



## No to US bases! Defend the USSR!

Only workers revolution can disarm  
the imperialists!

Thetford, England; Diego Garcia; now possibly Cockburn Sound in Western Australia. As US president Jimmy Carter continues his drive towards World War III and possible nuclear armageddon, so the proliferation of the US' anti-Soviet military bases continues apace. Thetford is to be one of the sites for the 160 Cruise missiles to be placed in Britain by 1983 as part of the Pentagon's new European strike force of Cruise and Pershing missiles; Diego Garcia, a barely visible dot in the Indian Ocean, has been transformed from an uninhabited atoll into a sophisticated installation ready for use by Carter's much-ballyhooed Rapid Deployment Force; and as proof that he is willing to go all the way with Washington, Malcolm Fraser has jumped in to offer Cockburn Sound in WA as a naval base for the US' rapidly expanding Indian Ocean fleet as well as a northern airfield for its B-52 bombers.

Fraser's offer of a new base to the US imperialists has predictably spurred sections of the reformist left into resurrecting all the nationalist/pacifist claptrap about disarmament and the need for Australia to be "non-aligned". But such daydreams cannot wish away the reality of the class struggle and the current international polarisation between imperialism and the Soviet workers state. In the conflict between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie there is not now, nor has there ever been, any "third camp". Those who refuse to defend the gains of the October Revolution which Carter's war drive is targeting must inevitably end up aiding and abetting the imperialists. Trotskyists say: Defend the Soviet Union! Smash the anti-Soviet military build-up! For workers revolution to end imperialist war!

With Washington beating the war drums Australian jackal imperialism has been quick to jump to attention. Fraser's rush to get under the US umbrella is the familiar gut response of the Australian



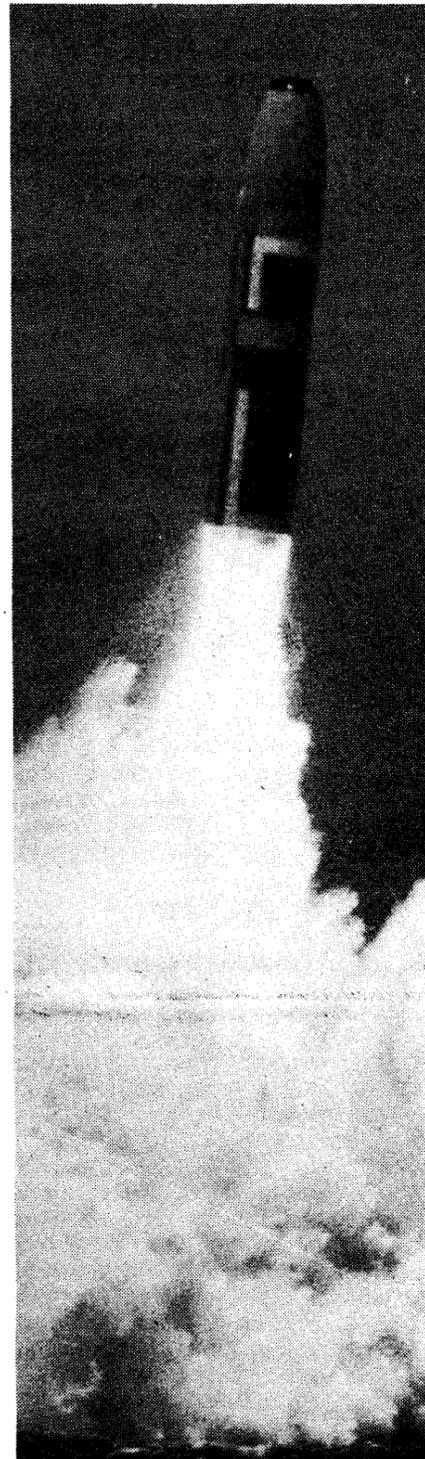
Spartacist Britain

Spartacist League/Britain at 22 June Labour anti-Cruise missile demonstration.

ruling class in a period of international tension. Since World War II the central core of Australian foreign policy has been to endear itself to Washington by being both the US' most bellicose and sniffing regional "friend". And this has been true whether the government in power has been Labor or Liberal. True, Whitlam liked to posture as a sort of "neutral", standing half-way between the "Third World" and US imperialism. But this was a phoney: Labor in power was no less committed to US bases such as Pine Gap and North West Cape than their conservative forerunners and successors. And to date, the ALP tops have said

virtually nothing about Fraser's Cockburn Sound offer, knowing that a commitment to the American alliance is essential if they are ever to get back on the treasury benches.

Australia's relationship to "its great and powerful friend across the Pacific" was well captured by ex-Australian ambassador to Washington, Alan Renouf. No Fraser fan, Renouf recounted Fraser's habit of writing frequent "Dear Jimmy" letters pledging eternal loyalty and dispensing some Fair Dinkum Aussie advice. Invariably, these epistles got lost in the State Department's filing system until some harassed low-level bureaucrat



Trident missile test launch.

rang Renouf and wondered what the hell he was supposed to say in reply. But while the spectacle of junior imperialist Fraser rushing to get a piece of the anti-Soviet action along with the big boys, Brzezinski and Carter, may look incongruous, it is very real nonetheless. Currently, the Pentagon's war strategists are "studying" the Cockburn Sound offer, but it could be taken up at any moment, thus adding another anti-Soviet base to the ever-growing list.

If Australia's Fraser is proving more than cooperative in backing up Carter's every anti-Soviet move — witness not

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# SWP's wish comes true Imperialists send troops to New Hebrides

Call in the Royal Marines. And if they won't go, send in the Diggers. That was in essence the disgusting response of Australia's "anti-imperialist" fake-left to the bizarre, sometimes farcical events in the New Hebrides as the former joint British-French "condominium" moved toward independence on 30 July. They got their wish, too. As if to advertise this South Pacific island chain's continued neo-colonial subordination, the "independence" ceremonies took place under the "protection" of 400 British marines and French paratroopers.

It was and remains an elementary duty for socialists to demand unconditionally: imperialist troops out! But not for the reformists of the Communist Party (CPA) and Socialist Workers Party (SWP), who echoed the mini-imperialist regional ambitions of their "own" ruling class by attacking Fraser and Thatcher for not intervening aggressively enough!

The 120,000 people of this tiny archipelago (now called the "Republic of Vanuatu") have been made virtual pawns in a tangle of sordid imperialist manoeuvres which their would-be local rulers are willing players in. The troops were sent after many demands from Father Walter Lini and his Vanuaku Pati, the victors in a UN-sponsored election last year and touted by the

reformists as "anti-imperialists", who wanted their masters to clean out secessionists on the island of Espiritu Santo led by the eccentric Jimmy Stevens. Portrayed by the media as a "lovable rogue", Stevens boasts that he will only talk to Lini if he comes begging to Santo wearing only a "wooden penis shroud".

Stevens' operation is backed by local French colons and the Phoenix Foundation, a group of ultra-right-wing American businessmen headed by Nevada real estate millionaire Michael Oliver. In pursuit of a tax-free capitalist paradise, they have supplied Stevens with both money and the constitution for his "Vemarana Federation". (The foundation's last such adventure founded when both flag and prospective "promised land" sank under four feet of water at high tide!) The rebellion has also had tacit support from the French colonial authorities, annoyed at the electoral victory of the anglophile Vanuaku Pati and concerned for the future of nickel-rich New Caledonia and nuclear test sites in French Polynesia.

After the Santo rebellion, the SWP's inimitable Renfrey Clarke brazenly declared:

"Nevertheless, if the British government was [sic] to use its troops to put down the

rightist coup on Santo, that would be a blow against these attempts to deny the New Hebrides population their national sovereignty."

— *Direct Action*, 18 June

Leave it to the SWP to propose the army of the British Empire, brutal enforcer of decades of colonial slavery, as a guardian of national rights! It has become routine for the SWP to counsel the oppressed to look for salvation to the armed fist of the imperialist bandits — be it to "protect" blacks in Alabama or Boston, or to help Mugabe "stabilise" black majority rule in Zimbabwe. These particular SWP-style "freedom fighters" happened to be 200 veterans of the vicious British occupation of Northern Ireland (*Newsweek*, 23 June).

The CPA complained that "The Australian government is unwilling to antagonise the French", who were getting ready to "plunge" the islands "into a Timor-style tragedy", and then went on: "The Australian government should demand that Britain and France end the Santo revolt" (*Tribune*, 25 June). The comparison with East Timor is appropriate in one respect only: the SWP, CPA and the rest of the fake-left, at the time of the Indonesian invasion, like-

wise campaigned for the "democratic" Australian bourgeoisie to "do something" and not "sell out" the East Timorese to the Indonesians. They stand four-square behind the "right" of White Australia to oppress and exploit the small island communities of the Pacific, against the competing claims of non-white Indonesians and "brutal" French alike.

With Whitehall on side, the goal of Fraser and the Labor opposition alike is to hasten the departure of the French from their remaining Pacific possessions by acting as the patron saint of indigenous "independence movements". Thus despite the CPA and SWP's years-long promotion of Father Lini's Vanuaku Pati as a "national liberation movement" Lini maintains cordial relations with Fraser and his foreign minister, Andrew Peacock.

In fact the French were finally persuaded to join the British "peace-keeping" mission in Santo by Fraser himself. He rallied the region's "independent" micro-nations and mini-kingdoms at a mid-July South Pacific Forum meeting in Kiribati behind his call on the departing imperialist powers to carry out their "responsibilities" — or have it done by someone else. As the local French Commissioner told the annoyed Santo colons the week before independence day, "What do you want? It's either them [the French troops] or an Australian military force which will be worse" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 July).

