



Military victory to left-wing insurgents!

Civil war in El Salvador

No to popular frontism!
For workers revolution
in El Salvador!

25 JANUARY — El Salvador, Central America is in the grip of civil war. Profoundly socially polarised, wracked by almost indescribably bloody right-wing repression, the country is locked in a battle to the death. On one side is a discredited US-backed regime defending the privileged rule of a tightly knit oligarchy. On the other are the impoverished worker and peasant masses who have suffered for half a century under Latin America's longest continuous military dictatorship.

On 9 January, El Salvador's leftist guerrillas launched their long-expected "general offensive". Labour, the left, minorities and all opponents of junta terror must greet the insurrection against one of the most barbarous US puppet regimes in the Americas. Whatever the odds, hesitation now will only invite a massacre far surpassing the bloodbath which followed the 1973 Pinochet coup in Chile. Victory depends on mobilising the energies and determination of the masses to sweep away the uniformed butchers forever, through workers revolution, rather than simply replacing them with a new gang of "democratic" bourgeois rulers. Military victory to the left-wing insurgents! Break the dangerous popular front with "democratic" bourgeois politicians and military officers! For workers revolution in El Salvador!

Taking over three radio stations in the capital city of San Salvador on 10 January, the Salvadoran guerrilla coalition, the Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation (FMLN), announced: "This is the moment. Free homeland or death! People of El Salvador, we have now started the national liberation". Simultaneously, 80 Salvadoran soldiers led by a lieutenant-colonel shot their commanding officer and burned down army barracks in Santa Ana, the country's second largest city. In Morazan department another ranking officer, also a follower of ousted junta "moderate" Colonel Adolfo Majano, called on officers and soldiers to follow the example of Santa Ana and join the insurgent forces. And detachments of



Jose Lavanderos

"Reform" Junta's National Guard "takes prisoners" after storming of the occupied Christian Democrat headquarters in El Salvador.

hundreds of guerrillas marched into a number of provincial towns.

Washington targets Central America

The spectre of "another Cuba" in "America's backyard" has already led the Republicans to signal the Salvadoran military that they will have free rein, and whatever military aid is needed, to drown the masses in blood. On the campaign trail, Reagan had rhetorically asked:

"Must we let Nicaragua, El Salvador all become additional 'Cubas', new outposts for Soviet combat brigades? Will the next push of the Moscow-Havana axis be northward to Guatemala and thence to Mexico, and south to Costa Rica and Panama?"

Now looking for an opportunity to flaunt US military strength, Reagan's advisers view El Salvador as the perfect place to

show some muscle without risking immediate confrontation with the Soviet Union.

Just how Washington plans to draw the line against the "red menace" in El Salvador is not yet clear. Sending in the Marines Santo Domingo-style may be very macho, but even for Reagan it is hardly the first option. The use of an "inter-American" Organisation of American States (OAS) "peace-keeping" force including Venezuelan, Costa Rican and other elements as a cover for imperialist intervention is possible. Then there are the mercenary brigades in Honduras and Guatemala formed from ex-Somoza troops, killers without a country who have been staging terrorist incursions into Nicaragua for months. Finally, there is the possibility of intervention by the Guatemalan and Honduran military regimes themselves. But whatever it

decides, the Reagan administration will find that all the options have been well-prepared by the Carter administration.

Guerrilla leaders have warned that US intervention would turn El Salvador into "another Vietnam and the tomb of the Yankee marines". This will be no easy task, especially given the military dictatorship's sizeable military forces and superior firepower. The guerrillas also speak of the "countryside surrounding the city" a la Mao Tse-tung, but in tiny, crowded El Salvador conditions are not favourable for prolonged guerrilla struggle. Yet if the working masses rise up in an all-round insurrection requiring the utmost in heroism and self-sacrifice, they can defeat the white terror.

The battle cannot be limited to little El Salvador, however, — the "pulgarcito (Tom Thumb) of the Americas". To stop

Continued on page two

French elections: Down with "unity"...6

El Salvador...

Continued from page one

the torturing, murdering Salvadoran gorillas and their Yankee godfathers, the whole Central American isthmus must be set aflame with proletarian revolution. This will force the petty-bourgeois bonapartist Sandinista regime in Managua to confront head-on the dilemma it has sought to escape: either breaking sharply with the bourgeoisie and arming Salvadoran leftists, or capitulating to the imperialist pressures and likely sealing its own doom. It also means linking up, just as the imperialists fear, with the potentially powerful Mexican proletariat.

The labour movement internationally, and especially in the imperialist US, must demonstrate active solidarity with the Salvadoran workers and peasants by boycotting all military goods destined for El Salvador. Waterside workers on the US West Coast pointed in the right direction when their union, the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), black-banned shipments of military goods from 30 West Coast, British Columbian and Hawaiian ports. The ILWU bureaucracy, however, which tails after the Democratic ex-chief imperialist Carter, has already refused to defend union members against threatened company reprisals.

The labour movement worldwide must demand: US-OAS-Latin American bourgeoisies — all hands off El Salvador! Any attempt at imperialist intervention, whether directly by US Marines, by mercenaries or neighbouring dictatorships as US proxies, must be met with militant mass protest.

No to the Popular Front!

Today, as even the *New York Times* (12 January) realises, "the civil war in El Salvador has divided the country along class lines, with most guerrillas being drawn from among peasants and workers". Yet repeatedly the Salvadoran left has tried to paper over the abyss between the opposing class forces by proclaiming a "national" and "patriotic" fight for "democracy", not socialism, and tying the workers to "progressive" bourgeois forces. Now this treacherous policy of popular frontism stands in the way of the key task: splitting the army, not between "democratic" and "fascist" officers, but between the proletarian/peasant ranks and an officer corps committed (even its most liberal elements) to the preservation of capitalist rule. Here the program of agrarian revolution — expropriate the latifundistas and coffee barons — is key to winning the peasant youth conscripted into the army.

The Salvadoran left drew inspiration from the July 1979 overthrow of Nicaragua's bloody patriarch, Anastasio Somoza, by the radical petty-bourgeois Sandinista guerrillas. They have even modelled their joint military command, the FMLN, on the Nicaraguan FSLN, down to naming it after Farabundo Marti, a Salvadoran militant who served with Augusto Sandino in Nicaragua in the 1920s and later was the martyred Communist leader of a 1932 uprising in El Salvador. But unlike the Sandinistas, the

Salvadoran workers and peasants do not face the tottering power of a hated strongman who alienated the traditional bourgeoisie and transformed the National Guard into his personal bodyguard. In El Salvador the ruling class is centred on a landed oligarchy, the so-called "14 Families", which for at least half a century has solidly supported naked military rule to prop up their economic domination.

The "golden age" of the coffee aristocracy came to a crashing end in 1929. As the bottom fell out of the world market, Salvadoran farm labourers were hit with mass unemployment. Meanwhile, the oligarchy moved to oust an elected "reform" government. In January 1932, the newly formed Salvadoran Communist Party (PCS) planned an insurrection after a putsch by General Maximiliano

Hernandez Martinez. Although the PCS leadership was rounded up (and later executed), coffee estate workers in western El Salvador rose and were brutally repressed. In the following weeks Hernandez drove home this bloody "lesson" to the working masses, by slaughtering 30,000 people, roughly 3 to 4 percent of the country's entire population.

This was *la matanza*, the Salvadoran bourgeoisie's response to the first Communist-led uprising in the Americas. No one on either side of the class barricades has forgotten it, and today 1932 is still the watchword of hardliners in the ruling class. As a spokesman of the growers association recently remarked, "Coffee growers should not anguish over the situation today; there was a similar one in 1932, and if it was solved then, it can be solved now" (*NACLA Report*,

March-April 1980). Only this time the "solution" they are talking about is 200,000 dead.

The roots of the current political crisis can be traced most directly to the heavy-handed vote fraud which stole two elections in 1972 and 1977, from Christian Democratic (PDC) winners and continued the succession of repressive army governments under military hardliner General Carlos Romero. With liberal reform efforts consistently stymied, a radical left opposition grew rapidly both in the cities and countryside.

Three different guerrilla "armies" arose, each with its own mass-based coalition. The first, the FPL, was founded by Salvador Cayetano, a former leader of the Communist Party who split from the

Continued on page eight

Spartacist demos in New York, London, Sydney Protest shooting of Bernadette Devlin!

On 16 January Bernadette Devlin and her husband Michael McAliskey were ambushed at their home in Derry-laughlin, Northern Ireland and brutally shot. The masked gunmen pumped seven bullets into Devlin's chest and legs, leaving her and her husband in critical condition in a Belfast hospital. This attempted assassination of the well-known Irish republican socialist comes shortly after the cold-blooded murder last year of Irish Republican Socialist Party militants Ronnie Bunting and Miriam Daly. It is part of a pattern of British imperialist/Loyalist terror directed against leading activists in the campaign against the notorious H-Block of Long Kesh prison.

Within days of the shooting of Devlin-McAliskey, the international Spartacist tendency organised a series of internationally coordinated protests. In New York City on 17 January some fifty people, including supporters of the US-based Northern Irish Aid, staged a demonstration outside the British Consulate. Among the slogans raised by the protesters were: "A united workers movement must avenge Bernadette Devlin!", "British Troops out of Ireland now!" and "Smash H-Block! Free Long Kesh Republican prisoners!" A spokesman for the Spartacist League/US, which had initiated the demonstration, pointed out that Devlin was shot "because she was the symbol of resistance to the British occupation and a symbol of socialism in Northern Ireland". At the end the demonstrators chanted; "Orange thugs will not escape the wrath of an Irish workers state!"

In London, on 23 January, a 20-strong contingent of members and supporters of the Spartacist League/Britain picketed outside the London School of Economics around the demands "Protest the shooting of Devlin-McAliskey!", "Troops out now!" and "Free Long Kesh IRA prisoners!" In Sydney, on 24 January, a Spartacist League (SL)-initiated demonstration outside the British Airways building drew some two dozen people, including supporters of the International Socialists and the Sydney University-based Left Action Group. In addition to demands protesting the murder bid and calling for British troops to get out of Ireland now, the demonstration also raised the demand "Not Orange against Green, but class against class!" and called for the freeing of the Republican prisoners incarcerated in the Long Kesh torture camp.

In contrast, the rest of the left internationally lifted hardly a finger to protest the attack. In Britain, both Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Party agreed to join the protest, but then failed to show up. In the US, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) refused point blank to support the rally at the British Consulate. Yet in the 23 January issue of the *Militant* these do-nothing reformists cynically called for a "campaign of protests against the British government"!

In Sydney, Steve Painter of the local SWP, the US SWP's Australian co-



Sydney, 24 January: SL protests rightist attack on Bernadette Devlin.

thinkers informed an SL caller that the SWP here had "already made our own protest" and would not be joining the demonstration because "actions that you [the SL] engage in or that you initiate have a very bad tone"! When asked what the SWP had carried out, Painter replied "That's our business" — in other words, nothing. Clearly the SWP would prefer the attempted murder of Devlin-McAliskey to go unprotested than be associated in any way with the SL's Trotskyist program.

The Communist Party (CPA) had a similar sectarian attitude. According to leading CPAer David McKnight, their approach was "largely dependent on what genuine mass organisations do". His example of a mass organisation? The H-Block Committee, whose active membership in Sydney one could count on the fingers of two hands! As for the "Socialist Leadership Group" in the NSW ALP, an unusually coy Bob Gould's response was that he couldn't "speak for the Socialist Leadership Group off the top of my head", but he added that he would "pass it on to my friends". The word couldn't have got around too far, for despite SLG supporter Natalie Gould's subsequent promise that "the SLG would be out in force" not one showed up to the protest. So much for Gould's puffed-up claims to be deeply committed to defence of the Northern Irish Catholic minority.

The three IS members who showed up for the protest were concerned though to keep their distance from the SL's slogans and refused to join the moving picket set up. Their speaker at the rally at the end of the protest characteristically put forward no other perspective for Ireland than "kick British troops out and ... fight for a united socialist

republic". This is simply a radicalised version of the IRA's green nationalism and holds out no future for the Irish masses. The IS has systematically adapted to the existing level of consciousness in the Northern Irish Catholic community, including defending (as did Bernadette Devlin) the entry of British troops into the province in 1969. When we mentioned this fact to IS members last November, we were denounced as "Healyite slanderers" (see *Australasian Spartacist* no 79, November 1980). Now the line is that the IS made a "mistake" in 1969. "Mistake"? Only a cynical reformist outfit could defend as progressive the actions of an imperialist army.

An end to imperialist oppression in Ireland will come only through fighting against the poisonous nationalism which divides the working class. As the final SL speaker at the Sydney rally put it:

"We are for British troops out of Ireland now, not gradual or conditional withdrawal as the left in Britain, tailing the Liberals, are pushing ... We defend the IRA against the British army and we shed no tears for the Mountbattens of this world who are killed by the IRA. And we want to see the RUC and UDR smashed. But we condemn indiscriminate terror ... Anti-sectarian workers militias can be organised against Orange and Green terror and imperialist violence ... Only a revolutionary party with a revolutionary program can seek the opportunities in the class struggle and make sure they are not drowned in communal bloodshed. And that means refusal to capitulate to British chauvinism, to Orange loyalism and to [Green] nationalism ... There is no easy solution to the Irish question. But there is only one solution. And that's socialist revolution. So we call for an Irish workers republic within a socialist federation of the British Isles." ■

Australasian
SPARTACIST 

Revolutionary Marxist monthly of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand, section of the International Spartacist tendency, for the rebirth of the Fourth International.

EDITORIAL BOARD:
James Shaughnessy (Managing Editor),
Chris Korwin, David Reynolds, Linda Brooke (Production Manager).

CIRCULATION: Paul Connor.

Printed by trade union labour. Registered at GPO, Sydney for posting as a publication — Category B. Subscription \$3 for 11 issues; airmail overseas \$10 for 11 issues. Address all correspondence to: Spartacist Publications, GPO Box 3473, Sydney, NSW, 2001. Telephone (02) 264-8115.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

Printed by Eastern Suburbs, Randwick, NSW.

