



## 3 years of bureaucrats' sabotage

# Stop the retreat! Jobs for all!

Three years ago, in June 1974, ACTU president Bob Hawke promised that large-scale unemployment was just "not on". Months later 5 percent of the total workforce was jobless. The number has since risen to a post-Depression record -- 5.8 percent. As the dole queues grow longer the unemployed and their families, by the tens of thousands, are plunged into severe material hardship. Young people leaving school are particularly hard hit -- half the registered unemployed are under twenty-one. Yet Hawke and his reformist cohorts continue to cling to their policy of class peace, retreating time and again under the blows of the union-bashing Fraser government. With every retreat another hunk is torn from the workers' diminishing living standards and trade-union rights to appease the bourgeoisie's voracious drive to maintain its level of profits in the midst of a recession.

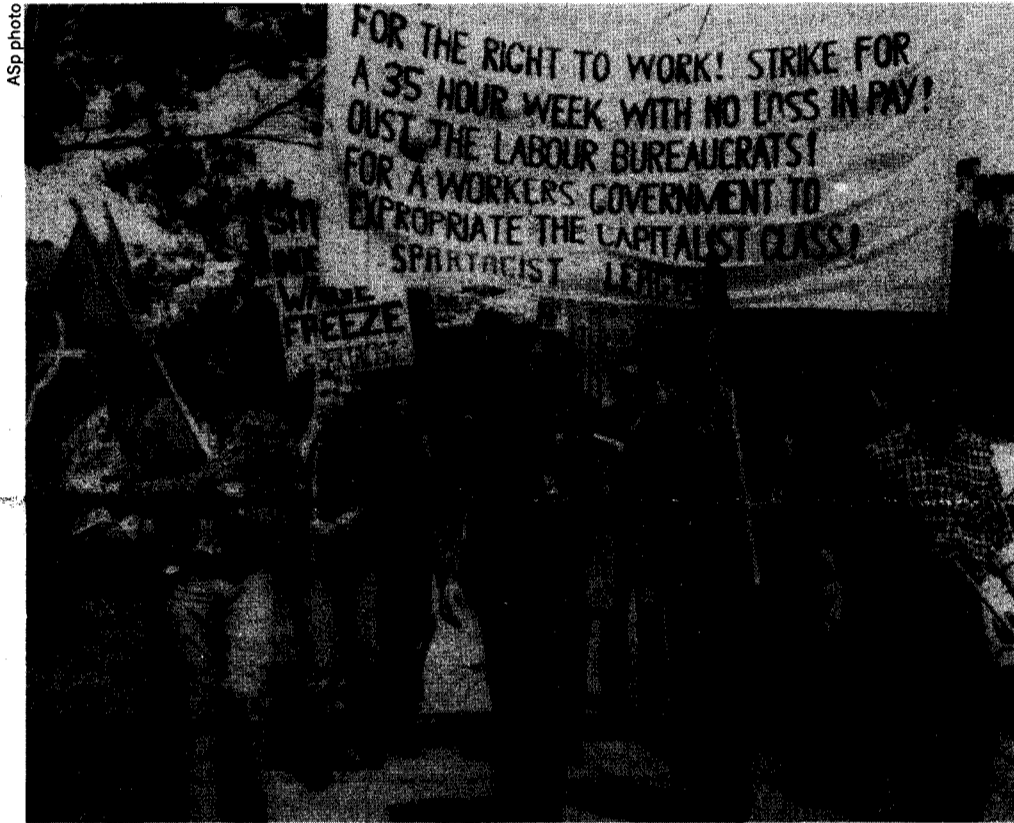
The bosses' offensive continues unabated. Two months ago the Fraser government moved to revitalise the hated penal powers through its proposal to establish an Industrial Relations Bureau and over the past few weeks the bourgeoisie has sharply escalated its war on the unemployed. The press has been filled with reports of employers "despairing" over a supposed inability to fill job vacancies. A flashy front-page story in Murdoch's *Australian* "revealed" a secret government survey which uncovered 140,000 people registered as unemployed who had left their jobs "voluntarily" -- the only trouble with this "secret survey" is that it never existed; or, as the *Financial Review* (7 March) politely termed it -- it was a "guesstimate" by Fraser. Nonetheless the government has seized on this and other stories to "prove" that high unemployment is "largely a myth" and a high-level governmental inquiry has been established to ferret out so-called abuses of dole benefits and welfare payments. This inquiry comes on top of the already existing "dole bludger" hunting expedition headed by the ABC chairman, John Norgard. Prompted by the more neanderthal element on its backbench the government is also considering issuing South Africa-style identity cards to dole recipients, introducing industrial conscription (ie, forcing the unemployed to work for their miserable dole handout) and discontinuing indexation of the dole.

There are several factors behind the present drive against the unemployed. If some of the "dole bludger" vilification could be made to stick it would divert attention, if only temporarily, from what is bound to be a deteriorating employment situation in the coming period (as predicted in the report by the Australian Industries Development Association, a national employer pressure group, in the *Financial Review*, 22 February). And dole benefits are an obvious target for Fraser's cost-cutting. The government paid out \$500 million last year -- fifty times the 1974 figure! -- and is already talking about sweeping new cutbacks in social welfare expenditure in the upcoming budget. Perhaps most importantly, the bourgeoisie relies on the army of the unemployed as a reserve labour pool to hold down wages and, potentially, to be used against organised labour as scabs. But that reservoir can only be reliably tapped if the jobless and their families are driven literally to the brink of starvation.

The unemployed themselves, dispersed and without real social power, are in the worst possible position to fight back. A winning strategy against retrenchments demands the mobilisation through the trade unions of the entire strength of the labour movement. The employed and unemployed must join in an offensive for a thirty-hour week at no loss in pay -- a sliding scale of

hours to divide the available work among all who need it, a sliding scale of wages to beat back the tide of inflation. Threats of layoffs must be met with immediate strike action and/or factory occupations. Any attempt to cut back dole benefits and other social services must be resisted and the demand raised for increasing the dole at least to the minimum wage and extending it to all workers, particularly married women.

The trade-union bureaucracy detests such a class-struggle course, however, and has instead sought salvation in the wage indexation decisions of the Arbitration Court and in joining with domestic bosses to plead for ever higher tariff barriers against imported goods. Burdened with the fear of unemployment and a passive bureaucracy, the working class has experienced a sharp decline in militancy which has meant not only wholesale wage cuts but work speed-ups and victimisation of militants in factory after factory. Strike activity in 1976, excluding the strikes around Medibank, was only 42 percent of the 1975 level. The trend is revealed particularly starkly by strike figures in the metal industries, which are traditional pace-setters and covered by the supposedly leftist Amalgamated Metal Workers and Shipwrights Union (AMWSU). In 1974 there were 700 disputes involving the loss of 2,850,000 working days. The first nine months of 1976 saw only 251 disputes with a total of



SL poses militant class-struggle alternative to reformists' reliance on protectionism and arbitration; photos top: John Halfpenny of the AMWSU (left), Arbitration head Sir John Moore.

320,000 days lost. And now the AMWSU tops sit waiting for Sir John Moore, president of the Arbitration Commission, to announce the new indexation decision before deciding if and when to launch their first award campaign in three years.

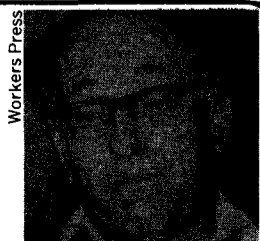
Instead of leading strikes to defend their members' livelihoods, the AMWSU bureaucrats, many of whom are associated with the reformist Communist Party of Australia (CPA), have raised a protectionist hue and cry about "Aussie jobs" going to overseas workers. The January issue of the AMWSU's journal, *Amalgamated News*, prominently advertises their latest betrayal -- a reactionary "Buy Australian" campaign which disingenuously promises a recession-battered working class that "Buying Australian gives a mate a job!"

The struggle necessary to take on the massive unemployment can only be launched in a political struggle against the bureaucracy and their treacherous policies. But instead of fighting to expose the bureaucrats, much of the "revolutionary" left has offered up its services as a left cover in the form of the recently constituted Right to Work Campaign. The campaign had its origins in an on-going committee set up at a Living Standards Conference organised by the AMWSU and a number of other "left" unions in Sydney last year.

Given its bureaucratic backers, it should come as no surprise that the Right to Work Campaign poses no real strategy to fight for jobs -- nor could it. United-front activity by small left groups can only have value in the fight against unemployment if they serve to point the way forward and expose the treacherous bureaucracy which prevents the class from being mobilised. This was the character of a small united-front effort in which the Spartacist League took part two years ago, the Unemployed Workers Action Group. But the present campaign is neither a united front nor does it expose the bureaucrats. Its

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**The anti-Marxist theory  
of the International Socialists  
SEE PAGE 4**



Tony Cliff, British IS leader.

# SWP renders Lenin a feminist

Did Lenin, who carried on a fierce polemical battle against the Russian Bundists who demanded an autonomous organisation for the Jewish workers, advocate an autonomous women's movement? To believe Nita Keig, Socialist Workers Party (SWP) Political Committee member (speaking at a recent Spartacist League forum at Sydney University), "Marxists have *always* supported the idea of women organising independently". Moreover, in an editorial in the SWP's new theoretical journal (*Socialist Worker*, March), Keig attempts to substantiate this outlandish claim with Lenin's own words.