The British/French force has shown no inclination to move against Stevens, however, and Lini has been left in Port Vila to fume and await 300 replacement troops promised by Australia's neo-colonial lackeys in Papua New Guinea. These will only be Melanesian surrogates for an Australian intervention. Indeed, the PNG troops are officered by Australian army personnel and are probably being financed by Canberra as well. This development has already been welcomed in advance by the SWP and CPA self-appointed advisors to the Foreign Affairs department. As for the future of the New Hebrides under Lini and his anglo-saxon imperialist friends, this sort of "independence" can be good for business. Commented an article in the *Financial Review* (1 August), "Independence... should mean more business for this tax haven and loan booking centre" — good news for the Hong Kong banks. Revolutionists do not take sides in the imperialist squabble over how and by whom the people of the New Hebrides will continue to be exploited. On the contrary; we have a special responsibility in this country to oppose the Australian bosses' ambitions for a racist "Pax Australiana" in its local region under the umbrella of US imperialism. That is a necessary part of the struggle for worldwide socialist revolution to smash all imperialist exploitation for good: The SWP and CPA have already indicated where they will stand in that struggle — on the side of their "own" exploiters. We demand: all imperialist troops — and their "Third World" stand-ins — out of the New Hebrides! ■

## CPA thuggery at "rank-and-file" conference

SYDNEY — Violence and thuggery against left-wing opponents seems to be fast becoming more of an in-thing with the Communist Party (CPA) these days. Last issue we reported an attack by a CPA member on a Spartacist League (SL) salesman in Balmain (see "Defend rights of socialist paper sellers!", *Australasian Spartacist* no 75, July 1980). Since then another CPA member, Joe Owens, has also lashed out and assaulted a Spartacist supporter, PKIU member Ron Rees. These thuggish violations of workers democracy must cease now!

The Owens attack came at the start of the deadly-dull "Rank and File Workers Conference" held in Sydney over the 19-20 July weekend. From the start Owens had been verbally abusing SL members and supporters. But on seeing Rees and an SL member talking to two conference attendees about a couple of articles we had run in the last issue of *ASp* on recent strikes at John Fairfax &

Sons, he became visibly angry. As he reached the bottom of the steps into the foyer of the Gaelic Club venue, he began shouting and shaking his fists, threatening to "come down hard" if Spartacists "caused any disturbance". Rees immediately protested this harassment, pointing out that there were people inside the hall who were known to have scabbed on strikes. (Rees had particularly in mind one Noel Hazard, an electrician who daily crossed the picket lines during the 1976 Fairfax printers' strike.) But he had scarcely got the words out of his mouth when Owens lunged at him, grabbing him hard by the throat with one hand and raising the other as if to strike him down.

When Rees then went into the conference room to protest and inform the organisers of what had happened, he was greeted with various responses ranging from "There are no organisers of this conference", to amusement, to total denial. As one CPA supporter lyingly put it, "I was there and I didn't see a thing".

But a few minutes later none other than Owens himself came out and "apologised", adding that nonetheless he was "standing on what he'd said". So much for his "apology" to comrade Rees, a bona-fide rank-and-file member of the PKIU who refused on principle to cross the picket lines of unions on strike at Fairfax, or to work in the struck plant during the 11-week-long metal workers' strike there earlier this year.

In response to the Owens' assault, SL members and supporters then circulated the following motion, which was quickly signed by a dozen participants at the conference and placed on the floor for discussion:

"In light of the recent attack on Peter Baldwin that this conference condemn violence and intimidation within the workers movement, and in particular that this Rank and File Workers Conference condemn the physical attack this morning

by Joe Owens on PKIU member Ron Rees, a Spartacist supporter, as a gross violation of workers democracy."

True to form, though, the aspiring bureaucrats running the meeting manoeuvred to ensure a minimum of discussion, allowing just one speaker — an Australian Railways Union member from Melbourne — in favour. Owens "apologised" for his behaviour, but added that it "wasn't an unprovoked attack. There are no scabs here!" — blithely ignoring Hazard's presence. Owens' fellow CPA member and old BLF crony Abe David then chimed in that the SL motion was "childish nonsense" and moved to shelve it. But when this was protested by many participants, David put the motion straight to a vote. Then, virtually as one, the CPA and the fake-left in attendance — the Socialist Workers Party, International Socialists, members of the "Trotskyist Study Group" and followers of the *Keep Left* paper in the ALP — banded together to vote the motion down.

Perhaps better than anything this incident illuminated the character of this woeful conference, which consisted for the most part of a tedious recitation of horror stories from the shop-floor. Owens' attack expressed his fear that SL members and supporters would introduce into the cosy proceedings a class-struggle program for work within the trade unions, and expose the conference as a fraud designed to give him and his friends a spurious "left" cover. But Owens is neither a "rank-and-filer" nor a union militant; indeed, his attack on Rees is consistent with his past rotten history, which includes dragging the Builders Labourers Federation before the bosses' NSW Industrial Court after he was ousted by Maoist Norm Gallagher in April 1975. We assure him — this history cannot be physically suppressed, no matter how much he and the anti-Spartacist fake-left may try. ■

## Correction

In the article "SYA: Scabs Youth Alliance" in our last issue (*Australasian Spartacist* no 75, July 1980), we mistakenly termed Castro's Cuba a "bureaucratically degenerated workers state". In fact, Cuba is a deformed workers state. The term "degenerated workers state" is applicable only to the USSR, which once was a healthy workers state, the product of a workers revolution which put political power in the hands of the working class organised in soviets. In contrast, there were never any soviets in the Cuban Revolution. With the overthrow of capitalism there in 1960-61 a workers state was established no different in kind to that now existing in the USSR. But Cuba did not degenerate; it was bureaucratically deformed from its very inception.

Australasian  
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# As fake-left push nationalisation fraud Pagewood workers knifed

In early July the announcement of the closure of the General Motors-Holden (GMH) Pagewood plant hit front page news and produced a lot of tough talk from the NSW State government, the union bureaucrats and the fake-lefts. Stories of shocked and outraged Pagewood workers whom GMH had cynically dumped after years of working there filled the papers for days. But now the ACTU, NSW Labor Council and Vehicle Builders Union (VBU) officials have written off the plant, the jobs and the livelihoods of 1500 vehicle workers and are "negotiating", while the only "action" being taken is a series of half-hearted bans on the number of vehicles that can be moved out of holding areas to dealers and on the movement of machinery out of the plant.

Led by Bob Hawke, the union "leaders" are trying to get a retrench-

power — administering a *capitalist* state — and has no intention of challenging the property rights of one of the most powerful corporations in the world. Wran knows that the real function of social-democratic nationalisations is to prop up bankrupt capitalist society, not to lead to the expropriation of the capitalists by the working class.

But fools and reformists never learn. The SWP in the 9 July *Direct Action* states that "... there is only one way that the jobs can be saved. The NSW Labor government must take over the plant, which can then be run in the interests of all working people". According to the SWP, a Wran-financed born-again Pagewood would miraculously "produce the sort of vehicle working people really need", as well as "public transport vehicles, cheaper and higher-

himself sacked workers there wholesale, shows that the Labor government will slash jobs as viciously as any private corporation. Additionally, lacking the capacity and access to markets that the General Motors giant already has, nationalisation would mean massively subsidising Pagewood just to allow it to survive — let alone compete effectively — in the capitalist economy. As the experience of British Leyland again shows, such subsidisation would be financed by extracting resources from more productive sectors of the economy; in turn, that would mean further immiseration of the working class.

Trotskyists do not *indiscriminately* call for nationalising particular industries or firms; to do so can only foster reformist illusions in the gradual socialisation of capitalist society. On the contrary, we stand for partial nationalisations in exceptional cases. The Transitional Program poses the question in the following limited and conditional way:

"The socialist program of expropriation, i.e., of political overthrow of the bourgeoisie and liquidation of its economic domination, should in no case hinder us from advancing, when the occasion warrants, the demand for the expropriation of several key branches of industry vital for national existence or of the most parasitic group of the bourgeoisie."

But GMH Pagewood is neither vital to the Australian economy, nor an especially parasitic, universally hated, sector of the capitalist class. The demand that this outmoded industrial facility *must* stay open in fact reflects the desire of the trade union bureaucrat to preserve his/her own little bailiwick.

Revolutionary Marxists do not favour freezing the existing industrial structure to preserve the present configuration of the workforce. GMH workers must not suffer because of GMH's rationalisation plans, but a resolution of the problems confronting them can only come through *class-struggle action*, not social-democratic nationalisation schemes. We advance a program of struggle for the workers to defend their own interests against capitalist attacks, not because this or that plant is sacrosanct, but to strengthen the class as a class, and so lead it toward the seizure of state power.

## "White Australia" protectionism

The SPA, which ran a front-page headline "Pagewood Must Stay Open" and characterised the closure as "the worst action in Australia's industrial history — so far", has been more forthright in laying out a further aspect of the nationalisation call. The 16 July *Socialist* says:

"If the Pagewood situation is accepted it will mean that monopoly companies will increasingly turn Australia into just a supplier of raw materials and transfer its manufacturing industry to cheap labour countries [read Asia]. This will result in massive unemployment throughout the whole of the country."

This is nothing but a chauvinist protectionist plea to "save" Pagewood jobs at the expense of Japanese and American car workers.

The SPA is not alone. The supporters of the Socialist Leadership Group/Keep Left paper in the ALP, led by bookshop owner Bob Gould, are even more explicit. Initially, they had called for state "resumption" of Pagewood (presumably the term nationalisation, let alone expropriation, smacks too much of socialism for this bunch), but have since dropped the call and are now arguing "For the Full ACTU Redundancy Plan" (*Pagewood News*, no 6). But they are not going to be outdone in chauvinism, it seems. In their *Pagewood News* no 4 they reprint a 3 July *Daily Telegraph* editorial entitled "A Car of Our Own". The editorial praises the idea of "motoring expert" Peter Wherrett who advocates "building the all-Aussie car and turning defeat into

attack". The Gouldites' shameless commentary is:

"It is also in the wind that another car manufacturer, *possibly Japanese*, is interested in taking over the Pagewood plant. We think the best plan is the Peter Wherrett Pagewood plan for a government car manufacturing enterprise." (emphasis added)

Heaven forbid that Japanese capital should ever besmirch this white island "socialist" paradise! What vile racist rubbish! Whether the corporation is Japanese or Australian, the exploitation of the workers for profit will be fundamentally the same. The point is to overthrow the capitalist system *internationally*. Yet, as we said in our article "For class unity with Japanese workers!" (*Australasian Spartacist* no 39, February 1977), "The economic nationalism and protectionist fervour of the trade-union bureaucracy and its hangers-on are the indispensable allies of the capitalist class in convincing the workers that they can only avoid impoverishment by supporting the imperialist ambitions of their respective bourgeoisies". Trade wars and protectionism literally do mean "turning defeat into attack", for trade wars inevitably must lead to shooting wars. The Spartacist League stands for international working-class struggle; the union bureaucrats and their drummer-boys ultimately stand for international imperialist war.