In late December 1979, the Soviet Union poured tens of thousands of troops into Afghanistan to prop up the shaky left-nationalist Kabul regime, which was fighting a civil war against imperialist-backed Islamic reactionaries who stand for feudal backwardness, female chattel slavery and mass illiteracy. The international Spartacist tendency (iSt) unambiguously greeted this intervention:

"... the Red Army in Afghanistan is clearly aiding the liberation of the oppressed and the defence of the USSR against imperialism. In the struggle against Islamic reaction we side with the Soviet tanks. Hail Red Army!"

— *Australasian Spartacist* no 71, February/March 1980

The rest of the left in contrast presented an appalling picture of confusion and capitulation in the face of the bourgeoisie's Cold War hysteria. The fake-Trotskyist "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec) in particular came down all over the map, some on opposite sides, others in between and some taking two, three, many lines within a few weeks time. Sections of the USec's centrist wing around Ernest Mandel, like the British International Marxist Group, came out for Soviet withdrawal, while the reformists in the American and Australian Socialist Workers Parties (SWP) came out on the side of the Soviet-backed PDPA Kabul regime. The Australian SWP initially sounded left wing, terming the Soviet intervention "an important blow to imperialism's efforts to hold back the advance of the world revolution"



ASP photo

SWP honcho Jim Percy.

(*Direct Action*, 17 January 1980). The group even claimed at first that "we support the right of the Soviet workers state to take measures necessary to protect itself against imperialist military threats" (ibid), a line which put it at odds with its US mentors who absurdly declared "the issue is not Soviet intervention..." (*Militant*, 18 January 1980). But the apparent difference soon disappeared as the Australians fell into line with the US SWP's insistence that the Russian question was *not* posed over Afghanistan.

At the time we noted that for the thoroughly social-democratic US and Australian SWPs, their Afghanistan line was "something of an unnatural political

Percy's US mentors join anti-Soviet chorus

SWP revisionists fall out over Afghanistan

act", given their uncritical grovelling before Khomeini, who backs the Islamic rebels the Red Army is fighting, and their long record of uncritical support for pro-capitalist Soviet dissidents — from Andrei Sakharov, who denounced the Red Army action, to Anatoly Shcharansky, who passed Soviet military secrets in 1978 to the CIA. In order to square these conflicting positions both SWPs massively denied reality, inventing a mythical "Afghan Revolution" in Kabul in April 1978 as the "real" target of US imperialism.

Now the American SWP has dumped its previous line and rushed to join the anti-Soviet chorus. Echoing Cold War ideologues, an SWP resolution on the shift declares:

"Rather than being liberators, the Soviet troops are the foreign occupiers.... The

workers state in preference to external pressures and threats!

So far the Australian SWP has refused to follow suit. Since its establishment as the Australian branch office of the US SWP eleven years ago, the SWP here has slavishly followed every twist and turn of its American big brother — from defending free speech for fascists right over to justifying the expulsion from Nicaragua of their own "comrades" in the Simon Bolivar Brigade and the current hero-worshipping of Fidel Castro. Last year it put on tour the wretchedly right-wing *chador* "socialist", Fatima Fallahi of the Iranian HKE, who systematically apologised for Khomeini's slaughter of leftists, national minorities, women and homosexuals in Iran. Since then it has come out with a position of

church access to the media. And in its conference resolution it came out for liquidating the "Fourth International" into sundry petty-bourgeois nationalist forces in the Caribbean and Central America:

"The task which confronts the Fourth International today is to link up with the Marxist leadership which has come out of the Cuban, Nicaraguan and Grenadian revolutions, to merge our forces together with other emerging revolutionary currents into a common political and organisational framework...."

Given this track record of opportunism it is clear that when Jim Percy finds it necessary or expedient, he too will junk the Afghanistan line.

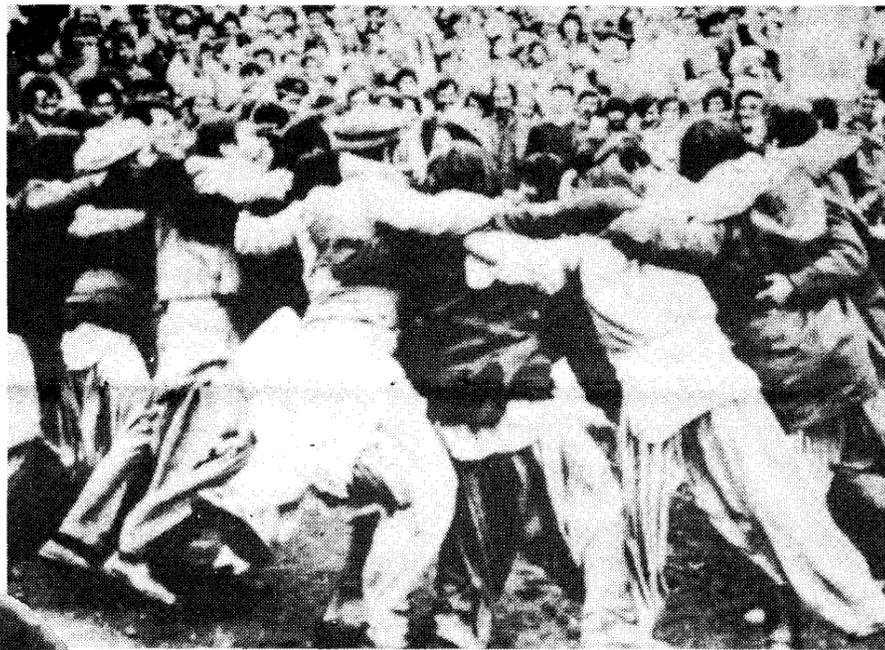
The US SWP line change has been in preparation since August, when the Polish events propelled a further rightward shift on the Russian question by most "left" groups, as they rushed to embrace the clerical-nationalists around Lech Walesa and poooh-pooohed the possibility of capitalist counterrevolution in Poland. We noted that "the Polish crisis created a touchstone of anti-Soviet unanimity extending not merely to avowed third-campists but all the way to the most right-wing, reformist social democrats.... [T]he impulse within the USec to throw away the 'outmoded' baggage of formal Trotskyism is likely to emerge more openly" ("The Russian question: Poland, Afghanistan and the left — An exchange with Paul White", *Spartacist Bulletin*).

The US SWP line change confirms our analysis. In an August 1980 speech, reprinted in *SWP International Internal Information Bulletin (IIDB)* no 4, 1980, Jack Barnes openly acknowledges that it was "our experience in carrying out this line through our industrial fractions, in the antidraft[sic] movement, our forums and elsewhere" which changed their minds. "It wasn't primarily on the basis of new facts". Translation: the SWP found its "pro-Soviet" position a barrier to pursuing its social-democratic appetites.

But what also bothered Barnes was the "tone and approach in the press of our Australian and New Zealand comrades". Both groups had gone too far, it seems, even letting slip — once each — the word "hail" in reference to the Soviet intervention. For Barnes had also "read the press of the Spartacist sect. 'Hail Red Army!' was the main headline...." and this made him "think about the devastating political logic that could be drawn from some of the assumptions we were starting from". The iSt stood for the Trotskyist program of defending the USSR and Barnes didn't want to risk association with that.

In an attempt to give a "left" cover to this capitulation to anti-Sovietism, Barnes drags in the Cubans who, he claims, didn't ecstatically acclaim the

Continued on page nine



Afghan peasants dance arm-in-arm to acclaim Soviet-backed regime's land distribution in 1979.

massive Soviet military presence has ... put the vanguard of the toiling masses of Afghanistan in a worse, not a better, position to mobilise mass opposition to their exploiters."

— *Intercontinental Press*, 22 December 1980; emphasis in original

It then equates the Red Army soldiers with the collection of landlords, mullahs, money-lenders and tribal chieftains who are fighting to restore their barbaric rule in the country: "Both the Soviet troops and the rightists more and more appear as evils to growing layers of the population". This "equal-handed" condemnation gives the lie to the resolution's professed support to the "Kabul regime in any clash with the imperialist-backed rightist guerrillas": without the Red Army the CIA-funded reactionaries would likely defeat the present "Kabul regime" and annihilate the Afghan left along with every single progressive reform implemented since April 1978.

The resolution tries to forestall any charge of joining the Carter/Reagan war drive by rejecting "campaigning for Soviet withdrawal" (emphasis added) in the imperialist West. Instead it calls on "revolutionary Marxists in the Soviet Union" to begin "denouncing the antiworking-class [sic] policy of the Kremlin and demanding the withdrawal of Soviet troops". But this is precisely the line being pushed by the more far-sighted State Department types: foment counter-revolutionary defeatism *within* the Soviet

support to Iran in its sordid nationalist war with Iraq. But this time?

At its recent conference in Sydney, the SWP reportedly adopted a political resolution which carried a watered-down version of the pro-intervention line initially taken. Beneath the difference is simple reformist nationalism: the Jack Barnes leadership of the US SWP brought its Afghanistan line into closer harmony with the rest of its politics because of the intensely anti-Soviet political climate in the US. In a country where even sections of the Victorian ALP Socialist Left defend the Soviet intervention, where Fraser's anti-Soviet Olympic boycott campaign was massively unpopular, the Percy leadership feels a pressure to *maintain* its position — if only to distinguish it from mainstream social democracy. Although the SWP here operates with the same reformist methodology as the Barnes group, a line change in Australia now would be unpopular and publicly humiliating for a group which claims to defend the USSR militarily.

There is no fundamental barrier to the Australian SWP changing its line, though. In 1979 it followed the American organisation in belatedly discovering that Pol Pot's Kampuchea was capitalist (see *Australasian Spartacist* no 61, March 1979). In 1980, it showed its anti-Soviet colours when it regurgitated *in toto* the US SWP's uncritical enthusing over the Polish strikes, including its support for

Spartacist League

Melbourne (03) 662-3740
GPO Box 2339, Melbourne
VIC, 3001

Sydney (02) 264-8195
GPO Box 3473, Sydney,
NSW, 2001

Have you moved?

If you want to keep receiving **Australasian Spartacist** please let us know at least three weeks before you move. Send your new and old address to:

Spartacist Publications
GPO Box 3473
Sydney, NSW, 2001.

CPA's Summer School blues

An opportunity to "develop socialist political practice" — that was how the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) advertised its fourth annual Marxist Summer School held at Sydney Teachers' College from 10-18 January. This year it "developed" in a way the CPA didn't have in mind and didn't like. These reformists ended up so exposed as traitors to the working class that the other opportunist tendencies which showed up — principally the anti-Soviet International Socialists (IS) and the NSW ALP Socialist Leadership Group (SLG) of Bob Gould — were taking pot shots, and scoring. To make matters worse, the party of "pessimism in the 80s" couldn't even put up a convincing reason why the CPA's existence independent of the mass reformist ALP is warranted. By the end of the week a group of CPAers resorted to a typical bureaucratic attempt to gag discussion ... and failed miserably. No wonder the tiny article in *Tribune* (21 January) was headlined, "Summer school 'success'", with "success" in quotation marks!

The gag move surfaced with a leaflet on the penultimate day claiming that "a small minority of people ... are having a disruptive effect". It was no accident that signatories included Laurie Carmichael, Joyce Stevens and "comrades from the Italian Communist Party (P.C.I.)" — they had been key to several sessions in which the CPA had been most sharply exposed.

Carmichael hadn't even bothered to show up for the 11 January session on the 35-hour week he was billed to speak at. The panel, featuring CPA leader Joe Palmada (active in the brewery workers' 35-hour campaign), spent a great deal of time criticising the workers for "apathy" and low consciousness — the bureaucrats' stock alibi for selling out. Also on the panel was one Brian Beer of the AMWSU, who admitted in the course of the meeting that when GMH was shutting down its Pagewood plant in Sydney and throwing 1200 workers onto the streets, he seconded a motion by right-wing Labor Council secretary Barry Unsworth to give up and do nothing!

Paul Ford, an SLG supporter, was only too eager to nail Beer; but during the struggle at Pagewood, where he was a shop steward, he refused to call from the start for an immediate plant occupation to spark off a nationwide struggle against layoffs throughout the car industry and to demand a shorter workweek at no loss in pay. Instead, he waited until the very last to put forward an occupation proposal — and then only to secure the "full ACTU redundancy plan", a pitiful sop! Class struggle was out for Ford and the SLG because it clashed with their sellout strategy of "pressuring" Wran to use his "legal powers of resumption" to keep the plant running as a money-losing capitalist enterprise.

You can't just "blame the leadership", whinged the CPA; but the issue was precisely that, as a postal worker militant and Spartacist League (SL) supporter underlined the point by describing how she had seen the militant Redfern Mail Exchange gutted by a "left" union misleadership which limited the fight against the union-busting Mail Network Plan to impotent bans and half-hearted stoppages — the very strategy the CPA has pursued in its 35-hour week non-campaign. She attacked the Gouldites' nationalisation as a cover for racist protectionism that the SLG and CPA alike promote. An SLG member complained that "the Spartacist League claims that *Keep Left* [the SLG paper] wants to take jobs from Japanese workers.... We wanted an Australian car industry, what else can you have?" As another SL speaker replied, this was a program for the capitalist state to subsidise decrepit industry to protect it from competition from Japanese imports. To this "White Australian



Unanimous vote for SL's anti-exclusion motion after CPA retreat.

Asp photo



Asp photo

Frenzied Freney pulls plug at CPA Summer School Meeting.

socialism", the SL counterposes the international class solidarity of Australian and Asian workers.

PCI backs NATO, austerity, cop terror

At the session on "Italy today", a PCI panel described brazenly how it has tried desperately to consummate an "historic compromise" with Italy's ruling capitalist Christian Democrats. In response to an SL question, one panel member defended NATO, the US imperialists' chief anti-Soviet military alliance, as "defensive and not ... offensive", arguing that Italy should stay in NATO to prevent it being left exclusively in the hands of the US! Another tried to compare "work in NATO" (by the Italian government) to the Leninist position of communist work in the army! In Italy the PCI is "talking about austerity for people on very reasonable salaries", and has a policy "not to fight for wage increases". Vilely slandering Italy's petty-bourgeois leftist terrorist Red Brigades as no different from "fascists", the PCIs defended their party's criminal support to capitalist repression against them.

