotskyist heritage and sank into reformism during the 1960s, fought bitterly against finking to the courts against the union bureaucrats. Today Kramer whines of the SL position:

"By this [SL] logic,



SL/US banner during miners' strike called for unions to "hot-cargo" (black ban) scab coal.

union militants who protest corruption and discrimination -- even murder -- through the courts pose the main threat to the independence of the unions."

Protest union corruption and bureaucratism by appealing to the capitalist courts? In 1957 when the McClellan hearings were convened to investigate the Teamsters, the SWP fought it tooth and nail. From the standpoint of union democracy and corruption, probably few unions were worse than the Teamsters of Dave Beck and Jimmy Hoffa. But the still-revolutionary SWP took a clear class position:

"Union bureaucrats of the Hoffa-Beck type who have been the initial targets of the McClellan probe are notorious for their thievery, gangsterism, and other corrupt practices in union office. But their removal is the internal business of the unions, not a matter to be left to capitalist politicians whose aim is to undermine the unions themselves on the pretext of fighting bureaucratic corruption." (from resolution of 18th National Convention of SWP, 1959)

And as to the Landrum-Griffin Act of 1959, the legislation utilized by all the finks today to sue the unions, whether it is big-timers like Miller and Sadlowski or smaller fry like Pete Camarata of Teamsters for a Democratic Union, the SWP wrote:

"To ask the capitalist government in Washington to defend the rights and interests of union members is like asking a pack of ravening wolves to preside over the reform of a hen house.

"The trade unions are the most elementary form of working class organization with interests diametrically opposed to those of the owning class. The task of defending the rights and safeguarding the interests of union members is the primary responsibility of the unions themselves -- both members and leaders.

"This task cannot be farmed out to the representatives of the business interests who rule the roost in Washington. The attempt to do so is a blatant confession of bankruptcy and can only lead to the most dire consequences." (*Militant*, 17 August 1959)

A far cry from the SWP today, which cheers on Labor Department-ordered union elections, seniority-busting affirmative action suits, etc.

Strike solidarity

The other section of Kramer's polemic is an attack on the class-struggle policies proposed by the SL for the trade unions in defense of the miners strike. In particular, Kramer takes umbrage at our denunciation of the empty "solidarity" rallies the SWP helped organize and uncritically hailed. In reality, these rallies had nothing to do with genuine solidarity; their purpose was to allow various trade-union bureaucrats to "make the record" in support of the miners, while insuring that any real act of solidarity would be squelched.

A perfect example was a Bay Area strike support meeting held March 11. The International Executive Board of the ILWU [wharfies] had voted for a one-day coast-wide dock shutdown in opposition to use of Taft-Hartley against the miners and called on the rest of labor to join in. When this motion was presented to the rally, SWP supporters present not only voted *against* it but helped mobilize the most rabidly right-wing elements of the labor bureaucracy to defeat it, by a margin of roughly 120-70 (see "For Strike Action to Defend the Miners", *Workers Vanguard* no 198, 24 March). The gutless SWP, which must cover up every sign of militancy, never even reported the ILWU strike call in its own press. (Unfortunately, the ILWU bureaucrats refused to implement the call.)

In contrast to such cowardice, the SL and its supporters in the trade unions fought to have transport workers hot-cargo [black-ban] scab coal, called on steel workers to wage a joint strike with miners, and in the face of Taft-

Continued on page nine

Labour boycotts vs imperialist sanctions

The Port Kembla pig-iron

The past decade has seen a proliferation of campaigns for economic boycotts of various sorts. Reformists and liberals have urged consumers to boycott South African sardines and diamonds; multinational corporations to boycott "racist" profits by divesting themselves of South African shareholdings; the United Nations and various "democratic" bourgeois governments to impose "no

therefore in a position not of carrying out conquests, but of defending those which it had carried out a century earlier.

However in conflicts which are not part of, or subordinated to, inter-imperialist rivalry -- for example, the struggles against Italian imperialist aggression in Ethiopia and the Japanese rape of China, against the South African racist

social revolution in China which a successful mass resistance would inevitably have unleashed. But Australian capital recognised that its central, long-term interest lay in opposition to Japan. The inter-imperialist war which was looming would find Japan pitted against the militarily weak Australian bourgeoisie's patrons, the crumbling British empire and the rising American one, in a struggle for domination of China and the Pacific.

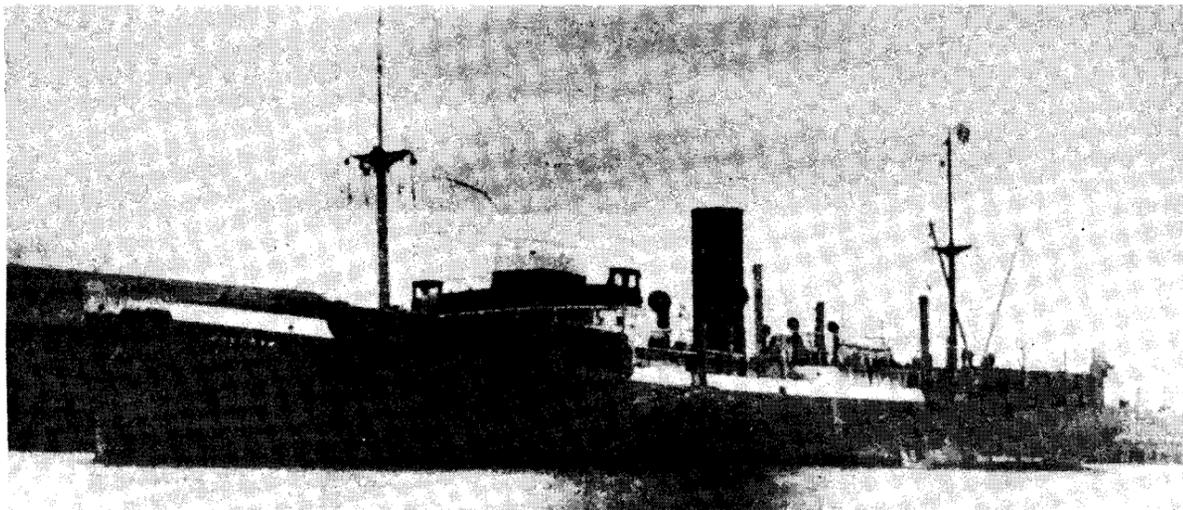
The small Trotskyist Workers Party (WP) responded to the invasion with agitation for class-struggle opposition to the Japanese aggression. The international proletariat had to take its stand alongside the oppressed masses: "... if there exists in the world a *just* war, it is the war of the Chinese people against its oppressors" said Trotsky in a statement issued shortly after the invasion. Centred in Sydney, the WP had originated around dissident CPA members expelled in 1932-34 who had become familiar with Trotsky's revolutionary critique of the Stalinised Comintern through American seamen docking in Sydney. Uniquely within the Australian labour movement, the Trotskyists refused to succumb to the chauvinist tide ushering in the coming inter-imperialist bloodbath or to renege on their internationalist responsibility to the Chinese workers and peasants.

Following the outbreak of war in China, the WP addressed a leaflet (dated 18 October 1937) to Sydney watersiders raising the slogans: "Defeat Japanese Imperialism -- Support the Japanese Revolution"; "For the overthrow of Chiang Kai-shek -- Power to the Workers and Peasants of China!" The Trotskyists called on the wharfies to "Refuse to load Japanese ships -- Refuse to handle goods to and from Japan -- Don't buy Japanese Goods", warning against the trap of class collaboration in which the CPA was to ensnare the Port Kembla watersiders a year later:

"Independent workers action will help the workers of China and Japan, will weaken Japanese capital, and will expose the hypocrisy of our capitalists' sympathy for China. There must be no calling on capitalist governments or League of Nations for action;... anything they do will be an imperialist manoeuvre which the workers can on no account support."

The response within the rest of the labour movement was varied. John Curtin, leader of the parliamentary Labor opposition, opposed any form of boycott action. So did Jack Lang, loyal to Labor's traditional xenophobic isolationism, expressed most sharply in its racist "White Australia" policy. A "left" cover for this isolationist refusal to support the Chinese masses in their struggle against Japan was provided by Dinny Lovegrove, a vice-president of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council and erstwhile self-proclaimed "Trotskyist" (to head later into the extreme right wing of the labour movement), who argued in the ALP paper *Labor Call* (14 October 1937) that opposition to Japan meant support for the designs of US and British imperialism.

