



## Massive Black Strike Under Apartheid Reign of Terror

# South Africa Showdown

### Forge a Bolshevik Party!

Australian Prime Ministers, past and present, have been shooting their mouths off a lot lately about South African apartheid. Former Liberal Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser as co-chairman of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group (EPG) and present Labor PM Robert Hawke have been piously extolling the virtues of economic sanctions to pressure Pretoria into anti-apartheid reforms. Both are proven Cold War union busters and enemies of the Soviet Union and Vietnam. Both have administered the institutionalised murder of Australian Aborigines through cop terror, ghettoisation, unemployment and the grinding poverty, disease and death in the bantustan-like Aboriginal reserves. Both have proved themselves worthy of the vicious whites-only tradition of this white imperialist enclave in Asia. So what's going on? Quite simply they're trying desperately to avoid the revolution that South Africa so desperately needs. Hawke recently worried openly about moderate black South African "leaders" like Bishop Desmond Tutu losing control of the anti-apartheid struggle and said: "If we have any interest in seeing a South Africa that is not going to depend on the weapons and support of the Soviets rather than the West, then we've got to be associated now with the process of change" (Age, 5 June). Fraser, Hawke and Foreign Minister Bill Hayden are the enemies of South African black workers, Australian workers, Asian workers, Soviet workers. They're worried solely about "stabilising" the southern hemisphere for white imperialism and anti-Sovietism. We reprint below the article "South African Showdown" from *Workers Vanguard* no 406, 20 June 1986 with a program for black-centred workers revolution in South Africa and international proletarian action to ensure that the imperialists fail in their aim.

JUNE 17 — South Africa's black masses observed the tenth anniversary of the Soweto rebellion, which was bloodily repressed by the apartheid state, with a general strike on June 16. The largest ever "stayaway", involving millions of black workers and shutting down major urban centers, was carried out in defiance of the regime's banning of any and all



Apartheid terror rumbles through Crossroads as black settlement burns, leaving more than 70,000 homeless.

Soweto commemorations and under draconian nationwide "state of emergency" conditions. As we go to press, the near-total blackout of information from South Africa leaves only scraps of information gleaned from dispatches self-censored by the media to conform to apartheid *baas* P W Botha's emergency restrictions. In Paris, African National Congress (ANC) leader Oliver Tambo said that, contrary to official reports of "only" eleven killed on Monday, there were "unconfirmed reports of massive slaughter".

Film footage that has gotten through shows the streets of Johannesburg virtually deserted, as were the trains and buses that normally bring hundreds of thousands from Soweto to work in the factories, shops and offices. Reportedly the strike was completely effective in the Eastern Cape region, including blacks, coloureds (mixed race) and Indians. One business source reported that up to 90 percent of the nation's black workers participated in the strike. In Durban, 40 percent of the workers reportedly stayed away today as well. However, mass demonstrations and the insurrectionary actions Botha claimed were being prepared by "radical and revolutionary elements" apparently did not materialize. In the June 16 test of strength between the Pretoria regime and the combative black masses, it appears that there has been a cold standoff, for now.

Botha declared the "state of emergency" June 12 after the bogus "parliaments" of coloured and Indian representatives balked at giving Law and Order Minister Louis Le Grange martial law powers. In the early hours of the 12th, security forces rounded up at least 1,200 anti-apartheid militants, including leaders of the United Democratic Front (UDF), the president of the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) Saths Cooper, Piroshaw Camay of the Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA), and clergymen. During the next days, over 4,000 were "detained", including many lower and middle-level officials of black unions and anti-apartheid groups, as well as the secretary general of the South African Catholic Bishops Conference and members of the End Conscription Campaign, a white group that opposes the draft.

Under the regulations, detainees may be held incommunicado indefinitely, and no security official can be tried for any actions under the "emergency", including murder. The

offices of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) as well as those of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) were ransacked. Winnie Mandela, wife of imprisoned ANC leader Nelson Mandela, was barred from speaking to journalists and restricted to her house from 6pm to 8am daily. Reporters were completely barred from the black townships and prohibited from reporting any "subversive" statements (such as a strike call), any actions by the police or army, or the names of detainees. On the 16th telephones were cut off for most of the day in the townships around Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria, Port Elizabeth and Durban.

Pretoria geared up for repression on a massive, bloody scale. In an interview on ABC News, T J Swanepoel, the police commander who ordered the first shot fired in the massacre of over 1,000 black youth during the 1976 Soweto rebellion, said he would do it again: "I will kill a thousand people if I can stop the violence..." On June 15, police fired tear gas into a gathering of nearly 1,000 commemorating Soweto at the St Athans Road Moslem Mosque in Athlone, a mixed-race suburb of Cape Town. According to the UPI: "Terrified worshippers broke doors and windows attempting to escape and several older people and children fainted and had to be dragged from the building, witnesses said. Police waiting outside the mosque beat fleeing worshippers with whips." At St Nicholas Anglican Church in the Cape township of Elsie's River, 250 were arrested (including many children) by police who called the service a "subversive" meeting.

Despite Botha's reign of terror, the massive strike was carried off. In the 20-month-long confrontation between the racist regime and deepening anti-apartheid revolt, police-state measures have failed to cow the oppressed into submission. Importantly, repression could not prevent the two previous general strikes, in the Transvaal in November 1984 and nationally in the recent heroic May Day strike. But as the prospect for bloody one-sided civil war looms ever

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# South Africa...

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larger, the question of power — who shall rule the country — is posed starkly. In confrontations such as this, the need for revolutionary leadership is more urgent than ever.

South Africa today has the smell of a revolutionary situation. In Lenin's classic definition, it's not enough that the masses can no longer live in the old way — their rulers must also be unable to rule in the old way. The government's actions are losing coherence, going in different directions at the same time, trying for piecemeal "reform" of apartheid, ordering brutal repression of anti-apartheid revolt, fantasizing about a separate Afrikaner state. Meanwhile the open fascists are growing in strength. There appears to be a loss of nerve at the top, the inability of the state to act as the general staff of a united ruling class. Which doesn't mean they're not ready for blood — on the contrary, genocide can be the result. Hitler came to power in part because of a loss of nerve of the German bourgeoisie. But rather than uniting around a bonaparte, the South African rulers seem to be thrashing around in wild factionalism.

The enormous potential power of the six-million-strong South African black proletariat has once again been demonstrated. "A general strike could bring the country to its knees in a couple of weeks", worried the chief labor specialist for the huge Anglo American mining and industrial conglomerate (*New York Times Magazine*, 15 June). And the black unions have discovered that they can't avoid politics. It all points to a revolutionary crisis brewing, but the key element for victory is missing. Unless the anti-apartheid revolt is organized along class lines, with the black proletariat led by a multiracial Bolshevik party, forged on the program of permanent revolution and leading the rest of the oppressed and disenfranchised in a fight for state power, the possibility of smashing the power of the white supremacist capitalist regime will be squandered, with hideous consequences.

## White Laager Digs In

While the nationalists of the main anti-apartheid grouping, the ANC, pursue a strategy of "pressure" on the regime (from without through imperialist economic sanctions, from within through the "policy of chaos", of making the townships "ungovernable"), Botha has increasingly responded to pressure from the right. Thus the South African bombing raids on the capitals of three black African border states, ostensibly aimed at ANC installations, in late May. Said Botha afterward: "South Africa has the capacity and the will to break the ANC.... We have only delivered the



Black unionists cheer founding of COSATU, November 1985.

first installment" (*New York Times*, 22 May).

A genuinely fascist far right has grown, largely at the expense of Botha's National Party (especially among the police). Hitlerite Eugene Terre'Blanche led his *Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging* (AWB — Afrikaner Resistance Movement) thugs in storming a National Party meeting just days after the bombing of the black states. From the shoulders of his stormtroopers, as the AWB's three-legged swastika flags filled the hall, Terre'Blanche ranted: "I want to tell the ANC: if you mess with the Boer Volk (people), we will blow you all

to hell" (*Times* [London], 23 May).

At the Crossroads squatter settlements near Cape Town, the regime is giving a taste of what it is prepared to unleash on the black population. For years Crossroads has stood as a symbol of resistance to the apartheid "influx control" which makes it illegal for the majority of blacks to move to the cities. The government has unsuccessfully been trying to force out most of the Crossroads population into a new black "township" ten miles further out of town — a deathtrap with only one access road and military bases on two sides. As they have throughout the country, the cops

spawned reactionary black vigilantes in Crossroads, called "widoekies" for the white armbands they wear, consisting primarily of black cops, common criminals and some shop owners, to be used against the militant township youth, the "comrades".

Between mid-May and mid-June, the police and army have backed up several thousand vigilantes in systematically destroying sections of Crossroads occupied by the "comrades", killing at least 65 with machetes and guns, torching thousands of shacks and leaving 70,000 homeless in Cape Town's winter rain and near-freezing temperatures. Pretoria's game here is clear, of portraying the events at Crossroads as "black on black violence". And Ronald Reagan joins in this pretext for terror, claiming, "It is blacks fighting against blacks" (*New York Times*, 14 June). As has been evident since the outset of the anti-apartheid revolt, Washington stands with its anti-Soviet ally in Pretoria, charged with policing the continent for the "free world".

This simple fact has not dissuaded the proponents of imperialist "sanctions" — who run the gamut from Bishop Desmond Tutu to the ANC and its "left" supporters. *Newsweek* (23 June) reported that "Tutu met with Botha for 90 minutes and appealed to him — in the name of Christianity and anticommunism — to lift the ban." Tutu emerged from the meeting with

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## ASp Sub Drive Success

Congratulations to participants in this year's *Australasian Spartacist* subscription drive. The five-week drive was extended into the sixth week to accommodate the Melbourne local's trip to Adelaide, netting 106 of their 511 points. Combined with the Sydney local's 376 points and 45 points at large, the national total reached an impressive 932 points for 186 percent of the quota. These totals include 68 points for subs to the Marxist working-class biweekly of the Spartacist League of the US (SL/US), and America's premier leftist paper, *Workers Vanguard*, 102 points for subs to the SL/US journal *Women and Revolution* (W&R), and 48 points for subs to other international Spartacist tendency publications. The popularity of W&R amongst our readers and friends here in Australia points to the question of women's oppression and special oppression generally in this brutally male chauvinist and Laborite nationalist country as an integral part of a revolutionary and internationalist perspective.

By far the biggest drawing cards for new subs were our powerful line against Reagan's anti-Soviet war provocations, particularly the terror bombings of Libya, and our

class-struggle defence of the BLF in the face of Labor's scabberding. Our reformist opponents (as opposed to damn near everyone else) thoroughly hated our slogan "Hawke is Thatcher in Drag!", but interestingly quite a few subscribed. Comrades returning from our most successful regional trip to Canberra (126 points) reported that students were hungry for leftist politics. On the campuses where we are active the most productive sub drive work was done at the Uni of New South Wales with 53 points. An exceptional 40 points in subs was sold to maritime workers in Melbourne, testimony in large part to our aggressive defence of the Vietnamese Revolution. Several ASp subs were sold on the BLF Footscray pool picket line in Melbourne. Among Sydney area unionists Fairfax metal workers who wanted to fight to defend the BLF bought the most subs.

Special congratulations go to our sub drive winner Lynne T from Melbourne with a spectacular 195.5 points. Runners up were Jenne K from Sydney and Toni S from Melbourne with 82.5 and 80 points respectively.

Welcome to our new readers and resubscribers.



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## SWP Assists Ustasha Penetration of Labour Movement

# Australia: Haven for Nazi War Criminals

The radio program "Nazis in Australia" during April and May performed a useful service in extensively documenting the history of a number of Nazi and Fascist war criminals who found a "free world" haven in Australia. The program produced by Mark Aarons, the son of former Communist Party leader Laurie Aarons, and John Loftus, a former investigator of the Office of Special Investigations (OSI) into Nazi war criminals in the US, was met by a thunder of pro-fascist apologetics from Kerry Packer's *Bulletin* magazine, BA Santamaria's National Civic Council and the Captive Nations crowd. For them the program was an example of some sort of "communist plot" against "decent" Australians. For them the real enemy is the USSR against which the imperialist bourgeoisies around the world are feverishly gearing up for war.

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP), who over the last four years have distinguished themselves as publicists in the labour movement for Croatian fascist Ustasha elements, chimed in

of Jews to the death camps. For decades he has been an important kingmaker in the NSW Liberal Party as head of the "uglies" faction. Another was Constantine Untaru who was a member of the Rumanian fascist Iron Guard whose members participated in murderous attacks on the Jewish community in Bucharest in 1941 during an abortive coup. Untaru became the long-time head of the Australian branch of the Assembly of Captive Nations. Yet another was Laszlo Megay, known as the "mass murderer of Ungvar", after the Hungarian town from which, as mayor, he oversaw and personally helped carry out the brutal deportation of thousands of Jews to Auschwitz. Before his death in the late 1950s he rose to a high position in the Liberal Party.

### Labor Welcomed Hitler's Killers

These are only the most well-known of Nazi flotsam and jetsam from the defeated wreckage of Hitler's Oper-

HDP paper Hrvatski Tjednik (April 19, 1983) glorifies Ustasha butcher Jure Francetic, leader of the Black Legion.



fascist monsters into the country and then frequently encouraged and patronised their continued organising efforts amongst their followers in the emigre communities. *We demand that Rover and Urbancic in particular — whose return has long been demanded by the Yugoslav government — be immediately deported to Yugoslavia to get swift justice.* All other fascist war criminals still resident should also be despatched forthwith to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to be tried by the surviving victims of their heinous crimes. We note that the Nazi mass murderers who fell into Soviet hands at the end of the war had all been hanged by 1946.