While Gould and the IS denounced the Italian "anti-terror" laws because (as Gould put it) "they won't be used against terrorism ... [but] against the working class" (as if leftist terrorists really deserve to be crushed), only the SL speakers unequivocally called for the defence of the Red Brigades against the capitalist state despite their futile strategy of individual terror against the class enemy. Gould's criticism of the PCI for backing

repressive laws in Italy is worthless, one SL comrade pointed out: In Iraq, the SLG criminally refuses to defend the Iraqi Communist Party against the repression of the capitalist Ba'athist regime, which butchered 21 CP militants in 1978.

CPA on women: Liberals, yes, "greedy workers", no

At the session on "Marxism and Women", Joyce Stevens illustrated the class line between her CPA feminism and Marxism by announcing that there are a lot of strikes she's not sure about supporting because they're "consumerist" and "develop the wrong mentality". This feminist echo of bourgeois media diatribes against "greedy workers" is hardly surprising coming from someone who also sympathises with strikebreaking "back-to-work" movements by strikers' wives. SL comrades present counterposed to this anti-working class position the Marxist program of class struggle as the road to women's liberation.

As hardened feminist opposition almost reduced the meeting to disarray, an SL comrade took the floor. Bolshevik politics became the topic as members of the audience began to ask her questions. One asked for examples of where feminism and Marxism were incompatible. In reply the SL speaker pointed to strikes at Fairfax newspapers in Sydney, where even "socialist" feminists like CPA supporter Anne Roberts had crossed picket lines. Class solidarity and "sisterly solidarity" were counterposed, she added. Finally, Stevens, unable to produce any sort of political defence, simply fled the meeting. Anyone who wanted to talk about "the topic" (!) should leave, she said, and walked out with a group of supporters.

At an earlier session on "Feminism and class" addressed by IS member Carole Ferrier, the IS denounced the CPA's gross class collaborationist attempts to bloc with Queensland Liberal Party MP Rosemary Kyburz. But the IS' own posturing as "anti-feminists" with a "class line" on women's oppression is a fraud. To this day, the IS maintains its longstanding anti-Leninist position in favour of women's caucuses in the party, giving the lie to Ferrier's claim that she stands by the early Comintern's program for communist work among women. This too is the group whose anti-Soviet Stalinophobic politics led it to back Muslim rebels in Afghanistan who are fighting for the bride price, for the veil, and *purdah* (segregation within the home). Yet when an SL speaker pointed what the IS' line on Afghanistan means in practice, their members could only cynically snigger.

Who defends workers democracy?

The CPA eventually issued a leaflet calling for a lunchtime meeting on the final Saturday to stifle any further criti-

cism of their policies. The meeting was a farce: motions were to be referred to the "Organising Committee", (which also signed the leaflet), not voted on; there would be one speaker from every tendency, only the CPA got as many as it wanted. Joyce Stevens — a CPA National Committee member — showed up to say how "threatened and intimidated" she felt by what the leaflet slanderously called "harassment, disruption and domination".

An SL speaker exposed this fraud as an attack on workers democracy flowing from the CPA's rotten politics. He put a motion which declared: "This meeting affirms the principle of workers democracy, by which all tendencies in the workers movement have the right to freely discuss different political strategies and programs and to participate in this school". Faced with considerable vocal opposition, the CPA soon declared the meeting closed and abandoned it in haste, taking about half of those present with them. (The rabid anti-Trotskyist Denis Freney stayed behind to unplug the loudspeaker.) The SL motion was then put and passed with 49 votes for — including those of the IS and SLG — and none against.

Before the meeting Gould had roneoed off his own motion with helpful hints on how the CPA could improve next year's school. He even produced an "amendment" to his own motion, urging "all participants" to "display sensitivity" — ie, a softcore version of the CPA's gag leaflet. Meanwhile, the IS had produced a schizophrenic leaflet with the earnest avowal on the front side that "strategies ... have to be debated seriously" and an advertisement for a public class series on the Russian question — open to "Friends of the IS welcome" — on the back. What this rider means was spelled out by leading ISer Martin Hirst two weeks later when a number of SL comrades tried to attend the class: "Friends of the IS" means anyone but the Spartacists.... It's simply a bureaucratic method of keeping you from coming in", he announced in an unusual display of candour.

As for Gould, he has long been associated with the most notorious thugs who call themselves "leftists" in this country, the Healyite Socialist Labour League (SLL) — now out of the workers movement by virtue of its political subordination to the bonapartist strongman of Libya, Colonel Qaddafi. Even before the SLL's Qaddafi Connection, in June 1975, Gould openly solidarised with a vicious thug attack on SL salesmen outside a "public" meeting which Gerry Healy himself addressed, and from which we were excluded on the same spurious grounds that the CPA tried to use against us and Gould at the summer school. Gould has never repudiated this attack.

The CPA has nothing to offer but reformist pessimism and betrayal. What militant could be attracted to a "Communist" party one of whose leaders, Mavis Robertson could seriously announce: "It is legitimate to ask: can there be fundamental change in Australia?" To those leftists at the summer school seeking a revolutionary alternative, the SL alone can offer the class-struggle, internationalist program of Trotskyism. ■

Panel debate on Poland

Sydney University

Speakers from:
Spartacist League
Socialist Workers Party
International Socialists
Communist Party

12-2pm
Thursday
19 February
Carslaw Lecture Theatre 4

Australasian Spartacist

For political revolution! Down with clerical reaction!

Poland debate polarises left

In mid-January Lech Walesa, head of the Polish Solidarity "free trade unions", took his crucifixes and Black Madonna of Czestochowa emblems to the Vatican, where he embraced and received guidance from the bitterly anti-communist Polish pope. That same week in Sydney, a whole range of self-proclaimed "revolutionaries" gathered at the Communist Party (CPA) "Marxist Summer School" session on Poland laughed off any suggestion that there was a counter-revolutionary threat behind this sinister collaboration between the "Polish hero" and the Pope.

Ever since the August upheaval which led to Solidarity's formation the ties of its leadership to the forces of clerical reaction have deepened and become more brazen. Yet the entire fake left with the exception of the Moscow-loyal Stalinists have united to excuse or defend these forces and their influence which endangers every historic gain of the country's proletariat. In contrast the international Spartacist tendency has advanced a program to split the reactionary elements out of the movement and open the road to political revolution:

- For trade unions independent of bureaucratic control and based on a program of defending socialised property!
- For the strict separation of church and state! Fight clerical-nationalist reaction! Guard against capitalist restorationism!
- Promote the collectivisation of agriculture!
- For workers control of production, prices, distribution and foreign trade!
- For proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy — For a government based on democratically elected workers councils (soviets)!
- Break the imperialist economic stranglehold — cancel the foreign debt! Toward international socialist economic planning!
- For military defence of the USSR against imperialism! For the revolutionary unity of the Polish and Soviet working classes!
- For a Polish Trotskyist party, section of a reborn Fourth International!

Behind the polarisation on the left over Poland is the Russian question. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan a year ago posed point blank the defence of the deformed and degenerated workers states against imperialist aggression. In Afghanistan the Red Army is fighting on the side of the oppressed against a mullah-led feudal/tribal insurgency; Poland is not Afghanistan. The current powerful but deeply contradictory movement of the Polish workers could open up either clerical-reactionary-led capitalist counterrevolution or proletarian political revolution. But for the fake left, Poland provided a much better cover for their cowardly abandonment of revolutionary duty. As we put it, "Polish workers are more palatable than Afghan mullahs and landlords as a cover for deserting Soviet defencism and crossing the bridge into the camp of social democracy" ("Poland and the left", *Australasian Spartacist* no 78, October 1980).

Fake lefts join pro-imperialist "third camp"

This line-up was clear at the CPA summer school Poland session on 10 January. CPA supporter Steve Brook, the featured speaker, maintained that the only reactionaries in Poland are just a "lunatic fringe" of "minority ratbag groups" and that the Solidarity unions can be accommodated by the bureaucracy through democratic self-reform. Admitting the church is "reactionary", he claimed it had "made its peace" with the regime, and has "a lot of authentic, genuine popular support" in Poland due to its opposition to the Nazi German

occupiers in World War II. But the Polish church "opposed" the Germans only to defend the Polish landlord and boss!

Brook tried to dismiss the line of the Spartacist League as "so far out of reality as to be almost invisible"; but anyone who believes that the Polish bureaucracy can live with independent workers organisations of any sort is living in a fantasy world. When the occupying Soviet Red Army eventually expropriated the Polish bourgeoisie after the war, they installed from above a regime of the type that issued out of the *degeneration* of the 1917 October Revolution in Russia — a parasitic bureaucratic *caste* resting atop the collectivised property forms of a workers state, defending its privileges with brutal police repression. The workers cannot dislodge these corrupt, bloody-handed usurpers peacefully, but will have to drive them out in order to establish genuine proletarian soviet rule — as the Hungarian workers tried to do in 1956.

The church remains an international bulwark of reaction which is scarcely reconciled to the overturn of capitalist property relations. Far from being "anti-

egates. He was ready to swear on everything that was sacred and dear to him: he was a believing Catholic, had married his wife in church; although a party member, he had his children baptized.

"The hall howls: 'We know his sort! Who made *him* delegate?' The man on the podium turns white with fear. The people in the hall remain implacable. In the end he says: 'I will swear to you on the crucifix that I'm telling the truth — I'm a party member, but in reality I belong to you.' 'The crucifix is hanging too high for the small man. Someone gets a chair, the man climbs on it, kisses the figure of Christ.'"

— *Der Spiegel*, 17 November 1980

It is disgusting to have to repeat such an elementary tenet of Marxism, but to the fake left, such basic points have truly become "invisible": clerical anti-communism amongst the workers is self-destructive *false* consciousness! And in Poland's 3.5 million landholding peasants, the church has a potential mass social base for capitalist restoration. The current peasant mobilisation to gain their own "union", Rural Solidarity, is demanding the return of religious instruction to the state schools and abolishing the privileged access of the collectivised farms to agricultural equipment.

which the IS insisted was "state capitalist" — the "theory" with which the IS tries to justify its refusal to defend the collectivised property forms in the Soviet bloc. The rest of the fake lefts present converged around this anti-Soviet axis. After one IS speaker had denounced the "capitalist" bureaucracy, Bob Gould of the left-reformist-cum-Healyite ALP Socialist Leadership Group (SLG) chimed in with an interjection: "Whatever they're called, they should be overthrown"! But for Trotskyists, there is a difference between *political* revolution to smash the bureaucratic caste, and *social counterrevolution* to restore capitalism. The Spartacist speaker exposed this bloc of open defeatists and ostensible defencists, all of whom had earlier last year joined the imperialist hue and cry over "poor little Afghanistan":

"... the American ruling class is hellbent on destroying the gains of Russian workers and all the workers in Eastern Europe... And what's really behind this debate is the fact that every tendency in this room which has spoken has lined up with an anti-Soviet war drive..."

IS rides wave of Cold War II

The IS' "theory" of "state capitalism" was cooked up to rationalise deserting the defence of the deformed workers states under fire. The IS' direct political progenitors, led by Tony Cliff in Britain, criminally refused to defend the Korean deformed workers state against the US imperialist onslaught in 1950-53. The Cliffites thereby joined the same "third camp" to which Shachtman & Co fled from the then-Trotskyist US Socialist Workers Party in 1940, abandoning unconditional military defence of the USSR against imperialism. During the Vietnam war the inveterately opportunist British IS, along with its US and Australian cousins, tailed the popularity of the Vietnamese Stalinists in the New Left — on the secondary grounds of national self-determination — instead of standing on their treacherous "principles", which dictated a similar defeatist betrayal to that over Korea.

In the Carter/Reagan years their "state capitalism" once again has found a propitious climate. When Washington seized on the Kremlin's Afghanistan incursion to launch a drive toward anti-Soviet war, the IS took to the new Cold War frenzy like a fish to water. For the mullahs, landlords and khans fighting the Red Army-backed Kabul regime, its land reform and its attempt to establish some minimal rights for women, the *Battler* (26 January 1980) cheered: "support for Afghan rebels". They were on hand to "leaflet" a reactionary demonstration of Captive Nations Council hard-core anti-communists which included the notorious Nazi thug Ross "the Skull" May. Backing the Carter/Fraser Moscow Olympics boycott, the IS' supposed "third camp" neutrality evaporated as they mobilised their own anti-Olympics rally on 1 August last year, at the height of the intense imperialist propaganda campaign (only to be met with a larger Spartacist counter-rally to defend the Soviet Union).

Now the IS has come out squarely for what might be called "Kulak Solidarity". Lauding the Rural Solidarity movement, David Lockwood in the 24 January *Battler* tells us: "The state exploits the peasants by fixing taxes and prices for farm produce and equipment". What nonsense! Lenin and Trotsky were not "exploiters" because they imposed such measures in the young Soviet Union; on the contrary, taxes on the peasants were essential to keep rich peasant (kulak) elements in check. And although the market was allowed (within limits) to dictate agricultural prices under the 1921 New Economic Policy, this was a conscious and temporary "retreat" (in Lenin's

Continued on page nine



Solidarity "free trade union" leader Lech Walesa goes down on bended knees before Polish pope Wojtyla during recent visit to Vatican. Polish workers must break with clerical-reactionary nationalism.

Nazi" in World War II, the Vatican of Pius XII was up to its elbows in Hitler's "final solution" holocaust of European Jewry! In Poland, pogroms against Jews were led by Catholic reactionaries. Since the 1950s, the deeply reactionary Polish Cardinal Wysinski may have reached a temporary *modus vivendi* with Stalinism; but the church is only waiting for the opportunity to support (or lead) a *viable* counterrevolution.

Meanwhile, the perfidious Stalinist bureaucrats have managed to make communism a dirty word even within a big section of the working class through their innumerable crimes and blunders, giving the church the opening to exploit an anti-communist mobilisation. Listen to Ewa Milewicz, a member of the liberal/social-democratic dissident group KOR, describe what happened when a delegate to the Gdansk-centred Interfactory Strike Committee last August stated he was a member of the Communist party:

"The hall is an uproar, there are shouts: 'Out with him. Out!' Totally confused, the man on the podium attempts to justify himself before the excited del-

Yet Solidarity is striking to *defend* this ominous development. Trotskyists in Poland would counterpose to Walesa & Co the defence and extension of collectivised agriculture.