The SWP is not usually fond of quoting Lenin, whose revolutionary politics it repudiates in

## CL, SWP oppose WLM purge

We welcome the following statements by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Communist League (CL), the two Australian sympathising organisations of the so-called "United Secretariat", condemning the anti-communist and anti-democratic exclusion attempt directed against us in Sydney WLM. SWPer Keig, however, has expressed reservations over the SL motion's labelling of Moore's move as anti-communist (despite their like characterisation of a similar red-baiting campaign -- directed in part against them -- five years ago). It is not unusual for the SWP to brush aside class questions such as this in its overriding concern for "democracy" though, inexplicably, SWP supporters in Melbourne have in fact endorsed the same motion.

As for the Communist League, when our anti-exclusion motion was raised by an SLer at the 20 March Melbourne WLM general meeting, CL supporter Ruth Egg spoke in opposition to the motion being put despite her avowed position "that Melbourne women must oppose" the exclusion move. Egg explained that it would interfere with the autonomy of Sydney WLM. Her confused about-face on the motion reflected a capitulation to the prevailing tenor at the meeting against "interfering" with Sydney WLM's "internal" problems. This symptomatic capitulation to pressure which characterises the vacillating, centrist CL was expressed five days earlier as well, at a public meeting on "Women and Revolution", where Egg was a scheduled speaker. In her initial presentation she opposed an independent women's movement and counterposed Marxist analysis to feminist analysis, only to back down under feminist criticism -- including that of SWP sympathisers. Egg then "explained" that what she had meant was that the women's movement could not be independent from the class struggle but that she supported an autonomous (!) women's movement. She continued that she had not meant to imply that feminism was counterrevolutionary; that it was in fact a step toward socialism (though opposed to a Marxist analysis?! If nothing else, the SWP has the "virtue" of being openly and consistently feminist.

March 23, 1977

Members of the Socialist Workers Party in the women's liberation movement regard the motion put forward by Margo Moore to exclude members of the Spartacist League from the women's house and activities emanating from women's liberation general meetings in Sydney as totally undemocratic. While having major differences with this organisation on the question of women's liberation as on many other questions, we consider its members to be a part of the forces fighting women's oppression and not comparable to the various right-wing opponents of the women's liberation movement as Moore crudely suggests. As such we support their right to participate in the movement and to put their ideas forward on the same basis as anyone else.

Nita Keig  
for the SWP

19th March, 1977.

Melbourne Women's Liberation Movement,  
Women's Centre.

Dear Sisters,

It has come to our attention that a move is being made to expel the Spartacist League from the Sydney Women's Liberation Movement. We feel that Melbourne women must oppose this move.

While we have differences with the Spartacist League on the question of the Communist Women's Movement (among others) we feel that any attempt to exclude the women from any left organisation from participation in, and debate around the direction of, the women's movement amounts to political censorship. We feel that, as supporters of the liberation of women, the Spartacist League have a right to participate in activities which are aimed at obtaining that liberation, and to argue for their position on how that fight must be conducted.

In conclusion we feel that political censorship and exclusion of any working class current can only be detrimental to the struggle for our liberation.

Yours in struggle

Gwynneth Evans & Ruth Egg  
for the Communist League

practice. But the editorial is directed in large part at the "irrelevant", "ultra-left sectarian" SL's class-struggle line in the women's movement, where its increasing impact lately has presented the SWP revisionists with a sticky dilemma. On the one hand, she attacks the *conception* of a communist perspective with mock wonder at how "frustrating" it must be for us that the "women's liberation movement [hasn't] voted to become a 'non-male-exclusionist communist women's movement...'" On the other, she expresses the more sober concern that we are "tarring the entire left [!] with the brush of lunacy [ie, open communist politics]". A dilemma indeed -- without discarding the historical authority of Bolshevism in which it cloaks its reformism, the SWP must distance itself from the Bolsheviks' "lunatic" politics.

The SWP wants us to believe that any movement against oppression is by definition an inherent part of the class struggle, in order to excuse itself from fighting for a class-struggle women's movement. Since women's liberation cannot be achieved within the framework of capitalism, explains Keig, women organised around ("even the most modest") demands relating to their oppression -- so long as they are organised with "proletarian methods" (ie independently ... of the proletariat) -- will of necessity be forced to confront the capitalist system as a whole. To enlist the backing of the Bolshevik leader for this Menshevik thesis that consistent feminism leads to socialism, Keig resorts to the classic revisionist expedient of falsification.

She refers the reader to a conversation between Lenin and German Communist leader Clara Zetkin, who was then preparing a resolution on the woman question for the Third Congress of the Communist International (see *Lenin on the Emancipation of Women*, Moscow Progress Publishers, 1972). By wending her way through a forest of anti-feminist statements in Zetkin's account of the discussion, carefully excerpting a couple of

neutral comments and splicing them together with a well-placed ellipsis, Keig notes his support, in her words, for a "broad international conference of women [from all classes] in defence of their rights". Quoting Lenin (with those three little dots!) that the conference would "increase unrest, uncertainty, contradictions and conflicts in the camp of the bourgeoisie and its reformist friends ..." she omits, among other things, Lenin's real attitude toward the conference: "What a picture of chaos, of decay of the bourgeois world the congress is bound to present! What a portrayal of its hopeless conditions!"

Keig implies that Lenin agreed with the SWP's specious argument that mobilising bourgeois women around bourgeois reforms somehow places them in contradiction to their native class interests and pits them objectively against the bourgeoisie. She thus equates Lenin's emphatic support for full equality for all women, including bourgeois, with support for class-collaborationist political unity with bourgeois women. Lenin's meaning was the exact opposite.

Far from arguing for unity with bourgeois feminists, Lenin and Zetkin, in the conversation from which Keig extracts her quote, intended the conference to split the women's movement along class lines: to expose the "female Social-Democrats", "lady-like English pacifists and ardent French suffragettes"; to fight for "Communist theses and resolutions on all items on the agenda"; to win over "the broad masses of women" to the "revolutionary proletariat" and the "parties of the Communist International". We solidarise proudly with the "ultra-left sectarian" views of VI Lenin:

"The first proletarian dictatorship ... eradicates more prejudice than volumes of feminist literature. However, in spite of all this, we do not yet have an international Communist women's movement and we must have one without fail." ■

## Letter to SYA: who lies about AUS Council?

*The reformist Socialist Workers Party/Socialist Youth Alliance (SWP/SYA) has tried to cover up the SYA's betrayals of revolutionary principles at AUS January Council by spreading unsubstantiated accusations of SL "lies" in an article on the AUS in our last issue. Their shoddy attempt to impugn the basic honesty and revolutionary integrity of the SL falls flat with their stated refusal to respond to our letter.*

*The political point we made in our article is moreover strengthened by the character of the mysterious amendment SWPer Deutschmann claimed we refused to mention, which effectively reduces the SYA's "anti-Maoist" stand to support for a bourgeois "democratic republic of Australia", but not one that is "truly independent", dropping altogether even the Maoists' phony "anti-imperialist" cover to better tail bourgeois liberalism.*

15 March 1977

Dear Comrades,

Members of the Socialist Workers Party and Socialist Youth Alliance, in particular leading member Dave Deutschmann, have accused us of lying about the SYA's role at AUS January Council in an article in the March issue of *Australasian Spartacist*. This is a serious charge. When Deutschmann raised the charge to SL member Steve Haran at Macquarie University 3 March, he was advised to write us a letter detailing the charges and/or correcting any factual inaccuracies. Deutschmann has refused, and *Direct Action* has remained silent on these charges; yet the verbal accusations of lying have continued.

On the basis of Deutschmann's incomplete, verbal statement on 3 March, the passage in question seems to be the following:

"... the Maoists ... moved another [motion] for a 'truly independent democratic republic of Australia' and 'opposing the effects of the November 11, 1975 semi-fascist coup'. Rather than oppose this nationalist motion in toto the anti-Maoist bloc [which included the SYA] merely amended it -- to delete 'semi-fascist'!"

Deutschmann claimed this is false because SYA supporters had attempted to put a second amendment to delete the words "truly independent" as well. When this amendment was bureaucratically suppressed, the SYA had voted against the motion in toto. Furthermore, he claimed that this omis-

sion was conscious as he had "explained" the matter to two of our comrades present as observers at the council meeting.

Neither Deutschmann nor anyone else in the SYA has questioned the veracity of the remainder of the article. In particular, none of the following observations made by the SL comrades present have been denied: (a) the SYA spoke only to the one amendment we reported which reached the floor of the council meeting; (b) the SYA did not attack the motion as a whole during the actual meeting, nor was there any public criticism of the phrase, "truly independent"; (c) no other amendment reached the floor.

Following the vote on the amendment which was moved, the chair asked for further discussion from the floor. No SYAer -- and no one else, for that matter -- sought the floor to oppose the motion as a whole. Whatever might have been said behind the scenes effective opposition was thus clearly absent. And, according to our comrades,

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## Red-baiting in women's movement

# Stop anti-Trotskyist purge!

An article in last month's *Australasian Spartacist* ("Fight women's oppression through class struggle") analysed the crisis of disorientation and demoralisation confronting the feminist-dominated women's movement. In it we warned that the "debate over new directions" currently going on among movement activists would remain "an exercise in self-deception" unless it was prepared to confront the root cause of the failure and confusion: feminism itself. We noted that, four years after voting to exclude Spartacist League (SL) supporters -- the only consistent class-struggle opponents of feminism within the women's liberation movement (WLM) -- from its general meetings, Melbourne WLM was stagnating for having failed to undertake that task. As an example of a proletarian approach we pointed to the SL proposal for a genuine united-front International Women's Day (IWD) march based on class-struggle demands, which was nearly adopted by the Sydney IWD committee.

