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Imperialists fuel Indochinese counterrevolution Kampuchea "aid" hoax

For the past month it has been impossible to pick up a paper or turn on the TV without confronting the agonising spectacle of skeletal and dying Kampuchean refugees struggling over the border to "sanctuary" in Thailand. The starvation is real, but the message -- that if only it weren't for obstruction by the bloodthirsty Vietnamese, "free world" leaders like Jimmy "Human Rights" Carter and his tag-along "statesman" Malcolm Fraser would have been able to rush in massive aid long ago -- is a vicious lie of genocidal proportions.

Although most bourgeois pundits trace the cause of the present starvation back to the murderous horrors of the Pol Pot regime which overthrew the US puppet Lon Nol in 1975, the real beginning is in early 1969, when the US began four years of the most devastating carpet bombing by B52s of the Vietnam war. Between 1970 and 1973, the US rained down more than an average of 100 tons of bombs for every man, woman and child in Kampuchea (formerly Cambodia), turning heavily populated areas into fields of craters and destroying agricultural dikes and waterworks. Probably a million died in Kampuchea during the civil war against Lon Nol, and famine already existed

when the US brutally cut off all aid following the fall of its henchman in 1975. Although it overthrew capitalism, the brutal Khmer Rouge regime of Pol Pot -- which depopulated the cities and villages at gunpoint, separated families, denied voluntary marriage and murdered thousands -- created such a horribly deformed workers state that even Pol Pot's former Prime Minister Ieng Sary admitted recently that after the Vietnamese army surged in to install the present Heng Samrin government in January 1979, there were "people who went toward ... the Vietnamese, attracted by their program" (*Le Monde*, 2 June). It would have been difficult indeed to have had a worse "program" than Sary's!

But reaction to the Vietnamese takeover in Kampuchea was uniform throughout the capitalist world. The anti-communist regimes of the ASEAN alliance (Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia) united against Vietnamese "expansionism", a result considered "beneficial" in the US (*Financial Review*, 26 October). A few meagre aid programs for Vietnam by countries such as Australia were dropped; and the US and Britain engineered the continued

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Vietnamese troops during the February 1979 Chinese invasion which consummated anti-Soviet US/China alliance. Since then imperialist propaganda war continued: first the "boat people", now starvation in Kampuchea.

"Lefts" talk tough but anti-union laws pile up

Bury Arbitration!

Lately some "left-wing" trade-union bureaucrats have begun rediscovering the inexpensive utility of a little left talk. "The time to fight Fraser's savage anti-union legislation is now.... We shouldn't buy the line that it's alright for Fraser to pass the laws but just wait till he tries to use them", blustered Communist Party (CPA) member Jack Cambourn, NSW state secretary of the Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association (FEDFA). "The ACTU, state Labor Councils and all unions should give a fighting lead. The workers will respond" (*Tribune*, 24 October).

Tough talk, Jack, but its three years late and anyway, how many strikes has the FEDFA called against anti-union laws? The reality is that for three years the entire labour bureaucracy has met each new addition to Fraser's now imposing anti-union legal armory with this same "wait until they use it" line -- no action. For example, Cambourn in 1977 proposed the unions "fight" the IRB legislation by firmly sticking their heads in the sand, simply boycotting it and refusing it information (*Tribune*, 9 February 1977), when what was necessary was a general strike to smash the IRB before it became law.

Fraser vs Staples

Fraser has not yet taken full advantage of their cowardice. Rather, the government's "continual parade of threatening gestures, most of which have remained mere gestures" (*National Times*, 27 October) have begun to damage its credibility in ruling-class eyes. But the bosses want to slash real wages still more drastically, and so this inconclusive shadowboxing with the unions cannot continue indefinitely.

Fraser's latest move was an attempt to compel the Arbitration Commission to shed its pretence

of "neutral" conciliation and simply ram the government's austerity policies down the unions' throats. The new laws, forced through parliament on 18 October, bar payment of wages for time lost due to "industrial action" (strikes, stand-downs or bans); force commissioners to consult superiors before altering award provisions; and deny the dole to union members laid off due to "industrial action" by members of the same union. Most dramatically, they empower the government to seek to have the Full Bench deregister unions and then to take them over and run them as the government sees fit -- indefinitely.

The sinister import of such provisions was largely obscured in the parliamentary brawl set off when someone leaked a letter by commission deputy president, and resident "maverick", Jim Staples, attacking the amendments which are designed to deprive commissioners like him of their relative autonomy vis a vis the commission president, Sir John Moore. An ex-CPAer and prominent left-Labor lawyer, Staples was appointed under Whitlam in 1975. This inveterate liberal moralist (who compared the new laws to pre-war Nazi Germany) is mainly concerned that the illusion of the "independence and authority" of the bourgeoisie's principal institution for containing the class struggle may be shattered "in the eyes of the millions of employees who contribute by their taxes to its support" (*Australian*, 13 October).

The government was caught off balance when all 25 commissioners supported Staples, but it overrode the more substantive objections after conciliatory late-night talks with Moore. How much Moore will cooperate is unclear, although

workers can now be sure of getting still fewer crumbs from the commission.

At present Fraser is testing the waters, letting the reactionary Queensland and Western Australian state governments do most of the fighting with the unions. The Trades and Labor Council's response to Bjelke-Petersen's new anti-union Essential Services Bill was not even the promised token one-day general strike but ... a rally. The WA TLC met WA premier Court's bill outlawing the closed shop and instituting court-controlled secret strike ballots with a call for ... a ban on WA exports. And so it goes.

Halfpenny says it's the workers' fault

For metalworkers union (AMWSU) Victorian state secretary and CPA member John Halfpenny, the Arbitration amendments are "offensive and tyrannical" but "there's a kind of immunity building up.... So there's a lack of immediate response from trade unionists. That's unfortunate" (*National Times*, 27 October): ie, if you don't want to fight, blame the backwardness of the ranks. "We don't support the Arbitration system", lies Halfpenny. But he was the one who sold out the militant LaTrobe Valley power workers in 1977, when they were forced to return to work and entrust their claim to Arbitration.

When the power strikers threatened to bring Victoria to a halt and hundreds of thousands of stood-down workers waited to see if they would hold out, they could have gone on to win a victory which would not only have stopped Fraser/Hamer cold, but would have given a great impetus to other workers' struggles. The sabotage of that strike was a pivotal event in the demoralisation of a labour movement besieged by depression-level

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Who warned the Iranian masses?

The legion of phony leftists who cheered Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini to power in Iran last February lately has been forced to acknowledge the bloody repression their hero has unleashed against the left, national minorities, women and homosexuals. But during the months in which the international Spartacist tendency was alone on the left in warning that Khomeini in power would seek to put women in veils and workers in jails, the fake-lefts labelled the SL "sectarian" and "counterrevolutionary" for telling the simple truth.

The most vocal "celebrators" on the Australian left of Khomeini's victory were to be found in the "Trotskyist" Socialist Workers Party (SWP), but they had plenty of company. The Communist Party (CPA) rarely mentioned the Iranian events during the months when millions marched behind the mullahs against the shah -- a display of social-democratic parochialism rivalled only by the International Socialists (IS), which was too wrapped up in the narrow preoccupations of reformist workerism to pay much attention. When they did notice, however, it was only to enthuse from the distance -- at

no risk to themselves -- over an opportunist betrayal of the Iranian masses for which thousands have already died.

It is thus particularly revolting to hear the lot now declaim against Khomeini's repression. But it is not so easy for the fake-lefts to explain away their so-recent enthusiasm for the butcher of Qom.

The IS's *Battler* (27 October) feebly answers the question: "Iran -- was it all a waste?" by claiming that Khomeini's "viciousness rises [sic] from weakness, not strength". So too the SWP, which has discovered that these days "the administration of justice in Iran is extremely arbitrary" (*Direct Action*, 25 October), nonetheless informs us that the repression expresses Khomeini's "position of relative weakness" (*Direct Action*, 6 September). But what has become of the inexorable "dynamic" that was supposed to ensure Khomeini's speedy "exposure" and decline? Last March, 10,000 women marched against the veil in Teheran, protected from Islamic thugs by armed Fedayeen guerillas; today hundreds of women demonstrators are literally

run off the same streets by thousands of knife-wielding "Islamic revolutionaries" shouting, "bad women should be hanged" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 November).

Perhaps even more wretched is the plaintive cry of the Moscow-line Socialist Party on behalf of their Stalinist colleagues of the Iranian Tudeh party. As Islamic courts executed its members, the latter protested nauseously that they helped to smash "leftist elements" and defended "Iran's territorial integrity" against the Persian-oppressed Kurds. In line with the Kremlin's treacherous policies they did everything to appease Khomeini, only to find that when the ayatollah raged against "communist devils" and the Soviet deformed workers state, he meant it.