Brook expressed the continuing sympathy of a section of the CPA for liberal Stalinism a la Dubcek's Czechoslovakian "Prague Spring" of 1968, by coming out for what he called the "radical reform" faction of the Stalinist PUWP (Polish United Workers Party). The first loyalties of these "Australocommunist" reformists, however, are to their own ruling class. Thus during the recent bourgeois media hysteria about impending Soviet invasion of Poland, the CPA issued a special press release piping up that it, too, (like NATO and the Pentagon!) was categorically opposed to Soviet intervention under any circumstances.

In the debate following Brook's presentation, the International Socialists (IS) formed the clear right wing, attacking the CPA for not going far enough in repudiating Soviet defencism. They demanded that the CPA address the "real issue", the "class nature of the state" in Poland,

French elections: Down with "unity"!

Socialists no, Stalinists maybe

The following article is adapted from *Le Bolchevik* no 20, November/December 1980, paper of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France (LTF), French section of the International Spartacist tendency. It explains our attitude towards the French Communist Party (PCF) and Socialist Party (PS) campaigns for this year's presidential elections.

For defensive reasons, the PCF has responded to the government's austerity policies and to the new Cold War atmosphere by making a bureaucratic shift to the left. Drawing back from a fling with Eurocommunism in the mid-1970s, the PCF today could be described as more-or-less Kremlin-loyal "Eurostalinists".

For the moment at least, the PCF candidate is running as a fierce enemy of "unity". Georges Marchais, who greeted Carter's pope in Paris, who helped sabotage the fight against redundancies in steel, now says that the popular front doesn't work. Marchais' campaign is above all an anti-PS campaign. Faced with an increasingly confident PS, which profits from the rightward-moving international political atmosphere to attack the PCF for its links to Moscow, the PCF is seeking to consolidate its ranks. For his own bureaucratic reasons, and in solidarity with the bureaucratic caste which rules the USSR, Marchais is the only candidate who defended the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, the candidate of the only party which minimally mobilised against NATO missiles in Europe. The PCF has again trotted out its class-struggle rhetoric, and is even organising bureaucratically and well-controlled "mobilisations" against Giscard.

Down with "unity" — Vote PCF

We are not so naive as to think that the PCF's new-found left face is more than skin deep. The PCF's current independent stance is merely a conjunctural tactic in the context of its profoundly class-collaborationist historic role comparable to that of social democracy. However, the contradictions inherent in a mass reformist workers party do surface when it stands in its own name, without the excuse of conciliating its bourgeois electoral partners (and in this case it cannot even use the convenient scapegoat of the PS).

But the crucial point is that the PCF is currently running in its own name and against collaborationism. If the PCF continues its campaign along these lines, the LTF will call for savagely critical support to Marchais next April. To cast a vote for Marchais is not to forget the strikebreaking social chauvinist role of this Stalinist bureaucrat and his "Communist" party. Our policy of critical support to the PCF can be a vehicle to expose the bureaucrats to their ranks, to set the base against the top. It has nothing in common with the uncritical apolitical tailism practised by the fake Trotskyists who must quiver with horror at Lenin's idea that critical support is undertaken in the spirit of "the rope supporting a hanged man". Undoubtedly all the fake Trotskyists will complain that our slogan "Down with 'unity' — Vote PCF" is sectarian. Sectarian? Ask 2 million CGT members!

In this period of bourgeois anti-Sovietism, we are pleased to be able to give critical support to a pro-Moscow Communist Party. For us, it is a way to highlight our Trotskyist defence of the deformed and degenerated workers states. Not so for the Stalinists, who remain French Stalinists committed to

the defence of the capitalist order in France and to French imperialist military power, to the *force de frappe*.

Proletarian internationalism v social patriotism

The savagely critical aspect of our support is directed in particular against the PCF's notorious anti-German chauvinism, which stretches from "Get a Kraut!" at "Liberation" to its attacks against German steel imports in 1979. Today, the PCF pushes the slogan "Produce French" and has gone so far as to campaign against immigrant workers (see accompanying article), but after the last war, PCF ministers in the government acted to maintain the "French Union" including by means of the massacres of Setif and Madagascar, implementing a policy of "Kill French". Economic nationalism and protectionism lead to shooting wars between the imperialist powers. Revolutionaries reject the "unity" of the working class with its "own" bourgeoisie and its profits. Not so the fake Trotskyists of the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) and the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (LCR — sister section of the Inter-

Marchais (right), Mitterrand (left). Today PCF defends Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and rejects Union of the Left popular front. Tomorrow?



Stalinists now feel obliged to take up previously taboo subjects, most notably the line which has dominated Stalinist policy for some 45 years: the popular front. The last PCF conference rang with criticisms and denunciations of the popular front. Henri Malberg noted that three times, with the popular front of 1936, following "Liberation" (1945), and with the signing of the Common Program (1972), "the PCF-PS union, although born in happiness, met a bad end" (*Le Monde*, 14 October).

It's true. Three times the PCF tried the popular front. Three times (its current leaders admit) the bourgeoisie won. For

fifty years the Stalinists have been the gravediggers of revolutions.

It is in part through the exacerbation of its internal contradictions that Stalinism will be swept away. The contradiction inherent in Stalinism is not only the contradiction of all "bourgeois workers parties" between the desires of the working-class base and the class collaborationism of the sellout leadership, which in the last analysis serves as a prop for the bourgeoisie in its period of decay. The very existence of Stalinism — the ideology of the bureaucratic caste which usurped political power from the Russian workers — was the reflection of the pressure of world imperialism in the first workers state in its isolation following the defeat of the German revolution. Stalinism came into being as the ideology of socialism in one country, appropriate to a parasitic, nationalist, privileged bureaucracy. Its survival is predicated on a stand-off on a world scale between the deformed workers states and imperialism; a proletarian upsurge which smashes capitalism in the advanced capitalist countries will also settle accounts with the bureaucratic regimes which exist in contradiction with the collectivised, ie proletarian, property forms of these states.

It is this contradiction which we seek to exacerbate in our campaign of critical support to Marchais, with our emphasis on the necessity of defence of the Soviet Union against imperialist attempts at capitalist restoration. The struggle for the defence of the USSR through proletarian political revolution against the conservative nationalist bureaucracy which undermines that defence at every turn, not least by working against the international extension of the revolution which Lenin knew was the only safeguard of the gains of October, is indissolubly linked to the struggle for socialist revolution in the capitalist countries.

Eurocommunists: sheep in sheep's clothing

Every reformist workers party contains a contradiction between the reformist leadership and the working-class base. This is true not only of the PCF which has propped up the bourgeois state in governmental coalitions — both official and unofficial — but also of the Socialist parties which by themselves have been the sole administrators of capitalist governments — eg the British Labour Party or the German SPD. But today the PS is running on anti-Sovietism and for a new popular front, possibly enlarged to include Chirac's Gaullist RPR. This is why



1 May 1980: Pablotites on their knees to "unity". This is the codeword for the resurrection of the Union of the Left popular front.

national Marxist Group), whose call for the "unity" of the reformist apparatuses would tie the workers to their traitorous leaders and ultimately to the "union sacree" and national defence.

We know that our program of consistent proletarian internationalism and militant opposition to racism against immigrant workers will not find an immediate echo in a proletariat trained by the Stalinists to defend their "own" empire. Only an authentic Marxist program to combat the social patriotic traitors — the Trotskyist program which embodies the slogan "Workers of the World Unite" — can break the workers from the chauvinist false consciousness which ties them to their own bourgeoisie. As Karl Liebknecht said, the main enemy is at home.

In gearing up their ranks for battle, the



LCR's Alain Krivine peddles "unity against the right".

Le Bolchevik

Intercontinental Press

it is impossible for revolutionists to call for a vote for the PS. Despite their current independent stance, the PCF is no less reformist than the more overtly rightist and/or more pro-American social-democratic parties.

The difference between them is the bourgeoisie's present intransigence towards parties linked to Moscow. The Gaullists and Giscardians are willing to dine with Mitterrand, but the bourgeoisie is presently manifestly unwilling to entertain the idea of even a corridor coalition with the PCF. When Marchais followed Carrillo and "renounced" the dictatorship of the proletariat, it had the same meaning as Stalin's dissolution of the Comintern (indeed the PCF has the same relation to the dictatorship of the proletariat as the Stalinised Comintern had to internationalism, ie none). Just as the dissolution of the Communist International during World War II was a gesture of appeasement towards the "democratic" bourgeoisie, so the formal renunciation of Leninist phraseology long since discarded in practice constituted an overture to the ruling class. But in the present climate of anti-Soviet bellicosity the bourgeoisie is no longer in a mood to listen. In order to prove their loyalty to their own bourgeoisie, the Eurocommunists, unlike the Stalinist PCF leadership, want to decisively break with Moscow, and openly espouse social democracy.

With the polarisation between the Eurocommunists and the rest of the PCF rapidly sharpening, after Marchais sided with the hardliners, a split in the PCF (for example, over a Soviet invasion of Poland) is entirely possible. The situation cries out for a Trotskyist party capable of intervening to deepen the contradictions of the PCF, to polarise it through forcefully posing a clear class program and ultimately to split it, exposing the sellout leadership and winning its best elements to authentic Leninism. In fact, we'll make LCR leader Alain Krivine another offer: he can have the Eurocommunists (Ellenstein and Mandel would get along famously), we'll take the militants who believe that the proletariat, organised in a vanguard party, is the motor force to change history and who can be broken from the betrayals of Stalinism.

These are the issues — the popular front, defence of the Soviet Union — which make the present political conjuncture a classic example of when the tactic (not strategy) of critical support can be applied. Today, Marchais is against the popular front and for the Soviet Union. Tomorrow, who knows?

The present configuration recalls Trotsky's call on the American SWP to offer critical support to the Communist Party candidate Browder during the brief period of the Hitler-Stalin pact in 1939-40, when the Comintern was not supporting the imperialist democracies, Roosevelt and Co.

"What I propose is a manifesto to the Stalinist workers, to say that for five years you were for Roosevelt, then you changed. This turn is in the right direction. Will you develop and continue this policy or not?"



Publication de la Ligue trotskyste de France

Subscribe: 20 francs for 6 issues
Order from/make cheques payable to:
Le Bolchevik, BP 135-10,
75463 Paris Cedex 10, France

Will you let the leaders change it or not? Will you continue and develop it or not? If you are firm we will support you. In this manifesto we can say that if you fix a sharp program for your candidate then we will vote for him."

— "Discussions with Trotsky",
Writings 1939-40, p273

This is the spirit in which the LTF raises the question of support to the PCF today.

Marchais, speaking on the television program "Cards on the table", pointed out that even though PS leader Mitterrand had been the perpetual candidate of the left, the right wing was still in power:

"Therefore we aren't going to repeat, unity, unity, unity... elections, unity, elections, like parrots. We are using our heads and we say, since we haven't succeeded that way... we must find another path."

— Le Monde, 15 October

"Unity" has become a code word for

reconstitution of the defunct popular-front Union of the Left. And the fake-Trotskyist groups which repeat "unity, unity" like parrots are hopelessly condemning themselves.

LCR: crime does not pay

But once again the fake Trotskyists of the French "far left" show themselves to be not merely incapable of such a course but obstacles to it. It goes without saying that the Stalinophobia of the reformist OCI of Pierre Lambert, revealed graphically over Portugal, constitutes an appeal to the most backward sections of the working class. For when the Communist Party headquarters were being burned down by anti-communist mobs in Portugal, the OCI added its voice to that of the CIA-backed Portuguese Socialist Party in hailing these assaults as part of a

struggle for "democracy"! Small wonder that the comrades of the LTF, selling their press which headlined "Hail Red Army" in Afghanistan, encountered Stalinist workers who told us: "I didn't know that Trotskyists defend the Soviet Union." And the right centrists of the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire are little better. While the Lambertistes campaign for "unity" empty of content under the rubric of a *candidat unique* (single candidate), the LCR trails along behind with its calls for *desistement* (standing down). Truly, six of one, half a dozen of the other.

The LCR has no more than the OCI to say about programmatic criteria for working-class unity, and in fact wages the same campaign for the reconstruction of the popular-front Union of the Left — in the name, of course, of "Giscard out".

Continued on page nine

PCF chauvinists attack immigrant workers



October: Moroccan miners demand equal rights with French miners.

On 24 December fifty people descended on a dormitory intended to house 300 immigrant workers from Mali in the Paris working-class suburb of Vitry-sur-Seine. As the African workers looked on, the mob systematically destroyed the dormitory, ending up by bulldozing the pathways and stairways and depositing the rubble in front of the doors. A vile racist provocation by one of the French fascist groups such as the Parti des Forces Nouvelles, Ordre Nouveau or the European National Fascists? No! The attack was led by the local Mayor, Paul Mercieca, a member of the French Communist Party (PCF)!

With the French economy in deep recession, with large scale unemployment and a catastrophic worsening of the living conditions of the working masses, the one and a half million immigrant workers were bound to become the scapegoats and victims of bourgeois racism and repression. But instead of leading mobilisations against the anti-immigrant attacks, the PCF is spearheading them. In none too subtle references to "higher criminal rates" among migrant communities, the PCF claims to be concerned about the ghettoisation of the working-class suburbs to which the bourgeoisie consciously reallocates migrant workers. For Marxists the way to combat this is by integrating migrant workers and the local proletariat, by resolutely fighting for full citizenship rights, including the right to join trade unions, and by uniting them in struggle against their common enemy, the bourgeoisie. All this the PCF stands opposed to.

The incident at Vitry-sur-Seine was grossly racist; disgustingly, the PCF's attitude was essentially to defend it.

