



Islamic thugs on bloody rampage

To the accompaniment of verses from the Koran and "revolutionary" chants in praise of the dying ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, "leader of the revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic", Iran's 213-strong *majlis* (parliament) convened in Teheran on 28 May. After the long-drawn out, heavily-rigged election fraud, victory had predictably gone to the mullahs of the Islamic Republican Party (IRP). And while the world capitalist press waited in vain for news as to what the mullahs had in store for the 53 US hostages held since last November, the *majlis* made clear that its major preoccupation was going to be — as before — how best to consolidate its shaky theocratic grip on the country.

With an annual inflation rate of 50 percent, an unemployment figure which has risen to one-third of the workforce, and a massive drop in oil exports from 6 million barrels a day under the shah to 700,000 daily now, the mullahs' Iran is in acute economic crisis. At the same time, it is facing challenges on three other fronts: from a well-equipped Iraqi army with which it has been skirmishing along Iran's northwest borders; from Kurdish nationalists resisting Persian chauvinism in turban; and from the left, whom the mullahs tried to annihilate during the purges of the universities at the end of April.

Khomeini's state apparatus is still chronically weak, too. Yet if he is to succeed in his efforts to "cut short the hands" of the internal enemies of his theocratic rule, he must have a strong, consolidated Islamic army at his disposal. We have said from the beginning that this can only be forged in bloody slaughter against the minorities and the left. But as the past months have shown, there will be blood on both sides. As long as the armed guerrilla fighters can call out a hundred thousand supporters to the streets as they did in their separate marches on May Day, and as long as the Kurds and Turkomans and others continue to resist Persian chauvinism with gun in hand in the mountains and villages, mullah rule will be shaky.

Confronted with the economic sanctions, the war threats and actual military aggression of the US, Khomeini has been partially able to bolster his still unsteady rule through his calls for national religious martyrdom to oppose the "Great Satan". Certainly, Carter's helicopter fiasco in the Great Kavir

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Down with Khomeini's "Holy War" on left!

Islamic terror: 30 leftists killed as lumpens, reactionary students, rampage at Teheran University, late April.



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**Qaddafi's
Murder Inc.**



page 6

**Cuba turns
tables on Carter**



Melbourne,
25 May, 1980

Dear Comrades,

In the last issue of *Australasian Spartacist* (no 73, May 1980), the article "Maoists offer pact to Fraser" illustrated the political implications of the Maoists' frankly-avowed support to the Carter/ Fraser anti-Soviet war drive by mentioning that a number of supporters of EF Hill's Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) (CPA[ML]) had urged a boycott of May Day — once their "one day of the year" — in order not to associate with "Soviet appeasers". However, the Hillite rag *Vanguard* called for a big anti-Soviet May Day turnout. But the most notable aspect of the Melbourne May Day march this year was that for the first time in over a decade there was no separate Maoist platform nor was there a deadly dull Chairman Hill speech. Indeed, the patriotic blue Eureka flags were few and far between throughout the day. While there was a noticeably small group of "independence" demonstrators, the rest of the Maoists marched with other contingents, including ethnic groups such as the neo-Maoist Turkish contingent.

Rather than being a "spontaneous" boycott by the harder anti-Soviet types this dismal turnout was a manifest display of weakness and continuing decline. At last year's march the Maoist platform attracted several hundred people — and this only months after China's invasion of Vietnam which, to put it mildly, was vastly unpopular on the left. The failure to mount a separate platform, while mainly a simple recognition of reality, almost certainly means the end of orthodox Maoism as a serious competing factor on the Melbourne left. And given their once hegemonic position in the ostensibly revolutionary milieu here, that is no small thing.

That their anti-Soviet hysteria is at the core of the Maoists' disintegration was even admitted in an unusual front page article in the 22 May *Vanguard* entitled "A correct decision properly decided on". While giving no ground on the question of who is the main — in reality only — enemy, *Vanguard* admits that even at this late date "there are those both inside and outside the Communist Party who do not agree with this and some strongly oppose it". Coming from these practised Stalinist thugs their plaintive plea that "there is no need to tear dissenters apart" can only be a response to the spectre of virtual total collapse.

The article in *ASp* no 73 also stressed the explicitly strike-breaking logic of the Hillites' increasingly enthusiastic identification with Fraser's "correct" anti-Soviet stand and their railings against "chaos" which aids "Soviet social

imperialism". Norm Gallagher's Builders Labourers Federation (BLF) has wasted no time in proving the point. Four years ago the BLF joined other "left" unions in imposing a rather impotent ban on the US Omega station in Gippsland, correctly denouncing it as an integral part of the Pentagon's imperialist death machine. With Hill saying that the US war machine is the last, best hope against "Soviet expansionism", Gallagher is now engaged in a pretty rough-house competition with the grouper-influenced Federated Ironworkers Association to build the base! So much for those past years of "struggle" against the US "superpower"....

Comradely greetings,

David Grumont

☆ ☆ ☆

La Trobe University,
1 May, 1980

Dear Comrades,

I would like to congratulate you for your detailed coverage (Spartacist No.73) of the Afghanistan debate held at La Trobe University on April 16. Despite a clearly partisan bias, the facts as presented were probably a more accurate account of events than one could possibly hope to read in the La Trobe University "students" newspaper 'Rabelais' or 'Partisan'.

However, there are two items in the above-mentioned article that I wish to dispute. The first is your misleading description of myself as "Moderate"; a term which I believe incorrectly classifies me as part of B.A. Santamaria's 'Moderate' Students Alliance. For the record, my politics are Australian Democrat and on campus I work within the Centre-Unity group of students. Second, your description of me as a "practised red-baiter" is also erroneous; whilst I did detail some of my criticisms of the Soviet Union in my speech on April 16, I do not believe that such criticism can be classified as "red-baiting". My reference to the Spartacist Club as "our local campus Bolsheviks" was also not an act of "red-baiting", rather it was a recognition (which you should regard as a compliment) of the fact that the Spartacist Club is the only

group which has clearly and actively been promoting Bolshevik politics at La Trobe. Yours faithfully,
Ian Farrow,
Centre-Unity National Executive Member.

ASp replies: There is nothing exceptional in the fact that we told the truth, Mr

Farrow, but we think you are wary of losing your slick liberal image. As you said at the debate, "cut the waffle and bullshit": in a shooting civil war or the anti-Soviet campaign over Afghanistan, you and crude red-baiter Santamaria are really on the same side anyway. You (and Don Chipp) just want a bit more room to manoeuvre against the working class.

British steel workers tell Thornett: We don't like scabs!

The Spartacist League/Britain's (SL) insistence that "Picket lines mean don't cross!" has won it the respect of striking workers who know that successful strike action means *no scabbing!* The SL has also outraged those fake-left British groups who have massively condoned or even engaged in scabbing, most notably during the recent British steel strike. Particularly stung by the SL's sharp exposure of their cowardly scabbing practices has been the fake-Trotskyist Workers Socialist League (WSL) of Alan Thornett, whose *Socialist Press* (23 April 1980) carried an envenomed polemic against the SL.