Ironically, as we were about to go to press we learned of a renewed attempt to bureaucratically stifle the necessary critical examination of prevailing feminist conceptions. Self-proclaimed "Marxist-feminist" Margo Moore (whom we incorrecly described last month as a Sydney University academic -- in fact she is no longer there) moved to exclude us from Sydney WLM. In a lengthy statement read out to the 27 February general meeting (which Moore herself did not attend), she motivated her determination to end the SL's "interference" "once and for all" not only by her "long-standing frustration and anger" (at having her sham "Marxism" exposed by genuine Marxists), but also for a particular "immediate reason": we had been too successful in convincing others to support a class-struggle proposal in the IWD committee. The general meeting voted to hold a special meeting on 17 April to discuss Moore's motion and the question of democracy in the movement in general. Since then, the Sydney exclusion attempt has sparked a reconsideration of the SL's exclusion from Melbourne WLM, which is to be discussed at a meeting there on 6 May.

Our reply to Moore's statement, printed together with the latter in the March issue of the *Sydney Women's Liberation Newsletter*, exposes a number of her slanders in some detail, particularly her lying account of what she has chosen to call "the incident of the I.W.D. coup":

"According to [Moore] the 'sparticists [sic] organised with the Communist League to push through the I.W.D. committee a new set of demands, other than those approved by the general meeting'. In fact, the general meeting which discussed IWD planning on 28 November did not approve any specific set of demands, which were to be discussed in the IWD Committee. She goes on to assert that we stacked the committee meetings: 'suddenly there were 15 odd sparticists [sic]'. At the meeting in question four SL supporters -- not fifteen! -- quite openly moved to reverse the decision of the previous meeting endorsing the conception put forward by the Socialist Workers Party...."

Moore's statement indulges in a great deal of hypocritical agonising about democracy and anti-communism: "the expulsion of a political tendency from a movement such as ours goes, on the face of it, against democratic debate"; and "such a step could be interpreted as being a move against communist tendencies in general...." "I am not attacking the sparticists [sic] for their class position", she protests, and surreptitiously proceeds to attack us for our class positions against feminism and for class struggle. She attacks us for alleged "manipulation" but also for ... openly arguing our views ("haranguing") -- a sin scarcely characteristic of manipulators. She does not like us because we try to recruit women in the movement to our views. Employing a classical red-baiting technique, she paints a picture of sinister operatives who supposedly "come to meetings in groups of six[!]" -- sit taking notes which they take back to their party organisation in order to receive directives as to what their next tactic will be". In sum, she is no anti-communist -- she only wants to get rid of those who insist on arguing their communist view and belong to an "outside" communist organisation!

This is not the first instance of red-baiting in Sydney WLM, nor is it the only example in the movement today. In 1972, members of other left-wing groups, particularly the Socialist Workers League (now Socialist Workers Party), were accused of "manipulation", "using the movement for their own purposes", "dominating" the movement, etc. They had no hesitation at the time in correctly labelling the "selective" attacks,

"usually confined to socialists", as "traditional anti-communism-red-baiting McCarthyism" ("Manifesto on the rights of 'political' women in women's liberation", reprinted in *Mejane* no 8, August 1972). In an alarming indication of the current rightward shift in the women's movement, several feminists at this year's Melbourne IWD march harassed our banner bearers, openly railing against communist and socialist banners "in a women's march" and arch-feminist Kathie Gleeson unsuccessfully attempted to exclude the SL contingent altogether. The Stalinist Greek Progressive Youth Movement, carrying a banner inscribed "Men are not the enemy, Capitalism is" was also harassed.

Moore's charges of lies and disruption are so transparently dishonest that a second statement submitted to the *Newsletter*, written by the *Scarlet Woman* (a "socialist-feminist" journal) collective in rejoinder to our reply to Moore, openly acknowledges and politically argues for the motion as a straightforward *political exclusion*. Thus the central point made in the *Scarlet Woman* statement is "... that the WLM is a sufficiently defined political force to justify its disassociation from the Spartacist League". Namely, they argue that all women in WLM should be obliged to agree with both the possibility and the desirability of an "autonomous women's movement".

Through a carefully prepared, systematic falsification of our views *Scarlet Woman* attempts

to convince women in the movement that the SL is against any struggle at all against women's specific oppression as women, and flatly against any organisation/mobilisation of women to fight their specific oppression. Thus they attempt to "prove" that those who oppose an "autonomous" women's movement oppose any movement whatsoever.

We oppose the perspective of an "autonomous" women's movement because in fact it leads to political subordination to the ruling class by pursuing a *strategy of writing women across class lines*. Women's liberation activists cannot be aloof from the reality of class society. We want pro-working-class women to break from a perspective limited to reforming bourgeois society and to split politically from their bourgeois "sisters", whose loyalty to their class privileges when put to the test will always triumph over their felt oppression as women. Far from leading to an abandonment of the struggle for women's immediate demands, this means that "Revolutionaries must fight to make the special oppression of women the concern of the working class as a whole" (*ASP* no 14, November 1974). There must be special forms of organisation, as developed initially by Lenin, Inessa Armand, Clara Zetkin and other early Communist leaders, to enable working women to fight against both their class and sex oppression, *programmatically* linking that fight to the revolutionary struggle of the working class against capitalism.

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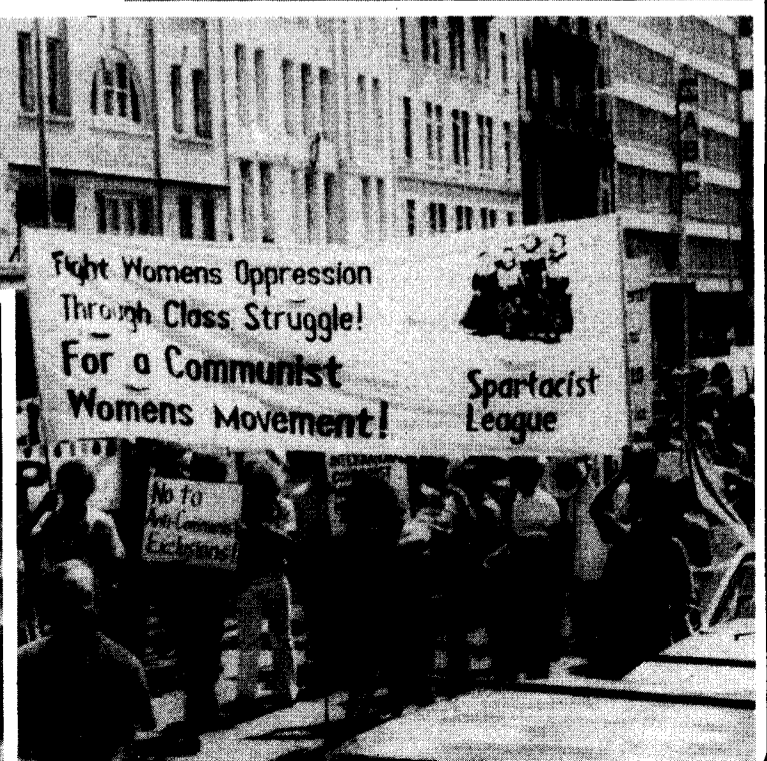
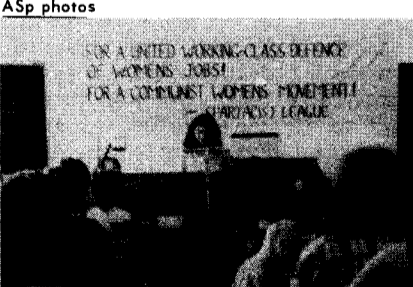
## Spartacist IWD forums: Toward a communist women's movement

For women's liberation activists seeking a way out of the feminist-induced crisis in the women's movement, Spartacist League (SL) activities around International Women's Day (IWD) offered a communist alternative. At the Sydney IWD march the SL contingent, leading chants of "Free abortion on demand, free quality health care" and "Lobbying parliament is no solution, fight for workers revolution", marched behind a bright banner calling "For a Communist Women's Movement". In Melbourne, one of the smallest marches in years was marred by open anti-communism directed against the SL and other leftists. In both cities, SL speakers addressing post-march rallies emphasised the necessity of a class-struggle, anti-feminist fight against women's oppression.

Lively debates on the Leninist approach to work among women marked two successful Spartacist League forums. SL Central Committee member Marie Hotschilt, speaking to nearly thirty people at LaTrobe University, described the historic gains for women in the Bolshevik Revolution. In response to several anarchists who cynically dismissed the Bolsheviks' achievements by parodying Lenin's views on "sexual freedom", SL members explained simply that the primary task confronting proletarian revolutionists was not "personal liberation", but the eradication of hunger and social deprivation through the destruction of capitalism. The anarchists' juvenile petty-bourgeois politics were truly reflected in their sometimes infantile behaviour during the forum.

Reflecting in part the heightened political debate in the Sydney women's movement stimulated by the recent exclusion attempt against the SL, the forum at Sydney Uni-

versity drew some sixty people, including at least five supporters of the Socialist Workers Party/Socialist Youth Alliance (SWP/SYA). Only one SWPer even attempted to defend their flimsy pretension to a bolshevik position on the woman question (see "SWP renders Lenin a feminist", this issue). As one comrade said in response to SWPer Nita Keig's ludicrous assertion that the "Spartacist League doesn't see the women's liberation movement as part of the class struggle", the SL -- in contrast to the SWP and other feminists -- recognises that it "has got to be part of the class struggle ... that is the sense in which it cannot be independent. It must be on the side of the workers in the class struggle!"



