



Israel, UN out of the occupied territories!

Zionist terror unleashed



Terrorists with state power: Israeli 175 mm self-propelled cannon passes UN "observers" on the road to Lebanon.

Criminal PLO attack used as pretext

On 15 March a four-pronged Israeli strike force of tanks, infantry and naval bombardment backed up by massive air strikes and heavy artillery ripped into southern Lebanon. A week later the Zionist invaders had occupied almost all Lebanon south of the Litani River, which empties into the Mediterranean 15 miles inside the border. Villages, towns and Palestinian refugee camps (including Damur, 15 miles south of Beirut, whose present inhabitants are survivors of the long Syrian siege of the Tel al Zaatar camp in 1976) were reduced to rubble. Over 1000 Lebanese and Palestinian civilians have been slaughtered and more than 230,000 refugees sent scrambling for safety north toward Beirut.

This murderous assault, aimed at wiping out the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in southern Lebanon, destroyed the illusory "peace hopes" conjured by the already stymied, grand-standing "peace initiative" of Egypt's Anwar Sadat and sponsored by US imperialist chief Jimmy Carter. An embarrassed Carter rammed through the UN Security Council a "peace-keeping force" to induce Israel to withdraw. With an uneasy and

Continued on page six

Stand-off in US coal fields

US miners will remember their betrayers

For nearly four months the American coal miners waged the most magnificent strike battle in over thirty years of labour history in the United States. On 27 March the ranks of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) returned to the coal pits for the first time in 110 days. Bereft of a leadership which could provide programmatic direction to their unmatched militancy and ironclad solidarity, the strikers saw nothing to look forward to but the prospect of one more sellout proposal after another. After having thunderously rejected two such settlements, they finally accepted a contract which, if not a historic defeat for the union, was a setback nonetheless. But if the miners had not scored the brilliant victory which lay so well within their grasp, neither had the employers, the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA), succeeded in grinding them down and crushing their militant solidarity.

The wages settlement, a 31 percent increase over the next three years, was essentially what the BCOA had offered them from the start. The operators also knocked back the demand for equalisation of pensions for all retired miners and succeeded in eliminating the free medical benefits plan which the miners had won in struggle thirty years earlier (though the final settlement stipulated that only the first \$200 of medical expenses annually be paid by the workers instead of the \$700 demanded by the companies).

Fundamental issue - the right to strike

But this was not a run-of-the-mill strike over wages and fringe benefits. The coal operators entered the negotiations determined to crush the miners' militancy and win draconian no-strike measures including fines on wildcatters, sackings for strike leaders and penalties for miners who respected picket lines, the most sacred tradition

Kentucky
state
cops
harass
striking
miners.



in the coal fields. They were backed up in their determination by the Carter administration, which is pushing a coal-oriented energy policy and is vitally interested in "labour peace" in the mines. They did not succeed.

After rebelling against one no-strike agreement after another, the miners forced the government and operators to back off on their demands for an explicit no-strike "stability" clause in the contract. This was a real setback for the bosses, a demand which they had considered a "must" before the strike began. But by failing to win an explicit unlimited right to strike -- an urgent necessity in the notoriously unsafe US coal pits -- the miners remain open to renewed attacks by the companies, courts and arbitrators

in the form of an Arbitration Review Board (ARB) decision which is no less dangerous than the BCOA demands. In a ruling handed down last October the ARB held that companies had the right not only to sack picketers, but even leafletters.

It is above all their respect for the picket line which is the symbol of the miners' solidarity. Even *after* they accepted the contract, numerous miners in seven states did not return to work. The still striking mine construction workers had set up picket lines at the pit heads -- each and every one of them was observed. Picket lines are not to be crossed! It is this elementary principle -- enervated by decades of bureaucratic treachery and denigrated by the re-

Continued on page two

SL builds support for US miners

"Victory to the US miners' strike! Black ban all coal shipments to the US!" These were the slogans which concretely expressed the elementary internationalist responsibility of the Australian labour movement to its embattled class brothers overseas. And they were also the basis

Australian coal is being sent to break the strike" (*Tribune*, 27 March). Since we had notified both the CPA and the Miners Federation officers of documented evidence (see *Daily Commercial News*, 8 March) of the scab shipment, this was nothing but the CPA's own lying way of trying to get off the hook.

To their credit, Bob Rose of the Newcastle Watersiders and Merv Nixon, secretary of the South Coast Trades and Labor Council (TLC), did at least endorse the Sydney picket and attempt to move resolutions of support for the miners in their TLCs. And, though it came too late to have any real impact, the Newcastle TLC (unlike South Coast, which refused even to vote on one, according to Nixon) did pass a motion presented by Rose pledging "full support to the US miners strike" and condemning "the US government's union-bashing through its use of the Taft-Hartley Act". At a special meeting several days later, the waterfront group of unions in Newcastle voted to place a complete ban on all coal shipments leaving Newcastle during the strike intended

for the US. Both the Newcastle motion and the ban were reported in the pages of *Workers Vanguard*, newspaper of the SL/US, which was being read by some 800 militant miners during the strike.

Such elementary internationalism was completely alien to the fake-revolutionary left, mired in its reformist parochialism. The International Socialists (IS) and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) not only refused to organise any support for the miners, but even buried coverage of the strike in the inside pages of their rubbish "mass" papers. While the IS endorsed the two SL-initiated protests, IS supporters attended neither of them. The SWP, on the other hand, in a curious display of "democratic centralism", endorsed -- and boycotted -- the one in Melbourne, and in Sydney refused to endorse the action but sent two leading members to observe from a safe distance. Now that Miller is the most hated man in the US coal fields, the IS and SWP may have felt a bit embarrassed about defending their respective US affiliates' hailing of Miller's "leadership" when he was placed in office. Genuine strike support can only be carried out by those who do not tail after or apologise for strikebreakers. ■

US miners. . .

Continued from page one

formists -- which the US miners have so magnificently embodied for the working class not only of the US but internationally.

To the end the miners stuck by their historical watchword: No contract, no work! As they have done three times in the past thirty years, the UMWA ranks openly defied the return-to-work provision of the strikebreaking Taft-Hartley Act, invoked by a desperate Carter government. The small handful of miserable cowards out of the ranks of the 160,000 strikers who obeyed the Taft-Hartley order were wise enough not to try the strikers' patience by attempting to scab a second day. In fact the federal judge who granted the government injunction refused Carter's appeal to extend it after two weeks, complaining "The miners are not paying any attention to what I am doing anyway".

As a cover for their own cowardice in the face of the bourgeois state, the pro-capitalist misleaders of labour counsel the workers to observe "the law of the land" -- compulsory arbitration, court rulings, anti-union legislation -- *the law of the bosses*. By their defiance of Taft-Hartley (like the Australian workers' defiance of penal powers during the Clarrie O'Shea strike in 1969), the miners demonstrated that "the law" is nothing but a reflection of the immediate balance of class forces. As the miners contemptuously tore up the injunction notices, Carter's only alternative was to resort to the bosses' ultimate strikebreaking weapon -- the mailed fist which

stands behind sanctimonious "legality". Carter hesitated -- all too aware that sending federal troops in to break the strike might very well have unleashed a civil war in the coal fields.

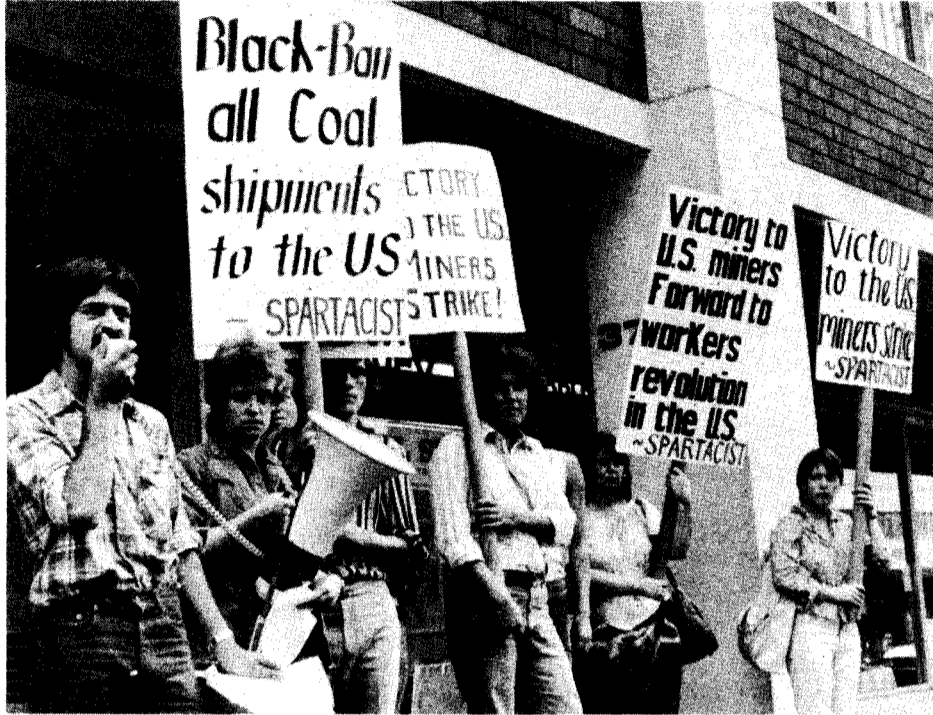
"Not only miners work in the pits!"