The response of the SWP's Iranian co-thinkers in the HKS (Socialist Workers Party) has been, if anything, more shameful. Death sentences hanging over two of 14 jailed members, HKS leader Babak Zahraie with spineless, cynical treachery still declares: "As strange as it may seem, there has never been as much freedom in Iran as now" (quoted in *Le Matin*, 3 October)!

This kind of bowing and scraping will not save the HKSers from the executioners' sword. And the Iranian proletariat has no need of a "vanguard" which "discovers" its enemies after they have begun butchering leftists and workers, and then announces this is really a "victory" because the reactionaries have been unmasked. It is not the ayatollah but his Western and Iranian sycophants who must answer for the crime of betrayal. And they will not succeed in suppressing the record of their crime. For the re-birth of the Fourth International!

Khomeini's "left" press agents or ...

Socialist Party of Australia

"The Tudeh Party leader (Nourredin Kianouri) also said in his interview: 'Shiite religious nations have democratic roots, and they have always been linked to popular, national, anti-imperialist forces. For this reason when Ayatollah Khomeini began uttering his strong and radical slogans against the Shah, he won our sympathy.... And we are doing everything we can to develop a common language with him. We feel that he is playing a totally progressive part in the development of Iran'."

-- *Socialist*, 31 January 1979

International Socialists

"True, Khomeini is essentially a religious leader. But he has come to symbolise total opposition to the Shah....

"For the moment, many workers and peasants articulate their feelings in religious terms. After all, Iran has been held in a vice of oppression and backwardness for centuries."

-- *Battler*, 2 December 1978

"The revolution in Iran has been a great victory for the people. At least the left, and women, now have the right to demonstrate and organise."

-- *Battler*, 31 March 1979

... and their international co-thinkers in the British Socialist Workers Party:

"It is almost as though the masses have seized on a tradition that is embodied in their history -- the tradition of religious opposition ... and hammered this religion of theirs into a mighty weapon, that has nothing to do with godliness, or holiness and everything to do with mass power.

"Propagandists for the Shah ... justify their support by evoking what they imagine to be the alternative. Images of Islamic rule, of a cruel and backward society, of hands being chopped off

for theft, and women stoned to death for adultery, are added to colour the picture.

"To believe that the people of Iran are fighting and dying in their hundreds and thousands purely to replace one reactionary ruler with another is absurd."

-- Joanna Rollo, "Iran: Beginning of a Revolution", SWP pamphlet.

Communist Party of Australia

"Moslem extremism and traditionalism have never been reliable allies of progressive forces. But they can be obstacles to Westernised capitalist 'modernisation'.

"And in Iran, where leftwing and working class organisation was either destroyed physically or driven deeply underground, the mosque remained the only focus of opposition and resistance."

-- *Tribune*, 31 January 1979

"Islamic teachings were certainly an important weapon against the Shah....

"The greatest hope is the possibility of greater freedom of speech and action under the new rulers, which the left may use to develop a powerful political base as it built under the

former nationalist prime minister, Mossadeq."

-- *Tribune*, 21 February 1979

Socialist Workers Party

"While religious leaders have attempted to place themselves at the head of the struggle against the shah in order to prevent it taking a more radical direction, the mass movement is basically a progressive struggle around such issues as political freedom, trade union rights, and the rights of national minorities."

-- *Direct Action*, 9 November 1978

"What the Spartacist largely succeeded in doing on June 11 was to turn a picket [on behalf of HKSers jailed by Khomeini's followers] aimed at defending the Iranian revolution into its opposite -- a demonstration attacking the revolution, that is, a reactionary demonstration [by c]oncentrating their attacks on "Islamic reaction" -- their name for the masses of Iranians [!] who have mobilised to demand an end to imperialist exploitation...."

-- letter to *Direct Action*, 14 June 1979, by "DL" (alias Ron Poulsen) defending the SWP's walking off their own demonstration, thus splitting the defence of their Iranian comrades

... the Spartacist League?

"But what is the political basis of the current opposition to the shah? It is not proletarian socialism. It is not even the bourgeois liberalism of Mossadegh, although liberals and leftists can be found in the movement -- and even apologizing for the Muslim preachers. No, fundamentally the current mass mobilizations against the Pahlavi family are under the ideological sway of Muslim fundamentalists whose idea of a golden age is the expansion of Islam by fire and sword in the seventh century AD.

"The hold of the mullahs over the Iranian masses is on the basis of a petty-bourgeois populist ideology, represented in its most radical form by Khomeini, who calls for the confiscation of the "immorally" gained wealth of the rich. The lavish ostentation of the decadent, corrupt, jet-setting Imperial Court renders this Islamic puritanism all the more appealing to the Iranian masses. This reactionary "anti-imperialism" virulently hates all aspects of Western culture which erode traditional Islamic society. The core of the mullahs' social support is thus the traditional middle classes -- merchants and artisans, the small stratum of wealthy peasants and certain backward sections of the proletariat....

"The victory of a reactionary movement of Muslim traditionalism will represent a far-reaching historical defeat for communists, who seek a revolutionary emancipation from semi-feudal backwardness. The religious opposition

stands on the heritage of the Middle Ages, opposed even to the paltry social advances for women in past decades....

"The hundreds of thousands who are now marching behind the mullahs are by no means all Muslim fundamentalists. Many are primarily motivated by hostility to the real crimes of the shah. Many leftists workers have probably joined what they view as a potentially successful opposition to the hated regime. But the masses, particularly the workers, who are now supporting the Khomeinis and Shariatmadaris can and must be won away from the present Islamic reactionary offensive in favor of a social revolutionary opposition to the shah....

"The Moscow and Peking Stalinists' support to the Muslim religious leaders serves only to tie the Iranian masses to treacherous class enemies. In contrast, revolutionary Trotskyism advances a program which can rip sections of the petty bourgeoisie away from its Islamic leadership: Smash the butcher shah with workers revolution! For a revolutionary democratic constituent assembly based on universal suffrage! Smash SAVAK! Land to the tiller! Only the victorious proletariat can guarantee these demands by sweeping away the social bases of the Pahlavi autocracy and of the ulema's religious obscurantism -- thus breaking Iran from imperialist domination. For a workers and peasants government!"

-- *Australasian Spartacist* no 58, October 1978

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Comrade Goffin's letter, below, is abridged from the Oct/Nov Naked Wasp, campus newspaper at Victoria's Caulfield Institute of Technology where he has been a prominent leftist activist for the past two years. Central to his final accounting with "socialist"-Zionism (he had been a member of Ichud Habonim for 10 years) was a trip to Israel last summer -- where he witnessed first-hand the brutal military occupation of the West Bank, the siege mentality of the Zionist bunker where every Arab is a "security risk", and the pervasive racism and national hatreds. Those cynical leftists (such as "gang of four" Maoist Albert Langer, SWPer Sol Salby and International Socialist third-campist Janey Stone) who collected together in the Jewish exclusivist (!) Melbourne-based "Jews Against Zionism and Anti-Semitism", repudiate Zionism not for proletarian internationalism but in the name of a guilty-liberal "progressive Jewish tradition" (!) and only to embrace Palestinian bourgeois nationalism. Comrade Goffin's conversion to the ranks of Trotskyism is a refreshing contrast.

An open letter by Jonathan Goffin

From "socialist" Zionism to Trotskyism

Reprinted from The Naked Wasp

Recently I joined the Spartacist League. Many of the questions I confronted, and eventually resolved while being won to SL politics have been controversial on this campus, and I'd like to take them up in this letter.

Almost two years ago I belonged to a "socialist"-Zionist youth group called *Ichud Habonim* [literally "Unity Builders"]. By 1976, the year after the political flare-up on Australian campuses -- when Zionists, myself included, tried to prevent two visiting PLO representatives from being heard in their public meetings -- I had decided that it was not just a hand-full of "anti-semitic terrorists" we were fighting, but more than that; Palestinian nationalism was a response to real national oppression. So, I became very apologetic about my continued adherence to Zionism. In 1977, a friend and myself -- we both considered ourselves as some sort of communist pole within the *Ichud Habonim* -- moved at a national meeting in Sydney that the group recognise the Palestinians' right to their own state. The motion was bureaucratically suppressed by the chair.