Instead of the weak strategy of bans, nationalisation schemes and reactionary protectionism, what was and is needed at GMH Pagewood is a program which mobilises the workers in a struggle to fight for their interests. In our last issue we called on workers to occupy the plant and hold the millions of dollars of machinery and unsold cars to ransom for jobs. We argued for a shorter work week at no loss in pay to spread the existing work around, and pointed to the need to link up with the metal workers to secure this demand — thirty hours work for forty hours pay! And we advanced the demand for unlimited unemployment benefits at full pay and fully paid job retraining under trade union control to win those currently unemployed to the workers' side.

The Pagewood workers too showed that they wanted to fight; at an early mass meeting their call was for a national VBU strike against GMH. But Bob Hawke and company intervened to ensure that this never got off the ground. If further Pagewoods are to be avoided, these traitors must be dumped and a revolutionary leadership of the workers movement installed in their place. Such a leadership though can only be one which rejects the fake-left's no-struggle, social-democratic policy of relying on the Wran government and which fights against "White Australia" chauvinist protectionism as part of the struggle for proletarian revolution in Australia and the rest of the world. ■



VBU pickets ban movement of stockpiles, but union tops killed struggle for jobs.

ment settlement in line with ACTU policy, which means the workers may just be as fortunate as the 800 Tooths' brewery workers whose jobs just got sold for a few thousand dollars each after a seven week strike. Now GMH has added insult to injury by stopping the check-off of union dues, throwing their insulting redundancy offer into the bosses' arbitration court, and by standing down workers daily for observing the union bans. So much for the years-long loyalty of many GMH workers to what they saw as "their" company.

A month ago the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the Communist Party (CPA), the Socialist Party (SPA), and the International Socialists (IS) united in the call for the NSW Labor government of "Nifty Nev" Wran to "nationalise Pagewood to save jobs". Now the SWP, CPA, and SPA have dropped the issue, for at base they believe what the CPA said in the 16 July *Tribune* headline, "No Hope for Sacked Pagewood Workers". Meanwhile the IS, which at least had called for a plant occupation (to be followed by nationalisation if GMH proved intransigent) has dropped the call for nationalisation altogether.

But it now looks like Pagewood workers, despite their earlier angry determination, are being sold out without a fight. Tailing behind the do-nothing union bureaucrats, the fake-lefts helped disarm and demobilise the Pagewood workers who had first reacted to the closure announcement with a call for a national VBU strike against GMH. The reformists' reflex call to "nationalise Pagewood" is a reflection of their parliamentarist conception of "socialism" as coming through the gradual statisation of industry and the evolution of a parliamentary majority for the Labor Party. But Wran never said a word about nationalisation. Unlike the fake-left, he is in

quality cars with greater safety and pollution-control features". Line speeds in the plant could be reduced as well, from the existing production figure of 120 Commodores *per day*. And they top it all off with a scheme for "a democratically elected board of management representative of all working people, as unionists and consumers" to "guard against the nationalised industry turning into another Telecom or Australia Post". Oh happy little island of socialism in the rough capitalist sea!

But Pagewood is the least productive plant of GMH, which already faces competition from Japanese car makers who produce more economical, better engineered vehicles which today have about 55 percent of the Australian car market (as against less than one percent in 1960) (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 July 1980). The plant is technologically obsolete, poorly located and is being jettisoned by GMH because it is not profitable. Nationalising this loser will manifestly *not* save jobs. A glance at the results of nationalising the Leyland car manufacturer in Britain shows why.

In 1975 the Wilson Labour government undertook a program of nationalisation and rationalisation of Leyland to the tune of 1 billion pounds. This "salvation" plan, four years and 775 million pounds later, produced a situation in which jobs were being slashed at the rate of 1000 each month while Leyland's share of the domestic market had slipped to 20 percent. Rather than "guaranteeing jobs", the nationalisation of this industrial cripple has only meant mass sackings, speed-up and wage cuts for the workers.

Were the Wran government to take over Pagewood, it too would have to sack workers to make the plant economically viable. And the example of the State Dockyards in Newcastle, where Wran

## Revolutionary Literature

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At a recent open plenum of the Central Committee of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand several comrades applied to join the organisation. We reprint below a selection of letters by some of these comrades which reflect our work over the past period. All the comrades were heavily involved in the campaign to expose the Socialist Workers Party as apologists for reactionary Islamic terror during the Fallahi tour (see article page 6). Also decisive in our recent growth has been our forthright defence of the Red Army incursion into Afghanistan and our hard defence of basic proletarian principle against craftist scabbing. We welcome our new members, confident that they will reinforce our determination to build the Leninist party which will lead the working class to final victory.

☆ ☆ ☆

## Peter W-Melbourne

I have been associated with the left for most of my life, having a fair degree of contact with several elements of the left; trade unionists, writers, feminists, even attending several Eureka Youth League camps. All that time I had the notion that all the left groups in Australia were one big happy family, with perhaps one or two fanatical elements. I didn't really have any idea of the deep conflicts between these groups. For instance in all the arguments I had with people about socialism, I always defended Russia as being the realisation of socialism. So when these people would describe rather unpleasant aspects of socialism in Russia, I would find myself trying to defend things I didn't really believe myself; or I would say that all the horror stories were just slanderous lies perpetrated by the capitalist press. All this time I became more and more confused and disillusioned.

I have always been a staunch trade unionist and ALP supporter, seeing these organisations as the only weapons the working class has against the ruling class, and I have always vehemently defended both. But more and more I have come to see the working class betrayed by the supposed leaders of the union movement and by the Labor politicians. While I could see these betrayals I was still prepared to support these people because I knew of no other alternative; then I encountered the SL. I talked about the doubts I had and they presented me with a Trotskyist perspective on these problems. We discussed the Soviet Union and I could have yelled for joy to find out that I could defend the Soviet Union and the gains made in 1917, but denounce the parasitic bureaucracy for betraying that revolution. And to be able to attribute the atrocities and the degeneration of that revolution to a real cause. I had a new perspective that eliminated all the doubts I had had as to whether socialism had been achieved or was possible. It was a great moment.

Later we talked about trade unionism. We talked about the betrayals of the leadership and the ultimately destructive practice of craft unionism where one group of workers will stab another group of workers in the back by working in a struck shop because they do slightly different jobs; and how we have to establish a norm of one out all out, enforced with picket lines to ensure the solidarity of the workers in a dispute. Without this the union movement will remain divided and weak. We also talked of how the ultimate extension of a united workers movement is proletarian revolution which will take power from the ruling class.

I agreed with all these perspectives, so what was left to do, only to join a revolutionary party; so I looked around the other Trotskyist groups. They all had, to my mind, serious flaws in their political outlook, some even claiming the USSR to be capitalist, denying the gains of the workers in that country. The SL always encouraged me to look at these other parties and they never tried to hide from them. In fact, the SL went to great lengths to confront these groups.

Recently a friend and I were invited to an SYA conference and were encouraged



Melbourne May Day, 1980.

ASp photo

# Why we joined the Spartacist League

## Christine S-Melbourne

Dear Comrades,

I have been asked to write about why I wanted to join the Spartacist League.

Well, as I had decided I wanted to be part of an organisation with a Trotskyist program, devoted to bringing about the downfall of the ruling class through workers revolution, there was no other party for me to join. Just as the Bolsheviks were the party of 1917 so the Spartacist League is the party of our epoch.

But six months ago I knew nothing of the theory of revolutionary class struggle, but was striving to find direction for my gut-level awareness of the need to fight oppression and pluck it out at its roots, though I didn't know what its roots were. I was tending toward a feminist line, but at the same time I was in a dilemma as to which battle to fight — "women's oppression" or "class oppression", as I

ASp photo

couldn't see a real stake for me in either battle.

I thought that fighting for the working class would do nothing to alleviate the oppression of women, because as I saw it "working class men oppress working class women"; but I hadn't examined the question closely enough to realise that the oppression of women is rooted, historically and institutionally, in class society, and we will never have a hope of liberation without the overthrow of class society.

I also knew that if I fought exclusively for "women's liberation" I would be turning my back on the struggle against the ruling class. So because of a basic ignorance of class politics, my theories were confused and actually had no direction or solution at all.

Anyway, about this time I started talking to comrade Margaret about my dilemma as she was at the time on the periphery of the Spartacist League, and I knew that she would have a class line, and I wanted to argue things out with her and sort out my confusion. During our conversations she asked the most probing questions and presented things to me which I had never really confronted before. "OK", she would say, "just what do you propose as a solution, and where do you think this oppression comes from?"

I hate to admit it, but for all my wanting to fight the oppression of the world I had never really understood where it came from. I had in a waffly way just sort of written it off as "that's the world", "power corrupts" or "that's human nature" and all such disgusting stuff.

Anyway the turning point came when comrade Margaret lent me a copy of a Spartacist publication, "The Crisis in the Women's Movement". This booklet specifically tackled my dilemma and presented all the answers for all the questions I had. As I read it lights were flickering on inside my head illuminating and giving shape to things which had previously been formless shadows. I was rapt. There it was, all in front of me — reasons and answers, and most import-

to attend by the SL. At that conference the necessity for hard political fights within the left was brought crashing home to me. Here was a party extolling the virtues of Castro's "revolutionary" leadership in Cuba, and who tail after popular movements in Nicaragua and Iran; completely denying a Trotskyist perspective. To crown it all off, going back to what I said before about picket lines and craft unionism, they had a member who stood up and told of having crossed picket lines, worked strikers' machines, and suffered hardship because the cleaners were out and his sandwiches were in peril from bugs; and how the men on the picket line, unreasonably — to his mind — thought him to be a strike-breaker. Instead of condemning this man for his betrayals, the rest of the party applauded the scum.