Despite the outcome, the miners' struggle will dominate US class relations for a good time to come. With their impressive display of muscle, they scared the hell out of the US ruling class and demonstrated that the bourgeoisie's drive to reverse the gains made by organised labour in the last forty years (demanding what the 28 March *Financial Review* referred to as "givebacks") can be stopped dead in its tracks. Their impact on the consciousness of the long-quiet US working class is already being felt in small ways. Shortly after the miners voted to return to work, New York City's municipal transit workers, preparing for a strike of their own, hooted down their union bureaucrats and carried placards reading, "Not only miners work in the pits!"

Though the encrusted, reactionary labour bureaucracy was able to head off any solidarity strike actions, the extent of rank-and-file sympathy for the miners was revealed by the huge financial donations made by various unions (even George Meany, who openly and arrogantly endorsed Carter's strikebreaking measures, felt compelled to toss in \$75,000), the widespread factory gate collections and food contributions, labour support rallies in a number of cities and, near the end, by the West Coast watersiders' union's decision (which was never implemented) to call a one-day national protest strike against the Taft-Hartley injunction.

Fake lefts allied with Miller

The coal miners did not lack perseverance, determination and valour. What they lacked was a leadership willing to stand up to the federal



SL-initiated demonstration outside US consulate, Sydney supports US miners' strike. A Sp photo

for two united-front protests initiated and organised by the Spartacist League (SL), the only active demonstrations of support for the US miners' strike in Australia. The pickets were held outside the US consulates in Sydney and Melbourne on 14 and 15 March, respectively -- two days after Carter invoked strikebreaking Taft-Hartley return-to-work orders against the miners.

The necessity for a trade-union ban as a concrete measure of solidarity was clear from bourgeois press accounts that the US energy monopolies, intent on circumventing the miners' success in cutting back domestic coal supplies, were on the lookout for emergency shipments of coal from New South Wales. Indeed, in the course of investigating these reports the SL discovered that a ship (the *Maratha Mariner*) had left Port Kembla laden with coal bound for the southern United States (Mobile, Alabama) on 8 March, without any trade-union action even attempted against it.

Nor was this simply an oversight. Most of the trade-union officials contacted by the SL in the course of building the support actions expressed sympathy for the miners but were not about to do a thing to stop scab coal, often claiming they would act only if officially requested by the US miners union -- "safe" enough since, as they knew, Mineworkers head Arnold Miller wanted to let scab coal move! And the social-democratic Communist Party (CPA) went out of its way to alibi them. Not only refusing to endorse or participate in the protest pickets, the CPA also printed a veiled attack on the SL's efforts to mobilise trade-union action against any further scab shipments by offering an anonymous Miners Federation bureaucrat's denial of "reports that



UMWA head Arnold Miller, hated in the coal fields.

government and say: No! The strike confirmed once again that those union "leaders" who place their confidence in the "neutrality" of the capitalist state and its politicians must betray. Five years ago, the Spartacist League/US (SL/US) had this to say of Arnold Miller's rise to the presidency of the UMWA, financed by Democratic Party liberals and facilitated by the intervention of Nixon's Labor Department into the UMWA:

"Scum like [former UMWA president Tony] Boyle must be thrown out by the organized and conscious union ranks, not by the capitalist government and courts, whose interests lie not in democratizing them, but in destroying them..."

"By establishing Arnold Miller in office, directly dependent on the liberal bourgeoisie and the state apparatus, the government sought to ensure that no real change would be effected in the relationship of forces between the miners and the coal operators." (*Workers Vanguard*, March 1973)

The title of that article was "Labor Department Wins Mine Workers Election". Today it is all too clear that this same Labor Department, doing the bidding of the BCOA, was dictating orders to the UMWA tops not only throughout the recent strike, but throughout Miller's term in office, as he squashed one wildcat after another.

But aside from the SL/US, virtually the entire

Continued on page six

Australasian SPARTACIST

a monthly organ of revolutionary Marxism for the re-birth of the Fourth International published by Spartacist Publications for the Central Committee of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand, section of the international Spartacist tendency

EDITORIAL BOARD: Chris Korwin
Len Meyers (managing editor)
David Reynolds
Inga Smith (production manager)
David Strachan (Melbourne correspondent)

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Roberto D'Amico

GPO Box 3473, Sydney, NSW, 2001
(02) 235-8115

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Three dollars for eleven issues (one year).

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST is registered at the GPO, Sydney for posting as a publication - Category B.

Printed by Maxwell Printing Company Pty Ltd, 862 Elizabeth Street, Waterloo, NSW 2017.

Sub drive success!

Australasian Spartacist's first public subscription drive, covering the month of March, went over the top by a substantial margin, scoring 137 percent of the national quota of 200. Regional trips to Canberra, Wollongong, Newcastle, and the LaTrobe Valley contributed strongly to the success, as did university sales. The area breakdown of the results is as follows:

	Quota	Total	Percent of quota
Melbourne	60	83½	139
Sydney	140	179	128
At Large	-	12	-
Total	200	274½	137

WSL left wing, London Spartacist Group fuse Spartacist League founded in Britain

On the weekend of 4-5 March the London Spartacist Group fused with the Trotskyist Faction (TF), recently split from Alan Thornett's Workers Socialist League (WSL). With this fusion the British supporters of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) constituted the Spartacist League/Britain (SL/B), sympathising section of the iSt.

The fusion represents more than simply a doubling of the cadre grouped around the Trotskyist program of the iSt in Britain. The TF brought with it the valuable experience not only of its accumulated years in the British left but also of its factional struggle within the right-centrist WSL. In the course of that fight it had to confront the cliquism rampant in the British left as it fought against and split from a small clique which had formed within its ranks. Disgusted with Thornett's parochial workerism, the 24 supporters of the TF walked out of the WSL's conference in mid-February. Their number included two National Committee members, several regional and local organisers and a layer of writers for *Socialist Press* (which may collapse as a result). The SL/B has been founded with real if modest roots in the British left milieu -- an important stride forward for the iSt as it seeks to transform itself into the International Trotskyist League in the struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International.

The presence of comrades from twelve countries, including representatives of the German, French, Australian, Chilean, American and Canadian sections, strikingly vindicated the commitment to internationalism which led to this historic conference. From its origins in 1961 as the Revolutionary Tendency of the US Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the iSt has struggled to overcome its initial, involuntarily imposed national isolation, committing significant parts of the precious cadre and material resources of pre-existing sections, even at the expense of important national priorities.

A spokesman for the Interim Secretariat of the iSt greeted the formation of this new section, but pointed soberly to the necessary task of further extending our tendency internationally:

"With all of the pleasures, apprehensions and enthusiasms that I experience in seeing this conference being convened, it has a bitter-

sweet component to it because our tendency has a certain imbalance. This kind of imbalance I first noticed at the end of the 1950s, where the split between the International Secretariat and the International Committee seemed to be between the Europeans and the English-speakers ... and you notice they have the same re-establishment of that old division after nearly ten years of faction fighting -- that's the agreement between the SWP and the French. And that is of course quite deadly. You can only know the world if you are in it and if you are confined to only a section of it, however big, powerful or broad, you are objectively set up for deformations."

The Spartacist tendency has uniquely struggled to re-establish "Russian Bolshevik" norms internationally, the speaker noted. The Spartacist League/US adopted the original Bolshevik term for the leading party body -- the Central Committee (CC), as opposed to "national committee" -- and corrected other such nationally delimited errors as the "nominating commission" adopted by the then Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party in the 1940s, returning to the standard Leninist practice in which the out-going CC nominates a new CC slate to national conferences.

The tasks confronting the SL/B are huge. Not only is Britain one of the most important countries in Europe, it is also the centre of a former empire which offers important opportunities for the recruitment of Trotskyist cadre from a host of different nationalities. All the more important is it then to confront and break from the particularly corrosive parochialism of the Labourist British left milieu. That the TF was able to do so is evidenced by the fact that it recruited three of the four members of the WSL's Irish Commission as well as members of its Turkish group.

That the WSL itself was not is evidenced by its history. When it was expelled in late 1974 from the Workers Revolutionary Party it represented the first serious internal challenge to Gerry Healy for many years. But it was WSL's workerist philistinism, as expressed in its liquidationist activity within the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement, a minimalist WSL front group, which first impelled the comrades of the TF to cohere into an internal opposition. They soon extended and developed their critique to reject any form of electoral support to the Labour Party while in coalition with the Liberals and developed an analysis of Healy's degeneration from an initially flawed opposition to Pabloism into a foaming apologist for the likes of Libyan butcher Qaddafi.

The founding conference document, "Tasks in Britain", traced this successful fusion to the "political attentions given to Britain from the time of the emergence of the tendency in political conflict with the Healy leadership of the International Committee". The fusion is a vindication of the London Spartacist Group's propagandistic orientation to the ostensibly Trotskyist centrist organisations as an aspect of its "central responsibility to recruit an indigenous cadre grouping":

"The particular programmatic questions brought to the fore by the conflict with the British centrists were the iSt's intransigent opposition to Labourism (currently most sharply expressed by our opposition to extending critical support to the Labour Party during the Social Contract or the Liberal-Labour coalition) and the iSt's equally implacable opposition to nationalism (most forcefully presented in this country by our uniquely proletarian revolutionary position on Ireland). Furthermore, the very composition of the group and the American newspaper, *Workers Vanguard*, that it sold were a challenge to the narrow parochialism of the British left, while its highly propagandistic mode of work was a challenge to the prevailing subordination of programmatic considerations to opportunism, cliquism, and manoeuvrism. As we grow in Britain we will seek with relish, as revolutionaries and internationalists, to find new ways of challenging opportunism and parochialism."