The very foundation of the Zionist State of Israel was based on the wholesale and brutal expulsion of the Palestinians from their land. The Zionists attempt to justify this by pointing to the 6 million Jews who perished at the hands of the Nazis. But when Jewish refugees sought entry into the United States and other countries the Zionists supported closing the doors to them in order to bolster a "Jewish homeland" in Palestine as the only solution. In reality this "promised land", economically ravaged by war and militarily besieged is a death-trap for the Jews in the Near East.

My conclusion that the state of Israel necessarily oppressed the Palestinians was confirmed on my visit there last summer. It was clear that for the Hebrew-speaking masses, this extremely militaristic capitalist society was anything but a "promised land".

Today the Zionist state bestows on the Palestinians the chauvinist "law-of-return" [granting automatic citizenship exclusively to immigrating Jews], forced exile of millions of refugees, night-time curfews compelling Palestinians to either return to the West Bank or Gaza or be locked up, the demolition of Arab houses in the West Bank and Galilee as part of the Judaization process of these areas and the identity card system to which Arabs alone are subject.

In early 1978 I left *Habonim* when these "socialist"-Zionists campaigned for a Liberal Party candidate in the local council elections merely because he was Jewish! But still unable to transcend the Zionist/Arab nationalist coin I supported the mini-state proposal for a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza to co-exist alongside Israel. At that time I looked to the Communist ("human-face") Party of Australia. However, a West Bank state led by the PLO would soon become a "bantustan" in which neighboring states could dump unwanted Palestinian refugees; at most a very partial and deformed expression of Palestinian self-determination. And the "alternative" of a "democratic-secular" Palestine within a capitalist framework could only lay the basis for a repetition of the communal slaughter in Lebanon. The fact is, that two distinct nations -- both the Palestinians and the Hebrew-speaking people of Israel -- have legitimate claims to that territory.

Those leftists who support "progressive" nationalism and deny the national rights of the Hebrew-speaking nation because it is today the oppressor nation are simply arguing for a reversal of the terms of oppression. Instead of seeking to drive a wedge between the Israeli proletariat and its Zionist masters, they accept the Zionist myth that Israel is a classless society. If the Hebrew-speaking workers are to make



Zionist "democracy": terror and oppression for Palestinians (above), death trap for Jews.

common cause with their Arab class brothers against the Zionists, oil sheiks and bonapartist colonels who rule the Near-East then they must know that their national rights will be defended.

What is the "progressive" nationalist solution in Cyprus where the Turks have only recently become the "bad guys" and the Greeks the "good guys" [following the 1975 Turkish intervention reversing the previous Greek Cypriot ascendancy]? Do you merely change direction like a weather-vane in the imperialist wind? Nationalism is a bourgeois ideology and an obstacle to class unity. Not Jew against Arab, but class against class!

The PLO's entire strategy is based on subordination to those capitalist Arab regimes who themselves have brutally suppressed the Palestinians (Jordan 1971, Syria in Lebanon 1976). The reality of the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israel wars has been the *subordination* of the Palestinian liberation struggle to predatory conflicts between the ruling classes of Israel and the Arab bourgeois regimes. Our goal is to build a Trotskyist Party in the Near East that will struggle to forge links between the Arab and Hebrew-speaking workers. We take our inspiration from the Palestinian Fourth Internationalists who in 1948 called on the Jewish and Arab workers to turn their "guns against the instigators of murder in both camps":

"In this burning hell of chauvinism we have to hold up the banner of international brotherhood.... Make this war between Jews and Arabs, which serves the end of imperialism, the common war of both nations against imperialism!"

For a bi-national workers state in Palestine! For a socialist federation of the Near East!

Classless feminism, no-nuke hypocrisy

Because of its proletarian opposition to dead-end politics of sectoralism, the SL has been baited as anti-woman and anti-gay. This slander is born out of a sentiment which holds that one dare not interfere with the oppressed in "their" separate struggles.

But ... while women's oppression hits women across class lines, only the proletariat consist-

ing of men and women has the capacity and objective interests to overthrow capitalism and lay the material foundations for women's liberation.

Because the feminists fear a class perspective, they are forced to ignore the material basis of women's oppression, choosing instead to concentrate on such sickly reformist struggles as "terminological liberation" and suppression of pornography. While CIT feminists were tearing down "Big M" ["sexist" flavoured-milk advertising] posters early this year, the "anti-woman" Spartacist League was pointing to the decisive importance of the woman question in Iran and raised the slogan "No to the Veil!" And while the SL fought for proletarian opposition to both the Shah and the mullahs, groups like the "feminist" Socialist Workers Party (SWP) argued that the veil was only a "symbol of resistance" to the Shah and celebrated Khomeini's victory.

... Feminism and Marxism are counterposed. Trying to pass yourself off as a "socialist"-feminist is like trying to be a "socialist"-Zionist. Women's and student groups fought for Pinochet too you know!

... Since anti-uranium rallies were the only mass form of what I thought was "leftist" political activity, I was eager to attend, not thinking much about the politics of the movement.

The no-nuke movement holds that "uranium causes nuclear war". In fact the threat of nuclear holocaust flows from the rivalries of the imperialist bourgeoisies, and above all their common appetite to reconquer the USSR and other non-capitalist countries. Only the expropriation of the bourgeoisie through international workers' revolution, and not the utopian banning of uranium, can prevent World War III.

Above all, the opponents of uranium mining focus their attention on the possible nuclear accident. Of course nuclear power plants are fraught with dangers and flaws, but what capitalist industry isn't? Far from being a movement for "human survival" the anti-uranium lobby is entirely indifferent to the thousands upon thousands of workers in the coal, asbestos and chemical industries who are daily exposed to the poisons on capitalism's shelf....

The Russian question, terrorism, communism and the party

I had regarded the defence of these states [the Soviet Union and other deformed workers states] as irrelevant to the fight for socialism and a real burden for communists. Mistakenly I equated the defence of the collectivised economy with the defence of those who hold direct political power. In fact, the two are sharply counterposed. Defence of the Soviet Union, China et al means not only military defence against capitalist attack, but overthrowing the anti-working-class bureaucracies through political revolution because they act to prolong the capitalist world order....

Up until early this year, I believed that discriminate terror, against targets representing bourgeois rule, could be a legitimate tactic. I regarded such action as a catalyst to raise working-class consciousness. Either the resulting state repression would instil militancy in the proletariat or the exposure of the state's vulnerability would be an inspiration to all oppressed people. This is like going for an each way bet.

Alas comrades, individual discriminate terror is a defeatist substitute for proletarian struggle and the difficult work of forging a Leninist vanguard which can lead the class struggle to victory and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat....

It is however the duty of communists to defend these sometimes courageous, but politically misguided militants rather than cower to the bourgeois state and disown them....

My earlier political sympathy for left-wing terrorism was closely linked to my disdain for all order on the grounds that "all order is oppressive and disorder is liberty". But even when

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OCI/Moreno: Nicaragua makes strange bedfellows

As events in Nicaragua send the United Secretariat carousel madly whirling, the USec has spun off an unexpected liaison. Suddenly the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) of Pierre Lambert is making common cause with Nahuel Moreno's Bolshevik Faction (BF). Only yesterday it would have seemed to casual observers that Lambertists and Morenoites stood at opposite ends of the pseudo-Trotskyist spectrum, and never the twain would meet. The BF these days lays claim to the USec's left flank, while the OCI represents the closest thing to a chemically pure social-democratic parody of Trotskyism. Yet today they unite to praise the Simon Bolivar Brigade (BSB), recently expelled from Nicaragua by the victorious Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), and to denounce the "reconstituted" (but none too stable) USec majority led by Ernest Mandel and Jack Barnes. Today, but not tomorrow; for this most putrid of rotten blocs is likely to have the lifespan of a mosquito.

At a stormy meeting of the United Secretariat over the weekend of September 30 the USec adopted a series of motions which add up to total liquidation of an independent presence and political line in Nicaragua, in favor of complete subordination to the petty-bourgeois Sandinista Front. The Morenoite-led Bolivar Brigade was unequivocally condemned and the BF ordered to cease operating as a "public faction", on pain of expulsion. A lengthy political resolution, "Nicaragua: Revolution on the March", fulminates against a "headlong plunge into ultraleftism" and "adventuristically forcing the rhythm of the class struggle", while labeling calls to break with the bourgeoisie a "sectarian temptation of applying an abstract schema" (*Intercontinental Press*, 22 October). It ends by calling on all USec supporters to act "as loyal militants of the organization which led the overthrow of Somoza" -- ie to dissolve their organizations, join the FSLN, shut up and take orders from the Sandinista leaders.