The "left-wing" NSW TLC condemned "the Japanese Government for its war of aggression against the Chinese people" and voted for a boycott of Japanese goods on 1 October 1937, to be followed



SS Dalfram, boycotted by Port Kembla wharfies in 1938.

aid, no trade" or "cut all ties" with Chile, South Africa, Indonesia and a host of other repressive regimes. The ACTU has banned wheat to Chile, and union bans have protested against such regimes. During the 1930s, in response to the rise of Nazism in Germany and the imperialist rapes of Ethiopia and China by the Italian and Japanese imperialists, similar appeals were raised for consumer boycotts, trade-union bans and League of Nations sanctions.

Whether or not socialists support such boycotts depends in the first instance on who is using them for what aim and with what effects. Most recently, there has been an anti-communist outcry for a boycott of the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow, ostensibly as a means of securing "human rights" for Soviet dissidents, but in fact as part of an international imperialist offensive against the Soviet degenerated workers state which has nothing in common with the struggle for genuine workers democracy in the USSR. Obviously such a boycott would be thoroughly reactionary and unsupportable.

Similarly, we give no support to imperialist trade sanctions. Boycotts carried out by imperialist powers, or combines of imperialist powers like the League of Nations or the United Nations, are for the sole purpose of defending imperialist interests, interests ultimately defended through war. The working class does not take sides in inter-imperialist conflicts, in attempts to divide and redivide the world for markets and exploitation, even when, as they usually are, carried out under humanitarian guises like "combating" fascism, "making the world safe for democracy" etc. The Australian bourgeoisie is no more "progressive" than the Indonesian; British imperialism was no more "democratic" for its colonial subjects than Japanese -- the oppressed millions of Africa, Malaya, India etc were clear about that. Earlier on the colonialist scene than Germany and Japan, British imperialism was

regime or the Chilean junta -- revolutionary Marxists approach the question of boycotts from the standpoint of how the working class can render *effective* assistance to the oppressed through class-struggle actions. Total, indefinite trade boycotts aimed against repressive regimes from outside generally hurt the oppressed masses as well as the oppressors, and are at best impotent moral protests. An indefinite, total boycott of South Africa, even if such a thing could be effective without imperialist support, would do little more than increase unemployment and lower the already abysmal standard of living of the oppressed black masses. Trotskyists argued against such boycotts of Nazi Germany in the 1930s. However in the case of Ethiopia and China, total labour boycotts of Italy and Japan were aspects of a policy of military support to the anti-imperialist struggles being waged.

In opposition to the open-ended liberal-moralist campaigns advocated by reformists like the fake-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Communist Party (CPA), the Trotskyist Spartacist League (SL) has argued for well-organised labour boycotts focused around specific events and demands: trade-union bans on military shipments to Chile and South Africa; time-limited protest bans, as in the case of a series of protest bans by wharfies in Sydney and Melbourne last year over the South African regime's murder of black militant Steve Biko, or the year before over the racist slaughter in Soweto.

From the period of the 1930s and the opposition to the Japanese colonial drive the Port Kembla pig-iron boycott of 1938 stands out as an example of such independent labour action. The Port Kembla boycott demonstrated that support to labour actions and calls for government sanctions were incompatible -- one expressed the workers' opposition to imperialism, the other the bourgeoisie's *own* imperialist interests. Independent workers actions -- strikes and boycotts -- represented a greater threat to those interests than even rival imperialist aggrandisement overseas. On the other hand the workers could not act independently if they were mobilised on a chauvinist basis. As Trotsky said of League of Nations sanctions against the Italian invasion of Ethiopia: "Support of the League and support of workers' action are fire and water; they cannot be united" (*Writings*, 1935-36).

The Japanese invasion and labour's response

In July 1937, having previously usurped control of Manchuria, the military cabal ruling Japan launched a renewed invasion aimed at conquering all of China as a desperately needed colony for Japanese imperialist ambitions. The United Australia Party government of Prime Minister Lyons maintained an official neutrality -- the Australian bourgeoisie had no desire to provoke Japan. Initially there was also some sympathy, as expressed by the conservative *Sydney Morning Herald*, for the Japanese military junta's struggle against the "Communists" -- a desire to see Japanese militarism crush the threat of



Stalinist Workers Weekly (24 January 1939) labelled sellout of boycott a "victory".



Jim Healy, leading Stalinist and WWF federal secretary.

n boycott of 1938

a month later by the ACTU (Derek McDougall, "The Australian Labour Movement and the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1939", *Labour History* no 33, November 1977). But the "left" bureaucrats' calls for labour boycotts were meant only for the minutes, and their apparent "anti-imperialism" was in fact support to British and US imperialism (they had, of course, never felt the need to utter even a word of solidarity against British imperialist domination of China). The ACTU executive welcomed "the condemnation of Japan" by that imperialist den of thieves, the League of Nations, and the NSW TLC "Hands Off China Committee" urged that "Britain should stand with the United States in protesting against the aggression of Japanese imperialism". Both called for government trade sanctions.

The CPA, too, "opposed" Japanese imperialism by supporting its equally murderous rivals. This was the period of the "people's front" in the Comintern, a policy dictated by the diplomatic manoeuvres of the bureaucracy in the USSR. In response to the rise of German fascism and Japanese militarism, the Stalin bureaucracy sought to "defend" the workers state through deals with the "democratic" imperialists, at the expense of the proletarian revolution. The Stalinist parties were interested not in independent class action in defence of the Soviet Union and the colonial



Cartoon from Workers Weekly (18 January 1938): anti-Japanese racism in the service of the "people's front".

peoples, but in pressuring the "progressive" (ie anti-Japanese, anti-German) sectors of the bourgeoisie into "anti-fascist" alliances. By dint of their influence in the Waterside Workers Federation (WWF) -- Jim Healy, WWF federal secretary, was a CPA member -- the Australian Stalinists were active in the militant boycotts opposing the Japanese invasion, but only for the purpose of transforming them into pressure on Lyons for government sanctions.

Against imperialism or against the "yellow peril"?

Solidarity with China and fear of Japan were inextricably mixed sentiments within the working class. There was genuine indignation at the atrocities inflicted by the invading Japanese militarists on the Chinese population, and boycott action was welcomed by the Chinese masses. At the same time, Australians had been brought up to see the Japanese people as a whole as the most dangerous embodiment of the "yellow peril", and fear that Australian pig iron exported to Japan would "come back as bullets" was strong.

Fear of Japan was not without foundation. In denouncing the Stalinists' social-patriotic appeals to the Australian "defence effort" and anti-Japanese racism, the Workers Party went overboard, denying the threat of Japanese invasion of Australia altogether as "highly improbable" (*Militant*, 7 February 1938). However, as Trotsky pointed out in an interview with Sydney's *Sunday Sun* (17 August 1937), "it is imperative for Japan to find a point of support in Australia" because of its strategic military location and natural resources, among other things. In a letter to the Workers Party (dated 23 December

1937) Trotsky noted that the chauvinist hysteria focused on the threat of Japanese subjugation could not be combated by simply discounting it:

"Naturally no Australian worker or farmer wishes to be conquered and subjected to Japan. For a revolutionary party it would be suicidal to simply say we are 'indifferent' to this question. But we cannot give to a bourgeois and essentially imperialist government the task of defending the independence of Australia." (*Writings, 1936-37*)

Leninists are opposed to the national subjugation of any people. But the Australian workers had no stake in "national defence" so long as it meant the defence of Australian imperialist interests, the defence of their own exploitation. The real allies of the Australian workers in opposing Japanese imperialism were not their own slave-masters, as the Stalinists and left reformists argued, but the Japanese workers themselves.

Whereas the Trotskyists appealed to the workers' internationalist sentiments in solidarity with the Chinese toilers, the Stalinists appealed to their chauvinist sentiments in fear of the "yellow hordes". The former led to class-struggle opposition to imperialism, the latter to "national unity" with the imperialist exploiters. That was the CPA's aim:

"The Lyons government must be forced to prevent the shipment of war materials to Japan. Japanese fascism menaces Australia. To send such cargoes is a betrayal of Australia's security. It is open treachery to the Australian people." (*Workers Weekly*, 21 January 1938)

Lyons was loyal to his class, to his "people". It was the CPA which was treacherous -- to the working class, the class it claimed to represent. The bourgeoisie certainly recognised that patriotism and class struggle were *counterposed*. As the *Sydney Morning Herald* (25 May 1938) observed: strikes "might cause serious retardation of the defence programme, and . . . should be, according to the patriotic expressions of the wharf-labourers, the very last thing they would desire".