Under a general headline of "How scurrilous can they get?" the WSL attempted to amalgamate the SL's principled working-class defense of picket lines with another article charging the Healyites with a broad-daylight break-in and theft of private documents. The WSL was particularly infuriated by the principled action of SL supporters at the Birmingham British Leyland SD1 plant in refusing to cross picket lines set up by striking workers of two other Leyland plants for three days, while WSLers blithely went on through. *Socialist Press* even tried to defend this scabby action, proudly upholding one "SD1 militant" who declared that "he had, as an individual, refused to cross the picket line — but had been completely *wrong* to take such a stand". And "the worst of it", according to the WSL, was that the SL supporters weren't even victimized by management for their courageous stand!

The WSL charges the SL with an "ultra-syndicalist fetish over picket lines" and raises the malicious slander

that SLers were "hated and despised by workers" during the steel strike. But as the following letter from two South Yorkshire steel workers proves, these WSL slanders don't fool real trade-union militants. They know that the picket line is a *class* line and the Spartacist League stands with those workers who uphold it.

Sheffield,
S. Yorkshire
5 May 1980

Socialist Press

Dear Editor:

We recently read your article "Sparts set up opponents for the sack" in the *Socialist Press* No. 195 dated April 23, 1980, and would like to correct some of the untruths and lies that you printed about the Spartacist League and their involvement during the steel strike.

The allegations that the Spartacists were despised by steelworkers is totally untrue. While many steelworkers did not always agree with their political strategy and views, they were nonetheless respected for their involvement and seriousness, wanting as we all did, the *victory* of the steel strike. As an example the Spartacists were welcomed and invited to the B.L. [British Leyland] Cowley flying picket during the steel strike because they committed themselves to supporting the victory of our strike. This we would ask of any organisation in the labour movement, we needed all the support possible. Equally many steelworkers, ourselves included, found what they had to say was always something to think about, interesting and we at least benefited by discussing with them.

As far as we can tell, a lot of your arguments centre around the Spartacists attacking people who cross picket lines. As far as we are concerned after our 13 week strike, where a lot of strikebreaking/scabbing took place, like Hadfields.... Sheerness etc., we don't like people who cross picket lines either.

We hope that in future that if you wish to treat yourselves more seriously you should address yourselves to a more truthful account of events.

Waiting for the publication of our letter in the next publication of your paper.

Yours fraternally,
K.J. Hall (Stainless Wks., Sheffield)
M.Hart (Shop Steward T&G Stainless Works)

cc: Spartacist League

— reprinted from *Workers Vanguard*
no 256, 16 May 1980

Correction

In the article entitled "Partisan stillborn" published in our last issue (*Australasian Spartacist* no 73, May 1980), we wrongly reported that Tony Brown of the Sydney *Partisan* collective was among those moving a motion at the Second National Radical Left Students Conference to condemn the Spartacist League for exposing the feminist scabs at Sydney University. While not speaking against the motion Brown did in fact vote against it. ■

Drop all charges against Fitzroy anti-Fraser demonstrators!

Towards the end of April, Neill Theiberger was convicted of resisting arrest and throwing an egg at Malcolm Fraser. Theiberger was one of nine people arrested on 30 March when up to 200 anti-Fraser demonstrators gathered outside the official opening of a nursing home in the Melbourne working-class suburb of Fitzroy to protest the government's vicious program of gutting medical facilities. Three days earlier, over 400 cops had turned out to ensure Fraser a safe escort past 2000 demonstrating students at Monash University. Members of the Melbourne Spartacist League also participated in the demonstration and raised, among other demands, the slogan "Cops Off Campus!"

The Victorian authorities have since made it plain that they are going to be as savage in protecting the Ayatollah of Nareen as he is in implementing his capitalist austerity measures: Theiberger was eventually sentenced to a straight 14 days in jail, even though this was his first offence. Meanwhile the other eight demonstrators arrested when mounted police waded into the crowd face charges ranging from offensive behaviour to assaulting police officers right through to ... cruelty to

animals (ie fleeing the sixteen-hands-high horses the cops used to trample protesters)! Additionally, one of this group of eight — who was on probation at the time — has reportedly already been jailed pending his court hearing.

It's no wonder that Fraser needs hundreds of cops and vicious court sentences to protect him. From his blatantly anti-Soviet Cold War attempts to reverse the Olympic Federation's decision to send a team of athletes to Moscow to his reactionary anti-union laws, Fraser has shown himself to be a fanatical enemy of all working people. And right now there are thousands of Australians who would like to do more than just put egg yolk on the face of this arrogant sheep farmer.

Tossing rotten tomatoes or eggs at Fraser is no way of putting an end to the rule of the class he represents. But it certainly is a legitimate form of political protest, defensible and even enjoyable. The bulk of the Fitzroy cases are due to be heard on 25 June, but it is clear from the treatment already meted out that the protesters can expect considerably more than the usual range of fines. We say: don't let Fraser get away with it — drop the charges now! Defend the Fitzroy 9!

Australasian SPARTACIST

Revolutionary Marxist monthly of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand, section of the international Spartacist tendency, for the rebirth of the Fourth International.

EDITORIAL BOARD:

James Shaughnessy (Managing Editor), Doug Fullarton, Steve Hooper (Melbourne correspondent), Chris Korwin, David Reynolds; Ron Sperling, Linda Brooke (production).

CIRCULATION: Toni Somerset.

Printed by trade union labour. Registered at the GPO, Sydney for posting as a publication — Category B. Subscriptions \$3 for 11 issues; airmail \$5 for 11 issues (except Europe/North America), \$10 for 11 issues (Europe/North America). Address all correspondence to: Spartacist Publications, GPO Box 3473, Sydney, NSW, 2001. Telephone (02) 235-8115.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

Printed by Eastern Suburbs, Randwick, NSW.

Hawke, Moore blackmail 35-hour "campaign"

Strike for a shorter work week!

Official unemployment in this country now stands at 440,000; unofficially, it could be anywhere up to twice that. After five years of grinding inflation, the real wages of those lucky enough to have jobs have dropped as prices march upwards and indexation wage rises lag further and further behind. And with a new international downturn on the way, the worst is clearly yet to come. Both the defence of workers' livelihoods and the very preservation of the organised workers movement demand a fight by the unions for jobs for all.

Instead, Bob Hawke, the official head of the ACTU, has just ground his heel in the face of the unemployed and all workers. When the eleven unions of the Metal Trades Federation, covering 500,000 workers, launched a "campaign" for a 35-hour week to "create jobs" last month, the Arbitration president, Sir John Moore, replied with a piece of vicious blackmail. This "impartial" bosses' toady announced on 26 May that until the campaign was abandoned, the commission would not even continue to discuss whether or not to grant a puny wage rise in the national wage case then in progress, and adjourned the hearings indefinitely. Hawke did what Fraser, Moore and the servile Labor parliamentary opposition could not, and on 6 June swung a 17-2 ACTU Executive vote to withdraw all ACTU support from the campaign. He was able to tell Moore the following day that he had done everything in his power to stop it. In recognition of this service, Moore then condescended to reopen the wage hearings, but with an arrogant warning to the metal unions against further industrial action.