In response to this treachery, Moreno submitted a counter-motion condemning the USec's scandalous refusal to express even elementary solidarity with its own "comrades" in the face of repression by the bourgeois Nicaraguan government. This Bolshevik Faction resolution "REJECT[S] these measures, which break all rules of democratic centralism", and calls on militants to "prevent the holding of an anti-democratic world congress". The threat to split before the USec's "11th World Congress", scheduled for early November, was clear. In addition to Moreno's BF, members of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency (LTT) voted for this motion. (The LTT is a grouping of former supporters of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction -- led by the American Socialist Workers Party -- who after the SWP's dissolution of the LTF in 1977 wanted to continue the factional struggle against the USec majority under Mandel, and have since politically aligned themselves *grosso modo* with the Lambertists.)

Immediately after the explosion in Brussels, representatives of the LTT and the BF held a private meeting with the leadership of the OCI, which then provocatively published this fact in its public newsletter (*Lettre d'Informations Ouvrieres*, 10 October) along with various USec

internal documents ("from a dossier given us by Comrade Moreno"). The newsletter politically endorses the Simon Bolivar Brigade and the BF as attempting to "aid the masses in developing their own organizations", while the 6 October issue of the OCI's newspaper *Informations Ouvrieres* announces that refusal to defend the BSB's right to stay in Nicaragua would be joining "the liquidators of the Fourth International" (in the previous month and a half the weekly *IO* had nothing to say on the subject). So the bloc is sealed, at least for the purposes of a joint wrecking operation against the SWP and Mandel, while the OCI's previous attempts to join the United Secretariat have apparently been shelved for now. Lambert was angling to blow apart the USec, and now that a split is clearly in the offing, he has simply placed his money and picked his horse.

Left or right on Nicaragua?

In the face of the SWP's outrageous support for Sandinista Front repression against the workers and its alliance with the "anti-Somoza bourgeoisie" in a capitalist government, and in con-

Nicaragua and the Left", *Workers Vanguard* no 240, 28 September), the Morenoites' present hostility to the FSLN is the pique of rejected suitors. Over the last year they have repeatedly called for a Sandinista government, later dressed up as "a government of the Front and of the workers and people's organizations" (*El Socialista*, 15 June) and similar formulas. But the FSLN, under the pressure of imperialism and "friendly" Latin American capitalist governments, and at the behest of Castro, preferred the company of industrialists and technocrats.

As for the Morenoite policies in the Simon Bolivar Brigade, they were even more opportunist (while also aggressively pressuring the FSLN tops, soon leading to their downfall). Sending an international brigade is a sometimes necessary and valiant tactic for communists in civil war situations; the participation of several dozen European Trotskyists in the POUM's Lenin Brigade during the Spanish Civil War, for instance, was principled and admirable. But since one can't expect to operate independently of an existing military leadership, it is *essential* to establish and defend the proletarian character of such a

unit. The Bolivar Brigade was a parody of these principles. Its very name denies a working-class character, and the Morenoite "Open Letter" calling for its establishment says flatly, "the only programmatic point of the Simon Bolivar Brigade is to support the struggle of the Sandinista people..." (*El Socialista*, 22 June). In addition to the Morenoites' usual financial shady dealings -- the Colombian PST, which organized the Brigade, raised money by selling bogus Sandino Bonds -- they ap-



FSLN-appointed junta members Borge, Ortega, Ramirez, Chamorro and Robelo.

pealed to the Colombian government to "legally recognize the Simon Bolivar Brigade, guaranteeing its papers, transportation and financing".

pealed to the Colombian government to "legally recognize the Simon Bolivar Brigade, guaranteeing its papers, transportation and financing".

But in response to this treachery, Moreno submitted a counter-motion condemning the USec's scandalous refusal to express even elementary solidarity with its own "comrades" in the face of repression by the bourgeois Nicaraguan government. This Bolshevik Faction resolution "REJECT[S] these measures, which break all rules of democratic centralism", and calls on militants to "prevent the holding of an anti-democratic world congress". The threat to split before the USec's "11th World Congress", scheduled for early November, was clear. In addition to Moreno's BF, members of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency (LTT) voted for this motion. (The LTT is a grouping of former supporters of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction -- led by the American Socialist Workers Party -- who after the SWP's dissolution of the LTF in 1977 wanted to continue the factional struggle against the USec majority under Mandel, and have since politically aligned themselves *grosso modo* with the Lambertists.)

Immediately after the explosion in Brussels, representatives of the LTT and the BF held a private meeting with the leadership of the OCI, which then provocatively published this fact in its public newsletter (*Lettre d'Informations Ouvrieres*, 10 October) along with various USec

internal documents ("from a dossier given us by Comrade Moreno"). The newsletter politically endorses the Simon Bolivar Brigade and the BF as attempting to "aid the masses in developing their own organizations", while the 6 October issue of the OCI's newspaper *Informations Ouvrieres* announces that refusal to defend the BSB's right to stay in Nicaragua would be joining "the liquidators of the Fourth International" (in the previous month and a half the weekly *IO* had nothing to say on the subject). So the bloc is sealed, at least for the purposes of a joint wrecking operation against the SWP and Mandel, while the OCI's previous attempts to join the United Secretariat have apparently been shelved for now. Lambert was angling to blow apart the USec, and now that a split is clearly in the offing, he has simply placed his money and picked his horse.

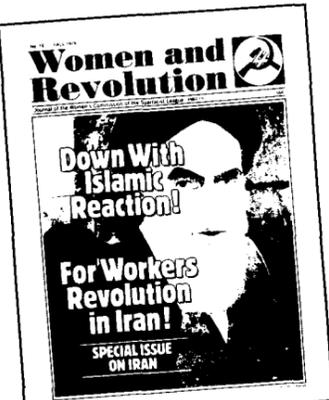
trast to the Mandelites' more shamefaced and whimpering capitulation, it's very cheap for the Morenoite/Lambertist bloc to look left on Nicaragua. Thus the OCI wrote of the new FSLN-appointed regime:

"This bourgeois government, installed solely due to the conciliatory spirit of the Sandinista leaders... has received, for the accomplishment of its counterrevolutionary tasks, the support of imperialism and the Kremlin bureaucracy..." (*Informations Ouvrieres*, 8-23 August)

Similarly, the Costa Rican Organizacion Socialista de los Trabajadores (OST), a USec sympathizing section which is linked with the LTT and directly tied to the French OCI, wrote in its newspaper *Que Hacer?* (26 June-11 July) shortly before the fall of Somoza that the opposition by the FSLN's provisional government to immediate elections "clearly demonstrates its intentions of safeguarding the interests of the national bourgeoisie and imperialism..." (translated in *Intercontinental Press*, 1 October). In turn, the Colombian Morenoites of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST) write that Latin American governments:

"... bought 'life insurance' for capitalism in Nicaragua with their intervention and support for the FSLN... To sum up, the 'democratic' bourgeoisies have sent the bill to the FSLN; and the advice of Castro is very clear: pay up!" (*El Socialista*, 7 September)

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- Fatima Khalil
(Near-Eastern communist woman)

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ism is just about the worst thing the SWP/Usec could do to besmirch the name of Trotskyism before the Central American masses" (WV no 234, 22 June). As for the OCI, its opposition to the new FSLN regime is based purely and simply on Stalinophobia -- denouncing "the sudden resurrection of the moribund Nicaraguan Socialist Party (national branch office of the Kremlin)" and "the excessive weight of its members vis-a-vis the Sandinistas in the government" (IO, 8-23 August).

Portugal, Angola, Cuba ...

We have dealt elsewhere with the stark contradiction between the abstract "leftism" of Moreno's Bolshevik Faction on Eurocommunism, the dictatorship of the proletariat or popular frontism in far-off Europe and his ultra-opportunist practice in Latin America (political support to Peron, Torrijos, etc). But what of its new bloc partners of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency (and its mentors in the OCI)? In opposing the dissolution of the LTF in 1977 the future LTTers put forward a face of left-wing militancy: where the SWP called the Mandeliste majority ultraleftist, they said centrist; where [US SWP leader] Jack Barnes said the faction was formed to fight guerrillaism alone, they said it was also to fight popular frontism at home. But by the time it came to formulating a "Call for the Formation of an International Tendency" ([SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, December, 1978), the future LTT stood on the whole of "programmatic and political acquisitions" of the LTF, and in particular "the texts of the LTF on the Portuguese revolution and on Angola".