Despite statements "regretting" what had happened, the party leadership came out openly in defence of Mercieca's actions. What lies behind this assault is the PCF's national chauvinism and the question of the popular front; it was a statement that the Communist Party is prepared to administer the capitalists' austerity program, a statement that it is prepared to make immigrant workers in particular pay for the crisis of French capitalism.

For some time the mayors of PCF-controlled municipalities have been waging a demagogic campaign directed against migrant workers. The Stalinists' rhetoric even flirts with the reactionary idea that immigrants are "stealing" French jobs. Just over eighteen months ago the secretary of the Val de Marne federation of the PCF was declaiming that "the government can't or won't master immigration although there is a crisis and although France... today has 1,400,000 unemployed".

Since the first popular front of the 1930s, chauvinism has been a constant for the PCF with the tricolour blocking out the Red Flag and the "Marseillaise" drowning out the "Internationale". As Leon Trotsky remarked at the time the PCF had become the party *par excellence* of "communichauvinism". Today's attacks on migrant workers are nothing extraordinary for a party whose cabinet ministers in the bourgeois governments after the war acted to maintain the "French Union" by supporting the infamous colonial massacres at Setif in Algeria and in Madagascar and who voted to send a French imperialist army to fight Ho Chi Minh's Vietminh in 1947.

The bourgeoisie and the Socialist

Party (PS) of Francois Mitterrand have attempted to use the recent incidents to scandalise the PCF which is running its leader Marchais against both the bourgeois candidates and Mitterrand in the April presidential elections and is for now critical of its past popular frontist policies. What hypocrisy! Mitterrand and the PS are not one whit less social chauvinist. Mitterrand himself was a minister in the government of the Fourth French Republic during its filthy war on the Algerians in the 1950s. The PS predecessors were bitter-end defenders of the empire. The current PS "expert" on immigration Jean le Garrec has himself deplored that "some left constituencies are alone" in containing up to 25 per cent migrant population. In 1979 the PS was campaigning for "very strict control" of the migrant flow! The PS mayor of Epinay-sur-Seine has recently come out with statements almost identical to those of PCF mayors.

What happened at Vitry immediately raised for Marxists the question of withdrawing critical electoral support to the PCF. The coming French elections are to an extent a referendum on the Russian question and opposition to the popular front. But what Vitry raised was whether Marchais was going to make the elections a referendum on national chauvinism, a bid to reconstruct a new popular front. At this stage, however, our position remains one of savagely critical support, with our criticism directed particularly against the PCF's egregious social patriotism and social chauvinism. Protest the racist outrage at Vitry! Down with PCF neo-Gaullist French chauvinism! Full citizenship and trade-union rights for foreign workers! No to the popular front!

El Salvador...

Continued from page two

PCS over its supine support for El Salvador in the 1969 "football war" with Honduras. The FPL is linked to the People's Revolutionary Block (BPR), the largest and originally most radical of the coalitions, which grouped most of the organised rural labourers and the teachers union. The second guerrilla outfit is the ERP, originally a Guevarist group which had roots in the left wing of the Christian Democrats. Its "popular organisation" is the February 28th People's Leagues (LP-28), strong among high school students and market vendors. The third group, the FARN, is a front for the United People's Action Front (FAPU), which controls the largest union federation, including the combative electrical workers

The incredible number of fronts, armies, parties, coalitions, etc makes El Salvador left politics extremely difficult to unravel. However, several points can be made. First, the main left groups are based on mass organisations of workers, peasants and the urban poor, counting tens of thousands of supporters. This contrasts with Nicaragua where the strategy of the bonapartist Sandinista armed forces was to conquer the main urban centres from without. This mass mobilisation is one reason why the imperialists are more worried about the Salvadoran left taking power than they were at the prospect of a Sandinista victory in 1979. Second, the political differences are at most tactical and even then murky. Furthermore they are extremely fluid, so that groups pass easily from one coalition to another, and yesterday's left wing today stands on the right. And while today "unity" is the watchword, Salvadoran factional politics can be deadly: when the ERP's most prominent member, well-known leftist poet Roque Dalton, opposed its "militarist" line in 1975 he was executed by his "comrades". Above all, even before their general rightward turn since 1979, none of the "guerrilla left" groups had a program and strategy for proletarian revolution in Central America; all were based on an eclectic mish-mash of radical nationalism and various brands of Stalinist "revolution by stages" reformism.

During the early and mid-1970s, the guerrilla groups engaged in a series of kidnappings, radio station takeovers, embassy occupations and assassinations of hated military figures and capitalists. Meanwhile, falling coffee prices and a bad harvest in 1978 led to unrest in the countryside, while strikes increased in San Salvador. The right wing replied with bloody terror. When the BPR occupied the capital's basilica in May 1979, police mowed down demonstrators on the cathedral steps, leaving more than two dozen dead. But the demonstrations continued.

"Human Rights Junta"

Obviously, General Romero's white terror was not working to stem the tide of worker and peasant unrest. It was at that point that Jimmy Carter's "human rights" administration stepped in. Shortly after Somoza fell, Carter sent State Department Latin America expert William Bowdler to El Salvador, asking Romero to step down. When the general refused, he was overthrown on 15 October 1979 in a coup which was obviously "made in USA". The new junta brokered by Washington included "moderates"

like Colonel Majano, leader of the "Military Youth" officers faction, together with right-wingers like Colonel Jaime Gutierrez, reputedly the Pentagon's man. They were joined by the "social-democratic" MNR leader, a leading industrialist and the head of the Catholic university. But very soon the new junta was outstripping even Romero in rightist terror.

At the turn of the year the junta fell apart, with reform-minded civilians opting out. Education minister Samayoa joined the FPL guerrillas (and was captured later, never to be heard from again). Agriculture minister Alvarez Cordova left to form the Democratic Front, which joined with the Revolutionary Coordinating Committee of the Masses (CRM) to form the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), and this "black sheep" of one of the 14 Families became the titular head of the opposition popular front. They were replaced by more Christian Democrats. But the killing went on.

Under the guise of "land reform", the junta conducted what has been in fact a Vietnam-style counterinsurgency program, a refurbished "strategic hamlet" project intended to create a layer of land-owning small farmers loyal to the government and hostile to the left. Two American "land reform" advisors recently assassinated in San Salvador worked for the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), a front run by US union bureaucrats for CIA dirty work in Latin America. The AIFLD's Salvadoran activities are guided by one Ray Prosterman, who had experience with a similar "agrarian transformation" program in Vietnam, which included the infamous "Phoenix Project" in which 30,000 "Vietcong suspects" were murdered. The El Salvador version runs true to form, as witness this bloodcurdling report by a Salvadoran technician who saw how "land reform" arrived at one hacienda:

"The troops came and told the workers that the land was theirs now. They could elect their own leaders and run it themselves. The peasants couldn't believe their ears, but they held elections that very night. The next morning the troops came back and I watched as they shot every one of the elected leaders."

— quoted in *NACLA Report*, July-August 1980

In the cities increasingly massive demonstrations reached a peak with a successful two-day protest general strike in June which solidly shut down San Salvador. But eventually the massive bloodletting began to intimidate the left's supporters from repeatedly trooping out to face deadly machinegun fire, and an attempted general strike in August failed to close businesses or stop mass transportation in the capital. Meanwhile the "Military Youth" have been isolated within the armed forces, its members removed from operational commands and eventually Majano dropped from the junta. (Like every other former government leader, he immediately went underground.)

For Central American workers revolution!

If a few "modernising" colonels or Archbishop Rivera y Damas were to link arms with the guerrilla left, it would not be to aid revolutionary struggle but to act as a brake, to ensure that it remains within capitalist bounds. Former junta member Majano shares responsibility (no less than the vile Christian Democratic politicians) for the more than 9,000 mur-

dered by rightist repression last year. He is a blood enemy of the Salvadoran working masses. In the opposition, he and his fellow officers would see their primary duty as preventing armed struggle from "going too far". They and bourgeois forces in the Revolutionary Democratic Front seek above all to preserve the blood-soaked officer corps and capitalist property from destruction.

Again and again since the October 1979 coup it has been demonstrated that popular-frontism paralyses and disorients the struggle against the generals' counterrevolutionary terror. When Romero fell the new junta attempted to neutralise and even win over the left. They almost succeeded. The PCS joined the cabinet. The LP-28 briefly gave conditional "wait-and-see" support. The BPR called on the junta to carry out its promises, helping to spread illusions that it could or would. Later, the August general strike failed (as a strike, anyway) in

oration of the Salvadoran guerrillas and the Nicaraguan Sandinistas. Seeking a modus vivendi with the "national" bourgeoisie, they refuse to internationalise the struggle against the capitalist exploiters; hence the absence of effective Sandinista military support to the Salvadoran rebels.

The Trotskyist program of permanent revolution — not for bogus "democratic" capitalism, but for a workers and peasants government to expropriate the bourgeoisie — is the only banner under which Central America will be liberated from the military boot, oligarchic exploitation and imperialist domination. This program is starkly counterposed to all brands of nationalist populism and Stalinist reformism in the Salvadoran left. Yet the major ostensible Trotskyist grouping in the world, the misnamed "United Secretariat of the Fourth International", has endorsed the program of the FDR popular front, which

SWP "replicates" pop front

MELBOURNE, 30 January — Over a hundred people gathered here today for a rally, called by the Committee for the Reconstruction of Nicaragua, to oppose any US intervention into El Salvador and to demand no US military aid to the murderous junta and an end to its bloody repression of the El Salvadoran masses. With El Salvador in the midst of a revolutionary civil war almost every left group in the city was present. But it was the sizeable Spartacist League (SL) contingent that alone put forward a program for the victory of the El Salvadoran masses, calling for "US/OAS/Latin American bourgeoisies — all hands off El Salvador!", "Avenge bloody junta's white terror! For workers revolution!", "Military victory to left-wing insurgents", "Popular front disarms masses before White terror!" and "Break with the bourgeoisie — Workers to power in El Salvador!"

The SWP-dominated Committee for the Reconstruction of Nicaragua made clear that it unashamedly embraces the class collaborationism of the El Salvadoran rebels with bourgeois politicians by having as the keynote speaker for the rally none other than maverick ex-Liberal, Don Chipp! A former minister of the navy during the Vietnam war, now head of the Australian Democrats, Chipp pointed out that: "The revolutionaries [in El Salvador] cover a large section of the political spectrum, from moderate conservatives, liberals, to social democrats, Marxists". The chairman explained that Chipp was invited because the Committee wanted to "replicate" in Australia the El Salvadoran rebels' opposition coalition, encompassing representatives of all classes. Predictably, when an SL representative requested to address the rally, the organisers refused and later demanded that our contingent leave!

Those who apologise and cover for popular-frontist betrayals are driven to try to silence revolutionary criticism. But the SL refused to leave or be silenced. Speaking from a megaphone as the rally ended, an SL spokesman pointed out: "Chipp was allowed to speak at this demo, but he is no representative of the oppressed. In El Salvador too it's not the bourgeoisie that are going to liberate the worker and peasant masses, but the workers standing independently for a workers and peasants government. Break with the popular front! Workers to power in El Salvador!"

part because petty-bourgeois components of the FDR kept their shops open and their buses running. After this setback, the FARN broke ranks in order to seek more powerful bourgeois backing (reportedly seeking to ally with liberal officers around Majano).

Even if an FDR government is set up in a Salvadoran "liberated zone" and its social-democratic backers in the Second International hustle to recognise it, it would be to prevent the anti-capitalist destabilisation of the entire region through international mediation. The beneficiaries would be not the worker and peasant masses but the likes of FDR leader Guillermo Ungo, whose liberal bourgeois Revolutionary National Movement is affiliated with the Second International. Ungo proved his willingness to sell out to the imperialists by taking a seat alongside the military butchers in the first junta which emerged after the military coup of 15 October 1979. To campaign, as some leftists are doing, for international recognition to an FDR government is a betrayal of the struggle for workers revolution in Central America.

Forces seeking proletarian revolution anywhere in Central America will face defeat if they limit themselves by artificial national frontiers. The Central American statelets have never been viable as independent economic or political units. The borders of El Salvador are far less defensible than Cuba's coasts, and even there the US attempted a counterrevolutionary invasion. Yet the necessary goal of a Central America-wide revolutionary mobilisation of the working masses is frustrated by the class collab-

calls for a "popular, democratic and anti-oligarchic" (ie, *not socialist*) revolution, which appeals to "healthy, patriotic, and worthy elements that belong to the current army" — eg, the Colonel Majanos (*Intercontinental Press*, 5 May).

Two small pseudo-Trotskyist groups inside El Salvador, the Morenoite PST and the formerly Lambertist OSI, raise as one of their central demands in the present revolutionary crisis, "For a free, democratic and sovereign constituent assembly" (*Correspondance Internationale*, October 1980). Yet *not even bourgeois liberals* are calling today for a constituent assembly, at a time when the constitution of soviets, organs of workers power, is on the agenda. Like the USec, the PST's main goal is to gain sufficient importance to enter the guerrilla command (DRU). But the struggle for Trotskyism in Central America is not a fight to unite with the popular-frontists but to defeat them politically, through independent mobilisation of the working class around the communist program and internationalist struggle for a Socialist United States of Latin America.

US/OAS/Latin American bourgeois rulers: All hands off El Salvador — no imperialist intervention! US workers: Boycott all military goods to Central American rightist regimes! Military victory to the leftist insurgents! For a Trotskyist party! For workers soviets — For workers and peasants governments in El Salvador and throughout Central America!

— adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 271, 2 January 1981, and no 272, 16 January 1981

SPARTACIST FORUM — MELBOURNE

Military victory to left-wing Insurgents!

Civil war in El Salvador

Popular frontism disarms masses before White terror

For Workers Revolution!

8.00 pm, Friday 6 February

Plumbers Hall, 52 Victoria Street, Carlton, Melbourne

For further information ring (03) 662 3740

PCF ...

Continued from page seven

While the OCI rivals the PS in Stalinophobic denunciation of Kremlin "expansionism" in Afghanistan, the LCR counterposes only cringing and confusionism, stopping short (most of the time) from a call for withdrawal of troops. Over Poland, both tail the nationalistic dissidents "unconditionally" — in other words without any "dogmatic" concern for such things as the preservation of nationalised property. The idea that either of these formations could ever convincingly appeal to the PCF ranks to "return to the road of Lenin" is simply ludicrous.