Hawke has a lot of betrayals under his belt, but this time he didn't even give lip service to the unions' demands. He simply brazenly set out to smash the 35-hour week campaign, echoing the barrage of propaganda from the bosses who backed Moore's blackmail only to turn around and blame the metal unions for holding up a wage rise.

When the metal unions launched their

national 35-hour week campaign, the employers said it would lead to more sackings, the bourgeois *Age* (12 May) condemned it as "simple-minded", and Labor leader Bill Hayden, speaking to the bosses "as an economist and former treasurer", denounced it as folly. But at mass meetings across the country, rank-and-file metal workers voted overwhelmingly for it. The bosses undoubtedly fear not just another rise in "labour costs", but see behind the 35-hour week demand the potential spectre of a real struggle against unemployment by an increasingly bitter working class. For the workers, the prospect of striking a real blow against unemployment is what's promised. But the plain truth is that the sort of "campaign" which has been foisted on the metal workers is a bureaucratic, reformist fraud.

What the union officials put forward at the mass meetings, and bureaucratically forced through with no amendments allowed, was a "campaign" incapable of winning anything. Once each month the metal workers are supposed to work only 35 hours, and it is left to the individual shops to demand payment for the lost wages. In other words, a 5-hour "strike" once a month! At the mass meeting in Melbourne's Festival Hall on 20 May, the "left-wing" Victorian AMWSU secretary John Halfpenny let slip the truth, that the bureaucrats never intended to win a significant shortening of the work week in the first place. "With positive action we might get the employers to talk", he said, which is the *most* that could be expected from such pathetic pressure tactics.

For Halfpenny and his fellow "left-wing" AMWSU bureaucrats like Dick Scott and the Communist Party's (CPA) Laurie Carmichael, the 35-hour week is a utopian scheme to make capitalism work better. By creating more jobs it would mean "more income tax and less dole payments", Halfpenny told the mass meeting, as well as "reviving... those parts of the Australian economy that are now sick". With such an utterly bankrupt program — and such pitifully weak

tactics to attain even the 35-hour week demand — it was no wonder that many of the speakers at that meeting expressed considerable skepticism that the "campaign" would not just lead to layoffs and wages lost as a result of these futile once-a-month pretences at action. But to these defeatist objections Halfpenny could only answer that there was "no sound reason" why a 35-hour week should cause job losses.

What rubbish! Under capitalism there will always be unemployment and the threat of layoffs. But for years now Halfpenny and his fellow left bureaucrats have "fought the sack" ... by refusing to take any militant action and instead whipping up a racist campaign to "export" unemployment to Asian workers with protectionist "Buy Australian" campaigns and demands for higher import barriers. Now they are pushing the reformist illusion that unemployment can be purged from capitalism by increments.

The elementary need of working people for the right to a livelihood demands a *sliding scale of hours* which should begin at minimum with a 30-hour week at 40 hours pay — and decrease the hours worked as necessary to make work available for all. This must be combined with the struggle for massive wage increases and cost-of-living clauses to ensure that wages keep pace with inflation. Unlike AMWSU Assistant National Secretary Laurie Carmichael who trades off more jobs against more money in an article in *Australian Left Review* no 73, we demand a sliding scale of hours and wages to protect the working class from the ravages of a capitalism in decay.

To fight for these demands requires a massive nationwide strike coupled with sit-down strikes and factory occupations in response to the threat of retrenchments. The "guerrilla tactics" peddled by Halfpenny and his former comrades in the CPA serve only to isolate actual struggles within individual shops. The result is to actively demoralise the ranks,

and to leave the multitude of small, poorly organised metal shops easy prey to employer propaganda and victimisation of militants. A class-struggle union leadership would on the contrary use the strike as an organising drive, reaching out particularly to the thousands of women and migrant process workers in the industry. It would seek to mobilise the unemployed to forge on the picket lines a unity in struggle with the striking workers.

Nothing could be further from the minds of the reformists of the CPA and Socialist Workers Party (SWP) than such a perspective of class struggle. Their main concern is to establish how reasonable a 35-hour week would be, how easy to achieve without challenging capitalism. "The 35-hour week would cut into those [rocketing] profits, not eliminate them", promised *Tribune* (14 May). The "real effect would be to take from the bosses some of the gravy ... not to cut their present volume of profits", gushed the SWP's Renfrey Clarke in a glowing review of the wretchedly reformist metal unions' pamphlet "35 Hours: More Work, More Leisure". We judge things by a different standard: what sort of "gain" is it which costs the bosses next to nothing?

There is a gulf between the small-change reforms pursued by the fake-Trotskyist SWP and the Trotskyist transitional program for the struggle to overthrow capitalism. The truth is that even with such a defensive demand as a sliding scale of hours, "It is easier to overthrow capitalism than to realise this demand under capitalism", as Trotsky put it (*Writings, 1937-38*). A serious fight for a sliding scale of hours throughout society would pose the need for a workers government based on workers organisations to expropriate the capitalists and establish a planned economy on socialist foundations. But it will take a new revolutionary leadership of the working class, committed to fight for a full program of such transitional demands, to lead that struggle to victory. ■

San Francisco labour routs Nazis



The 1200 strong labour turnout (above left) for the 19 April rally in San Francisco successfully stopped the threatened Nazi celebration of Hitler's birthday and taught the fascist creeps a lesson they'll not soon forget (see our article in *Australasian Spartacist* no 73, May 1980). The mobilisation of official union contingents like the militant phone workers of the Communication Workers of America (above right), blacks, Chicanos, Jews, homosexuals and leftists was the result of the hard work carried out by the April 19 Committee Against Nazis (ANCAN), initiated and heavily built by our



comrades of the Spartacist League/US. ANCAN mobilised in the trade unions and minority communities, in workplaces and on campuses, distributing 130,000 leaflets and 5000 posters. Such labour-based mobilisations are what it takes to crush the fascist gangs. This victory over the fascist scum cost money. ANCAN has bills totalling several thousand dollars — show your support for this powerful anti-Nazi mobilisation with donations of \$10, \$25, \$50 — whatever you can. Send cheque or money order to: ANCAN, c/o PO Box 6571, San Francisco, CA 94101, USA.

Reformists agree on non-aggression pact

CPA/SPA: Afghanistan

won't go away

After his provocative "rescue mission" fiasco in the Iranian desert, even Jimmy Carter's imperialist allies are eyeing him with increasing unease. But the insanity of Carter's drive toward World War III is more than just the madness of a man who wants to get re-elected to the presidency by bringing the world to the edge of nuclear holocaust. Carter is currently the leader of the most powerful and ruthless ruling class the world has seen — and one which has slipped down from the position of unchallenged imperialist dominance it held from the end of the last world war until the early seventies. The American bourgeoisie is quite capable of launching a nuclear war in an attempt to regain its position as imperialist top dog. There is only one way to avert the threat they pose — workers revolution to sweep rotting capitalism and its crazed rulers from the face of the earth.

