

Australasian

SPARTACIST



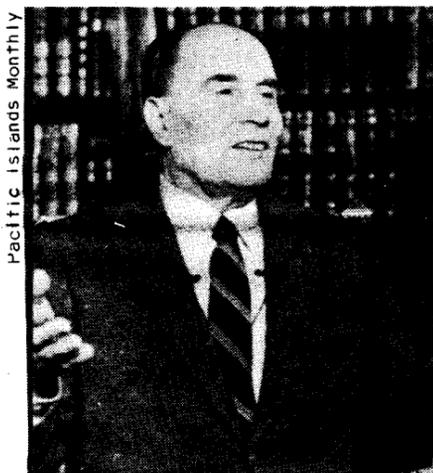
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Hawke/Mitterrand: Cold Warriors, Imperialist Overlords

Bloody Colonial Terror in the South Pacific



Pacific Islands Monthly



Pacific Islands Monthly



No Credit

Events over the last two months in the islands of the South Pacific, principally New Caledonia and also Vanuatu, have highlighted deep volatility and instability in the region. In this "American lake," scene of intensified US/Australian/French anti-Soviet war preparations, resistance to imperialist domination by Paris and Canberra is met with swift and ruthless suppression.

The backdrop to murderous suppression of Kanaks in New Caledonia was the French presidential elections in April and May, which pitted the incumbent Cold War "socialist" Mitterrand against his neo-Gaullist prime minister, Jacques Chirac. Anger amongst the Kanak population had been building up since last October when seven Europeans, self-confessed killers of ten Kanak militants (including two brothers of FLNKS leader Jean-Marie Tjibaou) were let off scot-free. Frustrated by the intransigence of French imperialism, and threatened by the imposition of new laws designed to undermine Kanak claims to land and local government areas they presently control, the FLNKS (Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front) announced a boycott of the presidential elections. Over 80 percent

Colonial overlords Mitterrand (left) and Hawke. Above, French gendarmes attack Kanak demo in New Caledonia, September 1987.

of the Kanak population responded to the FLNKS boycott call on 24 April. Meanwhile on the outer island of Ouvea, militant Kanaks staged a desperate ambush and kidnapping of 15 French gendarmes. Days later the hostage total had risen to 27, including the head of the crack GIGN (Intervention Group of the National Gendarmerie).

Australian imperialist chief Hawke bemoaned the "instability" in New Caledonia and called for the release of the hostages. The Mitterrand/Chirac government, incensed at the blow the hostage-taking had dealt its colonial "supremacy," embarked on a vindictive terror campaign against Kanaks throughout the territory. Using the tactics they employed in the bloody Algerian war, the French imperialists boosted troop strength to 12,000 — one for every seven civilians on the

islands — and ordered the wholesale evacuation of entire villages. In Ouvea they killed two elderly Kanaks. French helicopters strafed villages and entire families were separated as the military rounded up Kanak youth.

The hostage crisis ended on 5 May, two days before the final presidential vote, in a wholesale massacre of the Kanak militants which left 19 dead. Ordered by Chirac, who hoped to bask in the bloody glory of French "victory," the murderous assault was sanctioned by Mitterrand, whose own campaign was draped in the Tricolour. A total communications blackout was imposed immediately after the attack, and the bodies of the Kanaks were unceremoniously dumped in a mass grave. But gradually the truth has come out — it was cold-blooded, vindictive murder. A FLNKS spokesman revealed a "pre-

arrangement" had been set up to free the hostages. Witnesses came forward testifying that the Kanak leader of the kidnapers, Alphonse Dianou, was shot after emerging from the cave unarmed. A drip feed which had been inserted by a French doctor was ripped out and Dianou was beaten to death with soldiers' rifle butts. Even the bourgeois *Le Monde* (23 May) admits that two others were "finished off in cold blood after they had surrendered." Vengeance for the murdered Kanak militants! Immediate freedom for pro-independence militants imprisoned and tortured! French troops out of New Caledonia!

The French fascist National Front leader Le Pen, not to be upstaged by Mitterrand or Chirac, issued calls to "exterminate Kanak rebels." Fascistic vigilante squads in New Caledonia emboldened by the murder on Ouvea immediately embarked on their own killing spree. In one incident a white FLNKS official, Jean-Pierre Deteix, was subject to a hand-grenade attack. Australian Foreign Minister Hayden signalled Australian imperialist approval for the French actions by announcing a visit to France, ending a three-year break in ministerial contact. Hawke and Hayden then

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South Pacific...

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quashed the idea of an emergency conference of the South Pacific Forum called for by the Papua New Guinea (PNG) government to discuss the Ouvea massacre.

HAWKE BULLIES TINY VANUATU

The racist Australian bourgeoisie is worried that rising Melanesian nationalism from PNG to Fiji is threatening their South Pacific mini-empire. After the bloody French suppression of the Kanaks, Hawke seized the opportunity in Vanuatu to flex Australia's own military muscles. On 16 May Port Vila was the scene of a large demonstration, in which one protester was killed in clashes with cops, against Prime Minister Father Walter Lini's closing down of two government land corporations. Demonstrators, including traditional village landowners, aimed their anger at both Lini and big brother Australian imperialism.

The Australian bourgeois press screeched "riots" and "murder." Their reports were laced with proclamations that it was all some sort of Libyan destabilisation plot, alleging Transport Minister Barak Sope (since deposed) was the Libyan link. Hayden announced that Lini was "our man" and Hawke, eager to act the bully, immediately rushed 200 tear gas canisters and riot gear to "help" the Vanuatu police force. He followed this up with promises of Australian troops to supplement a PNG army contingent if need be. Hawke was planning a re-run of 1980 when PNG troops — with white Australian officers — were airlifted by Malcolm Fraser to Vanuatu to maintain imperialist stability on the eve of its independence. The navy ships Jervis Bay and Stalwart stood off Port Vila under the usual neo-colonialist pretext of ensuring the safety of Australians in the islands. ANZAC ally, Labour prime minister David Lange did his bit by placing New Zealand

On the move...?

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SPARTACIST

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MURDERED: Alphonse Dianou, by French troops on Ouvea on 5 May. Shown here at October 1987 protest at Pine Gap. US anti-Soviet war bases out of Australia, Philippines, Pacific!

troops on an alert. Murdoch's Australian (25 May) was beside itself with glee announcing "the hope ... that this will set a precedent for future policy in the region." We say: Australian imperialism get out and keep your bloody hands off Vanuatu and the Pacific!

COLD WAR IN THE PACIFIC

"Trained and armed by Libya" was the cry of French and Australian imperialism to justify murderous state terror against the Kanaks. "Libyan terrorists" is the now-familiar Hawke government codeword used to brand opponents at home and abroad as "Soviet surrogates" fit only for destruction. Last year's Gestapo-style raid by the Victorian Labor government on the Builders Labourers Federation (BLF) office in Melbourne was premised on the fabricated charge that the union took Libyan money. Aboriginal activist Mike Mansell is branded a "Libyan stooge" for travelling there, and by implication Aboriginal Apartheid is a "foreign terrorist plot."

In April Hawke and the Mitterrand-Chirac government colluded in an act of racist solidarity to summarily halt a trip of 11 pro-independence Tahitian fishermen to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Australian immigration, working closely with the French embassy in Singapore, kidnapped the hapless travellers at Sydney airport, holding them prisoner in a detention centre and then on an aeroplane for six days, claiming they were "terrorists" en route to Libya. This anti-Libyan, anti-Soviet "terrorist" campaign is based entirely on imperialist war frenzy and lies. Lini in Vanuatu scotched Hawke's Big Lie days after the Port Vila events. Having successfully removed his opponent, Sope, and nervous about Hawke's continuing talk of intervention, Lini admitted:

"As far as I am concerned it was not a Libyan connection, it was just a land issue that Mr Sope and the landowners in Vila were concerned about" (Age, 24 May).

Instability in the Pacific is making the rulers of this white imperialist enclave nervous and increasingly xenophobic. Japan, at once Australia's economic lifeline and its historic enemy, threatens to displace its US protector as the dominant imperialist power in the region. They fear for the future of the strategic US bases in the Philippines which is in the grip of

Communist Party-led insurgency. Their PNG neo-colony has for months been in a parliamentary crisis, complete with Canberra-inspired rumours of a military coup. The revelation that former PNG army commander and Defence Minister, Ted Diro, was on the payroll of the Indonesian generals sent waves of horror through the bourgeoisie.

Australia and France are the guardians of imperialist rule in the South Pacific and Cold War allies of US imperialism. In the last few years the exigencies of the anti-Soviet war drive have tempered white Australian imperialism's own regional designs in favour of rapprochement with France. It didn't take long for Hawke and Hayden to realise that Australian anti-French chauvinism was not going down well in Washington. Their occasional platitudes about New Caledonian "self-determination" have given way to support for Mitterrand's "decolonisation" scheme, which aims to maintain French control. New Zealand's David Lange described France's role as that of a "beneficent agent" (Age, 31 May), even as Mitterrand/Chirac were spitting away the last of the Rainbow Warrior terrorist murderers, ending their Club Med island "punishment."

Sealing the region for anti-Soviet war preparations has been the guiding thread to Hawke's aggressive militaristic posture. This was demonstrated last year over the election of the mildly anti-nuclear Bavadra government in Fiji. CIA/ASIO dirty work was behind the campaign of racist anti-Indian chauvinism which culminated in the Rabuka military coup a month later. Hawke mobilised the navy at the time in prep-

aration for putting down significant resistance to Rabuka. Now Australian federal police are working hand-in-hand with the Rabuka regime, cracking down on Bavadra supporters in Australia as the military rounds them up in Fiji, after an arms shipment (whose real destination is shrouded in a web of lies and speculation) was seized by customs in Sydney.

FAKE-LEFT SOCIAL-IMPERIALISTS

The various reformist groups like the Socialist Workers Party, Communist Party and the Stalinist Socialist Party filled the pages of their papers with denunciations of French colonialism over New Caledonia. Back in 1985 these "little-Australia" nationalists openly called for "their" imperialism to supplant the French, demanding "our government [to] join with other Pacific nations to act for Kanak independence" (National Times, 18-24 January 1985). Now, with Hawke widely despised in the working class, and furthermore in a bloc with Mitterrand, they are reduced to simple anti-French chauvinism. A May leaflet by Australians for Kanak Independence, politically supported by these groups, demands simply "Stop the French in the Pacific." These social-imperialists, with their touching faith in the "democratic" credentials of Australian imperialism, would condemn the oppressed peoples of the Pacific to its brutal racist rule.