State capitalism for the Maoists is purely and simply an idealistic justification for the Peking bureaucracy's nationalistic feud with its Stalinist colleagues in Moscow. The more sophisticated "Third Camp" theories, in contrast, view all the Stalinist regimes, including China's as new ruling classes. The "Third Camp" is represented in Australia by the International Socialists (IS), whose membership identifies more closely with the "bureaucratic collectivism" analysis held by the American IS and its mentor, Max Shachtman, than the state capitalist theory propounded by Tony Cliff, founder of the British IS (recently renamed the Socialist Workers Party). Far from providing a theoretical understanding of the critically important Russian question, they are in fact theoretical covers for a petty-bourgeois adaptation to Cold War anti-communism. Both Shachtman, now dead, and Cliff were renegades from the Trotskyist movement -- the former splitting just after the 1939 Soviet invasion of Poland, the latter just prior to the outbreak of the Korean War.

The brutal programmatic conclusion of the IS "analysis" surfaced in the American group's refusal to defend the Stalinist-led struggle in Vietnam against the murderous onslaught of US imperialism. With the same logic, Shachtman had earlier categorically rejected military support to the Stalinist forces in the Korean War and to the Vietminh's struggle against French colonialism in 1954 -- arguing that the Stalinist Vietminh functioned "in practice as the power instrument of Stalinist imperialism in Indochina" (*New Internationalist*, July-August 1954, p 196). Four years later this social-democratic anti-communism logically culminated in an explicit repudiation of Leninism and entry into the American Socialist Party -- a virtual "democratic foreign policy" brain trust for the US State Department. Only with Shachtman's open support to the "democratic" CIA-sponsored Bay of Pigs invasion aimed at overturning the "totalitarian" Castro regime did the present-day IS/US's progenitors publicly break with him.

Finally, only in 1969, after Vietnam had been pounded by napalm-laden B-52s and a half million US ground troops for years, did the IS reverse its position in favour of military support to the NLF. With the spurious "explanation" that the civil war had been transformed into a "democratic" struggle for self-determination against the US, the IS merely capitulated once again -- this time to the overwhelming popularity which the Stalinist NLF had acquired in the petty-bourgeois New Left milieu in which the IS operated. The only principle recognised by these small-time social democrats in their scramble for short-term popularity is to respect no principle. The virulent anti-communism hidden beneath their presently apolitical workerism will again be exposed full-blown with the next concerted imperialist mobilisation against the deformed/degenerated workers states.

The article below is extracted from an edited transcript of a presentation given by Spartacist League/US (SL/US) Central Committee member Joseph Seymour at a Spartacus Youth League (SYL -- youth section of the SL/US) educational gathering. First printed in *Young Spartacus* (March 1977), the entire article will be included in the forthcoming SYL pamphlet entitled *Trotskyism vs. Maoism: Why the USSR is Not Capitalist*.

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... I find it somewhat embarrassing to have to polemicize against so shoddy a theory as Cliffite "state capitalism". His major work, *Stalinist Russia: A Marxist Analysis*, relies upon a crude and demagogic exploitation of the widespread ignorance of Marxist economic theory. Cliffite "theory" is based upon a blatant and wilful re-definition of scientific Marxist terminology; that is, Cliff substitutes conventional usage for the precise and delimited meanings which have been given Marxist economic terms. Moreover, Cliff also resorts to substituting one economic category for another; in particular, he systematically confuses use-value and exchange-value.

There are two key re-definitions in the Cliffite theory of "state capitalism" -- that of economic competition and that of accumulation. For Marx, competition, insofar as it relates to capitalist economic relations, has a precise

meaning: it is the competition of private capitals over commodities (exchange values) in the market.

Unable to demonstrate "the interaction of many capitals" (what Marx termed the "essential character" of competition) in the Soviet economy, Cliff simply re-defines "competition", making this synonymous with any kind of political-economic rivalry or conflict. In his major exposition of the "state capitalism" theory Cliff declares:

"But as competition with other countries is mainly *military*, the state as *consumer* is interested in certain specific *use-values*, such as tanks, airplanes and so on. Value is the expression of competition between independent producers..." (*Stalinist Russia: A Marxist Analysis* [1955]; emphasis ours)

This is nothing but a clumsy terminological sleight-of-hand. In Marxist economic theory "independent producers" signify *private capitals*, not nation-states, and "competition" involves exchange-values in the *market*, not the arms race.

Cliff continues to heap error upon error:

"Russia's competition with the rest of the world is the expression of the elevation of use values to an end, and serving the ultimate end of victory in competition."

Of course, in all societies where economic scarcity prevails there is always competition for material wealth and productive resources. But to identify capitalism with generalized competition for use-values leads directly to ridiculous conclusions. For example, the Cheyenne and Sioux

means of production. That is why under capitalism the falling rate of profit is the central factor arresting the development of the productive forces.

But reading Cliff or Kidron one gets the impression that capitalism always maximizes real economic growth. What Marx called the "slaughtering of the values of capital" (concretely manifested in falling stock market prices), associated with economic depressions and crises, has no place in the Cliffite schema of the capitalist dynamic.

#### The class struggle: workers versus accumulators?

To the extent that "Third Camp" organizations have an attractive power, it is despite the intellectual shoddiness of their analyses of the bureaucratically degenerated/deformed workers states. The *real* appeal of Cliffite "state capitalism", like the theory of "bureaucratic collectivism" of the American IS, is an analysis of capitalism from the standpoint of trade unionism. Such tendencies have been able to gain a certain significance in the English-speaking world, where the relatively low level of class struggle has made trade-unionist economism prevalent and where the concept of the workers state as a *weapon* appears remote.

The real political content of Cliffite and Shachtmanite theories is the notion that the basic conflict in society is between the direct producers and their consumption needs and the administrators and their accumulationist desires; it is the conflict between higher wages now and economic accumulation. When you read Cliff or

## The anti-Marxist theory of the International Socialists

# What is the class nature of the USSR?

[American Indian] tribes frequently competed for hunting grounds, and European feudal landowners often bid up their daughter's dowries to secure a royal marriage. According to Cliffite "theory" such pre-capitalist economic phenomena presumably would represent "inter-imperialist war" and "capitalist competition"! So, this Cliffite nonsense about Soviet "capitalist competition" is nothing more than calculated terminological confusion.

The other key re-definition of Cliffite theory is that of economic accumulation. Again, there is a gross confusion of exchange-value with use-value. This is Michael Kidron, a leading Cliffite:

"[The Soviet bureaucrats] are under as oppressive a compulsion to fast economic growth as is any similarly placed class elsewhere. They need to be as clearly motivated to ensure growth as their counterparts abroad; and if their criterion of success has been the volume of gross *physical output* rather than *money profits*, the distinction is one of detail not essence." ("Maginot Marxism: Mandel's Economics", *International Socialism*, April-May 1969; emphasis ours)

Now, I could sit here literally for days and quote passages from Marx proving that the *essence* of capitalism is precisely that economic surplus must manifest itself as exchange-value, as money-profit and money-capital. For example, in analysing "the compelling motive of capitalist production -- money making" Marx wrote:

"... the circular course of capital ... is distinguished by the following features: "1. It appears as the *circuit of money-capital*, because industrial capital in its money-form, as *money capital*, forms the starting-point and the point of return of its total process.... It expresses furthermore that *exchange-value*, not *use-value*, is the determining aim of this movement." (*Capital*, vol II, part 1, chapter 1; emphasis ours)

Moreover, the Cliffite identification of the maximization of use-value ("the volume of gross physical output") with that of exchange-value is fundamentally false. Under capitalism the maximization of the exchange value of the means of production periodically comes into conflict with real economic growth. Capitalists do not strive to maximize the total volume of exchange value; rather, they seek to maximize the rate of profit: the ratio of surplus-value to the value of the

Shachtman, this is their vision and the gut-level source of their appeal: "These guys are taking my wages and building factories with it. It doesn't matter who they are, it doesn't matter what the system is. They are making *me* poorer".

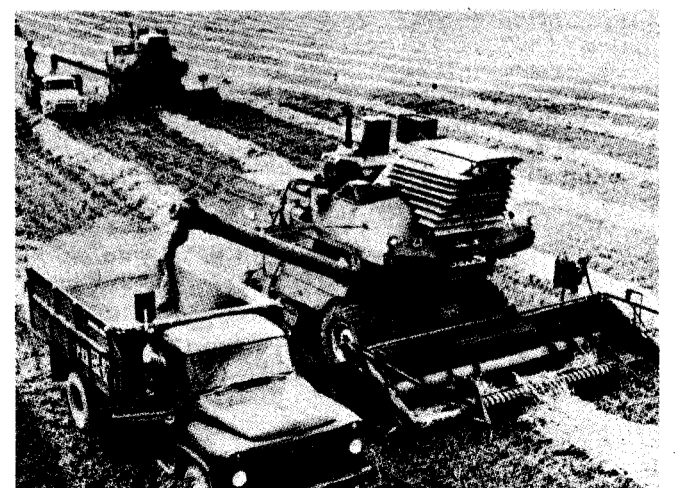
Let me read typical quotes from Cliff and from Shachtman, and you will see that this is the appeal of all the diverse "Third Campist" theories. You will also notice that one cannot tell that Cliff is describing "state capitalism" and Shachtman is writing about a non-capitalist "bureaucratic collectivism".

This is Cliff:

"The increasing rate of exploitation, the increasing subordination of workers to the means of production in Russia, accompanied as it is by the great production of guns but not butter, leads to an intensification, and not a lessening in the oppression of the people." (*Stalinist Russia: A Marxist Analysis*)

And here is Shachtman:

"Modernization was undertaken not with the aid of capital derived from the exploitation of labor in the past and elsewhere, but by means of an extraordinarily harsh exploitation of living indigenous labor in field and factory. This demands a regime which does not brook the slightest resistance from the producer.... "As Russia has shown, it is quite possible in this way to promote the industrialization of the economy. The price paid is the maintenance of an autocratic privileged class at the



Soviet mechanised farming.