Boycotts of "war materials"

The Port Kembla action was only the last of a series of largely spontaneous rank-and-file labour boycotts of Japanese commerce expressly in solidarity with China, and often against the wishes of the union officials. On 12 October 1937, members of the Fremantle Lumpers Union refused to load coal onto a Japanese whaling ship; then Geelong wharfies stopped work to protest against the loading of Japanese wheat. On 19 January the movement spread to Sydney, as a load of 500 tons of lead for the Melbourne Maru was blacked, followed a week later by a ban on scrap iron bound aboard the Atsuta Maru.

The ban was broadened to include tin clippings when the men on the job decided these had military application. Wool was loaded onto the Melbourne Maru, on the other hand, on the grounds that it "might be used for the civilian population of Japan" (*Workers Weekly*, 21 January 1938). Admirably, the wharfies wanted only to stop Japanese militarism, not inflict hardship on the civilian population, but in modern war, it is hard to draw the line between "civilian" and "war materials": wool could after all be used for uniforms. The Trotskyists correctly called for "the extension of independent workers action against Japan to include refusal to handle ALL commodities to and from Japan" (*Militant*, 7 February 1938). However the WP was *incorrect* in extending the boycott call to include a general consumer boycott of Japanese goods. Though not in principle

incorrect (for example as a secondary support tactic in a strike) the call for consumer boycotts in this case could only blur the crucial distinction between independent labour action and bourgeois moralism.

In the upshot, the Sydney wharfies placed a standing ban on "war materials" for "aggressor nations" (which included Germany). A threatened showdown with the Lyons government over the ban was averted only through an eleventh-hour capitulation by Healy and company, who talked the men into lifting it before Lyons' 25 May deadline.

The Port Kembla boycott

Then, on 15 November, Port Kembla watersiders blacked a shipment of pig iron bound for Japan aboard the freighter Dalfram. For nine weeks the Dalfram sat idle, waiting for its load of pig iron. For nine weeks, as the bourgeois press railed that "Communists" were behind the strike in order to stir up trouble, the ranks held their ground. Chiang Kai-shek sent them a telegram of gratitude. And Robert Menzies, then attorney-general under Lyons, earned the nickname he would take to his grave for his attempts to smash the strike -- "Pig-iron Bob".

Despite the depression conditions, the mid-1930s had seen a resurgence of labour militancy in the Port Kembla/Wollongong area, reflected in the election of CPA supporters to union office not only in the Port Kembla branch of the WWF but also in the Federated Ironworkers Association, whose members worked in the BHP steel works which dominated the town. The principal leader of the Dalfram boycott was CPA member Ted Roach, elected secretary of the Port Kembla WWF only the previous year.

Public support for the strike was considerable. Large numbers of unemployed provided a pool of potential scabs in depression-ridden Port Kembla. Yet when the government invoked the licensing provisions of the Transport Workers Act -- the "Dog Collar Act" (so named because of the licenses it prescribed, worn around the necks of scabs) -- there were no takers. When the hated Menzies visited Wollongong on 12 January 1939 he was met by 3000 demonstrating workers; a group of women tried to storm the entrance to his hotel; and miners at 9 out of 10 mines in the district stopped work in solidarity with the wharfies.

"Tell us what the Port Kembla men say"

Yet the strike was not spread. Other unions were allowed to work the wharves throughout the struggle (so long as they didn't "work with scabs"). Pickets were set up only after management scabs loaded the Dalfram with coal in early January. The steel workers -- who were not even leafletted until three weeks into the strike -- were never called out in solidarity. Instead BHP was allowed to *lock out* 4000 workers on 17 December, justifying it as a "stand-down" caused by the pile-up of pig iron. Rank-and-file militants demanded a general strike of miners and industrial workers at Port Kembla, but the CPA leadership was adamant that the strike be con-

Continued on page ten



Pacifist, chauvinist anti-uranium movement distorts militant tradition of 1938 boycott.

Rhodesia . . .

Continued from page one

did not prevent the three black quislings from defending the invasion authored by the all-white Rhodesian War Council. Chirau, a long-time toady for Smith, simply repeated the statements of the white generals. Muzorewa, in London trying to sell the British on the "transitional government", maintained a tactful silence. Sithole openly defended the assault, claiming that, "We have started a democratic process, but there are forces outside this country that would like to disrupt that democratic process, so that sometimes we have to do things that we don't like to do normally. As to whether such things are good or bad", he continued, "that is not the point" (*New York Times*, 3 August). No doubt the police slaughter of four striking black mine workers



Salisbury, 1977 (from left): Muzorewa, Smith, Chirau and Sithole signing "internal settlement".

during a 15 August strikers' demonstration is something this aspiring black bourgeois would more "normally like to do".

The point, as Sithole well knows, is that neither he nor the other two black leaders have any control over the all-white army officer corps or government bureaucracy anyway. The job these sellouts took when they joined the government was simply to provide a phoney black cover for a regime in which the white settlers would continue to call the shots. The case of Byron Hove stands as an example of what happens when Smith's water-boys step out of line. Hove, the black Minister of Justice and a close associate of Muzorewa, was sacked on 28 April for criticising racial discrimination in the police and judiciary. Muzorewa, who as an Executive Council member supposedly had a veto over the decision, was not even consulted. But after blustering for three weeks and threatening to resign, the bishop found that he had no alternative but to accept Hove's dismissal. To resign would have left him out in the cold without the backing of the guerrillas or the government.

Rhodesia on the ropes

The white settlers brought the three black puppets into the government as a desperate attempt to forestall the construction of a black-ruled Zimbabwe over the dead body of colonialist Rhodesia. But the attempt is not working. Muzorewa, Chirau and Sithole, despite the latter's claim to the allegiance of substantial numbers of ZANU guerrillas, have failed to attract Patriotic Front fighters to respect a "cease-fire" or join the government side in a war which has greatly intensified since the 3 March settlement. Emissaries sent by Muzorewa and Sithole to contact the guerrillas have been killed by them instead.

Rhodesian forces have been unable to contain the growth of the guerrilla insurgency, and government casualties have increased to a rate three times higher than the 1977 levels. Land-mines and ambushes have made rural roads and even major highways unsafe for travel by whites, and the government's loss of control over substantial areas of the country has compelled some white farmers to make their own deals with the guerrillas, turning a blind eye to their activities in exchange for immunity from harassment and attack.

White Rhodesia is visibly shrinking and, unlike South Africa where the population is 20 per cent white with roots that go back centuries, the settlers are simply too few to make an effective last stand. Two thirds of the whites hold British or South African passports and thus have one foot out of the country already.

Unable to suppress the guerrillas militarily or to entice Nkomo to throw his weight behind the "internal settlement" (despite the recent legalisation of ZAPU inside Rhodesia), the Smith regime recently indicated its acceptance of a US-British scheme for an "all-party conference" including the Patriotic Front. (Nkomo, the week earlier, had already announced his willingness to take part in such a conference.) Revolutionary Marxists reject any political accommodation with

the white-supremacist butchers in Salisbury and desire a quick military victory for the forces of the Patriotic Front. No Negotiations! Military Victory to ZANU and ZAPU!

In the meantime Smith has attempted to curry favour with British Tories and US right-wingers sympathetic to "plucky little Rhodesia". The government has sent Sithole and Muzorewa on propaganda tours of the US and Britain and churned out endless atrocity stories about the guerrillas. These tales make good racist copy for the tabloid press but sophisticated Western leaders have been giving them an increasingly skeptical hearing. Jimmy Carter's own black front man, US ambassador to the UN, Andy Young, for example, in his notorious "thousands of US political prisoners" interview charged the Smith regime with blaming the guerrillas for its own massacres.