The political bandits of the Socialist Labour League (SLL), in the context of Hawke's jingoistic Bicentennial, and undoubtedly prompted by their mentor, US Workers League leader David North, have lately discovered that Australia is racist and imperialist. The SLL's Workers News (6 May) headlined "Support Kanak Struggle," carried the overline "Unite Workers of Asia and the Pacific to Overthrow Imperialism!" But this is only a facade of anti-imperialism, covering an essential core of anti-Soviet, Laborite nationalism.

Last year over the Fiji coups they avoided a direct call for Australian government intervention to "restore democracy," demanding instead that the ACTU bureaucracy economically strangle Fiji with all-out union bans on trade. The ACTU did briefly impose bans — to push

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Gorbachev, Perestroika and the "Unity" Swamp

SPA, SWP Fusion?

As Mikhail Gorbachev shook Reagan's hand in Moscow, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the local pro-Moscow Stalinists of the Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) announced a program of joint activities and the drawing up of a joint program to prepare "the possibility of organisational unity." A joint statement says "both the SPA and the SWP have advanced the objective of bringing together into one party all who base themselves on Marxist-Leninist ideology and practice" (*Guardian and Direct Action*, 1 June). We noted with some amusement that they find it necessary to "popularise the idea ... among the members of the two parties."

The SWP and SPA, whether fused or separate, are reformist opponents of genuine Marxism-Leninism, that is, Trotskyism. We Trotskyists stand for the unconditional military defence of the historic conquests of the Russian Revolution against imperialism and counterrevolution. We seek to return the Soviet Union to the road of Lenin and Trotsky through workers political revolution to oust the bureaucratic usurpers; and we fight for the international extension of the October Revolution through world proletarian revolution, especially in the imperialist centres.

The SWP and SPA support Gorbachev's *perestroika* economic reforms, which undermine central planning and are bound to provoke working class resistance. They are especially enthusiastic about his concessions to imperialism, like the INF treaty and the sellout withdrawal from Afghanistan, handing to the imperialists what they've been unable to win on the battlefield. They believe a new era of "detente" is in the offing, clearing the way for them to break into the bourgeois parliamentary big-time via "left unity." With the working class base of the ALP turning away in droves, reformists like the SWP/SPA serve as a conveyor belt to redirect this disaffection back into Laborite parliamentarism.

SPA STALINISTS ON THE ROCKS

The SPA is the rump left behind by the defection of, first, the majority of the old Communist Party (CPA) to social democracy in 1968-71. Then the onset of Cold War II and the Hawke government led to the split of its conservative trade union bureaucrats in 1983. Since then its dim-witted leadership of Peter Symon/Alan Miller has repeatedly dragged the SPA through the anti-Soviet "unity" cesspool in a desperate bid to stave off looming irrelevance as a sterile pro-Moscow sect.

Life for loyal Stalinists used to be, if not exactly consistent, at least clear. For decades, they faithfully printed every proclamation issuing from Moscow. Now, under Gorbachev, the signals are not so clear and they have to



Jim Percy (second from left) and Peter Symon (fifth from left) lead joint SWP/SPA contingent at 1988 Sydney May Day march.

try to think for themselves. Every time they open *Moscow News* they have to unlearn another long-held Stalinist article of faith. Soviet official history textbooks are scrapped as a pack of lies. Even Trotsky is no longer denounced as an agent of the Nazis and the Mikado. Gorbachev attacks the corruption and economic stagnation of the Brezhnev period. Today the SPA is just one of several groups in Australia having relations with Moscow, and fears it is being abandoned by the Kremlin bureaucracy. Not surprisingly, there's considerable turmoil in the SPA, factionalism and quits. Last year the small Communist Group, publishing *Clarity*, split away, denouncing Symon's "opportunist" manoeuvres in the unity swamp. Many SPAers obviously can't stand the SWP, judging by their non-attendance at "unity" events.

"PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE: " A DANGEROUS UTOPIA

The SPA is genuinely conflicted. Symon proclaimed: "The four summit meetings already held have helped push the world away from the nuclear brink" (*Guardian*, 1 June) and the next week, a page one headline read "Progress at Moscow Summit." In the same issue, however, the page two editorial, "More, always more," made an unprecedented criticism of Soviet foreign ministry spokesman Gennady Gerasimov for a "defensive and apologetic statement" in response to Reagan's "human rights" grandstanding in Moscow. "The Reagans of this world will never accept the state of affairs in the socialist countries. They demand that socialism be thrown out and capitalism restored. No matter how ludicrous and dangerous this idea sounds, it remains their objective. It seems that some spokesmen for the Soviet Government do not understand this" (*Guardian*, 8 June). This is an implicit attack on Gorbachev himself. The SPA are in a bind. For some, it seems Gorbachev's grovelling in the face of Reagan's insults is too much, but then that

is the logic of their detente illusions.

Yes, decaying imperialism is unrelenting in its hostility to "the state of affairs" in the USSR and has been since 1917. The conclusion the *Guardian* editorial draws, however, is that they must fight harder for the illusion of "peaceful coexistence." "The imperialist states will have to be driven to the disarmament table. Every agreement will have to be screwed out of them. This is not to say it cannot be done." But who's screwing who here? The editorial lauds the "imaginative and vigorous foreign policy of the Soviet Union" — Gorbachev's concessions to aggressive imperialism, which also extend to pressuring the Vietnamese to pull their troops out of Kampuchea and the Cubans theirs out of Angola.

Gorbachev's appeasement of aggressive imperialism won't bring peace for the Soviet Union. Flowing from the bureaucracy's nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country," "peaceful coexistence" is a deadly dangerous

utopia, precisely because a direct military confrontation with the US is so suicidal. For when appeasement fails, the result is military confrontation. The Kremlin seeks to placate a hostile imperialist enemy which only grows more emboldened by every sign of Soviet "weakness." The imperialists cannot be placated short of liquidating the social foundations of the October Revolution upon which the bureaucracy itself rests. "While capitalism and socialism exist side by side, they cannot live in peace; one or the other must ultimately triumph," Lenin told Party activists in 1920. Nuclear weapons only make futile illusions in "peaceful coexistence" more dangerous, for the imperialists' real policy is not "deterrence" but a nuclear first strike against the USSR, of which the US spy/communications bases in Australia are an essential link. Only world proletarian revolution can disarm the imperialists.

SWP LOVE USTASHA, SOLIDARNOSC

Jim Percy's SWP has lately been full of praise for Gorbachev. In 1985 they split from the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat and became rabidly anti-Trotskyist, embracing some of the worst crimes of Stalinism — like the 1945 murder of the Vietnamese Trotskyists who led the Saigon insurrection against reimposition of imperialist rule. However, the SWP is steeped in anti-Sovietism. *Direct Action* didn't share the *Guardian's* qualms about Reagan's antics in Moscow, having always supported the imperialist "human rights" crusade and the anti-Soviet dissidents.

The USSR lost 20 million dead smashing the Nazi barbarians and their East European puppets. The SWP has seemed intent on giving new currency to Stalin's term

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Direct Action

Scientific analysis

In order to avoid falling into stereotypes and Croat propaganda it is important to have a scientific analysis of Pavelic and the Ustasha.

The first point to make is that the Ustasha was *not* a fascist movement, not, that is, in the Marxist meaning of the term.

Fascism is a term which is used too loosely by many people to describe any regime whose methods of repression resemble the police-state techniques

that oppression for the mass of the people.

Betrayal

Some critics of the Ustasha raise the question of its links in the 1930s to Italian imperialism. But in itself there is nothing wrong in a national movement taking aid from wherever it can get it. The Irish freedom fighters quite correctly accepted support from German imperialism in World War I in order to further their struggle.

And again, there was nothing wrong in Croatia utilising the falling out of the two imperialist gangs to try to gain independence. Croatia was not obliged to betray or be backed by British backers.

Pavelic's real betrayal of the Croatian national cause was his subordination of that struggle to the interests of German and Italian imperialism. It was for this reason that the NDH could not bring real freedom to the mass of the people or publish anything but a mockery of independence.

genuine political sovereignty can only be won by

Direct Action supplement (July 1983): Criminal apologetics for mass slaughter by Hitler's Ustasha puppets in Croatia. SPA has clammed up on this scandal — we thought popular front was supposed to be against fascism!

Kim Philby: In Memoriam

For many of us, the death of Kim Philby evoked our admiration for the achievements of this remarkable Soviet master spy who penetrated to the heart of British and American intelligence and counterespionage operations during and after World War II. Philby died May 11 at age 76, and was buried in Moscow with the military honors accorded a general of the KGB. The Soviet news agency TASS called him "heroic" and "a man of lofty internationalist duty," adding laconically:

"For a long time Kim Philby was engaged in an exceptionally delicate work, or, better said, a struggle directly within the special services of the capitalist countries whose thrust was spearheaded against the Soviet Union and the world's progressive movement."

As opponents of imperialism, we drew no small satisfaction from Philby's exploits and savored the humiliation which NATO secret services suffered as a result. At the same time, as fighters for the genuine proletarian internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky, our overall appreciation of Philby and his role must necessarily be more equivocal.

The outstanding work of Philby — called by one-time CIA chief Allen Dulles "the best spy the Russians ever had" — certainly had a devastating impact on the intelligence establishment of British imperialism, as rabid Fleet Street headlines about the "traitor Philby" bear witness still. When he finally escaped to the Soviet Union from Beirut in 1963, he left behind a legacy that goes far beyond the generation of spy novels he inspired, notably those of le Carre. British intelligence never really recovered; to this day they pore over each phrase of Philby, looking for clues to the elusive identity of a supposed "Fifth Man." Even the TASS eulogy for Philby set them vibrating again: "It was couched in the kind of prose that will raise eyebrows in London — and get MI5 going back over the Philby files, to see exactly what it was that made the KGB so grateful" ([London] *Guardian*, 13 May).