The architects of the US war drive against the Soviet degenerated workers state seized upon Afghanistan as a pretext for a massive arms escalation. But the Red Army in Afghanistan is fighting to defend the interests of the oppressed against counterrevolutionary bandits backed by the CIA. A Soviet victory over the Islamic rebels would open up the way for the liberation of these oppressed masses, and in particular would mean a gigantic step forward for Afghan women — currently treated by the reactionary guerrillas as mere chattel slaves. The response of any revolutionary to the December intervention should have been immediate: Hail Red Army! Extend the social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples! Defend the Soviet Union against imperialist aggression!

In the wake of the Afghanistan crisis, however, the fake-left is engaged in a pathetic attempt to make the mad-dog imperialists listen to sweet reason. Forget about Afghanistan, don't mention defending the USSR, they say, cringing before the anti-Soviet war propaganda. If only we can mobilise all "peace-loving people", we can help "convince" the imperialists that their war drive is not in their own rational self-interest. "Peace committees" have been disinterred and the old Vietnam Moratoria have been the subject of nostalgic revivals. And among the foremost organisers of the hoped-for legions of pacifists, preachers and Labor parliamentarians for "detente, disarmament and peaceful coexistence" have been the Moscow-line Stalinists of the Socialist Party (SPA). As proof of its non-communist "peaceful" intentions, the SPA has tried to avoid mentioning that, formally at any rate, it is on the Soviet Army side in Afghanistan, and in particular it has sought to assure its liberal would-be allies that it does *not* hail the Red Army intervention.

CPA/SPA mini-detente

Underlining the willingness of these Kremlin sycophants to "unite for peace" with anyone, no matter how anti-Soviet, the SPA recently concluded a kind of treaty with its previous bitter opponent, the Communist Party (CPA), which rushed to call for Soviet troops out of Afghanistan virtually as soon as the incursion became known. The 7 May issues of *Tribune* and *Socialist* carried a joint statement pledging the two groups to "joint activities" and "cooperation" and promising continuing discussions.

When a decisive section of the CPA leadership centred around Laurie Aarons



Afghan rebels promise "jihad" against Red Army. CPA says "Red Army out".

broke from Moscow to condemn the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, a bitter factional struggle ensued, ending over three years later with the Kremlin-loyal minority walking out to form the SPA. Trotskyists opposed the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia because it was aimed at cutting short potentially revolutionary ferment which could have led to workers political revolution *a la* Hungary 1956. But as we pointed out six years ago, "At the root of the Aarons policy was not a left turn (certainly not 'Trotskyism' as the pro-Moscow wing charged) but capitulation to bourgeois hostility towards the Soviet workers state" (*Australasian Spartacist* no 9, June 1974). The Aaronsite wing of the old Stalinist CPA was eager to be rid of its political subordination to Moscow in order to better pursue its social-democratic appetites.

Now over Afghanistan, the CPA's "independence" from Moscow — the better to serve Australian capitalism — has meant openly siding with counter-revolutionary rebels. Moreover, its subservience to imperialism has placed it on the other side of the barricades from the SPA in the Afghan conflict. Yet it is now that the SPA and the anti-Soviet CPA declare that they can agree to disagree! That's how the SPA "defends" the Soviet Union!

The 7 May joint statement pledges to support "the defeat of the Fraser Liberal-NCP Government and its policies", to "preserve Australia's national independence", and other such reformist nostrums designed to appeal to the ALP. But most of it is given over to the call for "a stronger, broader anti-war movement uniting all forces opposed to militarism and any return to the cold war". In more ways than one, the statement is a piece of classic, cynical diplomacy: "Seizing on events in Afghanistan (about which the two parties differ [!]), the imperialists are attempting to justify a worsening of international relations". A key point is the agreement to support "Peaceful co-existence — the peaceful settlement of disputes between nations — respect for equality, national sovereignty and independence — non-interference in internal affairs".

Woodrow Wilson, champion imperialist hypocrite of the first world war, couldn't have put it better.

What's really going on here? Certainly not a genuine political rapprochement. *Tribune's* "commentary" assured its readers that "the CPA is not formulating a common political program with the SPA", carefully stressing that "our unquestioned right to independently shape our own direction and policies ... is now an irreversible reality". For its part, the *Socialist* promises that the joint statement heralds no "amalgamation".

Nevertheless, some things have changed since 1972, including the dissipation of much of the heat engendered by the split. Then, too, the SPA looked geriatric and moribund, while the CPA seemed youthful and "with it" as it pursued one New Left fad after another. Ten years ago the conservative Kremlin policy of "peaceful coexistence" meant the reformist SPA was staid and uninteresting to many would-be communists; today, when the USSR is the main target of the imperialist war drive backed by the union-bashing Fraser, it is capable of exerting some attraction. As for the CPA, the drying up of the New Left pool it once fished in has left its perspectives increasingly bleak. Its prospects of replacing the ALP or even becoming a significant influence on it are historically dim, and it lacks the ties to the Soviet bureaucracy which have given the SPA some stability. Now, despite its anti-Sovietism, it is the CPA which is in need of this alliance in order to give its sagging prospects a boost — and, no doubt, to placate the rumblings of dissent over Afghanistan from a section of the party.

Reformists agree: Whitlam yes, Red Army no

But the true character of the CPA/SPA non-aggression pact — an agreement to suppress the Russian question in order to pressure Bill Hayden, the ALP and sections of the liberal bourgeoisie into adopting a bourgeois pacifist "anti-war" policy — emerged at a conference on Indochina held in Sydney on the weekend of 18 May. Before the conference began,

a defence guard of leftists and unionists (including Spartacist supporters), was established to protect the meeting from the sort of knife-wielding attacks which Vietnamese reactionaries have recently launched in Melbourne and Wollongong. (Ironically, in the defence squad were a couple of supporters of the International Socialists, who must have felt funny defending a delegation of the Hanoi regime, which they think is totalitarian state capitalist, against the same sort of riffraff that they give military support to against the Red Army in Afghanistan.) As it was, the band of reactionaries which showed up outside the Graphic Arts Club venue were held behind police lines and caused no trouble.

In the conference, Afghanistan and the USSR were unmentionables, although no one could deny their importance. The audience of about 300 SPA and CPA supporters and liberals of varying hues listened respectfully to Gough Whitlam, foremost among featured ALP luminaries who also included Tom Uren and Lionel Bowen from the anti-Soviet Hayden's shadow cabinet. Whitlam complained that US refusal to give Vietnam the aid Nixon had promised was driving Vietnam into the arms of the USSR. But many were outraged when speakers from the Spartacist League (SL) dared to raise the taboo subjects. One SL supporter declared that just as during the Vietnam War it was the "responsibility of the workers movement to fight internationally for military victory of the NLF/DRV against US imperialism", so

"it is our task today to defend those gains against imperialism. But ... it is not a struggle for peace, a pacifist struggle.... So long as imperialism exists there will be no peace and we are not in the business of advising butchers about how to run their society...."