We hail the founding of the Spartacist League/Britain. Forward to a British Trotskyist party! Forward to the rebirth of the Fourth International! ■

Statement of Trotskyist Faction

(At WSL conference, 18-19 February, 1978)

The debate at this conference has exposed in the clearest light the majority's hostility to the highest task of Marxists today: the construction of an international cadre hardened in the fight for a communist programme.

The counterposition of the Bolshevik position of the Trotskyist Faction to the hardened right centrism of the central leadership has brought forth another shameful defence of the majority's Pabloite attachment to the Labour Party, their capitulationist attitude to nationalism, and in particular Irish nationalism, their all-pervading economism and minimalism and their parochialism.

It is apparent that the fight for the re-creation of the Fourth International can only take place in implacable opposition to this parody of Trotskyism. Recognising the fundamental divergence between our faction and all other tendencies within the Workers' Socialist League that has been confirmed this weekend we resign from the WSL.

We intend to immediately open discussions with the international Spartacist tendency, with the aim of moving toward a fused organisation. Forward to the British section of the reformed Fourth International!

Signers:

1. Eanice Aktar, WSL 1978, Liverpool Branch.
2. Richard Brookes, I.S. 1973-75, WSL 1975-78, Oxford General Branch.
3. Carolyn Dixon, WSL 1977-78, Birmingham Branch.
4. E., WSL 1976-78, London Area Committee, Turkish Group, Hackney Branch.
5. F., WSL 1976-78, Turkish Group, Hackney Branch.
6. Alastair Green, I.S. 1973-74; Left Opposition (ex-I.S.); RCG 1975; founder member WSL, 1975-78, West Midlands Area Committee, Birmingham Branch chairman, convenor student fraction, editorial board Socialist Press.
7. Clive Hills, WRP 1973-76, editorial board Keep Left (paper of the Young Socialists, youth group of the WRP); WSL 1976-78, Oxford Student/Trent Branch.
8. Alan Holford, I.S. 1971-73 (expelled); Revolutionary Opposition (ex-I.S.); 1972-74; founder member RCG 1974-75, Political Committee; founder member WSL 1975-78, National Committee, West Midlands Area chairman, Birmingham Branch secretary, convenor of Women's Commission.
9. Dewi Jones, WSL 1976-78, Liverpool Branch.
10. Mark Kinker, WSL 1977-78.
11. Leena, Maoist organisations (Asia) 1972-74; WSL 1977-78.
12. Paul Lannigan, SLL 1968-72, Derry Branch, Northern Ireland, Irish National Committee (1968-70), full-time organiser Liverpool SLL/YS (1970-72); WSL 1977-78, Irish Commission, West London Branch.
13. Cath McMillan, WSL 1977-78, Coventry Branch.
14. Joe Quigley, Communist Party of Great Britain, 1969-70; I.S. 1970-74 (expelled); Left Faction, Left Opposition (both of I.S.); RCG 1975; founder member WSL 1975-78, National Committee, North West Area secretary, Manchester Branch secretary, Irish Commission.
15. Jim Saunders, I.S. 1974-76; WSL 1976-78, London Area Committee, West London Branch secretary, Irish Commission, editorial board Socialist Press, Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement, organising committee.
16. Mike Shortland, Young Communist League 1970-73; IMG 1975-76; WSL 1977-78, London Area Committee.
17. Robert Styles, WSL 1976-78.
18. Caroline Walton, WSL 1977-78, Central London Branch.
19. Jo Woodward, I.S. 1972-74 (expelled); Left Opposition (ex-I.S.); WSL 1976-78, Coventry Branch.
20. Tim Woodward, I.S. 1972-74 (expelled); Left Opposition (ex-I.S.); WSL 1976-78, West Midlands Area Committee, Coventry Branch chairman, convenor NALGO union fraction.
21. John Zucker, WSL 1976-78; Birmingham Branch.

Another comrade, not a member of the Trotskyist Faction, resigned together with the faction and submitted the appended statement:

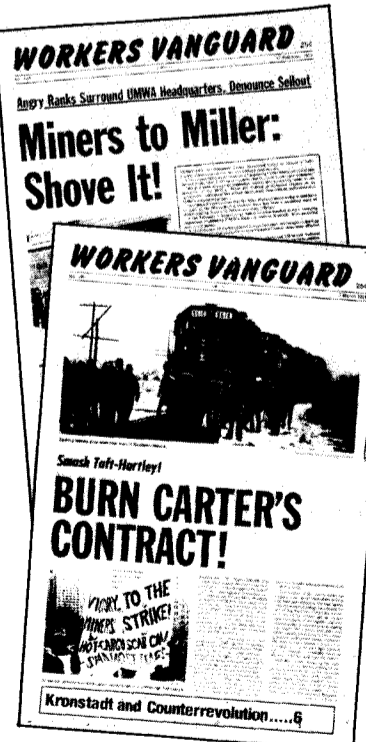
Although not a member of the Trotskyist Faction, and with some reservations, I supported their main perspectives document, and I stand by that. The discussion and voting at this conference have confirmed for me that the WSL is not to budged from what I regard as its fundamentally wrong positions, and I therefore also resign.

Signed:

P., WRP 1974-75, expelled as part of the Thornett opposition; WSL 1975-78, editorial board Socialist Press, London Area Committee.

WSL: Workers Socialist League
WRP: Workers Revolutionary Party,
formerly the SLL; Socialist Labour League
YS: Young Socialists, youth group of the WRP
RCG: Revolutionary Communist Group
I.S.: International Socialists,
now the SWP; Socialist Workers Party

Workers Vanguard "tells the truth"



That's what a number of US miners have been saying. In recent months, the US coal fields were uniquely the hot spot of the US class struggle. And Workers Vanguard was there, covering the strike directly from the mining areas, providing a program for victory. That was what made some 800 miners a week buy and read WV during the strike. During the month of April, we are offering packets of 5 WVs with articles on the 1978 miners' strike and its background (including "Labor Department Wins Mine Workers' Election", March 1973).

Subscribe to
Workers
Vanguard

One year
(48 issues) -
\$20.00 (air)
\$5.00 (surface)

Order from/pay to:
Spartacist Publishing Co,
Box 1377 GPO,
New York, NY, 10001 USA

Special Offer (April only)

Workers Vanguard Miners'
Strike Packet \$1.00
(free on request with subscrip-
tion to Australasian Spartacist)

Order from/pay to:
Spartacist Publications
GPO Box 3473,
Sydney, NSW, 2001.

Military re-appoints dictator Suharto amid student Indonesia: twelve years at

Twelve years after the brutal slaughter which choked Indonesia's cities and countryside with the corpses of some 500,000 to a million workers and peasants, the military dictatorship of General Suharto which it brought to power is still there. But though Suharto was unanimously "re-elected" president of the republic for another five years at last month's People's Consultative Congress (MPR), his regime is faced with widespread discredit and dissatisfaction. For several months prior to the MPR Suharto was the target of active, albeit relatively small-scale, student protests and rumblings of criticism from higher echelons, most notably the Muslim political establishment and a cabal of "dissident" generals.

If the visible opposition to the generals today appears as narrowly based, elite-centred and moderate, this is no measure of the pent-up, massive popular discontent. Rather it is a reflection of the enormity of the holocaust in 1965. The bloodbath of 1965-66 is not as evocative to many leftists as the Chilean coup of 1973, although both resulted from the same criminal popular-front alliances pursued by Stalinist parties, and left in their wake equally brutal dictatorships. The Indonesian slaughter, however, resulted in a proletariat which was not merely beheaded but crushed. Leaderless and disoriented, the toiling masses of Indonesia have yet to recover from the disaster paved by the cringing policy of "national unity" (*gotong royong*) with the "progressive" bourgeoisie which was practised by the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI).

With some three million members, the PKI was the largest Communist Party outside Russia and China. The youth and women's affiliates had similar numbers while the PKI-controlled All-Indonesian Central Organisation of Trade Unions (SOBSI) claimed three and a half million members, encompassing over 60 percent of the organised labour movement. As well the PKI peasant association represented some nine million peasants -- all this out of a total population of slightly more than a hundred million. Yet in a few short months the PKI and its organisations were literally immolated in a counterrevolutionary bloodbath whose scope and ferocity have few historical parallels. As the army hunted down PKI cadre and supporters in the cities, a nightmarish White Terror enveloped the countryside. Throughout the archipelago and particularly in the PKI strongholds in central Java and Bali, village after village was razed and men, women, and children hacked to pieces by the military and roving bands of Islamic reactionaries. Throughout this savage massacre the Stalinist PKI leadership was utterly helpless, pledging its eternal loyalty to a "progressive" national bourgeoisie whose army was pulverising them out of existence.