Before Philby, the British secret services were viewed as older and wiser, if a bit impoverished, by their US counterparts. Although Allen Dulles and James Jesus Angleton were taken in by him too (despite their claims in hindsight to have suspected all along), the "special relationship" between US and British spy agencies did not survive the Philby episode. Philby became the symbol for the demoralization and self-doubt of the British ruling class as the last remnants of their empire crumbled and the Americans took over as world gendarme. No longer could they implicitly trust the most privileged and gifted scions of their elite institutions. More than anything, the British establishment could never forgive Philby for being a traitor to his class.

As a young leftist at Cambridge in the early '30s, HAR Philby was attracted to Commu-



Kim Philby, December 1967

nism: "I had a good look around me and I reached a simple conclusion — the rich had had it too damn good for too long and the poor had had it too damn bad and it was time that it was all changed." For the next 30 years he served as a Soviet agent, moving into key positions in the British SIS (Secret Intelligence Service, also known as MI6). He ran Britain's anti-Soviet counterespionage operations from 1944 to 1947; he foiled imperialist-sponsored expeditions to promote counterrevolution in the Ukraine and Albania; he was the chief British liaison with the FBI and CIA in Washington during the period he described as "the full evil blast of McCarthyism"; he was even in line to become head of MI6, when the 1951 flight to the USSR of Donald Maclean and Guy Burgess, who had also been young leftists at Cambridge recruited to Soviet espionage, placed Philby under a cloud of suspicion.

With proverbial nerves of steel, Philby brazened it out. He was officially cleared by Prime Minister Macmillan in Parliament and continued working for SIS in Beirut. Then, as the TASS communique said with suggestive

understatement, "In 1963, having successfully accomplished a regular assignment, Kim Philby got to Moscow...." When asked in a recent interview if he would do it all again, he responded instantly: "Absolutely." Philby wanted to respond to the persistent planted rumors that he was disillusioned, in alcoholic depression, etc. He pointed to his comfortable Moscow home and his happy marriage to his Russian wife Rufa. "Although life here has its difficulties ... it's my country and I've served it for more than 50 years. I want to be buried here. I want my bones to rest where my work has been."

Part of our admiration for Philby stems from hatred of those he opposed in the British intelligence services who thought they were fighting the wrong war (against Hitler) and wanted instead to be fighting the USSR. During WWII Philby evidently contributed to preventing the British from reaching a separate peace with Nazi Germany to combine forces against the Soviet Union; while in charge of the SIS Iberian operations he deflected overtures from Admiral Canaris and other of Hitler's disaffected officers. In his memoirs, *My Silent War*

(1968), Philby wrote: "... it is a sobering thought that, but for the power of the Soviet Union and the Communist idea, the Old World, if not the whole world, would now be ruled by Hitler and Hirohito. It is a matter of great pride to me that I was invited, at so early an age, to play my infinitesimal part in building up that power."

There is no question that Philby and his colleagues from Cambridge undertook their work in the sincere conviction they were serving the cause of a communist future for mankind. Donald Maclean, one of Philby's comrades, evidently remained true to his socialist convictions until his last days in Moscow (he died in 1983). Roy Medvedev, who knew him personally, wrote in a eulogy that Maclean was disgusted by Stalin's crimes and had in his home a sign which read, "Opportunists, Dishonest People and Anti-Semites leave this apartment!"

But a life of service as a spy for the Soviet state under Stalin and his heirs does not necessarily equal a life of service to the working class. While Philby's circumstances placed him in a position to battle against powerful imperialist agencies, many of his contemporaries in Soviet intelligence had far dirtier assignments, sabotaging revolutions and murdering leftists. While he was gleaning valuable information from the Francoists, on the other side of the lines in the Spanish Civil War his GPU colleagues were assassinating leftists like Andres Nin and strangling the revolution. Philby's intelligence work reflects only one side of the contradictory Soviet regime which issued from the political degeneration of the first victorious workers revolution, a regime that sacrificed the hopes for world revolution on the altar of "socialism in one country."

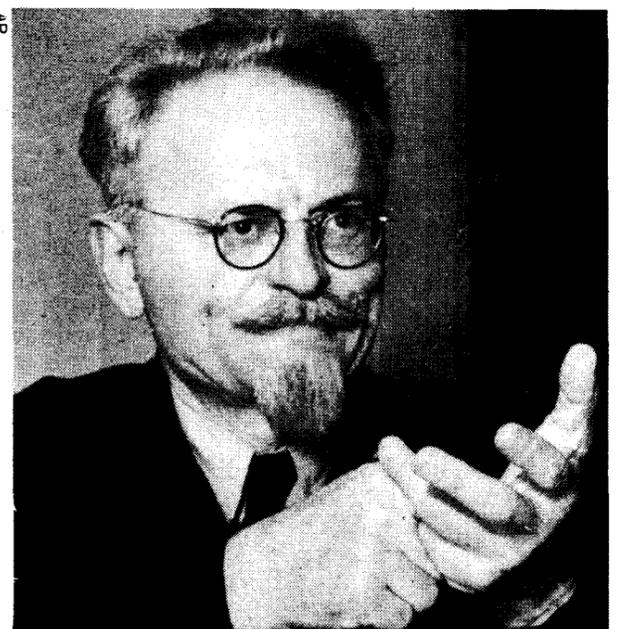
That Philby shared this program is evident in a recent interview in the (London) *Sunday Times* (20 March, 27 March, 3 April and 10 April). In his first published interview with a Western journalist in 20 years, Philby met this spring with Phillip Knightley on several occasions, discussing his views at length. Asked about

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Vladimir Kibalichich

Ignace Reiss (left), veteran of Soviet intelligence service, murdered in 1937 by Stalin's NKVD after embracing Trotsky's Fourth International. Trotsky (right) was himself assassinated by Stalinist agent in August 1940.



Solidarność Revival Fizzles

What's Behind Polish Strikes

Massive price hikes ordered by the Polish government in everything from food to rent sparked the strike wave. Transport workers wildcatted, steel and munitions workers shut down their plants demanding catch-up wage increases. The leaders of Solidarnosc rushed to place themselves at the head of this spontaneous strike wave. "I can mobilize the whole country," bragged Lech Walesa on May 4 as he once again led a strike at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk, the birthplace of Solidarnosc. A week later Walesa led a few hundred dispirited followers out of the shipyard gates as the recent strike wave in Poland collapsed. That night he and his wife Danuta attended Catholic mass. Afterward Walesa proclaimed to reporters, "There is no freedom without Solidarity." His wife, visibly bitter, said, "There is no Solidarity."

For a few weeks everyone in Poland and in the world was asking: would it happen again? Would Solidarnosc again challenge the Warsaw regime on behalf of open anti-Communist clerical-nationalism? As in 1980 the current strike wave was triggered by an austerity program dictated to Poland by Western bankers. The *New York Times* (28 April) noted, "the Government is seeking to demonstrate to international lenders, such as the International Monetary Fund, from whom it seeks fresh credit, that it means business in cleaning up the economy." Since February the price of food has jumped 40 percent, public transport by 70 percent, heating by 100 percent and rents by 200 percent. Everyone expected trouble, and in late April trouble came.

It began with a wildcat strike of transport workers in the northern city of Bydgoszcz. This ended almost immediately when the regime came up with a 60 percent wage increase. The next day the largest industrial enterprise in the country, the Lenin Steel Works at Nowa Huta near Krakow, was shut

Strike at Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk, birthplace of Solidarnosc, collapsed within a week.



down and right after that another big metal-working and arms-producing complex in Stalowa Wola. The Nowa Huta strikers were not only demanding a 50 percent wage hike for themselves but big pay raises for all state employees in Poland.

While the main thrust of the steel strikes was more money, they also had a political edge. The Nowa Huta strike committee demanded the reinstatement of Solidarnosc activists fired years before, while Stalowa Wola's demanded the legalization of Solidarnosc. The latter strike was settled in a few days for a hefty wage hike, but the Nowa Huta strike continued. Then on May 2 strikers occupied the Gdansk shipyards. Now Walesa was once more on the forefront of the Polish stage. Here the demand to re-establish Solidarnosc was first and foremost, wage concerns were secondary.

Solidarnosc' masters and paymasters in Washington (this "free trade union" has received millions from the CIA, and the US Congress last year openly voted \$1 million for it) and the Vatican

immediately launched a campaign on its behalf. US State Department spokesman Charles Redman lectured the Jaruzelski regime: "The current strikes in Poland demonstrate more clearly than ever that successful economic reform and recovery require genuine dialogue between the government and society" (*Washington Post*, 3 May). By "society" the Reagan gang means Walesa & Co. On his way to visit Paraguayan dictator Stroessner, Pope John Paul Wojtyla (originally of Krakow) declared that the Solidarnosc leaders "deserve unconditional support and encouragement."

This time the best efforts of President and Pope to subvert Poland fell flat. On May 5 a police raid broke the Nowa Huta strike, while police cordoned off the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk. Immediately the mass of strikers went home, leaving Walesa with about 500 raw youth. From Warsaw the Solidarnosc leadership appealed to workers throughout Poland for "actions of solidarity" on behalf of Walesa and his hold-outs. But Polish workers did not answer this appeal. History did not repeat itself.

THE RISE AND FALL OF SOLIDARNOSC

During the 1970s the Stalinist regime of Eduard Gierak, grossly corrupt and incompetent, mortgaged Poland to the loan sharks of Wall Street, the City of London and the Frankfurt Borse. When in 1980 the Western bankers turned the screws, the Warsaw government cut living standards by sharply raising prices, thus setting off a strike wave which gave rise to Solidarnosc. The legitimate grievances of Polish workers against the economically and politically bankrupt Stalinist bureaucracy were channeled into a clerical-nationalist movement tied to the apron strings of Washington and the Vatican.

At its first national congress in September 1981, Solidarnosc consolidated around a counter-

revolutionary program of "Western-style democracy" with Walesa praising Japan and the United States as economic and political models for Poland. At that point the international Spartacist tendency, almost unique on the left, raised the cry: Stop Solidarnosc Counterrevolution! Fortunately for the international working class, indeed for all humanity, Solidarnosc' bid for power was spiked at the last minute by the (near-bloodless) counter-coup carried out by the Polish regime under General Jaruzelski in December 1981.

