



Pacifist/disarmament fraud no threat to NATO death arsenal Neutron bomb uproar

At the same time as the United Nations special session on disarmament, which opened on 23 May, was being serenaded by hypocritical platitudes about the need for peace, a more significant -- and true-to-life -- meeting was taking place several hundred miles away in Washington. In an atmosphere exemplified by Carter "national security adviser" Brzezinski's denunciation of the Soviet Union for having broken "the code of detente", the NATO defence ministers met to plan an across-the-board increase in military expenditures. The Carter administration's increasingly shrill cold-war rhetoric of late amply confirms what the Spartacist League has consistently warned: Carter's "human rights" campaign has been directed first and foremost at paving the way for an imperialist anti-Soviet military buildup.

Even US vice-president Mondale's speech to the disarmament conference was an ominously sabre-rattling anti-Soviet affair. Yet the pro-Moscow Stalinists lauded the disarmament farce as a potential opening to "a whole new phase in the fight to stop the arms race" (*Socialist*, 17 May). In particular, it was an opportunity to climax their pacifist campaign against the US's much vaunted "enhanced radiation" weapon, the neutron bomb -- a focus of world attention in the weeks preceding Carter's 17 April decision to defer production.

With the public outcry against the grisly N-bomb -- labelled the weapon which "destroys people and not property" -- the politicians found it a hot potato which they tried to pass on to someone else. Carter consulted his conscience and decided that explicit agreement by West European governments to deploy would have to precede a US decision to produce the bomb. West German chancellor Schmidt, hearing the voices of his Social Democratic Party ranks, insisted that the decision to produce must precede the agreement to deploy.

After this charade had run its course the imperialist war hawks began wringing their hands. Pentagon generals wondered anonymously what could have induced Carter to take this step -- was he some kind of religious pacifist nut? NATO commander (and former Nixon adviser) General Haig threatened to resign. West European governments grumbled about the "erratic" US policy. But when all is said and done Carter's post-



US Lance missile (left): carrier for N-bomb, NATO's hope to offset Soviet tank superiority (right).

ponement of production will barely affect the development of the new weapon. Carter ordered that NATO weapons, in particular the army's Lance missile and 8-inch cannon, be prepared to carry it. As an administration official put it: "Carter's decision puts us 90 percent down the road toward where we would have been with a complete green light" (*Newsweek*, 17 April).

What is the neutron bomb?

The neutron bomb is simply a very small atomic fission bomb that releases most of its energy in the form of highly penetrating subatomic particles (neutrons). According to published reports, blast damage from the neutron bomb is confined to an area of 300 yards radius, while the intense heat generated by the explosion extends out approximately another 100 yards. (By way of comparison, a "small" one-megaton thermonuclear warhead has a blast damage radius of three miles and is capable of creating fires and inflicting third-degree burns as far as eleven miles from the centre of the explosion.)

Beyond the 400-yard radius, extending outward to a range of 1400 yards the neutron bomb emits large quantities of energetic neutrons that readily penetrate buildings and armoured vehicles without damage to these structures. The neutrons however cause massive damage to central nervous systems. People exposed to the radiation will be unable to function within half an hour and will die a lingering death, succumbing a day or so later to fits and heart failure.

Popular attitudes toward the neutron bomb are similar to the horror of chemical or bacteriological warfare. However, while the US imperialists hypocritically refrain from widespread deployment of the latter agents because of their limited military utility, they are unlikely to renounce the neutron bomb which lends itself to a wide variety of military uses, including "surgical" counterrevolutionary measures around the world and in the US itself. In particular, NATO sees the N-bomb as its answer to the overwhelming superiority of the Soviet bloc (Warsaw Pact) in tanks deployed in Central Europe.

As Trotskyists we are absolutely opposed to the US and West European armed forces acquiring the neutron bomb, as we are to the capitalist governments' entire military programs. Not one man nor one penny should go to the imperialist military, whose targets are the degenerated/deformed workers states and the labour and left

movements throughout the world! Instead of ever more "wonder weapons" from the merchants of death, we demand a program of useful public works to fight unemployment.

This places us on entirely different ground from the Stalinists, reformists and other enemies of class struggle who want to reform the US military program to favour the "peace-loving" imperialists against Pentagon "hawks". Neutron bomb or no neutron bomb, US imperialism possesses 7000 tactical nuclear warheads on the European continent -- and it will use them. The only serious argument of the "anti-neutron bomb movement", the argument that provides a meeting ground for Stalinists, the pope, pacifists and liberals, is that the neutron bomb lowers the "nuclear threshold", ie its lesser collateral damage makes it more likely to be used.

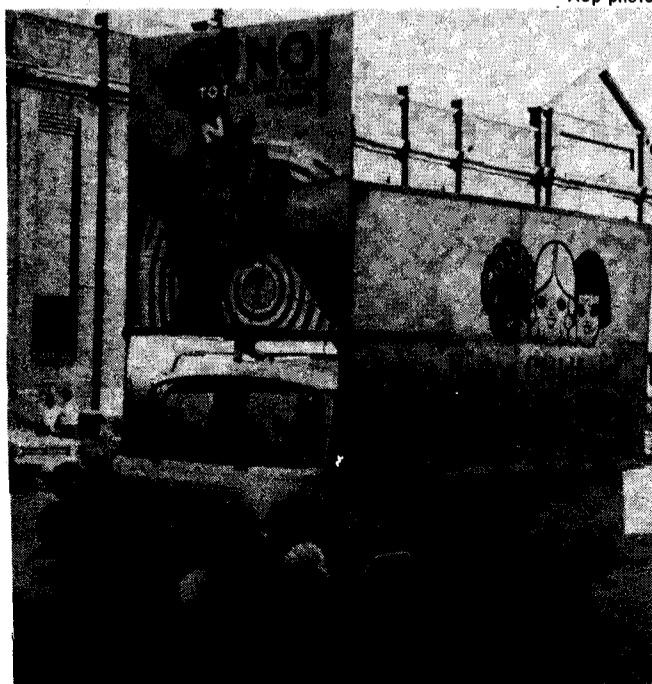
If one is a Rand Corporation strategic analyst for whom war is simply the continuation of game theory by other means, perhaps this makes sense. But for the imperialist generals war is quite definitely a life-and-death matter, and there are no holds barred. In fact, the new army field manual dictates that tactical nuclear weapons dominate NATO battlefield strategy and calls for each commander to fire large numbers (50 or more) of high-yield nuclear devices.

US beefs up NATO forces

What is disturbing about all of the attention that the bourgeoisie is giving to the neutron bomb is that it ignores the major effort being mounted to overhaul NATO's juggernaut -- its forces aimed at the Soviet heartland. A 1977 US government interagency study painted a very gloomy picture of NATO's forces in Central Europe. The study concentrated on the two-to-one advantage that the Warsaw Pact enjoys in tanks and its three-to-two advantage in manpower. It also noted that superior Soviet supplies reduce the amount of warning time that NATO forces would have in case of attack.

The study prompted an August directive by Carter that NATO forces be strengthened, a directive which was implemented in Defense Secretary Harold Brown's 1978 report to Congress and his 1979 budget. The latter is being touted as the "NATO budget". The 3 percent real increase in funds called for in the 1979 proposal is intended largely for expenditures in Europe -- for new weapons and for greater integration of im-

Continued on page two



Stalinists decry "anti-people weapon" on May Day, Sydney.

NOTICE

CHANGE OF DATE:

The Spartacist League forum *Rape and bourgeois justice*
(advertised on page 2, this issue of *ASP*, for 21 June)
will be held on Tuesday 27 June in Room 5, Trades
Hall (Sydney) at 7.30 pm.

Women and Labour Conference bans left press

The overwhelmingly academic Women and Labour Conference held at Macquarie University in Sydney on 12-14 May scored a great "success" for its feminist organisers -- only because it had been rendered as apolitical as possible. No wonder the communist politics of the Spartacist League (SL) participants evoked some venomous hostility. And no wonder the only event of political significance was the scandalous ban on the sale of left-wing literature by the "organisers", led by a determinedly autocratic Sue Bellamy, a seasoned red-baiter. They eventually ruled non-feminist literature could be sold, but only if it directly concerned women! An International Socialists (IS) lit table was shut down on the first day. And after briefly allowing the display of *Australasian Spartacist* and *Direct Action*, on lit tables, Bellamy decreed that they had to go.

On the last day the SL placed a sign before its table reading, "'Women and Labour' Conference organisers have banned *Australasian Spartacist* from this table! (But you can get it if you want -- just ask)". On seeing it Bellamy tore it up in a rage, undeterred by the protests of

nearby witnesses (excluding Socialist Workers Party [SWP] members, who observed in silence). Within an hour more than fifty signatures were gathered on a petition circulated by the SL and the IS opposing "the suppression of left-wing literature" as "undemocratic and anti-communist". But when an SL supporter put a motion to that effect at the final session, she was met with such a hysterical anti-communist outburst from the largely feminist audience that "Marxist-feminist" Rosemary Pringle blurted out that the uproar was "fascist".