So that's why I joined the SL. To fight for revolution and to fight against all those people on the right or on the left who deny or betray the revolution.



Winning student support for Victorian power workers, Sydney Uni, 1977.

antly — the real solution. A couple of the statements which really impressed me were:

"Some look at the working class as it is, filled with male chauvinist backwardness, and imagine that these backward workers will be the motive force of the socialist revolution. The working class will indeed be the class which liberates society from capitalism, but not the class as it is now, filled with male chauvinist, racist, religious and patriotic illusions. It is precisely the task of the revolutionaries to replace these illusions by class consciousness, an awareness that such backward prejudices divide the working class and keep it from struggling against its real enemies."

And

"We who have been raised in capitalist society can never be truly free; the greatest personal liberation we can attain is creative participation in revolutionary struggle against an oppressive social system."

After this revelation I wanted to learn more, and so I read as much as I could and began attending a series of classes which was being run by the Spartacist League. Things went fairly smoothly for a time, with me on the periphery, not really feeling ready to join; and even if I had, I had no full comprehension of the differences between the leftist parties as I had always accepted the old line of "why don't they join against the common enemy?"; and so I wasn't politically equipped to make a decision about joining any party. Then something happened which became the decisive axis of my turning unflinchingly and resolutely to the SL as the party which I wanted to join.

A friend and I heard of an SYA [Socialist Youth Alliance] conference which was being run, and thinking it would be both educational and worthwhile we decided we'd attend. When we told friends of ours from the SL they were quite emphatic that we should attend, as they wanted us to find out for ourselves what we thought of SYA/SWP politics.

The conference proved both educational and worthwhile, but not in the

farce. I was not alone either; Peter my friend, and Alex, who we met through the conference, were of exactly the same mind.

So, in a nutshell, after becoming politically aware, and realising a Trotskyist program as the only road forward — the only logical place I had to turn to was the SL, and I can only conclude that any revolutionary situation which may arise in the future will be victorious only if it is led by the party with the true Marxist, Leninist, Trotskyist program, and that party is the Spartacist League.

## Jenny M - Sydney

For the last 4-5 years I have been around the "left", the women's movement, the anti-uranium movement etc but my main interest has been in working in trade unions. I have had varying amounts of contact with the organised left and in the last two years have felt the need to be in a political party. My original impulse was towards the Socialist Workers Party but after attending their annual conference in 1979, which struck me as a bit thin on politics, and a brief involvement as a sympathiser in one of their trade union fractions, I developed the opinion that the SWP was not my idea of a revolutionary organisation.

The first time I really began to talk to the Spartacist League was during the aftermath of the last major dispute at my workplace. The dispute had been a complete disaster — mainly due to our incompetent and unprincipled leadership which refused to call for a strike or organise support from other sections of the union. The "left" militants (ie people from the CPA, SWP and assorted rank and filists about the place — including myself to begin with) there did not offer any alternative to this leadership and in fact most supported the sellout tactics wholeheartedly. The SL were the only people to say what was really needed —

Asp photo



SL hails Red Army in Afghanistan at Melbourne "anti-war" rally, February.

sense I'd expected. Suddenly I understood Lenin's tireless fight against the Mensheviks. Suddenly I understood the acute importance of the workers vanguard party. For here was a party who applauded a scab and who supports Castro's Cuba as a healthy workers state, and Nicaraguan Sandinistas as some kind of "proletarian leaders" — totally ignoring the fact that Trotskyist literature is suppressed in Cuba and that strikes by workers in Nicaragua have been crushed by these "revolutionary" Sandinistas. This party purports to be Trotskyist! And capable of leading a socialist revolution. Can you beat that! I can almost hear the groans of Trotsky as he turns in his grave.

I was so disgusted with that conference that when I left on the last day, I practically ran to the SL office, determined that they should expose this

an indefinite statewide stoppage to smash the bosses' union-busting plans. Even after the union had been soundly trounced and the workers totally betrayed, the would-be leftists still supported the sellout left ALP bureaucrats, even to the extent of helping in election campaigns, on the bogus contention that "at least they were better than anything else offering, and we had to keep the right-wing out somehow". The SL were the only ones to point out the obvious — these bastards had just led our union to the most resounding defeat in its history; they in fact had no more to offer than the right-wingers; they had never made one statement of policy that drew a class line on anything; that they could be relied on to betray again and again. In fact the only claim on the term "left" they had was the cover provided for them by the rest of the "revolutionary" militants. And thus they



Asp photo

Spartacist speaker at Melbourne rally.

were completely unsupportable — to support them could only lead to discrediting the left and the only way forward for our union was to build a class-struggle leadership. At this point I began to feel that the SL was the only revolutionary organisation to have a decent understanding of trade union work.

Soon after this the printers at Fairfax went out on strike and the SL's position on the picket line was demonstrated — no worker should cross a picket line or work in a struck shop irrespective of whether it's your union or not — when one clerk, an SL supporter, refused to work during the strike. This, in the face of the craftist position of other left parties, further convinced me that the SL had a class analysis of the trade union question.

During this time of course the wonderful world of international politics had not been in a state of suspended animation while I made up my mind on who had the best line on the trade unions.

In Iran women had been shot for showing or using their bodies, homosexuals had been stoned for existing, leftists were brutally attacked for being anti-Islamic and still some people spoke of the "Iranian Revolution". I find it difficult to take seriously any organisation which can so blatantly crawl to a mass movement irrespective of its class nature. As a woman who believes in the liberation of women, homosexuals and national minorities and the possibility of the creation of healthy workers states, I agree fully with the SL's line on Iran: Down with the Shah! Down with the mullahs! For the building of a Trotskyist party in Iran!

And then there was the question of 1980 — Afghanistan and the Russian

question. My original response was fairly confused (in line with the rest of the left) — I felt that the USA had no right to be in such a stew about the USSR intervention considering their history in Vietnam, but as to what I actually thought about Russia's involvement in Afghanistan I couldn't make up my mind. So I examined the various positions being put forward. "Troops out now" struck me as lining up with the Jimmy Carters and Malcolm Frasers of the world and as such was completely unacceptable — and "Defend the Gains of the Afghan Revolution" (but try to ignore the Red Army) seemed to somewhat miss the point — What revolution? Where was the Afghan proletariat who had led it? What really worried me was this massive war drive by the USA directed against the Soviet Union. After discussion with the SL I came to the conclusion that what the Soviet Union was doing in Afghanistan was progressive — after all they were defending the rights of women, the peasants and the oppressed. And no matter what, the USSR was more progressive than the USA, so the SL slogan "Defend the Soviet Union, Hail Red Army in Afghanistan" was the only revolutionary position on this question.

So finding that I agreed with the SL program on the trade unions, Iran, Afghanistan and knowing (through my admittance to a couple of internal meetings) that any disagreement I had could be discussed and resolved within the party, I felt that I had found what I wanted — a revolutionary party committed to leading the world proletariat to power — so I joined.

## Helen R - Sydney

I had previously been a member of the SL for three years (from 1973 to 1976) more or less from its inception in Australia. This was my first experience as a fully-fledged communist in an active way. Feeling somewhat inexperienced politically and wanting in confidence, I came to believe that I needed a period of time away from the political scene although my leaving was not a decision that was easy to live with. I fully supported the SL's program throughout my absence. I travelled north for a period of two years and the general malaise and apathy there was not fundamentally different to the more sophisticated dilettantism here in cosmopolitan Sydney.

After my return to Sydney I observed that the SL was a more healthy organisation and this was evidenced by the fact that it was more open. Of course, the same old allegations that the SL was sectarian and abstentionist continued. One only has to read the press and study its history to observe that such allegations are completely unfounded — for example the powerful anti-fascist rallies in America and on the domestic front the Fairfax picket line work.

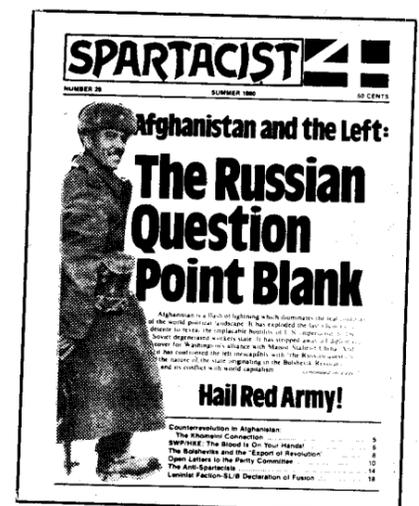
Since my return, it became obvious to me that the iSt was advancing both here and internationally. For me, there had never been a question of joining any other organisation, as the SL was the only organisation to really absorb the programmatic lessons that the working class

Continued on page 8

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**Spartacist** (English edition) is the theoretical journal of the international Spartacist tendency, published by the International Secretariat of the iSt. The current issue features articles on Afghanistan, the left and the Russian question; the Bolsheviks and the "export of revolution"; and several articles discussing two recently formed international pseudo-Trotskyist groupings, the "Parity Committee" of Moreno/Lambert and Alan Thornett's "Trotskyist International Liaison Committee".

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# Spartacist campaign exposes "Islamic socialists"

## SWP/HKE's Fallahi: All the way with the Imam

"Protest against Fatima Fallahi, apologist for Islamic reaction!" That was the theme of the campaign waged by the Spartacist League (SL) during July in answer to the Socialist Workers Party (SWP)-organised speaking tour of Australia by this pro-Khomeini Iranian "socialist". And from Sydney to Melbourne, for all those who heard Fallahi speak, one thing was crystal clear: the Spartacist League is right. Fallahi, her organisation, the HKE ("Revolutionary Workers Party"), and the SWP are mullah-lovers, willing to defend virtually every crime of the Khomeini regime against the left, the working class, the national minorities and the women of Iran.