This statement definitively branded the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency as a reformist formation and ignominious capitulators besides. For what did the LTF stand for in Portugal and Angola? At the height of the 1975 polarization in Portugal, when Lisbon workers were taking over factories, the LTF called for a purely "democratic" program of defense of the constituent assembly (at the time the battle cry of the right). As the Socialist Party of Mario Soares was leading a mass anti-Communist mobilization which was burning down CP offices, the SWP proclaimed that the "real vanguard of the Portuguese working class ... participated in the SP demonstrations" (*Militant*, 8 August 1975). And the OCI called for a "Soares Government" (*Informations Ouvrieres*, 23 July-6 August 1975). Moreno broke from the SWP and split the LTF precisely over this issue, while the future LTTers were at first even harder in condemning the SWP's tailing after Soares (only to capitulate a few weeks later and vote for the LTF's "Key Issues in the Portuguese Revolution" resolution).

For principled Marxists differences of the magnitude that divided the Morenoites and Lambertists over Portugal would make unity impossible: like the SWP and Mandel, they would have been facing each other on opposite sides of the barricades in Lisbon. The same on Angola,

where at the height of the fighting between the South African-led, CIA-financed imperialist drive on Luanda, the SWP/LTF refused to take sides for the military victory of the Soviet-backed MPLA. (Later they tried to disguise this vile betrayal by some heavy-handed "editing" of a January 1976 SWP national committee statement.) Moreno denounced this in the most violent terms, publishing a whole book on the subject (*Angola: La revolucion negra en marcha* [1977]) where he said that, "the best way to aid Vorster and Yankee imperialism was to say what the SWP said...." So how does Moreno feel about uniting today with people who consider the SWP/LTF's stand "historic"?

And Cuba? On Cuba, the LTT supports "the general line of D Keil's contributions", while three



Reformist Pierre Lambert, meet adventurer/charlatan Nahuel Moreno.

leaders of the Costa Rican OST (Andres, Rodrigo and Sara) signed together with Keil a document labeling the Castro regime a "bureaucratized workers state" ("For a Change in the Fourth International's Position on Cuba", [SWP] *IIDB*, December 1978). Again, at first glance this might seem a move to the left from the Usec's political support to the "unconscious Trotskyist" Fidel (now taken to new lengths by the SWP's latest panegyrics to Castro, the champion of peace and friend of the world's children). But as we pointed out in our article, "For Workers Political Revolution in Cuba!" (WV no 224, 2 February 1979), Keil et al were attacking the SWP "from the right, arguing in effect for a consistently social-democratic position of opposing all Stalinist regimes". We summed up: "Add up the SWP/LTF positions on China, Vietnam, Portugal and Angola and throw in a deformed workers state position on Cuba and what do you get? A fleshed-out program of Stalinophobia". The LTT/OST's openly counterrevolutionary positions on Nicaragua, calling the Sandinistas' victorious "second of-

fensive" and "adventure" are a vivid confirmation of our earlier conclusion.

... And the strange case of Fausto Amador

These questions -- the most basic issues of revolutionary perspective in key recent events -- are but the small change in the horse-trading combinations and recombinations of Usec factional struggles. There is a basis of sorts for the Morenoite/Lambertist block: both are deeply reformist while appearing left today on Nicaragua. Besides there is the attractive bait that the OCI recently broke with Moreno's long-standing opponents in the Argentine *Politica Obrera* group (enemy of my enemy makes you my friend, etc). But there are a few sticky points, even for these consummate opportunists. And one of these is the case of Fausto Amador, already introduced to our readers.

For Fausto Amador did not simply break from the FSLN. He was interviewed on Somoza's television and spoke to Somoza's press, where he urged other members of the guerrilla organization to lay down their arms in return for promises of amnesty by the blood-soaked dynastic dictatorship. For this the FSLN leaders rightly considered him a traitor. Later, as a Nicaraguan cultural attache in Brussels -- ie, an employee of Somoza -- he was reportedly won to the Usec's perversion of Trotskyism. Naturally this caused a certain commotion in Central America, where the case was well-known. Moreno picked this up and was the first to make it an issue in the Usec. At a December 1977 meeting of the central committee of the Colombian PST, Bolshevik Faction leader Eugenio Greco complained:

"Do you know the name they give in Europe to what Fausto Amador did. It was called collaborationism... If a very probable combination of circumstances occurs: that Somoza falls; that the Frente Sandinista emerges as a movement of great prestige because of its antidictatorial struggle... the Frente Sandinista might say: I would like the Fourth International to explain why Fausto Amador Arrieta is in its ranks ... and, gentlemen, at that moment Trotskyism will be finished in Central America." ([SWP] *IIDB*, April 1978)

And so it came to pass. But today the notorious Fausto Amador, a leader of the Costa Rican OST, is defended by the LTT and its new allies of Moreno and company. The BF counter-motion at the September 30 Usec meeting explicitly defends Amador against his accusers, "a petty-bourgeois leadership foreign to the Trotskyist movement". Attacks on the personal integrity of political leaders are the bane of the Latin American left, where most splits focus on accusations of stolen money or cowardice and betrayal. In the case of Fausto Amador the charges are essentially proven by his own admission; and yet he remains a recognized leader of the Usec. What is destroyed by this fact is not Trotskyism, however, but the revolutionary pretensions of these renegades from Marxism for whom Fausto Amador's hands are only a little dirtier than all the rest. ■ (reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 242, 26 October 1979)

Simón Bolívar Brigade:

Did Camejo turn them in?

The 60 leaders of the Simon Bolivar Brigade departed from Nicaragua on 17 August by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) may have been expelled from the country at the request of their own ostensibly Trotskyist "comrades". The putative fingerman? Peter Camejo, a leader of the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP). And behind him? The leadership of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (Usec), which allegedly ordered the denunciation.

As we have already reported (see *ASP* no 68, October 1979), Usec leaders -- far from protesting against the FSLN's expulsion of the "foreign Trotskyist" leaders of the Bolivar Brigade (who were beaten by Panamanian police during their transit through the land of "anti-imperialist" strongman Torrijos), went so far as to actually endorse the regime's anti-communist crackdown. On September 3, Sandinista leaders were handed a statement by a Usec delegation stating that "the FSLN was right to demand that the non-Nicaraguan members of this group ... leave the country".

Now at a meeting of the United Secretariat over the September 30 weekend an "official" statement was voted to explicitly "condemn and repudiate the Simon Bolivar Brigade and its activities". However, an amendment by Usec leader Ernest Mandel mildly criticising the expulsion as unnecessary, was enough to cause the rabidly pro-Sandinista SWP to vote against the resolution. Now it appears that this is only the political aftermath of the affair.

The source of the information is a letter addressed to the Usec published in a bulletin of the Italian LSR, followers of Brigade mentor Nahuel Moreno -- signed by three members of the pro-OCI "Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency" of the Usec: Sara (Executive Committee, OST Costa Rica); Felix (Executive Committee, OST Costa Rica); and Galene (Central Committee, French LCR). (For the full text of the letter, dated 20 August from Managua, see *Workers Vanguard* no 242, 26 October.) The authors mainly relate the story of the betrayal as it unfolded before their eyes, insisting that

"This testimony does not imply any support to the Simon Bolivar Brigade's [political] orientation, of which we have an extremely negative opinion. Our only objective is to help the appropriate bodies of the International to throw light on the incident in question and draw all the lessons so that events of the same nature and such gravity don't occur again."

The events the letter relates are straightforward. On the night of 12 August "comrade Manuel, a member of the United Secretariat" allegedly spoke by phone with Peter Camejo at the SWP convention in Oberlin, Ohio, after which the former

"stated that comrade Pedro [sic] Camejo had just informed him that the position of the comrades of the United Secretariat in Oberlin was to be even harder on the Simon Bolivar Brigade, to take no responsibility [for the

Brigade] with the Sandinista Front and to collaborate with the leadership of the Sandinista Front in order to help it to get rid of the Simon Bolivar Brigade." (emphasis added)

The next day "Manuel", the Usec delegate in Managua, carried out this mission: he "had a discussion with Julio Lopez, a representative of the Sandinista party organization, during which, according to what the comrade himself reported to us, the Simon Bolivar Brigade was discussed". That evening he "went to the Brigade's headquarters", where

"a discussion took place in our presence in which comrade Manuel informed the leadership of the Brigade that he was going to meet the leadership of the Front to ask that the Simon Bolivar Brigade be kicked out of Nicaragua."

The letter's authors assert that "the events described above are strictly those which we witnessed, in a situation in which we warned comrade Manuel that he could not count on our collaboration in this maneuver which we disapproved of from the start", and conclude:

"Whatever the magnitude of our differences, collaborating with the petty-bourgeois leadership against members of the Fourth International, within which they are organized as a faction, cannot be tolerated."