"When China invaded Vietnam it was as the cat's paw for the US and it was aimed at the Soviet Union. In Afghanistan the Red Army is fighting against reactionary tribesmen who are opposed to land reform, trade unions and education for women. Isn't it our task to stand firmly behind that involvement and support the victory of the Red Army in Afghanistan? Isn't that the question that poses sharply which side you are on, dividing the cowards who want to flinch and the people who want to defend the gains of the working class?"

Much to the discomfort of at least the CPA, the Vietnamese Charge d'Affaires Tran Van An felt compelled to reply that the struggle of the "Afghan revolution" against the opposition of "reactionary forces" is a "right struggle" meriting the support of "people from all over the world".

After Whitlam's call for more *effective* anti-Soviet policies, another SL spokesman expressed disgust, pointing out that when it counted in the mid-1960s, while Whitlam was deputy leader of the opposition, the ALP *opposed* the withdrawal of troops from Vietnam. Calling for political revolution in Russia, China and Vietnam, he pointed to the need for Australian workers to smash the bosses' state and take power themselves; but the ALP, whose leaders want to run that state, is a roadblock to socialist revolution. Pat Geraghty of the Seamen's Union replied from the platform. A lot of what the SL speaker had said was true, he admitted, but only to conclude that a lot of work was still to be done influencing the ALP. No matter how disgusting the anti-Soviet "allies", the SPA Stalinists must seek them out and applaud them in



Soviet tanks near Kabul: OK by UN Charter, says SPA, but CPA howls about Brezhnev "exporting revolution".

the name of "detente" and "peaceful coexistence".

And to that end the SPA must even repudiate defending the Kremlin's own actions. In a graphic confession of political bankruptcy, the SPA has denounced "Victory to the Red Army" in Afghanistan as ... a "trotskyite" slogan. According to the *Socialist* (30 January), expressing the wish that the Soviet divisions give the reactionary Afghan riffraff what they deserve "tends to actually give credence to and complement the capitalist anti-Soviet propaganda about a supposed aggressive USSR trying to expand its frontiers and seeking world hegemony." But all this is just a cover for the fact that the SPA cannot, because of its policy of "peaceful coexistence" with the capitalist class, openly state that in the civil war in Afghanistan there is one side right and one side wrong, and that all socialists should unconditionally stand for the Soviet side winning. And as we pointed out in *Australasian Spartacist* no 71 (February/March 1980), even former CPA general secretary Lance Sharkey could show more backbone than his current political heirs when, in 1949, he

went to jail for stating that Australian workers would welcome Soviet troops who entered Australia in pursuit of aggressors.

In its tirades against those who hail the Red Army action, the SPA does have genuine common ground with the anti-Soviet renegades of the CPA, which denounces the grey-suited, conservative bureaucracy of Brezhnev and Kosygin, of all people, for the "export of revolution". While the SPA echoes the line of TASS communique that the Red Army incursion was under the sanction of Article 51 of the UN Charter, the CPA turns the facts right way up, denouncing the action for violating the sacred "principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries".

"Revolution on bayonets"

Well, the Soviet divisions certainly did "violate" the artificial boundaries of the Afghan state when they landed at Kabul airport, and they certainly intervened in "internal affairs" when they liquidated Hafizullah Amin and installed Babrak Karmal in power in his place. But faced with the prospect of a hostile, anti-communist regime being established on

its southern border, the Soviet bureaucracy had no option but to intervene against the reactionary rebels in the civil war which was in progress. Their action clearly aided the liberation of the oppressed of Afghanistan and the defence of the Soviet workers state against imperialism.

Invoking the "principle of the non-export of revolution", as Eric Aarons does in the CPA's *Australian Left Review* (no 73), is only a cynical evasion coming from a party which is, fundamentally, against revolution full stop. In fact, it is only a "principle" for liberal petty-bourgeois democrats. The class struggle is international and does not halt at formal state boundaries, as both the bourgeois rulers and genuine communists understand. But it is *opposition* to international proletarian revolution which unites the SPA, wedded to the nationalist interests of the Soviet bureaucracy in the name of "socialism in one country", and the CPA, with its parochial Australian reformist ambitions.

Eric Aarons pontificates that outside aid is fine so long as it does not "substitute for local effort to replace it as the main force, for this would be tantamount to the export of revolution." Thus, for him, the socialist interests of the working class can never stand higher than the right of a particular nation to self determination. But for Marxists, the Soviet bureaucracy's real crime in Afghanistan would be to pull out leaving the antiquated feudal (and pre-feudal) social structure of the country intact. And as the Red Army withdrawal from northern Iran after World War II shows, the Kremlin leaders are capable — in the name of "peaceful coexistence" — of handing back areas they control to the capitalist "sphere of influence". Yet if Afghanistan was effectively incorporated into the Soviet bloc, this would be an historic advance compared to present conditions — even though its incorporation would only be as a bureaucratically deformed workers state. However, for the CPA "national self-determination" is everything; thus in Afghanistan, it prefers counterrevolution from within to revolution from without.

In any case, opposition in principle to the "export of revolution" is a flat denial of Marxist internationalism. When the Bolsheviks led the Russian workers to power in October 1917, they knew that the new Soviet workers state would have to link up with the victorious workers of other countries. Of course, each proletariat would have to rely mainly on its own forces in its struggle for power, but intervention by the Red Army to either assist or precipitate such a struggle could at certain points be crucial to the success or failure of the socialist revolution.

Thus the Bolsheviks had no qualms, when it became necessary in the course of the civil war against the Whites and the imperialist powers, about sending the Red Army into Georgia and liberating it from the hold of the capitalists and landlords. In 1919 the shortlived Hungarian Soviet Republic, which in good part due to its own errors had alienated probably a majority of Hungary's peasantry and national minorities, faced defeat at the hands of the white army of Admiral Horthy. Lenin specifically ordered the Ukrainian Red Army to advance into Galicia and

Bukovina, a step "essential for contact with Soviet Hungary". Just before Horthy's victory Lenin was forced to inform Bela Kun: "We are aware of Hungary's grave and dangerous situation and are doing all we can. But speedy assistance is sometimes physically impossible. Try to hold out as long as you can."

But the military campaign did not succeed, to the great misfortune of the socialist cause. Likewise the Red Army was unable to cross the Vistula at Warsaw in 1920, thus preventing a link up (by direct invasion of Poland) with the German proletariat. Had the Bolsheviks been able to achieve that contact, a successful proletarian revolution in industrially advanced Germany might have occurred, thus breaking the imperialist encirclement of the fledgling Soviet state and so undermining the material conditions — isolation of the revolution in a backward country — which later gave rise to the Stalinist degeneration of the USSR. But had the Bolsheviks managed to save the Hungarian Soviet Republic, imperialist spokesmen and social democrats throughout the world would have denounced "Soviet Russian imperialism" for "violating the principle of non-interference".