Since then the Solidarnosc leaders have been completely unashamed in their support to "free world" capitalism and anti-Soviet militarism. They have denounced the social-democratic "peace" movement in West Europe as Kremlin agents and dupes. In 1985 the Solidarnosc Temporary Coordinating Commission (TKK) adopted a program calling for a thoroughgoing market economy in Poland complete with private ownership in industry and a stock market to boot. Even some of its

Continued on page eight



Flanked by cross, Solidarnosc leader Walesa (second from left) leads small band out of Gdansk shipyard in defeat, May 10.

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Nicaragua in Turmoil

Workers Need Bolshevik Leadership

6 MAY — With truce talks in Managua between the radical-nationalist Sandinista regime and Washington's contra mercenaries once again interrupted, Nicaragua is seething internally. As government negotiators offered increasingly dangerous concessions to the counterrevolutionary chiefs, who keep demanding more, thousands of Sandinista supporters demonstrated with signs demanding "death to the contras." Meanwhile, the Nicaraguan masses stagger under anti-working-class austerity which has slashed their miserable wages. Pushed to the wall, construction workers and mechanics have been on strike for the last two months. And as the Sandinista police crack down, the internal right wing and contra leadership — in collusion with opposition union leaders — are cynically posing as friends of the strikers.

In the all-sided turmoil engulfing Nicaragua, a Bolshevik party is ever more urgently needed to crystallize the situation along class lines, fighting to complete the revolution by expropriating the bourgeoisie, and to extend it throughout Central America and beyond.

The March 23 Sapoa cease-fire agreement, implementing the Esquipulas II "peace" pact engineered by the Democratic Party and Costa Rican president Arias, is an effort to undermine the limited gains of the Nicaraguan Revolution through negotiations, since Reagan's contras have lost on the battlefield. Contra official and former *La Prensa* editor Pedro Chanorro said as much on returning to Managua: "We came here to achieve at the conference table what we have not been able to achieve in the mountains" (*New*

Outside US embassy in Managua, Sandinista demonstrators denounce CIA-backed assassins, call for permanent cease-fire to end contra war.



York Times, 17 April). Backed up by the \$48 million voted by the Democrat-controlled Congress, the contras want all Sandinista military and civilian personnel to abandon the seven "cease-fire" zones! They are also demanding the right to receive "replacement" weapons and ammunition, and that Soviet military aid to the government be cut off.

The Reaganites in Washington are doing their best to sink the truce talks. Under the Sapoa accord, "humanitarian" aid to the contras is supposed to be delivered by a "neutral" party, so the White House picked AID (Agency for International Development), synonymous with CIA counterinsurgency programs from Vietnam to El Salvador. AID has already resumed air drops to the mercenary camps along the Honduran border with Nicaragua. Even so, the military attempts at overthrowing the Sandinistas may have reached a dead end. "The bottom line is that the Contra war is over," said US Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams in an off-the-record interview. "And perhaps the last service I will perform for the Contras will be to hand out green (US immigration) cards" (*Independent* [London], 9 April).

Meanwhile, the contra leadership is fracturing. During the

negotiations longtime CIA operative Adolfo Calero and former Somozaist National Guard colonel Enrique Bermudez have fallen out. Bermudez fired the contra commanders who signed the Sapoa agreement, whereupon Calero tried to pull a coup to oust the military chief. The cease-fire poses a big problem for the contra tops: their mercenary peasant army could dissolve without the pressure of war and the promise of endless dollars. One contra official said, "Who knows how long we can hold together and keep up the morale of our troops" (*New York Times*, 26 April). As Sandinista troops in the field began meeting with nearby contra units, orders went out from contra HQ in Tegucigalpa to stop the fraternization. But in several cases the meetings have continued.

While the Sandinista leadership rolled out the red carpet for the contras, the Nicaraguan masses were in the streets. Dozens of demonstrations assembled to call for unconditional surrender by the contra killers. While the imperialist media have been bellowing about "censorship" of the voice of the internal contras, *La Prensa*, because it wants more (Soviet-supplied) newsprint, and the government caved in by supplying it, Sandinista youth gathered outside the CIA mouthpiece chanting, "Give back to the people the paper you used to defame the people" (*La Repubblica* [Rome], 17 April). Pressured by the Sandinista ranks, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega vowed to a crowd of 20,000 that if peace talks fail, "we shall continue fighting until we totally annihilate the Contras." And on May Day, Ortega declared:

"What we are discussing is how the mercenary forces, who are already defeated, can lay down their weapons.

"They should be grateful that we are not offering them the guillotine or the firing squad, which is what they deserve."

— *New York Times*, 2 May
Militant declarations notwith-

standing, in negotiating a treacherous "peace" fraud the Sandinistas are paving the way for counterrevolution.

SHOWDOWN OVER STRIKES

Despite all the vituperation from the Reagan White House against "Sandino-Communism," the Sandinistas have never sought to establish a collectivized economy, the basis of a workers state. While the FSLN smashed the capitalist state of the Somoza dynasty installed by the US Marines, the guerrillas in power vowed to follow a utopian pipe dream of "mixed economy, political pluralism and nonalignment." But this didn't placate the Reaganites, who wanted an easy "win" in Central America for their anti-Soviet war drive. For more than eight years, the fate of the Nicaraguan Revolution has hung in the balance. Now with the defeat of Washington's contra terrorists, we have warned that the petty-bourgeois bonapartist FSLN regime, rather than following the "Cuban road" to a bureaucratically deformed workers state, is moving toward reconsolidating a capitalist state (see "Sandinista-Contra Pact: Revolution in Grave Danger," *Workers Vanguard* No 450, 8 April).

In recent weeks the FSLN has made one concession after another to the bourgeoisie while forcing the working class to the wall. The current labor battles are the result of a sweeping pro-capitalist economic "shock treatment" launched by Ortega on February 14. Overnight the Nicaraguan currency, the cordoba, was devalued by 3,000 percent; the government exchanged old cordobas for new ones at the rate of 1,000 to one. Given the astronomical inflation, monetary reform was inevitable. But along with it, Ortega decreed a series of measures favoring businessmen and gutting Nicaraguan workers' budgets. Almost all subsidies for food and basic goods were eliminated, government spending was cut by 10 percent, wage different-



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ials were increased for higher-paid professional employees ... and capitalists' export earnings will now be paid at international market rates! One US-educated "technocrat" who helped design the program said:

"This is a reaffirmation of the view that socialist central planning is not viable in this country. The logic of these measures is a greater reliance on market signals."

— Washington Post, 5 March

The impact on the Nicaraguan masses has been devastating. While wages were increased, prices have risen faster. Mainstays of the Nicaraguan diet like rice, beans and corn have virtually disappeared from the markets as producers and speculators hold on to them rather than sell them at government-controlled prices. The working class faces an impossible situation. An auto mechanic, a skilled worker toward the upper end of the new 15-step wage scale, makes 1,700 cordobas per month (about US\$45 currently). Yet even according to government estimates it takes at least 2,300 cordobas (and more likely double that) just to feed a family of four. Unskilled workers may earn as little as 500 cordobas per month! Simply to survive workers must find some bisnes in the black market, which continues to flourish despite government efforts to suppress it.

The catastrophic collapse of the workers' standard of living resulting from the economic reform soon touched off strikes by 3,000 construction workers and 1,200 auto mechanics, as well as (more briefly) by restaurant



New York Times



March 3 — Nicaraguan masses demonstrate against La Prensa, mouthpiece for capitalist reaction. Contra kingpin Calero (centre) whoops it up with La Prensa publisher Violeta Chamorro.

...pseudo-leaders who receive money from the CIA." A relative of a striker countered, "They say this is a political strike, but the real cause is that we can't live on what they want to pay." With these totally counterposed accounts, what is the truth? And what should be the policy of proletarian revolutionaries?

The strike clearly began as an economic struggle, forced by the FSLN's drastic anti-worker economic policies. When the strikes broke out in late February, the government made no attempt to bargain and simply fired everyone. And the wages are truly impossible. A New York Times (14 April) article reported the comments of a construction assistant who earns 26 cordobas a day (while a worker's lunch costs 30 cordobas, a packet of cigarettes costs 39 and an inexpensive pair of shoes goes for at least 400);

And both PCN and PSN are part of a 14-party alliance opposed to the Sandinistas which includes all the right-wing parties.

Yet the strikers certainly do not see themselves as counter-revolutionaries. Indeed, as the New York Times (14 April) article reported: "The construction workers' union hall is decorated by portraits of Lenin and other Marxist heroes," and both unions sport the traditional communist symbol, the hammer and sickle. SCAAS is known for leading a hard-fought building workers strike against Somoza following the 1972 earthquake, while CAUS once led the largest and most militant factory in the country, now called FABRITEX, where they continue to have support and which has one of the highest percentages of workers who have joined the militias and fought the contras at the front. In fact, most of Managua's industries have a strong presence of ostensibly socialist opposition unions.

LESSONS OF OCTOBER: BOLSHEVIK PARTY IS KEY

Sandinista Nicaragua has been brutally battered by years of Yankee imperialist aggression, both by the bloody contra terrorists who have killed tens of thousands and by Reagan's trade embargo which has sought to strangle the economy. Having endured so much, so long, it is natural that war-weariness has spread in Nicaragua. This can drive backward workers into the arms of reaction. We have recalled the example of Kronstadt, where sailors mutinied in 1921 against the Soviet regime (see "Finish Off the Contras — Complete the Revolution!" WV No 445, 29 January). At that time also, hard-pressed urban workers led by the Mensheviks were striking for basic economic necessities. Lenin, Trotsky and the rest of the Bolshevik leadership tried to negotiate with the sailors, but finally the mutiny had to be put down by the Red Army.