Can the SWP, the Usec and/or Peter Camejo refute the serious charges made in this letter? Are they true? Further, just how did the FSLN pick out the Morenoite leaders of the very much larger Bolivar Brigade? Did Usec representatives supply them with names? In a Marxist organization any member (much less a leader) guilty of such treason would be expelled. And faced with such grave charges, silence by the accused can only be interpreted as admission of guilt. ■

Did Peter Camejo, the SWP and the Usec finger the Simon Bolivar Brigade? We demand an answer! (adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 242, 26 October 1979)

Sydney Uni: "lefts" cross class line ... again

Five years ago it seemed as if hardly a meeting of the Sydney University Senate -- the bourgeoisie's governing board for the university -- could take place without a protest or picket outside. At that time, when leftists ran for the token "student seat" on the Senate -- successfully -- at least it was on a program centred on abolishing this undemocratic chamber of capitalist control.

Although the ruling class controls the university through the Senate in the same way today as before, the former protesters have "changed their spots" with the times. The militant reformism of the Whitlam years and opposition to the Vietnam war already faded from their memory, today's student "leftists" are barely distinguishable from the prevailing campus mood of pursuing careers and "finding yourself". Last year Gary Nicholls, leading member of the Communist Group (campus CPA supporters), and CG supporter Barbara Ramjan scabbed on an SRC workers' strike; and both the CG and their slightly-to-the-left International Socialist (IS) imitators favoured using the ruling-class courts against SRC/AUS rightist Tony Abbott, an act which predictably brought cops onto the campus. This outrage, which would have sparked vigorous and massive left protests a few years earlier, barely caused a ripple.

With these betrayals under their belts, it wasn't at all surprising when campus "leftists" crossed the class line again last month, by standing for the token "student seats" on the

Senate in order to support this body rather than call for its abolition. The ALP-style candidates of "Students for Democracy" -- Anne Britton, Paul Lynch and Jenny Hansen -- promised to present "responsible views to the Senate" and bring it "into touch with students". Lest any doubt remain they were careful to reassure the administration that "there is obviously a need for the Senate".

The *Red Letter*, campus newsheet of the CG, had not a word of criticism of the "left" candidates as it endorsed this "campaign" to fight "individual careerists" and "right wing elements". When Sydney University Spartacist Club supporters, who call for boycotting Senate elections and abolishing the Senate, raised the Senate election campaign at the 15 October SRC Women's Collective meeting, the somewhat embarrassed CG and IS supporters present played coy at first. They said the campaign could have been more "critical", and abstained when Spartacist supporters put a motion condemning "this disgusting collaborationism" with "the bourgeoisie's arm on campus". But when the motion unexpectedly passed, they quickly came to their reformist senses and put another motion to rescind it, which carried, with IS and CG supporters clearly in favour.

These reformists thereby endorsed "lefts" joining appointed businessmen and such others as Vice-Chancellor Bruce Williams in their reactionary work. Yes, that's the main author of the

Williams Report calling for the reinstatement of tertiary fees, which even Fraser didn't dare incorporate in the annual budget. The Senate increased the penalties against the student demonstrators, including CG members, who appealed to it following their "trial" before the Proctorial Board for liberal-moralist disruption of the lectures of racist ideologue Hans Eysenck in 1978. One of the "left" Senate candidates, Jenny Hansen, was on the Proctorial Board herself in 1978. But this pales next to the shameless CPA; party members Peter Reed, Greg Schofield and Carl Heid have themselves just obtained SRC appointments to the Proctorial Board for next year!

The IS claim to stand qualitatively to the left of the Communist Party has been exposed again as worthless. Last year IS supporters at first agreed with the Spartacist Club's call for a defence of the anti-Eysenck protesters based on militant protest, but then refused to build the actual demonstration called by Spartacist supporters against the Vice-Chancellor's "welcome to new students". Instead they signed a call with the CG and others to "put pressure on the Senate" by "highlighting" to it "the spurious nature of the charges".

The opportunist, sand-box misleaders of the CG and IS will find ruling-class control of the university as impossible to "reform" as capitalism itself. As Dawn McEwan concluded in a letter for the Spartacist Club to the last 1979 issue of *Honi Soit*,

"Eysenck-1978. This is the role of the University Senate. It does not operate from 'false consciousness' or because it is a neutral body, as the CG suggests, but because it is the governing body of the University in capitalist society.... Such bodies cannot be reformed to work in the interests of campus workers and leftist students!... Down with the Senate! Abolish the Proctorial Board! Cops off campus! For student-staff-campus worker control of the University!"

Kampuchea ...

Continued from page one

recognition of the overthrown Pol Pot as the legitimate government of Kampuchea by the UN. Rapidly reduced to a small band and driven into the mountainous areas near the Thai border, the remnants of Pol Pot's forces have been kept alive with food and sanctuary in Thailand, including permission to escape Vietnamese forces through Thai territory to reenter Kampuchea at safer points. The Khmer Rouge have also been allowed to receive arms from their Stalinist Chinese backers across Thai territory (*Financial Review*, 26 October). In February, after promising the US to "teach Vietnam a bloody lesson", China launched a "punitive" invasion, thus solidifying the US/China alliance aimed against the Soviet Union and putting additional military pressure on Vietnam.

Three months ago, the Heng Samrin government of Kampuchea urgently appealed to the Red Cross and UN relief agencies for food and vital medical supplies, only to be met with a string of hypocritical "guarantees" and "conditions". Any aid to Phnom Penh had to be distributed to people under Pol Pot's control as well, despite the civil war conditions and obvious dominance of the Heng Samrin regime. Japan promised aid only if Vietnam stopped the fight against Pol Pot (*Intercontinental Press [IP]*, 24 September). According to one report, UN troops would be required to distribute the aid, and Australia volunteered to be part of the "peacekeeping force" (*Asiaweek*, 26 October)! Naturally, Phnom Penh rejected this blackmail.

No red tape has held up aid going into Thailand, however. Food supplies available across the border have turned a refugee trickle -- little more than a few Chinese advisors of Pol Pot turned up in Thailand in the few months immediately after the Vietnamese takeover -- into a flood. Recent US actions such as the "windfall aid plan", under which US oil companies are putting their excess profits tax toward a fund to provide food through agencies operating on the Thai border (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 19 October) serve to bolster Pol Pot, who controls enough of the distribution to funnel aid into Kampuchea, where his guerrilla fighters get preference (*Asiaweek*, 26 October).

But food is only the beginning. More than half a dozen rightist groups led by former officials and generals of the Sihanouk and Lon Nol regimes, and probably backed and supplied by the CIA through Thailand, are now operating alongside Pol Pot's forces inside Kampuchea against the Heng Samrin regime. One of these, the "Khmer Serika",

is called the "paras" by the Vietnamese, apparently because of their boots and crisp new camouflage uniforms (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12 October). Thailand itself is getting rush shipments and top priority on US military aid, including latest model M48 tanks and sophisticated TOW anti-tank missile systems, with plenty of US advisers for training.

Against this background, Carter's call for prayers for the Kampucheans, and statements that the "aid" issue is "beyond politics ... a matter of simple and humanitarian concern" from White House officials (*Asiaweek*, 26 October) ring hollow indeed. Although more aid is now being flown into Phnom Penh by Western agencies for appearances' sake, the latest US ploy is to demand the Samrin government's approval for a "land bridge" of aid from Thailand, which would only strengthen the already existing links to the various rightist and anti-Vietnamese bands operating in border areas.

There is no way that the US imperialist butchers of the Vietnamese and Kampuchean people will ever have a "change of heart" or a real "humanitarian" impulse. Yet that is exactly what the reformists of both the Stalinist Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) and so-called "Trotskyist" Socialist Workers Party call for! "Food for Kampuchea now!" and "End Australian complicity" demands the SWP's *Direct Action* (25 October) echoing its international mentors:

"It is the elementary duty of governments around the world -- and especially of the US government, responsible for so much carnage in Indochina -- to mount a massive international relief campaign." (*IP*, 8 October 1979)

The SPA was only slightly more direct when its Central Committee "appealed to US President Carter to respond positively to the latest Soviet proposals" on arms reduction.