The Taraki/Amin regime in Afghanistan proved unable to carry out its program of limited democratic reforms in the face of the feudal-Islamic insurgency. And this petty-bourgeois nationalist government, based on a section of the old officer corps (the April 1978 "revolution" was a leftist military coup), was, of course, organically incapable of effecting a social revolution. In the imperialist epoch there is no middle road — either it's the power of the landlords, usurers and mullahs or the power of the proletarian state. Only now, when the armed forces of the Soviet degenerated workers state are dominant in Afghanistan, has a social revolution (albeit bureaucratically deformed) become possible.

"Peaceful coexistence" is a fraud because imperialism will not, cannot peacefully coexist with the Soviet Union. The two represent counterposed social systems, the one resting on private capitalist ownership, the other on collectivised (proletarian) property forms. The international working class has a stake in any conflict between US imperialism and the USSR — the defence of the still extant gains of the October Revolution embodied in the Soviet state. With the US beefing up its naval and military capacities in the Middle East and Persian Gulf, and still led by a crazed ruler who sees Afghanistan as the first domino in a Soviet takeover throughout Southwest Asia, defence of the USSR is now very sharply and acutely posed. Yet only the Trotskyists of the international Spartacist tendency have rallied to defend the Soviet Union.

The patient efforts of the Kremlin to build a stable relationship with Washington have collapsed in ruins. Detente is no more; it was recognition of this fact that led to the Red Army being sent into Afghanistan. Brezhnev at least did that; his loyal political henchmen around the world have to continue to pressure the imperialists for detente when the imperialists have shelved it.

The imperialists will never be hindered by treaty obligations, nor are they amenable to moral suasions. The illusions of detente vainly pursued by the Kremlin bureaucrats only politically disarm the struggle against the imperialist war drive, and concretely endanger the defence of the gains of October. The road to peace is the road of class struggle which will overthrow capitalism through social revolution and the Stalinist bureaucrats through political revolution. "Victory to the Red Army in Afghanistan!" is a Trotskyist slogan. Only the Trotskyists, who stand for the program of international class struggle — the program of Lenin and the Bolsheviks — can really defend the existing gains of the working class and lead the way forward to the conquest of new ones. ■

Subscription drive success



ASp photo

The recently concluded *Australasian Spartacist* subscription drive was a complete success. From 9 April to 9 May 339.5 subscriptions were sold — 121 percent of the quota set and an impressive 25 percent increase over the number of subscriptions sold during last year's drive. We welcome our new readers and thank the comrades and sympathisers who made the drive a success. Our congratulations go to Comrade Kyle M of Sydney who topped the individual sales table with 37 subscriptions sold.

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At large		30
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"Freedom flotilla" backfires — US trips on Big Stick Cuba turns tables on Carter

The exodus of thousands of Cubans to the shores of Florida has turned into one more embarrassment for Jimmy Carter as he bumbles through this election year. It started out as a broad-scale campaign to disrupt and intimidate the Castro regime and reinforce US imperialist domination of the region. The weapons included a propaganda blitz against "Communist tyranny", economic/political pressure on Caribbean governments friendly to Havana and provocative military maneuvers openly aimed at Cuba. But now Carter is desperately trying to cut off the flow of "boat people" to Key West. And while black residents of nearby Miami set the "Liberty City" ghetto aflame in anger over racist injustices, thousands of Cubans riot in the "Camp Libertad" refugee center, trying to escape the barbed-wire enclosures where they have been penned up since arriving in the "land of the free".

When 10,000 people crowded into the Peruvian embassy in early April to demand "asylum", Carter promised that the United States would welcome the anti-Castro Cubans with "an open heart and open arms". But Carter's plans backfired when Castro took him at his word. Everyone in the Peruvian embassy was granted an exit permit and anyone else who wanted to leave was granted permission to do so as well. The Cuban government made its position clear:

"If the Peruvian government wants to receive all the anti-social and lumpen elements in Cuba, we will gladly let them go, along with all those who are ideologically opposed to the Revolution and socialism. The dividing line between common criminals and counterrevolutionaries is becoming less and less clear."

— "Cuba's Position", *Granma*, 7 April

When an airlift to Costa Rica was suspended by Castro on April 18, friends and relatives from Florida sent boats to evacuate the "refugees" by sea. Anyone who could pay the charge of \$1000 could ride the "freedom flotilla" of small fishing boats and pleasure craft to Florida.

This was more than Carter had bargained for. When the Cubans actually started arriving in large numbers (close to 65,000 have entered the US in the last few weeks) the "land of opportunity" was not standing with outstretched arms. Particularly when it became clear that a large proportion of the "tired and poor" were common criminals and other social "undesirables" Carter did a quick about-face: "We will not permit our country to be used as a dumping ground for criminals who represent a danger to our society, and we will begin exclusion proceedings against these people at once" (*New York Times*, 15 May 1980). The "freedom flotilla" was declared "disorderly" and every craft found bringing people from Cuba was seized.

Big Stick and Racism

In an absurd attempt to disguise the cutoff, Carter proposed an airlift and sealift for only the "screened and qualified" to come to the US. He actually proposed to send the US Navy to Cuba to make sure that no "degenerates" boarded the boats! While the US president made his "offer" in all seriousness, no one waited with bated breath for Castro to accept. And the Cubans have continued to come. Carter's latest attempt to save face has been to rule that those arriving from Cuba would not be treated as political refugees but as applicants for asylum. This maneuver in effect removes legal restrictions on the number of Cubans who can be admitted to the US.

Carter's pressure against Cuba has



Cuban working masses say "Down with the blockade", "Yankees out of Guantanamo".

not been confined to a press smear campaign. Along with the two-decades-old economic embargo and preservation of a naval base on Cuban soil at Guantanamo Bay, American policy in the Caribbean is returning to the days of "dollar diplomacy" and "the big stick". Thus the US-dominated International Monetary Fund recently cut off the pro-Cuban Manley government in Jamaica, starving it of import credits in a blatant attempt to bring it down in upcoming elections. Carter/Brzezinski are reportedly talking of blockading the tourist and nutmeg island of Grenada, the latest "revolutionary" regime in this American lake. And in the former banana republic of Nicaragua, pro-US capitalist representatives walked off the figurehead junta in early May as a clear warning to the Sandinista rulers.

Toward Cuba itself Washington policy has been old-fashioned gunboat diplomacy, even before Carter seized upon Afghanistan as a pretext for his anti-Soviet Cold War offensive. Last summer there were the fireworks over Russian troops who had been on the island for 15 years or more. This was used as the excuse to set up a new US naval command in Key West, "less than 90 miles from Cuba". Earlier this month Bahamian gunboats seized two Cuban fishing vessels 20 miles off Cuba (supposedly inside Bahama's territorial waters since it claims the 200-mile limit!). Cuban fighter planes sank the

patrol boats first and Havana apologized later. Simultaneously the Pentagon has launched a major Caribbean military exercise amid a total media blackout in the US. "Operation Solid Shield", scheduled for May 8-20, involves 42 warships, 20,000 troops and 350 fighter planes in maneuvers near Cuba. Plans include landing 2000 Marines at Guantanamo and practice for B-52 bombers in mining Caribbean waters from the air.