At the Mutualite on 30 October, LCR superstar Alain Krivine showed he has not forgotten how to talk out of the left side of his mouth. To the applause of his comrades, he sharply castigated the PCF for its social chauvinism, its calls on the state to deal with the fascists, and so forth. He even made reference to "popular frontism"! But the militants of the LCR should be asking themselves where all the pretty words were when Krivine was interviewed on the front page of *Le Monde*, proudly reprinted by *Intercontinental Press*. The half a million people who saw this interview will find no reference there to popular frontism, only nostalgia for the "unity" of the bygone days of the Union of the Left. Not only did Krivine come forward as a parliamentary cretinist par excellence but he tilted his pro-unity rhetoric unmistakably towards the PS:

"One gets the impression that the PCF is doing everything to push the PS into the arms of the right. ... But in a perhaps less visible way the Socialist Party is also playing a role in the disunity, notably with its increasing winks in the direction of the Gaullists."

— *Le Monde*, 29 October

Krivine sees nothing but "disheartenment" coming out of the PCF's hypocritical left turn on the Union of the Left:

"You cannot with impunity get hundreds of thousands of people to march in the streets, from 1972 to 1978, to cries of 'Union, action, Common Program', and, in the space of 24 hours, explain that this Union was not a good union, that this Program was not a good program, and turn your back on any perspective of unity."

— *ibid*

Well, comrade Krivine? Was the popular front with the left radicals "a good union" on "a good program"? The worst Krivine can bring himself to say about the Union of the Left is that the workers at the base were not sufficiently consulted: "The workers are beginning to open their eyes on the electoralist combinations of the Union of the Left and the Common Program, in which they were not involved."

The LCR is truly without perspectives. It gambled on the social-democratisation of the PCF along the lines of the "Eurocommunist" model of Spain and Italy, hailing "Eurocommunist" currents in the PCF as a healthy pressure towards "democratisation" of the Stalinist parties. But unfortunately for the LCR, the PCF pulled back from a "Eurocommunist" course. Indeed, it was precisely at the time of the Soviet invasion of

Afghanistan that Marchais made his pilgrimage to Moscow.

The practical consequence of the LCR's line of "unity, unity" is that it can unite fewer and fewer people behind its own party banner. Its campaign for *desistement* being virtually indistinguishable from the "strategic united front" policy of the OCI, the LCR nourishes pro-Lambertiste currents within its own ranks. First came the split of the LCI (Ligue Communiste Internationaliste), which immediately gave the lie to its formally left-critical stance by taking off full speed in the OCI's direction, fusing with the OCI less than a year later. Now the Mattistes can be heard muttering that the OCI is "revolutionary". It doesn't take a crystal ball to predict that the LCR will continue to haemorrhage to the profit of the OCI so long as both put forward basically the same social-democratic line, the main difference being that the Lambertistes are not only rather more consistent but larger.

In France today, beset by economic crisis, capitalist "austerity" and a resurgence of fascist terror groups, the objective conditions for socialist revolution are not merely ripe but overripe. And once again what stands in the way is the crisis of working-class leadership. The grip of Stalinist and social-democratic reformism on the French working class will never be broken by empty sloganeering about "unity". Only a clear class program can unite the working class by breaking it from the social-chauvinism and backwardness which pit the different layers of the workers against each other in partial and sectoral

struggles. Only a revolutionary, proletarian, internationalist vanguard can lead the working masses forward in struggle for their real needs, uniting behind their class banner all the oppressed and exploited.

- PCF workers: 1936, 1944, 1972. Yes, three times is enough! Demand a rendering of accounts from your leadership! Prepare yourselves to oppose the new popular front that your leadership will impose on you!
- For an electoral campaign of class against class! If the PCF continues its posture of an independent, anti-"unity" campaign, to give the candidacy of Stalinist bureaucrat Georges Marchais savagely critical support!
- No votes for the Parti Socialiste, the most overt practitioners of working-class subordination to the bourgeoisie!
- Down with *Desistement, Candidat unique* and all the slogans of nostalgia for the popular frontist Union of the Left!
- Down with NATO! For defence of the USSR and all the deformed workers states against imperialism! For workers political revolution against Stalinism!
- For working-class unity behind a class-struggle program, the Transitional Program of intransigent struggle against capitalism!
- For international working-class solidarity! For a workers government in France!
- For a return to the road of Lenin! For a Trotskyist party and the rebirth of the Fourth International! ■

SWP on Afghanistan ...

Continued from page three

Soviet action. He also invokes an imaginary "worldwide shift to the detriment of imperialism" to justify his claim that defence of the USSR is "a fake issue in the concrete case of Afghanistan". Here the objectivist method of Pabloism is put to the service of social-democratic anti-Sovietism.

Barnes additionally weighs in against the evils of "revolution from without", citing as his authority the Castro leadership who "understand exactly why revolution cannot be extended from one country to another on the point of a bayonet. They are conscious Leninists on this" (*IIDB* no 3, 1980). On this Barnes is a conscious liar, rehashing stock Stalinist and social-democratic slanders. For even as the Bolsheviks rejected the program of "revolution from without", they still upheld the principle and perspective of using the Red Army to promote revolutions abroad. The Red Army's unsuccessful invasion of Poland in 1920 was debated tactically but not in principle; and the successful forced Sovietisation of Menshevik-ruled Georgia in 1921 was necessary for defence of Soviet Russia

itself (see "The Bolsheviks and the 'Export of Revolution'", *Spartacist* no 29, Summer 1980). The Castroites in contrast oppose a proletarian internationalist foreign policy, and instead serve the aims of the Kremlin, not world revolution. In Angola, they defeated the CIA-backed South African invasion — with the US SWP scandalously taking a neutral position — but power remains in the hands of the anti-working-class MPLA nationalists. In Ethiopia, they propped up Mengistu's bloody tyranny against the just Somali and Eritrean national struggles.

Barnes also cites the revolutionary Fourth International's (FI) 1946 call for Soviet troop withdrawal from Eastern Europe as "precedent". But this too is hopelessly off the mark. In Eastern Europe there was a substantial proletariat capable of overthrowing capitalism. At the time, Stalinist parties were selling out revolutionary upsurges in Italy, France, Greece etc; and the Red Army was promoting national antagonisms and coalitions with capitalists in Eastern Europe. The FI, weakened by the decimation of its cadre in World War II and disoriented by the post-war events, expected the Stalinist armies to behead proletarian upheavals in Eastern Europe. Their call for troop withdrawal was designed to further the cause of international proletarian revolution. In Afghanistan today there is hardly a proletariat to speak of: the Red Army intervention poses the possibility of a social revolution in this wretchedly backward country, a possibility which did not exist before.

Barnes caps this wholesale cynical revisionism with an outrageous call for the USSR to unilaterally disarm:

"Think of the stupendous impact it would have on people throughout the world, the vast majority of humanity, if Brezhnev were to go on television and announce that the USSR is destroying a big part of its nuclear arsenal and propose to Washington a schedule to destroy the rest at short intervals. Wouldn't that put Washington on the spot? Wouldn't that clearly put the spotlight on the US imperialists as the true warmakers in the world?"

— *IIDB* no 4, 1980

In 1977 the late Joseph Hansen treacherously called on the USSR to challenge the US to mutually dismantle their nuclear stockpiles. Barnes' call is for the Soviet Union to *surrender* to imperialism

by wilfully throwing away its means of defence.

Afghanistan and Poland have become the acid test for those who claim the heritage of Leon Trotsky. The American SWP said the Russian question was not an issue at the time of the China/Vietnam war; they repeated this line over Afghanistan and Poland. Having long since abandoned defence of the USSR, the group is now found marching to Reagan's anti-Soviet battle hymn. One step behind them all along the line has been the Australian SWP; when the occasion warrants, it too will find its rationalisations for openly joining Reagan's war drive. The international Spartacist tendency alone has shown that it is prepared to uphold the program of Trotskyism. The Fourth International of Trotsky and Cannon will be reforged only in opposition to reformist traitors of the Barnes/Percy ilk. Hail Red Army in Afghanistan! Smash the Reagan/Fraser war drive! Defend the Soviet Union!

Poland ...

Continued from page five

words); any workers state that gave up the power to dictate prices would simply be permitting a descent into capitalist anarchy.

"It's true that they've [the Polish peasants] also pressed for religious instruction in schools and the right to buy up land from the state farms", Lockwood admits. IS supporters should ponder what sort of "capitalist system" forbids the peasants to expand the only key area of the economy which produces for profit by buying up state farm land. The IS is backing the fight for that right — ie, the fight for real agricultural capitalism! Any significant strikes by Rural Solidarity will be in the mould of the anti-working class, kulak-led 1928 grain boycott in the USSR — only Poland's peasants are also mobilised politically around clerical nationalism through the church.

The idea that Poland is capitalist is absurd. The IS claims that Polish workers are beset with austerity "just like" workers in the West. Unlike a capitalist country where periodic depressions result from the tendency of the rate of profit to

fall, the Polish bureaucrats themselves largely made the economic mess there by grossly mismanaging a *planned economy*. "The ruling classes of Eastern Europe [are] no different from the managers of BHP", says the *Battler* (6 September 1980). In fact capitalists are not mere managers but owners of capital who can't be "sacked" like Gierek (and before him, Gomulka), both of whom were removed from membership in the so-called Polish "ruling class" overnight.

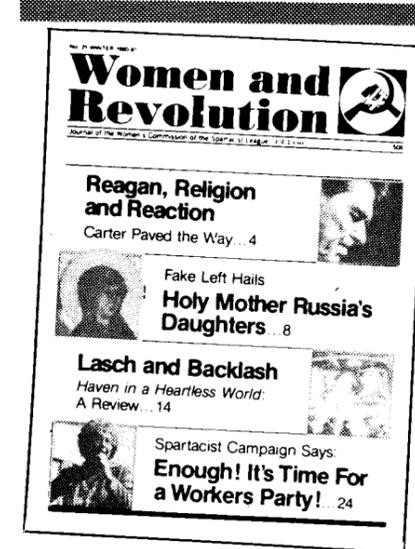
The working class worldwide may suffer a tragic defeat if the Polish workers do not break the Pope's embrace in time. The key to successful political revolution is the struggle for a Trotskyist leadership of the Polish proletariat — and an international party to lead the struggle to smash imperialism. The Kremlin's flunkies, like the Socialist Party of Australia, fulminate about "anti-socialist elements" only to defend all the crimes of the bureaucracy. Those who renounce the defence of the existing gains in the name of "anti-Stalinism", however, are traitors to the international proletariat. For a Polish Trotskyist party, section of a reborn Fourth International! ■

Revolutionary Literature

Spartacist League Sydney public office

Summer hours:
Saturday 12 noon to 4 pm

2nd floor,
112 Goulburn St
Sydney



Women and Revolution
Journal of the Women's Commission of the Spartacist League

Reagan, Religion and Reaction
Carter Paved the Way... 4

Fake Left Hails
Holy Mother Russia's Daughters... 8

Lasch and Backlash
Haven in a Heartless World:
A Review... 14

Spartacist Campaign Says:
Enough! It's Time For
a Workers Party! 24

Subscribe! 4 issues — \$3
50¢ per copy

Order from / make cheques payable to:
Spartacist Publications, GPO Box
3473, Sydney, 2001.

Defeat Wran/UTA attacks on bus workers!

For a Sydney-wide bus strike!

SYDNEY, 2 February — The NSW Urban Transit Authority (UTA) began introducing new work rosters for government bus crews here last week, including one-man operation on the busy Pitt/Castlereagh and soon George Street city routes. This will mean big job losses, longer hours, intensification of already gruelling workloads, loss of penalty rates and worse conditions for bus drivers and conductors. And workers travelling to work on already overcrowded buses face more inconvenience and longer delays. On the first day of the new rosters, a *Daily Telegraph* reporter claimed he walked the entire length of Castlereagh Street, Sydney, in the same time as his bus! Through such "cost cutting" and "rationalisation" schemes, the Wran government, doing the bidding of the capitalists, seeks to get rid of the annual \$450 million NSW public transport deficit. The Wran ALP government thus rewards the workers who elected it, who run the buses, and who travel on them by destroying hundreds of jobs and deliberately running down a vital public service in the interest of capitalist austerity.

The right-wing leadership of the 4500-strong government bus workers union, the Australian Tramways and Motor Omnibus Employees Association (ATMOEA), has refused to wage a fight. The NSW state executive even officially supports the introduction of one-man buses. The union has the power to totally shut down government bus services, but all the ATMOEA tops can do is go from one isolated depot branch meeting to another telling the restive rank and file the same story: you can't wage a fight to defend your conditions because the other depots won't support you. And militants who go to other depots to appeal for support are red-baited and vilified. The new rosters were rammed through branch meetings of only about 50 off-duty workers, over the heads of hundreds.

The only stopwork meetings were held at Waverley depot, historically the most militant. Workers there were sold out on the issue of one-man buses two years ago, and as a result have the heaviest workloads in Sydney. They wanted no more staff cuts and the reintroduction of two-man operation on busy routes.

At the 19 January stopwork, the militant ranks overwhelmingly rejected a "compromise" proposal put forward by the UTA and supported by both the state and depot union leaderships, an *Australasian Spartacist* reporter was later told. Discussion ensued over the UTA's "acceptance" of the Waverley "acting drivers," (those still classified as conductors) refusal to do the widely-disliked queue-conducting shifts, substituting instead reluctant "acting drivers" dragged in from other depots. One militant pointed out how divisive this would be, pitting workers from one depot against another when they need to fight in unity against the new rosters, whereupon this part of the UTA offer was thrown out along with the rest.

The meeting also voted for the state executive to organise a 24-hour stopwork of all depots involved to discuss the issue. But the executive, running scared of the militant ranks and fighting to keep each depot in isolation and ignorance, voted against this, with only the two Waverley members in favour. Militants responded with a petition which has so far gained around 200 signatures, still short of the 10 percent of members required to force a city-wide stopwork.