The PSN and PCN are politically similar in many ways to the Russian Mensheviks. They are hardline reformists, ardent believers in "two-stage" revolution who opposed as "adventuristic" the 1979 insurrection which toppled Somoza. The Mensheviks, too, led sections of the working class, such as the railway workers who opposed the October Revolution and sabotaged its defense. But the Sandinistas are no Bolsheviks — far from it. The Kronstadt sailors, many of whom came from rural backgrounds, objected

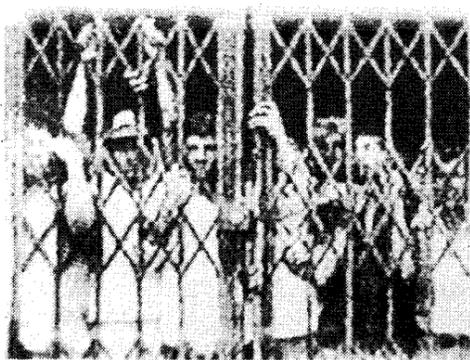
to the Bolsheviks' policies of War Communism, seeking free markets for peasant producers. "War Sandinism," in contrast, has been marked by hefty dollar subsidies for "patriotic" capitalists and increasingly impossible conditions for the workers. And now the Sandinistas have decreed a "free market" austerity rivaling anything the IMF bankers' cartel has ordered, as they prepare to bring back the contra capitalists.

The current Nicaraguan strikes are not Kronstadt but closer to the El Teniente strike in Allende's Chile. In May-June of 1973, workers at the country's largest mine fought against the "Popular Unity" government to retain their sliding scale of wages, a protection against inflation. Allende, like Ortega, accused the strikes of being "economistic." Yet while the popular-front left denounced the El Teniente strikers, we Trotskyists called to defend their strike. Eventually, however, as Allende's "popular" government drove the strikers into the abyss, the CIA's coup plotters seized the opportunity. A miners' march on Santiago was taken over by the ultra-rightist National Party and turned into a counterrevolutionary political mobilization. (For more about the El Teniente strike, see "Defend Chilean Miners' Strike," WV No 23, 22 June 1973; and "How The Battle of Chile Disarms the Workers," WV No 202, 21 April 1978.)

In Nicaragua today, Ortega has denounced the strikers as having "no class consciousness" for struggling to feed and clothe their children while the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie receives subsidies and the Sandinista comandantes shop at Managua's "dollar stores." The workers have sacrificed plenty, but where's the social revolution? The workers' demands are a legitimate defense against the FSLN's economic "reforms" which are aimed at securing capitalist property relations. The right-wing opposition, which seeks untrammeled capitalist exploitation, has seized upon the strikes as a club against the Sandinistas. A genuine communist leadership would seek to take control of the struggle away from the reformist traitors who are leading the workers into the arms of Reagan's contras.

A Leninist-Trotskyist party would fight for workers control of the factories, for expropriation of the bourgeoisie, for a workers and peasants government — and oppose the sellout of the revolution in the phony "peace" talks with

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SIN TV/Workers Vanguard

Construction workers and mechanics on hunger strike for a living wage at union hall in Managua. Reformist union leaders display the hammer and sickle, but ally with the bourgeoisie.

workers, truck drivers and sugar plantation workers. The striking construction workers are demanding 200 percent wage increases and the limitation of the workday to eight hours. The Sandinistas responded by declaring the strikes illegal and firing the workers, while the pro-government CST labor federation has organized scabs to take their places. Tensions have run high as Sandinista militants and unionists have squared off in street confrontations. Last week 38 construction workers went on a hunger strike to press for their demands. And then the right-wing opposition walked out of the "national reconciliation" talks, protesting Sandinista "intransigence" in resolving the strikes.

On May Day, Daniel Ortega denounced the strikers, saying, "These workers are fighting against the revolution instead of the imperialism of the United States and the contras." "They are led," he said, "by people who have a counterrevolutionary program

"It's a question of starving on strike or starving on the job. You absolutely cannot live on that salary." There have also been walk-outs in workplaces controlled by Sandinista unions: eight in January alone.

On the other hand, the union leaders are cooperating with right-wing reaction. The strikers are organized in the SCAAS construction workers union, affiliated with the pro-Moscow Socialists (PSN), and the CAUS union of the Communist Party (PCN). SCAAS and CAUS, in turn, are part of an opposition labor umbrella group which includes the CUS union that is indeed on the Washington payroll, via the American Institute for Free Labor Development, a "labor" front for the CIA set up by the AFL-CIO and US businessmen. According to the Wall Street Journal (31 December 1985), "AIFLD funnels about \$60,000 a year to the CUS from funds it receives from the National Endowment for Democracy," set up to launder US government dollars.

Polish Strikes...

Continued from page five

ardent supporters in the Western left conceded that Solidarnosc now had a pro-capitalist program (see "Solidarnosc Calls for Wall Street to Run Poland," Workers Vanguard No. 406, 20 June 1986).

At the same time, Solidarnosc was becoming moribund within Poland, reduced to small groups of intellectuals with clandestine printing presses. Last year the conservative London Economist (25 April 1987) reported: "Working-class support for Solidarity has dwindled rapidly, as polls conducted even by pro-Solidarity sociologists show." And Jacek Kuron, a leading intellectual figure in the movement, admitted, "Even the strongest optimists acknowledge that the influence of Solidarity activists on the silent majority of society has been radically diminished." Moreover, the Solidarnosc leadership disintegrated into competing factions and cliques.

Solidarnosc's godfathers in Washington and the Vatican were naturally distraught over the sorry state of the organization and made some effort to revive it. Last June John Paul Wojtyla visited Poland and prayed for "the special great heritage of Polish Solidarity." A few months later Reagan's man, former CIA chief George Bush, made his pitch. On a pilgrimage to a Warsaw church along with Mr Solidarnosc, Bush proclaimed, "I am proud to be standing beside Lech Walesa, a man so well respected in the United States" (Chicago Tribune, 29 September 1987). The crowd responded by chanting, "No freedom without Solidarity! Long live Bush! Long live Reagan!"

Wojtyla's prayers and Bush's praise were unable to restore the influence of Solidarnosc. But the economic pressures on Poland, for



Lech Walesa flaunts money from Western backers; Pope John Paul Wojtyla, godfather of counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarnosc.

end of their rope and would resist further austerity measures. Even the official unions, which Jaruzelski set up to replace Solidarnosc, complained that social benefits and housing in Poland were much lower and much worse than in other Eastern bloc countries. And when the Jaruzelski regime first proposed big price hikes last spring, the official, bureaucratized unions declared this "unacceptable to working people" and implicitly threatened to strike against it.

Nonetheless, the Jaruzelski regime went ahead with plans for sweeping market-oriented reforms dictated by the IMF: elimination of most, or all, subsidies for consumer goods; closing down unprofitable enterprises; expanding the scope of small-scale private capital; and encouraging foreign investment. Professor Jan Mujzel, one of Jaruzelski's top economic advisers, is quite blunt: "I have no doubt that we will see bankruptcies and unemployment... Reform requires much harder conditions for all working people" (Wall Street Journal, 10 April 1987).

The Jaruzelski regime has



Poland. In a sense that is true. The Jaruzelski regime is totally discredited. Everyone knows that economic "reform" is just a code word for severe austerity measures, and nobody believes the promises of "democratization." At the same time, the working class and society at large show little support or loyalty for Solidarnosc. It is doubtful that many Poles want Lech Walesa, who acts like a holy idiot, to govern their country.

Both the Stalinist Jaruzelski regime and the Solidarnosc opposition serve as transmission belts for international finance capital into Poland. At the height of its strength in 1981 Solidarnosc demanded that Poland join the IMF, which in fact Jaruzelski did a few years later. Thus the Polish working class is totally without leadership to resist the extortion of the Western bankers.

Economic desperation is driving Polish workers to struggle. In the next months we can expect at least localized strikes over wages. However, there can be no question of economic recovery as long as the surplus produced by Polish workers is turned over to the imperialist loan sharks. Yet no political grouping in Poland demands repudiation of the debt — not even the shadowy "leftists" of the so-called Workers' Opposition Alliance, promoted internationally by pseudo-Trotskyist Ernest Mandel. The Workers' Opposition Alliance blames the economic crisis solely on "the parasitism, the incompetence and the dictatorship of the Stalinist bureaucracy" (International Viewpoint, 27 October 1986).

All tendencies from the most rabid anti-Communist nationalists to the most hardline Stalinists take for granted that Poland must endure years of hardship to repay Western bankers. This view was stated clearly by a Polish academic visiting Harvard, Jan Chowaniec, last year in a letter to the New York Times (31 March 1987):

"...Poland owes to her Western creditors a total of \$33.5 billion. To meet that challenge alone will require years of belt-tightening policies and huge sacrifices from the whole of Polish society. However, I am afraid that before the Poles can be either fed or housed better, they will first have to work harder, produce more, export more and pay their foreign debts."

Jaruzelski's economic advisers would dismiss any talk of repudiating the debt as wildly



Soviet leader Gorbachev encourages Polish general Jaruzelski (right) to impose savage austerity program on behalf of Western bankers.

years led white by the IMF, were rapidly building toward a working-class explosion. These were the same conditions which originally gave rise to Solidarnosc.

IMF BANKERS BLEED POLAND

Poland's debt to Western bankers — some \$36 billion — amounts to \$1,000 for every man, woman and child in the country. This is equivalent to the annual wage of the average worker. Poland has been paying off the debt at \$3 billion a year. By depressing living standards and starving industry for investment funds, the Jaruzelski regime has managed in recent years to run a balance of trade surplus of about \$1.5 billion annually. But Warsaw still has to borrow just to meet its existing debt service.

By last year it was clear that Polish workers had reached the

loudly identified its economic reforms with Gorbachev's perestroika (restructuring). And there are indeed important similarities. However, the main authors of the Polish "reforms" do not reside in Moscow but in the IMF headquarters in Washington. As a public relations ploy, Jaruzelski & Co held a referendum last November on the austerity program. Over half the registered voters either abstained or voted against so that the referendum failed. Still, the Warsaw Stalinists pushed ahead with the price hikes, despite knowing full well they were heading into a confrontation with the Polish working class.

FOR REVOLUTIONARY INTERNATIONALISM!

The New York Times maintains that there were "no winners" in the recent strike wave in

unrealistic. The bankers would retaliate by organizing a boycott of Polish exports in Western markets. Poland could not then pay for vital imports of food and raw materials. Its economy would totally collapse. Moreover, no economic assistance could be expected from the Soviet Union, especially under Gorbachev. In fact, Gorbachev would strongly oppose Poland's repudiation of its debt to Western creditors.