While the just hatred of the black masses for

the bloody-handed white colonialists leads naturally to attacks on the missionaries who accompany the imperialists to Africa, there is evidence that Rhodesian claims of guerrilla massacres of missionaries and black villagers are indeed cover stories for the atrocities of the regime's black troops. Sister Janice McLaughlin, a Maryknoll nun expelled from Rhodesia by the Smith government, pointed out in the August issue of *Seven Days* the inconsistency in the government's charge that Catholic and evangelical missionaries suffering government repression for aiding the guerrillas are the victims of massacres by those same guerrillas. McLaughlin reported that pro-government clergy in the Dutch Reformed Church are apparently immune from attack. She quoted the remarks of a French mercenary who exposed the Smith government's game when he stated in an interview with a Paris weekly that, "I have been told that in some operations there were Selous Scouts [a secret counter-insurgency unit] who disguised themselves as Mozambican soldiers or guerrillas to attack the villagers and travelers or kill missionaries".

"Majority rule" - a reformist/imperialist hoax

The white settler regime in Rhodesia is a barbaric anachronism. Although detached from Britain by the 1965 "Unilateral Declaration of Independence", Rhodesia remains a relic of the British colonial empire. The "majority rule" advocated by Smith and endorsed by his black

front men is a colonialist hoax in which the white population (four percent and shrinking fast) would hold effective veto power over the parliament by their control, directly or by nomination, over 28 of 100 seats. Moreover the army and the police force -- the real basis of state power -- as well as the upper ranks of the civil service would continue to be dominated by whites for an indefinite period.

The fraudulence of the "internal settlement" as even a partial realisation of the democratic aspirations of the black masses of Rhodesia was highlighted by the Smith regime's "anti-discrimination" ruling in August, fully six months after the "transitional government" was set up. Though Muzorewa pronounced himself "very, very pleased.... One of the greatest things that has happened to our country..." (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 August), the ruling did little more than "abolish" discrimination in public places (eg restaurants, hotels) which were already effectively open to blacks but did not touch segregation in schools, hospitals and residential areas.

Yet this is the perspective -- in practice -- of the ostensibly Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), not only for Rhodesia, but more importantly for South Africa, with its potentially powerful black proletariat. Less than a year before the "internal settlement", the SWP's US co-thinkers denounced our comrades for the crime of characterising the US SWP's central slogan for South Africa -- "black majority rule now" -- as "inadequate" (*US Militant*, 15 April 1977). The SL's call to "smash apartheid" was labelled "bizarre" by the US SWP (quoted in *Young Spartacus* no 51, February 1977).

Even the SWP was compelled to denounce the "internal settlement" as a "victory for whites", only in the next breath to admit that "the white regime has been compelled to concede Black majority rule by the struggles of the Zimbabwean masses" (*Direct Action*, 16 March). Even in the SWP's terms "black majority rule" was inadequate -- "a victory for whites". But that did not stop them from continuing to insist on "majority rule" for South Africa, as opposed to the more precise, radical-democratic demand for a constituent assembly raised by the SL. Because for the SWP, intent on tailing petty-bourgeois nationalists and liberal imperialists like Young, the revolutionary mobilisation of the black proletarians of South Africa needed to achieve such democratic demands is also ... "bizarre".

Trotskyists have no illusions about the "socialist" and "Marxist" pretensions of the petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership of the Patriotic Front, who are qualitatively no different than the now-exposed lackeys of white supremacy -- Muzorewa, Sithole and Chirau. All are aspirant leaders of a new black ruling class. When these fakers are in power they will be unable to blame the white colonialists for the exploitation of the black masses. Joshua Nkomo is a notoriously opportunist politician. In the early 1960s he pledged his loyalty to the British Crown and supported the 1961 Rhodesian constitution, which was more white supremacist than Smith's "internal settlement". Today Nkomo jets around the world courtesy of "Tiny" Rowland, the Rhodesian founder of Lonrho, Africa's largest multinational firm.

Robert Mugabe of ZANU is a practising Catholic whose "Marxist" rhetoric is the standard cover for bourgeois nationalism in backward

Forward to the rebirth of the Fourth International!

The road to the rebirth of Trotsky's Fourth International - founded 40 years ago this month, destroyed from within 15 years later by Pabloist revisionism - lies over the political corpses of today's Pabloists who falsely claim its banner.

"The Fourth International, already today, is deservedly hated by the Stalinists, Social Democrats, bourgeois liberals and fascists. There is not and there cannot be a place for it in any of the People's Fronts. It uncompromisingly gives battle to all political groupings tied to the apron-strings of the bourgeoisie. Its task - the abolition of capitalism's domination. Its aim - socialism. Its method - the proletarian revolution...."

Leon Trotsky, "The Transitional Program", 1938



Trotsky memorial meeting, New York, 1940.

Pathfinder Press

"The struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International promises to be difficult, long, and, above all, uneven. But it is an indispensable and central task facing those who would win proletarian power and thus open the road to the achievement of socialism for humanity."

"Declaration for the Organizing of an International Trotskyist Tendency", international Spartacist tendency, 6 July 1974

countries. His long-standing split with Nkomo's ZAPU is based not on programmatic differences but on personal rivalry and above all tribal enmity. While ZAPU is based among the minority Ndebele tribe, ZANU draws its support from among the Shona-speaking majority. Even now there are widespread reports that Nkomo's men are clashing with the ZANU guerrillas as the latter extend their base into Ndebeleland. The defeat of the Smith government would undoubtedly be followed by the kind of intra-nationalist and tribalist bloodletting common throughout black Africa. The end result would be the victory, as in Angola and Mozambique, of a viciously anti-working-class regime, enslaved by imperialist domination.

What was true at the time of the "internal settlement" stands as a powerfully prophetic warning today on the eve of a guerrilla victory:

"Confining the struggle within the narrow framework of bourgeois nationalism will also mean the continued subjugation of the black masses to poverty and wage slavery. On the morrow of victory, the Nkomos and Mugabes -- aspiring exploiters one and all -- will prove as implacable class enemies of the African workers and peasants as the white settlers. Only through the establishment of a Zimbabwe workers and peasants government in the framework of a socialist federation of southern Africa, will industry and agriculture be put in the service of the oppressed. This requires the construction of a Trotskyist party and concrete links with the massive and combative black proletariat of South Africa." ("Imperialist 'Majority Rule' Hoax in Rhodesia", *Workers Vanguard* no 195, 3 March 1978) (adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 213, 11 August 1978)

SWP . . .

Continued from page five

Hartley demanded protest strikes. *Workers Vanguard* publicized the ILWU strike call, along with similar motions passed by Chicago's UAW Local 6 and BART (rapid transit) workers in San Francisco. Kramer and the SWP do not have the guts to openly denounce the resolutions for sympathy strikes passed by the UAW, ILWU, and Amalgamated Transit workers as "sectarian" and "ultraleft". That is why they simply refuse to report that these trade-union bodies passed such strike calls.

The real point is that the "strike support" policies of the SWP were no different from those of the trade-union bureaucracy. All wings of the bureaucracy, from Meany to Sadlowski, fearing to alienate their allies in the Democratic Party and the Carter Administration by proposing a militant defense of the miners, limited itself to token donations of money and food (whose distribution to the miners Miller and company then sabotaged). Exactly how much these labor fakers "supported" the miners is demonstrated, for example, by Meany's support to Carter's Taft-Hartley injunction and UAW president Doug Fraser's advocacy of a strikebusting federal seizure of the mines. The real question, comrade Kramer, is why the "strike support" policies of the SWP were identical to those of such scoundrels as Meany and Fraser. The answer is simple: the political program of Meany and company, of the Sadlowski/Miller "reformers", and of the SWP is fundamentally the same.

And through the picket line

Finally, our readers, and particularly the coal miners among them, are entitled to be informed of the SWP's scandalous record on the issue of respect for picket lines. While in the coalfields the tradition of honoring picket lines is so strong that a union official would be risking his career were he to urge miners to cross such a line, the same is hardly true in other unions. Indeed, it is not at all uncommon for unions at the same work location to officially sanction scabbing on each other's strikes. And the SWP, with its gutless tailing after the trade-union bureaucracy, goes right along with this policy.