But what is it all for? Surely the US has no desire to restore the former Pol Pot regime, despite the latter's valiant effort to beat the US' own record for brutality in Southeast Asia. The Khmer Rouge gang, however, is now out of power and divorced from its earlier connection with an anti-capitalist state structure. There is no guarantee now that the Khmer Rouge, if returned to power militarily, would maintain the collectivised property forms of the Kampuchean deformed workers state. Their victory, if carried out in step with their new rightist allies, could lead to the restoration of a capitalist regime. Ieng Sary made this point repeatedly in a series of interviews in June, as he appealed to former enemies in the Lon Nol/CIA gangs to "forget the past", and revealed Khmer Rouge ties with Thailand, ASEAN countries and anti-communist hill tribes in Vietnam (*IP*, 11 June, 18 June and 9 July 1979). And, as the *Guardian Weekly* suggested (30 September), there are other "neutralist" (read capitalist) alternatives as well: "The only possible defence for support of Pol Pot is that it leaves open the 'Sihanouk option'".

With 180,000 Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea, none of these "options" has much chance at present; but none of them would exist at all were it not for the Thai/imperialist aid and comfort.

Vietnam itself is hungry and devastated by war, pressed militarily in the north by China, and internationally isolated except for its alliance with the Soviet Union. But the counterrevolutionary Brezhnev bureaucracy refused to honour its treaty with Vietnam during the Chinese invasion in February, opting instead for the illusion of "detente" with imperialism; and the longer the imperialists and their Thai and Chinese allies can keep an anti-Vietnamese option open in Kampuchea, thus forcing the Vietnamese army to remain, the greater chance they have of making the national question work against the Vietnamese Stalinists.

The Spartacist tendency warned in January that continued Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea, while it might improve the quality of life in the short run, "will increase the poison of national chauvinism" between the Kampuchean and Vietnamese peoples (*Workers Vanguard*, 19 January) and will ultimately be incompatible with the national democratic rights of the Khmer people. Though the chances of the discredited Pol Pot rallying a popular anti-Vietnamese upsurge are slim indeed, the Vietnamese Stalinist leadership will inevitably increase those chances with its own national chauvinism and imposed "federation" of Indochina.

A genuine soviet federation of Indochina -- in which Vietnam would necessarily play a leading role -- could only be based on enduring solidarity of the Khmer and Vietnamese people under workers democracy, not puppet governments and military occupation. And it could only be established through the ousting of the parasitic Stalinist caste in Hanoi and Phnom Penh, through proletarian political revolution led by a Trotskyist vanguard party of Indochina.

While pointing out that a struggle for the national existence of the Khmer people could develop, we took no side in the original squalid border conflict in 1978 between the qualitatively similar Pol Pot and Vietnamese Stalinist regimes; and while opposing the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in January, we refused to join US imperialist demands for the immediate withdrawal of Vietnamese troops following Hanoi's sudden victory. "History will decide", we said, whether the national question would come to predominate in Indochina as it was not clear whether "given a choice, the Cambodians [would] rather have national independence or schools, marriage of their own choice, food, children and wages" (*Workers Vanguard*, 2 March). But the manoeuvres of the imperialists, Thais and Chinese Stalinists could pose the possible emergence of a serious anti-communist military force composed of Pol Pot and "free Khmer" rightists, subordinated to an imperialist drive to restore capitalism in Kampuchea. The military victory of such a force could only rob the Khmer people of any choice, and reimpose the domination of imperialism in part of Indochina, thus striking a blow against the Vietnamese revolution as well. In the event of such a threat materialising, revolutionists would have no choice but to stand for the unconditional military victory of the armies of the deformed workers state. ■

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Arbitration ...

Continued from page one

unemployment in the period since 1975. Now traitor Halfpenny has the gall to wonder why there is no "immediate response" from workers!

The penalties on the unions embodied in Fraser's new legislation rely for their effectiveness largely on the bureaucrats' utter dependence on Arbitration. Accustomed to conducting a pseudo-struggle under its shelter, their very tactics -- selective bans and token strikes, as opposed to "all out" strikes supported by strike funds and militant industrial solidarity (picket lines) -- are moulded to the task not of defeating the bosses but pressuring the "judges".

Along with their pathetic clinging to Arbitration, all wings of the bureaucracy can only respond to the decline of capitalism with a *reactionary* perspective: more racist protectionism, craftist job-trusting and freezing technology -- a program for the further disruption and stagnation of capitalism, without being able to resolve the system's historical crisis. Reformism will only succeed in creating a breeding ground for National Alliance-style fascism.

Arbitration must be smashed through class struggle. The anti-union laws are on the books, but ultimately "law" is no more than a reflection of the relation of class forces, and these laws have yet to be enforced. When the confrontation that Fraser has not yet found expedient and the bureaucrats have shrunk from does come, there will be more at stake than defending the formal legal rights of trade unionism under capitalism -- necessary as that defence is. The defeat of the bourgeoisie's state depends on the emergence of a proletarian leadership prepared to carry this struggle through to the end, splitting the masses of workers from the ALP misleaders and forging a revolutionary workers party to lead workers to state power.■

Redfern ...

Continued from page eight

grouped many of those activists who worked in an officially sanctioned union "publicity committee" organised by SWP supporters, and explicitly subordinated to the Hawkins/Battese executive, in the run-up to the abortive July bans campaign. The RFG appeals to the betrayed workers' understandable cynicism with a vague, anti-"officials" veneer, and has maintained the illusion of being different from the other opportunists by refusing to take a position on anything important. Thus, during the elections, individual members of the group were left to support whomever they wished.

To the extent the group has a common political basis at all it is reflected in a "Draft Charter", never adopted, which consists mainly of worthless platitudes about jobs and conditions and fanciful "solutions" to bureaucratism like "limited tenure of office" and refusal to run for any official union position, or to allow any union official to be a member of the RFG, etc. These congenital reformists substitute their anti-Leninist fear of leadership for *genuine* workers democracy, which can only be consistently defended by a *leadership* committed to a class-struggle program. By pretending to reject "leadership" in general, the RFG in reality presents the current misleadership with a blank cheque by refusing to struggle against them.

Behind the sub-syndicalist nonsense lies a *fundamental political kinship* with the Hawkinses and Kanans. Compromised already by the role of many of its founders in the publicity committee which fronted for Hawkins' treacherous "passive resistance" strategy, the RFG has maintained a guilty silence on the July sellout. With no program to oppose Hawkins or Kanan, the RFG at best can only be the future vehicle of an aspiring reformist bureaucrat should one less tarnished than the current batch come along.

IS "principles" come cheap

This is just what the IS is always looking for. So these "rank and file" reformists have played the RFG up as the way for Redfern workers to "organise ourselves" to "beat the bosses", rather than "rely[ing] on the union officials", either the "right wing officials" or the "other bureaucrats" (*Battler*, 13 October). Indeed, the IS was forced to depart from its usual "lesser-evil" opportunism with an uncharacteristic, if mealy-mouthed, implicitly "neutral" stance in the recent APTU elections. "Who's the best of a bad bunch?... it's not an easy decision", said the *Battler* (29 September). The *Battler* has even quoted approvingly APTU militants who express "absolute contempt for the courts" (27 October).

In practice the IS, true to form, turns out to

be not so neutral after all. At the 9 October APTU meeting one Steve Drakeley, a supporter of IS politics at Redfern, registered his backhanded support for Hawkins by *abstaining* on the motion of confidence. Later he confirmed this was merely shamefaced "lesser evil" tailism by reportedly contending that to vote *against* confidence in an anti-communist class traitor was to bloc with the fanatically anti-communist NCC! And the *Battler* says *nothing* of those RFG members who voted for the motion.

As for the courts, who does the IS think it's kidding? Remember the IS-touted "Builders Labourers for Democratic Control" which only last year *twice* got the courts to force *court-controlled* elections on their union? Then, when the bureaucrats-on-the-outside were less distasteful than the likes of Hawkins/Kanan, the IS said it was a "legitimate tactic". The Spartacist League called for "bosses' courts out of the union" and exposed them: "Union 'democracy' at the cost of class independence is the 'principle' of reformist bureaucrats out of power" (*ASP* no 55, July 1978 -- emphasis in original). The IS will not hesitate to cross the class line in the APTU too whenever the chance of a little influence comes its way. Their "principles" come dirt cheap.

Postal workers do not need a "rank and file" edition of the pro-capitalist misleadership which has already cost them so much. To defend Redfern and beat back the anti-union assault they need a leadership armed with a program which unflinchingly addresses the needs of workers assailed by inflation and the spectre of the dole, needs which *cannot* be satisfied within the crisis-ridden capitalist system; a program which vigorously defends the class independence of the workers organisations from the state which defends that system. The only worthwhile opposition is one organised around such a program -- centrally including a militant national strike to defeat the MNP and restore eroded living standards; a sliding scale of hours; unconditional automatic cost-of-living wage rises; and a workers government based on workers organisations to expropriate the capitalists as a class -- that relentlessly exposes and combats *all* wings of the bureaucracy, as part of the struggle for a revolutionary party capable of leading the proletariat to power.■

Red Army ...