The most vocal opponent of the new rosters was aspiring bureaucrat Shane Maddick, recently elected YLA national secretary who successfully moved for a campaign of lightning 24-hour stoppages at Waverley until rejection of the rosters was secured. This is just a recipe for defeat — the bosses can weather such limited stoppages at little cost, while they

usually only demoralise the workers. Such tactics are counterposed to the all-out mobilisation of other depots in support; they mean the full strength of the union is never brought to bear. Most importantly, they mean working the new rosters in between these short "strikes".

At the next stopwork on 27 January sentiment for an all-out strike ran high. However most "left" opponents of the bureaucracy (including supporters of the Socialist Party of Australia and Bob Gould's ALP Socialist Leadership Group [SLG]) could offer no coherent program for victory. An SLG supporter handed out a leaflet deploring divisions within the union but advanced no program to fight the UTA save the vague call for "determined industrial action" (whatever that may mean).

But another leaflet handed out by a militant did put forward a class-struggle strategy. "The AT&MOEA should strike city-wide, indefinitely and this Waverley stopwork can give the lead." It called for "an elected strike committee based on a program to win this struggle... Coordinate and spread the action to the other depots with mass pickets!" A motion along these lines won the support of a sizeable minority and was the only clear alternative to the bureaucrats' proposed acceptance of the UTA offer, which was angrily voted down. An older "left" militant finally broke the stalemate by using his authority to get the "lightning strikes" strategy proposed by SPA/SLG supporters passed, without any specific date for action. As a result, there has been no action and none is planned.

At Waverley, the willingness existed to take on the UTA and so was the desire to do away with the disunity between the depots. But this militancy was disorganised and directionless, lacking an authoritative alternative leadership based on a class-struggle program. The ATMOEA

were able to head off the struggle, aided by the fake-left's harmless "safety-valve" tactics. Instead of one isolated militant depot going out, a united Sydney-wide strike is necessary. Waverley workers know what the one-manners will mean and should take the lead in winning their fellow workers to support this action. Mass pickets would be necessary to stop the UTA bringing in scabs and an elected strike committee of rank and file activists could organise the activity, take up collections for a strike fund, keep the workers informed and guard against any sellout by the union officials.

The ATMOEA tops said that an all-out strike would be crucified by the public. But bus travellers can see that one-man operation means worse services; a *decisive* struggle to win decent, convenient and *free* public transport could rally the working people of Sydney solidly behind the strike. The fight against the Wran government's "rationalisation" of public services must also be broadened, to the powerful Australian Railways Union, for example, whose members in the State Rail Authority face similar attacks. Wran's planned layoffs must be beaten back by fighting for a shorter work week at no loss in pay, and an automatic cost-of-living index to keep wages up with inflation. The Wran ALP government has shown itself to be the loyal servant of capitalism; what the working class needs is a real workers government, based on workers organisations, to end this anarchic, profit-based capitalist system. But the class-struggle strategy needed to defeat the new rosters and win these demands cannot be put into practice without a struggle every step of the way against the treacherous do-nothing ATMOEA bureaucracy, a struggle which aims to replace it with a revolutionary leadership. ■

Omega base...

Continued from page twelve

accommodating them? The Gippsland Omega base is actually no more than two powerful radio transmitters and a huge steel tower 427 metres high — the tallest man-made structure in the southern hemisphere. Originally sited in New Zealand but shifted after protests there in 1968, it is the last in a network of eight around the world, the others being in Argentina, Japan, Liberia, Norway, North Dakota, Hawaii and La Reunion (a French island off the east coast of Africa). The system provides world-wide Very Low Frequency (VLF) radio navigation for land, sea or air craft. While satellites are theoretically more accurate and defensible, they cannot be used by submerged submarines. The VLF transmission can penetrate the surface of the ocean to a depth of as much as 30 metres and be detected by submarines operating well below the surface. Thus with Omega fully operational, the US will be able to move its deadly new Trident nuclear submarines — whose individual nuclear payload is capable of destroying 408 separate targets — anywhere in the world without detection, since they need never rise to the surface or make a transmission in order to fix their position. Combined with the proposed MX missile system, designed to make US ICBMs all but invulnerable, the Omega system is central to the Pentagon's long sought nuclear first-strike capacity.

Gallagher's Omega turnabout can be precisely dated. After the Soviets went into Afghanistan to throw back feudal reaction, the Maoist Communist Party of

Australia (Marxist-Leninist) (CPA[ML]), of which Gallagher is "vice-president", proclaimed US bases "defensive, not offensive" and its paper *Vanguard* vowed to "throw off all the inhibitions in the struggle against Soviet social imperialism". Virtually overnight up went the BLF picket. As the *Melbourne Age* (7 January) cynically editorialised, "Mr. Gallagher realised that in fact Omega was an asset in the struggle against Soviet hegemony".

Omega represents the most graphic local illustration yet of the thoroughly counterrevolutionary logic of Maoist Stalinism and Peking's alliance with US imperialism against the USSR. Spawned during the Mao-faction's "Cultural Revolution" within the Chinese bureaucracy, China's anti-Soviet alliance with the US was already evident when US president Nixon toasted the Chinese leaders in Peking as the bombs rained down on Vietnam in late 1971. The Mao-Stalinists of the CPA(ML) have slavishly followed every bureaucratic twist in Peking, taking them from militant petty-bourgeois nationalist opposition to US bases and the war in Vietnam to their present grovelling — with greatly reduced numbers — at Reagan/Fraser's doorstep. Gallagher's shift on Omega is thus merely the latest step in a long history of betrayals by the tendency which once proclaimed "No US bases!" as one of its foremost slogans.

For Gallagher, Omega is also a neat convergence between his pro-Peking Stalinist politics and his appetites as a job-trusting union bureaucrat. With unemployment cutting deeply into their membership, building and construction unions should band together and launch an industry-wide struggle for jobs through a shorter workweek at no loss in

pay. Instead the several vying union bureaucracies have turned on each other in a cut-throat struggle to save their financial base at each other's expense. Building workers will be the losers in this war, in which thousands of jobs are at stake in the construction of power stations and alumina smelters in the NSW Hunter Valley and Gippsland, among others. While the BLF vows to "win in the field", the "communist" Gallagher leadership is no less rooted in the institutionalised class collaboration of the Arbitration system than the FIA, which is run by elements of the post-war anti-communist "industrial groups". The Omega dispute has been through Arbitration twice and the BLF is now running it through the bosses' High Court "on appeal"!

This squalid, backstabbing empire-building and its resultant demarcation wars are poison to a united labour movement. The members of the BLF, FIA and other building industry unions need one united union in the construction industry and a class-struggle fight *against the employers* for jobs for all. But such a perspective means a struggle to oust the anti-Soviet, anti-communist bureaucratic betrayers and replace them with a revolutionary leadership based on the Trotskyist Transitional Program.

With its old mainstay, the Maoist Australian "Independence" Movement, now all gung-ho for Omega, the campaign against the base has fallen into the rather decrepit lap of the Congress for International Co-operation and Disarmament (CICD), the "peace movement" supported by the Communist Party (CPA) and the pro-Moscow Socialist Party (SPA). The CICD's anti-Omega campaign is at once nationalist, pacifist and legal-

ist. They proclaim Omega is "a wolf in sheep's clothing" which must be opposed in the name of "Australian independence and true security" ("Stop Omega" leaflet) because it will attract Soviet nuclear retaliation. For these "Australia Firsters" the Omega campaign is part of a generalised utopian search to get out of the international nuclear firing line. Their main pitch is to some like-minded respectable and progressive wing of the bourgeoisie to tail after — and right now that can mean just about anyone. Thus at a 20 January CICD demonstration outside the US consulate their main demand was a call on Fraser's Liberal government to initiate "a full public enquiry into the defense and strategic implications of the Omega system" (CICD press release, 16 January).

In total contrast to the nationalist/pacifist approach of the reformist left, we stand for proletarian class struggle to smash the imperialists' cold war offensive and to defend the USSR. Our slogan is Lenin's: "Arm the proletariat to defeat, expropriate and disarm the bourgeoisie!" The Stalinist policy of detente and "peaceful coexistence" with the bourgeoisie only allows the imperialist war machine to rearm and to achieve decisive first strike nuclear capacity.

The working class must beat back Fraser's anti-BLF union-bashing offensive, but in doing so it must also put an end to the sordid bureaucratic wrangling as to who builds this anti-Soviet base. What is needed is a struggle to *smash* Omega and the anti-Soviet ANZUS alliance. This would pit the working class against both the Tory coalition and an ALP misleadership pledged to the US alliance. Smash Omega! Down with the US/Australia and US/China anti-Soviet alliances! Defend the USSR! ■

Australasian Spartacist

Gang of four ...

Continued from page twelve

pro-Moscow Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) tut-tutted about the "unseemly picture of the morality of the Chinese leaders and the methods used in the struggle for power" (*Socialist*, 14 January). These defenders of the Moscow Trials have some nerve to talk of "morality" but this time they are not wrong. Take the case of Mao's "closest comrade-in-arms" and official heir, Lin Biao. According to the current official story, in the course of one train journey by Mao in 1971 Lin successfully bungled attempts to dive-bomb the train, incinerate it by flame-throwers and obliterate it by time-bomb!

The fact that the two most prominent defendants, Chiang and Chang refused to recant (Chang maintaining a contemptuous silence throughout) represents a black eye for Deng and his colleagues. Under the new penal code, confession is now no longer necessary to establish guilt. But confession (extracted in pre-Communist China by the liberal use of torture) played such an important part in traditional Chinese jurisprudence that a defendant's refusal to admit his/her alleged crimes raises doubts in the minds of the population as to their guilt.

A Stalinist show trial? Yes. There is, nonetheless, a fundamental difference with the most famous Moscow trials in the 1930s. Under Stalin's gun were Old Bolsheviks with a genuine revolutionary past — Nikolai Bukharin, Gregory Zinoviev, Karl Radek and others — accused of fantastic crimes they did not commit. Whether or not they are guilty of the specific charges against them, the Mao clique are first-class Stalinist criminals. They are directly responsible for the blood of thousands if not millions of innocent people during the Cultural Revolution frenzy of 1966-68. Among these were the old Communist Party cadre who had played honourable and heroic roles in the Chinese Revolution. The old guerrilla chief Ho Lung and the commander of the Chinese army in the Korean War, Peng Teh-huai, were reportedly done to death by the Red Guards in slow and brutal ways.

As for Chiang personally, the prosecution had an easy time painting an all too credible picture of a vicious and morbid paranoid, a luxury-loving concubine - turned - empress - dowager. Besides catapulting her into power the Cultural Revolution provided Chiang with the perfect opportunity to hunt down and settle scores with the veteran cadre of the CP underground in Shanghai in the 1930s who knew too much about her past as a starlet in Shanghai's "decadent" thirties film industry. A court room showstopper was the playing of a tape recording of the torture/interrogation of an already dying Professor Zhang Zhongyi by Chiang's followers for the simple reason he had briefly known one of her main enemies 30 years previously (*Guardian Weekly*, 14 December)!

But Chiang's Dengist judges do not have cleaner hands. How many innocent workers, peasants and intellectuals were victimised under the Liu/Deng regime of the early 1960s, a regime not exactly

known for its liberalism and respect for legality? And what of the Chinese Trotskyists jailed in 1953 and kept in prison ever since? Here all the squalid cliques/factions of Chinese Stalinism could unite in suppressing genuine proletarian revolutionaries. Perhaps Deng's greatest crime against socialism was in early 1979 when he sent thousands of young Chinese workers and peasants to kill their class brothers in Vietnam, a war undertaken in collusion with US imperialism.

The Gang of Five?

It was really the Cultural Revolution that was on trial. The indictment abandons the previous characterisation of the "GPCR" as a movement worthy in its original intentions that went off the rails. Now it is presented from the beginning as a conspiracy by "leftist" radicals to seize power from the wiser veteran leaders. But what of Mao? The Deng leadership cannot repudiate the Mao cult altogether without calling into question their own legitimacy. So they are forced to present Mao as so incompetent or senile in the last eleven years of his life that he let China be dominated by a gang of scheming and venal "ultra-leftists" who were busy establishing a "feudal, fascist state", no less.

Nonsense! Everyone in China who was politically aware at the time understands that Mao was the prime mover of the Cultural Revolution, from Lin Biao's

the bureaucracy is equivalent to assigning to Brezhnev and Yuri Andropov the leadership of the proletarian political revolution in the Soviet Union. As we wrote at the time:

"The Cultural Revolution was, in its origins and essence, a faction fight between two wings of the Chinese bureaucracy. It is now clear that there were no substantive differences between the two tendencies and that the argument that Liu Shao-chi represented a 'rightist', or 'pro-Soviet', or 'pro-capitalist' tendency was without foundation. It was in 1959 as a result of being saddled with the consequences of the Great Leap that Mao lost the chairmanship of the government to Liu and was allowed to hold only the largely honorific title of Party Chairman. The Cultural Revolution was Mao's successful recapturing of the Chinese state and Army, which incidentally included the destruction of the CCP [Chinese Communist Party] by the Red Guard Youth."