No doubt alarmed that even its *Direct Action* was banned by consistent feminists, the "consistently feminist" SWP solemnly reported the "political ban", noting that it "was raised in the final session, as a petition was circulated" (*Direct Action*, 18 May). Ban on whom? Raised by whom? Whose petition? *Direct Action* wouldn't say. Unwilling to challenge the feminist politics of the anti-communist censors, the SWP can only censor the role of the SL, the only consistent communist opponents of feminism in the women's movement.

Cringing "left" refuses to defend Red Brigades

The spectacular kidnapping of former Italian prime minister Aldo Moro came to its grim conclusion on 9 May when the anarcho-terrorist Red Brigades (BR) carried out their death "sentence". After 54 days of adamantly refusing to strike any bargain with Moro's captors, the Italian government could now display the bullet-riddled corpse as proof of its commitment to the "authority of the state" -- an authority it was demonstrably lacking.

Without exception, the revisionist left in Australia -- even from this comfortable distance -- capitulated shamelessly to the anti-terrorist hysteria which followed in the wake of the kidnapping. As if in unison, the Moscow-liners of the Socialist Party, the "independents" of the Communist Party (CPA) and the fake "Trotskyists" of the Socialist Labour League (SLL) "condemned" the Moro assassination. The Socialist Workers Party chimed in, terming it "a victory for conservative forces everywhere" (*Direct Action*, 18 May). To varying degrees, each attempted to link, either explicitly or implicitly, the BR action to some rightist-manipulated plot (without a shred of evidence) as a rationale for renouncing the duty to defend them from bourgeois repression or, in the case of the CPA and SPA, for actively supporting the ruling-class witchhunt. If the workerist International Socialists denied "weeping over Aldo Moro" (*Battler*, 20 May), neither could they gather up the courage to come to the defence of his captors.

The abduction and execution of Aldo Moro was a stupid act of individual terrorism which has served only to prepare the political climate for massive repression in Italy, of the "far left" in particular. But however misguided their program and activities, the militants of the BR were seeking to struggle on behalf of the oppressed masses. What then can be said for the CPA, which compares the BR actions, directed against the class enemy, with mass murders perpetrated in the

name of apartheid (*Tribune*, 17 May); or the SLL, which shows more sympathy for an imperialist statesman (the SLL's current hero, PLO head Arafat, sent a wreath of mourning for Moro) than for the innocent Israeli civilians regularly killed in the random terror of the PLO (see *Workers News*, 18 May).

We, as revolutionary proletarian communists, stand for the unconditional release of those BR members in prison and the unconditional defence of those whom the bourgeois state is now hunting down. We will not join the shameless fake-communists, who, for all their stated differences, "unite" on their knees before the ruling class.

Pig-iron Bob drops dead

When Sir Robert Menzies finally croaked last month his passing was sincerely regretted by the rich and powerful. By the capitalist media we were treated to reverential tributes, nauseating and endless, to the autocratic, stuffed-shirt Menzies' "greatness". The real reason the rulers mourn Menzies they cannot mention: he was a tenacious enemy of the working class. He personified the Liberal Party he founded, the party of big business. He symbolised ruling-class contempt for the masses. He dispatched troops to help the big imperialists in Korea, Malaya and Vietnam. From the failed Communist Party Dissolution referendum and the Petrov conspiracy through to the Vietnam war, he was an accomplished and vicious anti-communist witch-hunter.

Criticism of Menzies is cheap. Yet the Socialist Workers Party's (SWP) *Direct Action* (18 May) published a truly pallid editorial which, among other things, condemned Fraser's statement that "Menzies 'gave his party and his country great strength and inspiration.' This is just rubbish". Is it? Not unless Menzies is to be taken to task for not "serving his country" -- as does the editorial when it says, "let's not forget his disastrous first term as PM when he led Australia into World War II". The SWP "does not mourn" Menzies. But why not? In the hysteria following the assassination of US president Kennedy in 1963, their political progenitors in the US SWP hastened to telegram the widow of this chief imperialist assassin its "deepest sympathy" and headlined: "If We Really Love This Country We Must Abjure Hatred" (*Militant*, 2 December 1963)!

In fact social patriotism runs like a yellow thread through the condemnatory obituaries of the left, with two themes: Menzies was "incompetent" and Menzies was not a "good Australian". "A catalogue of Menzies' foreign policy mistakes [!] would fill a book", writes Laurie Aarons of the Communist Party (CPA) in *Tribune* (24 May). "He followed Chamberlain's line of appeasing Hitler ..." -- the "mistake" in this case being that Menzies, due to his pro-Nazi sentiments, was not sufficiently gung-ho for the coming imperialist slaughter, the "great anti-fascist war".

The most prevalent and in a way most disgusting focus for this anti-Menzies social patriotism is the incident which gave him the nickname "Pig-iron Bob", the 1938-39 Port Kembla wharfies' boy-

cott of pig iron to Japan which he tried to smash. In every case it is used to paint Menzies as "pro-Japanese". In the case of the "revolutionary" International Socialists, the rendition is obscene: "His nickname ... came from his determination to sell pig iron to Japan during the late thirties; iron the Japanese gratefully returned in the form of bombs a few years later" (*Battler*, 20 May)! "It will come back as bombs" was a common theme, expressing fear of the greatest "yellow peril", Japan, at the time of the boycott. But what none of the left papers have dared to mention was that the boycott was explicitly initiated to defend China in response to the renewed Japanese imperialist attacks of 1938. At that time, the boycott was an act of international class solidarity in defence of a backward country against imperialist invasion, not a class-collaborationist act of support to one imperialist gang against another in a world war, the great crime of the Stalinists and social democrats in World War II.

"Pig-iron Bob" is an appropriate way to remember Menzies. His attempt to break the pig iron strike with the infamous "Dog-Collar Act" and his enmity to the Chinese struggle for national liberation earned him the class hatred of militant workers. But as much as his death inspires subjective feelings of satisfaction, unfortunately it gives no real cause to celebrate. The capitalist system he loyally served remains with us. No struggle against this corrupt social order and the parasitical scum like Menzies who rise to the top in it can succeed unless the social patriotism of the reformists is decisively repudiated. ■

Neutron bomb...

Continued from page one

perialist military activities. Of particular import is the emphasis on tank warfare.

More ominous than any specific budgetary item is the accompanying rhetoric. A graphic picture was painted by influential senator Sam Nunn:

"What confronts NATO across the inter-German border is not 935,000 [Warsaw Pact] troops but 935,000 Pact troops organized, deployed, trained and equipped for a Blitzkrieg, and governed by a doctrine based on surprise and a postulated rate of advance of 70 kilometers per day."

Most ominous of all was a speech Carter gave at Lake Forest University in March in which he more or less threatened to match the Russians weapon for weapon. The speech was drafted by one of the architects of the Vietnam War, Sam Huntington.

For the military strategists of imperialism, obsessed with the vision of the war for the West being waged against Soviet Panzer divisions on West German or Belgian soil, development of an anti-tank weapon with minimum "collateral" damage became paramount. The neutron bomb seems ideally suited.

There is a consensus among the imperialist powers (and China and the Maoists) that a major Western rearming is necessary. And contrary to the views of the pro-Soviet Stalinists, this attitude is not restricted to a nefarious band of war hawks. It is indicative of the degree to which bourgeois opinion has moved rightward that the abandonment of any weapons system, even for a more effective weapon, is viewed as a major surrender to the Warsaw Pact. Hence the flak over the B-1 and neutron bomb.

Continued on page seven

Forum

Rape and bourgeois justice

Speaker: Phillipa Naughton
(SL Central Committee member)
Date: Wednesday 21 June 1978
Place: Room 5, Trades Hall
Time: 7.30 pm

Sydney Spartacist League public office

2nd floor 112 Goulburn St, Sydney
Thursday: 5.30 to 9.30 pm
Saturday: 12 noon to 5 pm

Revolutionary literature

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: Roberta 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.

Who can be more opportunist?

SWP, SLL "debate" Palestine

Following the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon in March a war of words erupted between the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Socialist Labour League (SLL) in the pages of their respective papers, *Direct Action* and *Workers News*. Those who have bothered to read the exchange may wonder what the dispute is all about. After all, on virtually all the fundamental issues posed in the Middle East, the two groups are putting forward nearly identical positions. Both politically support Arab nationalism and, to different degrees, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO); both deny any national rights to the Hebrew-speaking people in the region; both endorse the PLO's central demand for a "democratic secular Palestine" and refuse to advance a program for socialist revolution in the Middle East. Yet each accuses the other of being "Zionist" or as good as, of slandering the PLO, and generally being an enemy of the Palestinians. What's up?

The truth is that prior to last year, the position of chief sycophant of Palestinian nationalism in the Australian left clearly belonged to the SWP. Now the SLL has moved in on their turf, equipped with a readiness to be still more sycophantic. Before last year they had little if anything to do with the Palestinian milieu and were frequently critical of the PLO and its leader, Yassir Arafat. Then the SLL's British overlord Gerry Healy hooked up with the oil-rich, anti-communist, fanatically Muslim, pro-PLO Libyan dictator, Muammar Qaddafi. So now *Workers News* (20 April) cannot find words good enough for the PLO and Arafat: "The PLO, under the leadership of Al Fatah and its chairman Yassir Arafat ... stands at the vanguard of the forces for world revolution" -- side by side with Qaddafi!