More than anything else it was the 1965 coup which locked in Southeast Asia, securing Indonesia as a reactionary bastion in the region for a grateful US imperialism -- and Australian jackal imperialism -- and allowing a section of the US bourgeoisie to contemplate withdrawal from Vietnam. Besides being the fifth most populous state in the world and (with the partial exception of Vietnam) the most powerful state in Southeast Asia, Indonesia straddles Japan's vital trade lifelines to Europe and the Near East oil fields and is itself an important arena for neo-colonialist exploitation, particularly for the US and Japanese imperialists.

Fearful that the slightest relaxation of repression may unleash the seething hatred of the

Indonesian masses, the junta has kept tens of thousands of leftists imprisoned without trial in prison camps throughout the country. While the regime claims that only 21,461 political prisoners remain, Amnesty International estimated that there were between 50 to 100 thousand detainees in 1977. And the junta has made it clear that many thousands of "die-hard" prisoners, including PKI members, SOBSI militants and many of Indonesia's outstanding post-war cultural and artistic figures, will rot away in the "New Order" jails for the rest of their lives.

In response to international criticism and as a gesture to international bourgeois public opinion, the regime "released" some 10,000 "B-category" political prisoners in late December, only to send them off to remote "resettlement" areas, subject to "control and guidance by the government until their loyalty is assured". Yet this sham "amnesty" was sufficient "improvement" in the Indonesian "human rights situation" for US president Carter to promise hefty new arms shipments -- a telling illustration that Carter's "human rights crusade" is but a hypocritical Cold War drive directed against the Soviet Union.

Regional rivalries and government corruption

Aside from the backwardness and the unrelieved and abject poverty of the masses, most of whom subsist on little more than \$120 per capita income, Indonesia represents a complicated social matrix. Though the great bulk of the population is Muslim, significant differences exist in interpretation, reinforcing regional tensions as, for example, between the more orthodox Sumatra and the still strongly animist-influenced Java. Side by side with the overcrowded, relatively homogeneous millions of Java are thousands of other island communities with distinct dialects. While it is possible to talk of an (overwhelmingly Java-centred) Indonesian bourgeoisie, Indonesian nationalism and national economy, in many areas the terms are hardly relevant outside the main trading and administrative centres. Regional inequalities and Javanese predominance in the central apparatus fire secessionist movements and sentiments, like the sporadic and politically ill-defined regional revolts of the 1950s, which testify to the incomplete character of unifying national experiences like the Dutch colonial rule and the war of independence.

The current unrest came to the fore on 20 January, when the regime responded to the escalating wave of student protests and criticism from military "dissidents" and the press with a sudden crackdown in which over 300 students were arrested, seven leading newspapers banned and the military critics told to shut up or else. Within a month the newspapers were back on the streets after their chastened editors had pledged to "always maintain the good reputation and authority of the government and national leadership". But protest rallies and study strikes continued, particularly at the prestigious Bandung Institute of Technology. In Jakarta, where rumours of student deaths at the hands of the rampaging troops are widespread, the troops were used to shut down the University of Indonesia and other nearby campuses.

Broadly speaking the opposition to the regime has come from four overlapping groupings, all of which continue to express their loyalty to the post-1965 "New Order" and whose main focus of attack is the rampant corruption. In addition to the students and the military critics, known as the "Sick at Heart Brigade", there is dissatisfaction among the petty-bourgeois, professional civilian strata, with figures like the "civil liberties" lawyer, Adnan Buyung Nasution, representing the more liberal populist wing. Similar dissatisfaction exists among the country's sizable Muslim political and social establishment -- itself divided between more modernist, populist currents and orthodox advocates of a theocratic state.

Before the MPR gathering the security chief,

Admiral Sudomo, decreed a "Silent Week": "essentially an appeal and suggestion to the people to help secure the situation and make the MPR session a success". Lest the "suggestion" be misunderstood, the military regime banned all political rallies and meetings for the duration of the meeting and flooded the streets of Jakarta with troops.

"Sick at heart" -- but ruthless butchers

The MPR itself was a stage-managed farce. Of the 920 assembly delegates most are government appointees, while the 360 elected assemblymen are mainly army and GOLKAR (the official party) men who won their seats in last May's grossly fraudulent elections. 165 are officers of general rank or equivalent. But even the orchestrated *mufakat* (consensus) of the MPR was temporarily unsettled by the announcement, shortly before the opening session, that Hamengku Buwono, the sultan of Jogjakarta and an important civilian leader of the regime, would not continue as vice-president. His replacement by former foreign minister Adam Malik rather than a military hardliner was probably intended as a sop to the anti-corruption, reformist elements of the regime, though immediately following the MPR Suharto increased the number of military men in the cabinet from four to eleven.

The "Sick at Heart Brigade" consists of retired or non-active senior ABRI (Armed Forces) officers like the former defence minister and independence war hero, AH Nasution (not the lawyer), independence war hero Bung Tomo and former commanders of the celebrated Siliwangi Division (prominent for its brutality during the coup) like Kemal Idris and former ASEAN secretary-general HR Dharsono. While men like Nasution and Dharsono may not have been especially close to Suharto since the coup, they are all fundamentally identified with the "New



PKI before 1965: support to Sukarno led masses into bloodbath.

Order" and were often directly and intimately involved in the massacres -- Nasution was then ABRI chief of staff. In fact Dharsono and Idris were staunchly anti-Sukarno hawks who wanted to carry the purge farther than Suharto. These butchers are not interested in restoring democracy but in stabilising the situation by purging the junta of the more corrupt elements and introducing a less overtly military regime.

Before the 20 January crackdown, members of the "Sick at Heart Brigade" were popular speakers at student meetings. At one such meeting called to commemorate the "66 Generation" -- the Muslim student activists who played an important auxiliary role in the round-ups and massacres of the time -- Dharsono summed up the feelings of the "heartsick" ones:

"... our enemies in 1945 were the colonialists. In 1966 they were the communists. And now, although we have no enemies, we have differing opinions that should be overcome ... the people would obey out of fear not love." (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3 February 1978)

Dharsono should know all about obedience through fear as he was commander of the Siliwangi Division when that outfit was "purifying" central Java of peasant supporters of the PKI in 1966. However his audience of students, later to be described by the regime as "subversives", re-

Reply to the Guardian

The Stalin School of Falsification Revisited

Includes:

- ◆ The Permanent Revolution
- ◆ Socialism in One Country
- ◆ The Third Chinese Revolution
- ◆ Mao's China: From Stalin to Nixon

75c

A Spartacus Youth League Pamphlet

Order from/pay to: Spartacist League
GPO Box 3473, Sydney, 2001

Unrest after the bloodbath

sponded to this "criticism" with cries of "Long live Pak [father] Dharsono" and "Long live ABRI" -- a telling illustration of the current political consciousness of the students.

Originally beginning as vague protests against corruption and the blatant rigging of the last "election", student anger has increasingly focused on Suharto, with calls for his removal by "constitutional means" -- in the context of the "New Order" simply a call for a less discredited and corrupt figure in charge. Another focus of protest has been the ostentatious luxury and business activities of "certain officials' wives", a barely disguised attack on Madam

ter of the Indonesian student movement is not surprising. Within Indonesia the tertiary student population numbers only 160,000, carefully vetted and often the children of the "New Order" elite. Though a revolutionary party would look to recruit individuals from such strata, the role of the students in Indonesia graphically confirms that students are one of the most volatile sections of the petty bourgeoisie and not the automatic force for revolution they are made out to be by "student vanguard" enthusiasts like the Pabloite United Secretariat/Socialist Workers Party.

The main responsibility for the near total passivity of the working masses in the face of dictatorship and grinding oppression rests squarely on the leadership and policies of the PKI. Prior to 1965 the PKI pursued the classic Stalinist two-stage strategy of revolution. Temporarily useful to Sukarno as a counterweight to the aggressively rightist ABRI generals, the PKI pledged eternal loyalty to the "Great Leader of the Revolution" and abandoned all semblance of political independence in exchange for high-level manoeuvres to join the capitalist government. PKI leader Aidit exhorted the cadre to place "the interests of the class and the party below the national interest" as the party called for the strengthening of the bourgeois state with the slogan of

"Help the Police" and agitated for the jailing of Sukarno's liberal and Islamic critics -- in the very prisons which were later to hold them. While the masses reeled from rocketing inflation and economic collapse the PKI refused to launch a campaign against the rising prices, preferring to coin idiot slogans for the demagogic Sukarno like "Our hearts are harder than our hunger".

Throughout this period the Maoist bureaucracy in China, with whom the PKI had aligned in the Sino-Soviet dispute, had uncritically hailed the PKI's course. Mao himself proclaimed that the PKI leaders had "creatively applied and developed Marxism-Leninism in the light of the revolutionary practice in its own country" (quoted in Simon, *The Broken Triangle*). Such praise fitted in snugly with Peking's own ardent wooing of Sukarno as an "anti-imperialist" statesman, though his "anti-imperialist" credentials were no more solid than were those of Chiang Kai-shek in the 1920s. When, after the failure of the 30 September Movement -- an attempted coup against the rightist generals by more junior officers loyal to Sukarno -- the army moved against the PKI, Sukarno willingly joined the witchhunt (see "How Maoist strategy sabotaged the Indonesian Revolution" in the Spartacus Youth League pamphlet, *China's Alliance with US Imperialism*).