This is all quite true. What it proves is that there is no solution to the Polish crisis within the framework of nationalism or Stalinism. Only a proletarian political revolution can liberate Poland from the IMF because only a revolutionary workers government can affect the international conditions to counter imperialist retaliation. Only from the standpoint of socialist internationalism can Polish workers effectively appeal to Soviet workers, who have their own reasons for opposing and resisting Gorbachev's market-oriented reforms. At the same time, revolutionary workers in Moscow, Warsaw and East Berlin would have the moral authority to appeal to workers in West Europe and the United States against imperialist economic warfare against East Europe.

The Polish bureaucratically deformed workers state was established by a social revolution carried out from above by Stalin's Russia in the aftermath of World War II. For some years now Polish workers have been deluded that their liberators are in the Vatican and White House. In reality Wojtyla and Reagan, acting through Solidarnosc, have conspired to bring about a bloody counterrevolution in Poland as a step toward destroying the Soviet Union. Aiding in the delusion of the Polish working class have been Western social democrats, Eurocommunists and pseudo-Trotskyists like Ernest Mandel, who for years have screamed, "Solidarity with Solidarnosc!"

Now it appears that Polish workers have become disillusioned with Solidarnosc. It is only by returning to the road of proletarian internationalism, exemplified by Rosa Luxemburg and the early Polish Communist Party, that Polish workers can liberate themselves from the Stalinist bureaucracy and the bloodsuckers of the IMF. For a Trotskyist party in Poland, section of a reborn Fourth International!

— Reprinted from Workers Vanguard No 453, 20 May 1988

Kim Philby...

Continued from page four

Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, he said that if his advice had been sought, "I would have advised against it on purely historical grounds. I would have said, look what happened to the British there. So keep out.... We decided to go in and hold the country down for a bit until we could restore order.... But now we are anxious to pull out as soon as we can do so without a massacre of our friends there."

We Trotskyists, who unconditionally defend the Soviet Union against imperialism and internal counterrevolution, proclaimed, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" Faced with unenviable options on

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

Nicaragua...

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the contras. It would fight to defend, complete and extend the Nicaraguan Revolution!

Located in an area considered by the Yankee imperialists to be their "backyard," Sandinista Nicaragua has been battered by an unrelenting onslaught from the colossus to the north, combining bloody contra terror and economic strangulation. Reagan wouldn't leave them alone yet Washington feared to send the 82nd Airborne into another Third World military adventure. So the Nicaraguan Revolution has been stuck in mid-stream — it is now becoming unstuck. As decisive days approach in Managua, the experience of the

Russian October Revolution becomes all the more vital. In September 1917, following the defeat of Kornilov's attempted counter-revolutionary putsch and as economic collapse threatened, Lenin wrote his famous pamphlet, The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It:

"Control, supervision and accounting are the prime requisites for combating catastrophe and famine. This is indisputable and universally recognised. And it is just what is not being done from fear of encroaching on the supremacy of the landowners and capitalists....

"In point of fact, the whole question of control boils down to who controls whom, ie,

their Afghanistan border, the Brezhnev regime chose what it saw as the lesser evil: intervention against CIA-backed feudalist reactionaries. This pushed the Soviet military into defending social progress and women's rights, while cutting against the pursuit of "detente." If ever there was an occasion to implement the policy of "exporting revolution" by force of arms — a line often attributed to Trotskyists, but actually proposed by Red Army Marshal Tukhachevsky (as well as the youthful Bukharin) — it would be in Afghanistan. Far from being a historically cohered nation-state, Afghanistan has been and is a cauldron of feuding tribes and fragmented peoples, for whom effective assimilation into the USSR through an Afghan workers state would constitute enormous social progress. Conditions of life in Soviet Central Asia testify to the vast gains this would bring for the Afghan peoples.

Unfortunately the Gorbachev leadership, in deciding to withdraw the Soviet army from Afghanistan, is leaving open the field for the bloody chieftains and mullahs who would unleash a bloodbath against leftists, against unveiled women, against atheists, against any who have assisted the Soviets. And the market-oriented economic policies of the new Kremlin chiefs threaten to strengthen the hand of capitalist restorationist forces internally, as well as fostering social inequality, undermining centralized planning and exacerbating antagonisms

among nationalities of the USSR.

To political impressionists, the zigzags of the Soviet bureaucracy appear incomprehensible; the fundamental underpinnings of the state are confused with vagaries of policy. Thus when Stalin's terror held sway, and particularly during the Hitler-Stalin pact, it became fashionable to deny altogether the class character of the USSR as a workers state; even today Stalinism is made out by some to be "counterrevolutionary through and through." Conversely, with Gorbachev's current popularity in the West, one hears the fake-left chorus hailing the return of workers democracy to Soviet Russia. But a vast gulf separates glasnost and perestroika from measures of genuine soviet democracy: only the revolutionary mobilization of the Russian workers behind an internationalist, Bolshevik leadership can dismantle the legacy of Stalinism and restore the traditions of Lenin and Trotsky, the traditions of the October Revolution. We look forward to a new generation of Bolshevik-Leninists in the USSR, part of a reborn Fourth International committed to finally dispatching moribund capitalism through world socialist revolution.

In an article written more than a decade ago ("Heroic Soviet Spies," Workers Vanguard Nos 165 and 166, 8 and 15 July 1977) we paid tribute to men like Leopold Trepper, head of the Red Orchestra Soviet spy network in Nazi-occupied Europe; Richard Sorge, who ran a daring operation in

which class is in control and which is being controlled. In our country, in republican Russia, with the help of the 'authorised bodies' of supposedly revolutionary democracy, it is the landowners and capitalists who are still recognised to be, and still are, the controllers. The inevitable result is the capitalist robbery that arouses universal indignation among the people, the economic chaos that is being artificially kept up by the capitalists. We must resolutely and irrevocably, not fearing to break with the old, not fearing boldly to build the new, pass to control over the landowners and capitalists by the workers and peasants."

How this was to be done was spelled out in an article he wrote that same day, which concludes: "Power to the Soviets means the complete transfer of the country's administration and economic control into the hands of the workers and peasants, to whom nobody would dare offer resistance and who, through practice, through their own experience, would soon learn how to distribute the land, products and grain properly" ("One of the Fundamental Questions of the Revolution," September 1917). That step was taken with the October Revolution, whose program remains today the guiding light for proletarian revolution throughout the world.

— Reprinted from Workers Vanguard No 452, 6 May 1988

WWII Japan; and Ignace Reiss, a Soviet intelligence officer who embraced Trotskyism and was murdered by Stalin in 1937. The crucial warnings by Sorge and Trepper of the impending German invasion of the USSR in 1941 were criminally ignored by Stalin, whose refusal to heed them and prepare militarily cost millions of Soviet lives. Workers Vanguard also recounted the venal record of others who did the Kremlin's dirty work, like Mark Zborowski, who infiltrated the Trotskyists and played a key role in the NKVD assassination of Trotsky's son Leon Sedov in 1938 (and probably that of Ignace Reiss as well), or Ramon Mercader, who on Stalin's orders in 1940 drove a mountaineer's ax through the skull of Leon Trotsky.

The same Workers Vanguard article described the dual nature of the Soviet state and the men who serve it:

"... how can it be that within one and the same government apparatus, at the very heart of the military and security organs of state power, there can be such mortal enemies: the Zhukovs and Tukhachevskys, the Abakumovs and Treppers, the Zborowskis and Reiss' — the jailers and those who tomorrow will be their prisoners, the assassins and those who will be their victims, all loyally working in the interests of the Kremlin? The answer is to be found in the fundamentally contradictory character of the Soviet deformed workers state.

"Stalin's capture of political power in the USSR marked the

imposition of iron rule by a parasitic stratum that had escaped the control of the working class. This bureaucracy sought above all to defend its own privileges. At times this would force it to resist encroachments or direct attack by one of the imperialist camps, as in World War II.... It was because of this face of the bureaucracy that dedicated Soviet intelligence officers could accomplish the outstanding work that they did against the Axis imperialists, although it was constantly sabotaged by their superiors.

"But there is another face of the Kremlin as well, that of the state prosecutor who demands 'confessions' for imagined 'crimes against the Soviet Union,' and of the prison camp guard who executes jailed oppositionists while they sing the Internationale and vow to defend the USSR against imperialist attack."

We celebrate the triumphs of Kim Philby, Soviet master spy. He performed invaluable services in defense of the homeland of the October Revolution. And, as we wrote ten years ago, "when the Soviet working class rises up to expel the Stalinist bureaucracy, they will remember the vital work done by the heroic Soviet spies, the martyrs of the Red Orchestra and their comrades. Nor will they forget the infamy of the Zborowskis and Mercaders and their masters. To each his due."

— Reprinted from Workers Vanguard No 454, 3 June 1988

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Extend the Gains of October to Afghan Peoples!

La Trobe University

1:00pm, Thursday, 30 June Meeting Room, Union Building
For more information phone the Spartacist League
on (03) 654-4315

Spartacist League

<p>GPO Box 3473, Sydney, 2001 Ph: 281-2181</p>	<p>GPO Box 2339, Melbourne, 3001 Ph: 654-4315</p>
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SPA, SWP ...

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social fascism through its sinister connection with the Croatian HDP. They apologise for the bloody mass murder by Hitler's wartime Croatian satellite Pavelic and his fascist Ustasha, and defend acts of Ustasha terrorism against the Yugoslav workers state! (See Australasian Spartacist No 103, August-September 1983.) For the sake of "unity" the SPA's Guardian has maintained a complicit silence on this scandal.

Over Poland, the SWP demonstrated for Solidarnosc counter-revolution, with fascistic "Captive Nations" emigres, outside the Polish consulate in Sydney in December 1981. Perhaps that's where they met the HDP-Ustasha. Percy even said the SWP was the closest thing to Solidarnosc in Australia, though in fact Santamaria's NCC actually edges them out. Stuffed to the gills with Vatican/CIA dollars, Solidarnosc, whose hero was the fascistic Marshal Pilsudski, carried with it Reagan/NATO's hopes for "democratic" capitalist counter-revolution from within the Soviet bloc.

The SWP and SPA include in their "unity" plans the Maoists of the CPA(ML), slavish backers of China's treacherous alliance with the US against the USSR/Vietnam, defenders of Pol Pot's genocidal Khmer Rouge in Kampuchea, and recently authors of vitriolic diatribes against Japanese investment in Australia that must be music to the ears of racists like Bruce Ruxton and Blainey.