For the sake of a momentary stab at influence these political bandits are capable of saying one thing one week and its exact opposite the next without blinking an eye. In contrast the SWP's aspiration to become the left wing of the labour bureaucracy lends it greater stability and an internal reformist consistency which rules out such routine flip-flops. The SWP must, for example, distance itself from the terrorist tactics of the PLO, respectfully pointing out that the random slaughter of innocent Israeli civilians in acts of indiscriminate terrorism alienates bourgeois public opinion (see *Direct Action*, 16 March).

Slander for slander: the fight for top opportunist

The SLL's opportunism (including its vicarious, total enthusiasm for such small-scale atrocities) knows no such limits, so naturally the political bandits attack the reformists for not being *totally* shameless. In the 4 April *Workers News* Greg Adler, under the heading "Pabloists scab on the Palestinian Revolution", announced that the SWP "have been revealed as open supporters of Zionism and imperialism" because of a "slandering and vicious attack on the PLO and its leadership". This "slander" was in a feature article by the US SWP's David Frankel (*Direct Action*, 16 March) which dared to note the "bankruptcy of the current Palestinian leadership" and talk about the need for a "revolutionary-socialist political program" -- *never*, needless to say, drawing the conclusion that the Palestinian proletariat must be organised independently of the petty-bourgeois nationalist PLO.

In a four-part reply in *Direct Action* (beginning 6 April) Allen Myers dispels all doubt that the SWP is in any way *hostile* to the leadership of Arafat and the PLO, reassuring his readers that occasional orthodox-sounding criticism (Frankel's for instance) need not be taken too seriously: the SWP is merely "advising" the PLO of "mistakes", not attempting to win Palestinian militants from the PLO's nationalist ideology. After all, "The PLO ... needs supporters who will work hard to build the anti-Zionist movement in this country and who will discuss questions of strategy and tactics openly ..." (*Direct Action*, 27 April).

Indeed, the bulk of Myers' reply is devoted to denouncing the SLL's failure to be as *consistently* liquidationist as the SWP, singling out for attack everything that the SLL once said that smacked of a class line on the Middle East! Qaddafi, of course, cannot even be mentioned for fear of offending Palestinians taken in by the myth of "Arab unity" and Qaddafi's "pro-Palestinian", "revolutionary" fakery. According to Myers, the problem with the SLL is that in the past it went so far as to say: "But nationalism can solve none of the problems of the Arab working class and poor peasantry. Only the socialist revolution can do that" (*Workers News*, 14 November 1974). The SLL dared to call for unity

of Arab and Jewish workers against Zionism, and even said that "the Jews in Israel have the right to be recognised as a nation" (*Workers News*, 8 November 1973). But most scandalous of all, the SLL used to accuse Arafat of "betraying" the Palestinians!

In fact the SLL *systematically adapted to Arab nationalism in the same period*, tailing along only at a somewhat greater distance than the SWP and with more of a left cover. Since 1967 the Healyites internationally have adhered to the Pabloist invention of an "Arab Revolution", independent of the class struggle in the various Arab nations, which somehow was supposed to have an automatic, objectively anti-capitalist character. The SWP uses an identical rationale for repudiating the ABCs of Trotskyism.

Does the Hebrew nation have a right to exist?

In the process of denouncing the SLL's past call for Jewish-Arab class solidarity and socialist revolution, Myers declares that "Socialist revolution in the Middle East is *impossible unless it is combined with a successful nationalist struggle against Zionism*" (*Direct Action*, 13 April; emphasis in original). But Myers nowhere calls for socialist revolution in the Middle East. Instead he goes on to declare that "the only basis for real unity is ... the struggle to destroy the Zionist state and create a democratic, secular Palestine". "Democracy" in the abstract does not exist. Counterposed to a call for a bi-national Palestinian *workers state*, this is a call for a *bourgeois* Palestinian regime -- under the hegemony of the Palestinian Arab rather than the Hebrew-speaking nationality. This was evident as well in the evasive refusal by "pro-Palestine" spokesman Jon West (who reflected the views of the SWP) to characterise a "democratic secular" state as socialist in response to an SL challenge at a 23 May debate in Wollongong. The foundation of Trotsky's theory and program of permanent revolution is the exact opposite of Myers' *menshevik* theory of stages: in backward countries a successful struggle to complete the national-democratic tasks is *impossible without socialist revolution led by the working class*.

This truth is acutely evident in the concrete context of the Middle East, where two nations developed *intermingled* within the same territory. *Within a capitalist framework* the development and consolidation of either as a bourgeois nation-state can come only at the expense of the other. Thus the commitment of the SLL and the SWP to a bourgeois-nationalist -- and not a proletarian-socialist -- solution to the national conflict in the Middle East is reflected

Direct Action, 1971:
SWP always tailed
Arab nationalists.
Below: SLL's
Workers News, press
agent for PLO.



in their insistence on denying any national rights to the Hebrew people. To do so Myers must agree with a fundamental premise of Zionism, that "self-determination for [the Israeli Jews] means ... precisely the Zionist state of Israel" (*Direct Action*, 27 April). Does Myers really believe that the national rights of the Hebrew people can only be expressed by an avowedly expansionist state which is several times larger than the area of Hebrew concentration?

Myers points to the fact that "the Israeli Jews are an *oppressor nation*" and refers to "Lenin's crucial distinction between oppressed and oppressor nations" to vindicate the SWP's support to bourgeois nationalism. Of course the Hebrew nation is the oppressor nation, brutally carved out of the living body of the Palestinian nation, and the fight for Palestinian national rights has the full support of Leninists. But where did Lenin say that *oppressor nations have no right to exist*? Nowhere -- on the contrary, Lenin explicitly stressed the need to support the right of all nations to self-determination "without undertaking to give anything at the expense of another nation" ("The Right of Nations to Self-Determination"; emphasis in original). As for the nationalism of the oppressed, he

Continued on page seven

SL pickets against Healyite exclusion

For years the only shred of political consistency which it has been possible to credit to the Healyite Socialist Labour League (SLL) is its policy of quarantining its membership from the Trotskyist Spartacist League (SL) through bureau-

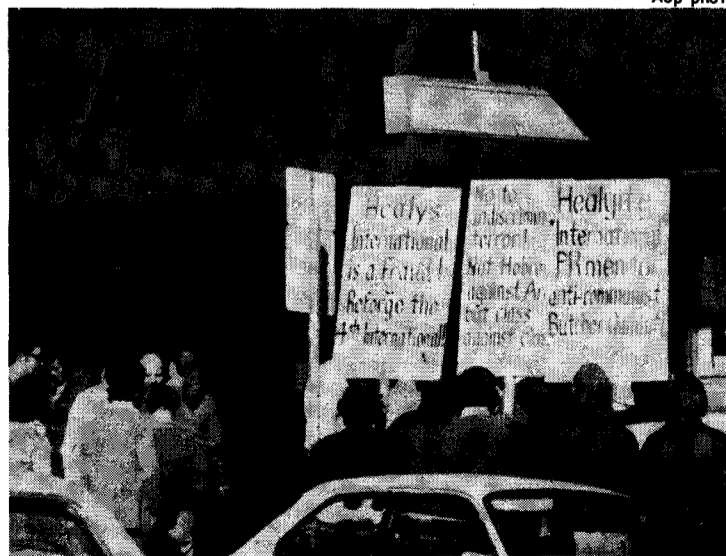
against Zionist terror!" in clear view, the Zionist-baiting did not wash.

The cop-baiting fared little better. One Healyite tirade in particular was cut short when an SL supporter shot back

that it was the SLL, not the Spartacist League, which held its internal youth conference in a Police-Citizens Boys Club to which uniformed cops had access at all times (see ASP 43, June 1977)! The transparent cynicism with which the SLL promiscuously tosses around its cop accusations, which were directed at Socialist Workers Party (SWP) supporters as well, was revealed last year when the Healyites uncritically reported our expulsion of ASIO agent Janet Langridge (see *Workers News*, 23 June 1977).

Though the Healyite goons did not physically assault any of the pickets or paper sellers, their notoriously vile and backward brand of street-gang thuggery was nonetheless in evidence. When an SL supporter attacked the Healyites' knee-scraping servility to Libyan dictator Qaddafi before a group of listening Palestinians, one enraged SLLer demanded that the comrade, a woman, "shut up" or "I'll rape you"! According to an account in *Direct Action* (18 May) leading SWPer Jamie Doughney, who was selling *Direct Action* outside the theatre, was also threatened with having his "balls pulled off" and told that he would be "dead by the end of the year".