A case in point was the recent strike by a Bricklayers [union] local at the huge Inland Steel complex outside Chicago. The president of the Inland local, USWA Local 1010, announced that steel workers who refused to cross the Bricklayers' lines would not be defended by the union against company victimization. This was tantamount to organized scabberding. Two young steel workers at Inland who refused to cross the lines challenged this policy, first at a Local 1010 meeting and then at a District 31 Conference

meeting. In both instances they were ruled "out of order", in the second case by District 31 head Balanoff, Sadlowski's handpicked successor. The story was covered in the bourgeois press, but the SWP, which supports the Balanoff/Sadlowski leadership of District 31, and whose trade-union supporters routinely cross such picket lines, has said not a word about it in the *Militant*.

An even more dramatic instance grew out of the pressmen's strike at the *Washington Post*, which began in October 1975 and lasted for well over a year. As a result of extensive scabbing, initially by members of the Newspaper Guild, the strike and the pressmen's union were broken. In the midst of the strike there was an election in Washington-Baltimore Local 35 of the Guild. The SWP publicly supported Tom Grubisich for president. Grubisich, who advocated leniency toward scabs, was narrowly elected over the incumbent Warren Howard, who at the time advocated disciplinary action against scabs. Having been put into office by scabs, Grubisich subsequently crossed the picket lines himself. He later ran for convention delegate on a program of bringing no charges against the Post scabs (see the 2 July 1976 *Militant*). SWP trade-union leader Frank Lovell praised the Grubisich campaign as a model one, and the SWP gave the scab candidate "full" support.

Of course, to the SWP respect for a picket line as well as hatred for the sellout policies of Arnold Miller and other trade-union bureaucrats is "sectarian" and alien to its brand of "socialism". Fine. We are more than happy ourselves to publicize these treacherous positions of the SWP. But militant miners and other class-conscious workers should know that there is one party in America that is not a scab party. It is a party that stands four-square for the Marxist program of working-class independence from the capitalist state, for the Trotskyist Transitional Program. This is the party that told the truth about the Arnold Millers, Sadlowskis and their likes from the word go, and provided a fighting program for victory at every step during the great 1977-78 coal strike. That party is the Spartacist League. ■

(reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 211, 14 July 1978)

Maoists . . .

Continued from page three

ception, its deployment of multiple warheads (MIRVs) etc. The capitalist powers have never been reconciled to the Russian Revolution. US imperialism's current striving for a nuclear first-strike capacity -- under the hypocritical cover of Carter's "human rights" crusade -- is testimony to their determination to overthrow the socialist property forms and restore "freedom" for imperialist exploitation -- not only in the USSR and Eastern Europe but also in China, Cuba, Indochina, Albania and North Korea. As proletarian revolutionaries we do not condemn Soviet military spending and preparations but are rather concerned that they might be inadequate!

Langer's anti-Sovietism compels him to defend NATO as a "force for defence". Challenged by Spartacist League (SL) supporters at the MIS forum to explain the distinction between the Turkish NATO "forces for defence" and the Turkish forces that invaded Cyprus and why the MIS did not drop its opposition to US bases in Australia in the interests of "collective security" the normally voluble Langer seemed at a loss for words. Maoism embraces the whole sordid record of Stalinist betrayals -- including Stalin's criminal disorganisation of the Red Army on the eve of World War II -- and now refuses to defend the remaining conquests of the October Revolution against imperialism. That is why Maoism has never been, and never will be, able to attract significant support in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

During the forum discussion period it was clear that some members of the MIS sought to evade the conclusions that Langer has drawn about NATO. Some may look to Albania. But without breaking from the whole Stalinist world-view they must live with its counterrevolutionary logic. Aside from justifying the actions of a nationalistic, parasitic bureaucracy Stalinism can provide no coherent political perspective whatsoever -- only a path to betrayal. Indeed, the MIS, having broken its umbilical cord to Peking, is clearly going nowhere ... fast! Attendance at MIS general meetings has been so poor that they now take place only every two months! Its work around the economic crisis and unemployment is little more than an unsuccessful throwback to New Left infantilism with such slogan stickers as "Unemployed? Keep warm this winter -- make trouble".

The MIS is visibly teetering between political oblivion and a "future" as disgusting apologists for counterrevolution. In the After Hours Bookstore in Collingwood, run by the MIS, there is a shelf containing "enemy" material. The latest fulminations of EF Hill and Hua Kuo-feng? Or

perhaps a selection from the "New Tsars"? No -- it is a collection of writings by Leon Trotsky. Significantly, during the MIS forum on the Soviet Union, Langer offered as his example of "teaching by negative example" the SL pamphlet, *Why the USSR is not capitalist*. Yes, for Stalinists proletarian internationalism is the "enemy" and Trotsky and the Spartacist League are "negative examples". While Langer may well enjoy being a "part-time strategic analyst" for US imperialism there may still be supporters of the MIS seeking the revolutionary road. For them there is no alternative but to begin a serious study of our "negative example". ■

Gay rights . . .

Continued from page twelve

police" and "demand[ing] that all charges against the 104 arrested be dropped [and] ... full democratic rights for homosexuals".

A protest picket was organised outside the court hearings on the Monday morning, 28 August. At a meeting of over eighty people that night, attended by supporters of the SL, SWP, International Socialists (IS) and Communist Party (CPA), a united-front "Drop the Charges Committee" was organised. Such a genuine united-front committee, open to gay, women's and labour organisations and all supporters of democratic rights on a non-sectarian basis is a crucial precondition for an effective defence campaign and, if successful in its appeals to the organised labour movement, as a prelude to a far broader campaign around the question of democratic rights for gays in general. Unfortunately, for its own sectarian motives -- ie to protect the territory of its "own" "Anti-Festival of Light Committee", designed to organise a protest against the upcoming visit of British reactionary Mary Whitehouse -- the SWP rejected the SL-proposed demand that "Full democratic rights to lesbians and male homosexuals" be one of the bases of the defence committee.

But the most despicable, sectarian response came from the CPA. Incredibly, they argued that the CPA-dominated Gay Solidarity Group (GSG), open only to those who agree with its sectoralist politics, should be the group through which the defence was organised. CPAer Peter Murphy got up to question whether it was possible to do anything in the present political climate. Then, hiding behind their own pessimist, defeatist doubts, the CPAers voted against the formation of a defence committee! The CPA in practice stood opposed to a defence of the victims of Wran's "poofter-bashing" cops! The CPA in practice stood opposed to a defence of democratic rights for homosexuals!

There must be a stop to such sectarian games! The CPA is simply attempting to sabotage this defence campaign the way it, the SWP and the IS sabotaged the possibility of effective, united-front defence of the sixty arrested in June! At that time, on the CPA's initiative, all three of these reformist outfits blocked to subordinate an independent defence committee initiated at the proposal of the SL to the gay-sectoralist GSG, which has done precisely nothing to publicise or effectively oppose the frame-ups. The GSG is still around, and it is still doing nothing.

Behind the sectarianism of the CPA stands not only its refusal to do anything which might embarrass Neville Wran's ALP on the eve of the upcoming state election, but as well the hostility of gay sectoralism to the proletarian politics of the SL. The "high points" of the Fourth National Homosexual Conference, 26-27 August, which attracted only 600 of the expected turnout of 2000, were disgusting sectarian attacks directed against the SL. A motion supported by both the SWP and CPA which denied voting and speaking rights to all but self-proclaimed homosexuals was explicitly motivated as an attempt to "get the Sparts". Yet employer groups were invited to speak to the conference. The bosses are welcome, but communists, or for that matter, "straight" trade-union militants are not. Furthermore, prior to the march CPA supporter and one of the conference coordinators Brian McGahan threatened that any marchers arrested would not have access to conference fees held by the conference coordinators for bail funds, a threat which was carried out until these swine were compelled to back off by a motion approved by conference participants.

It is not the "Sparts" the reformists and gay lifestyleists are "getting" through their sectoralist, sectarian shenanigans, but the homosexual population itself. The CPA says: don't fight at all; suffer the attacks in silence. The SWP says (in one of its position papers to the conference): "The only way to achieve gay rights is to force the politicians to introduce them". Which politicians? Fraser? Wran? No! The only way to achieve gay rights -- or even to effectively defend Wran's victims -- is to mobilise real force -- the industrial muscle of the working class. ■

Spartacist League

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Students . . .