Cold War Prime Minister Hawke initially dismissed the whole affair before reluctantly setting a "one man, three month enquiry", a transparent cover up of Australian imperialism's complicity. His Labor government's imperialist big brother Reagan last year decided to re-cement the anti-Soviet alliance with resurgent West German imperialism over the graves of the SS murderers at Bitburg. For it must be understood by the working class internationally — and indeed by all decent humanity — that Reagan's insane drive to obliterate that world power that issued out of the October Revolution of 1917 leads inevitably to the rehabilitation of Nazism. The sight of a certified war criminal like Kurt Waldheim elected president of supposedly neutral "democratic" Austria can only embolden the fascist, old and

new, to take their place in Reagan and Hawke's crusade against what Waldheim himself called in 1944 "the ... danger from the East".

The SWP's pious claims about "non-existent" Ustasha activities are blatant and dangerous lies. Fascist war criminals in Australia are not only figureheads for fascist rejuvenation but active components of fascist terrorist activity. The history of Ustasha terror in Australia is well documented, including repeated bombings and other attacks on Yugoslav consulates, embassies, travel agencies, community functions, Serbian churches as well as political opponents. In the 1960s Ustasha terrorists even got caught out carrying out training sessions with the Australian army. And in 1964 and 1972, Australia was the base for Ustasha terrorist missions inside Yugoslavia. ASIO's collaboration with and protection of these Ustasha terrorists was exposed after Whitlam's Attorney-General Lionel Murphy's famous 1973 raid on ASIO headquarters. They've never forgotten — behind the current political vendetta against Murphy is undoubtedly ASIO and their CIA masters' thirst for revenge.

The "Nazis in Australia" program coincided with the mid-May trial of Andrija Artukovic, the notorious Nazi "Butcher of the Balkans" who was sentenced to death in Zagreb after finally being deported from the US.

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Workers News

SWP and HDP members selling papers together outside Croatian soccer match.

that the Ustasha is today a dead letter which "disintegrated in the early 1950s", and despite some "Mickey Mouse" attempts at terrorist training have "fizzled out" (*Direct Action* 7 May). The SWP are providing credentials for Ustasha fascist vermin in labour movement circles. The fascist scum from Eastern Europe who came to Australia found not only a safe, white-racist home to escape the justice of their victims but an operating base to plan and run their terrorist activities.

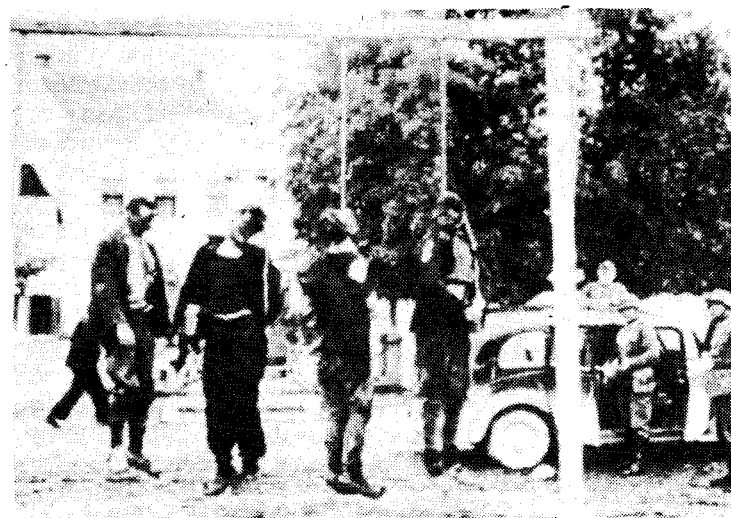
Who are some of these scum? Srecko Rover was a member of the "mobile court martials" of the Nazi puppet state of Croatia, under Ustasha Fuhrer Ante Pavelic. These death squads took part in the mass slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Jews, Gypsies, Serbs, Croats and Partisans carried out by the Nazis and Ustasha quislings. For three decades Rover has been a central and well-known leader of the Ustasha in Australia in its various manifestations. Lyenko Urbancic was a leading fascist publicist on behalf of the Slovenian puppet government which deported thousands

of Jews to the death camps. For decades he has been an important kingmaker in the NSW Liberal Party as head of the "uglies" faction. Another was Constantine Untaru who was a member of the Rumanian fascist Iron Guard whose members participated in murderous attacks on the Jewish community in Bucharest in 1941 during an abortive coup. Untaru became the long-time head of the Australian branch of the Assembly of Captive Nations. Yet another was Laszlo Megay, known as the "mass murderer of Ungvar", after the Hungarian town from which, as mayor, he oversaw and personally helped carry out the brutal deportation of thousands of Jews to Auschwitz. Before his death in the late 1950s he rose to a high position in the Liberal Party.

Successive governments, first Labor and then Liberal, welcomed these



World Jewish Congress



Tanjung

Lt. Kurt Waldheim (In centre, left photo) with Waffen SS in Yugoslavia, 1945. Yugoslav partisans hanged by Nazis, 1942 (right).

**For a Federated Workers Republic of Lanka and Eelam!**

# Sri Lanka Army Invades Tamil North

JUNE 1 — Vowing to “exterminate” the Tamil militants in the North of Sri Lanka, on May 17 the rightist government of JR Jayewardene mounted its largest military offensive ever against the Jaffna peninsula, stronghold of Tamil guerrillas fighting for a national homeland (“Eelam”) in the Eastern and Northern provinces of the island. The Tamil people of Sri Lanka are a national minority, distinguished from the majority Sinhalese by language and religion (Tamils are mainly Hindus while Sinhalese are mostly Buddhists). Some 9,000 troops of the mainly Sinhalese army advanced on Jaffna from three directions while army forces holed up in the old Dutch fort shelled the city. Aerial bombardment, strafing from helicopters and naval shelling of coastal villages have been going on for weeks, leaving hundreds of civilian casualties.

But JR’s offensive ground to a humiliating halt as the troops encountered fierce resistance from well-equipped Tamil guerrillas. The roads into Jaffna were mined and a key bridge blown up; the government forces, stopped at Elephant Pass, retreated into their fortified enclaves and launched another wave of bombing attacks to terrorize the Tamil population. As one Sinhalese com-



J R Jayewardene’s army tries to “exterminate” Tamil militants in Jaffna.

to its Tamil citizens. In the summer of 1983 many hundreds of Tamils were killed in Sinhalese communalist pogroms instigated and led by government thugs, which brought massive murder and destruction of Tamil-owned (and Indian-owned) property in Colombo. This was a calculated attack by the Sinhalese chauvinists on the economic interpenetration of the island’s peoples, intended to

exports for foreign currency. According to human rights workers, in the North and East there were 2,578 confirmed killings of civilians in the ten months up to February of this year; in the same period 12,105 Tamils were reported arrested and 547 “disappeared”. It is the Sinhalese chauvinist state which has dragged the country to the brink of civil war.

Jayewardene, having devoted months under a fictitious “cease-fire” to pacifying the Eastern region and building up the military, moved on the North with the intention of finally crushing the Tamil resistance and wiping out their cadres. The openly pro-US regime appeals to “the English-speaking world” to help “suppress the alarm and rebellion here” (London *Sunday Times*, 11 May) and the imperialists have obliged. The Sri Lankan army is now equipped with 150 armored personnel carriers from South Africa, 21 US-built helicopters, six Marchetti planes from Italy, as well as 50 patrol boats and some 40,000 land mines (*Asiaweek*, 1 June). British and Israeli commandos are training counterinsurgency teams, while thousands of officers are sent to Pakistan for training; British and South African mercenaries are piloting the bombing runs over the North. And Jayewardene can no doubt rely on the backing of his pal Reagan, holding out as bait the strategic naval base at Trincomalee for US warships in their

hostile encirclement of the Soviet Union and its allies.

In a pitch to his anti-Soviet allies, Jayewardene paints the Tamil insurgents as Marxists: “Terrorism is no longer ethnic but an attempt to install a communist dictatorship by force and destroy Sri Lanka’s democratic form of government” (London *Times*, 19 May). Unfortunately, the Tamil militants, however just their struggle against genocide and for national self-determination, are far from being Marxists. The logic of petty-bourgeois nationalism has led them increasingly into acts of pointless slaughter of innocent civilians and bloody fratricidal warfare between rival Tamil groupings. The massacre of over a hundred Sinhalese pilgrims at Anuradhapura, a historic Buddhist site, last May marked a clear turn toward targeting Sinhalese civilians for indiscriminate attack.

On May 3 an Air Lanka aircraft was blown up on the runway at Katunayake International Airport in Colombo, killing 16, mainly foreign tourists on their way to the Maldives Islands, and including the wife of a PLO ambassador. Probably only a delay in the scheduled departure time prevented the plane from exploding in midair. Tourism was meant to be one of the pillars of the capitalist prosperity promised by Jayewardene’s UNP government, and the airport bombing is clearly a devastating blow to tourism, logical from the indefensible nationalist standpoint as an effective act of economic warfare.

Soon after, a bomb exploded in the Central Telegraph Office, killing at least eleven and injuring over 100. Situated in downtown Colombo, in a country where only the rich can afford telephones, the CTO is usually crowded with ordinary people. These bombings were acts of indefensible indiscriminate terrorism, which can only deepen the communal divisions and provoke bloody anti-Tamil pogroms. In fact the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students claimed responsibility for both the airport bombing and the telegraph office attack. Another group took responsibility for a dam collapse in April which killed 40 people. During a Buddhist religious festival (May 24-25), 20 Sinhalese villagers, in-



Sandro Tucci

Tamil nationalist group now claims “credit” for blowing up Air Lanka jet filled with tourists.

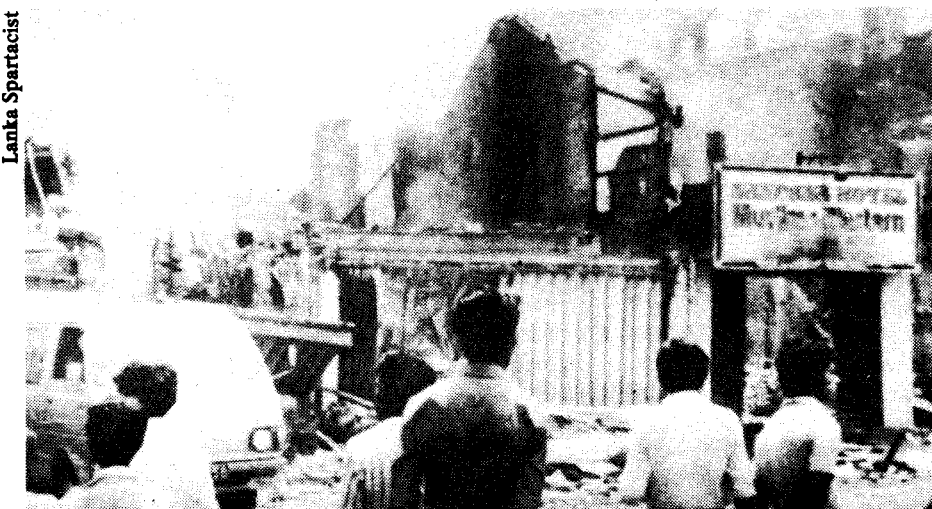
mander put it, admitting they were unwilling to take the massive casualties required to crush the rebels, “You cannot win a guerrilla war when your enemy is fighting on home territory with the backing of the people. The Americans lost in Vietnam” (London *Guardian*, 21 May). And JR’s ferocity is no doubt tempered by the fear of provoking a military intervention on the part of India, where Rajiv Gandhi faces substantial pressure from the 50 million Tamils in the southern state of Tamil Nadu.

## State Terror Against the Tamils

Coinciding with the army invasion of the North, a government decree put Tamil employees of state-run institutions in Colombo and the South on involuntary “leave” from their jobs. This blatantly racist move, which in effect convicts Colombo Tamils of being a fifth column of potential terrorists, underlines the regime’s deprivation of civil and national rights

obliterate the significant layer of Tamil merchants in the capital. In the East, the government has combined army atrocities with intensification of long-standing schemes to settle poor Sinhalese there in order to shift the ethnic balance.

In the overwhelmingly Tamil North, where growing separatist sentiment had forced the mainstream Tamil politicians to espouse the “Eelam” demand, the regime deprived even these moderate parliamentarians of a voice in the system by making explicit disavowal of Eelam a condition for them taking the seats to which they were elected. Thereby the Jayewardene government ousted the largest single Opposition from Parliament and in effect disenfranchised the entire northern population, which it then subjected to military occupation. And in recent years an ominous pattern has emerged of sporadic organized Sinhalese thug violence against the hill country Tamil plantation workers, who for decades have kept the economy afloat by providing most of Sri Lanka’s



Colombo, July 1983: Government-instigated pogroms slaughtered hundreds, burned Tamil-owned shops to the ground.

cluding women and children, were massacred allegedly by Tamils at Siripura, near Trincomalee, and another 12 were killed in nearby villages (*Le Monde*, 27 May). An explosion at a food and soda processing plant in Colombo on May 30 killed ten workers and injured 50.