Such threats from the SLL cannot be taken lightly. But gangsterism and bureaucratism will not deter the struggle for genuine Trotskyism. As we have in the past, the Spartacist League will continue to defend workers democracy and expose the SLL as hooligans and political bandits.



cratic exclusionism, brutal gangsterism and shrill, slanderous cop-baiting. When the SLL excluded SL supporters (as well as members of other left organisations) from its recent public screenings of *The Palestinians*, the SL responded with a protest picket outside Sydney's Paris Theatre on 13 May. Unable to intimidate the pickets the Healyites instead resorted to their slanderous standby, attempting unsuccessfully to discredit the SL as cops and Zionists. But with such SL slogans as "Defend PLO

Spartacist League/Britain founded

The rebirth of British Trotskyism

When 24 supporters of the Trotskyist Faction (TF) walked out of the Workers Socialist League (WSL) at the WSL's 18-19 February second annual conference they left declaring their opposition to the central leadership's "Pabloite attachment to the Labour Party, their capitulationist attitude to nationalism, and in particular Irish

for fusions in the highly fragmented British Trotskyist milieu.

The factional struggle in the WSL and the fusion with the TF also vindicate in a powerful manner the iSt's policy of revolutionary regroupment. Recognising that many valuable militants are presently to be found in various pseudo-revolutionary organisations, we have fought to regroup the best of these potential cadres for the nucleus of an international vanguard party. It was essentially a process of splits and fusions, both in the US and internationally, that enabled the Spartacist League/US to break out of the national isolation imposed by our expulsion from Gerry Healy's 1966 International Committee (IC) conference. But for the

Irish Commission, and several regional and local organisers. With the loss of one-fifth of its active membership, the WSL reverts back to its original regional limitations -- the celebrated car fraction at British Leyland's Cowley plant in Oxford, the London grouping and a handful of shaky members in Yorkshire.

Moreover, Thornett's response to the challenge presented by the Trotskyist Faction was positively pathetic, both before and after the split. Perhaps sensing that he is at his weakest debating politics, Thornett simply waved his Cowley credentials as a talisman to ward off all attacks. In his hour-and-a-half opening remarks to the WSL conference he attended only briefly to the programmatic issues which were about to rip 20 percent of the participants away from him. His allegation that the TF members were only interested in "exciting politics" was hardly an indictment in view of the WSL's apolitical glorification of the "daily grind". And the failure of the majority to present any political perspective certainly contributed to the fact that a relatively large number of the TF supporters were younger rank-and-filers. Rarely has a centrist leadership presided over the coming apart of its organisation so meekly.

The WSL from womb to ...

Prior to the split of the Trotskyist Faction the WSL was already an organisation in deep trouble, its haphazard "international work" come to naught and its domestic prospects cloudy at best. As the TF stated in its founding document:

"The WSL is in chaos. It has no clear idea of its tasks or direction...."

"This situation has a political origin -- to put it bluntly the movement as yet lacks any programmatic basis for existence as a distinct political tendency. Every political tendency from Trotskyism to reformism is represented on the NC [National Committee] and among the membership." ("In Defence of the Revolutionary Programme" (INDORP), [WSL] Pre-Conference Discussion Bulletin no 8, February 1978)

Yet only three years ago Healy's expulsion of the Thornett grouping from his Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) made a big splash among ostensible Trotskyists throughout the world. Thornett's orthodox-sounding defence of the Transitional Programme, his well-publicised industrial mili-

John Sturrock/Report

Part 1 of 3

nationalism, their all-pervading economism and minimalism and their parochialism" ("Statement of the Trotskyist Faction", *ASp* no 52, April 1978). Its aim, said the TF, was to struggle for a British section of a recreated Fourth Inter-



Singing of the "Internationale" concludes founding conference of Spartacist League/Britain.

Spartacist Britain

national. The first step toward this goal was the rapid merger of forces with the London Spartacist Group (LSG), at a conference over the 4-5 March weekend, to form the Spartacist League/Britain (SL/B) as a sympathising organisation of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt).

This fusion is one of the largest and most important in the 15-year history of the Spartacist tendency. The new organisation already has close on 50 members and a presence both in London and the Midlands. By its comprehensive Leninist programme and clear internationalist perspectives the SL/B is exercising a strong attraction on remaining dissident elements inside the WSL. The same will soon prove true as well toward the numerous small centrist organisations, which will find in the Spartacist League a solidly programmatically based unity -- in striking contrast to the short-lived, politically promiscuous unnatural couplings which pass

WSL leadership around Alan Thornett any polemical combat within the left is "petty-bourgeois"; consequently the WSL has been unable to develop any coherent perspective for international work at all.

The goal of our regroupment policy has always been to decisively split the cadre of centrist organisations, in the first instance the Pabloist pretenders to Trotskyism who are the principal obstacle to reforging the Fourth International. This is exactly what has happened in the WSL. Just over four years ago *Workers Vanguard* sent a reporter to cover the British miners strike. At that time the Spartacist tendency had just made its first isolated recruits in Europe. Only at the end of 1975 were we able to establish a Spartacist group in London, and it took nearly two years of dogged propagandistic activity to achieve the breakthrough represented by the fusion with the Trotskyist Faction. But today sections of the iSt outside the US make up over one-third of the total membership of the tendency internationally.

Bob Pennington, a leader of the International Marxist Group (IMG -- British affiliate of the so-called United Secretariat of the Fourth International [Usec]), remarked last autumn that those who proclaim themselves Trotskyists will have to choose between two "mainstreams", the Usec and the iSt. By this he undoubtedly meant to suggest that the "re-united" Usec would be "where the action is". But the WSL split and subsequent formation of the SL/B, establishing the iSt as a direct organisational competitor with the Usec on the British terrain, has certainly given no comfort to Pennington et al. It indicates that there are those on the British "far left" who have had enough of chasing after whatever is popular and want to get on with the business of constructing a democratic-centralist, authentically Trotskyist International.

As for the workerist WSL, in its main reply to the TF documents the Thornett group initially referred to the oppositionists as "a small part of our movement". From the tone of their subsequent public comments it is evident that they were surprised that nearly two dozen members took the step of walking out of the Workers Socialist League. The WSL will not easily recover from the loss of two National Committee members, three members of the *Socialist Press* editorial board, three out of four members of its



Cowley shop steward and WSL leader, Alan Thornett.

tancy and opposition to Healy's sectarian practices promised to be an attractive combination. What brought about his demise?

In the mid-1960s a large part of the leadership of the shop stewards committee at the Cowley assembly plant (then Morris Motors), including Alan Thornett who had been a Communist Party

Spartacist Britain

SPARTACIST
BRITAIN

WSL left wing, London Spartacist Group fuse
The rebirth of British Trotskyism

First issue includes:
- Documents from the struggle of the Trotskyist Faction in the Workers Socialist League
- "Tasks in Britain", SL/B founding conference document

The paper of the Spartacist League/Britain.

Second issue now available

Subscribe!

International rates (outside Europe):
12 issues - air £3.00, surface £1.80

Order from/pay to: Spartacist Publications,
PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE

trade unionist, were personally recruited by Gerry Healy to the Socialist Labour League (SLL -- predecessor of the WRP). "The Cowley Fraction" was Healy's pride and joy and the major vehicle for the expression of his deformed brand of Trotskyism in the labour movement. But the first time Thornett crossed his godfather, Healy responded with vicious Mafia tactics, including physical intimidation.

The Thornett group, including the Cowley fraction was summarily expelled in December 1974 and a few months later became the core of the Workers

leader, roughly a third of the RCG left to join the WSL in 1975.

Even Alan Thornett, whose political horizons do not generally extend far beyond the shop floor at Cowley, recognised the importance of the recruitment of this layer of cadres, which enabled the WSL to establish branches in Birmingham and Coventry in the West Midlands and in Liverpool. Speaking at a WSL Midlands Aggregate meeting in 1976 Thornett accurately termed this recruitment "the biggest gain the WSL has ever made". This would seem to fly in the face of Thornett's

denigration of any orientation toward other left groups, except that the WSL leadership did almost nothing to achieve this regroupment.

... the London Spartacist Group

In late 1975 the iSt established in London a small group of experienced cadres, thus fulfilling a long-held aspiration to begin systematic work in Britain. In addition to its intrinsic strategic importance, the presence of Healy's SLL/WRP makes Britain one of the centres of ostensibly orthodox Trotskyist groupings. In the late 1950s and early 1960s the SLL's theoretical journal, *Labour Review*,

had begun to elaborate the struggle against Pablist liquidationism which the American SWP had grievously neglected after the 1953 split in the Fourth International and which it was abandoning altogether by capitulating to the popularity of Castroism.

The SLL's 1960 document, "World Prospects for Socialism", moreover, was seen by the Revolutionary Tendency (RT -- forerunner of the SL/US) of the SWP as an articulation of its own anti-Pablist views. The RT and later the Spartacist group sought to make common cause with Healy, but were blocked by the little despot's insistence on squelching the slightest dissent (as Thornett was to discover years later). Following our bureaucratic expulsion at the 1966 London conference of the IC, Britain remained sealed off to the Spartacist tendency for some time.