We undertook the campaign to expose Fallahi as a craven "socialist" who has "followed the Imam's line" to the hilt, and to protest her organisation's betrayals in Iran. We said, "SWP/HKE: The blood is on your hands" when these groups supported last April's murderous right-wing "Islamification" purge of Iranian campuses which left scores of leftists dead and hundreds more injured. In Melbourne we organised a picket of almost 50 people to show our opposition to this and other crimes of the SWP/HKE (see accompanying photobox). We called on would-be leftists to "hate the mullahs, hate the SWP/HKE" because both organisations have unflinchingly covered for Khomeini's bloody rule since he came to power in February 1979. And during this campaign the SWP gave us further reason to despise them, as they kept up their longstanding policy of bureaucratically and cowardly refusing to allow Spartacist supporters and members into their "public" meetings in Wollongong, Sydney and Melbourne, and threatening to use the capitalist cops to silence our political criticisms of Fallahi.

In an article on Spartacist "disruption", *Direct Action* (30 July) now slanderously claims that our political attacks on the HKE's sordid record were "clearly designed to whip up a right-wing frenzy against Fallahi". Coming from an organisation which *defends* the right-wing mullahs and gangs which slaughter leftists, Kurds and homosexuals in Iran, such an allegation reeks with hypocrisy. But its purpose is simply to smear the SL as "provocateurs" who "disrupt" SWP meetings. Normally the SWP likes to pretend that we are "irrelevant", but this unusually lengthy piece by SWP leader Nita Keig indicates that we've touched a sore spot. For what is notable about Keig's article is that, amid all the spurious charges of "disruptive and sectarian behavior" (read: posing awkward political questions), it makes no effort to reply to *even one* of our political charges against the HKE. For good reason; for Fallahi herself confirmed that everything we said about her and the SWP/HKE was true.

### My Imam right or wrong

At meeting after meeting, Fallahi lovingly recounted the "progressive" role of the mullahs in overthrowing the shah; how since then, the Iranian people have never had it so good; how the Islamic *shoras* are "soviets" in the making; and how all is *still* for the best in what she sees as this best of all possible "revolutions". Her method of "argument" followed well the pattern of the SWP's "Pollyanna Goes to Teheran" coverage of Iran: see no evil, speak no truth. In the name of "getting out the truth about our revolution", she resorted time and again to the Big Lie. And just as Goebbels advised, she told them big.

But our campaign ensured that her lying public relations effort for Khomeini was challenged all down the line. At the Sydney Trade Union Club forum on 11 July, the SL distributed leaflets demanding that Fallahi answer ten questions on Iran, and inviting people to come to the counter-forum we had organised in the same building that night. The SWP too had its leaflet, "justifying" its exclusion of us from the meeting upstairs. But individuals in the audience — among them SL sympathisers whom the SWP



Fallahi's "brothers" of the pasdaran ("revolutionary guards") murder Kurdish nationalist fighters. Fallahi said "Khomeini did not kill them."

goons had failed to catch when vetting the audience at the door — nonetheless demanded answers. As one woman comrade put it:

"Why have you made no mention of the slaughter of the left on the campuses? Why is your organisation the only one that can freely operate? Why is your newspaper published and 48 others suppressed? Why were you released just a few days before the killings on campuses? ... There is no room in a Trotskyist program for a religious reactionary regime of mullahs, who happen to be the largest land-holding class in Iran."

Fallahi's response? Evasion, then silence — even on the question of why the HKE was allowed to operate legally, while the rest of the left was systematically harassed. When a Kurd from Turkey asked, "Thousands of Kurds were killed by Khomeini, what do you say?", Fallahi's answer was a straight lie: "Khomeini did not kill them". Unable to deny that Kurds *have* been massacred en masse in Iran, she attempted to pin the killings on anonymous generals left over from the old regime, but when "Khomeini heard about it, he made a statement that brother should not kill brother"! No wonder a number of people, including ordinary liberals, walked out of the Fallahi meeting in disgust, some noting that Fallahi had not answered the questions. Some of them came to the SL forum to hear the *truth* about Iran.

Confronted with the mullahs' execution of gays and anyone engaged in extramarital sex, Fallahi justified these atrocities too by saying, "these are our traditions". What these "traditions" are was graphically illustrated just eight days before Fallahi spoke by a barbaric execution which took place in the southern Iranian town of Kerman. Four people, including two middle-aged women, had been convicted of "sexual

crimes" and were ritualistically stoned to death in the traditional Islamic manner. The four victims were sacramentally washed by the clergy, clothed in white garments and "hoods of death", buried in the ground up to their chests, and then stoned for fifteen minutes until they died, with the presiding judge casting the first rock.

Nor is this the only "tradition" that Fallahi defends. At her meetings she consistently hailed the *chador*, the veil which symbolises the oppression of women in Iran, as something "beautiful", something "we're proud of", "a symbol to fight against US imperialism and about the capitalism inside the country". It's just like wearing a "sari", a "workers uniform", "blue jeans" even! And she openly *boasted* about her own routine in Iran:

"I wear my *chador*, go to the mosque at 5 o'clock, join prayers and after prayers sit down and talk politics. And they know that I'm a socialist and they respect me."

At her forum at Sydney University on 14 July, she also explained her "position" on gay rights to a questioner who had said, "I am not a Spartacist, but is it true that homosexuals are being stoned to death in Iran?" She replied:

"Well, it is not true.... We are opposed, as socialists, to any execution of anything. But the thing is, the homosexuality in Iran is different from Europe and the United States.... those people that were executed ... they were not homosexuals. These people, they were rap[ing] the kids, or gave the money to the kids to have a sexual life with them.... The majority of the Iranian people, they don't know what the homosexuality is."

When this drew a derisive laugh from the audience, she quickly added that of course, if Iranians wanted "to have it [homosexuality], they can have it at home"! Sure — whatever the local Imam's Committee says about its victims

must be true. If Khomeini says homosexuals are all child-molesters and rapists, the HKE has to say the same thing. After all, the Imam is their hero — and the protector of their legality amid slaughter! He "has been right before, he never compromises, and he is right now", as Fallahi put it on 11 July. Fittingly, when a Spartacist reporter intervened at the Sydney Uni talk — against attempts by SWPers to shout her down — to denounce such nauseating justifications for oppression and murder, it was a woman clad in a veil who rose to defend Fallahi and her revered ayatollah.

### "A beautiful revolution"?

For Fallahi and the HKE, the mullahs' victory against the shah in February 1979 was "a progressive revolution and one of the beautiful revolutions in the whole world history" (Sydney Uni forum). What now exists is the opportunity for the peaceful development of this "revolution" or, as she put it at the Sydney Trade Union forum, "out of revolution comes evolution". To back up this wholesale adaptation to the mullahs' rule, Fallahi necessarily conjures up a post-shah Iran in which "women are participating more in the social life than ever before"; in which the Kurdish national minority in particular has gained "a lot", like the opportunity to "speak in their own language" (at a time when even Fallahi's "international", the "United Secretariat", admits that Khomeini is waging genocidal war on them!); in which there is "freedom of press, freedom of political activity, freedom of all those groups" outlawed under the shah (try telling that to the Fedayeen, Fallahi).

During the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, Stalin too painted Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang as "progress-





# US bases...

continued from page 1

only his attempted Olympic boycott, but also his bawling out of foreign minister Peacock when the latter briefly floated the idea of withdrawing recognition from the Pol Pot "government" — the same cannot be said about Carter's European imperialist "allies". Certainly, Margaret Thatcher and the British ruling class, presiding over a decaying economy, have gone the whole hog with Carter's anti-Soviet offensive even to the extent of opting for the monumentally expensive Trident missile system. But not so the West Germans or the French.

Since the devaluation of the dollar in August, 1971 and the subsequent US withdrawal from Vietnam, the United States has been merely the most powerful "first among equals" in the imperialist system. Prior to then it was the undisputed imperialist top dog, and when it said "Jump!" to the other capitalist states, they jumped. But no longer, as even the latest secretary of state, Edmund Muskie, admitted in so many words. Thus, while the US maintains that Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan is a precondition to future "disarmament" talks with the Kremlin, French president Valery Giscard d'Estaing went off to see Soviet leader Brezhnev in Warsaw in May, and West German chancellor Helmut Schmidt went to Moscow straight after the June summit conference in Venice. Both the French and the Germans have their own imperialist interests, including their own anti-Soviet strategies, to pursue — and they by no means harmonise in every aspect with those of the US.

Behind this increasing tension between Washington and its NATO allies lies the stark military fact that during the 1970s the USSR achieved effective nuclear parity with the US. In the mid-1960s De Gaulle asked: will the United States risk Chicago for Bonn? Today all of Europe asks the question the other way round: will the US risk Bonn for Chicago? The West European bourgeoisies, not to mention the working masses, fear that Carter and Dr Strangelove Brzezinski, not to mention aspiring president Ronald Reagan, are just crazy enough to start a war with the Russians over a god-forsaken place like Afghanistan, while trying to save the US by limiting the fighting to Central Europe.

In addition to the legitimate fear of becoming the battlefield for World War III, the European bourgeoisies are resistant to a new Cold War offensive for sound economic reasons of national (capitalist) interest. The EEC is far more dependent on trade with the Soviet Union than is the United States. In 1978 the Common Market exported over \$7 billion worth of goods to the USSR and imported over \$8 billion; the US, in comparison, exported only about \$2 billion and imported only \$500 million from the Soviets. West Germany received important raw materials from Russia: a quarter of its imported natural gas and 40 percent of its enriched uranium.

No wonder then that Schmidt is the most insistent in seeking to maintain an "island of detente" with the USSR. But

as the *Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands* (TLD), German section of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt), put it in their May Day statement this year, entitled "The Main Enemy is at Home!" Schmidt's pro-detente stance is not "accommodation with the Soviets" but simple "German patriotism". "The social democratic administrators of West German imperialism have their strategy... to achieve capitalist counter-revolution in the [German Democratic Republic]... Besides that the West German bourgeoisie is already making its contribution to the imperialist encirclement of the Soviet Union. The Bundeswehr is the second strongest army of NATO... But for the time being, the West German bourgeoisie is attempting to use its greater economic strength to subvert the planned economies of the East European deformed workers states.