All the Tamil armed struggle groups, with their nationalist politics, countenance such attacks on innocent civilians, lending credence to the regime's attribution to them of any and every atrocity. Thus the massacre at Siripura, which presents some unusual features — mainly, the immediate presence on the scene of reporters and photographers, who have been kept out of the Trinco area for many months, and the prompt appearance of a detailed article on it in the *New York Times*, which has been virtually silent on recent events in Lanka — is attributed to Tamil militants by the government which in this context can expect to have its version widely believed.

### Fratricidal Warfare

Some of the ugliest incidents have occurred in the course of the bloody internecine warfare among the Tamil organizations themselves. As many as 300 Tamils were killed in recent fighting between the Liberation Tigers (LTTE) and the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), said to have been sparked by the kidnapping by TELO of two of the Tiger commanders. In three days, the better-organized Tigers wiped out all 24 of TELO's camps and assassinated the TELO commander, Mohan Sri Sabaratnam. *Le Monde* (14 May) cites an eyewitness report by a journalist of the United News of India, who describes how "fifty young Tamils belonging to the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation, some of them 13 or 14 years old, were burned alive in public after being doused with gasoline by their adversaries".

Noting the ominous shift among the Tamil groups from attacking legitimate targets of military occupation to victimizing innocent Sinhalese civilians, and the rise of violent clashes among the Tamil nationalists themselves, we wrote last December:

"The petty-bourgeois nationalist Tamil organizations have come to mirror the worst Sinhala chauvinism of the traditional Ceylonese left parties with their own murderous logic of racialism and nationalist communalism. Marxist revolutionists, who base themselves on the morality of internationalist class struggle, abhor racialism in all its forms, and find deeply repugnant the terror methods of gangsterism employed by those who fight in the name of social justice."

— "Bloody Communal Terror in Sri Lanka", *WV* No 393, 13 December 1985

The nationalist perspective of the Tamil insurgent organizations has led them into reliance on capitalist India and the regime of Rajiv Gandhi — itself stained with the blood of



Tamil demonstrators in London appeal to capitalist India.

communalist slaughter in the Punjab and Assam — to save the Lankan Tamils from JR's genocidal terror. And the Tamil groups have remained indifferent to the struggles of key potential allies among the exploited Sinhalese workers in the South and particularly the plantation Tamils on the upcountry tea estates, struggles which point toward the possibility of a progressive class-struggle alternative to the current spiral of bloody communal violence.

### Plantation Tamils Key to Revolution in Lanka

Under pressure from the plantation workers, their main organization, the Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC) led by S Thondaman — trade-union boss, big landowner and cabinet minister in Jayewardene's government — called a three-month "prayer campaign". Plantation workers were to "pray" for five hours a day, a threat to utterly disrupt tea production. Two days after this thinly disguised strike began on January 14, it was called off as the government promised to grant citizenship to 94,000 "stateless" Tamils and their dependents who had been disenfranchised since independence in 1948. Despite the wretched slave-labor conditions and communalist terror they continue to face, wresting from the state a promise of citizenship rights is a victory for the plantation Tamils and a demonstration of the power of working-class action. And whatever the CWC's claims that "problems can be resolved through peaceful dialogue and prayer without resort to conflict and confrontation" (*Sun*, 21 January), it was not neo-Gandhian prayer but strike action which achieved it.

Predictably, the promise to grant citizenship unleashed paroxysms of anti-Tamil chauvinism among Sinhala communalists. Leading the pack was the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) of former prime minister Mrs Bandaranaike, who told the Sinhalese to "get ready for a war with the estate workers". And on the weekend of January 25-26, Sinhala communalist thugs attacked the Tamils in the Nuwara Eliya hill country district. But this time the plantation workers fought back: tens of thousands went on strike, many estate workers armed themselves, they felled trees and

Workers Hammer

rolled rocks down from hilltops to block the movement of police and army convoys. An SLFP leader lamented that the police were afraid to go onto the tea estates to make arrests. Fearing a "third front" the government made an effort to cool the situation by appearing even-handed.

When the new citizenship law was enacted on February 1, the SLFP representatives stomped out of Parliament in protest. But the blatant Sinhala chauvinism of the SLFP — which first gained prominence in the '50s with their "Sinhala only" campaign against Tamil language rights — has never prevented the fake-left parties of Ceylonese parliamentary reformism from joining wholeheartedly in SLFP popular front coalitions. The cravenly reformist Communist Party and the stinking corpse of the Lanka Samasamaja Party (LSSP), sometimes falsely characterized as "Trotskyist", were thoroughly discredited when they joined Mrs B's popular front government and hailed the 1971 massacre of Sinhalese youth who rose up against it.

Today, as the SLFP aims to renew its popular front of Sinhala racialism in the form of a "National Front" with the Buddhist religious hierarchy, the reformist left is dutifully tagging along behind. The NSSP, the "New" LSSP formed by a split in the 1970s after the old LSSP had thoroughly discredited itself by slavish subordination to Mrs Bandaranaike, showed itself wedded to the same popular front perspective as its parent when it hailed the SLMP, a thoroughly bourgeois split-off from the SLFP, as a "working-class formation". On the question of rights for plantation Tamils, the SLMP has declared that the new citizens would be "an additional burden which the economy cannot bear" (*Sun*, 27 January). And the Communist Party paper *Aththa* worried: "There is the possibility of Indians and people from Tamil Nadu infiltrating the plantations. It will be the Sinhalese people who will be in danger" (quoted in the *Island*, 6 February).

Against the wretched popular frontism and pandering to Sinhala chauvinism of the reformist Lanka left, the international Spartacist tendency and its section on the island, the Spartacist League/Lanka, have fought consistently in defense of the Tamils and for the right of Tamil national self-determination, in the framework of a Leninist/Trotskyist program of internationalist class struggle.

The plantation workers are not the only section of the working class to show combativity. In March nurses went on strike for almost a month. The government banned their union and seized its funds under the emergency regulations. Notably, like the plantation strikes and the militant strikes at textile factories like Polytex and Magnum, these struggles centrally involve women workers. Deeply oppressed, and all too often treated with disdain and indifference by Lankan and Eelamist leftists alike, these women have shown their willing-

ness and capacity for struggle. Militant class-conscious women can and will be won to communism and will be among its best fighters.

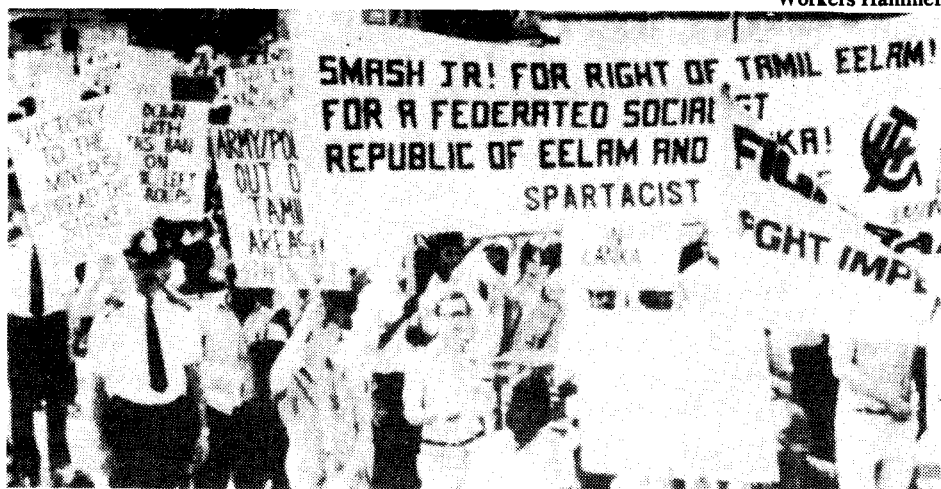
The bonapartist JR regime faces pressures from all quarters. In Jaffna prior to the army invasion of the North, Muslims protested the terror-bombing of Libya by JR's friend Reagan in a 2,000-strong demonstration. More recently fighting in the Slave Island quarter of Colombo left seven dead, as local inhabitants, mainly Muslims and Tamils, resisted the riotous soldiers from a neighboring army camp. The regime continues to imprison Sinhalese leftists accused of having ties with Tamil groups, as well as countless Tamils held under the draconian "Prevention of Terrorism" laws. The imperialist bloodsuckers of the International Monetary Fund have threatened to cut off "aid" and loans unless the government demonstrates it can find a "solution" to the ethnic problem and get back to the orderly business of making money for domestic and multinational capitalists and their world bankers. Meanwhile the army seethes with mutinous elements and Jayewardene's own party is itself rent with factions including an ultra-racialist wing which sees JR as "soft" on the Tamils. And the regime has succeeded in deeply antagonizing anew its powerful neighbor India, which could swat away Jayewardene's forces with minimal effort.

But Tamil Eelam achieved on the bayonets of the Indian army could be at best a pathetic client of capitalist India, itself a prisonhouse of peoples with its own bitter communal divisions and murderous suppression of minorities. A socialist Eelam is conceivable only in the framework of proletarian revolutionary struggles of the key plantation Tamils and Sinhalese workers to overthrow capitalist rule in the South as well, and the extension of revolutionary conflagration to the oppressed masses of the Indian subcontinent.

Indeed any perspective for revolution in Lanka makes little sense unless the island is seen as a staging area for proletarian revolutionary struggle throughout the Indian subcontinent. Ceylon has always been an organic cultural component of India; the island's history has always been linked to that of the mainland except when the English made Ceylon a separate administrative unit for their own convenience. The best traditions of the old Ceylonese Trotskyist movement date back to World War II when the Ceylonese communists were united with their Indian comrades in one party of common struggle against British colonialism and capitalism.

In the period since independence in 1948, the policy of Sinhalese racialist exclusivity sought to make external to "our people" first the plantation Tamils and Burghers (mixed-race descendants of European settlers) and now the Muslims and Tamils. As the island today is torn apart by Sinhalese state terror and retaliatory Tamil terrorism against innocent civilians, it seems clear that the cycle of bloodbaths will not easily be broken. The pressure on India to step in to restore order is rapidly becoming irresistible. Rajiv Gandhi is perhaps impeded from action by his evident desire for a rapprochement with US imperialism, and by the precarious condition of bloody national antagonisms inside India. But if he permits the Sri Lanka government to accomplish the genocidal slaughter of Tamil Hindus, it would mean his undoing as surely as his mother's falling out with the Sikhs meant hers. Sooner or later, and likely soon-

Continued on page nine



Spartacist League/Britain protests anti-Tamil terror in Sri Lanka, London 1984.

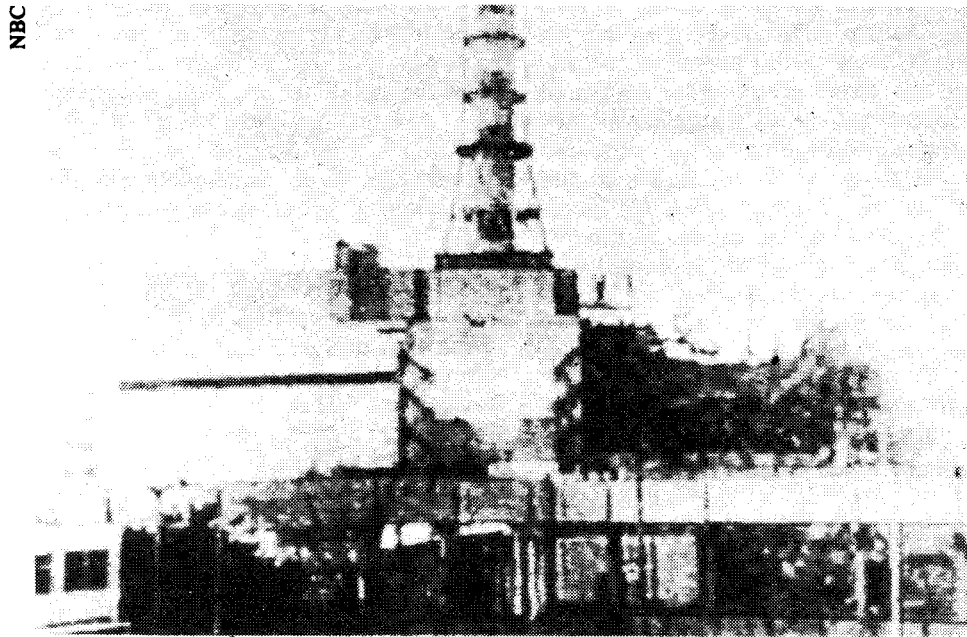
# Chernobyl - Media Meltdown on Russia

MAY 5 — It is a sign of the war mania rampant in the US ruling class that a tragic industrial accident in the Soviet Union is turned into anti-Soviet hysteria. Lacking any hard information when the accident developed at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant near Kiev, the American "news" media simply conjured up the wildest stories imaginable. Typical of the "Killer Cloud Heads West" headlines were this week's crop from the *New York Post*: "The World Trembles — 2,000 dead, 25,000 flee, N-cloud is spreading", "Out of Control — 2nd meltdown spews new death cloud", "Winds of Death", "Mass Grave for 15,000 N-Victims" and so on *ad nauseum*. Then, after shamelessly conjuring up a "Red Nukemare", they have the gall to denounce the Russians for covering up!