Beginning in 1975 the London Spartacist Group set out to systematically probe and polemicise with the myriad of groups and grouplets which populate the asteroid belt to the left of the centrist Pablist IMG and the left-reformist "state capitalist" IS/SWP. The LSG's fight for political clarity and authentic Leninism frequently upset the cosy chumminess of the British Trotskyoid left. Many were shocked to hear a group which refused to succumb to the charms of the left Labourite "club", to embrace the green nationalism of the IRA or to go along with the charade of phony "mass work" which are common denominators in the intensely parochial and workerist "far left".

There were plenty of evidences of crisis in the left-of-the-Communist Party "family". The IS had been declining visibly from the time of the general election in February 1974 and suffered a haemorrhaging of cadre in 1975. The WRP had gone off the rails altogether, spending most of its

efforts in slandering Joe Hansen (of the American SWP) and more recently in praising Libya's fanatical Muslim dictator Qaddafi. The IMG could never decide how many factions it had, oscillating up towards five, nor whether it would be super-Mandelite or a bridge to the Hansenites.

Among the smaller groups the RCG was on the road to becoming a cult, which is currently tailing after the geriatric Moscow-loyal Stalinists. Sean Matgamna's Workers Fight (ejected from the Cliffites in 1971) had just joined with the Workers Power group (a 1975 vintage IS expulsion) to form the International-Communist League (I-CL), while covering up differences on the Russian question (Workers Power is state capitalist), the Labour Party and Ireland. The Workers Fight/Workers Power marriage of convenience came apart shortly before its first anniversary, having discovered unbridgeable disagreements over ... Ireland and the Labour Party.

The WSL was in many respects the most serious of the split-offs from the "far-left" Big Three (SWP, IMG and WRP). The harsh contradiction between its claims to Trotskyist orthodoxy and its economist practice clearly labeled the WSL as a group heading for an explosion. And it was initially open to political discussion with other avowed anti-Pabloists. Its October 1975 document, "Fourth International -- Problems and Tasks", sought to re-evaluate the history of the post-war Trotskyist movement and to serve as a basis for discussions with other tendencies, "especially those expelled from the IC" (published in the "Trotskyism Today" supplements to *Socialist Press* nos 21-23).

The iSt responded to this invitation with a letter (dated 17 June 1976) pointing to the WSL's softness toward social democracy and focusing on our analysis of the formation of the deformed workers states (particularly the methodologically key case of Cuba), as well as reviewing our relations with Healy's IC. The letter also attacked the workerist view that the degeneration of the IC or any tendency could simply be ascribed to its petty-bourgeois composition. Although this was the only reply to the WSL's offer of discussions, the iSt letter was not circulated even to the NC for over a year.

However, the aggressive propaganda work of the LSG made it impossible to simply seal off the WSL against Spartacism. The first fruit of these efforts was an amendment from the Liverpool branch to the international resolution at the WSL's first annual conference in December 1976. Although flawed by its attachment to WSL workerism and hence hostile to the iSt's regroupment perspective, it nonetheless demanded recognition of the principled approach to the Cuban Revolution taken by the Revolutionary Tendency in the American SWP. This was clearly counterposed to the Thornett leadership's position that there had existed only two views on Cuba: the Pablists' enthusing for Castro and Healy's myopic denial that a revolution had taken place at all.

The leadership urged the conference delegates to reject the amendment, not because it was wrong (in fact they claimed to agree with it), but to prevent the resolution from turning into a book. But when the membership voted to include this amendment, the only successful motion against the platform during the proceedings, Thornett and his lieutenants simply buried it, so that the resolution as amended never saw the light of day. Although this issue had no immediate consequence, it was indicative of the WSL leaders' frenzied reaction to anything smacking of Spartacism.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

(Reprinted from Spartacist Britain no 1, April 1978)



New York, 1974: Spartacist tendency built international support for British miners' strike.

Socialist League. The iSt assessed the split tentatively at the time:

"At present the WSL is most clearly defined negatively.... While its future programmatic course is not definitely predictable, the WSL's failure to develop the internal struggle against Healy much beyond the democracy issue, and its rejection of Healyite 'ultra-leftism' while maintaining some of the most rightist-revisionist aspects of the SLL/WRP, would seem to define the WSL as a split to the right from a badly deformed and characteristically English-centered version of fake 'Trotskyism'." ("After Healy, What? WSL Adrift", *WV* no 69, 23 May 1975)

The Trotskyist Faction, writing three years later, confirms this diagnosis: "The WSL's break from Healyite maximalism was, in the final analysis, a break toward economism and minimalism" (INDORP).

While still inside the WRP, Thornett's opposition (centred in Oxford) had linked up with another dissident clot in London at whose head stood Alan Clinton. Clinton was noteworthy for his rightist grumblings at the WRP's decision to stand candidates against Labour during the 1974 general elections, while Thornett was more interested in resurrecting the transitional demand of workers control of production. The politically heterogeneous lash-up between Clinton and Thornett was an early expression of indifference to programme which in the WSL was later to harden into purposeful confusionism.

The combination of the glamour of an influential, although localised, industrial fraction and its claim to defend orthodox Trotskyism attracted to the WSL in its early period a series of leftward moving groups. The most important source for these regroupments came from former members of Tony Cliff's International Socialists (IS -- now Socialist Workers Party [SWP]) who were breaking from the IS' social-democratic workerism in the direction of Trotskyism. The majority of these elements -- out of which was to crystallise the core of the later Trotskyist Faction -- passed briefly through the Revolutionary Communist Group (RCG).

The RCG at its formation in mid-1974 had also declaimed loudly on the importance of programme. The initial components of this group originated in the Revolutionary Opposition, expelled from the IS in 1973, and had seen at first hand the consequences of a mindless worship of spontaneity which produced an organisation whose net caught everything and held nothing. They were joined in the first months of 1975 by nine members of the heterogeneous Left Opposition (also formerly of the IS), which had split in four directions in December 1974. Iconoclastically dismissing all past struggles to construct the Fourth International, the RCG under its guru David Yaffe was principally an academic debating society organised as study groups to write a new programme.

Lacking a shared programme yet requiring a minimum of common activity, the RCG was easy prey for a trio of supporters of the American SWP who elaborated a regimen of single-issue campaigns on women, on Ireland, solidarity work with Chile and subsequently South Africa. In reaction against this reformist single-issuism and attracted by Thornett's credentials as a workers

Spartacist League marches on May Day



May Day contingents of the Spartacist League in Sydney (photo) and Melbourne provided an intransigent communist alternative to the kaleidoscope of opportunists, from Stalinist peaceniks and Maoist patriots to "Trotskyist" ecologists, on May Day 1978. Wherever SL supporters marched, sales of *Australasian Spartacist* were brisk. In Sydney, 206 copies of ASP no 53 were sold; in Melbourne, 108; in Newcastle, 53. In Adelaide a sales team of two sold about 35, for a national total of over 400. Contrary to the wishful thinking of revisionists of various hues, there is an audience for the authentic voice of bolshevism in Australia: our program is the program of the future -- the undiluted program of world proletarian, communist revolution!

ASp photo

Maoists...

Continued from page eight

REM rejects the Marxist analysis of the state -- including a proletarian state -- as based on the existing property relations and not on the ideology or psychology of its rulers. At the most basic level the restoration of the monarchy in France in the 1820s did not mean a return to feudalism and the undoing of the work of the bourgeois French Revolution. The Maoist mumbo-jumbo about so-called "Class Struggle within the Communist Parties" whereby "revisionists" in the upper echelons of the party and the state can more or less peacefully restore capitalism simply runs the film of reformism in reverse.

Having broken from Peking not on the basis of a political break from the bureaucracy but on the basis of Mao's death, the REM must try to reconcile its "r-r-revolutionary" distaste for the CPA(ML)'s "domestic" line with the doctrines of

the Chairman which fostered it. The REM supports the reactionary role Peking has played in betraying the international proletariat around the world, but wishes to avoid getting its hands too dirty at home.

Thus a document entitled "Three Worlds" by one "A Ward" devotes two-thirds of its fifty pages to a theoretical defence of the "Three Worlds Theory" against the Albanians (and undoubtedly against the pro-Albania elements within REM) and the remainder to a denunciation of the Hill leadership ("some people") as "hens" and "flunkies" for putting it into practice in Australia.

How "Three Worlds Theory" makes Fraser "progressive"

To squirm out of having to cosy up to the anti-Soviet (but eminently unpopular) Fraser, the Ward document attempts to create a completely artificial division between the "international class struggle" and the "domestic class struggle", agreeing of course that the Soviet Union is the "main danger" internationally, just not here. To demonstrate that it has no qualms about supporting the reactionary anti-Soviet alliance overseas, the document engages in the most absurd and disgusting whitewash of US imperialism, in the process illustrating the REM's acute national parochialism:

"If those US forces [in Europe] are not a factor for defence then what are they for... Perhaps they are there to oppose the people's revolution in the European countries? No doubt they would, but at present there is no civil war raging... We have opposed US and NATO forces in Europe in the past, and will undoubtedly do so in the future. But that does not change the fact that they are, in relation to the Soviet Union, a factor for defence."