Lashed by the murderous repression and demoralised by the failure of their policies, the post-1965 PKI splintered into a pro-Peking and a much smaller pro-Moscow wing, with leading cadre dispersed in exile in Moscow, China and Albania. The pro-Peking elements issued some "self-criticism" of the "old" leadership for not adopting an "independent attitude toward Sukarno" and not preparing for eventual "armed struggle". But an independent attitude toward the bourgeoisie was impossible within the framework of the menshevik/Stalinist conception of "two-stage revolution", which demanded an *alliance* with the national bourgeoisie, with Sukarno!

The 1965 coup demonstrated forcefully, and all too tragically, that Maoism's claim to be more "revolutionary" than Moscow-style Stalinism was false to the core. Now, with Peking's shift to a vociferously anti-Soviet policy and its support to ASEAN (justified by the "Three Worlds Theory"), it would only be logical for the Chinese Stalinists to come out openly in support of those who butchered the PKI. They are, after all, a bulwark against "Soviet hegemonism" in the region.

The PKI still retains widespread support and

Butcher Suharto with wife, "Madam Ten Percent".



sympathy among the Indonesian masses and is even able to maintain some organised activity -- the extent of which can be roughly assumed to lie somewhere between the absurdly exaggerated claims of organised resistance made by some PKI supporters in exile, and the military's official (deliberately low) claim that only 200 PKI militants were arrested last year for being active. However the already existent disorientation of the remaining cadre must be all the greater with the cycle of purges in China following Mao's death and the resultant increasing fragmentation of the Maoist movement internationally. But all variants of Stalinism are counterrevolutionary. All wings of the PKI leadership stand ready to repeat the disastrous strategy of Aidit.

Permanent Revolution, not "two-stage" betrayal

The way forward for the Indonesian working masses is not through a renewed search for *rotong goyong* but along the road of the Russian Revolution. The "progressive" bourgeois government of Kerensky and his Menshevik hangers-on was no more capable than Sukarno of solving the tasks of the bourgeois revolution. It was the October Revolution, the seizure of power by the working class led by the Bolsheviks, which brought land to the tiller, liberated the oppressed nationalities of the Czarist empire and destroyed Russia's alliance with Western imperialism. As Lenin wrote, "in order to consolidate the achievements of the bourgeois democratic revolution for the peoples of Russia, we were obliged to go farther, and we did go farther. We solved the problems of the bourgeois democratic revolution in passing, as a 'by-product' of our main and genuinely proletarian-revolutionary, socialist activities" ("Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution").

Only by repudiating the PKI's stagist strategy in favour of the Trotskyist program of Permanent Revolution can the tasks of the democratic revolution be solved. A just and democratic solution to the national and communal differences permeating Indonesian society will be found only within the framework of a socialist federation of the Indo-Malay archipelago, which will recognise the right of self-determination as it applies to national groupings and allow for the establishment of autonomous regions in other instances. The PKI's support to Javanese-centred Indonesian nationalism is a roadblock to uniting the toiling masses in struggle against their common oppressors. Moreover, it denies the possibility of forging links with the ranks of Chinese and other non-Indonesian proletarians in the region.

A socialist Indonesia, free of the grip of imperialism, would be capable of tapping its vast natural riches to develop agriculture and industry, and eliminate the poverty which chains the Indonesian masses. But as demonstrated in 1965, and again in Chile in 1973, the Stalinist road to "socialism" leads only to the betrayals of the popular front. The Indonesian proletariat must have emblazoned across its banner: not "national unity", but the unity of the toiling masses against their exploiters. Only then, under the leadership of a Trotskyist vanguard party, will they be able to avenge the martyrs of 1965. ■



Rightist demonstration after 1965 coup. Military mobilised students as an auxiliary to the slaughter of more than 500,000 workers and peasants.

Suharto (whose notoriety for corrupt business dealings has earned her the title, Madam Ten Percent). Given the dominant role of the Islamic students society, the Himpunan Mahasiswa Indonesia, in the protests, the attack on "wives" is a convenient appeal both to populist, reformist resentment against nepotism and to reactionary orthodox sentiment for reinforcing women's chattel status, for a return of the veil. While there are no indications of "Marxist" or PKI influence amongst the students, many do regard themselves as socialists. But the "socialism" espoused is no different in kind from that of a variety of nationalist demagogues in the Islamic world ranging from Pakistan's Bhutto, the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Libya's radical Islamic reactionary dictator Qaddafi.

The present bout of student protest is not the first. The so-called Malari riots which shook Jakarta in January 1974 during the visit of the then Japanese prime minister Kakuei Tanaka combined characteristics of a desperate plebeian upheaval with a chauvinist pogrom against the sizable Chinese population. The theme of racist anti-Chinese xenophobia was not only an important component of the slaughter in 1965-66 but also continues today in student attacks on Chinese businessmen as one of the prime sources of corruption. When high school students staged their own anti-corruption demonstration before the MPR opening they pointedly held it in the Chinese quarter of Jakarta.

The contradictory and extremely narrow charac-




Students vs soldiers, 1974: "Malari riots" in Jakarta.

Details
the treacherous foreign policy of Maoism, in Indonesia, Ceylon, Eritrea, Iran, Europe, Angola, Portugal, etc.

Counterposes
to Stalinism the proletarian internationalism of Lenin, Trotsky and the international Spartacist tendency.

one dollar

Order from/pay to:
Spartacist League
GPO Box 3473
Sydney, 2001



CHINA'S ALLIANCE WITH U.S. IMPERIALISM

A SPARTACUS YOUTH LEAGUE PAMPHLET \$1

US SWP knifes miners' struggle

Pursuing its support to the policies of United Mine Workers (UMWA) president Arnold Miller to the bitter end, the US Socialist Workers Party (US SWP), co-thinkers of the equally social-democratic Australian SWP, has attempted to cover for the openly despised Miller even in the current strike, seeing this as a grand opportunity to ingratiate itself with an ever-broader layer of union bureaucrats - to impress them with its capacity to betray even in the midst of the most militant US labour struggle in years. Its behaviour in the miners' strike is the most blatant proof yet that its "turn to the unions" means covering for the bureaucrats and outright sabotage of vitally needed militant labour action. And the refusal of its local affiliate to support any sort of concrete solidarity action for the US miners (see "SL builds support for US miners", this issue) demonstrates, albeit on a more modest scale, that its claims to class-struggle politics are no less spurious.

When Miller first ran for president of the UMWA in 1972, under the sponsorship of the US Labor Department, the US SWP supported him. When Miller presented the UMWA ranks with a sellout contract in 1974 - a contract which the militant miners were burning in the coal fields while their misleaders were negotiating in Washington - the US SWP's *Militant* (20 December 1974) came out in favour of the sellout with a headline declaring "How to Defend Gains (!) in New Miners Pact".

In the current strike, the SWP became - with the sole exception of the reactionary Meanyite leadership of the AFL-CIO (US equivalent of the ACTU) - the most rabid opponents of sympathy protest strikes to aid the miners in the entire US labour movement.

The SWP's most shameless and disgusting performance was in San Francisco in the second week of March. The International Executive Board of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU - covering the West Coast wharves) had voted for a one-day coast-wide dock shutdown in opposition to the use of the strikebreaking Taft-Hartley law against the miners, and called on the rest of labour to join it. When this motion - a potentially significant break in the bureaucracy's anti-strike front - was presented to a meeting of Bay Area labour leaders who had earlier hosted a support rally for the miners' strike, the SWP spokesmen present were in the forefront of the most right-wing, conservative and cowardly labour bureaucrats who opposed it. While supporters of the Stalinist Communist Party (CP) abstained on the motion in embarrassment, the SWPers loudly argued and voted against it, in effect calling the ILWU motion "ultra-left"! Incredibly, these "yellow socialists" thus took up a position to the right of a major national union.

Wherever pressure built up amongst the ranks for militant action in defence of the miners, as in the strategically central United Auto Workers (UAW), the SWP rushed to aid the bureaucrats. For example, militants in the Detroit Dodge Trucks UAW Local 140 succeeded in polarising a union meeting around a motion for a work stoppage of organised labour, despite the bureaucrats' efforts, and demanded a division. As supporters and opponents of the motion lined up against opposite walls for the vote, who was left sitting alone in the middle, furiously caucusing, but three supporters of the SWP's mis-named *Militant*! Finally scurrying to vote for the (narrowly defeated) motion, they later admitted to its sponsors that they didn't really support it anyway. As one Dodge Truck worker put it, "They voted their embarrassment, not their program".

Throughout the strike the *Militant* was positively shameless in slanting its coverage of the coal strike to apologise for the Miller bureaucracy. Nowhere noting even in passing the miners' roving pickets which slashed non-union coal production and were key to maintaining the strike's effectiveness, they had not a word of criticism for the mineworkers officials' sabotage of efforts to shut down scab production or approach other unions for sympathy action. Never once calling for the ouster of Miller, the *Militant* did not even dare to mention the important 10 February demonstration in Washington, DC, where hundreds of miners stormed the union headquarters while Miller hid inside. To this day the SWP calls for the defence of the "democratic gains" of the Miners For Democracy, ie the Miller regime (*Militant*, 24 February). So concerned was the SWP to protect its "responsible" image that it did not even make a simple call on the miners to defy the Taft-Hartley injunction! So distorted was the *Militant*'s coverage of the most powerful US strike in 30 years that one could actually get a more accurate picture of its main features from reading the *New York Times* (see *Workers Vanguard* no 197, 17 March 1978)!