### Documents of the

### Bolshevik Tendency

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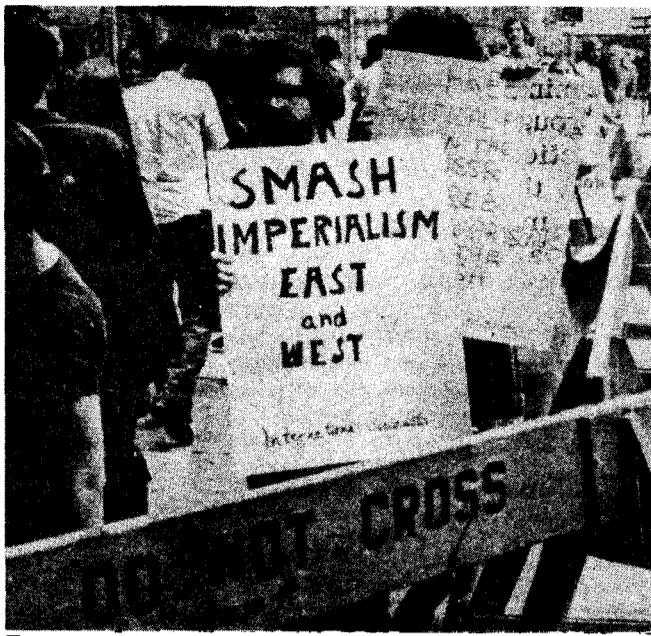
The documentary record of the Trotskyist oppositionists excluded from the Communist Party of Australia. (issues 1 - 3)

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Economist arguments for IS's counterrevolutionary "Third Campism" (left) would logically have led them to support 1921 Kronstadt mutineers' demand for wage increases and "Soviets



without Bolsheviks". Veteran Bolsheviks led the assault on Kronstadt (centre). Photo at right depicts Trotsky, founder of the Red Army, reviewing troops.



top and an exploitation and disfranchisement at the bottom unrelieved by the existence of any of the rights required for dissent and resistance." (foreword to Leon Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese Revolution* [1967])

I believe that the real theory of Cliffite "state capitalism", as well as of Schachtman's "bureaucratic collectivism", can be summarized as follows. The industrialization of a backward country requires a rate of accumulation that the workers will not accept under conditions of proletarian democracy. Thus, industrialization requires a totalitarian regime; since the Stalinist bureaucracy is an agency for accelerated accumulation imposed from above upon the workers, it is an exploiting class.

#### "Third Camp" economism against Bolshevik Russia

In our movement there is a tendency to regard "Third Campism" first and foremost as a Stalinophobic departure from Trotskyism. While historically accurate, I think this is too narrow a conception of the vast political differences.

I would argue that the political conceptions which have become central to the Cliffites and Shachtmanites would have led them into opposition to Lenin and Trotsky from the onset of the Bolshevik Revolution. Projecting the Cliffite/Shachtmanite tendency backwards, these "Third Campists" in 1921 would have been in the syndicalist Workers Opposition which Lenin and Trotsky fought, and later in the 1920s, after the Stalinist political counterrevolution, they would have been in the Tomsy wing of the Bukharin faction. With Cliffite politics there is no way one could have supported the economic policies of the Left Opposition; the Trotskyists, who during the late 1920s were dubbed "super-industrializers" by the Bukharinite Right Opposition, never called for the maximization of wages at the expense of state accumulation. For example, when in 1927 the Stalin/Bukharin regime reduced the work day from eight to seven hours as a demagogic maneuver against the Left Opposition, Trotsky and the Left Opposition *opposed* this action as detrimental to the Soviet economy.

Let's project forward and assume for a moment that Trotskyist parties come to power in the Soviet bloc through workers political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy. In addition let's assume that these political revolutions do not immediately provoke socialist revolution in the capitalist West, so that for a period one would have an isolated, but relatively powerful, bloc of revolutionary workers states. I do not believe such a situation would eliminate our political differences with the "Third Campists" over the "Russian question". Undoubtedly the form of

these differences would change, but decisive differences will remain. Why?

I believe that underlying the revisionist theories of the "Third Camp" tendencies is a semi-anarchist denial that state power -- and therefore the economic resources available to a workers state -- is an important proletarian weapon. I believe that this lies at the heart of our differences and transcends the specific question of the nature of Stalinism.

The clearest statement of this position that I know is by Chris Harman, a leading Cliffite. In defending the Cliffite position that the USSR became "state capitalist" with the imposition of the first Five Year Plan, Harman strongly implies that an isolated and backward workers state can borrow against the coming world revolution in the form of a high-consumption, low-accumulation economic policy:

"Until 1924 not economic and military competition with the West, but spreading of the revolution was seen as the basis for establishing socialism in Russia." ("The Inconsistencies of Ernest Mandel", in *Readings on 'State Capitalism'* [published by the British International Marxist Group])

Lenin would never have written anything like this, because he never *counterposed* the economic and military strength of the Soviet Union to spreading the revolution internationally. On the contrary, during the early years of the Russian workers state some of the most bitter factional struggles within the Bolshevik Party -- and between the Bolsheviks and other tendencies within the Russian workers movement -- were generated by Lenin's single-minded effort to impose a centralized and efficient economic apparatus. It was against considerable opposition that Lenin fought for the replacement of delegated workers management by one-man management, for the employment of bourgeois experts drawing high salaries and for recourse to the widespread use of piece-rates.

One of Lenin's overriding concerns was not to permit the civil war and the isolation of the Soviet workers state from leading to the disintegration of Russian industry and the consequent petty bourgeoisification of the Russian proletariat. This is Lenin addressing the Fourth Congress of the Communist International in 1922:

"... our heavy industry is still in great difficulties.... We must economize now though it is often at the *expense of the population*.... We must do this, because we know that unless we save heavy industry, unless we restore it, we shall not be able to build up an industry at all; and without an industry we shall go under as an *independent country*. We realise this very well.

"*The salvation of Russia* lies not only in a good harvest on the peasant farms -- that is not enough; and not only in the good condition of light industry, which provides the peasantry with consumer goods -- this, too, is not enough: we also need *heavy industry*." ("Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution", in *Collected Works* [1966 ed] vol 33; our emphasis)

#### Industrialization as a proletarian-revolutionary policy

One can get to the heart of our fundamental differences with the "state-capitalist" tendencies if we ask why Lenin and Trotsky regarded the development of industry in the USSR as not at all counterposed to, but a necessary *element* of, an international revolutionary perspective. There are actually several different reasons.

To begin, Lenin and Trotsky were not pacifists. When Marshal Tukhachevsky advocated conquering Europe with the Red Army, Lenin and Trotsky vehemently rejected such a course. But Lenin and Trotsky never assumed that the European, and specifically the German, revolution would have a nationally-limited character. Since a successful German revolution would very likely have provoked intervention by France and Britain, backed by the US, one of the variants of the

German revolution was a European-wide revolutionary war, in which military intervention by the USSR might have been decisive. Thus, in 1920 Lenin was willing to attempt to conquer Poland in order to create a more favorable military situation for the German revolution.

Let us assume that in the early 1920s there was a successful German revolution, but as a result of imperialist military intervention, the rest of Europe remained capitalist. In an isolated German-Russian soviet bloc the need to spread the revolution would have been no less urgent; the tensions and conflicts between consumption and accumulation would have been much less severe than in isolated and backward Russia, but they would not have disappeared. (Interestingly, in his *New Economics* Preobrazhensky discussed the economic problems created by just such a projected situation.) Undoubtedly the backward elements of the German proletariat would have resisted the massive transfer of resources to the Russian peasants (in 1924 Germany was poor relative to its past).

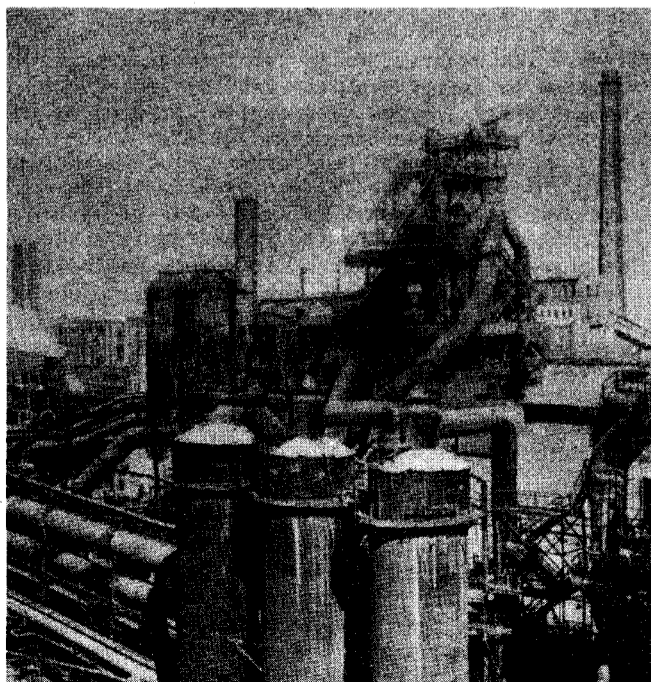
On the other hand, let's say that the German revolution failed, as it did, but that the Chinese revolution of 1925-27 succeeded. In such a situation a Chinese workers state could not have survived, even in the short run, without the transfer of considerable industrial resources from Russia to a society even more economically backward; even discounting imperialist military intervention, there almost certainly would have been a trade boycott of the Sino-Soviet workers states. The USSR would have had to economically carry a Chinese workers state. Thus, the economic and military strength of the Soviet Union was an *essential* component in any serious world-revolutionary strategy.