— "Chinese Menshevism",
Spartacist no 15-16, April-May 1970

The Cultural Revolution was essentially a giant Stalinist purge, which got out of hand and eventually backfired. Domestically, it set the Chinese economy and educational system back at least a decade. In foreign policy the Cultural Revolution helped lay the basis for China's alliance with US imperialism against the Soviet Union which Mao and Chou made in 1972. All the ideological garbage of the "GPCR" — "capitalist roadism", "the red bourgeoisie", "the

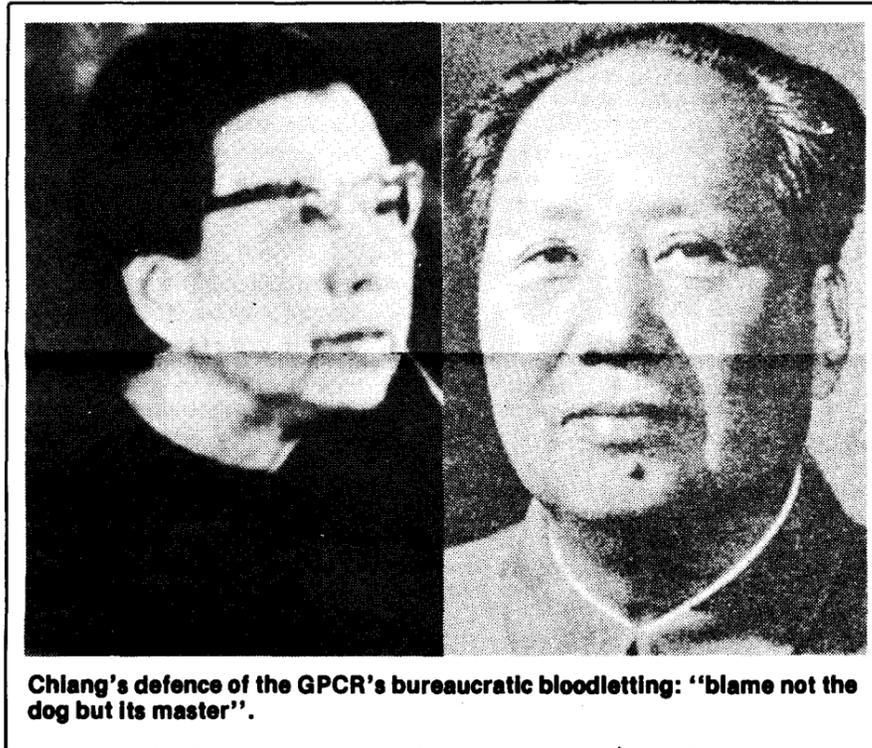
Stalinist bureaucracy, greatly increases the danger of nuclear world war III.

The death of Mao and the arrest of the "Gang" precipitated a split in Australian Maoism between EF Hill's loyal-no-matter-what old guard in the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) and the Cultural Revolution "generation" led by Albert Langer. With his efforts to build an organisation having virtually disintegrated, Langer has been reduced to signing pathetic paid advertisements in the bourgeois liberal *National Times* (4 January) along with academic "China lovers" like Ted Wheelwright of Sydney University and the remnants of the Maoist push at Flinders University. Piously asserting that "Whether China takes a socialist or capitalist direction is a matter for the Chinese people", the petition implores Deng not to execute Chiang because of the "considerable harm to Australia-China relations"! Incredible. But then Langer (like Hill) is so committed to "unity" with Fraser, and now Reagan, on the basis of frenzied anti-Sovietism that he may well hold out hope of Fraser interceding on his heroine's behalf.

For proletarian political revolution against all Mao's heirs!

The savage clique and factional struggles tearing at Chinese Stalinism are, in the last analysis, generated by the pressure of the imperialist world order on an extremely backward nation whose bureaucratic rulers are fundamentally wedded to the Stalinist myth of "socialism in one country". China remains simply too poor and its peasantry too numerous for the traditional Soviet Stalinist model of rapid economic growth. Hence the wild zig-zags between Mao's primitive voluntarism and adventurism (the backyard steel furnaces of the Great Leap) and Liu/Deng's promise of a more coherent and rationalist approach.

But Deng's post-1976 program of making China into a modern, prosperous industrial power of the first rank by the year 2000 — a drive which in part was to be economically underwritten by US and Japanese imperialism as a "reward" for Peking's virulent anti-Sovietism — is in its own way as utopian as Mao's national messianism. During the "Gang" show trial the leadership was compelled to announce a program of wholesale economic retrenchment and renewed belt tightening for the masses. Deng's talk of rapidly improving living standards is no less a Stalinist big lie than his promise of "socialist legality" and democratic rights for the masses. The fundamental transformation of China into a modern industrial society and the establishment of workers democracy requires a proletarian political revolution against all of Mao's heirs at home and social revolution in the imperialist centres to create a world socialist order. ■



Chiang's defence of the GPCR's bureaucratic bloodletting: "blame not the dog but its master".

palace coup in mid-1966 through the anarchistic violence of 1967 to the termination of the Red Guards in August 1968. When Chiang screamed at her judges: "I was Chairman Mao's dog; whoever he told me to bite, I bit", and claimed that her actions had been backed by the Central Committee and even Deng's professed hero Chou En-lai, she did not lie.

In the late 1960s most of the Western left viewed the Mao-led Cultural Revolution as a bonafide anti-bureaucratic mass uprising. But to think that Mao and Lin could lead the working class against

bourgeoisie inside the party" — had as one of its central purposes the claim that Brezhnev's Russia had become a "capitalist-imperialist" super-power, one becoming more dangerous than the US.

During the Vietnamese liberation struggle against US imperialism the Red Guards obstructed arms shipments from the Soviet Union to North Vietnam. After all, they didn't want Vietnam to become a "colony" of "Soviet social-imperialism". In this the Red Guards were just anticipating the policy of their leaders. It was the Mao/Lin Piao regime which first referred to Brezhnev's USSR as "fascist", especially over the Kremlin's 1968 intervention in Czechoslovakia to suppress the Prague Spring.

The imperialist bourgeoisie, as usual, were sharper about the nature of Chinese Stalinism than the impressionistic New Left, which looked on Mao's China as an alternative to the long stodgy Soviet Union. The capitalists understand that when a Stalinist regime calls another government "fascist", it is an opening for a bloc against the "non-fascist" presumed lesser evil. In consolidating Mao's alliance with US imperialism, Deng has shown himself to be a legitimate executor (no less than Chiang Ch'ing) of the Cultural Revolution's genuine legacy. Peking's alliance with Washington, supported by all wings of the Maoist/

posed in the article "A workers Poland, yes! The Pope's Poland, no!", garbling two separate passages. The first, at the bottom of column 1, should have referred to Stalinist bureaucrat Maciej Szczepanski who had "ten lavish residences, one off the coast of Greece, and a taste for porn and sex...." The second, in the middle of column 2 immediately above the caption, should have read "Trotsky had types like Moczars in mind when he said a wing of the Stalinist bureaucracy could go over to fascism".

Corrections

In the last issue of *Australasian Spartacist* (no 80, Summer 1980/81) a line was dropped from a remark by Melbourne Discussion Group leader Paul White in the article "Weekend of the living dead" (top of column 4, page 7). The passage should have read: "It is ludicrous to go into practice without a programmatic base ... these two days of fruitless discussion [showed] that it was [pointless] to form a transitional organisation".

On the same page, a line was trans-

SUBSCRIBE!

Australasian Spartacist

11 issues (1 year) — \$3

overseas rates:

surface mail — \$3 for 11 issues
 airmail — \$10 for 11 issues

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Postcode _____

Phone _____ Donation _____

mail to/make cheques payable to:
Spartacist Publications,
GPO Box 3473
Sydney NSW 2001

I would like more information
about the Spartacist League



BLF/Maoist bureaucrat Norm Gallagher.

Maoists, Groupers vie to build US war base

- Black ban Omega! Defend the USSR!
- Labour must smash Fraser/Peacock union busting!

MELBOURNE, 2 February — the demarcation dispute between the Builders Labourers Federation (BLF), led by Maoist "big Norm" Gallagher, and the right-wing-dominated Federated Ironworkers Association (FIA), which has held up construction of the US Omega base at Woodside, Victoria for nearly ten months has come to a head. This morning Victorian police, acting on the orders of Fraser's Industrial Relations minister, Andrew Peacock, physically dragged off BLF picketers trying to stop a minibus containing FIA members from getting onto the tower site. Peacock has threatened to call up the army if necessary, while the BLF has vowed to maintain its picket lines and is threatening retaliation against Federal government projects. We demand: No construction of this anti-Soviet base — either by the BLF or FIA! Stop Fraser's union-bashing now!

All the bourgeois media's euphemistic references to Omega as a "navigation station" notwithstanding, it is a strategic US military installation locking in communications between the Pentagon High Command and its nuclear submarine strike force whose devastating destructive power is targetted directly at the Soviet bloc. As a US military installation Omega has been subject to a long-standing but totally ineffective blackban by left-wing trade unions in Victoria — a ban originally loudly backed by the BLF. But with the consolidation of the reactionary alliance between the US imperialists and the Chinese Stalinist bureaucracy, and in the wake of the bourgeois hue and cry over Afghanistan, the Maoist Gallagher abruptly changed his tune and decided that the BLF should have the "honour" of building the base. In March 1980 the BLF picket line went up to

enforce the demand that the sixteen-man workforce organised by the FIA join the BLF. On 11 April work ceased. The Fraser government has finally moved for a showdown after mounting pressure from an exasperated US embassy, and FIA tops have proclaimed their willingness to resume work under government protection.

Revolutionaries stand totally opposed to the construction of Omega. With arch Cold Warrior Reagan and his sinister sidekick General Alexander Haig talking nuclear showdown with the Kremlin, our opposition is rooted in our Trotskyist stand of unconditional military defence of the bureaucratically degenerated Soviet workers state against imperialism. Class-conscious workers can only feel utter disgust and contempt as the anti-Soviet BLF and the FIA leaderships wage their squalid, backstabbing campaign over

who gets to break the ban on a US war base!

But while Gallagher's picket line is designed to serve an explicitly reactionary aim, it is still a picket line. If Fraser and Peacock send cops or troops to break the BLF picket, it will not just be an attack on the relatively isolated BLF but on the entire labour movement. The Victorian Trades Hall, backed by the ACTU, must mobilise a mass picket to stop Fraser's strike breaking in its tracks and at the same time defeat the purpose of Gallagher's, politically reactionary picket. *Stop Omega! Defend the USSR! No support for either the BLF or FIA bureaucratic traitors! For mass labour action to stop Fraser's union bashing and to put Omega in the ground permanently!*

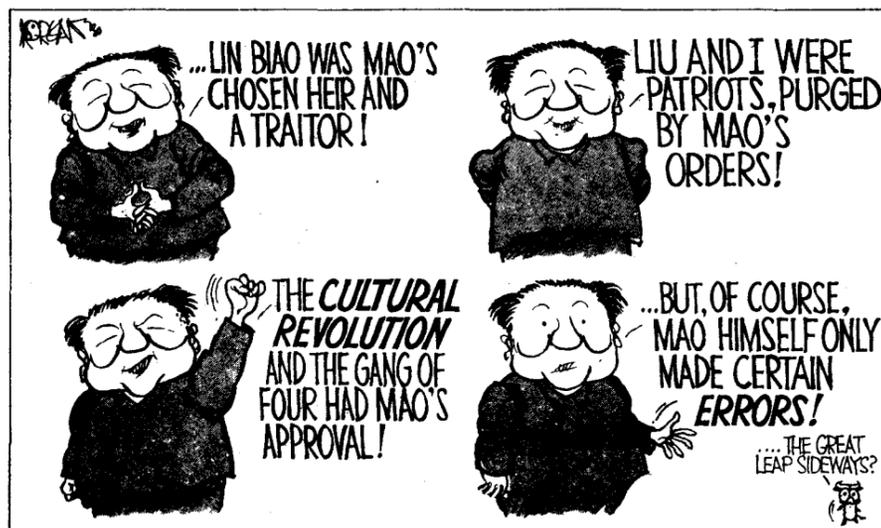
Why is Washington so anxious to build Omega and why is Fraser so hell-bent on

Continued on page ten

Behind the Gang of Four show trial

At the close of Peking's spectacular show trial against the "Ten Evil Heads", Chiang Ch'ing, Mao Tse-tung's widow and leader of the notorious "Gang of Four", challenged China's current strongman Deng Xiaoping (Teng Hsiao-ping) to execute her before a million people in Peking's Tian An Men Square ("if you are a man"). In the end the Dengist judges sentenced Chiang and fellow gang member Chang Chun-chiao to death, suspended for two years to allow Chiang "time to repent". The rest of the ten, which included Mao's former political secretary Chen Po-ta and five generals belonging to the Lin Piao group received long jail sentences. The long delay in bringing down the sentences, as well as the timing and manner of the gaudy trial itself, has been intimately bound up with the latest round in Peking's never-ending bureaucratic clique wars.

All the signs point to the early exit of party chairman Hua Guofeng too. An ultra-colourless secret police functionary, Hua rose to prominence on Mao's coattails during the latter's now discredited stewardship in the post Cultural Revolution period. With Mao's mausoleum "temporarily" closed and his portraits disappearing all over China the Chairman's last purported quotation: "With



you in charge, I'm at ease", is as good as a kiss of death to Hua. But it will not end with Hua. Peking is planning a series of trials for lower-ranking supporters of the "Gang" and a general shakedown of the bureaucracy. The difficulty for the Deng group is that Hua, even if only a figurehead, typifies a whole generation of party, state and PLA functionaries who rose up the bureaucratic ladder at the expense of the Liu Shao-chi/Deng faction

and can now be expected to wage a protracted guerrilla resistance to any sweeping nationwide purge by Deng and his proteges. The Chinese bureaucracy's post-Mao time of troubles has not ended with the Gang of Four trial.

Despite the unprecedented court room coverage in the Chinese media no-one could pretend that it was a fair trial. There were no defence witnesses, only prosecution witnesses; the main pros-

ecution witnesses had turned state's evidence after many years in prison; the witnesses read set-piece speeches; and the main business of the "defence" lawyer was plea-bargaining. The four principle charges against the "Ten Evil Heads" were: framing and persecuting party and state leaders in a plot to seize power; persecuting and suppressing large numbers of citizens and cadres; "vilifying Deng Xiaoping as a big quisling and fascist"; plotting to assassinate Mao as part of a "counterrevolutionary" attempted coup d'etat in 1971; and plotting an armed rebellion in Shanghai in 1976 to seize power following Mao's death. The "Gang" are accused of ordering the murder of 34,274 people, and the persecution and torture of 700,000 others. For good measure Chiang was accused of "framing Shi Chuanxiang, a model street cleaner".

As sanitised as the official television proceedings were and as fabricated as some of the "evidence" doubtless was, the trial provided a devastatingly lurid picture of life at the top of the heap in the Heavenly Palace. The murderous cliquism of Chinese Stalinism makes the legendary court intrigues of the Ming and Manchu dynasties look like Mao's proverbial "tea party". Even the local

Continued on page eleven