And it wasn't just the sensationalist tabloids going berserk. Howdy Doody Koppel on ABC-TV's *Nightline* asked endless "what if" questions of "nuclear experts" who knew nothing about the accident. Local TV weather reports showed satellite photos of cloud movements over the European regions of the Soviet Union. The staid *New York Times* spread scare stories about "2,000 dead", Pacifica radio played end-of-the-world music while reporting the nuke news. It was an across-the-board media panic, from ultra-right Reaganites to rad-lib eco-freaks. The only thing we were spared was those Long Island high school kids kissing the ground, Grenada-style, when their parents rushed them back from tours of the Soviet Union to check them for "contamination". (The amounts were so minute one technician quipped it would only be harmful if they ate off the soles of their shoes.)

It was, moreover, a *manipulated media panic*. At the imperialist summit in Tokyo, Reagan tried to deny the US was engaged in "Soviet bashing" while one key official said, "the last thing we want to seem to be doing is any gloating". Gloating isn't the half of it. The Reaganites were having an anti-Soviet field day. Add to the usual "Russians eat babies for breakfast" Cold War rhetoric quite a dose of Ukrainian malice, as the media interviewed expatriates filled with hatred for the October Revolution, who all seem to have left in 1944 (ie, with the retreating Wehrmacht). And a special contribution from that coterie of social democratic Cold Warriors around Jeane Kirkpatrick, notably Kenneth Adelman, the man who wouldn't call nuclear war "horrible" until it was clear his appointment by Congress as head of the "arms control" agency depended on it.

The "evil empire" propaganda was coming not only from Reagan but also liberals like the *Washington Post* (30 April), who claimed in an editorial ("The Russian Syndrome") that the Soviets don't put "the same value on civilian lives ... as does the democratic West". That's quite a mouthful coming from the only country to ever use nuclear weapons ... against the civilian populations of Hiroshima



Chernobyl power plant in the Ukraine, site of tragic nuclear accident.

and Nagasaki, with a toll of more than 90,000 dead immediately and another 110,000 from the aftereffects! And don't forget those innocent civilians repeatedly irradiated over the years by fallout from US nuclear tests in the Pacific. Recent evidence suggests that Marshall Islanders may have been deliberately exposed to the fallout so that they could be guinea pigs to study the effects of radiation on humans (*London Guardian*, 2 May).

So in the midst of this media meltdown, what did happen at the Chernobyl power plant? The Russians clearly want to minimize it, and they have their story. The Americans clearly want to maximize it, and they have lots of stories ... which are all now collapsing on each other. All the satellite photos and other paraphernalia available to the US "intelligence community" have not come up with anything to contradict the assertions in Soviet press statements. There was a serious nuclear accident, two people reportedly died immediately, about 20 are said to be in serious condition and around 200 were hospitalized. Several towns were evacuated. Certainly there will be many more deaths in the weeks and years to come among the Soviet citizens exposed to the Chernobyl accident. And there will be an increased incidence of cancer in that region. But most everything else in the capitalist media has been a Big Lie.

Reagan's accusations of Soviet "disregard" for international welfare are not only lies but the height of hypocrisy, coming from the gang that wants to *nuke Russia* with a first strike. Far more dangerous than the Chernobyl incident was the deliberately provocative US invasion of Soviet territorial waters in the Black Sea in March. *That* might have triggered a nuclear showdown. From Nicaragua to Angola to Afghanistan, the Pentagon is trying to escalate its "low intensity conflicts" with "Soviet surrogates" into confrontation with the Russian bear. And now CBS News (5 May) reports that the US is planning *yet another* attack on Libya, this time with cruise missiles: "The administration is currently debating which targets should be hit".

The real nuclear danger is from the White House.

## Manipulated Media Panic

Here are only some of the Big Lies that have been strewn over the airwaves and published in millions of copies by the US media in the last week. The purpose: to create anti-Soviet panic.

**Lie No 1: "2,000 dead".** This came from a phone conversation with an "unidentified Kiev resident", according to UPI. It was later stated by the UPI night editor in Washington that this was "an unconfirmed report" which "came out of US intelligence" (from column by Hunter Thompson in the 5 May *San Francisco Examiner*). When the Soviets issued their statement reporting only two dead, 197 hospitalized, with 18 in "serious condition", US Arms Control Agency head Kenneth Adelman claimed this

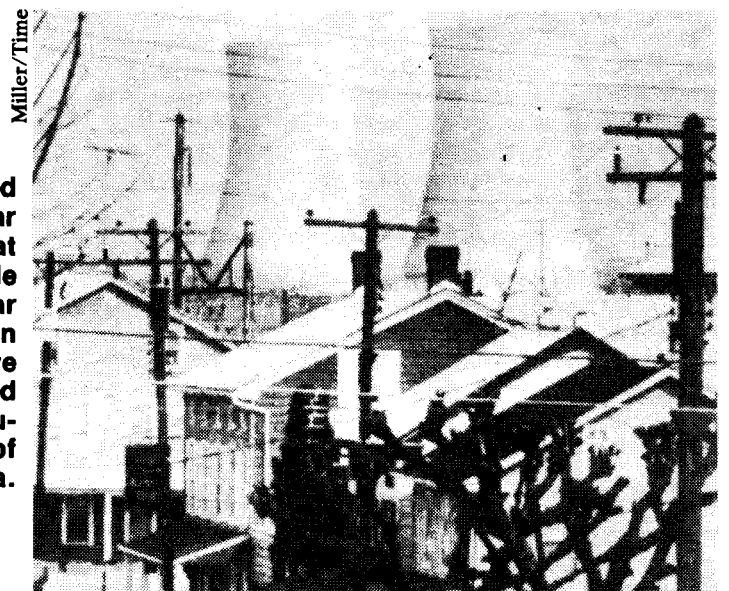
impossible if a holocaust had just occurred in the suburbs. As the chief spokesman for the Soviet Foreign Ministry, Vladimir Lomeiko, rightfully complained at a New York conference on US-Soviet press relations this week: "The Soviet Government gave the information, which is true and reliable, that two died. But you didn't like that. So you talked about 2,000 deaths ... It's a lie" (*New York Times*, 3 May). But as the Reaganites learned from Joe McCarthy and Josef Goebbels, mud sticks if you throw enough of it.

**Lie No 2: "Mass Grave for 15,000 N-Victims".** This wildly incredible claim also came from the Ukrainian "community" in the US. There are indeed mass graves in the Ukraine — they contain mostly Jews, such as the one at Babi Yar — but they were made by Nazis, not Russians, with the help of Ukrainian fascists in World War II.

**Lie No 3: "This time we apparently have the real thing, the core meltdown that Three Mile Island was not"** (*Washington Post*, 30 April). To begin with, Three Mile Island involved a partial meltdown, which came within an hour of being total. As for the Chernobyl accident, physicists are divided over whether there was any kind of a meltdown — an uncontrolled nuclear reaction. According to the *New York Times* (30 April), Yale physicist Allan Bromley, a government adviser on nuclear policy, pointed out that the Chernobyl accident "was almost certainly not a classic meltdown". Given the "design and physics of the Soviet reactor", he noted, "the fuel temperatures could not soar high enough for this to occur".

Apparently what happened was that graphite blocks, used in Soviet reactors to "moderate" the nuclear reaction, overheated and caught fire.

It has happened here. The near meltdown at Three Mile Island nuclear power plant in 1979 could have devastated densely populated area of Pennsylvania.



was "frankly preposterous" (he wanted more). But Dr Richard Reba, director of nuclear medicine at George Washington University Medical Center, said the Moscow statement "makes sense", since anyone immediately killed by radiation would have had to be "in the reactor facility or very close to it".

Western media also noted with bewilderment that life was "normal" in nearby Kiev, where May Day celebrations went on as scheduled —

At some point, a chemical explosion apparently blew open the reactor, releasing a cloud of radioactive particles into the atmosphere. "The reactor was turned off immediately after the accident", said Boris Yeltsin, Moscow Communist Party leader, in a West German TV interview. The 30 April TASS statement noted specifically that "no chain reaction fission of nuclear fuel is taking place". The big problem was putting out the graphite fire.

**Lie No 4: "It'll Burn for Weeks"** (*Daily News*, 1 May). This widely publicized assertion was based on the offhand comment of Harold Denton, an official of the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission — hardly a paragon of technical truth. The day after, the Americans' "interagency panel" on the nuclear emergency was backtracking, saying that "the latest Air Force reconnaissance photos made it 'plausible' that the Soviet Union had put out the fire, as Moscow contended" (*New York Times*, 2 May).

**Lie No 5: "Thousands Flee Nuke Nightmare — Help Us, USSR Pleads"** (*Daily News*, 30 April). This is intended to make the Soviet government look like helpless idiots, supposedly pleading for allegedly superior American technical aid while a leaderless population panics. Wouldn't the Pentagon's first-strike war planners love that? But it's pure fantasy. The Soviets did carry out an organized evacuation of four settlements near the plant, reportedly 49,000 people — without upsetting May Day celebrations in Kiev. This was hardly panicky "fleeing". By way of comparison, when a test of evacuation plans for communities around Long Island's Shoreham nuclear plant was scheduled a while ago, it was called off because 1) local authorities considered evacuation impossible, and 2) they feared the chaos of a test evacuation could lead to deaths.

While White House spokesmen made a big publicity point of offering US "help", they never did have any suggestions about how to put the fire out — the Russians did that all by themselves, apparently by dumping wet sand on it. The Soviets did take up the offer of help from the International Bone Marrow Transplant Registry at UCLA. The need for bone marrow transplants to treat severe radiation cases requires precise matches of tissue types, and hence a large pool to draw from.

**Lie No 6: "Experts: By Design, It Can't Happen Here"** (*Newsday*, 30 April). After Three Mile Island? US reactors, they say, use "containment" buildings to prevent release of radioactive material (they don't mention that the containment wouldn't help much in a total meltdown) and they don't use graphite-moderated reactors. This is not true for military/research reactors run by the Energy Department, which believes containment buildings "are not cost effective" (*New York Times*, 3 May). The Hanford facility in Washington state, which uses a graphite moderator like the Chernobyl reactor, is "designed to produce weapon-grade plutonium", unlike the Chernobyl plant which is a civilian utility.

**Lie No 7: The reports of a Soviet electricity "Shutdown"** (*Newsday*, 2 May) turned out to be a gross exaggeration. Only nuclear plants similar to the one at Chernobyl were shut down — a wise move under the circumstances — amounting to a temporary loss of less than 5 percent of total Soviet electric power production.

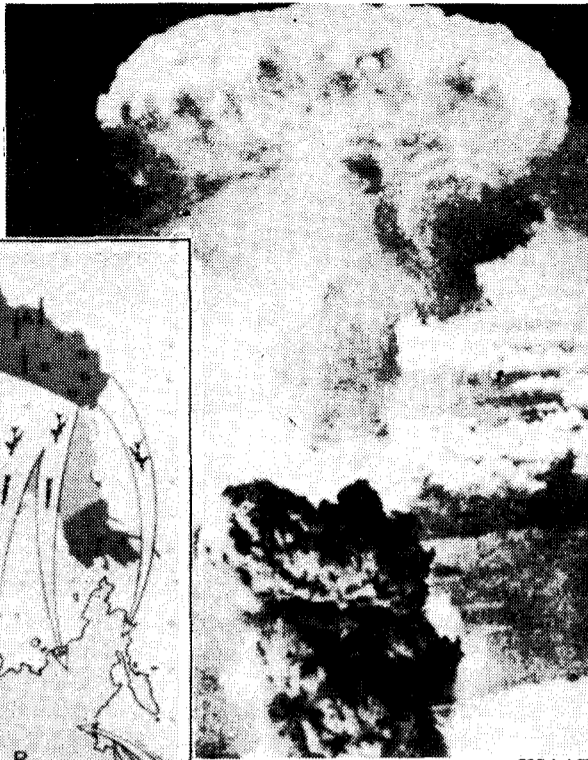
### Anti-Soviet Chain Reaction

The sequence of events as described by Soviet spokesmen appears utterly plausible. The accident reportedly happened on the night of Friday/Saturday, April 25/26; the first public announcement came on Monday, April 28. Soviet foreign ministry spokesman Lomeiko told Western reporters:

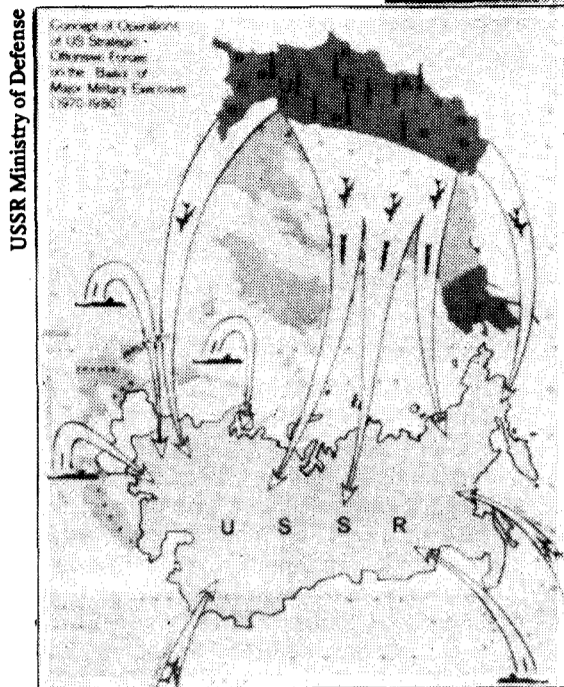
"An event arose there [at Chernobyl], and its consequences were not known to us. It was a leak of radiation. But when it became known that it was not an event with just local repercussions, we informed you."

The Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency was informed of the partial destruction of a reactor

**US war criminals  
A-bombed  
Hiroshima and  
Nagasaki (right).**



USAAF



USSR Ministry of Defense

**Today Pentagon targets Soviet Union for nuclear annihilation.**

and leakage of radioactivity. Contrary to scare stories about "death clouds" spreading across Europe, the radiation levels outside the Soviet Union were minuscule and quickly dissipated. Danish scientists measured radiation at 0.02 millirems per hour on May 1, or 1/500th of the amount of one chest x-ray. In Sweden, the peak was recorded at 2 millirems. "By comparison", the *New York Times* (2 May) noted, "a passenger flying from Los Angeles to New York receives a dose of 2.5 millirems from cosmic rays".

There was a series of successively more detailed Soviet news releases as information was verified — and so far they have proven to be true, unlike the hysterical Western reports. The *New York Times* (1 May), attempting to draw parallels about "Soviet Secrecy", noted that the Soviet news release process "recalled the defensive Soviet coverage of the South Korean [KAL 007] airliner incident, when Moscow took six days to concede that it had shot down the plane, and then gradually increased the doses of information while it built its case that the plane had been on an espionage mission". But in the sequel, all evidence points to the fact that the KAL jetliner was on a US spy mission (see "KAL 007 Was US Spy Plane", *WV* No 379, 17 May 1985).

If this process seems slow by Western standards, it's not a Kremlin plot of secrecy but reflects the slowness of the ponderous Stalinist bureaucracy. If the Soviets can be faulted, it's that they did not inform their own people fast enough or with enough detail, leaving them susceptible to capitalist panic-mongering. And the decision-making levels of the apparatus may indeed not have known what happened. The cumbersome bureaucracy has built-in buffers against the impact of reality. Consider the illusions implied by the statement of Vitali Sklyarov, minister of power and electrification of the Ukraine, in an interview in the February 1986 issue of *Soviet Life* featuring the nuclear power plant at Chernobyl: "The odds of a meltdown are one in 10,000 years. The plants have safe and reliable controls that are protected from any breakdown . . ."

There is no doubt that Soviet safety standards have been undermined by the bureaucratic degeneration of the Bolshevik Revolution. Prophetically, a March 27 article in the Soviet journal *Literaturna Ukraina*, by a woman described as a senior manager at the Chernobyl plant, complained of "deficiencies" in the building of the plant due to bureaucratic attempts to

fulfill "unrealistic quotas" (*Newsday*, 2 May). A thoroughly plausible scenario printed in the same paper ascribes the accident to a sudden cutoff of electrical power to the coolant system. Naturally, the emergency backups also failed. Why shouldn't they? No time-serving bureaucrat would have checked it out — he figures he'll be gone in three years. It sounds all too true.

The *Washington Post* called Soviet society "accident-prone". Certainly workers democracy would clear up a lot of snafus in this degenerated workers state. But talk about throwing stones in glass houses: so far this year the US has managed to blow up a billion-dollar space shuttle with seven people on board; explode a \$500-million spy satellite atop a Titan rocket; spend \$70 million on an underground nuclear test which failed when the blast destroyed the test equipment; run two nuclear subs aground; and this week they blow up a weather satellite atop a Delta rocket at Cape Canaveral. So much for the "magic of the marketplace". When one Congressman tried to taunt Soviet embassy spokesman Vitaly Churkin at a House hearing by asking him to explain "in laymen's terms" the Chernobyl accident, Churkin shot back: "Can you tell me in those same layman terms why the Challenger disaster happened?" (*New York Times*, 2 May). Behind this hoary old evasion stands a grim reality, the results of the market.

If you want to talk about genuinely sinister governmental cover-up and silence, what about the incident near Palomares, Spain in January 1966, where a US B-52 crashed, losing four 20-megaton H-bombs. For 44 days the US would not even acknowledge that it had lost anything, even while American troops scoured the Spanish countryside with Geiger counters. Eventually the US admitted that two of the bombs had broken open, spraying the region with deadly radioactive plutonium and enriched uranium. The radiation was "basically harmless", the US insisted, even as they secretly scooped up 1,500 tons of topsoil and shipped it back to the US for burial. But there was no outcry about the "madmen" in Washington from the US media or the "European community" of NATO — that rhetoric is reserved for the Soviet Union only.

### Chernobyl and the Anti-Soviet War Drive

What's going on in the US and West

Europe this week is a sinister amalgamation of hysterias, cleverly manipulated into anti-Soviet panic. In the wake of the Three Mile Island near-meltdown in March 1979, we wrote, "Of course nuclear energy is far from completely safe and is fraught with unsolved problems . . . But the alternatives under capitalism are just as, if not more, unsafe" ("No-Nuke Syndrome", *WV* No 229, 13 April 1979). A nuclear power industry spokesman on CBS-TV's *Nightwatch* recently stated that 300 lives are lost yearly in "conventional" (non-nuclear) power plant operations, not to mention the many thousands of coal miners who have died horrible deaths from black lung disease over the years. And don't forget the Union Carbide disaster in Bhopal, India in December 1984: 2,000 people died immediately, and another 200,000 suffered injuries which will remain with many of them for the rest of their lives. But nobody seriously proposed abandoning the petrochemical industry.

A *New York Times* (5 May) news analysis noted:

"People carry in their minds images of the mushroom cloud of Hiroshima, and so atomic bombs and nuclear power plants become to them interchangeable in their potential for death and destruction."

The reformist left has tried to turn these fears into an anti-nuclear movement, by making a false equation between nuclear energy and nuclear weapons. "Shut 'em down!" demanded the rad-lib *Guardian* (7 May) regarding nuclear power plants, echoing panicky bourgeois media stories about "millions" contaminated by dangerous radiation from the Chernobyl plant. Similarly, the *Militant* (9 May) chimed in with a call to "shut down all nuclear power plants immediately". So the eco-freaks have joined the anti-Soviet war drive. With their logic, you might as well shut down all industry, for good.

The *New York Times* (1 May) airily dismissed the Soviet government's complaints about panic-mongering coverage in the Western press, and recalled Gromyko's statement when he nominated Mikhail Gorbachev head of the CPSU a year ago, that "We live in a world in which, figuratively speaking, various telescopes are aimed at the Soviet Union". They're "just waiting for some sort of crack to appear", he opined. This is not "paranoia" but entirely accurate, as the Chernobyl incident graphically demonstrated. The monstrous inefficiencies and loss of life caused by the Stalinist bureaucracy's stifling of workers democracy are all too real. They only pale in comparison to the deliberate mass murder carried out by the imperialists. Militarily defending the Soviet Union against imperialist attack, the Soviet workers must take back political power and restore the banner of the Bolshevik October Revolution.

The real threat to the world comes from those nuclear nuts in Washington. You can bet that the nuke planners in the Pentagon were carefully tracking that radioactive cloud this week — not out of humanitarian concern, but to calculate the effects of their planned nuclear first strike against the Soviet Union. For them, the Chernobyl accident was merely an out-of-town tryout for nuking Russia. From the MX to the Pershing 2s to the Trident submarines to Reagan's "Star Wars" madness, the US government — Republicans and Democrats alike — are driving us headlong toward a nuclear World War III, and only a proletarian revolution can stop them.

— Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 403, 9 May 1986

# Nazis...

Continued from page three

Artukovic's son is now in Australia campaigning amongst the likes of the 2000 pro-Ustasha Croats who demonstrated in defence of Artukovic outside Parliament House in Canberra in March. Artukovic's son is also campaigning against any investigation into Nazis in Australia. In May hundreds of Croatian ultra-rightists protested outside ABC offices in four cities against the Aarons/Loftus program. These sinister proto-fascist mobilisations, coming exactly a year after the terror campaign launched by emigre Vietnamese fascists with Hawke's blessing, pose a potentially deadly threat to the working class. What is needed is some solid mass proletarian action which will drive these scum back into their ratholes.

The Australian ruling class keeps the emigre fascistic groupings in reserve for use against the labour movement. Last year on the 10th anniversary of the heroic Vietnamese victory over US and Australian imperialism, Hawke unleashed fascist Vietnamese elements against left and labour meetings celebrating the Vietnamese revolution. This counter-revolutionary refuse mounted deadly attacks on a number of meetings often with cop connivance, causing serious injury. We of the Spartacist League stood alone in fighting for a solid working class defence of our own and all celebration meetings — the fascist vermin needed (and still do) a lesson in the power of the working class. The union bureaucracy and fake left (prominently Meredith Burgmann) universally opposed our class struggle campaign and viciously slandered us as "racist" for fighting back against these fascists, the same twisted logic of the SWP — in whose eyes opposing Ustasha genocide equals anti-Croatian "racism"!

## SWP Fronts for the Ustasha

The Spartacist League was the first on the left to extensively document the SWP's obscene and in every sense sinister collaboration with and defence of the Croatian Movement for Statehood (HDP — Hrvatski Drzavotvorni Pokret) and the Ustasha background of this organisation (see "SWP Whitewashes Sinister Croatian Nationalists" and "SWP Defends Ustasha" in *Australasian Spartacist* nos 101 and 103). The SWP defence of the Ustasha is the logical conclusion of their long and positive orientation toward all oppositional groupings, even the most openly pro-imperialist and anti-communist in the Eastern bloc deformed workers states. In 1981 the SWP did not hesitate to join a demonstration of reactionary and fascistic Captive Nations elements in support of counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarnosc. They soon discovered the Croatian "liberation" movement and became the defenders of grotesque fascist Ustasha mass murderers arguing that the Ustasha was not a fascist movement and that the scale of Ustasha crimes was "massively exaggerated". Croatian Nazi puppet and mass murderer Ante Pavelic became for the SWP a national-liberation figure whose only crime was that he "subordinated" the Croatian cause to the "interests of German and Italian imperialism". In other words, Pavelic and his butchers like the Black Legion, whose atrocities even the Germans had to curb, should have done it all on their own. The SWP even denounced the Yugoslav deformed workers state for "terrorism" in defending itself against the fascist swine. *Direct Action* also praised present day terrorists such as Miro



Tito (third from left) with Partisan leaders. All-Yugoslav resistance triumphed over Ustasha and their Nazi overlords through social revolution.

Baresic, imprisoned in Sweden for murdering the Yugoslav ambassador Rolovic in 1971.

Since then the SWP's collaboration with the Ustasha lovers has deepened. The HDP's *Hrvatski Tjednik* carried SWP election material in its 4 February '86 edition alongside articles defending Artukovic and other Ustasha war criminals. *Hrvatski Vjesnik*, produced by the Croatian Students Association of Victoria printed a DA article, "Yugoslavia: Heads for an explosion?" alongside material defending the "Butcher of the Balkans" on 18 March; in May it carried an article lauding the fascistic mobilisations against the ABC over the "Nazis in Australia" program. In return the SWP continues to defend the HDP as simply a "diverse group" of "Croatian nationalists" and has maintained complete and totally damning silence on the Artukovic trial and the demonstrations against the ABC and on the program itself.

The SWP's earlier efforts to gain respectability for the HDP fundered as Labor Party doors across the political spectrum began slamming in their face. So lo-and-behold in late 1984 a new organisation appeared: the Croatian Socialist Party (SPH, Socialisticka Partija Hrvatski) with "former" HDP leader and SWP member Yure Lasic as its spokesman. Lasic's latest outfit has nowhere distanced itself from the HDP or the Ustasha "tradition" on the central question of the defence of the genocidal Nazi puppet regime of Ante Pavelic. Lasic and the SPH is just the Ustasha connection at one remove, a snow job designed to help the SWP leadership peddle reactionary Croatian nationalism (with its organic Ustasha connection) in the labour movement.

Ominously, this time the SWP and their sinister Croatian friends have had some success within the labour movement. The earlier attempts to win support for the freeing of the murderer Miro Baresic from his Swedish jail flopped (though Lasic is still pushing his defence). The SWP's latest service for the Croatian ultra-rightists has been to initiate a campaign to free six members of the rightist Croatian Republican Party jailed in Sydney for allegedly attempting to blow up the Sydney water supply and for attempted murder. A meeting to defend those committed last October featured as guest speakers George Crawford, Victorian Socialist Left ALP parliamentarian, and Bobby Dalton, a Victorian organiser of the BLF. More recently, Lasic has been carefully cultivating an image of himself as a BLF militant, taking a leaf from exposed fascist criminal Srecko Rover who tried to pass himself off as a leftist and join the ALP and CPA over a decade ago. It didn't work for Rover, but this time the SWP is supplying credentials for these dangerous Nazi-lovers.

The SWP stands for bloody counter-revolution in Yugoslavia, for destruction of the historic gains that the heroic

1945 anti-capitalist revolution led by Tito's Partisans brought for workers and peasants of all nationalities. The communists' fight for national equality made it possible for a predominantly Serbian party to mobilise partisans from all nationalities, including Croats, and for the first time lay the basis for a united South Slavic state. In conjunction with the defeat of the Nazis in Eastern Europe by the Red Army, the partisans swept away the Nazi occupiers and their puppets like Pavelic in a historic victory which created the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. If today national tensions are again on the rise, it is because Yugoslavia is a *bureaucratically deformed* workers state.