France too is pushing its own anti-Soviet schemes. Historically, the characteristic independent posturing of the French bourgeoisie has been an attempt to straddle the historic contradiction it faces — world ambitions impeded by a relatively weak economy. The Gaullist concept of France's own nuclear *force de frappe* (strike force) well reflects this posturing, but the *force de frappe* has always been aimed East not West. As our comrades of the *Ligue Trotskyste de France* (LTF) put it after Giscard's visit to Moscow: "The *force de frappe* is analogous to the French divisions which went into Germany in 1944-45: although not significant militarily, they went there all the same to guarantee France the right to participate in the discussions of the great powers after the war" (*Le Bolchevik* no 18, July 1980). Giscard is merely using French nuclear capacity as a bargaining device within the context of an anti-Soviet alliance with the US.

Of Carter's European allies, only Thatcher's Britain has lined up four-square behind his Cold War drive. Like Fraser, Thatcher has offered the US increased military facilities in Britain; and like him, she also vigorously campaigned for a boycott of the Moscow Olympics. The Olympic Games is not an institution we are especially fond of. But the relative failure of the imperialists' anti-Soviet boycott was a legitimate cause of satisfaction to revolutionists. The "Iron Maiden's" aggressively anti-Soviet stance has produced in Britain an outpouring of protests for "peace". Even the British Labour Party has joined in, and on 22 June organised an anti-Cruise missile demonstration in London around the slogan "Nuclear Arms, No; Peace, Yes".

The 22 June rally was a pacifist affair, far removed from the class struggle response needed to halt the imperialist war drive, though. Alone, the Spartacist League/Britain (SL/B) stood out for defence of the Soviet Union and proletarian struggle to smash the imperialists' offensive. One SL/B banner, carrying a quotation from Lenin, showed the way forward: "Arm the proletariat to defeat, expropriate and disarm the bourgeoisie!" The contrast to the gutless slogans of the peaceniks was clear to all. As the arch-Tory *Daily Mail* reported: "Scores of supporters of the Marxist group, the Spartacist League" drowned out pacifist

pleas with "a shout of one, two, three, four, we don't want imperialist war, five, six, seven, eight, defend the Soviet workers state".

In like manner to the British social democrats, the reformist left in Australia has shown signs of wheeling out a similar "peace" movement to oppose Fraser's offer of new bases and his gung-ho support for the Carter war drive. In particular, the Communist Party and Socialist Party have already called, in their joint statement last May, for a "stronger, broader anti-war movement uniting all forces opposed to militarism", and for Australia to join "the non-aligned movement" (*Socialist*, 7 May). The whole nationalist-pacifist approach behind this call was summed up in its plaintive headlines "Australia In Nuclear Firing Line" and "B52 Bases in Australia Endanger Our [!] Security" (*Socialist*, 16 July). For our part, we of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand stand for the same program of uncompromising proletarian internationalism as the rest of the iSt. Unlike the fake-Trotskyist "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USEC) — divided three ways at least over the Red Army incursion into Afghanistan — our tendency is a democratic-centralist organisation which fights for a common international line.

What the reformists of every stripe fail to see is that as long as capitalism exists,

there will inevitably be wars, as the imperialists search out new markets in their quest for profits. And chief target of the imperialist powers is the one-third of the globe where capitalism has been overthrown, and in particular the USSR. But criminally the Stalinist bureaucrats who rule the Soviet Union have responded to the massive American military build-up internationally by relying on the current pro-detente sentiments of European imperialists like Schmidt and Giscard. But this sort of "protection" will be about as effective as the Stalin-Hitler pact. When it comes down to a crunch with Moscow in the present period, Schmidt is right in saying that the US "can count on the damned Germans".

Only when the working class internationally takes power from their historically bankrupt ruling classes will the Soviet Union be secure and the future of mankind assured. The Soviet bureaucracy, precariously trying to balance between the pressures of imperialism and the working class, is incapable of waging a struggle for world-wide socialist revolution. It is up to the Trotskyists, the Bolsheviks of today, to rally the world proletariat to break forever the power of the imperialist warmongers. From Sydney to New York to Berlin, it is the international Spartacist tendency which stands for this program, the program of international proletarian revolution. ■

## international Spartacist tendency publications

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Peaceniks, Labourites rally round the Union Jack  
**Smash anti-Soviet war drive!**

**LE BOLCHEVIK**  
Pas d'illusions dans la détente!  
**Giscard renforce l'arsenal anti-sovietique**

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**Nieder mit der NATO!**  
Nicht Strauß, nicht Schmidt!  
**Für eine Arbeiterregierung!**

**WORKERS VANGUARD**  
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**SPARTACIST CANADA** SUMMER 1980 No.43 25c  
**Crazy Carter Runs Amok Stop Anti-Soviet War Drive**

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Clockwise, from top right: *Le Bolchevik* (Ligue Trotskyste de France), *Workers Vanguard* (Spartacist League/US), *Spartacist Canada* (Trotskyist League of Canada), *Spartakist* (Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands) and *Spartacist Britain* (Spartacist League/Britain).

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# “Sixty years of struggle”?

## Trotskyists told the truth about the CPA

The Communist Party (CPA) is celebrating its past with a splashy sixtieth anniversary history campaign. A series of forums, a regular feature in *Tribune*, interviews with party veterans, even a special magazine (*Sixty Years of Struggle*) all culminate in a national conference in Melbourne on 23-24 August on “Communists and the Labor Movement”. But what the CPA is celebrating is not “sixty years of struggle” but close on half a century of treachery and class collaboration.

Why sixty? There could not have been such a celebration of the CPA's semi-centennial ten years ago. In the midst of the bitter factional struggle leading to the expulsion/split of the party's pro-Moscow stalwarts in 1972, “party history” was an explosive issue. After the split, the Aaronsite CPA used “party history” as a vehicle for ridding the CPA of its past historic association with the USSR, an association it saw as an obstacle to reformist success.

Today the CPA is longing for the sort of bourgeois acceptability it enjoyed as the party of the biggest jingoes in the Australian workers movement during World War II. These were the days when chauvinist plumping for the “great patriotic anti-fascist” imperialist war brought in the liberals by the thousands. One CPA “commemorative” leaflet distributed in Sydney flaunts on one side a 1937 issue of the CPA paper *Workers Weekly* with headlines like “Trotskyist Aid for Franco Revealed”; and on the other, a wartime *Tribune*, blaring: “Produce for Victory”. The CPA may have repudiated its erstwhile Moscow sponsors and the Soviet workers state, but it continues to trumpet proudly the worst Stalinist crimes of its past. The difference is that today the CPA wants to betray the working class directly on behalf of the bosses, with no obligation whatever to defend the Kremlin bureaucracy's counterrevolutionary policies, let alone the proletarian property forms established by the October Revolution.

It is a matter of historical record that it was the Trotskyists who fought for a program of class struggle during the thirties — not the CPA and its partners in Stalin's Comintern. In Spain, Stalin and his followers sacrificed the Barcelona proletariat and the Spanish Revolution in the name of “People's Front” unity with the class enemy and “democratic” imperialism. They slandered the Trotskyists as “agents of Franco” in order later to physically annihilate them and other would-be leftists, including left popular-frontists like the POUM

of Andres Nin. And the CPA retailed every one of these lies here in Australia, and used the same slander techniques during the war when “production for victory” meant open strike-breaking in the service of the imperialist slaughter. Then it was striking workers who were “Trotskyites and counter-revolutionaries”, as CPAer Pat Lavelle put it in a circular to members outlining how the party should break a strike at Austral Bronze in Sydney in 1943 (quoted in the *Socialist*, 1 March 1943, published by the Labor Socialist Group [LSG]).

There was considerable opposition within the CPA when the leadership at first came out for the war in 1939. Guido Baracchi, one of the CPA's founders, was expelled and joined the Trotskyists of the Communist League of Australia. When the implications of the Stalin-Hitler pact dawned on them, however, the CPA tops made an about-face and were banned by the government (as were the Trotskyists, one of whom, Jack Wishart, was sentenced to six months hard labour for handing out anti-war leaflets). This awkward interlude for the Stalinists, temporarily estranged from the ruling class, ended with Hitler's invasion of the USSR. Now the CPA could reverse its line again and support the war under cover of defending the Soviet Union, and legalisation of course followed. (The Trotskyists remained officially banned for the duration). Yet now, adays, over Afghanistan, the CPA has joined the erstwhile “allies” of the USSR in an anti-Soviet campaign against the Red Army incursion.

The CPA's support for the imperialist war repeated the historic crime of the Second International at the outbreak of World War I; but the CPA had become rotten with reformism long before 1941, primarily as a product of the Stalinisation of the Comintern. By the late 1930s, wedded to the class collaboration of the popular front, the degenerated CPA was already spouting vicious anti-Japanese racism, foreshadowing its role during the war and



Racist anti-Japanese cartoon in CP Workers Weekly, 18 January 1938.

revealing a political kinship with the Labor Party of White Australia. The Australian Trotskyists who fought the CPA's betrayals represented the real continuity with the revolutionary aspirations of the CPA when it was founded under the inspiration of the Bolshevik Revolution.

We reprint below two articles from the Trotskyist press of the late 1930s/early 1940s. The first appeared in the 21 February, 1938 *Militant*, organ of the Trotskyist Workers Party of Australia led by Nick Origlass and Laurie Short. The second is from an illegal roneoed edition of the *Militant* dated December 1941, after the organisation was banned. About this time a politically unclear split had divided the Trotskyists into two groups, and this issue was probably produced by a small group around Jack Wishart and Alan Thistlethwaite which later called itself the Revolutionary Workers Party (while the Origlass/Short group went on to form the LSG). However, despite some political flaws (eg the projection of nationalised war-time industry as the answer to capitalist irrationality), this article upholds the basic Leninist stand on the war taken by the Fourth International and exposes the true record of the CPA.

## Stalinist chauvinism

### Its origin and its danger

The signing of the Franco-Soviet Pact was the first most open step by Stalinism in its adaptation to capitalism.

After signing the Pact the proletariat in France had to be organised, according to Stalinism, not so much to overthrow French capitalism as to support the Franco-Soviet Pact. The best way to assure a “strong France” was to have “National unity” that meant the end of the class struggle. Since then the adaptation has gone on apace.

Let us take for instance the present Sino-Japanese dispute.