The SWP's marriage of convenience with the bureaucracy may or may not get it a few jobs as education, research and editorial officers in the pro-capitalist union hierarchy. But this "socialist" pimping for Miller and company has most certainly earned them the indignant contempt of all conscious union militants and real defenders of the miners' strike.

US miners. . .

Continued from page two

left (including the ostensibly Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party [SWP] and the workerist International Socialists [IS]) uniformly touted Miller's election in 1972 as a "victory for the miners". Now that Miller is the most hated man in the coal fields, they have all distanced themselves from him (though the SWP did so rather belatedly -- see "US SWP knifes miners' struggle", this issue), latching on to one or another of Miller's equally reformist competitors. But they wanted Miller voted in. They are responsible for Miller -- and for his betrayals -- as they will be responsible for the betrayals of his pro-capitalist "alternatives".

Revolutionary leadership the key

The 1978 miners' strike was a dramatic confirmation of the Trotskyist thesis that the crisis of working-class leadership is key to the deadlock of trade unionism. Miller is so discredited and isolated that a meeting of district-level officials shortly before the final vote already decided on a campaign to dump Miller, but not until after the contract had been ratified. Ironically it is a former Doyle protege, Lee Roy Patterson, who now claims the mantle of "militancy" against Miller. No less than Miller, these anti-Miller "militants", who voted for the various sellout contract proposals and did nothing to organise the ranks for a victorious strike, will be remembered by the UMWA ranks as betrayers. The near-total collapse of the UMWA leadership -- from the cowardly Arnold Miller to this second layer of "dissidents" -- graphically demonstrated not only that the union bureaucracy is the agent of the bosses within the labour movement, but also that its privileged position is mortally threatened by any outbreak of militant struggle.

The US labour bureaucracy -- from the arrogantly anti-communist, racist octogenarian George Meany to such Labor Department "reformers" as Arnold Miller and Ed Sadlowski -- is particularly brittle. Locked into its alliance with the bourgeois Democratic Party, it lacks the flexibility afforded the Australian bureaucracy by its "socialist" veneer. When the militancy exemplified by the miners spreads to the US working class as a whole, the question posed will not be whether the current bureaucracy will survive that upsurge, but who will replace it. Either it will be a slicker, smarter, more "socialist" set of betrayers like the IS and SWP aspire to become, or it will be a revolutionary leadership anchored in the program of Trotskyism. ■

Zionist terror. . .

Continued from page one

intermittent ceasefire settling over the occupied area, nearly 1000 of a planned force of 4000 UN troops have already been deployed along the Litani and in the port town of Tyre (largely deserted following Israeli bombardment). The PLO officially welcomed their arrival. But Israel, despite promises to pull out in favour of UN forces, still shows no sign of preparing to do so. Nor is it about to unless under substantial US pressure, and not until it finishes "uprooting" Palestinians and the Lebanese it does not consider friendly. Israel is expected at least to continue occupying the six mile deep "security belt" seized in the first stage of the invasion.

The pretext for the apparently long-contemplated attack was the 12 March terrorist rampage of an 11-man Palestinian guerrilla squad, armed with automatic rifles and hand grenades, along the Haifa-Tel Aviv highway, abducting two busloads of passengers and randomly firing on passing cars. By the time the kamikaze attack came to a bloody end in a hail of gunfire from an Israeli ambush 37 Israelis had been killed and another 76 wounded along the way. Fatah, the largest Palestinian guerrilla group and the backbone of the PLO, immediately took credit for this massacre. Equating it with the Nazi murder of six million Jews, Israel's fanatical Zionist prime minister Menahem Begin vowed to "cut off the evil arm of the PLO".

Prior to the raid Begin was under increasing pressure from the more "moderate" wing of the Zionist movement for his intransigence in dealing with the US and Sadat's "peace initiative". But now yesterday's "moderates" tried to outdistance the butcher of Deir Yassin in calls for Arab blood. One of Begin's harshest critics, Yigal Allon, a former foreign minister and leader of the "Labor" Party, called for the "use of active defense in order to break the strength of the PLO". Even the self-proclaimed "left-wing" Zionists in Mapam trumpeted: "The hand of Israel will reach them wherever they may be and they will be punished".

While temporarily closing ranks in the Zionist

camp, the invasion drew further into the open US imperialism's increasing impatience with Begin. A less than friendly meeting between Begin and Carter in Washington led the US secretary of state, Cyrus Vance, to complain of "absolutely fundamental" differences over Begin's unwillingness to withdraw from any Arab land, and one Carter aide called Begin "the wrong man in the wrong place at the wrong time". Rumours circulated that the US was "conspiring" to topple Begin from government.

Understandably the Zionist establishment, ever sensitive to its relations with its Washington patrons, reacted nervously. Declaring that "We're at the height of a confrontation with the US the likes of which Israel has never known", Ezer Weizman, Begin's defence minister, proposed a new "national peace government". But Begin snubbed Weizman's proposal and breezed through a vote of confidence in the Knesset (parliament). Clearly the interests of US imperialism (for greater regional stability) can and do clash with the homegrown expansionist appetites of its Zionist client state, which is not simply an imperialist outpost.

Butcher Begin - a terrorist with state power

Unlike the poorly armed Palestinian guerrillas the Zionists can and do mobilise all of the resources of a state power equipped from the arsenals of US imperialism with the most advanced weaponry in the world. To give but one stark contrast, the PLO forces of course have not one single plane whereas Israel has the third most powerful air force in the world including, for example, F-15 Eagles (which cost US\$17 million apiece).

The 12 March Palestinian raid was the largest in Israel's history. And the response this time was not limited to the usual mass cruelty of Zionist "justice" which takes 100 eyes for any eye. Today Israel is led by that genocidal maniac Menahem Begin, the Zionist terrorist leader of the Irgun whose murderous atrocities against the Palestinian population in the 1940s brought about their physical dispersal and the creation of the Zionist state over the dismembered body of the Palestinian nation.

Weizman called the Lebanese invasion "not a reprisal operation in the usual sense" -- that is, the usual sense of last November's reprisals where massive air strikes murdered 300 Arab civilians in revenge for three Israelis killed by rockets launched from southern Lebanon. These reprisals in fact are seldom aimed at the Palestinians themselves so much as at the governments that give sanctuary to them, intended to pressure these regimes to "discipline" and police the Palestinians. This Israeli strategy proved successful in Jordan, where a series of reprisals in 1968-1969 led to the Jordanian civil war and the tragic "Black September" of 1970 in which King Hussein was able to militarily crush the Palestinian resistance. However, this strategy has not worked in Lebanon because its army was too weak or more recently non-existent. Therefore the present campaign is, in Weizman's words, designed to "uproot the terrorist concentrations in southern Lebanon once and for all". But as Arab civilians are indistinguishable from "Arab terrorists" the campaign seeks to uproot -- and it has largely succeeded -- an entire Arab population.

"Steadfastness front"?

The government-controlled Egyptian press denounced Begin as a "new Hitler". But today's "new Hitler" was yesterday's "good friend" of Sadat's "peace initiative". Ironically, Sadat's pilgrimage to Jerusalem where he fawned over all the leaders of Zionism, including the butcher

Australasian
SPARTACIST



Subscribe 11 issues - \$3

Overseas rates:

surface mail -- \$3 for 11 issues

airmail -- \$5 for 11 issues (except Europe/North America). \$10 for 11 issues (Europe/North America)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

POSTCODE _____

mail to/make cheques payable to:

Spartacist Publications,
GPO Box 3473,
Sydney, NSW, 2001

Begin, took place in the aftermath of Israel's November air strike against Lebanon.

Meanwhile, those Arab states which joined with the PLO to oppose Sadat's "peace initiative" -- Syria, Algeria, South Yemen and Libya -- and which formed the so-called "steadfastness front" have up to now remained "steadfast" in doing virtually nothing to materially aid the PLO in the face of the Zionist genocidal aggression against the Palestinian people. Syria, crowned the "main confrontation state" as the only member of the "front" which borders Israel, has kept its troops north of the Litani and away from contact with Israeli ground forces.

The Syrian forces, the butchers of Tel al Zaatar, are as much the policemen of the Palestinian commandos in the north as the Zionist-supported Maronite Christian militias are in the south. During the invasion Syrian president Hafez al-Assad bombastically declared "Syria will remain the big power forming a spearhead in the resistance to every invasion and aggression against the Arab nation" and offered rights of passage to any Arab wanting to aid the Palestinians in Lebanon. Now, however, Syria has clamped a "complete ban" on arms and reinforcements for Palestinian guerrillas in Lebanon! Syria's real line, along with its puppet government in Beirut, is to rely on the real "big powers" on the United Nations Security Council to force Israel to withdraw.

Nonetheless the presence of 25,000 Israeli troops directly on the other side of the Litani tremendously destabilises what is already a volatile situation. The Israeli invasion had the magnitude of a fifth Near East war. It could rapidly escalate into a major confrontation between Israel and Syria -- again threatening to drag in their respective patrons, the United States and the Soviet Union -- thereby sparking a global confrontation and perhaps nuclear holocaust.