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in the Broad Left and "justified" the scabbery. The SYA's cavalier response (in the words of Jon West) was "What's a bit of scabbing amongst friends?" For months the SYA's parent Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has carried on a heated polemic against the CPA's "right turn" embodied in its "New Course" policy. But to keep within sniffing distance of the CPA's tail, the SWP was amply prepared to cover for blatant scabbery. As for the "Communist" Group, were it a genuine socialist organisation it would have expelled Nicholls on the spot and demanded the two scabs' ouster from all SRC and AUS positions. But the CG simply dismissed it all as a "ridiculous wrangle" (*Red Letter*, 2 August), with not so much as a word from the CPA itself.



Sydney Uni, 1977: Spartacists support Victorian power strike

Cornered, Nicholls and Ramjan responded in a manner befitting their sort ... with lies and slanders. Frenetic CG members accused our comrades of endangering the SRC workers' jobs (); chalk-ups appeared proclaiming that "A vote for Spartacist is a vote for ASIO" (!). But to two blacklegs, honourable "officers of the fifth SRC", waited until the last day of classes to lash back with the final lie, a vengeful calumny so insidious that it could have only one effect: to set up the SL for victimisation by the bourgeois authorities. A statement dated 3 August and luridly entitled "Death threats against prominent members of the S.R.C.", in the format of a formal press release, charged four SL supporters -- by name -- with physically threatening and intimidating the "prominent SRC members" at a Spartacist Club election rally the previous Wednesday, where Nicholls and Ramjan had come to distribute their "reply" to the charges ("An Open Letter to Socialists at Sydney University"):

"Ms Ramjan alleges that a number of members of the campus Spartacist Group threatened to arrange her battering to death whilst Mr Nicholls alleges that the same people threatened to bash him there and then and failing that, to arrange to have him shot or hung."

"Battered to death"? "Shot"? "Hung"? Who besides the bourgeois authorities could make use of such outlandish charges? Eighteen people who were not witness to the "alleged" incident -- including four members of the Broad Left and ex-member Hammond, one member of the Macquarie University Communist Group and one ISer -- signed statements condemning this venomous concoction, knowing it was wildly inconsistent with the SL's practice. Fifteen witnesses present at the rally (eight of them non-Spartacists, including another member of the IS) *explicitly denied* the charges. One of the fingered SL supporters, Peter Musicka, described in a statutory declaration how Nicholls and Ramjan had twisted our comrades' *political* denunciations into preconceived fabrications:

"... while talking to Gary Nicholls I pointed out that in the US coalfields strikebreakers

are often shot. Nicholls immediately replied, 'Are you threatening me?' I responded that we (meaning the Spartacist League) had no wish to use violence against either Nicholls or Ramjan, but that we wished to discredit them through political exposure."

There was only one thing of which our comrades were "guilty": denouncing, sharply and vehemently, a couple of scabs.

Strikers -- "is a little bit of scabbing alright?"

In their "Open Letter" Nicholls and Ramjan plead for sympathy against the plots of the notorious "Sparts". Here they were, "officers of a student union", "socialists committed to workers control", subject to "vile lies" and "slanders" by "an utterly isolated but insufficiently publically [sic] discredited political sect". "Slandered"? Well, they confessed, they did work during a strike ... but that was not "scabbing". Oh no, they only worked for five minutes ... with permission from a union official; "neither the union involved nor the SRC employees have ever accused us" of scabbing. Anyway, the strike wasn't even justified -- it was all a question of "false information" on the part of the strikers -- and it "greatly interfered with our responsibilities" to the students. The Spartacist Club's reply the following day was entitled, "Why are they squirming?"

These "socialists" must certainly have been aware of the filthy heritage they were embracing; the pitched battles fought out between strikers and scabs in the US coal fields; the contempt still reserved for those who "scabbed in 51" during the great New Zealand watersiders' strike -- to this day pubs that served scabs are still boycotted! If Nicholls and Ramjan's crime was petty, its very pettiness makes it all the more disgusting -- they could not be bothered waiting even five minutes for the sake of elementary class solidarity! But their whole rickety heap of excuses collapsed a few days later when following the elections the secretaries issued their own statement, "Is a little bit of scabbing alright?":

"We informed the President of the S.R.C. of our intention to strike the next day, and that any attempt to operate the Front Office would be considered scabbing.

"... SINCE WHEN HAS A STRIKE BEEN CONVENIENT TO ANYONE? SINCE WHEN HAVE SO-CALLED RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS BEEN A JUSTIFICATION FOR STRIKE BREAKING?..."

"As officers of a Student Union and Socialists committed to workers control how come you needed the official Hospital & Research Employers [sic] Union to justify your strike breaking?" (emphasis in original)

The logic of reformism

It is not simply an isolated accident that a member of the Communist Party could engage in scabbery -- an action so contrary to the principles of the working class that even conscious trade unionists, much less communists, find it repulsive -- or that the "Trotskyist" SYA could cover for it. (In fact the SYA covered, not only for scabbing -- SYAer Gash handed out the "Open Letter" whitewash leaflet -- but for slander as well: although repeatedly approached, the SWP/SYA have criminally refused to take a position against the "Death threats" smear.) Scabbing flows directly from the politics of the CPA and SWP, which -- despite their verbal appeals to the unblemished heritage of Leninism -- are no less reformist than the openly parliamentarist, social-democratic ALP.

Rejecting proletarian revolution in theory or practice as a utopian fantasy, reformists necessarily sacrifice the interests of the class struggle to the illusions of petty, short-term sectional interests. Thus on the university campus, the CPA and SYA place narrowly defined "students' interests" above those of a couple of "misinformed" strikers. Supporting workers struggles is all well and good -- it is the "socialist" thing to do -- only so long as it does not interfere with "student control over student affairs".

Even those members of the Broad Left who were prepared to condemn the scabbing pleaded that the matter was "complicated" because the SRC was a "student union" and its work had to go on. Even in the case of a *genuine* union, to break a strike in the name of unionism is a betrayal of its most elementary principle as a weapon of the class struggle -- industrial solidarity. The only "work" a union has in the midst of a strike is defending the strike.

But the SRC is not a union. How ludicrous the conception of "student unionism" is could not be clearer than at Sydney University, whose students include the sons and daughters of Australia's upper crust -- are their interests the same as those students who come from or are headed into the working class and the petty bourgeoisie? Students from elite tertiary institutions have frequently served as a reservoir of strikebreakers during major battles of the working class, as they did in the 1926 general strike in Britain. Sydney University students were among the ten thousand "free labourers" mobilised to

break the 1917 NSW general strike. The primary task on campus of a communist youth organisation in such circumstances -- a task the CG, SYA and the rest of the Broad Left are self-evidently incapable of -- would be to win students to the side of the strikers and to frustrate the use of the campus as an organising centre for strike-breaking.

"Left" or right, a scab is a scab

The class line at Sydney Uni does not lie between right and "left" student politics, between engineering students and General Philosophy students, between those with short hair and those with long hair and not even, necessarily, between readers of Ayn Rand and devotees of Althusser and Poulantzas. It lies between those who oppose workers struggles and those who support them in practice. And in the SRC elections, the Spartacist Club stood on one side of the class line and the Broad Left, the "moderates" and the right wingers of Tony Abbott's ilk on the other on the only question in the elections which drew the class line concretely.

In their "Open Letter" Nicholls and Ramjan complained, "Look at the Spartacist propaganda -- about 5% is directed against the forces and policies of reaction ... and 90% is devoted to attacking the left". Yes, we seek to expose those who, under cover of "unity of the left" and in the name of "socialism", stand as directly counterposed to the struggles of the working class as Tony Abbott's openly reactionary views. *A scab is a scab, whether a professed leftist or an open right winger.* Nicholls must not be left unexposed and untrammelled to graduate some day to the big-time betrayals of his comrade, John Halfpenny. We want to discredit him, his political tendency and its political fellow-travellers among students looking to socialism. In "Why are they squirming?", the Spartacist Club explained,

"The working class cannot win even its immediate aims, let alone state power, if it allows its strikes to be broken, *scabbed on* ..."

"We want to win students to the fight for workers revolution. And for that they had better understand the difference between socialists and strikebreakers."