In other words, US bases in Australia must be opposed but in capitalist Europe, where the class struggle is at a much higher tempo, US bases are just fine -- "there is no civil war raging". Nor will there be if these "r-r-revolutionaries" have a say in it.

The REM vehemently defends itself against charges that it is "soft" on the Soviet Union by boasting that:

"We were not put off supporting greater Australian defence preparations, and collective security against Soviet aggression when some of today's anti-Soviet heroes were denouncing Fraser for 'increasing' the defence budget..." (*Rebel*, October 1977)

In the name of fighting Soviet "hegemonism" it is more than prepared to build up the *bourgeois* military, the mailed fist of the class enemy. Where it does draw the line, however, is in *labelling* Fraser "progressive", which admittedly would not win it any popularity in the left line milieu. They appeal to Mao for historical precedent, only to have it stand up and kick them in the face. They attack the "absurd" CPA(ML) position that:

"The Prime Minister Fraser and other pro-U.S. diehards have a certain progressive role to play, both externally and internally (our emphasis). (We are not aware of Mao Tsetung having ever described Chiang Kai-shek or other diehards as having a certain progressive role to play internally)." (REM statement, "Opinions on some international questions")

"Absurd"? Here then some Mao Tse-tung unrehearsed:

"Without the Kuomintang it would be inconceivable to undertake and pursue the War of Resistance. In the course of its glorious history, the Kuomintang has been responsible for the overthrow of the Ch'ing, the establishment of the Three Policies of uniting with Russia, with the Communist Party, and with the workers and peasants, and the great revolution of 1926-27. Today it is once again leading the great anti-Japanese war. It enjoys the historic heritage of the Three People's Principles; it has had two great leaders in succession -- Mr Sun Yat-sen and Mr Chiang Kai-shek..." ("Report to the Sixth Plenum of the Central Committee of the CCP", October 1938; S Schram, ed, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, Penguin)

Of course the REM might be excused for being "unaware" of such utterances; this passage was completely omitted from the repeatedly rewritten *Selected Works*. As for the 1926-27 revolution, which Mao calls "great", it involved the crushing of the Chinese proletariat by the "great Mr Chiang" -- into whose Kuomintang the CCP had liquidated under Stalin's orders.

The seeming divergence in the REM's talk of "independence meaning socialism" from the Stalinist schema of two-stage revolution -- exemplified by Mao's bloc with the Kuomintang -- reflects little more than an empirical recognition that Fraser is not about to join its united front. And what about the revolution? How is the proletariat to be mobilised to achieve its dictatorship? On this the REM offers nothing but "r-r-revolutionary" rhetoric and minimalist "mass campaigns, to make, for example, unem-

ployment and the economic crisis an issue of mass struggle". When an SL supporter at an MIS film evening following the May Day march indicated that demands such as for a sliding scale of hours and wages to fight unemployment would be part of a program to mobilise the working class, Langer recoiled in horror, claiming that such demands would simply create illusions that this was possible under capitalism. This is not communism, but reformism in fear of itself.

The Comintern of Lenin and Trotsky had a different approach:

"In place of the minimum programme of the reformists and centrists the Communist International puts the struggle for the concrete needs of the proletariat, for a system of demands which in their totality disintegrate the power of the bourgeoisie, organise the proletariat, represent stages in the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship, and each of which expresses in itself the need of the broadest masses, even if the masses are not yet consciously in favour of the proletarian dictatorship." ("Theses on Tactics")

The Cultural Revolution -- an anti-Leninist heritage

It was the Cultural Revolution which was the decisive political experience of the leading REM cadre in their journey from New Left student radicalism to Stalinism. The "Chinese road to socialism" -- epitomised by the Cultural Revolution -- was seen as the revolutionary anti-thesis of Khrushchevite "peaceful coexistence", and the "economism" and "theory of the productive forces" (rapid industrialisation) which they believed had paved the way for revisionism in the Soviet Union. More importantly, to impatient petty-bourgeois radicals, it held out the promise of an immediate leap to communist egalitarianism, without the material prerequisites for achieving the technological and cultural level necessary for classless society.

The "militant" posture of the Cultural Revolution period, best exemplified by Lin Piao's "Long Live the Victory of the People's War", was the response to the failure of preceding Chinese foreign policy and to the threat posed by the massive escalation of the American intervention in Vietnam during 1965. A grouping around Liu Shao-chi, Peng Chen and PLA chief-of-staff Lo Jui-cheng advocated a policy of reconciliation with the Soviet Union in order to get military aid and a forward defence posture along the lines of the Korean war. Mao and Lin pushed the "people's war" and "self-reliance" line. But behind the latter group's greater verbal militancy lay a tacit pledge to US imperialism not to unite with the Soviet Union and not to intervene in Vietnam as long as the US would leave China alone -- to build "socialism" in its own country. For the Vietnamese, self-reliance meant a call to *de-escalate* the war, to leave industrial and population centres defenceless since their defence depended in large part on the use of Soviet military equipment which the Chinese no longer allowed to be transported over their territory.

The Sino-US detente was on. In 1968 the CCP discovered that the Soviet Union had gone "capitalist" twelve years earlier, and in 1971, the United States became only one of two superpowers. Soon after the Nixon visit the USSR became the "most dangerous". It is perversely ironic that for all the talk of armed struggle, self-reliance and people's war, the Cultural Revolution laid the necessary basis of the rapprochement with US imperialism and for all of China's foreign policy since then.

What self-reliance meant for the Chinese working masses was a mobilisation of petty-bourgeois student youth in the Red Guards, as a battering ram against the living conditions of the Chinese proletariat in order to extract the economic surplus needed for modernising a backward country with its own meagre resources. All this the Maoists called putting "politics in command", "never forgetting the class struggle" and "combating economism". Yet it was this reactionary throwback to the "barracks socialism" of the utopian socialists which Marx had decisively repudiated 130 years earlier which appealed to New Left radicals throughout the West, including the present cadre of the REM. The return of Teng and the more orthodox Stalinist economic policies associated with him could only mean, given the

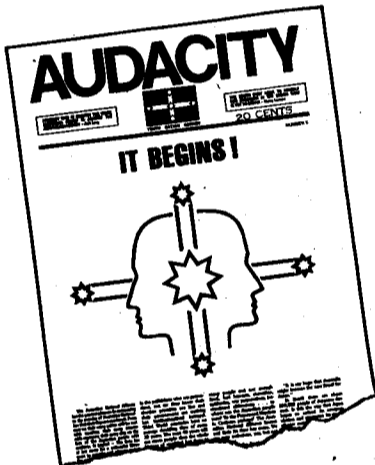
Free Hugo Blanco!

In the wake of a general strike on 22-23 May, the Peruvian regime arrested over 2000 strikers and deported political and trade-union leaders, including long-time Peruvian peasant leader Hugo Blanco, into the hands of the murderous dictatorship in Argentina. Blanco's life is in mortal danger.

Telegrams demanding the release of Blanco and the other victimised militants, should be sent to: General Jorge Videla, Casa Rosada, Buenos Aires, Argentina. For international labour action to release Hugo Blanco and all the deported Peruvian prisoners! Release the thousands of arrested strikers in Peru! Down with political repression in Peru and Argentina!

Fascists vie with Maoists for Eureka flag

A challenger has emerged to claim the standard which has come to be synonymous with Australian Maoism, the Eureka flag. And the identity of the Maoists' rival is a telling indictment of the reactionary politics of Australian patriotism which the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) and its recent split-off, the Red Eureka Movement, have cloaked in "Marxist-Leninist" verbiage. Under the very same blue-and-white flag the recently surfaced "Australian National Alliance" (and its paper *Audacity*) pushes its sinister White Australia racism and fascist ultra-nationalism, readily acknowledging that the Eureka flag's true "glorious" history is one of anti-Asian pogroms and "Yellow Peril" chauvinism. And the fascists are confident of beating out their competition: "Once ... the public hear that a right-wing group is using the Eureka Flag the sounds of Maoists ripping the stickers off the backs of their cars will be deafening" (*Audacity* no 5).



Fascism under the Southern Cross: *Audacity* pushes "White Australia" racist filth.

It would indeed be a gain if the emergence of this fascist band impelled some Maoists to repudiate the patriotic anti-Sovietism to which their allegiance to Peking has led them. But, as illustrated when *Vanguard* (18 May) described the sale of a *Vanguard* subscription to an unconstructed (!) DLP supporter, the Maoists are already patently aware of the thoroughly reactionary allies their "anti-imperialist united front" seeks out. The sale was clinched by explaining that *Vanguard* "is calling strongly for the united front against the menace of Soviet social-imperialism".

That fascists can lay claim to the emblem of the radical-nationalist republicanism of the Eureka Stockade, demonstrates irrefutably that Australian patriotism has long since lost any progressive content. Whatever banner the fascists claim, they will one day be trampled under foot along with it by the workers, marching under the red banner of international communist revolution.