The "Nazis in Australia" exposures highlight the SWP's degeneracy and naturally rival reformists like Denis Freney of the pro-Hawke, anti-Soviet Communist Party of Australia (CPA) have used them for maximum political mileage. For the CPA, such Nazi war criminals are an unfortunate blemish on Australian "democracy", an aberration. In fact they're here precisely because Australia is a white racist imperialist outpost. World War II was not the "peoples war" of "democracy" versus "fascism" of CPA myth, but an inter-imperialist slaughter which the Trotskyist Fourth International fought to turn into a civil war for the overthrow of the bourgeois rulers in both camps, while defending the USSR against Hitler. And for white Australian imperialism the Pacific war was above all a racist war against the Asian "yellow hordes" in defence of its share in the "democratic" imperialists' colonial exploitation of the Asian region (Papua New Guinea) against Japanese imperialism. The CPA's full support of its "own" ruling class, like outright strikebreaking, backing the racist internment of "enemy aliens", and hailing the A-bombing of Hiroshima/Nagasaki was a massive crime against the international working class. Its pivotal role in Australian imperialism's victory helped consolidate chauvinist national unity and thus prepare the Cold War witchhunt, the Vietnam war, and making the country safe for ANZUS, the spy bases and... Nazi war criminals. Then a Stalinist party, the CPA has now broken from Moscow and now defends Hawke and his Cold War Accord. But if you love Hawke, you get Urbancic, Rover and the rest as part of the deal.

Welcoming fascist war criminals was more than just an early Cold War favor for the big brother in Washington, for those who fled westward with the retreating Wehrmacht in 1944-5 possessed not only the virtue of being fanatic anti-communists: they were also *white*. The slogan of the post-war Chifley ALP government's immigration scheme — including the Displaced Persons Program through which the fascists initially gained entry — was "populate or perish". It meant populate Australia with white immigrants or perish at the hands of the "Asian

hordes". White fascistic refugees from the East European social revolutions were welcome: reds and Asians were not. Today Australia is a favoured destination for Polish anti-communists and South African white racists. It was official policy that "under no circumstances are refugee Spaniards from the Franco regime to be included in the immigration program" (quoted in J Playford, "The Truth Behind Captive Nations Week", April 1968). Arthur Calwell, immigration minister of the Chifley Labor government and later leader of the ALP, coined the despicable racist slogan of the day "Two Wongs don't make a white". Laborite white racism was the key to the door for such as Urbancic and Rover — a fact that "Nazis in Australia" producers Aarons and Loftus cannot admit.

Eli Rosenbaum (an Office of Special Investigations staffer) described the response of dozens of nations to OSI requests for help in tracing war criminals or witnesses: "Every nation on the planet, on both sides of the Iron Curtain helped us enthusiastically, except for Australia" (*Sydney Morning Herald* 13 May). A recent issue of the *Australian Jewish Times* (26 June) reported that the Australian war-time government discriminated against Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazi holocaust because in the words of then interior minister John McEwen for "fear that they would swamp British migration".

This reactionary white imperialist country is both a haven and breeding ground for racism, anti communism and national chauvinism. Today the SWP's promotion of the Ustasha represents a direct threat to the working class and the left. Victorious international workers revolution will sweep the fascist murderers from the face of the earth and prevent a future holocaust which is even now being prepared using the services of the technicians and executioners of the last one. ■

# South Africa...

Continued from page two

the complaint that the draconian measures would "not likely help restore law and order", ie, they might backfire. And in an Op Ed piece in the *New York Times* (16 June) he spelled out the anti-Soviet "logic" of his call for sanctions, noting that the US used sanctions against Poland, Nicaragua and Libya and still maintains a blockade of Cuba. But the ultimate absurdity and imperialist hypocrisy behind the call on racist mass murderers like the United States rulers to impose sanctions on their South African junior partners was



Doing Botha's work: black vigilantes torch shanties in Crossroads settlement.

Australasian Spartacist



exposed by the report that *Israel*, a major military supplier of the Pretoria regime, was considering a trade ban!

Similarly, the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group supports sanctions and pressure on Pretoria to negotiate with the ANC in order to forestall the coming to power of a "radical black government 'totally antipathetic' to Western interests" (*New York Times*, 13 June). Botha's reply to "the Commonwealth" was the bombing raid on three black African member states while the EPG was in South Africa. American leftists, meanwhile, are calling on the US to "Boycott South Africa, Not Nicaragua". But KKK-endorsed Reagan, who alibied the March 1985 Uitenhage massacre and told the world that racial segregation had been abolished in South Africa, is in a strategic *alliance* with apartheid (even if an occasionally strained one) whereas it is committed to *overthrowing* Nicaragua's Sandinista regime.

### Smash Apartheid! Workers to Power!

Backing the Soweto Day general strike in a May 21 radio broadcast from his headquarters in Zambia, ANC president Tambo called for a total shutdown as part of a "death-defying" campaign to "bring the ruling class to

its knees". But the ANC calls for "armed struggle" and "people's war" as part of its thoroughly reformist strategy of pressuring apartheid into a "power-sharing" scheme. Are unarmed black masses to go up against the massively armed racist ruling class and die by the thousands just so that Oliver Tambo can be South Africa's counterpart to Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, so Nelson Mandela's picture will be printed on Rand notes while Anglo American, Wall Street and the City of London continue to control the wealth of South Africa? To liberate the oppressed masses from apartheid slavery *those who labor must rule*. This can be accomplished only through the construction of a Leninist proletarian vanguard forged in struggle against petty-bourgeois nationalism and its pressure schemes.

Pretoria, spurred on by the Afrikaner ultraright, is gearing up to drown the black revolt in blood. But there are notable cracks within the white population, as demonstrated by thousands of white youth who are refusing conscription and the hundreds who defy police *sjamboks* and bullets to demonstrate alongside blacks. One of the stories to filter out of South Africa is that in the early morning hours of June 16, some 30 carloads of flowers collected the day before in liberal white churches were deposited on the outskirts of Soweto

— which was sealed off to whites. The flowers were seized by the apartheid authorities; apparently they too were "subversive". Later, some were dropped into the township by plane. Attached to one bouquet was a message that read:

"Many white South Africans feel a profound sense of sadness and shame at what happened in Soweto in 1976, and what continues to happen in 1986, and would like to express this in some way. Normal avenues of communication have been closed and so we search for a gesture to show black South Africans that we care, and that we too would like to see the creation of a just and open society in this country."

— *New York Times*, 17 June

Such gestures are all too rare in this racist police state. But a Bolshevik party can seize upon such openings while struggling tirelessly to overcome ethnic and tribal divisions among the exploited and oppressed, especially among the strategic "migrant" workers who come from the bantustans and neighboring black states. The vision of a "just and open society" for all the oppressed — in which anti-racist whites must have a place as well — can only be realized in a black-centered workers government that turns the tremendous mineral and industrial resources of South Africa into a powerhouse for the liberation of the entire continent.

The question of power is posed point-blank — and beginning the work of constructing a Leninist-Trotskyist party for the conquest of power, the urgent internationalist duty of all revolutionists, is long overdue.

— Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 406, 20 June 1986

## Sri Lanka ...

Continued from page five

er, the Indian army will be forced to intervene in Lanka, the Sinhalese will "get theirs" and the Tamils won't like it very much either.

As against the despairing perspective of nationalists, for whom guerrilla counter-terrorism and eventual Indian invasion represent the only logical program, we fight for the perspective of revolutionary class struggle across national lines. The bloody horror of communal slaughter, in India no less than in Lanka, will be ended only by international class struggle, uniting the toiling masses across all ethnic, national and religious divisions under the leadership of a world party of socialist revolution, a reborn Fourth International. For a federated workers republic of Eelam and Lanka, part of a socialist federation of South Asia!

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 405, 6 June 1986

## Hawke...

Continued from page twelve

strike as the way to respond to Hawke/Cain/Wran and their cops and scabherders.

Caruso and Neal got a good hearing at this meeting, but BLF general secretary Norm Gallagher personally took the floor against them. Gallagher decried their resolution as a "joke" motion and in effect baited them as tools of the bosses, claiming that an industry-wide strike was just what the bosses wanted. Gallagher boasted that "this union has never had a general strike and as long as I am around it never will have". The BLF leadership dismissed the example of the British miners strike saying "look what happened to them". True, after a year of hard class battle the heroic miners strike was defeated basically because of the treachery of the rest of the union bureaucracy and Scargill's refusal to break from Labourism. But the miners strike polarised British society along class lines and they went back with heads held high and as an army capable of fighting another day. In contrast, the BLF has been liquidated virtually without resistance, the worst, most demoralising kind of defeat for the proletariat.

Hawke (and Fraser before him) has been trying to get the BLF and Norm Gallagher for years and has finally succeeded. Gallagher had a reputation for militancy, for occasionally flexing some of the BLF's substantial indus-

trial muscle to improve the wages and conditions of the BLF membership through his site-by-site "guerrilla" strategy. Though this strategy was simply a pressure device geared completely within the Arbitration framework and though Gallagher never actually threatened to burst the boundaries of the Accord, it was still too much for Hawke and the conservative ACTU/TLC bureaucrats. For his part Gallagher, long-time leading light of the Peking-loyal CPA(M-L), foreshadowed his capitulation to this government onslaught at the 1983 ACTU Congress. Here he found common ground with the Reagan/Hawke-loyal right wing by endorsing the Accord and joining the Cold Warriors' anti-Soviet furor on behalf of Reagan's KAL-007 Big Lie campaign. This won him a (very briefly occupied) seat on the ACTU executive. But the Maoist Gallagher still qualifies as a "red" for Hawke and his CIA mentors.

The BLF in Hawke's eyes has also been a union he'd love to crush not least because of its composition. It is a *labourers'* union made up of unskilled workers who at least at some gut level understand that they have nothing to sell but their labour power. Amongst these "troublesome" elements are a fair percentage of migrants and racial minorities, including Pacific Islanders and Aborigines — the first targets of Cold War austerity. Hawke was surely counting on and feeding the rampant craftism and white racism in the labour movement here. Gallagher's "guerrilla"



"Anti-Accord" reformists Jim Percy (SWP), George Petersen (ALP), author Frank Hardy: "But The Dead Are Many".

strategy won his members some gains when things were fat, but this is Cold War II and only an all-out class-struggle counteroffensive could have smashed Hawke's attack, forged a militant industrial union throughout the building industry, cut through the craftist, racial and ethnic divisions and shown the way forward to busting Hawke's Accord. In the end Gallagher was a militant business unionist who fought that strategy when raised by Tony Caruso and Martin Neal in his union.

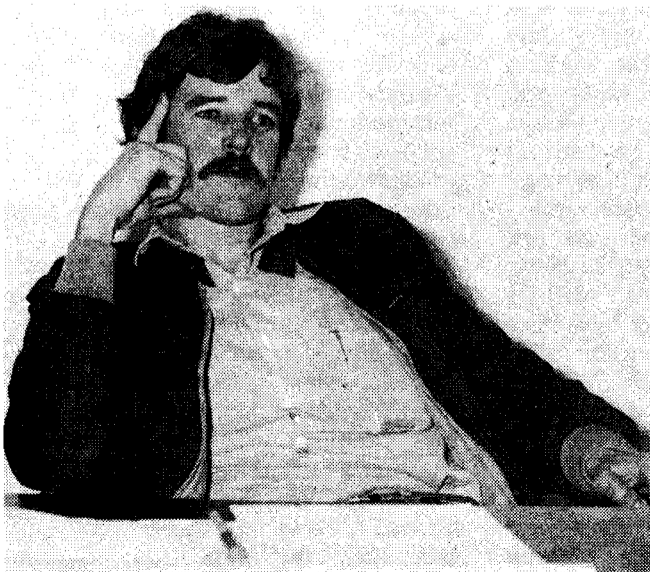
Gallagher's had his union blown out from under him, he's an aging diabetic and now the government's re-trying him on 22 "corruption" counts over his Victorian beach house. As an elementary principle of working class

solidarity we think the union movement in this country should undertake a militant defense of Gallagher, demanding that all the charges be dropped and the witchhunt stopped. And we don't care if he then retires to enjoy the beach house. But the fate of Norm Gallagher demonstrates that if you play by the bosses' rules you lose. What is desperately necessary in the workers movement here is to forge a class-struggle leadership, a Trotskyist party which defends the workers unions and the workers states and has the program and resolve to carry the struggle through to the end — the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a workers government and a planned economy based on collectivised property forms.

### Sharkey, Cambourn, McDonald — Remember the Traitors!

Hawke could not have destroyed the BLF without the active collaboration of the so-called "left" leaderships of the BWIU and FEDFA like Tom McDonald and Stan Sharkey of the BWIU and Jack Cambourn of the FEDFA in Cold War alliance with the CIA lovers running the FIA. McDonald and Sharkey, associated with Pat Clancy's pro-Moscow Association for Communist Unity (ACU), and Cambourn of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), the initial architects of the Accord, had worked out in advance with Hawke's Industrial Relations Minister Willis the carve up of the

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Under Hawke/ACTU/Arbitration hammer, BLF tops Black (left) and Gallagher (above) caved in without a fight.