Consistent nationalism is genocide

Fatah and the PLO hailed the 12 March terrorist raid as a "big success". Timed to occur on the eve of Begin's trip to Washington, it was clearly intended to disrupt the present round of negotiations sparked by the Sadat "initiative" and US pressure on Israel to make some token concessions to Egypt while leaving out the PLO. This was Fatah's answer to US national security strongman Brzezinski's remark, "Bye, bye PLO". Forcing Begin to postpone his trip for one week, Fatah has won a pyrrhic diplomatic victory indeed.

The suicide raid was most certainly a desperate act by self-sacrificing elements of an oppressed people abandoned on all sides by their self-proclaimed allies and with no other prospects but another 30 years of poverty and the squalor of refugee camps in hostile countries. But it was an act of indiscriminate terrorism in which the guerrillas simply killed at random whomever they came across, from the first person

they encountered on the beach where they landed, a 19-year-old girl, to the young children captured in a hijacked tourist bus.

The desperate conditions which spawned it make this raid no less criminal. Indiscriminate terror -- whether aimed at Hebrews, Maronites or Palestinians -- asserts that a whole people, rather than its ruling class and organised state power, is the enemy. Fatah's rampage on the Haifa-Tel Aviv highway asserts that the liberation of the Palestinian people requires not just the destruction of the Israeli state and ruling class but the annihilation of the Hebrew people, just as Zionism asserts that survival of the Hebrew people requires annihilation of the Palestinians.

The program of Palestinian nationalism -- which is the program of all factions of the PLO, from "radical" George Habash to Arafat -- is no different from the program of Zionism carried out to its logical conclusion. That program calls for "national liberation" through genocide. The difference is that the Zionists have the means to implement their program, the Palestinian nationalists do not. But this does not mean that we support the program of the victim, the program of Palestinian nationalism. We consider utterly *indefensible* the Fatah atrocity on the Haifa-Tel Aviv highway.

Messengers of Qaddafi, mouthpieces for PLO

Not so most of the "Marxist" left, who assiduously tail Palestinian nationalism and the PLO. But none can match the panegyric fervour of the Healyite Socialist Labour League (SLL). Only last year the SLL, which in Australia denounces militant trade-union picketing as a cop provocation, answered the Packer empire's red-baiting by shouting, "everyone knows that we are completely opposed to the methods of terrorism" (*Workers News*, 21 April 1977). Now, declaring the Fatah raid a "successful PLO operation within Israel", they gush: "those who fell in the battle have taken a place in the ranks of the Palestinian martyrs as a proud inspiration to continue the struggle for the liberation of their homeland" (*Workers News*, 16 March). Not even Michel Pablo, the "Trotskyist" who joined Ben Bella's government, could out-do the liquidation into bourgeois nationalism carried out by the SLL, which declares that "the Palestine Liberation Organisation embodies more and more each passing day" "the socialist revolution in the Middle East"!

The following issue labels the mildest criticism of the raid or the PLO as "support for Zionism and imperialism". A genuinely hysterical polemic levels this charge at -- of all people -- the fake-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (whose reformist legalism compels them to distance themselves from the PLO's terrorist tactics despite continuing political support to the PLO's nationalist program). But the SLL's nauseating pact with Libyan dictator Qaddafi evidently entails more than just acting as a press agency for him and Arafat. The role of lackey for the murderous ruling cliques in the Arab countries also requires them to applaud the Iraqi state's vicious suppression of the oppressed Kurdish minority whose struggles they denounce as a "fight to break up Iraq and create ... another Israel"! So much for the right to national self-determination.

What must be supported is not the PLO's bourgeois nationalism but the real struggles of the Palestinian masses against the real enemies of the national liberation of the Palestinian people: in the first instance the Zionist ruling class, its army, police and prisons. Therefore, we unconditionally defend (irrespective of their present leadership) the struggle of the Palestinians against the Israeli armed forces in Lebanon and in the occupied territories. We also defend the struggle of the Palestinian refugees against their Arab oppressors, from US client Hussein to the "militant" Assad, who are no more interested in the national liberation of the Palestinian nation than is Israel. While taking a defencist position on the side of the Palestinians under Israeli attack in Lebanon and exposing the hypocrisy of the Arab regimes which have turned their backs on the embattled guerrillas, we point out that if Syria directly enters the fighting the conflict would be transformed into another reactionary nationalist war not different in kind from the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars.

The Hebrew workers must be broken from their Zionist rulers, a task fundamentally counterposed to the tactics of indiscriminate terror practised by the Palestinian nationalists. Israeli workers must be made to see that the Begins, Allons and "left" Zionists can lead only to more war and destitution. At the same time the Palestinian people must be broken from the PLO, its militants won over to the perspective of the class struggle and internationalism. They must seek their liberation not through the dead-end nationalist policies of genocidal terrorism and reliance on reactionary Arab League regimes or imperialist diplomacy, but in the class unity of the Hebrew and Arab proletariat. An internationalist communist leadership must be forged in the Near East

that fights for the realisation of the self-determination of both the Palestinian and Hebrew nations in a socialist federation of the Near East. Israel/UN out of Lebanon and all the occupied territories! For Trotskyist parties in the Near East! For the rebirth of the Fourth International! ■

(adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 198, 24 March 1978)

BLF. . .

Continued from page eight

trayers", this issue), the IS and SWP embrace Rix's blatantly minimal reformism in the name of "revolution". The IS has now withdrawn its support to Rix for "splitting the rank and file vote" by deciding to stand in the NSW branch election for state secretary against previously selected BLDC candidate Noel Olive. But the IS did so only to reaffirm its undying loyalty to the BLDC's rotten program, shared by Rix ([*Battler*] "Statement on NSW BLF state elections", undated).

The current favourite out-bureaucrat for the American SWP and IS is Ed Sadlowski, Miller's exact but thus far unsuccessful replica in the US Steelworkers. Only last year *Direct Action* (24 March 1977) made a pitch for an Australian Sadlowski (who is less a "socialist" than John Ducker): "an example which could well be repeated in this country". In endorsing Rix's court campaign (*Direct Action*, 2 February), they advocate an Australian repetition of Miller's betrayals.

Whoever wins in the BLF -- Gallagher or his present opponents -- it will not be the BLF membership. Consistent trade-union democracy can only be compatible with a revolutionary defence of the interests of the working class -- the fight for industrial unionism, for jobs for all through a shorter workweek with no loss in pay, to smash all penal powers and anti-union legislation, for a workers government to expropriate the capitalists. The Spartacist League, uniquely on the left, takes an uncompromising stand for the independence of workers organisations from the bourgeois state because only we seriously aim to lead the working class in smashing it. ■

Power workers must fight!

On Thursday, 6 April, LaTrobe Valley State Electricity Commission (SEC) workers will meet to consider the outrageous, insulting 22 March decision by Arbitration Commissioner Norman Mansini. Five months ago the 2300 power maintenance workers waged a militant eleven-week strike directed centrally against the wage-cutting indexation fraud. They faced down Victorian premier Hamer's introduction of a state of emergency and Fraser's threat to bring in the army. Yet just as the strike really started to hurt the bosses, power workers saw their leaders, like John Halfpenny, AMWSU state secretary, and Sam Armstrong, shop steward committee head (both supporters of the so-called Communist Party of Australia), deliver their struggle into the clutches of the bosses' Arbitration Commission -- the very institution which they had in the past denounced, correctly, as never giving workers anything.

And nothing is what they got. In response to their claim for a \$40 inflation catch-up, Mansini awarded pitiful increases of between \$1.60 and \$5.50 a week -- and only to those with more than two years with the SEC. Almost a third of the workers, who on average lost over \$2000 in wages during the strike, did not even get that!

Power workers can still win their demands. But this time they must shut down all the power stations from the beginning through mass militant pickets to pull out all workers -- without exception. As shop steward George Wragg told an ASP reporter after the Mansini decision, "It would be pointless to go out leaving the power stations operating. If we go out that means stopping the plants and mass picketing at all power station entrances". The recent US coal miners' strike (see article this issue) showed how the mass picket line can successfully enforce the basic principle of industrial unionism, *one out all out*. If this is done it will not take over seven weeks for a strike to bite Hamer and the bosses, but a matter of days. This is the way the power maintenance workers can translate their anger into a strategy for victory!

Spartacist League

MELBOURNE (03) 62-5135
GPO Box 2339, Melbourne, VIC, 3001

SYDNEY (02) 235-8195
GPO Box 3473, Sydney, NSW, 2001

NSW mail drivers sold out

For two weeks last month NSW mail drivers were on strike against Australia Post's attack on their jobs through the parcelling out of contracts to private mail contractors. George Slater, federal secretary of the Australian Postal and Telecommunications Union (APTU) who is simultaneously a Postal Commissioner for the bosses, openly encouraged Fraser and Street as they moved to fine the NSW branch and prosecute its leaders for "strike incitement". Though closer to the ranks and given to verbal militancy, the NSW leadership around Merv Hawkins proved no more capable of defending their interests. Hawkins got the men to return to work on 28 March on nothing more than the promise of a hearing on the disputed Canberra/Bombala run by Arbitration Commissioner Clarkson -- with the incredible proviso that if Clarkson hadn't reached a decision by 26 April then the run would be automatically handed over to a private contractor.