WV exclusive:

The inside story of the split in the US Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party. In two parts -- 25 cents each

Available from: Spartacist League, GPO Box 3473, Sydney, NSW, 2001

Subscribe to Workers Vanguard

1 year (48 issues) \$20 airmail \$5 surface

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

REM's Maoist idealism, full-scale capitalist restoration. In fact the "capitalist roaders", both Liu and Teng, merely represented a *bureaucratic* policy which was based on the same premise of building "socialism in one country", equally wedded to the defence of the bureaucracy's power.

False nostalgia for the Cultural Revolution will not keep the REM together for long; rhetoric and evasion will not substitute for program in providing it direction. If the cadre of the REM fail to confront the questions which brought them to their present impasse, they will simply retrace a history of disorientation. At the MIS film night one REM member found himself face-to-face with a Spartacist League member whom three years earlier, at LaTrobe University, he had attempted to bash to silence in order to stifle our revolutionary criticism of the CPA(ML)'s social-patriotism. Political opponents may be silenced temporarily, but history is relentless.

The quandary of the REM is that, having cut itself off from the Maoist "socialist motherland" its Maoism loses its only coherence. Those REMers whose revolutionary will has not been completely eroded by years of justifying betrayals must confront the Stalinists' "Trotskyite" bogey. If they do so seriously they will find that there is a program capable of mobilising the proletariat around its felt needs in the struggle for power, based on the revolutionary tradition of the early Comintern. There is a program capable of defending the gains of the Chinese proletariat without sacrificing the struggles of their class brothers everywhere else; in fact it can only be done by extending those struggles from the standpoint of the world proletarian revolution. This is the program of Trotskyism, the Leninism of our time, the program of the Spartacist League. ■

Palestine...

Continued from page three

insisted: "Marxism can never be reconciled with nationalism, be it even of the 'most just', 'purest', most refined and civilised brand. In place of all forms of nationalism Marxism advances internationalism" ("Critical Remarks on the National Question").

Only the overthrow of capitalism by the Hebrew and Arab workers can make possible a just and democratic settlement by replacing the program of bourgeois-nationalist exclusivism with the program of proletarian internationalism. This means that in the fight for the Palestinians' national rights, Trotskyists stand *irreconcilably counterposed* to the leadership of the petty-bourgeois nationalists and their program; for the *class independence* of the Palestinian workers from the PLO and Arab workers from their own rulers; and for *class unity* with Hebrew workers, whose only hope for escape from the brutal cycle of bloody war and capitalist exploitation is to renounce Zionism and side with their Arab class brothers against the Zionist state.

Myers unintentionally gives the lie to the SWP's "Trotskyist" facade when, in passing, he quotes from a past *Direct Action* polemic the rhetorical question: what could be said "of someone who in 1948 took a neutral position or supported Israel because the Arabs were led by reactionaries?" (see *Direct Action*, 14 April 1977). What would Myers say about one group which at the time took a revolutionary defeatist position toward both sides in the 1948 war -- the Palestinian section of the Fourth International (*Fourth International*, May 1948)? Today the fight for Trotskyist parties in the Middle East as well as Australia, for class independence from the PLO -- the Palestinian Kuomintang -- and for a socialist federation of the Middle East is left to the genuine Trotskyists of the international Spartacist tendency. Forward to the rebirth of the Fourth International! ■

Neutron bomb...

Continued from page two

The mounting imperialist military preparations, prepared for by Carter's "human rights" propaganda offensives, while focused on Europe is actually quite general in scope. To begin with Carter, who campaigned with a promise to cut defence spending, now proposes to raise

this spending to \$173 billion by 1983. In addition to the NATO buildup, Brown's 1979 budget calls for a specialised "rapid reaction strike force" stationed outside of Europe, consisting of two army airborne divisions and a marine amphibious division totaling 100,000 men. Such an army would enable the imperialists to make brief forays into the Persian Gulf, Saudi oilfields or sub-Saharan Africa. At the same time, Carter has announced at least a year's delay in his promised withdrawal of troops from South Korea.

More significant is the inexorable movement of the Pentagon toward a "nuclear first-strike capability" against the Soviet Union. For some time US air force generals have been clamouring for the production of a new generation of ballistic missiles with accuracies far exceeding those required for the destruction of a city -- ie the sort of accuracy required to destroy a Soviet intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in its launching silo. Thus Brown has given the go-ahead for production of the MK-12A warhead and quintupled funding for an ICBM fired from a mobile launcher, the so-called MX missile.

The stated rationale for the latter decision is an alleged increase in the ratio of Soviet to US land-based strategic forces. This is a transparent fabrication. For one thing, it is the Soviet Union which should be worried as its ICBM force is predominantly land-based and in a low state of readiness. Furthermore, as *New York Times* military analyst Drew Middleton noted in a 10 October article, the expenditure of at least \$30 billion for such increased mobility in land-based ICBMs is outlandish, as the US imperialists currently admit to possessing 656 very mobile missiles aboard submarines. MX's real selling point is that it will carry seven to fourteen independently deliverable and extremely accurate warheads as compared to the three aboard the currently deployed Minuteman III ICBM.

The pacifist "madness" of the SWP

The Pentagon's drive to qualitatively surpass the Soviet Union in nuclear weapons technology highlights all the more urgently the Trotskyist call for the unconditional military defence of the deformed workers states. Yet in an article by leading theoretician Joseph Hansen, the fake-Trotskyist US Socialist Workers Party (SWP) last year used the "madness" of the nuclear arms race for theoretically repudiating even its paper position on Soviet defensism, declaring that "Military defense" has obviously become meaningless" (quoted in *ASP* no 47, October 1977) with the acquisition by both the US and USSR of stockpiles of nuclear weapons capable of destroying humanity (referred to as "Armageddon One"). Arguing that all military expenditure and planning is now "madness", Hansen placed equal blame for the arms race on the US and USSR and advised the Soviet Union that its only sure defence was "political", urging it to take the lead in nuclear disarmament talks and thus "expose" the imperialists' war drive.

This is a particularly stupid pseudo-technological argument, designed to appeal to the bourgeois liberals whom the SWP chases. What is decisive is not the totality of stockpiled nuclear weapons but the ability of minimising any effective response. Hence the Pentagon's urgent drive to develop the MX missile and a "first-strike" capability. Perhaps somewhat embarrassed the SWP sought to step back a little -- but only a little -- from Hansen's *blatant* repudiation of orthodox Trotskyism. An article in the 17 March (US) *Militant* by David Frankel, echoed in a recent leaflet ("Disarmament" -- The question is: Who will disarm whom?) distributed by the Australian SWP at the "People's Disarmament Conferences" held in Melbourne and Sydney, attempts to place the "blame" for the arms race on the US. Frankel then goes on to argue, however, that a real revolutionary government would accept "slight military disadvantages in the interests of helping to clarify the political issues facing the masses around the world" by, for example, encouraging "a movement of hundreds of thousands in opposition to nuclear power". Solemnly proclaiming that "the question of disarmament cannot be separated from the general anticapitalist struggle", the SWP disarmament leaflet agrees with Frankel that "the present anti-uranium movement is a good example of a mass anticapitalist struggle ... against imperialist military madness".

What idiocy! The imperialists' military buildup is no "madness" but part of a calculated design to destroy the workers states. Following Hansen's lead, Frankel is in effect advocating that the USSR (and China) give up certain "slight" military advantages to cater to the pacifist anti-technological delusions of sections of the petty bourgeoisie. And which side of the line would the SWP be on were this "mass anti-capitalist" movement to prevent the shipment of Australian uranium to the USSR or China -- with the "anti-capitalist" "greenies" or with the deformed workers states? We can only agree with Trotsky's observation: "Whoever combines phrases on the social revolution with agitation for pacifist disarmament is no proletarian revolutionist but a pitiful victim of petty-bourgeois

prejudice" ("To Young Communists and Socialists Who Wish to Think", *Writings* 1935-36)

In fact, encouraging grossly reformist, pacifist movements and accepting military disadvantage is precisely what Stalinism does -- and in a big way -- from its withdrawal of forces from the western borders of the USSR prior to World War II to SALT negotiations today.

Contrary to the reformist illusion, disarmament agreements are either meaningless public-relations gimmicks or part of the imperialist military offensive. Under the terms of the SALT I agreement the US tripled its inventory of strategic warheads by MIRVing its ICBMs. Carter's SALT offensive of last year called for a virtual cessation of Soviet strategic arms programs, and the outline of the SALT II agreement yet to be finalised will allow the US to load its B-52s (or 747s) with deadly Cruise missiles, deploy the ultramodern Trident submarine and increase the number of its strategic launchers as well. Even under these terms, Henry Jackson has vowed to lead a (probably successful) fight against ratification.

Similarly, at the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction negotiations, the United States is seeking to strengthen its military posture. These talks have been stalled since 1975 when NATO proposed that in return for its removal of 1000 tactical nuclear weapons and 29,000 US troops, the Soviets should remove an entire army from East Germany!