Of course the reformists of the CG and SYA cannot even seriously defend the "students' interests" they crow about. Like the genuine needs of any grouping oppressed under capitalism -- and most students are oppressed -- these cannot be isolated from the class struggle in society as a whole. Only the mobilisation of the working class can achieve significant reforms of the educational system. We demand the autonomy of the universities from the direct meddling of the bourgeois state through the replacement of the bourgeois administration with democratic student/staff/campus worker control and the ouster of all cops and military training. We demand that tertiary education be made accessible to working-class youth, through open admissions and full living stipends for all students. Such genuine reforms, however, breaking down the elitist class bias of the universities, are too "advanced" for the Communist Group and the Socialist Youth Alliance, whose devotion to narrow "student interests" without a revolutionary perspective is purely and simply a defence of bourgeois class privilege and the continuation of the bourgeois order. The communist program for the universities is workers revolution: only with the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the creation of a workers state will the universities cease being transmission belts of bourgeois ideology and become genuine centres of inquiry and learning.

In the Sydney University SRC elections, 85 students cast their first-preference votes for the Spartacist Club candidate for SRC president, Dawn McEwan, who came seventh in a field of eight (Tony Abbott won) -- twice the number received by the Spartacist candidate last year. Each of those votes represented a vote for working-class principles and against scabbery. The Spartacist League uniquely upholds the principles of the class struggle because we alone have a program for successful socialist revolution. Build the nucleus of the vanguard party of the workers revolution! Build the Spartacist League! ■

Port Kembla . . .

Continued from page seven

fined to the waterfront.

When rank-and-file wharfies in Sydney spread the strike by blacking pig iron to be loaded on two ships bound for East Asia, the WWF bureaucrats fought hard to get the ban lifted -- and failed. At one meeting vividly depicted in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (14 December 1938) the branch secretary produced a telegram from Healy pleading for the lifting of the ban. "Never mind about Healy", shouted one wharf labourer. "Tell us what the Port Kembla men say." The ban

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The complete set of leaflets from the Sydney university anti-scab campaign. Cost: 30 cents postage.

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stayed, and the ship sailed without pig iron.

On 17 January, Healy and Roach struck a deal with Menzies -- which did not even include firm guarantees against reprisals -- and took it to the wharfies. It got voted down overwhelmingly. Four days later, after another trip to Menzies produced only minor modifications, the WWF officials managed to browbeat and deceive the workers into accepting it.

The Workers Party denounced the settlement as "the most blatant and cynical betrayal ever perpetrated on a section of the working class" (*Militant*, February 1939). The CPA hailed it as a "victory": "No pig iron for Japan" blared *Workers Weekly* (24 January 1939). The "victory"? The Dalfram would be loaded and then a conference held "between Federal Cabinet and representatives of the Australian trade unions" at which they "would be able to show the Federal government that the policy of banning pig iron ... was correct". The "conference" accomplished nothing, and four weeks later, union officials cajoled the Port Kembla wharfies into loading a new pig-iron shipment for Japan -- "under protest". And so came the end of any significant labour solidarity actions with China.

Workers Weekly (29 November 1938) praised the Port Kembla wharfies not for militant class solidarity, but for patriotism: "By taking this action they ... express a very sincere love for their country". And how did the CPA express its "love of country"? By selling out the Port Kembla boycott. After all, how was Lyons to be convinced that it was in the "national interest" to ban pig iron when the wharfies were paralysing Port Kembla and defying his government?

From the standpoint of the CPA, the defeat of the ban and its substitution with pleas to Lyons for a government boycott was, in a sense, a "victory". If the Stalinists did not have their demand for government trade sanctions satisfied immediately, they soon got that and then some. As the *Militant* (February 1939) warned following the Port Kembla defeat: "Any real boycott of Japan ... by the capitalist government would indicate that British imperialism had decided to go to war with Japan" -- not to defend the Chinese masses but to plunder them -- "to stop encroachments by the latter on Britain's 'preserves' in China".

With the onset of World War II in the Pacific, the Sino-Japanese conflict became subordinated to the inter-imperialist war. But the Trotskyists remained consistent to the principles of proletarian internationalism which they had pursued throughout the boycott campaign: they advocated and resolutely upheld the Leninist policy of revolutionary defeatism in both the "democratic" and "fascist" camps of imperialist robbers, while defending militarily the USSR -- a courageous, principled stance for which they were outlawed during the war. The Stalinists remained consistent, too -- encouraging the "patriotic" slaughter which robbed the proletariat of its youth.

An internationalist tradition, a revolutionary potential

Today, forty years after the Port Kembla boycott, the no longer Stalinist (but no less reformist) CPA is joined by a host of other reformist groupings -- including the ostensibly Trotskyist SWP -- who see in the Port Kembla struggle only a "justification" for the same chauvinist, class-collaborationist policies which brought about its defeat. In a particularly grotesque travesty upon that militant proletarian struggle, the petty-bourgeois environmentalist anti-uranium movement last year launched the slogan, "Pig iron 1938, Uranium 1977" in their pacifist campaign to "keep Australian uranium in the ground" so it won't "come back as bombs". In the name of "peace" they foster the chauvinism which will facilitate the next war. And if the bourgeoisie

Victory to waterside, tramway strikes!

In the wake of the horror budget a wave of strikes centred in Melbourne is threatening to bring major confrontations between Fraser and the labour movement. On Wednesday, 6 September, employers on the Melbourne wharves spread a dispute with maintenance tradesmen by issuing stand-down orders, for the first time since 1914, to 800 waterside workers. All Melbourne wharfies have walked off, and nationwide mass meetings on Friday will consider a national wharf strike. Fraser threatens to invoke the IRB against tramway workers, on strike to stop an anti-union "conscientious objector" with a special government certificate to scab, a provocative assault on compulsory unionism. Workers on the Westgate Bridge have been out since the budget came down against the budget's harsh new severance pay taxes. Workers must not be intimidated! Decisive action is needed by the entire labour movement to defend these struggles. One out all out -- for a national waterside/maritime strike! Meet any use of penal powers with a nationwide general strike! Smash the IRB!

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had "bowed" to the demands of the CPA, SWP and other reformists for "no aid, no trade" and imposed sanctions against Indonesia during the Timor invasion, it would have done so, as in the case with China in the 1930s, to protect its own "preserve", out of concern only for its own "rights" to exploit the Timorese people.

The uncompromisingly revolutionary response of the Workers Party to the Port Kembla pig-iron boycott and the imperialist war preparations of the late 1930s is testimony to the validity of the Trotskyist program, and to the fraudulence of any claim by the SWP to the heritage of Australian Trotskyism. The continuity of Trotskyism in Australia was destroyed following World War II but the program remains, represented today uniquely by the Spartacist League. The Port Kembla boycott itself was testimony to the concrete reality of the international class struggle and to the revolutionary potential of the Australian proletariat, reaffirmed since in the ban on Dutch shipping during the Indonesian independence struggle in 1946 and the seamen's action which stopped an American vessel on its way to Vietnam in 1971.

However that potential will not be realised under the leadership of those, like the CPA, its pro-Moscow and pro-Peking splinters, or the SWP, who seek to divert internationalist impulses in the direction of chauvinist class collaboration. The necessity now, as forty years ago, remains the construction of a revolutionary party in Australia, grounded in the struggle for a reborn Fourth International, world party of the revolutionary proletariat. ■

Budget . . .

Continued from page two

ately to expose the pro-capitalist fakers and break their hold over the working class, particularly over the most militant elements in the strike committees, thus paving the way to a pre-revolutionary situation and the construction of a revolutionary leadership of the labour movement.

Not Hayden's recession budget but a class-struggle program

Such a revolutionary leadership could only be built around a full program of struggle against the attacks of the capitalist class and the recession going beyond the demands of the general strike and leading unalterably to one conclusion: the need for the working class to establish its own class rule and sweep away the bankrupt capitalist system once and for all.

Such a program would include: jobs for all -- share the available work by reducing the work week with no loss in weekly pay -- a sliding scale of hours! Stop inflation's constant erosion of workers' living standards -- for automatic, monthly wage adjustments to meet the full, real increase in the cost of living! Under indexation, Arbitration doles out crumbs every quarter -- and now it will be every six months -- only in order to blackmail workers who, seeking to stay even, strike against the "guidelines". Arbitration is always and only the bosses' tool -- down with the Arbitration system!