# Hawke...

Continued from page nine

BLF membership and went into action like a well-oiled machine. Sharkey, McDonald and Cambourn and their supporters will be remembered by all working class militants for what they are — scabherding quislings.

In 1983 the entire reformist left hailed Hawke's election as a "victory" for the working class. But since then Hawke has caused those same "lefts" considerable anxiety. Hawke promised slavish subordination to Reagan, ANZUS and the "free world" drive for World War III against the Soviet Union. He guaranteed the future of the strategic US communication bases at Pine Gap, Nurrungar and Northwest Cape. He has brought the CIA-loving NCC unions back into the Labor Party who, together with Paul Keating's NSW right-wing base (which never

left in the 1955 split) are trying to forge the ALP into a reliable instrument of Cold War and austerity. Hawke promised in advance to make the workers pay for the deregulation of the economy and the scaling down of its massive protectionist barriers for the better political and economic "enmeshing" of Australian imperialism in Asia. The "lefts" on the other hand, from Victorian Socialist Left types like George Crawford and Joan Coxedge to the pro-Accord John Halfpenny and George Campbell of the AMWU, are little-Australia nationalists who favour the massively protected, regulated economy of days gone by and who want to walk the halls of power but not under the strict tutelage of George Shultz and the CIA.

But a period like this of Cold War and capitalist economic crisis leaves the "lefts" no room for manoeuvre. As Leon Trotsky said almost half a century ago:

"The intensification of class contradictions within each country, the intensification of antagonisms between one country and another, produce a situation in which imperialist capitalism can tolerate (ie up to a certain time) a reformist bureaucracy only if the latter serves directly as a petty but active stockholder of its imperialist enterprises, of its plans and programs within the country as well as on the world arena. Social reformism must become transformed into social imperialism in order to prolong its existence, but only prolong it, and nothing more. Because along this road there is no way out in general."

—"Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay"

Hawke's onslaught against the BLF was a test of the usefulness of the trade union and ALP "lefts" to Hawke's imperialist "strong state" and its objectives. Some, like George Crawford and NSW State MP George Petersen, voiced objections to the deregulation bills in ALP caucus, but as usual bowed to its discipline in the parliamentary votes. Only Senator Georges, in a final gesture before his impending retirement, risked expulsion by voting against. Bill Hartley, though a little-Australia nationalist and a pro-capitalist reformist like Crawford, to his credit denounced Hawke and Cain's deregulation — and was summarily chucked out of the ALP. But for Hawke to achieve his aims in the building industry the "lefts" who run the BWIU and FEDFA had to participate actively in the destruction of the BLF and so they did, acting in close unison with CIA-loving NCC types like Harry Hurrell of the FIA and Ernie Ecob of the AWU.

## The BLF, the Russian Question and the Left

Trotskyists stand for unconditional military defence of the USSR and in this region Vietnam, starting with class struggle against the anti-Soviet US bases and the ANZUS military alliance. The Russian question draws a sharp class line through politics internationally and those who cannot defend the gains of the October 1917 Russian Revolution or the gains won by the heroic decades-long struggle of the Vietnamese workers and peasants against first French and then US and Australian imperialism cannot defend the unions at home. If the liquidation of the BLF was a sharp test of the Accord on the trade union front, the events of last year in connection with the 10th anniversary of the Vietnamese Revolution were a dress rehearsal.

The April-May 1985 rampage by Vietnamese fascists against celebrations of the anniversary of the revolution was an acid test for the reformist left. Unleashed by Hawke to cure his left-wing of any uppity post-MX ideas on the Cold War and show he was no softy on Vietnam, the fascist rampage posed defence of the Vietnamese Revolution and the Australian labour movement point blank in the streets. The Spartacist League threw all our forces into mobilising the power of the working class to rout these fascist losers, tapping an enthusiastic response especially from angry waterfront workers. The Clancyite ACU through their offshoot MUSAA in the Sydney waterfront unions pulled out all stops to prevent the ranks being mobilised in union-based workers defence guards. They may have half of the Moscow franchise, but the ACU, which includes the now infamous Sharkey and McDonald, want above all their workaday unity with the ALP and that means with its CIA-loving right wing. Pro-Soviet in words, in action the Clancyites do the worst Cold War dirty work. When workers

political revolution restores the USSR to the road of Lenin and Trotsky, these treacherous "friends of the Soviet Union" won't be seen within a million miles of it, and still less would they be welcome. The CPA and its friends responded to our campaign by circulating slanders that we were "racist", in order to prevent what was, and still is necessary: powerful union-based defence guards to drive these fascist enemies of the Vietnamese Revolution off the streets for good. That in the end the maritime union bureaucrats were forced to mobilise a show of union power in the 17 May Sydney "Vietnam Solidarity" meeting was due solely to the anger and class solidarity with the Vietnamese Revolution catalysed largely by the Spartacist campaign.

A graphic example of the role these "left" union bureaucrats have come to play was captured neatly by the April *Pacific Defence Reporter*. This semi-official mouthpiece of the Defence Department frankly and fulsomely praised an "avowed communist", Newcastle Trades Hall Council secretary and CPA member Peter Barrack for his active role in the Newcastle State Dockyard's bid for a share of the Navy's \$2600 million new submarine contract:

"He is a key figure both in Newcastle's defence contract drive and in the attack on Newcastle's former strike-prone reputation. He is a director of the Hunter Development Board, a NSW Government-backed body... He had a big role in hammering out an industrial agreement that has transformed industrial relations at Newcastle State Dockyard and has virtually ended demarcation disputes that brought the undertaking to its knees in 1982."

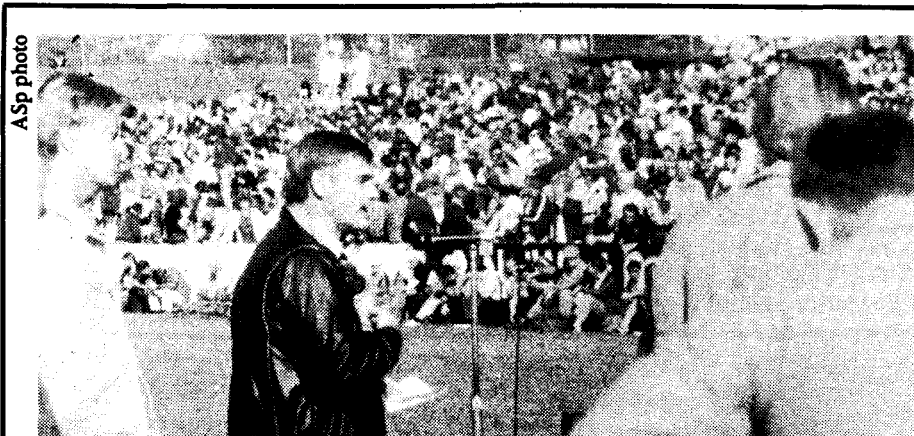
The union lefts' collaboration in the capitalist state's destruction of the BLF is an indictment of the whole history of state-dominated trade unionism in this country. The examples of Peter Barrack, Sharkey, McDonald and Cambourn throw into relief the utter bankruptcy of reliance on the conciliation and arbitration system — which works in a thousand ways to integrate the unions into the bourgeois state apparatus.

## For a Revolutionary Workers Party

Hawke's smashing of the BLF hit the reformists hard, and they've polarised along the lines of the haves (the "Broad Left") and have-nots (the "anti-Accord left"), those in trade union office like the CPA/ACU and those on the outs like the anti-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP). The other components of the SWP-dominated lash-up are: the rabidly Stalinophobic little ALP faction of Bob Gould (erstwhile Healyite) and George Petersen in NSW; the far more significant "Hard Left" wing of the Victorian ALP Socialist Left; the Maoist BLF leadership and Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist); and an "anti-Accord" wing of the CPA around writer Frank Hardy which aims to "save" the CPA. Also orbiting at a distance are the SPA and the identical-twin Russia-hating groups, International Socialists (IS) and its split-off, Socialist Action (SA).

What defines this bloc is its lowest common denominator: anti-Sovietism (the IS/SA consider the USSR "imperialist" and "state capitalist"); anti-American "little-Australia" nationalism; and reformist hostility to the class struggle; reliance on the imperialist state, and more deeply, identification with the ruling class of this "democratic" white bastion of reaction in the region. If the "Broad Left" types of the ACU/CPA have shown themselves good only for facilitating the torpedoing of Aus-

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## Fairfax Metal Unions Defend BLF

FIA militants Bret Stebbing from John Fairfax & Sons (at microphone) and Neil Florrimell from Cockatoo Island dockyard (left) addressed the 28 May mass meeting of over 5000 members of mainly metal trades unions at Redfern Oval in Sydney. They spoke in support of the Fairfax metal unions' class struggle motion in defence of the BLF. The motion, summarily squashed by Hawke's labour lieutenants, was distributed to the meeting in leaflet form by Fairfax workers and their supporters as follows:

Having voted to join today's strike the 27 May meeting of Fairfax metal trades unions, attended by around 60 members, voted overwhelmingly to "attend the mass meeting and fight for the following motion":

**Whereas**, the attempt to crush the BLF being carried out by the Hawke/Cain/Wran Labor governments, backed by the courts and armed police and with the active collaboration of the scab leaderships of the BWIU, FEDFA, FIA, and AWU, is an attack on the fundamental right of workers to organise and fight for our interests against the employers and their government; and

**Whereas**, tens of thousands of BLF members have been confronted with the ultimatum of either signing a government/employer scab contract which repudiates their BLF membership and sets up a government theft of BLF union funds or be sacked and blacklisted in the building industry; and

**Whereas**, the leaderships of the ACTU and TLCs have stabbed the BLF and all unions in the back by refusing to defend the BLF and joining the government hysteria about alleged BLF "violence" while condoning the very real police violence — including the use of MACE gas — against BLF militants.

**Therefore, be it resolved:** This mass meeting condemns the union-busting attacks on the BLF by the Labor governments which are acting as open enemies of the union movement and the leaderships of the BWIU, FEDFA, FIA, and AWU as their quislings, and we condemn their attack on the BLF as an attack on all workers. We declare our full solidarity with the BLF in this fight and urge the BLF to initiate strike action throughout the building industry backed by mass pickets to shut the industry down tight and drive back this attack, achieve full union rights for the BLF and reinstate all sacked BLF members with full back pay. We further call on the memberships of all building trades unions to join and support this strike and picket effort in defiance and repudiation of their scabherding leaderships.

**Be it further resolved:** That this mass meeting pledges that we will support and build such mass pickets with official union contingents and support such strike action in every possible way.

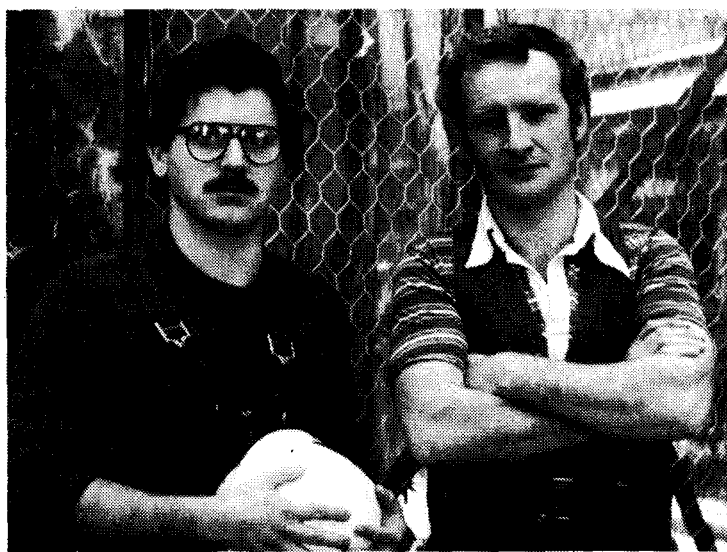
**And be it finally resolved:** That this mass meeting declares that Hawke's Accord is the bosses' tool to chain the unions and that we reject it and all reliance on the bosses' courts and arbitration system and assert the need to rely on our own organised strength to defend our organisations in this watershed battle of the workers unions against the bosses and their government. **An attack on one is an attack against all.**

This motion must be discussed and voted at today's meeting. All union brothers and sisters should support this motion.

Moved: Bret Stebbing  
(FIA Member, John Fairfax & Sons)  
28/5/86

tralian unions and Russian shipping, the "anti-Accord left" isn't any more attractive. They have "defended" the BLF by campaigning to turn the whole thing into a "civil liberties" pressure tactic directed at ... the imperialists. In a May Day statement entitled "It's Time to Draw the Line" they appealed against Hawke's anti-BLF attack in the name of "human rights" to the International Labour Organisation — an arm of the United Nations — and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions — an anti-communist union centre run by the CIA! They defended Gallagher's order to sign Hawke's scab contracts, and backed his pathetic court strategy. And when Tony Caruso and Martin Neal fought in the BLF for class-struggle action to smash Hawke's attacks, an SWP supporter present voted against.

The "anti-Accord lefts" are regular little social patriots. Thus their April "Left Consultation" conference attacked ANZUS and the bases as a "threat" to "Australia's security and independence", a direct appeal to nationalist anti-Sovietism. And in their "Socialist Policy Statement" issued to last Easter's Broad Left conference



BLF militants Tony Caruso and Martin Neal fought for industry-wide strike and mass pickets to defend the union.

in Sydney they called for "Australian government action to support self-determination for the peoples of East Timor and West Papua and the Philippines", assigning the racist ruling class of this privileged white imperialist enclave the role of "liberators" of the oppressed of Asia and the Pacific.