Moreover, there were a number of defensive reasons why the industrialization of the Soviet Union was important. Industrialization means more than building more factories and installing more machinery; it also involves the expansion of the proletariat relative to other social classes and a general raising of the cultural level of the toiling masses. What would a high-wage, low-accumulation policy have meant for the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR during the 1920s?

Had the policies of Bukharin/Tomsy prevailed in the USSR, one would have had a small industrial proletariat earning relatively high wages, far higher than peasant incomes. Consequently, peasants would have flocked to the cities in far greater numbers than the slowly growing industry could absorb. In the USSR during the mid-1920s the problem of urban lumpenism had already manifested itself. There's a good novel, *The Thief* by Leonid Leonov, describing the lumpen milieu under the New Economic Policy. The social structure of Russia in the 1920s (though not the regime) was far more conducive to capitalist restoration than in the USSR today.

Finally, there is the well-known problem of the Russian peasantry during this period. If Soviet industry failed to provide the peasants with industrial and consumer goods at prices comparable to their levels under Tsarism, there would be a strong tendency for the peasants to breach the state monopoly of foreign trade through dealings with the petty traders. Consequently, there would have developed in the USSR a mercantile bourgeois class tied, on the one hand, to the peasant masses and, on the other, to foreign capital -- an obvious locus of counter-revolution.

Thus, the program of the Left Opposition for accelerated industrialization was designed in part to counter the growing strength of reactionary social classes under the Stalin/Bukharin regime. The defense of the historic conquests of the October Revolution from the outset and their extension throughout Europe could only have been subverted by a perspective derived from Cliffite/Shachtmanite economism. ■



Large-scale metallurgical plant at Magnitogorsk.

# Nuclear power and the workers movement

The following excerpts from a more comprehensive article which first appeared in Workers Vanguard no 146 (25 February 1977) are reprinted below for their comments on the social, political and technological aspects of the nuclear controversy internationally.

Since the 1973-74 Arab oil embargo and the subsequent quadrupling of the price of crude oil, nearly all of the major countries have embarked upon vigorous programs to expand the generation of electric power by means of nuclear fission reactors. Thus in 1974 the US Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) anticipated a 12- to 15-fold increase in nuclear generating capacity by 1985 and an additional three- to four-fold increase by the year 2000. France and Japan expected capacity to double every two years.

These programs have provoked widespread controversy, with the grounds for opposition ranging from neo-Malthusian pessimism and peasant conservatism to sober doubts on the safety of nuclear fission reactors. In West Germany,

by Jeff Maxwell

atomic power station facilities have been stormed and exploratory drilling for waste storage sites has been halted by anti-nuclear protesters. In Sweden, the Social Democratic government's program for nuclear power became the issue in the final days of the national election campaign last September and was an important factor in the fall of the Palme cabinet.

In the US, a well-financed campaign by the atomic energy lobby, strongly backed by construction unions, last year defeated six state-wide initiatives seeking to tighten controls on nuclear power plant construction. Certainly the divisions on the nuclear power issue do not fall along simple class or political lines. In Europe opposition to nuclear power comes from such disparate sources as the Norwegian government, the Dutch Labor Party, the Swedish Center Party, West German Maoists and fake-Trotskyists, the British Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution and the conservative *Economist*.

As Marxists we generally strongly support the introduction of new technology, including the development, construction and operation of nuclear fission reactors. Certainly proponents of a socialist society based on material abundance have a vastly different viewpoint on this subject than ecological crackpots who in effect seek a return to pre-industrial society. At the same time we point out that the economic advisability of nuclear fission power can only be judged within the framework of an internationally planned socialist economy....

It is a truism that petroleum will not be abundant forever. Given current rates of consumption, a number of experts predict that supplies of natural gas and oil will come close to depletion during the next century. (Such projections must be taken with more than a grain of salt, as new reserves tend to appear whenever there is a profit to be made.) In any case, what has the imperialist rulers more immediately worried is the prospect of a sudden drop of imported petroleum supplies, a very real prospect

given the intense renewal of inter-imperialist rivalry.

Among the Western powers, the move to nuclear fission power arises out of economic competition and is ultimately part of a trend toward economic autarky on the road to a new imperialist war. For smaller and economically backward capitalist nations, efforts to secure nuclear fission technology are a simple reflection of the desire to obtain the wherewithal to construct nuclear weapons. Israel, South Africa and India are cases in point.

Certainly, current-technology nuclear reactors touch only the immediate situation and offer no solution to the gradual depletion of fossil fuels. The single-pass-through uranium "burner" uses its fuel inefficiently, liberating only 0.5 percent of the stored energy, and is therefore far from being the "ultimate" power generator. Already there are "projections" that high-grade uranium reserves will be depleted in burners by the end of the century. Thus atomic power under capitalism may very well replicate the oil "crisis", even down to the dramatis personae: half of all US uranium reserves are owned by the oil monopolies.

Such visions of future bottlenecks are not very appetizing to the rest of the bourgeoisie. This has led to proposals for conversion to a "plutonium economy", first via the recycling of fissionable plutonium wastes created in uranium burners, followed by the development of "breeder" reactors which convert non-fissionable U-238 into plutonium and produce more fuel than they consume. The energy gain over the current-technology burners could be hundred-fold using the same fuel input. Moreover, because breeder-reactors can use lower-grade reserves, including possibly simple bedrock (U-238 comprises 99.3 percent of all uranium found in nature, and traces of it are found throughout the earth's crust), the total increase in potentially available energy would be greater by many orders of magnitude....

The principal dangers attendant upon the operation of nuclear power plants are two. Should all reactor cooling systems fail, the reactor core will melt. This could ultimately lead to the release of enormous amounts of lethal radiation. No such "maximum credible accident" has occurred, although there have been any number of lesser cooling system malfunctions. Loss of coolant in a breeder reactor would be potentially even more destructive. The concentrations of plutonium in such a facility are great enough to allow the possibility of a low-grade explosion which would liberate tons of radioactive debris and explosive molten sodium.

Waste disposal is the second major problem. Plutonium, which is highly toxic, has a half-life of 24,000 years and must be isolated from the biosphere for several hundred thousand years. The US Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA) says that the technology exists to safely store highly radioactive wastes and permanent storage sites are being constructed in salt beds, but leaks have occurred at temporary sites.

The technical debate on safety has become a hysterical exercise in obfuscation -- both by government and industry scientists and their op-

ponents in the environmentalist movement. The resignation, shortly before the California referendum last June, of three General Electric engineers and an NRC safety inspector protesting against inadequate safety in the atomic power industry was met by a ringing endorsement of nuclear power by a panoply of Nobel physics laureates.

Likewise, the release of the "definitive" Rasmussen Report by the AEC, which ascribed a minute probability to a "maximum credibility accident", was countered by a number of scientists who doubted the quoted odds. The most extreme case of anti-nuclear anxiety has been in West Germany, where opponents of atomic power are publicizing as good coin the wildly exaggerated "findings" of a speculative government study which talks of 30 million dead as a possible result of a nuclear reactor disaster.

We do not wish to take a position on the technical issues involved, nor do we offer suggestions to capitalism as to which method of energy generation it would do best to use. As the recent natural gas "shortage" proves, the anarchy of production under capitalism makes the energy "crisis" inevitable.

Capitalism also makes it difficult to choose a lesser evil. Pollution from the burning of sulfur-bearing coal and oil probably results in thousands of deaths *per year*. Moreover, deaths among coal miners in the US from industrial accidents and black lung disease are notoriously high (although West European, Polish and Soviet mines have drastically reduced them). As to major disasters, the collapse of a hydroelectric dam above Sacramento [California] could result in an estimated 260,000 deaths. The near collapse of the Lower San Fernando dam [California] in 1971 threatened 80,000 lives. Both the probability of occurrence and probable destruction from such a catastrophe could greatly exceed those of the "maximum credible accident". When one adds up deaths from sulfide pollution, mine accidents, black lung, dam collapses, etc, there is no guarantee that by reliance on fossil fuels and hydroelectric energy overall safety would be increased compared to widespread use of nuclear power. In fact, atomic power might well be safer....

There have been a number of alternatives proposed to the generation of nuclear power through fission -- solar energy, fusion power, geothermal power, tidal power, oil from shale and windmills. Of these, a number have yet to be developed, partially because their development has not been adequately funded, while others require such massive initial capital and energy investments that their profitability is problematic in the short run. The real option at present is between coal (which will be abundant for centuries) and nuclear power.

The more pessimistic of the bourgeois critics such as the Ford Foundation's Energy Policy Project have urged massive economic changes to approach "zero energy growth" (ZEG). The Ford panel's suggestions are utopian in the extreme, assuming the validity of dubious economic models and a rationality which capitalism does not possess. For example, an important aspect of ZEG is the de-emphasis of the automobile in urban centers. This idea is not new nor is it necessarily invalid in the abstract. The hitch is that capitalist reality is moving in the opposite direction, ie, toward the increased cost and decay of mass transit....

Ignored by the well-fed, well-paid "zero-growth" proponents is the fact that the overwhelming majority of humanity lives in abject poverty. Thus an environmentalist must recoil in horror from the prospect of a qualitative breakthrough in the worldwide standard of living such as would occur after an international proletarian revolution. Both per capita and total energy consumption must be orders of magnitude higher under socialism than they are under capitalism.

Most importantly, calls for zero growth as the solution to energy problems can only intersect the austerity program of a capitalist economy in a period of contraction....

The historical pessimism expressed by the zero-growthers does not reflect a law of nature but rather is deeply rooted in bourgeois society. The physical possibilities for energy production are virtually unlimited. The main known power source in the universe is nuclear fusion -- the conversion of hydrogen to helium (ie, the energy emitted by the sun, or as a local and episodic example, explosion of a hydrogen bomb). The obvious task of mankind is to obtain a direct and controlled access to this fundamental energy source.