Continued from page eight

sabotaging the possibility of a strong counter-picket. The self-proclaimed Moscow-loyal Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) was determined to keep its head low. In imitation of their Soviet patron's attempts to conciliate imperialism with talk of "detente", the SPA holds off mobilising its union supporters for fear of alienating bourgeois public opinion. "The best counter-demonstration that can be held is a full theatre", was the SPA's mealy-mouthed response. Such complacent reformist passivity only ensures that the anti-communist demonstrations will be bolder and more aggressive in the future.

Predictably the social-democratic Communist

Party just wasn't interested. Socialist Workers Party (SWP) spokesman Tony Forward replied with typical cynicism, "we're going to the movies to-night", proving once again their Soviet "defencism" isn't worth the paper it's (now rarely) printed on. International Socialists (IS) spokesman Mick Armstrong of course refused, invoking their "third camp" neutrality in any conflict between the USSR and imperialism. Indeed while the SWP was off, probably enjoying the aesthetics of the anti-communist film *The Deer Hunter*, the IS would have been right at home with the Maoist, Ukrainian and Zionist fanatics denouncing "Russian imperialism".

It is one sign of the Kremlin bureaucracy's ultimate inability to defend the Soviet workers state that its criminal national oppression of Soviet minorities creates a base for counter-revolutionary nationalism. These bureaucratic usurpers must be swept away through workers political revolution. At the same time the defence of the gains of October against such an anti-communist rabble is the elementary duty of any class-conscious militant: it is a telling indictment of Australia's opportunist left that when it came to fulfilling this duty they were nowhere to be seen.■

"Socialist" Zionism ...

Continued from page three

I began to move away from anarchism, I still had a mistrust for anyone who spoke favourably of a vanguard party of the working class. Either they were an aspiring despot or a fool who had failed to learn from the Russian Revolution that Bolshevism necessarily led to Stalinism. Of course, this view is extremely unscientific because it discounts the material factors affecting the degeneration of the Russian Revolution, ultimately, the pressure of imperialism on the isolated and backward Russian workers state, and the demoralisation unrelieved by a successful revolution elsewhere. To consolidate his rule and the victory of bureaucratic reaction, Stalin was forced to destroy Lenin's party.

... To reject the vanguard organisation of revolutionists leads to support for the reformist bureaucrats who lead the working class today and justifies their sellouts of the workers struggles by blaming it on the backwardness of the working class.

The Spartacist League does not "agree to disagree" in order to preserve the "family" of the left because we are not pessimists. We aim to build an international revolutionary party which will fight for the expropriation of the bourgeoisie by the world proletariat, thereby creating the conditions for the elimination of scarcity and the development of a classless, communist society. This world-historic task will not be accomplished through tailing the pre-existing bourgeois or reformist leaders of the workers or of sections of the oppressed. Stealth will not win people to socialism.

For the rebirth of the Fourth International!
For world communism!■



We are the party of the Russian Revolution

The 1917 October Revolution was the shaping event of our century. The seizure of state power 62 years ago this month by the revolutionary Russian proletariat, led by its Bolshevik vanguard, was a monumental advance toward world socialism. Today only the international Spartacist tendency -- the legitimate political continuators of Lenin's Bolsheviks and of Trotsky's Fourth International -- stands solidly on the Trotskyist program of unconditional military defence of the USSR against imperialism and counterrevolution, combined with the struggle for political revolution in the degenerated and deformed workers states to establish the proletarian democracy of soviet rule.

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"Rank and file" reformists tail Hawkins

Redfern Mail: sellout takes its toll

ASp photo



Redfern Mail Exchange, centre of APTU militancy: threatened with extinction.

Both victors and vanquished in last month's Australian Postal and Telecommunications Union (APTU) elections for federal and NSW state executive positions have wasted no time confirming that they are equally rotten. The losers were the so-called "left-wing" clique headed by APTU state secretary Merv Hawkins and state president Noel Battese (whose own posts were not up for election), and the winners the opposition slate of Joe Kanan, his right-wing bloc partners and his tacit supporter George Slater, the union's federal secretary, who sits on the Postal Commission which runs Australia Post (AP). Both sides were already thoroughly discredited before the elections by their joint responsibility for the sellout of the struggle at Redfern Mail Exchange last July.

It was this cowardly capitulation which paved the way for AP to begin implementing on a large scale the Mail Network Plan aimed at dismantling the exchange, the most militant centre of the union. Since the election, AP has slowed down its half-cocked attempt to by-pass 50 percent of mail ordinarily sorted at Redfern to overloaded regional mail centres. Now, however, the plan is being pursued in a more orderly fashion, with projected transfers to the decentralised mail

centres starting to open up, and the AP apparently confident of meeting little resistance.

On the shop floor AP continues to press its advantage. Erosion of working conditions and traditional rights has gone ahead, including stepped-up management harassment of union job representatives. Meanwhile rabid anti-communists, who backed Kanan, and other sordid elements at Redfern, have begun to emerge from the woodwork, and there have been incidents of open red-baiting of militants on the floor.

The anti-communism has only been encouraged by the role of the opportunist self-proclaimed leftists at Redfern, who are up to their elbows in the dirty inter-bureaucratic clique squabbles and sellouts. Lynda Boland of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Communist Party (CP) supporter Brian Carey have been Hawkins' loyal flunkies, while Ted Sharkey (pro-Moscow Socialist Party supporter) has been associated with Kanan.

Fake lefts vote confidence in proven sellout Hawkins

Amidst the continued AP attacks the cliques were at it again only a week after the election results became known. Court cases were flying once more in both directions as Kanan pushed through a special general meeting on 9 October

by petition for the purpose of getting a vote of "no confidence" in his opponent, using as a pretext an arbitration court ruling that Hawkins had used union money to send out his campaign material. Hawkins, however, though discredited in the ranks especially at Redfern, still has a base among union activists and Kanan's manoeuvre fell through.

Instead of the no-confidence motion, a Hawkins supporter moved a motion of confidence and despite some vintage red-baiting demagoguery by Kanan (who ominously threatened to take the anti-red campaign to the shop floor), it passed. Naturally, Boland and Carey were among those voting for confidence in the proven sellout Hawkins; nor did they object to the union being dragged through the bosses' courts again. But a bigger chunk of the pro-Hawkins vote came from the 20-odd union members mobilised by the Redfern "Rank and File Group" (RFG), some voting for and some abstaining. No genuine militant could even consider any alternative but voting against this blanket endorsement of Hawkins' sellout role.

Made up of assorted "independent" leftists, anarchists, feminists and supporters of the International Socialists (IS), the RFG has re-

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ASp photos

"Red Army troupe welcome here!"

Spartacist League opposes anti-communist mobilisation



Top: Zionists, Maoists bloc with "Captive Nations" anti-semites against USSR. Bottom: SL demonstrates against anti-communists outside Red Army Troupe performance.

When the Soviet Red Army song and dance company opened its Sydney season at the Regent Theatre 22 October it was met by 250 anti-communist zealots who jeered and harassed theatre-goers attending the show. "Captive Nations" placards denouncing the "Red Butchers" mingled with banners proclaiming "Free Croatia". Establishment Zionists from the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies were there demanding "Let Our People Go" and "Free Soviet Jewry". Next to them was an outfit calling itself the "Veterans of Ukrainian Insurgent Army" which busied itself handing out an expensively produced, glossy four-page leaflet demanding the release of Ukrainian nationalist "prisoners of war".

And right up there waving their Eureka flags amid this motley collection of anti-communists and Zionists were the Maoists of the People for Australian Independence. In this unholy alliance anti-semitic pogromists stood alongside Zionists, Maoists alongside fascistic anti-communists, and all literally under the banner of "Human

Rights" -- Jimmy Carter's codeword for US imperialism's sinister anti-communist crusade directed at the Soviet Union.

But this reactionary anti-Soviet mobilisation did not go unchallenged. Across the street a small but disciplined contingent of Spartacist supporters set up a counter-demonstration with placards proclaiming "The Red Army Troupe is welcome here", "No to Stalinist detente/SALT illusions" and "Down with Carter's anti-Soviet 'human rights' crusade! Defend the workers states from imperialist attack!" Spirited chants rang out across the road: "Down with anti-communism, defend the Soviet Union"; "Soviet workers: oust the usurpers -- return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky"; "One, two, three, four, Carter's 'human rights' means imperialist war, five, six, seven, eight, Russia don't capitulate".

Not one other political tendency turned out to join our opposition to this anti-communist provocation,

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