Medibank never went far enough to satisfy the real needs of society. For free adequate health care for all -- nationalise the profit-bloated private funds and hospitals with no compensation! Instead of cuts in necessary social services, for a massive program of socially useful public works in areas of crying need: health, housing, education etc! For an end to the enslavement of women in the household -- for free public laundries, cafeterias and child-care facilities!

The bosses have no "right" to make decisions vitally affecting the workers' livelihoods in order to squeeze more profits from them. In answer to capitalist rationalisation, automation and speed-up -- for workers control of industry through factory and shop committees! Open the books of the corporations to workers' inspection! Down with government and business "secrets" which hide from the working class the profits and machinations of the bosses and their servants in the Treasury!

The bosses must not be allowed to hold society to ransom -- nationalise the banks and industry without compensation! For an economic plan in the interests of all the oppressed! Parliament is a farce; nothing important for the workers can be accomplished through this bourgeois talking shop which the ruling class will discard at once at the slightest real threat to their system. For a workers government based on workers organisations!

What does the ALP offer in response to the attacks of the capitalist class? An "alternative" budget, a slightly milder administration of the recession in the interests of profits than Fraser's. Hayden's claim that unemployment can be substantially reduced with a bigger government deficit to "stimulate" investment is a fantastic pipedream. His "alternative" budget is so negligibly it wins him good marks from the ruling class for his "reasonable" attitude and his

"fairly cautious" rejection of any significant social reforms (*Financial Review*, 24 August).

The pro-capitalist Labor fakers of all stripes -- Hayden, Wran, Dunstan, Uren -- are the main obstacle to the working class taking the road of socialist revolution, by virtue of the authority in the workers' eyes of the mass organisations they mislead. Unless they are exposed, thrown out and replaced with a revolutionary leadership, firmly based on a revolutionary program of transitional demands such as that outlined above, they will succeed in derailing, setting up for repression or themselves repressing the working class. The reformist bureaucracy, however, finds only eager helpers among most of the "revolutionary" left. These shameless opportunists, from the CPA, the pro-Moscow Socialist Party (SPA) and Maoists -- all ensconced in some niche of the union bureaucracy -- through to the small-time reformists of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and International Socialists (IS) and including the hardened political charlatans of the Socialist Labour League (SLL), offer only variations on the themes set by Hayden and Halfpenny.

Faced with the biggest government crisis since the sacking of Whitlam, they can offer nothing better than protest strikes and calls for "congresses" of the labour fakers to "discuss" a "national campaign". The SWP (*Direct Action*, 24 August) and CPA (*Tribune*, 23 August) in almost identical words plead with the reformist leaders to take up their "responsibility" to "give leadership" when it is obvious to everyone that that is the last thing they want to do. Instead of exposing them, the SWP advises them as to "socialist policies" with which they can better hide their pro-capitalist loyalties from the workers. This entire collection of would-be Haydens and Hawkes has completely failed to provide a concrete perspective for the present crisis precisely because they are tied politically to the Hayden/Hawke misleadership.

The IS, to be sure, called for a general strike but in so unserious a fashion as to render it meaningless. Criticising the leaders, the *Battler* (19 August) says "we're going to have to do it ourselves". Who? How? This syndicalist nonsense only lets the leaders off the hook. At the Melbourne meeting the SWP went so far as to call for a 48-hour (!) general protest stoppage -- a real alternative to Halfpenny! SLL supporters simply ignored all proposals for general strike action. The SLL has been "campaigning" to "bring down Fraser" (in *Workers News* only, of course) for three years. Now that the moment for action has arrived, it has nothing concrete to propose at all.

A general strike against the horror budget and the Fraser government would open up a pre-revolutionary situation, putting on the agenda a contest for power between the working class and the capitalist state. We demand that the ALP take power now only so that these class traitors would be forced to show their true colours in practice, opening up the possibility for the revolutionary vanguard to split away a section of their working-class base and forge an instrument capable of truly leading the workers to power by smashing the capitalist state. In a pre-revolutionary situation such as that a successful general strike would open up, a small vanguard nucleus can develop a mass base rapidly. But because at bottom they do not believe in the need for or the possibility of a revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, everything the fake revolutionaries do is aimed to avoid exposing or embarrassing the ALP leadership. Only the Trotskyist program of the Spartacist League provides the perspective for carrying out this task. ■

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The logic of reformism —

CPA, SRC leaders scab at Sydney University

On 14 July, three weeks before the Student Representative Council (SRC) elections at Sydney University, the two secretaries who staff the SRC office staged a three-hour strike around the demand for job permanency, a vital necessity given the fickle political winds which blow through the SRC. They warned SRC president Barbara Ramjan and acting honorary secretary/treasurer Gary Nicholls, a Communist Party (CPA) member and guru

of the pro-CPA campus Communist Group (CG), that if any work were done in the office during the strike they would consider it, correctly, scabbing. When the secretaries returned to their office, they found the shutters unlocked and the phone off night switch. *Nicholls and Ramjan -- "socialists" -- had scabbed!*

Nicholls and Ramjan are perhaps the two most prominent figures in the Broad Left, the "progressive" coalition in the elections supported by the Socialist Youth Alliance (SYA), the CG, the International Socialists (IS), the Labor Club, the "Marxist-feminists" etc. The Broad Left knew these two had scabbed; yet for two weeks this information was *deliberately suppressed*. SYAer Liam Gash reportedly had put a motion that the two be expelled from the Broad Left, but the motion was tabled -- so as not to upset the slate's electoral chances! The facts might never have come to light had not the Spartacist Club learned of the incident and brought it immediately to the attention of students, staff and campus workers.



"Broad Left" scabs: Barbara Ramjan (left), CPA member Gary Nicholls.

The Broad Left was thrown into panic and disarray, and the campus polarised on the scabbing issue. On the afternoon of 31 July the Broad Left held an "emergency meeting". This time even a censure motion was knocked back. Disgusted, four independent members walked out in protest -- though not Gash, who reconciled himself quickly to covering for the scabs. But only one, Bill Hammond, took the necessary principled step and split from the Broad Left. Within several days a statement condemning the scabbery circulated by the Spartacist Club had gathered 67 signatures, including four Broad Left members. Among the many campus workers who signed it, one plumber told our comrades: "I hope you do the same for us when we have a strike".

Though two off-campus ISers signed the anti-scab statement, IS student Mick Segretto stayed

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Sydney Grammar and Sydney University students scab on 1917 NSW general strike.

Defend gay rights protestors — No more sectarian games

Wran stages new mass arrests

For the fourth time in less than two months, the NSW Labor government of premier Neville Wran has staged a massive crackdown on supporters of homosexual rights, rivalling only the openly reactionary government of Queensland premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen for its flagrant disdain for elementary democratic rights. On 27 August police surrounded and broke up a march by some 300 participants at the Fourth National Homosexual Conference in Sydney's Paddington Town Hall. As the marchers were proceeding peacefully from Paddington to Hyde Park in order to protest against a rally by the reactionary Right to Life organisation, the cops moved in, ordering them to disperse on the grounds that they were an "unlawful procession" and started to drag them off.

The police attack was a deliberate trap! The marchers were given *exactly seven seconds* to disperse from the time the cops gave the second order to disperse. They had in fact already begun leaving as the police surrounded them and began their indiscriminate round-up. When a smaller group of marchers made it to Hyde Park, the cops staged another mass arrest, bringing the total

number of protestors arrested that day to 104! In that dragnet they also arrested three Right-to-Lifers as a face-saving show of "impartiality". So brutal were these thugs in manhandling their victims that even Fairfax's *Sydney Morning Herald* was compelled to register a protest at the cops' treatment of one of their photographers who was mistaken for a demonstrator. Included among the arrested were two supporters of the Spartacist League (SL) and six Socialist Workers Party (SWP) supporters.

This brings the number of gay-rights protestors arrested by Wran's cops in the last two months to a total of 178! All the charges against all the 178 must be dropped! The labour movement bears a serious responsibility and duty in particular to mobilise its unique social power to defend those arrested and demand an end to these incessant attacks. Trade unionists and members of the ALP should condemn and repudiate Wran's actions, as have at least two ALP branches in Sydney. At its 4 August meeting the Surry Hills branch passed a resolution "condemn[ing] the arrests staged by Wran's

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Sydney, 27 August: cops arrest anti-Right-to-Life protestor.

Geoff Friend