What is required to realize these potentialities is an international proletarian revolution which will establish a social order where production is designed to satisfy human need. Half a century ago, some 16 years before Enrico Fermi succeeded in achieving the first controlled fission reaction, Leon Trotsky said of nuclear power:

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"The atom contains within itself a mighty hidden energy, and the greatest task of physics consists of pumping out this energy, pulling out the cork so that this hidden energy may burst forth in a fountain. Then the possibility will be opened up of replacing coal and oil by atomic power. This is not at all a hopeless task. And what prospects it opens up before us! This alone gives us the right to declare that scientific and technical thought is approaching a great turning point, that the revolutionary epoch in the development of human society will be accompanied by a revolutionary epoch in the sphere of the cognition of matter and the mastering of it." ("Radio, Science, Technology and Society", March 1926)

But unleashing the energy locked in the atom's nucleus has proved an easier task to accomplish than installing the proletarian dictatorship throughout the world. We are left with a tremendous concentration of nuclear destructive capacity in the hands of the rapacious imperialists, making even more pressing the crisis of revolutionary leadership and very real indeed the choice posed by Marx: socialism or barbarism. ■

## Uranium . . .

Continued from page eight

stone age", as US Air Force general Curtis LeMay threatened, but for American fears of Soviet nuclear retaliation. Now, in order to tail the disgustingly pacifist ecology freaks, the CL forsakes its erstwhile Stalinist heroes. The labour movement must not be sucked in by pacifist day-dreams -- complete access to nuclear weapons technology (including refusal to sign the phony "non-proliferation" treaty and whatever testing programs may be necessary) by all the degenerated/deformed workers states must be resolutely defended.

The spread of nuclear weapons among the smaller capitalist powers poses an obvious threat to the world working class, by increasing the danger that they will be used in national wars by desperate tinpot bourgeoisies. But the imperialist concern with proliferation is primarily a means for maintaining the nuclear monopoly as a club over former colonial countries. The greatest nuclear danger does not come from India's bomb; nor from some hypothetical gang of crazed terrorists who put together a crude plutonium bomb with stolen materials; nor from a catastrophic accident in a nuclear power plant. No, the most dangerous nuclear terrorists already possess all the sophisticated weaponry needed to wipe out civilisation many times over -- the imperialist powers, first and foremost the US.

Common to all the opponents of nuclear energy, "revolutionary" or not, is a touching faith in the benign good will of the imperialist mass murderers who left Dresden, Hiroshima and large sections of Indochina heaps of rubble. The SWP argues for leaving "uranium in the ground" because "no confidence can be given to any big-business 'solution'" of the technical problems, while accepting that a socialist society might develop nuclear energy safely (*Direct Action*, 12 August 1976). This is certainly true. But presumably, then, the SWP does trust the bourgeoisie to mine coal or manage railways safely, police its stockpile of nuclear bombs and (as it in fact does by calling on the US army to defend blacks) protect oppressed minorities from racist violence.

In all areas of human activity, the "solution" of the bourgeoisie is one which subordinates general welfare and safety to the accumulation of profits. There is only one solution to the danger of nuclear war, as well as the other miseries incumbent in this irrational system: the revolutionary destruction of capitalism by the international proletariat. ■

## SYA . . .

Continued from page two

Deutschmann in his discussions with them did not in fact reveal the content of any other amendment.

It is your responsibility to provide written substantiation of the charges you have raised. Unsubstantiated charges of lying, slander, etc. are historically the property of Stalinists, social-democrats and their ilk who seek to hamper open political debate in order to cover up their own betrayals.

We await your clarification and will, of course, publish any factual correction necessary. The Spartacist League has a long record of honesty and scrupulousness concerning facts, a record known to even our most virulent opponents on the left.

Fraternally,  
Steve Haran  
for the Spartacist League

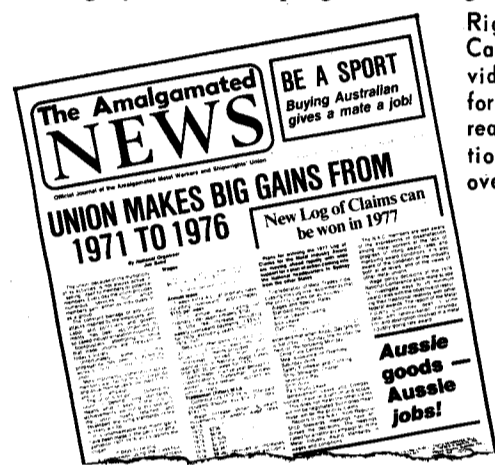
## Unemployment . . .

Continued from page one

fraudulent character as a propaganda bloc designed to garner support for a "Right to Work Charter" (which the AMWSU has no difficulty supporting since the charter makes no mention of the chauvinist protectionist campaign) is epitomised by the arrangement worked out between the Right to Work "radicals" and some of their friends in office. With consummate cynicism a number of union officials have agreed to inform the campaign of impending retrenchments so that people can be sent to "picket" the factory gates and distribute leaflets to the workers about to be sacked calling on them to support the charter.

While the workerist International Socialists (IS) and the fake-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) both offered pro forma criticisms of the AMWSU-promoted "Buy Australian" rubbish three months ago, they now become errand boys of the same class traitors in exchange for an opportunist piece of the action in this "campaign" against unemployment. The bureaucrats' real campaign, of course, consists in trying to steal jobs from foreign workers, but for the IS the Right to Work Campaign is "the beginning of a serious fight for jobs" (*Battler*, March), while the SWP enthusiastically predicts it "can be the beginnings of a massive drive to defend jobs, involving the widest sections [!] of the labor movement under the leadership of the ACTU" (*Direct Action*, 24 February).

While the charter includes some completely supportable demands its overall thrust makes it a thoroughly reformist program "to fight unemploy-



ment" within the framework of maintaining capitalism. It presents the call for a 35-hour work week with no loss in pay as being entirely possible under capitalism because of wastage, inbuilt obsolescence and technical change -- which accurately captures the intentions of its authors. It calls for nationalisation under workers control ... but only of those companies threatening layoffs. In Melbourne, the parallel Demand for Work Campaign does not even raise that demand -- because the bureaucrats who attended the organising meeting (including "lefts" like John Halfpenny, AMWSU vice president and CPA member, and Maoist Ted Bull, wharfies' state secretary) opposed it!

At the 7 February meeting in Sydney which adopted the charter only the Spartacist League (SL) opposed it as a fundamentally inadequate program for a real struggle to end unemployment. SL supporters counterposed a proposal for a genuine united-front demonstration centred around the demand for internationally co-ordinated strikes of Australian and Japanese workers against ship-building layoffs. Such a demand was necessary to counteract and expose the protectionist rubbish of the bureaucracy. Needless to say, the fake revolutionaries at the meeting rejected this proposal out of hand, anxious above all not to offend their "left" friends in the AMWSU.

For the SWP in particular the Right to Work Campaign represents an opportunity to latch onto the "class struggle left wing in the labour movement" it has been chattering about lately. But given the SWP's drivel that the reformist charter "strikes at the heart of unemployment and the system responsible for it" (*Young Socialist*, March; emphasis added), this new "left wing" will undoubtedly look much like the stale Halfpenny variety!

A class-struggle alternative *is* necessary in the labour movement, but it will not be based on the warmed-over social-democratic politics of the Right to Work Charter. A struggle against the unemployment endemic to the capitalist system requires a program which goes beyond reforms, no matter how extensive, and poses the conquest of state power by the working class under the leadership of a vanguard party. Neither the present AMWSU leadership, committed to maintaining their bosses in power nor the handful of leftists who prop that "leadership" up with "revolutionary" rhetoric can lead that struggle. Revolutionary caucuses must be constructed in the unions, based on firm opposition to the whole lot of labour fakers and committed to a program linking the workers' immediate needs to the necessity of expropriating the capitalist class under a workers government. ■

## Purge . . .

Continued from page three

The proposed exclusion of the SL would, as the *Scarlet Woman* statement makes clear, effectively introduce a *political basis for membership* in WLM for the first time. Were *Scarlet Woman* honest, it would put forward a new motion *explicitly* defining membership in WLM on the basis of agreement with the conception of an autonomous movement and excluding us on *that* basis. In this case, given the red-baiting methods and suppression of a communist, class-struggle viewpoint, our exclusion would presage a political consolidation in a clearly right-wing direction, around an explicitly anti-class-struggle, class-collaborationist orientation. Anti-communist exclusionism has its own political logic. Who will be next to be considered "disruptive" because they want to talk about revolution, because they are too radical, or simply because they differ too much from the majority? A group of lesbian activists at the Sydney IWD march correctly observed that if the SL were expelled, why not the SWP, then the CPA and then the lesbian feminists?

*Scarlet Woman* openly equates opposition to the classless illusion of an autonomous women's movement with opposition to WLM. But the "movement" is not and has never been a politically defined organisation. It has never attempted to define membership criteria beyond solidarity with the broad goal of the liberation of women from oppression as a sex. In its present umbrella role as a centre for discussion and debate, for exchange of information and for the co-ordination of different activities initiated by diverse independent groups, it serves as a vitally necessary open forum. To destroy that forum now, when the debate over the way forward for those fighting for women's liberation is the most pressing need facing movement activists, would severely hinder the struggle for political clarity and direction.