In its anti-Castro campaign the US has portrayed the fleeing Cubans as victims of political persecution. Therefore it is all right to let them in while the Haitians, for example, must be kept out because they are allegedly only economic refugees looking for a better way of life. The Carter administration has neatly reversed the facts to fit its own propaganda needs. The Haitians are trying to escape the violence of the bloody, US-backed Duvalier dictatorship: their motive is simple — they want to stay alive. The real reason for the government's closed door policy here is racism toward the black Haitians and the anti-communist instinct to stand by your despot. Like Chileans seeking to escape the butcher Pinochet and refugees from other right-wing dictatorships, they are turned away because, as one lawyer put it, "If they can stay, the whole hemisphere is eligible" (*New York Times*, 27 May). As a result, more than 600 have been sent back to face imprison-

ment, torture and frequently death at the hands of "Baby Doc" Duvalier's killers, the Tontons Macoutes.

None of the Cubans, however, have even claimed to fear for their lives, in a country where there has not been a single execution since Batista's most sadistic murderers were shot in 1959. Many do admit that they have been in jail, claiming that they were imprisoned for political reasons so they won't be shipped back for being the common criminals that they no doubt are. Most are simply looking for a better standard of living in the land of supposed capitalist riches. It should be clear, however, that once ensconced among the gusano-led Cuban exile communities, some of them (especially when they discover that Miami streets are not paved with gold) will be recruited into the network of clandestine reactionary murder gangs such as the notorious Omega 7.

Along with the criminals, degenerates and deserters, Castro includes homosexuals in the category of "social scum". "Cuba's Position", reprinted from the official organ of the Cuban Communist Party, states: "Even though in our country homosexuals are not persecuted or harassed, there are quite a few of them in the Peruvian embassy, aside from all those involved in gambling and drugs who find it difficult to satisfy their vices here." What we have here is an expression of the Cuban regime's Stalinist discriminatory treatment of homosexuals as social parasites. Perhaps some of the homosexuals who are leaving Cuba are in fact "social scum", but not for the reason of their homosexuality. And their lot will not be better in capitalist America, where anti-homosexual bigotry is intrinsic to the bourgeois social order. In the federal prison in Talladega, Alabama, where some hundreds of the Cuban exiles are being held as "undesirable aliens", many are imprisoned only because they are homosexuals.

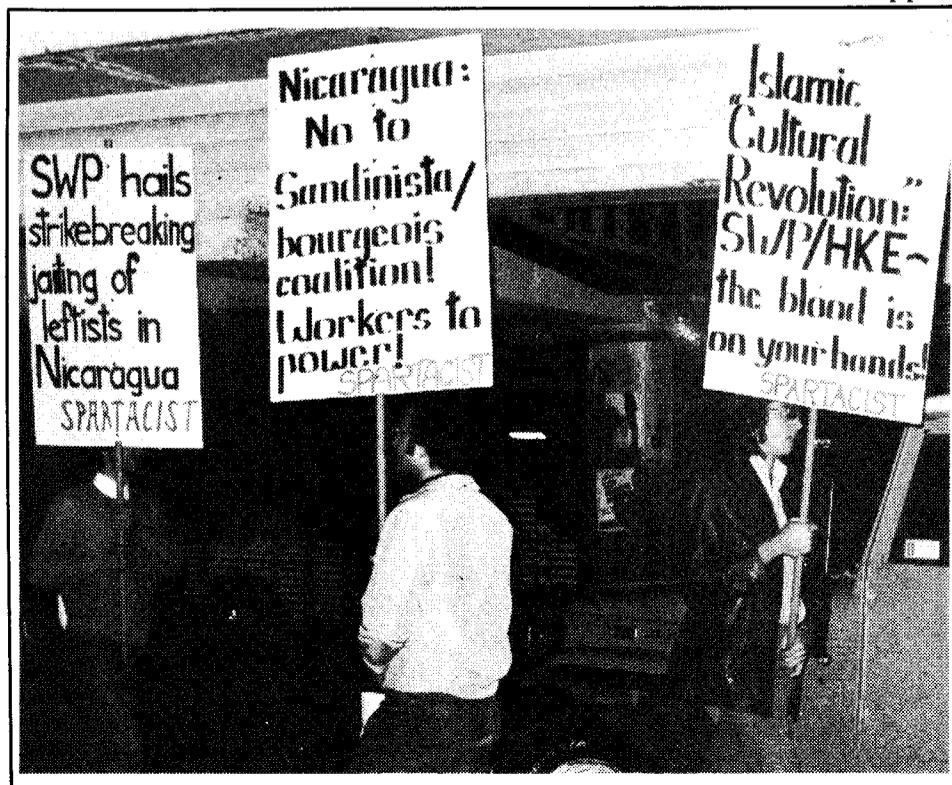
Cuba Si, Yanqui No

As Castro pointed out in 1965, if the US promised unlimited immigration to the people of any other Latin American country, they would pack up overnight. It is certainly evident that the higher standard of living in the United States exerts a powerful attraction. However, no one is starving in Cuba,

"SWP! HKE! Running dogs of Khomeini!"

ASp photo

MELBOURNE, 30 May — "Public meetings are public! Down with political exclusions!", "SWP! HKE! — running dogs of Khomeini!", "Who fingered the Morenites? Was it Pedro Camejo?" were some of the chants raised here tonight to protest the Socialist Workers Party's exclusion of the Spartacist League from its "public meeting" on Central America. The picket of almost 20 SL members and supporters was put up after SWP honcho Peter Abrahamson excluded 3 SL supporters from entering the meeting. You're just "a bag of shit" was Abrahamson's reply when SL sympathisers demanded an explanation. These reformist yellow-bellies exclude us because they cannot face Trotskyist criticism of their grovelling before anti-working-class "mass leaders" like Castro, the Nicaraguan Sandinistas or Khomeini in Iran. But more people were on the SL picket than attended the meeting, just as the SL contingent on May Day here outnumbered that of the SWP. Simple proof that crime doesn't pay, and something which the SWP would do well to ponder over for the future.



Islamic "revolution" crushes left on Iranian campuses

SWP/HKE: The blood is on your hands

Crazy Carter's bungled imperialist "Mission Impossible" in Iran demonstrates he will do anything to stay in office as he drives toward World War III. The Spartacist League says, "Hands Off Iran!" But unlike the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and their cohorts in Iran, the HKE, we do not defend the equally crazy "Imam" Khomeini who also will do anything to consolidate his Persian chauvinist, Shi'ite Islamic theocracy. Khomeini opposes imperialism only when it stands in the way of plunging Iran back into the seventh century. He has no qualms about using American Phantom jets and helicopter gunships to massacre Kurdish rebels in Sanandaj. He offers "unconditional support" to his fellow Islamic clergymen in Afghanistan when they are tools of US imperialism and the CIA. Khomeini and the Afghan mullahs and the US imperialists know that their main enemy is the Soviet Union. It was the October Revolution which broke the reactionary social power of mosque and bazaar as it liberated the Moslem borderlands from imperialist subjugation. We call for unconditional military support to Iran against imperialist attack in order to open the road for the October of the Iranian working masses which will sweep away Khomeini and all the exploiters, capitalist and pre-capitalist.