In this situation the Stalinists are concerned primarily about the possibility of a Japanese invasion of Russia. They believe that Japan has to be defeated at any cost and by any means and that such a defeat would end, even if only temporarily, the possibility of any upset of their national utopia.

They further think that Britain, America and France are more friendly to Russia than Japan, consequently they would welcome an imperialist war by English, American and French imperialism against Japan.

In some of their organs they even try to remind Britain that she has “vast interests” in China.

Not only does this reasoning signify a willingness to sell the world proletariat into an imperialist slaughter, ostensibly for the defence of the poor Chinese and for the preservation of “democracy” but it also shows a pathetic lack of understanding of the nature of imperialism. The capitalist world which includes ALL imperialist powers, want to see the end of the Soviet Union. Quite apart from the material wealth which [it] hopes to acquire it also wants to finally eradicate from the world all vestiges of workers control and of those faint connections with Bolshevism which the existence of the Soviet Union symbolises.

Even in the immediate future the possibility of a bloc of England and Germany — dragging France and Italy behind them — against Russia cannot be excluded. This is the feeble and treacherous theoretical background which provides the present chauvinistic campaign which is being carried on through

out the world and in this country against the Japanese by the Stalinists.

However, do not be mistaken we too are for the defeat of the Japanese and for the defence of the Soviet Union, for reasons previously stated in our press, but we want to expose the treacherous approach of Stalinism to this question.

One of the most repulsive features of Stalinist propaganda in relation to the Japanese invasion is the chauvinistic campaign they are waging against the Japanese. The Japanese in the Stalinist press, posters and orations are more and more being referred to as “Japs”. Their cartoons and posters portray the Japanese as loathsome leering orientals. They are continually warning the “Australians”, yes even the squatters, that they are coming here next. They appeal to all “patriots”, in one Stalinist paper. They point out to the local boss that he should support the boycott of Japanese goods because the cheap Japanese article represents “unfair competition”.

So in this wave of chauvinism whipped

up by the local capitalist press including the Stalinists, we have the vicious “White Australia Policy” all over again. Once again all the horror stories of the “Yellow Peril” are being brought to light. Once again we hear of Japanese spies in our “fair and fertile” Northern Territory. In this vile and vicious campaign in which the most loathsome chauvinism is being used, the Stalinists are playing no mean part.

Marxists must explain everywhere, that while we stand for the defeat of the Japanese in China we also stand for workers power in Japan and that the only distinction is the CLASS DISTINCTION not a racial or colour distinction. On every occasion this narrow filthy white chauvinism must be exposed. It must be exposed because of its barbaric reactionary character and because it is assisting capitalism in its war plans.

Down with Nationalism and Chauvinism!

Long Live the International Proletariat!  
Workers of the World, Unite!  
L.S.

# The Communist Party at war

## National unity or class struggle

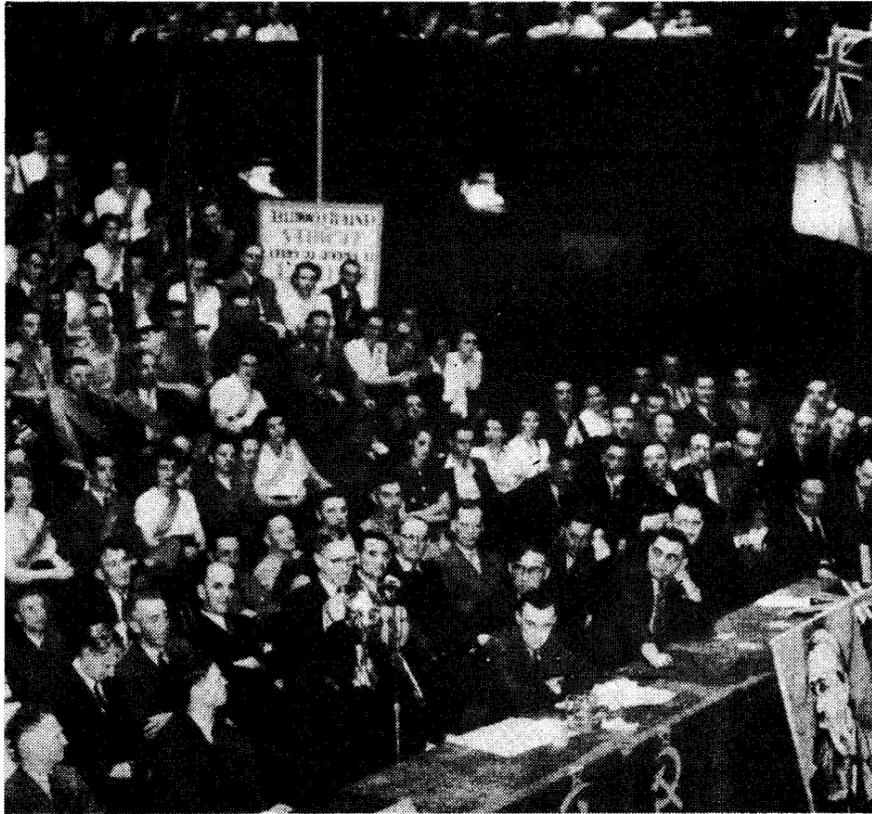
In a pamphlet "Destroy Hitlerism" the C.C. of the Australian Communist Party calls for complete abandonment of the class struggle in favor of "national unity" against overseas fascism. Thereby the C.P. draws to its logical conclusion the line laid down by Sharkey in his brief emergence from smoke ... no more frivolous or unnecessary strikes, submit disputes to arbitration, full support for the Anglo-Soviet War effort, maximum production of munitions.

This new line of the C.P. flows directly out of the policy of the Stalinist machine, a policy of prostrating the Party and the working masses at the footstool of Anglo-American Imperialism. Stalin pleads with the cynical Roosevelt and the anti-bolshevik Churchill for more aid for the Red Army ... his stooges in the "democratic countries" must therefore abandon their struggle against their own ruling class, and deliver themselves bound hand and foot to the imperialist slaughter. For a few hundred tanks the Stalinists will readily sell — or try to sell — the working class of the Soviet's "democratic" allies. This is the position in practice.

### The "Changing Character" of The War

The pamphlet "Destroy Hitlerism" begins with an attempt to justify the new line because of the changed character of the war. "No longer" it asserts "can the war be described as a struggle between the two great imperialist groups for world domination". We, Fourth Internationalists, do not deny that there is a new element in the war situation. The phase of the world conflict that opened on June 22nd with Hitler's invasion of the USSR faced the world's working class with the carrying out of one of its greatest duties — the defence of the USSR against capitalist attack. We say that as far as the Soviet masses are concerned, fighting, as they are, for the gains of the October Revolution, the war is progressive. But we deny that the character of the war has changed for the masses of the "democratic" Imperialist Powers.

What are these Allies fighting for? The



CPA 13th congress, 1943 (top); dead Japanese POW after Cowra breakout, 1944 (bottom).

numerous problems of the war against Hitlerism, or that it will establish National Unity.... What Australia needs, and what the Labor movement must set out to achieve is a National Front that embraces the whole of the population or all except a very small minority." A Labor Government is too far to the left, it seems. The C.P. [is] frightened lest even the reformist, opportunist leaders of the Labor Party should refuse to perform the foul task of harnessing the workers to the War machine. The Popular Front, at its worst, never fell as low as this.

They hope that the struggle against Hitler will be the cement that will hold this "Peoples Government" together. We are not told how the interests of the workers and farmers can be reconciled with profitmaking. You may be sure, Messieurs Stalinists, that the "business men" will never give up their struggle against the workers for the sake of National Unity. The Peoples Government cannot blanket the flames of the class struggle.

The document makes a great show of attacking the monopolists who are hampering the war effort. "The bottlenecks of monopoly control must be eliminated." They demand "direct representation by workers delegates on boards controlling the war effort", ... "limitation of profits", "price control", and so on. But not a word about Nationalisation under workers control. And how otherwise can profiteering, inefficiency, and the bungling inherent in capitalism be eliminated? Such an idea is far too revolutionary for the C.P. Its advocacy would offend the "business men" and put an end to the farce of national unity.

They then go on to tell us that a policy must be adopted that will "arouse enthusiasm among the workers for maximum production, and among the masses for recruiting and necessary financial sacrifices". In this war, according to the C.P. the task of the workers is to slave and die.

Taken to its logical conclusion this means Conscription and Compulsory Loans, no Holidays, less pay, and a complete smashing of the worker's standard of living.

Since the above was written the November 14th Tribune has appeared. It confirms our anticipation of the logical end of the C.P. line. Here is an extract: "However, while trying to limit profit-making from the War production must go on. The immediate issue is not to abolish profitmaking which is to abolish Capitalism; the issue today is to defeat Hitler, save the Soviet Union, free the enslaved countries and make certain that Hitler will enslave no more people.

"Since Capitalism cannot function without profit, we must pay the price, and while acting to limit profiteering, increase production of the means to victory."

Comment is superfluous. The struggle against Capitalism is to be abandoned in favour of the struggle against Hitler. Will the C.P. tell us how the workers of Australia, India, Africa, etc. are to escape from the enslavement that this policy means; How they will defeat Anglo-American Imperialism after they have been handed over bound hand and foot. In the Factories and workshops the role of the C.P. members will be to report "lazy men" (see E. Thomson), attack militants, move for more overtime, no holidays, no strike action, submission to the boss. The Class Struggle however will go on. The solution is not to be found in "democratic" capitalism, but in a world struggle for a socialist peace. ■

aims of August 1914 — the enslavement of the peoples of the world, including the people of the Soviet Union. Their war aims cannot change; it is still a dog-fight for the division of the world.

They will drop the Class Fight at home and join hands with their Imperialist Masters who fight to smash Hitler for purely reactionary imperialist reasons. This is the stinking dish of class collaboration Stalin's local parakeets serve up to the Australian working class.

For the workers of the Allies the character of the War will change only when their own ruling classes are overthrown. Perhaps the C.P. imagines this has occurred? Not a bit of it. They brazenly proclaim "we will join forces with anyone and everyone resolved to annihilate fascism".