At stake in the strike was not just the Bombala run but the whole future of the APTU. The Postal Commission is determined to cripple the union through a "decentralisation" scheme that will dismantle the militant Redfern Mail Exchange. The strike should have been extended into a concerted struggle by the APTU to smash the Commission's union-bashing plans. Rather than wait to be stood down all APTU members throughout the state should have been called out the moment the drivers stopped work to completely shut down the Postal Service. This was what a Spartacist League leaflet put forward as a winning strategy to a meeting of stood down postal workers the day Hawkins ended the strike.

But the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) -- with supporters in the APTU -- did not once call for an extension of the strike beyond the embattled mail drivers, or anything that smacked even of union militancy, let alone revolutionary leadership. Indeed they called for nothing more than support committees to raise money and "inform the public". This is what the SWP means when it talks of building a "class struggle left wing" in the unions -- covering for sellout bureaucrats.

Australasian SPARTACIST



No vote to class traitors, Gallagher and Rix

BLF ranks: throw the courts out!

Maoist Norm Gallagher, who runs the Builders Labourers Federation (BLF) in a small-time imitation of the bureaucratic regimes in Peking and Phnom Penh, will be forced to face a special new election for federal secretary this year. Only a year ago he won re-election "unopposed" -- by having all the opposition candidates for federal offices, including his principal opponent, Sydney Qantas job delegate Brian Rix, summarily ruled off the ballot on the pretext that they had not paid an \$8 levy imposed by Gallagher in 1975. But the election rerun is a victory not for the BLF ranks but for Fraser and the government's anti-union penal powers. Ordered by the Federal Court in response to legal action by Rix and to be run by the Commonwealth Electoral Office, it is an outrageous and dangerous attempt to dictate the union's internal affairs by an agency of its most deadly enemy, the bosses' state.

Gallagher's opponents in the NSW-based Builders Labourers for Democratic Control (BLDC), for which Rix has been the central spokesman and which is also actively supported by the old NSW leadership, have embroiled the BLF in not one but four court cases. A suit similar to Rix's was filed unsuccessfully by Melbourne oppositionist Jocka Burns. In one of two others before the NSW Industrial Court, the union was ordered to issue union tickets to two out of five former NSW officials expelled by Gallagher in 1975 (with no decision yet on the principal figures, Bob Pringle and Communist Party [CPA] members Joe Owens and Jack Munday). In the other case, the NSW Industrial Court ordered interim elections for state officials to be held in April in the NSW state branch.

Gallagher is guilty of gross betrayals of the working class. In 1975 he openly joined with the bosses' Master Builders Association (MBA) to crush the former NSW branch and expel its elected officials, appointing his own men at the head of a demoralised, disorganised, tame-cat branch which has not experienced a genuine election since. With militancy dissipated, job conditions have been constantly eroded and job organisation is in a shambles. Since then Gallagher has presided over a long decline in the real wages of builders labourers and the disappearance of thousands of jobs, causing union membership to plummet. In the NSW court hearing this "Marxist-Leninist" even justified his exclusion of Owens/Munday/Pringle from the union by citing their involvement in protests against the Vietnam war as evidence of "bad character"!

But the bourgeois courts are not some sort of neutral agency for resolving disputes within the workers movement. They are part of the class enemy's apparatus for repressing the working class with armed might, intervening in union affairs only to gain an even stronger stranglehold over the workers' organisations. Despite condemning his opponents' use of the courts, Gallagher himself is perfectly willing to use the courts against his own union opponents, as he attempted to in 1974 against the NSW BLF (as announced in one of Gallagher's own leaflets at the time; quoted in *ASP* no 10, July 1974). But if Gallagher were to defy the court interference, class-conscious workers would bloc with him and resolutely defend the union against the vicious penal powers of Arbitration which stand behind the court orders and with which Rix and the BLDC have allied themselves.

Those like the BLDC who go to the courts in the name of "union democracy" play a particularly pernicious role now, by making themselves available to Fraser to claim as a "rank-and-file" invitation to wield his new anti-union laws, intended to force elections and votes on the unions

as a means of intimidating militants and installing more pliant officials. It is all the more urgent now to firmly resist the courts' encroachments. *Throw the courts out of the BLF!*

Virtually the entire fake-revolutionary left -- excluding, of course, Gallagher's own Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) -- has joined this united front of the BLDC and the bosses' state. But no one can beat the workerist International Socialists (IS) when it comes to enthusiasm for the Federal Court. ISer (and BLF member) David Shaw explained ("Why we used the courts", *Battler*, 18 February) that it's all a question of tactics:

"When you're faced with that sort of one-man rule within the union, then it does become valid to use the courts for the limited purpose of forcing proper elections to take place when they're scheduled."

"Valid"? These are the same courts that jailed Clarrie O'Shea! Their target is not Gallagher but the union he represents, however treacherously. The overriding precondition for trade-union democracy is the complete independence of unions from the capitalist state.

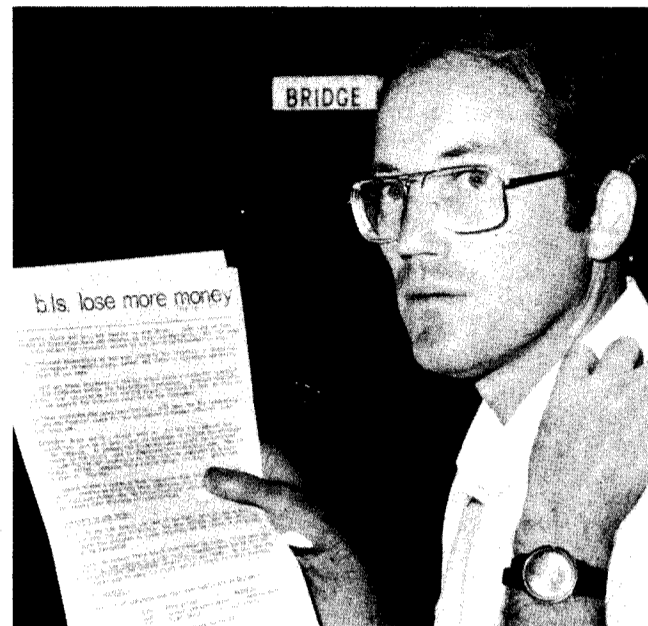
While the union must be defended from court intervention no matter how rotten the current leadership, Gallagher has as much claim to be "militant" as his opponents, a claim resting on his use of sometimes highly disruptive "guer-



Norm Gallagher (lower right), Joe Owens (behind to left) at 1974 rally following deregistration of federal BLF, before takeover of NSW branch.

rilla tactics" (such as stopping concrete pours). Before the recession crippled the long boom in the building industry in 1974, he as well as Munday/Owens in NSW won concessions through such tactics. But they are impotent even to defend, much less advance, workers' living standards in the recession, when the bosses' stiffened resistance requires a mobilisation of the ranks in a serious struggle to stop production.

Last year, instead of the industry-wide national strike that was needed, Gallagher and the Building Workers Industrial Union (BWIU) jointly launched a campaign for a 35-hour week and a \$30 pay rise limited to completely inadequate "guerilla" actions. Though Gallagher continued the campaign after the BWIU treacherously pulled out to settle for a puny \$4.60 wage rise,



"Rank-and-file" reformist Brian Rix outside Federal Court.

he had no stomach for a real fight. In the end result his "guerrilla" campaign was a sham which could only demoralise and disorganise, winning nothing and not even educating the ranks in struggle.

Rix and the BLDC, however, criticised

Gallagher for continuing any campaign at all after the BWIU pulled out. A BLDC leaflet (26 January 1978) echoes bourgeois propaganda against any sort of militant action, deploring the "lost time (wages) in a shonky ... 'one-out' dispute". The bourgeois press approvingly reported Rix's position at the time (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 September 1977) in order to attack the BLF campaign.

Here is the essence of the BLDC's "rank and filism": if the ranks, demoralised by recession, betrayal and defeat, are against strikes, then so are they. In an interview with *ASP* Rix openly admitted that the recently drafted BLDC program, which does not even mention the IRB or the need to smash the indexation wage freeze, was systematically tailored to the average existing level of consciousness:

"Some of the things we've put in our program ... look extremely bloody primitive -- just basically reformist.... To go any further and try and explain it on a political basis -- I just don't think you'd get any support on it."

The BLDC looks back to the "good old days" of the Munday/Owens leadership, but the latter's policies are a demonstrated dead-end. Unable to mobilise the ranks to defend the union against Gallagher and the MBA, they tried to use the bourgeois courts against Gallagher instead. Their "militant" green bans, an attempt to curry favour with ecology-minded liberals, dissipated the union's strength in sometimes supportable but largely misdirected and useless struggles. At the same time, as a form of political strike they earned the MBA's enmity. But today Rix steers clear of the "green bans" issue in order to deliberately appeal to conservative sentiments against industrial militancy in general.

For reformists on the outer, like the IS and the fake-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), support to such "rank-and-file" oppositions holds out the promise of gaining some cheap influence within the labour bureaucracy. Avidly imitating their American counterparts, who five years ago supported another court-backed union "reformer", Arnold Miller of the US miners' union (see "US miners will remember their be-

Continued on page seven

Spartacist League founded in Britain

SEE PAGE 3