The "anti-Accord" left groups have taken a harder line rhetorically toward the Hawke/Keating government, dis-

covering for example that it is *capitalist*. But their program is still nakedly Laborite. Their "Socialist Policy Statement" is crowned with the call to "campaign for the Labor movement's traditional socialist objective — nationalisation of private industry under workers control". This is nothing more than a call for "lemon socialism", to nationalise the losers in the capitalist rat-race and make the workers pay, as well as a warmed-over version of the old call

for a Labor government with "socialist policies".

Hawke has publicly noted that the "good old days are gone" and asserted that he will risk electoral defeat to ram his program of austerity and anti-Sovietism down the throats of the working class. Both the "Broad Lefts" and the "anti-Accord lefts", despite the rhetoric, have demonstrated that they will strive with might and main to see Labor stays in government — the "Broad Lefts" from the "heights" of their Accord offices and sinecures, and the "anti-Accord" crowd from the depths of their parliamentary cretinist despair and confusion. Hawke has nailed the BLF but the heavy battalions of the proletariat in this country on the wharves, in the mines, in transport can bring down this anti-worker/anti-Soviet Labor government through a hard class-struggle counteroffensive. What is missing is a class-struggle leadership to oust the treacherous union bureaucracy, to split the Labor Party's proletarian base from its pro-capitalist tops. A Trotskyist party must be forged to fight for a workers republic of Australia in socialist Asia. That is the only alternative to the madness of Reagan/Hawke Cold War.

## Socialist Labour League Scabs on BLF

In the last issue of *Australasian Spartacist* we exposed the Healyites without Healy of the Socialist Labour League (SLL) for their anti-working class crime of printing the fascist Vietnamese-language paper *Bell of Saigon* in their party printshop. Well, these unregenerate political bandits have been at it again — this time scabbing on BLF picket lines!

Since mid-May SLL-supporter Bruce Cameron, a Plumbers Union member, has been crossing the BLF picket line at the Footscray pool site in Melbourne, while outside sacked BLF militants, including Spartacist supporter Martin Neal, have battled vicious cop onslaughts. The photo above of Cameron crossing the line under police protection tells the story. Picket lines — the battle lines of the class struggle — mean *don't cross!* The SLL's scabbing explodes its pretence to "defend" the BLF. When it comes to deeds they've ended up again on the side of the bosses, the cops, union-busting Labor governments and scabherding bureaucrats against the working class, this time against the BLF in the biggest assault on the working class here in decades.

When confronted by Spartacists SLL members have brazened out their scabbing. And with colossal cynicism and a contempt for their readers worthy of Rupert Murdoch, the SLL's twice-weekly rag *Workers News* (1 July) ran a photo of Cameron standing on the Footscray picket line in May, during a brief walkout by the tradesmen in protest at cop arrests of pickets, over a letter by him moaning about "safety" on the site on the other side of the line! Well, what should have happened was that instead of a dozen or so militants outnumbered by cops, there should have been hundreds of BLs backed up by building tradesmen and workers pulled out from nearby factories to shut the site down. Then things would have gotten really "unsafe" for scabs like Cameron! Despite the craft-unionist "tradition" in this country of unions scabbing on each others' strikes, there are still plenty of union militants who know that, as one picket told Martin Neal, "Anyone who crosses a picket line is a scab".

July/August 1986

An article in *Workers News* (13 May) by former builders labourer Rodney Robinson claimed: "Only the SLL has fought consistently for the mobilisation of the BLs through strike action, as the way of gaining support from the entire working class". As usual with the SLL the reality behind the bombast is pretty sordid. The SLL did call for "national strike" action by the BLF — and linked it to a call on the ACTU/TLC scabherders who were

resolution but hardly even mentioned the BLF!

Further evidence that the SLL's "national strike" line was empty posturing aimed at pressuring the Gallagher leadership and the ALP/ACTU scabherders is the fact that SLL supporters signed Hawke/Cain/Wran's scab contracts. After weeks of denouncing Gallagher for telling his membership to "sign over", the 31 May *Workers News* describes its

ASp photo



SLL supporter Bruce Cameron (centre) crossing picket line at cop-protected Footscray pool site.

smashing the BLs to break with the Labor government (*Workers News*, 10 May). In the same article the SLL equated the pre-Accord state-run, Arbitration-controlled unionism which has crippled the union movement in this country for almost a century with "independence" of the trade unions. They steadfastly ducked the necessary call for mass pickets and a strike committee to run the strike. But then why not? For the SLL picket lines are something you cross and the labour lieutenants of capitalism in the ACTU are the future leaders of a "workers government". Moreover, at the 28 May Redfern Oval mass meeting where metal union militants *did* fight for class struggle solidarity action to defend the BLF (see opposite page) SLL supporter Alan Hardy spoke to call on the Accord's ACTU policemen to fight the Labor government for a wage rise and not only refused to support the Fairfax metal workers'

supporter Alan Hardy as "a BLF member forced to join the BWIU". Elementary trade union principle demanded a refusal to sign this outrageous document and any serious strike strategy had to be linked to a mass refusal to sign over. When Gallagher told his members to sign over to "stay on the sites" it was a sure indication that he'd thrown in the towel. The SLL's capitulation on this and their justification of this cowardice to other workers aids and abets the Hawke government's liquidation of the BLF and its attempt to establish one big company union in the building industry. What was necessary was not to "stay on the sites" but to shut them down! Hardy justified signing over by equating their cowardly tailing of Gallagher's bureaucratic capitulation with the Bolsheviks work in the Tsarist army in World War I. Well, Messrs Beams, Hardy & Co, there is a big difference — it's called the class line.

Lenin's Bolsheviks, *conscripts* like the mass of Russian workers and peasants, were in the trenches organising communist cells to destroy the Tsarist army, to turn the imperialist war into a civil war to smash the bourgeois state. The SLL's scabbing and counselling capitulation on the issue of signing the government/employer scab contract aids the bourgeois state in smashing a workers union. We doubt it but the difference may be clear even to you.

In short, all the hype in the recent SLL forum tour celebrating 1000 issues of the *Workers News* and calling to "Defend the BLF" amounts only to a cover for SLL lies, opportunism, and scabbing. And what of the recent split off from Nick Beams' travelling scab show? The hapless Communist League (CL) emerged from their confusion to march at May Day in Melbourne and Sydney. We pointed out in *Australasian Spartacist* no 115 in the article "The Communist League and the Russian Question" that unless they broke decisively from their Stalinophobia and workerism in the direction of revolutionary Trotskyism that the CL would quickly go the way of the rest of the reformist left, including the SLL, into the dead end of Laborite tailing of the trade union bureaucracy. Sure enough their Melbourne branch's May Day statement praises the BLF tops for "correctly adopting tactics appropriate to illegality: striving to stay on the sites, with the members ... where necessary signing pieces of paper in order to keep the organisation together" (their emphasis). The result of that bit of Laborite "wisdom", comrades of the Communist League, is that the BLF is off the building sites, has few members to speak of, and no organisation. The union has been destroyed without a fight and you are in the company of the likes of Beams and Hardy in covering for the BLF tops' capitulation.

Only the Spartacist League, the genuine Trotskyists in Australia, fought for class struggle defence of the BLF. We warn all militant workers and youth against the Socialist Labour League — they are corrupt political bandits and scabs. ■



## ALP/ACTU Scabherders Smash BLF

# For Hard Class Struggle to Bring Down Hawke!

The Bulletin

### Workers Need a Trotskyist Party

The world imperialist economic crisis is hitting Australia hard. The dollar keeps bouncing around below the US\$.65 level. The foreign debt has exploded to \$75 billion thus doubling in the last eighteen months. Australian capitalism, which has always had a strongly "rentier" character, built up an inherently uncompetitive manufacturing sector behind huge tariff walls to keep out "cheap" Asian goods and paid its way through the export of mineral raw materials and pastoral and agricultural produce. Though expanded after WWII on the basis of large-scale European immigration, manufacturing has since been run down by the bourgeoisie and now Australian capitalism's traditional export markets are being ripped away by the EEC and the United States and the prices of coal and iron ore are falling. As we go to press the Triple-A credit rating of this resource-rich white imperialist enclave in Asia is under review by Wall St financial institutions like Moody's and Salomon Brothers and as stated in the 12 July *Sydney Morning Herald*: "To avoid the

to its imperialist masters and its Big Brother in Washington that it is more than willing and able to regiment the unions of this country for anti-Soviet war and austerity. The "accord" between the ALP and ACTU has always been a no-strike pledge writ large and in this crisis climate it had to be tested dramatically. Thus starting in April, while fulsomely praising Reagan's terror bombing of Libyan civilians and war provocations against the Soviet Union, Hawke went over to open war on the union movement. One of Australia's most militant unions, the Builders Labourers Federation (BLF), was effectively liquidated in a blitzkrieg of Arbitration Commission decisions, parliamentary deregistration legislation, phalanxes of cops and scab union organisers from the BWIU, FEDFA, AWU and FIA, and charges of BLF "terrorism". Labourers on building sites in NSW, Victoria and the ACT were told their union no longer existed and presented with a scab contract by which they signed over to one of the raiding unions, repudiated their BLF member-

ASp photo



Spartacist contingent on Sydney May Day 1986: fighting anti-Soviet Cold War, for class-struggle defence of BLF.

ignominy of a lower credit rating, the government will have to convince the men from Moody's that it is practising austerity as well as preaching it". Thus when Hawke's Treasurer Paul Keating announced that Australia was headed for "banana republic" status it was by way of something between a threat and a promise to the proletariat and oppressed of this country.

The Cold War Labor government of Robert Hawke has to continually prove

ship and demanded their "share" of union funds (an open prelude to government theft of the union's assets). In a violation of even common law justice they were given the ultimatum of sign or be sacked. Isolated by the ALP/ACTU bureaucracy and shackled by their own Laborite faith in the capitalist courts the BLF leadership of Norm Gallagher and Steve Black instructed their members to sign over, sign statements that they'd done

### Union-buster Hawke: Thatcher In Drag.



so "under duress", and fight it in the courts!

### Class-Struggle Leadership Could Have Won

The BLF has gone down virtually without a shot fired, handing Hawke an easy victory. But it didn't have to be that way and it is necessary to draw the lessons of this debacle. There was plenty of will to fight among Builders Labourers as well as among the rank and file of the other building unions. What was centrally missing was a class-struggle leadership with a strategy to win. As we said in a leaflet distributed on 23 April to a mass meeting of two thousand BLs in Sydney:

"A hard fight can turn this situation around. The strategy to win is a nation-wide building industry strike, mobilising the full resources of the union to build mass pickets that nobody crosses to shut down the sites and drive off the cops and scabberding traitors. The BLF must fight but it must not be left to fight alone. All unionists must stand in solidarity with the BLF, and an all-out fight would have a powerful appeal."

— "Smash Attacks on the BLF! Bust the Union-Busters!", *Australasian Spartacist* no 115

We also called for mass refusal to sign Hawke/Cain/Wran's scab contract. Hawke's "test" of the Accord was an opportunity not only to defend the BLF but to smash the whole class-collaborationist Accord structure and turn the tide that has been running against the unions since Hawke took power in 1983.

In May resolutions demanding class-struggle solidarity action in defense of the BLF (see box this issue) were put by union militants and Spartacist supporters to meetings of the APTU and ATEA in Melbourne and to a meeting of metal workers at John Fairfax and Sons and then to a mass stop work meeting of around 5000 metal workers at Redfern Oval in Sydney. That the metal workers at Fairfax adopted the resolution put by

FIA militant Bret Stebbing and then distributed it and fought for it at the Redfern Oval mass meeting is a ringing confirmation both that Hawke's onslaught on the BLF was widely seen as an attack on all unions and that there was a will to join hands with the BLF to drive back that attack. Metal union bureaucrats called the meeting — over a piddling 2.3% wage increase and a new superannuation plan — to let off steam and to shore up the Accord. FIA bureaucrat Bob Davies ruled class-struggle defence of the BLF "out of order", and refused the microphone to BLF members present — a good day's work for his capitalist masters.

BLF militants and Spartacist supporters Martin Neal and Tony Caruso refused to sign the government's scab contract and, calling on all other BLs to refuse as well, linked this refusal to a fighting strategy at the 13 May Victorian branch meeting of the BLF. Their resolution stated:

"We reject any reliance on the courts, Arbitration or the Labor government, instruments of the class enemy and declare the necessity to rely on our own strength."

Thus the 13 May monthly general meeting of the Victorian branch of the BLF resolves to organise immediately an industry-wide strike, with mass pickets to drive back the Government's attacks and regain full union rights for the BLF and its members. All charges must be dropped and all sacked members reinstated.

That is necessary to bring out the membership of the other building industry unions to shut the whole industry down tight and to extend the strike nationwide until this attack on the entire union movement is driven back. That a strike committee be elected to run the strike."

During the meeting Neal, who'd been sacked for his principled refusal to sign the scab contract, made the link between Hawke's Thatcherite attack on the BLF and Reagan/Hawke's drive for war against the Soviet degenerated workers state and pointed to the heroic example of the 1984-85 British miners

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