### The New Policy In Practice

Consider the practical consequences of this new line. They tell us "In the last analysis 'Peoples' Governments must be established to obtain victory and peace". In the last analysis notice. The problem of hurling from power the agents of capitalism is to be left for the "last analysis".

And what does this "Peoples Government" look like? We are told it is not a Labor Government. The pamphlet says "It is not to be supposed that a Labor Government will immediately solve the

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# Baldwin bashing rocks ALP

SYDNEY — The vicious bashing of left-wing Labor MLC Peter Baldwin in the early hours of 17 July has caused the simmering factional war in the NSW ALP to boil over. Two thugs set upon Baldwin as he arrived at his Marrickville home around midnight, beating his face to a bloody pulp with either karate blows or an iron bar and leaving him with a fractured skull, compressed fractures of the cheek bone, a smashed nose, a broken jaw and cuts which required 50 stitches. This brutal job bears the stamp of professional criminals who intended to mark Baldwin for life, to make him "a walking deterrent to anyone thinking of investigating corruption in the branches", as one friend put it (quoted in the *Australian*, 19-20 July).

The Steering Committee, the state ALP's official "left" faction to which Baldwin belongs, immediately pinned the blame on "professional bashers acting on behalf of persons whose actions inside the ALP are totally suspect and improper" — ie, criminal elements within the corrupt right-wing machines running the ALP branches and municipal councils in Sydney's inner-western suburbs. None but the wilfully blind dispute this. This atrocity is an attack on the entire labour movement and it is vital that its perpetrators are exposed and stopped.

Why was Peter Baldwin bashed within an inch of his life? For almost four years he has co-edited *Challenge*, the factional paper of a group of left social democrats seeking to revitalise the ossified bureaucratic Steering Committee. Working to oust local machines which are mostly loyal supporters of the dominant right-wing faction in control of the state party apparatus, this group has campaigned to expose and "clean up" the crooked inner-city ALP branches. In this venal world numbers is the name of the game, including for the "left wing" — with safe Labor seats on municipal councils or in the state and federal parliaments as the prize. Baldwin was deeply involved in exposing both the widespread practice of "rotting" — whereby branch records are falsified and fictitious members enrolled in order to fix pre-selection ballots — and the links between the local powerbrokers and underworld racketeers.

Violence is nothing new to this factional struggle. At one meeting during the left-wing takeover of the Balmain branch in 1976-77, four party members were hospitalised by right-wing thugs; at another, the lights suddenly went out, a fire extinguisher flew through a window and the branch records vanished. Thus do "democratic socialists" — so ready to condemn "totalitarian" Leninism — sometimes settle their internal differences. This year, Baldwin had turned his attention to the Marrickville municipality, where his exposure of the rorts in the Enmore branch resulted in the expulsion of the branch secretary. Subsequently, a week before the bashing, the branch was dissolved and Baldwin entrusted with its reorganisation.

## "Left" demands public inquiry

At first the ALP tops and the police tried to play down or cover up the vicious assault. According to *Challenge*, (29 July), the cops initially claimed Baldwin was lying. False reports were fed to the press that he regarded the attack as "non-political"(!) and re-

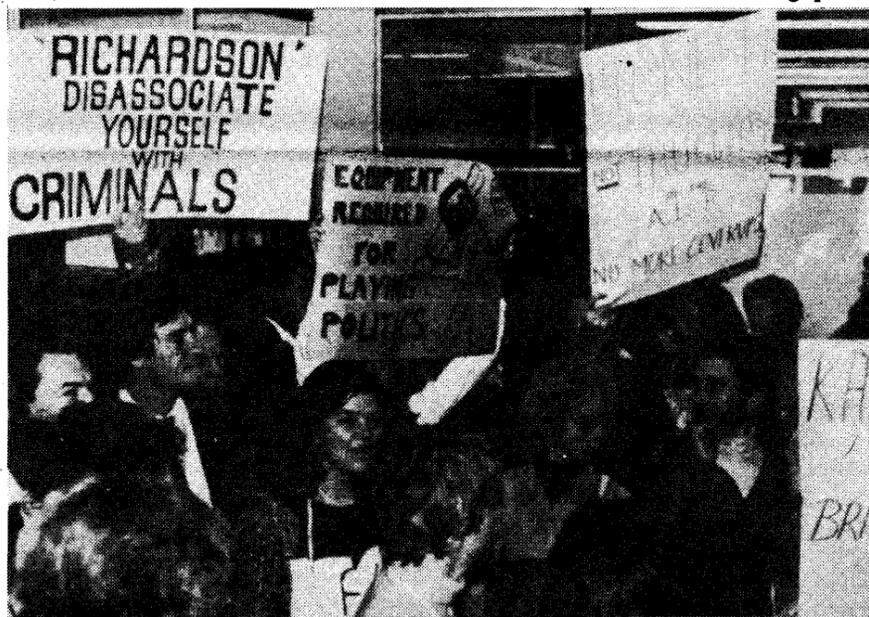
quested no investigation. But when Baldwin's battered face hit the front pages, the left seized the chance. An angry meeting of several hundred demanded a public inquiry and the next day 150 invaded the ALP head office. On 25 July 700 ALP members attended a Steering Committee mass meeting which called for the dismissal of General Secretary Graham Richardson.

Under pressure, the right wing set up a "task force" on the inner-city branches, dissolved the most blatantly stacked (East Rozelle) and promised to discipline those who stacked it. Now they are getting rid of the most compromised elements, beginning with Leichhardt deputy mayor Danny Casey, whose base was Rozelle East. Facing charges within the party over his alleged criminal connections — unearthed during the NSW Royal Commission into Drug Trafficking this year — Casey quit the ALP, bitterly denouncing the right-wing officers for their ingratitude after all



Peter Baldwin.

Challenge photos



ALP left-wingers invade right-wing controlled head office, 18 July.

he had done for them these last 37 years. Baldwin's bashing may have been a clumsy overreaction by small-time local crooks; but it is certain that this element represents only the proverbial tip of the iceberg. It has now emerged that the ALP-run Marrickville and Leichhardt councils sunk some \$1.5 million into the highly dubious Nugan Hand merchant bank. Last January, around the time of the bank's financial collapse, one partner, Frank Nugan, was found shot dead in a "suicide"; the other, Michael Hand, vanished after claiming a hit man was after him. According to *Tribune* (23 July) Hand worked for the drug-running CIA airline Air America during the Vietnam War. And the *National Times* (27 July) reported that "senior Labor people in NSW" are "worried that more significant transactions between party figures and Nugan Hand are yet to be revealed". Every strand of evidence points to pervasive corruption going right to the top of the party. Although Labor premier Wran has so far kept the mud off his "nifty" image, one is tempted to wonder when a "minister for the Mafia" will join his cabinet.

With federal elections coming up as well, the ALP tops have every incentive to

put the lid on fast. Members have been banned from making unauthorised statements to the media. Amidst charges that Steering Committee forces run their own rorts in branches they control, a whitewash deal in the name of "party unity" may be on the cards.

## Crims, crusaders and social democracy

While the Steering Committee has a base in the left wing of the trade-union bureaucracy from which it carries on its perennial clique war with the "right-wing machine", the *Challenge* group has been primarily based on the younger liberal, middle-class layer dominating the North Shore branches and which has been moving into the inner-western suburbs over the past ten years. Espousing "progressive" social causes and ideas such as feminism, ecology and public ownership of the economy, their attempt to mould the local ALP branches in their own image ran up against the entrenched conservative Tammany Hall style machines based on largely pauperised remnants of the working class — including a lumpenised, criminal milieu — left behind by the flight of industry to the outer suburbs.

The program of both *Challenge* and the Steering Committee as a whole scarcely goes beyond ensconcing themselves in the party offices and parliamentary seats now held by the "right", and the classic liberal conviction that everything will be fine once the good guys, the "honest people", get in. In addition, the *Challenge* group has been identified with the demand for less "trade-union control" of the ALP in the name of fighting bureaucracy. But it is these links with the unions which has historically given the ALP its character as a party of the working class; and in any case, the unions are defensive organisations of struggle whose bureaucratic misleaders must be driven out and replaced with a revolutionary leadership.

In contrast to the unions, however, the ALP as a political party is defined by its commitment to attaining control of the capitalist state. No amount of crusading zeal will ever fundamentally "clean up" the ALP, however many individual racketeers are expelled. Bourgeois politics is corrupt from top to bottom because the bourgeois system is corrupt. The leading layers of the ALP are absolutely committed to maintaining that system, and are deeply enmeshed in the everyday repressive machinations of the capitalist state, in exchange for an array of material privileges of which the opportunity for an illicit buck is only a part. The real danger to the working class in the ALP comes neither from "organised crime" nor from trade-union "domination". It is that the ALP, by tying the masses of Australian workers to the bourgeois state and the bosses' system, constitutes a strategic obstacle to the construction of a revolutionary party capable of smashing that system.

The response of *Challenge* and the Steering Committee to the Baldwin bashing — to call for a "public inquiry", whether a Royal Commission or under the auspices of the Attorney General — is an attack on the one progressive aspect of the ALP — the extent to which it represents the political independence of the working class. The bosses' cops and courts could easily have a field day turning such an intrusion into a witchhunt against the left, or an opportunity to go after the unions, all in the name of fighting "corruption". Keep the capitalist state out of the labour movement!

Most of the left outside the ALP has sided with the Steering Committee in the factional warfare. But the workerist ALP Socialist Leadership Group (SLG) around Bob Gould, the owner of a million-dollar bookshop business and at one time reputed to be a "Trotskyist", is pursuing a bloc with the opposing rightist clique. (The SLG's politics closely parallel the line of the pro-Qaddafi Socialist Labour League [SLL].) A leaflet co-signed by Gould and Labor MLA George Petersen suggests darkly that perhaps the attack was a "direct provocation of the ruling class", shifting the blame away from the right-wing party officers under whose regime the rorts flourished.

After denouncing with great fervour Steering Committee calls for "public inquiries" because that would be "bringing the capitalist state into the affairs of the labour movement", they proceed to call for a "Labor and trade union movement inquiry" to be headed by ... the Arbitration Commissioner, Mr

Continued on page 8