This is no accident. Where

these "lefts" find maximum unity is precisely as sergeant-majors for a new imperialist war to defend White Australia capitalism against its Japanese rival and historic enemy. Waving the Eureka Flag, they all defend racist protectionism and urge a more "independent" and aggressive policy in pursuit of Australia's regional interests upon Hawke. Well, the logic of "socialism in one country" is popular fronts with the bourgeoisie. And naturally they are opposed to independent struggle by the proletariat for this disrupts chauvinist national unity. In 1985, when the Hawke/Cain governments and ACTU smashed the Builders Laborers Federation, the SWP and SPA opposed strike action to defend it. They blockade the hard class struggle needed to bring down the Hawke government and trot out a vote to Labor time and again, though last time the SWP voted for the bourgeois Democrats. We Trotskyists fight to split the Labor Party base from the capitalist-serving tops and build a revolutionary internationalist workers party.

The SPA has to be pretty far gone even for Stalinists to want fusion with Percy's SWP, a bunch of petty-bourgeois nationalists who succeed in giving rotten opportunism a bad name. There's not much Percy won't do to get rich quick, witness the HDP-Ustasha episode. This planned fusion is just Percy's latest "big breakthrough" manoeuvre, hard on the heels of the collapse of the last one, unity with the CPA in the "New Left Party Charter." Percy now ruefully describes the "new party" milieu as "badly infested territory, a real swamp" (Workers News, 22 January). This latest flop produced internal

trouble in the SWP, sections of which blamed it on Percy.

In early March four SWP National Committee members quit, saying "the Party is not the democratic organisation it pretends to be." No kidding. The four long-time SWP leaders, Brett Trenery, Peta Stewart, Margo Condoleon and Tony Forward, were hitherto part of Percy's bureaucratic clique, so they ought to know. As proof, they are circulating on the left the constitution of the vehicle through which Percy exercises personal control of SWP property, named with supreme cynicism the "LD Bronstein Society" (after Trotsky's real name). Undoubtedly Percy's pro-Gorbachev rhetoric, his current tactical hard line on the ALP, plus his notorious bureaucratic cultism, were obstacles to the regroupment with the CPA/greenie "swamp" which the quitters wanted, but most likely they just got fed up when Percy came up empty-handed yet again.

Whether this rotten fusion will actually be consummated is open to considerable skepticism. After all you need a scorecard to keep track of the splits in the name of "unity." At any rate SPAers would be well advised to hang on to their wallets.

SWP/SPA: NO PLACE FOR COMMUNISTS

There is an alternative for genuine defenders of the October Revolution; exemplified in the recent fusion of the Tribune Communiste group in France with the international Spartacist tendency. These comrades, from the "anti-opportunist" milieu around the French Communist Party, were driven by their impulse to defend the USSR and oppose the PCF's popular-front betrayals, to the realisation that there is no revolutionary proletarian alternative to opportunism within the framework of Stalinism, only the program of Trotsky's Fourth International upheld today by the iSt. Anyone who mistakenly joined the SWP or SPA to defend the Soviet Union and fight for revolution will also find abundant lessons in this fusion, a programmatically principled revolutionary regroupment the polar opposite of the cynical manoeuvrism of the reformist swamp. Percy and Symon are sinking in the swamp — the SWP/SPA are no place to be a communist! Only the Spartacist League fights for defence of the USSR, and to return it to the road of Lenin and Trotsky, the road of proletarian internationalism. That is where real communists belong! ■

Cleveland St High...

Continued from page twelve

call for separate schools is a despairing response to the entrenched racism of this ugly country, accepting the racist status quo and abandoning the struggle to change it. "Separate" is not "equal" — in racist Australia such schools would be neglected, dirt-poor, third-rate prisons for black kids. Marxists stand for universal, free, secular, quality education by the state for all. This can only be achieved through struggling against racial segregation, for revolutionary integration.

It is the duty of the union movement to lead the fight to ensure that Aboriginal children are able to attend state schools. The workers movement can, and in spite of its racist Laborite leadership, has on occasion defended the rights of blacks. In 1946, when the grandmothers of today's students were fighting to get their kids into schools, black bans by the Seamens Union in support of striking Aboriginal stockmen in the Pilbara quickly won concessions from the bosses. Union bans have been effectively used in Central Australia against colour bars in public places. On 6 May, workers at the Darling Harbour construction site in Sydney struck briefly when the bosses threatened to victimise crane drivers who flew the Aboriginal Land Rights flag.

Teachers must be won to struggle for the defence of the victimised students. That will require a class struggle leadership. Greiner is continuing the previous Unsworth Labor government's onslaught on teachers — trying to increase class sizes and reduce staffing levels. Powers to expel students are being broadened. The abolition of the youth dole forces kids to stay at school, turning schools into overcrowded prisons. Posters of boxer Jeff Fenech exhort students to "play by the rules" and they want to assign cops to school yards! Aboriginals, and many others, won't salute at Greiner's proposed flag-raising ceremonies, but he's reintroducing caning to take care of that. The bourgeoisie wants a compliant, regimented population for their drive to war against "godless communism": they want kids who'll change their school uniforms for khaki at the first call of the bugle, and ask no questions.

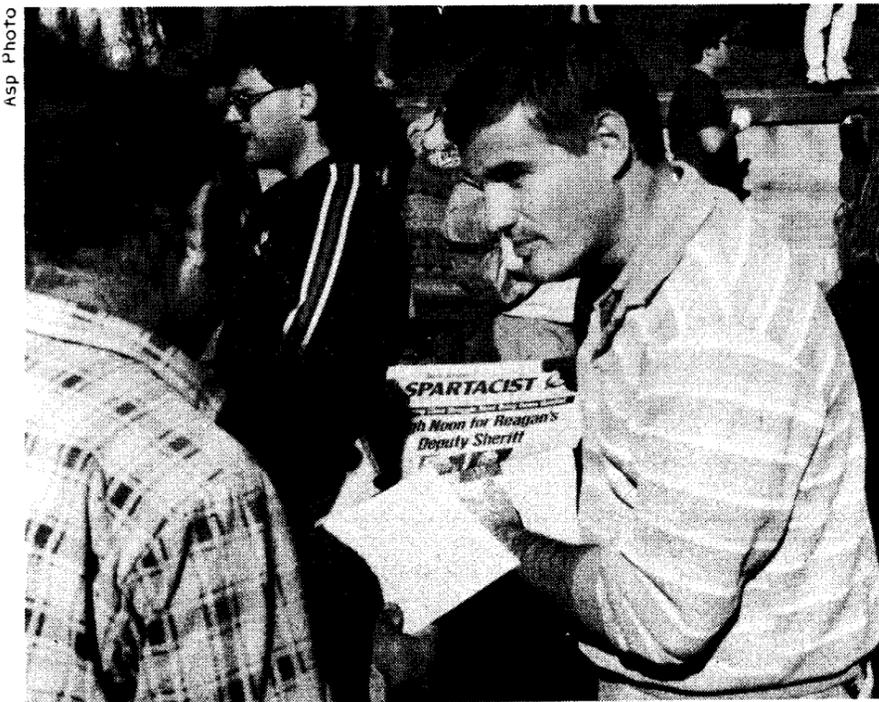
There's no shortage of potential allies for blacks. The working class is broadly disaffected by the Hawke government's union-busting and wage-cutting under

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Local	Quota (in points)	Final Totals	%
Sydney	600	742	123
Melbourne	500	574	115
At-Large	-	12	-
National Total	1100	1328	120

Congratulations to Spartacist League comrades on the success of our sub drive, especially to top seller, Andrew S from Melbourne. We are proud to have sold 518 points to publications from the international Spartacist tendency, plus 810 points to Australasian Spartacist. English language Spartacist, no 41-42, entitled "Return to the Road of Lenin and Trotsky!" particularly attracted many new subscribers. We extend a warm welcome to our new readers!



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the lie of "national prosperity." What's required is a revolutionary leadership of the labour movement, to direct this disaffection into a class-struggle offensive to smash racist reaction, to fight for full social equality for blacks, for decent schools, health care and housing, for better jobs and conditions with full employment for all, to fight for a real workers government. This means breaking the working class from its misleaders in the ALP and Trades Hall, who serve this white-racist capitalist state, and building a revolutionary party which is the tribune of all the oppressed.

It's striking that the "left" Teachers Federation tops, the bourgeois press and various guilty white liberals and "left" groups have rushed to endorse the demand for an Aboriginal school, while none are fighting to rescind the expulsions. For them, if blacks propose to separate themselves, good, let them go quietly. The Teachers Federation has volumes of "pro-Aboriginal," anti-racist verbiage on its books, but they won't defend half a dozen Aboriginal students. When confronted by the concrete reality of racism in the Cleveland St events, all their pious words aren't worth the paper they're printed on. The union tops' allegiance is to Australian capitalism, which is based on racist oppression of blacks and exclusion of Asians.



Historic 40,000-strong demonstration against racist Bicentennial, Sydney 1988 — giving notice that blacks intend to fight for their rights.

The fake left shares this program. Consider the Socialist Labour League (SLL) who, like the Socialist Workers Party, endorse separate schools. The SLL deny the special oppression of blacks, women, gays to amnesty backwardness in the working class. But the Bicentennial protests have made it impossible for even them to ignore Aboriginal oppression. So they make Aboriginals "part of the world working class" (Workers News, 19 May). They're blind to the reality that blacks are systematically excluded from the working class and condemned to subsisting on miserable "sit-down money" (social services). When blacks from Toomelah took action in self defence against racist viol-

ence last year, the SLL joined the bourgeois press, crying "riots," while we Trotskyists defended the Toomelah 17 (see Australasian Spartacist, no 120, May/June 1987). They called for a "union inquiry" into black deaths in state custody. It's a version of the whitewash Royal Commission, but the SLL want it done by Hawke's lieutenants in the labour bureaucracy. From John Pat to Eddie Murray to Lloyd Boney, we demanded: Jail the killer cops! For labour/black/minority mobilisations to stop racist terror!