The struggle for women's liberation depends ultimately on the mobilisation of the proletariat and the masses of women around the revolutionary program of communism. Regardless of our status vis-a-vis WLM general meetings we will continue with our historic mission. Our exclusion in Melbourne has not prevented us from remaining actively in the forefront of struggles against women's oppression, such as the picket set up by sacked women workers at the Everhot factory in Bayswater in 1975. Nor has it prevented Melbourne WLM, despite the absence of Spartacist "disruption", from teetering on the brink of disintegration. Meetings are smaller than they have ever been and this year's IWD march in Melbourne was the smallest in years. Our exclusion can never change the validity of the communist program of the SL. It can demonstrate only the political bankruptcy of feminists who can answer our ideas only by resorting to bureaucratism, slander and suppression. ■

## Fight exclusion!

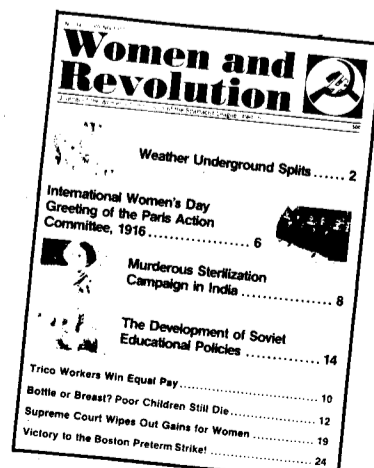
We the undersigned see the need for open political discussion within the women's liberation movement and support the democratic right of participants to raise their political ideas. The motion to expel the Spartacist League from the women's liberation movement is an attempt at political censorship which can only be interpreted as undemocratic and anti-communist. We therefore reaffirm the right of the SL, as opponents of the oppression of women to participate in meetings and activities of Sydney Women's Liberation.

Partial list of endorsers:

Christine Allsopp, Lou-anne Barker (SYA), Lynda Boland (for the Communist League), Moira Borthwick (SYA), Janet Burstall, Linda Carlin, Jenifer Eastwood, Ruth Egg, Betty Hounslow, Caroline King, Mary Merkenich (SYA), Angela Nanson, Tasma Ockenden, Mary Perkins, Sandra Sky, Jean Smith, Janey Stone (International Socialists), Anne Talve, Faye Westwood.

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## The "great" uranium debate Pacifism, profits and the class line

The cautious go-ahead given to nuclear power generation by the long-awaited Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry's first report four months ago has done nothing to dampen the controversy which has engaged the editorial pages of the left and bourgeois press for the last year. Joining the hard-core "bicycle power" conservationists of the Friends of the Earth is a diverse array of forces: "left-wing" unions and "left" ALP parliamentarians, the Catholic Church, the now ex-Liberal MP Don Chipp, and much of the ostensible revolutionary movement. Yet, unlike most other countries where the nuclear debate has raged, the Australian bourgeoisie, "blessed" with an abundance of indigenous fuel resources and relative military security facilitated by its firm partnership with US imperialism and its geographic isolation, has not been pushing the "nuclear option" locally. Rather, with a quarter of the world's known reserves of high-grade uranium ore estimated to be buried in Australian soil, the immediate question is whether to mine and export it for use by other countries.

As nowhere else, the labour movement has been actively involved in the uranium controversy from

hazards and irrationalities of capitalism remedied through reforms. We do not advocate indefinite bans or moratoriums on uranium mining or nuclear plant construction. We do, however, defend *any* industrial protest over uranium from attacks by the bourgeoisie and support the thrust of initiatives of the sort recently voted down in California, which would have removed the ceiling on corporate liability for nuclear accidents and restricted plant sitings prior to an adequate investigation of specific safety factors. Furthermore, in Australia the mining tycoons must not be allowed to trample over legitimate Aboriginal land rights.

As long as the bourgeoisie maintains its rule, workers must fight for the widest possible control over all aspects of industrial safety, and not simply in the nuclear industry. Union committees elected by the rank and file must set and oversee all safety standards -- not entrust them to "neutral" agencies of the bosses' state. Beyond this the workers movement must demand complete access to all information which has been "classified" in order to cover up nuclear acci-



Australia's only nuclear reactor, Lucas Heights.

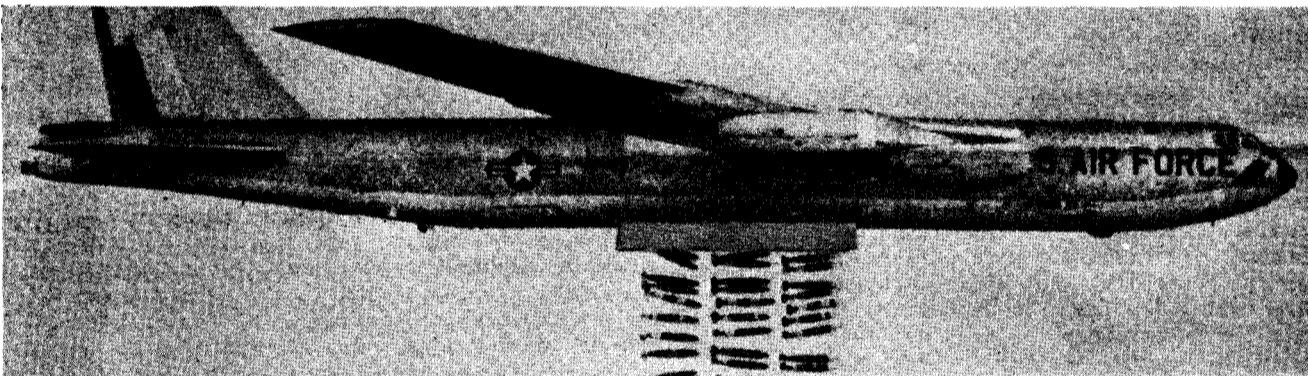
The thoroughly reformist CPA is proud of its vanguard role in the liberal middle-class ecology movement. But it does not stand alone. The reactionary utopianism, social pacifism and moral hypocrisy of the anti-nuclear lobbyists have been echoed in one way or another by virtually the entire left, from the staid Stalinist Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) to the "respectably" fake-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the "new vanguardist" Communist League (CL).

Bound by its obeisance to the Moscow bureaucracy -- which is committed both to nuclear power generation and a nuclear weapons capability -- the SPA does not call for an outright ban. Instead it "demands" that uranium be exported only for "peaceful purposes", only to signatories of the nuclear non-proliferation and partial test-ban treaties (which include the US, but not China, Vietnam and other deformed workers states) and only after the "widest public debate ... by the Australian people" (*Socialist*, 10 November 1976).

But the erstwhile guerrilla enthusiasts of the CL outdo even these long-time practitioners of "peaceful co-existence" in their pacifist preachings. Pointing to the dangers of proliferation the CL warns that, "There is no way of preventing a government which has bought uranium for 'peaceful' purposes using it for making nuclear weapons, as the example of India has already shown" and notes that the Fraser government is already negotiating "for sales to Iran and Russia [emphasis added]" (*Militant*, 7 December 1976). With the demand, "No uranium mining or export", the CL would presumably deny uranium supplies to defend the deformed workers states -- "peacefully" or otherwise.

The Vietnamese Stalinist regime which the CL *uncritically* supported several years ago would quite literally have been "bombed back into the

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Capitalism kills, nuclear or not: US B-52 rains bombs on North Vietnamese workers and peasants (1972).

the start. According to Tom Uren, deputy leader of the Labor opposition, "workers will readily identify the class issues involved" (quoted in *Uranium Deadline*, 1976, vol 1, no 5). Referring to alleged complicity by US nuclear multinationals in the 1975 political crisis, Uren despairs that Australia "will never be permitted to have a properly functioning Labor Government" once it is "plugged in" to uranium production (from a speech to the Australian Railways Union [ARU] in Brisbane, 26 June 1976 -- quoted in undated leaflet, "You'll Really Need Medibank If They Start Mining Uranium"; emphasis in original).

Following the release of the so-called Fox report, the ALP and ACTU dropped long-standing bans against the export of the processed "yellowcake", mined presently only at Mary Kathleen in Queensland, though bans against opening new mines remain in effect. A one-day national railway strike last year in defence of an ARU ban against Mary Kathleen nearly touched off a major confrontation between government and unions. But the mainstream bureaucracy has been steadily backing off since then.

There are class issues involved, but the ALP/ACTU "lefts" have avoided them to emphasise moral-pacifist and nationalist concerns. The nuclear industry has an abominable record of covering up safety hazards. But because the ARU ban demanded a complete halt to uranium mining rather than enforcement of stringent safety conditions, workers at Mary Kathleen opposed it as a threat to their jobs. Genuine concerns over the disposal of radioactive wastes and the danger of nuclear accidents (see "Nuclear power and the workers movement", this issue) have been overshadowed by an obfuscating debate centred on issues such as nuclear weapons proliferation, nuclear "terrorism", the economic feasibility of nuclear power generation and the moral validity of high-energy, "consumerist" industrial society.

The working class must not get caught up in the social-democratic dream world which sees the

dents and unsafe conditions. On a case-by-case basis nuclear power projects where there are specific hazards should be banned or shut down.

The bureaucrats who express such pious concern for the nuclear danger posed to unborn generations have not lifted a finger to mobilise the workers in struggle against the atrociously unsafe working and living conditions which *today* cause untold deaths, injuries and disabling illnesses. Communist Party (CPA) member John Halfpenny, vice president of the Amalgamated Metal Workers and Shipwrights Union, has boasted his "principled" opposition to uranium mining ... even if it provided jobs for "each and every person who is currently unemployed" (*Age*, 20 May 1976). Halfpenny's "conscience" comes cheap indeed for one who has refused to launch an award campaign through two years of devastating increases in unemployment and inflation.



Spartacist

Pacifists, patriots, populists -- anti-uranium demonstrators in Melbourne (1976). Genuine concerns over safety issues must not obscure main nuclear danger -- US imperialism. Above: SL/US called for nuclear "shield" against US aggression in Vietnam (1965).