To a revolutionist, Stalinism's crimes include the acceptance and promulgation of bourgeois "disarmament" and "detente" schemes which put the deformed and degenerated workers states at a military disadvantage. Thus as an integral part of the Trotskyist movement's defence of the gains of the social revolutions embodied in the Soviet, East European, Chinese, Cuban and Indochinese deformed workers states, revolutionaries have an obligation to denounce these schemes and expose those pro-imperialist reformists who foster them. Above all, the successful defence and extension of the gains of the 1917 October Revolution requires construction of Trotskyist parties in the Soviet Union and deformed workers states, to lead the working masses in political revolution to oust the counterrevolutionary Stalinist bureaucracies. ■

(adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 204, 5 May 1978)

Stop witchhunt in ALP

On June 3 the state conference of the NSW ALP moved to endorse an Administrative Committee vote to expel any ALP member associated with "the production or distribution" of *Direct Action* (paper of the Socialist Workers Party). This action is a blatant and despicable attack on the freedom of discussion and criticism within the ALP.

A petition protesting against this anti-democratic purge attempt is presently being circulated by *Direct Action* supporters. However, the supporters of *Direct Action* have sought to focus their "defence" campaign on their proven servility to that same pro-capitalist bureaucracy which is now trying to boot them out. One leaflet distributed outside the state conference by *Direct Action* supporters pointed out how *Direct Action* lauded the 1972 capitalist government run by the ALP labour lieutenants of capital as a "big victory for the working class and its allies". The reality is that the left-reformist views expressed in *Direct Action* do not threaten the ALP tops at all! But the witchhunt against *Direct Action* is aimed at stifling all opposition from the left to the pro-capitalist bureaucracy. It must be vigorously opposed.

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

Spartacist League

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

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



"Gang of Four" rebels split from CPA(ML)

What is the Red Eureka Movement?

By dying when he did in September 1976 Mao Tse-tung may have inadvertently performed a service to the cause of international proletarian revolution. For in a very real sense the nails in his coffin were also those in that of the international Maoist movement. Had Mao died some six years earlier, before the People's Republic of China broke out of the diplomatic isolation of the Cultural Revolution period and before he had lent his personal authority to a series of manifest and bloody betrayals, including the detente with US imperialism, it would have been far more difficult to debunk the myth that he was a communist revolutionary.

US president Nixon's enthusiastic welcome in Peking in the midst of a major US aerial offensive against North Vietnam in 1971 caused the first of a series of wrenching crises which brought mounting disillusionment and fragmentation to the international Maoist movement. Several years later, repelled by the Chinese line of unity with German militarism and NATO against the Soviet Union and China's open alliance with South Africa and the CIA in Angola, a number of significant European New Left Maoist formations, such as the Portuguese UDP (Democratic People's Union), adopted an openly "critical" posture.

Mao's death and the purge of the "Gang of

Four" -- and with it, the last remnants of the Cultural Revolution under whose ensign the "Gang" rose to influence -- signalled the coup de grace for any semblance of international Maoist unity. With the immense personal authority of Mao gone, an international schism surfaced between China and Albania. Albania denounced the "Theory of the Three Worlds", clearly identified with Mao, which categorically states that the Soviet Union is the "main enemy" everywhere. Faced with the hegemonic role of US imperialism, most of the Latin American groups joined with Albania, as did some in Europe, and the Communist Party of New Zealand is following suit.



Kang Sheng, Chiang Ching, Chou En-lai and Lin Biao with Mao in 1966 during the Cultural Revolution.

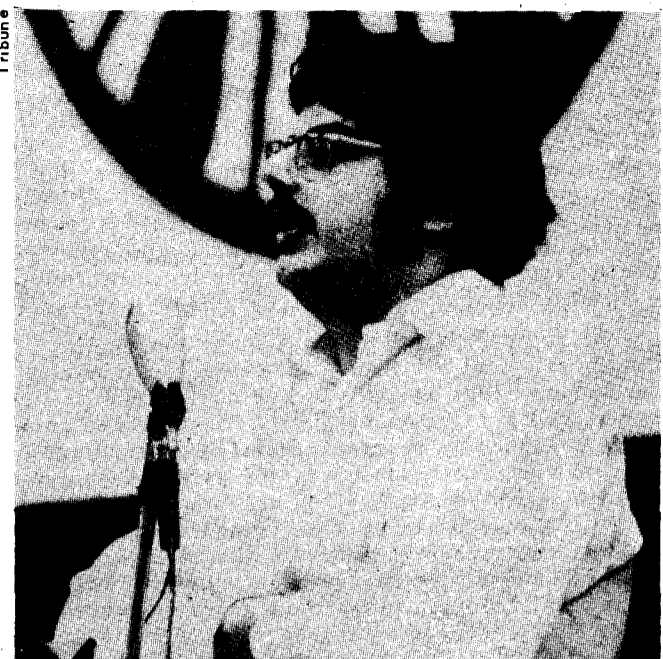
The Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) (CPA[ML]) has not. For eighteen years, ever since its stodgy barrister chairman, EF Hill, led a split out of the pro-Moscow (now "independently" reformist) Communist Party, the CPA(ML) has stuck unswervingly by Peking -- the unchallenged voice of "Mao-thought" in Australia, willing to be reduced to a marginal sect within the labour movement, to applaud even such hated reactionaries as Fraser and Anthony in order to adhere to every twist and turn in Peking.

But at this year's May Day march in Melbourne -- long the centre of Maoist strength -- there were two Maoist contingents, one marching under

the traditional blue Eureka flag, a smaller one marching under red Eureka flags, carrying a banner which demanded not just "independence" but "socialism" as well. The name of the new group is, appropriately, the Red Eureka Movement (REM). A week earlier, at a 29 April panel forum on China, former CPA(ML) member Albert Langer announced publicly his solidarity with the fallen "Gang of Four" and proclaimed that China, though still "socialist", was now on the "capitalist road". At the same time he reaffirmed his support for China's treacherous foreign policy. Langer, a well-known radical student leader at Monash University and the most prominent Maoist figure during the turbulent student and antiwar struggles of the late sixties, is the leading figure in the REM.

"God's gift to the working class?" The public emergence of the REM and the "broad" front group aligned with it, the Movement for Independence and Socialism (MIS), was foreshadowed by months of subterranean in-fighting. The bizarre red Eureka flags first appeared in late 1976. Then came vitriolic denunciations in *Vanguard* of unidentified "r-r-revolutionaries" who "talk endlessly about confronting the state power immediately to achieve socialism", who pro-

peatedly been "warmly hailed" by Mao himself. In a damning indictment of its own association with the CPA(ML), the REM asserts that, "Some comrades have been waiting for more than a decade to get directions 'from above', but have received none" (*Rebel*, vol 2, no 1). For ten years! Will the REM now try to say that the CPA(ML) has just of late embarked on a course of "new revisionism"? Did the super-flunkey manage to hoodwink the great helmsman and the rest of the CCP leadership all these years? Of course not; for Mao this was a "good thing". What Mao needed and wanted in Australia was not revolutionaries, but precisely flunkeys.



Albert Langer during heyday of antiwar radicalism.

Central to Stalinist ideology is the identification of the programmatic interests of the international proletariat with those of a parasitic bureaucratic caste which holds power in a deformed workers state. The bureaucracy's international supporters are not the general staff of the revolutionary proletariat but the border guards of provincial "socialist construction".

Propelled into existence only by its identification with the losing one of two programmatically undifferentiable cliques in Peking, the politics of the REM and the split from which it emerged are at best murky. Most of the other "critical" Maoists at least broke empirically from one or another particularly egregious aspect of Chinese foreign policy. The REM is prepared to defend it all yet refuses to defend the current CCP leadership, whose policies are no different. In part the REM's composition is cliquist, centring on the cadre recruited along with Langer at Monash University, but encompassing different conflicting political strains and appetites.

While Langer is a staunch defender of the "Three Worlds Theory", the REM also includes strong proponents of the Albanian line. In addition there is an element within MIS, epitomised by one-time SDSer Harry Van Moorst, for whom the split and the MIS are undoubtedly an opportunity to distance themselves from the strictures and discipline of party politics. In particular the REM's rejection of Hill's single-minded concentration on "Australian independence" and the "main danger" of "Soviet social-imperialism", though in itself to the left of the CPA(ML), also reflects an opportunist desire to escape from the sectarian taint of orthodox Maoism in the broader left milieu.

Capitalist "restoration" and Maoist confusion

But what does the REM have to counterpose to the CPA(ML)? On almost every important question the REM is at best ambiguous and more often politically evasive. Indeed, except for the reference to a "coup d'etat" the REM has not bothered to present even a remotely serious explanation for the question which ostensibly impelled it into opposition -- the startling triumph of the "capitalist roaders" who are presumably bent on leading China down the road toward becoming a "dark fascist state". If we are to believe the REM, China (not to mention Vietnam), like Russia before it, is about to have "socialism" and the dictatorship of the proletariat overthrown by a "new bourgeoisie" with utterly ridiculous ease (though REM hasn't revealed how we are to know when this has happened).

The restoration of capitalism in China and Russia would require a massive social counter-revolution and civil war to destroy the collectivised property forms which would be at least as momentous and dramatic as the initial overthrow of capital. On this central question, t

Continued on page