FOR REVOLUTIONARY INTEGRATIONISM

The nationalist Aboriginal leadership's call for separate

schools is part of their despairing and defeatist program of separatism. They conceive Aboriginal Land Rights as the basis for so-called "self determination," with Aboriginals opting out of white society, and themselves in charge of what would be little better than bantustans. Marxists demand Aboriginal Land Rights as a minimal, democratic measure of historic justice, while recognising this cannot overcome Aboriginal oppression. In the mouths of guilt-ridden Laborites it means "out of sight, out of mind," ensuring continued poverty, race terror and misery. Likewise separate schools, reliant on meagre state funding, cannot represent independence or "self-determination." Moreover, funding is frequently used as a political lever by the state against "outspoken" blacks.

Racism cannot be reformed out of the Australian capitalist system, it must be smashed through workers revolution. Liberation for Aboriginals, who by themselves have no social power, must be tied to the struggle for liberation of the working class and all the oppressed. And for that struggle it's urgently necessary to build an internationalist, revolutionary party that fights for a racially integrated workers republic linked up with a socialist Asia/Pacific region. Then Australia will become a place worth living in for all races. ■

South Pacific...

Continued from page two

Hawke toward military intervention. The ACTU tops have loyally served Hawke's Cold War regime. His chief agent in smashing the BLF, they have also been an instrument of foreign policy, implementing the reactionary bans on the Soviet Union over KAL 007 and the more recent bans on the Polish consulate in Sydney in support of counter-revolutionary Solidarnosc. For the SLL the instrument of their program is the racist, nationalist Laborite bureaucracy. Thus their mindless strategy of demanding that the Labor "lefts," currently administering Australian imperialism with enthusiasm, form a workers government!

The SLL's nationalism, translated onto New Caledonian soil, becomes Kanak nationalism. Workers News (6 May) says:

"National liberation for Kanaky can only be achieved through the victory of the Kanak working class, backed by the villagers and small farmers, to establish a Kanak socialist republic as part of a socialist federation throughout the Pacific and South East Asia."

These high-sounding phrases conceal some important truths. First, there is virtually no Kanak working class to speak of, as the Kanaks have been systematically segregated on the land away from the most important sections of the economy. Second, what of the remainder of the population, the Wallisian Islanders, Vietnamese, Indonesians, French Polynesians, who predominantly work the nickel mines? What of the white settlers? The SLL echoes the nationalism of the FLNKS, which

grants these peoples no rights within "Kanaky."

Within the confines of these tiny South Pacific islands, where one can hardly speak of full-fledged nations given the small size of the populations and the primitiveness of the economies, it is absurd to project an isolated "liberation struggle." A decent future for the islands' peoples can be envisaged only in close connection with the proletarian struggles in Australia/New Zealand and in particular Japan, the powerhouse of Asia.

The Australian proletariat has a crucial role to play in the liberation of the oppressed peoples of the South Pacific. The bottom line to the Australian working class becoming a class for itself is intransigent struggle against its own imperialism through understanding that the enemies of Australian imperialism amongst the oppressed of the South Pacific are its allies in internationalist proletarian struggle. Last year in the midst of Hawke's militarism over Fiji, Spartacist supporter and militant ironworker/rigger Neil Florrimell, in Sydney's Cockatoo Island naval dockyard, agitated for strike action to stop the Jervis Bay being sent to Fiji. This exemplary struggle was followed by a bitter two-week ironworkers strike on the island against the sacking of Florrimell in a government/bosses attack aimed at destroying militant unionism in the service of increased anti-Soviet militarism. The struggle Florrimell undertook, against the treachery of the nationalist Laborite bureaucracy and its fake-left tail, demonstrates the path to a socialist future. A revolutionary party must be built to break the working class from the shackles of Laborism and fight for socialist revolution! For a

workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia!

FOR PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM!

In New Caledonia as Fiji, imperialism has bequeathed another intractable communal conflict. The generally privileged Caldoches (between 35 and 40 percent of the population and largely descendants of French settlers and convicts, including from the Paris Commune, and pieds noirs from Algeria), together with descendants of immigrants from Vietnam, Java and French Polynesia, comprise an anti-independence majority over the Kanaks, the pre-colonial Melanesian population.

The "socialist" leaders of the FLNKS have neo-colonial "independence" as their ultimate goal and thus it is not surprising that they have put themselves in the straitjacket of the French Gaullist Constitution according to which the only way to accede to independence is through a referendum — which to succeed must exclude other non-Kanak inhabitants from voting. Politically unwilling to mobilise for real working class action in Australia or France — or for that matter in New Caledonia — the FLNKS tragically looks to the French imperialist state as a potentially neutral arbiter and its protector against the armed bands organised by New Caledonian Gaullists and fascists. In the days preceding the colonial massacre at Ouvea, FLNKS leader Tjibaou was endorsing French imperialist chief Mitterrand as "the representative for all people who support human rights and a modern and progressive image of France" (Pacific Islands Monthly, May 1988).

In the island states of New

Caledonia, Fiji and Vanuatu there is no solution to the enormous oppression of the peoples within the confines of capitalism. The deadly logic of nationalism is lived out today in Fiji where the extreme nationalist Taukei movement, which formed the political backbone of Rabuka's CIA-connected anti-Indian coups last year, agitates for the driving out of Fiji's Indian population. The horrible crimes of imperialism cannot justify a futile and reactionary attempt to deny the existence of other minorities and decide arbitrarily which are more equal than others. Moreover in New Caledonia today every attempt to exclude any of the minority groups can only lead to a military solution where the Kanaks will be decisively beaten if not exterminated and is an invitation for further intervention by France, or by Australia which harbours ambitions to become the new master of New Caledonia. New Caledonia today desperately needs independence and equitable land redistribution. But this will not be based on tribal custom, just as the expropriation of the nickel bosses will not be a repetition of pre-colonial primitive economy. What is needed is a coalition of conscious working people of all of the ethnic groups on the islands to drive the French troops and administration into the sea, a coalition organised on the basis of a program which guarantees democratic rights to existence to all those who wish to live in an independent New Caledonia. Transcending the myriad of ethnic conflicts and breaking out of island particularism will take a revolutionary program carried out by sections of a democratic-centralist Trotskyist international fighting for socialism in the Pacific. ■



Rescind the Cleveland St High Suspensions!

Racist Victimisation of Aboriginal Students

12 JUNE — Six Aboriginal students have been indefinitely suspended from the inner-city Cleveland St high school in Sydney, and face expulsion, which would ban them from all state schools. The school principal and the new, Tory, Greiner state administration, the NSW Teachers Federation bureaucrats and most of the teachers at the school, are united in this racist victimisation and make it clear they intend to keep the students out of school.

The suspensions followed a girls touch football match (a form of rugby) against outer-suburban Engadine High. One suspended student, Fiona Anderson, explained what happened:

"Both sides were getting rough. It was getting too out of hand and the referee called the game off. Someone on the other side called us a 'bunch of black sluts' and we reacted."

— Sydney Morning Herald, 21 May

Such racist insults are fighting words. A scuffle broke out and two Cleveland St teachers, who intervened on the side of Engadine, were allegedly roughed up in the melee. The teachers called the cops — a real provocation to black youth who are routinely harassed by the racists in blue.

The following day, at a special school meeting, the principal denounced the girls for "animalistic behaviour" and "bringing shame on the school." The Aboriginal students walked out of the meeting in a dignified protest. Up to 100

students, predominantly blacks, began a solidarity strike. Only months after participating in the massive Australia Day protest — a proud and historic event, giving notice to the Hawke regime that blacks intend to fight for their rights — these students were not going to take this sort of crap.

Parents and community leaders, who went to the school to learn why their kids had been suspended, were attacked by the principal as "an angry black mob." A Teachers Federation representative wanted the school closed during the 27 May protest strike meeting, in case of "violent attacks" by Aboriginals. Minister for Education Metherell refused to meet with the suspended girls and their mothers, saying he would be "ambushed by an undefined, large and angry mob" (Sydney Morning Herald, 21 May). This violence-baiting serves to set up blacks as non-persons without rights. The real crime here is against the students, thrown out of the school system, their future denied them.

SEPARATE IS NOT EQUAL

We salute the strike by Aboriginal students and demand the suspensions be immediately rescinded! The six students must be allowed to return to Cleveland St or any state school of their choice, without fear of reprisals. Perhaps to the well-appointed Vaucluse High, where students earlier had rejected their Bicentennial medallions en masse.

The government-school-union leadership line-up on this issue



The Eastern Herald

Fiona Anderson (left) and Melita Yow Yeh (right). Two talented senior year students amongst those suspended from Cleveland St High.

highlighted the hard racial exclusionism and brutal oppression of Aboriginals. From the early 1900s to the 1940s Aboriginals were excluded from state schools, attending instead poorly funded separate schools (whose untrained teachers' task was to prepare students for menial labour). Then, with post-war assimilationist policy, the government formally opened schools to blacks. Even then it was a struggle for Aboriginals, who petitioned schools and governments and fought racist opposition to get their kids into schools. They were to be admitted only if "clean, clad and courteous." White racists continued to get blacks excluded on spurious grounds of "health risks." Some Aboriginals were able to get into schools by producing medical certificates or by gaining Exemption Certificates (particularly awarded to children of servicemen), better known as "dog licences." The NSW Teachers Handbook provided for

excluding Aboriginals on grounds of "substantial (community) opposition" until 1972! (JW Harris, Aboriginal Education in NSW, 1976)

Following the suspensions parents and community leaders set up a makeshift school in the nearby ghetto suburb of Redfern. Aboriginal activists like Lyall Munro have generalised this into a call for a separate Aboriginal school, with Aboriginal teachers and curriculum. The Cleveland St girls don't want to return to a school where they are violence-baited by the principal and whose teachers refuse to protect them against racist slurs. Who can blame them? And parents want schools their children will attend without fear of racist provocations. School is a daily battleground for black kids: only seven percent finish high school, compared with a national average of 45 percent. But the

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Colin Townsend



no credit

Spartacist contingent in demonstration on anniversary of cop murder of John Pat, Sydney 1987 (left). Aboriginal demonstration in Darwin, 1967 (above), calling for integration not assimilation and support to striking Aboriginal stockmen. Communists fight for revolutionary integration. Reformists want separatism, accept the racist capitalist order.