During April dozens of leftist students were murdered and hundreds were injured as Khomeini sent his "Islamic Revolution" onto the campuses to "purge" them of "Marxist" influence. At Friday evening prayer services on 18 April, the prayer leader at Teheran University called for ridding the campuses of pictures of Lenin and hammers and sickles. Within hours Teheran University was stormed by knife, club and gun wielding Islamic thugs, the *Hezbollahi* or "people of the party of god". These are the lumpen gangs recruited and bribed by the mosque with CIA money to bring down bourgeois-nationalist prime minister Mossadegh in 1953 and restore the shah to power. The *Hezbollahi* attacks upon the left, nationalist and secular organizations last August paved the way for Khomeini to ban all political parties and papers, making the universities the last refuge of organized leftwing propaganda. Now Khomeini has determined to completely annihilate such groups as the populist Fedayeen Khalq, the radical Islamic Mujahedeen and the pro-Moscow Stalinist Tudeh. The Fedayeen who barri-



Khomeini called for purge of Marxists. Leftists aid injured comrade.

caded themselves in buildings at Teheran University report that twenty of their comrades were murdered. In provincial universities the Islamic goons were even more vicious. At the university in Shiraz more than 400 were injured.

The SWP/HKE have praised the veil, the symbol of the Islamic enslavement of women, as "progressive" (which is like praising the chains of a black slave as "progressive"); they have denied the right of the oppressed nationalities of Iran to self-determination; they have supported Khomeini's Persian chauvinism to

the point of backing Iran in their border war with Iraq; they have hailed as "brothers" the *Pasdars* — "revolutionary guards" — the hated butchers of the workers, leftists, Kurds, Arabs and other minorities. Now they have carried their criminal support to Khomeini's "Islamic revolution" to its logical conclusion: they hail the bloody purge of leftists on the campuses and denounce as "sectarian opposition" those who try to defend their organization and their very lives from the Shi'ite clergy's stormtroopers.

The SWP — like Carter over his

Iranian military escapades — has taken full responsibility for its Iranian cronies' defense of the massacre of leftists. In an article titled "Why Carter Fears 'Unraveling Authority' in Iran" (*Intercontinental Press*, 5 May, [also reprinted as "Behind Recent Events on Iranian Campuses" in *Direct Action*, 14 May]), the SWP quotes from an HKE statement published on 21 April at the height of the Islamic goon attacks upon campus leftists:

"The Tudeh Party, Mujahedeen, Fedayeen, Paykor and other so-called Marxist organizations, which always start from their own narrow, sectarian interests, have essentially opposed this brave action. These forces, under the pretext of defending the 'barricade of freedom' (these organizations think that reaction has taken over the country and that the campuses are the last bastion) have mobilized against the action of the ISOs [Islamic Student Organizations]."

The ISOs were the first to mobilize around Khomeini's demand for the "Islamification" of the universities. *Hezbollahi* merely carried out this demand in a "revolutionary" fashion. Khomeini's governing "Revolutionary Council" then adopted this slogan and closed the universities in order to complete the "Islamification".

This recent betrayal places the HKE far to the right of Tudeh which was so subservient to Khomeini that they have been derisively referred to as "assistant ayatollahs". By this act the HKE is traitor to every principle the labor and socialist movement stand for. As if to compound their crime by showing the spoils as well as the dead bodies, *Militant* carries with its article a large photo caption showing the last of the imprisoned HKE members leaving jail and stating that "in Iran, deepening revolutionary ferment has created an atmosphere open to debate of different viewpoints". Tell that to the Fedayeen who lost 20 comrades at Teheran University. With the SWP's full approval, the HKE has offered up the lives of Iranian leftists to Islamic reaction to save their own skins. But for the East the 1965 Indonesian coup demonstrated on a massive and catastrophic scale, for those even remotely connected to the left, that opportunism saved nobody's skin including their own.

— reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 256, 16 May 1980

which is a lot more than one can say about any other Latin American country — or the ghetto poor in the US. And one of the main reasons the Cuban masses must suffer privation is the trade blockade by the US! Nevertheless, even today the majority of Cubans have contempt for those who deserted the revolution for a little more comfort. On the anniversary of the Cuban victory in the Bay of Pigs invasion, April 19, over a million people demonstrated their opposition to the "scum, parasites, shirkers, counterrevolutionary gusanos" and others who have lent themselves to the imperialist attack on Cuba. And on May Day far more than a million crowded into Revolution Square in Havana in one of the biggest rallies on the island since the revolutionary victory.

The fact that revolutionary enthusiasm has not died out in Cuba is heartening. Partly it is due to the fact that 20 years of imperialist economic strangulation, military attacks and counterrevolutionary subversion have forced a garrison mentality on Castro's Cuba. This is Stalinism under the gun. Aid to struggles against imperialist forces elsewhere, as in Angola during 1975-76, certainly has contributed — though this is the exception rather than the rule. Settling down to build "socialism in one island", Castro long ago shut off the pipeline to Latin American guerrillas (except where they are allied with bourgeois patrons, as was the case of the Nicaraguan Sandinistas).

As Trotskyists we uncompromisingly defend the social conquests of the Cuban revolution, while at the same time denouncing the bureaucratically deformed nature of the Cuban workers state. With power concentrated in the hands of a small bonapartist caste, there is no soviet democracy for the working people. Only through a *political revolution* can the Cuban masses take the reins. A healthy workers state would not rely on ephemeral good relations with Latin American capitalist regimes or the pipedream of a deal with rapacious Yankee imperialism but would seek to extend proletarian revolution throughout the Americas and the world.

On the US left the pro-Moscow Communist Party predictably parrots the line from Havana. With its Stalinist blinders the CP can neither explain why tens of thousands might seek to leave a supposed socialist paradise nor offer revolutionary leadership to Cuban and American workers. Their only answer is the chimera of "detente". Even more enthusiastic in its *fidelist* passions is the ex-Trotskyist, now-reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which tries to tail simultaneously after Castro and the liberal American bourgeoisie. The SWP is so caught up in the contradictions of its position that the current issue of its *Militant* (23 May) on one page lauds Castro's May Day speech saying good riddance to the "corrupt elements, delinquents and lumpen" and on the facing page attacks Carter as a "racist" for describing the Cuban refugees in

similar terms.

For almost two decades the Spartacist tendency was unique in analyzing Castro's Cuba as a *deformed workers state*. Recently some who call themselves Trotskyists — notably the French OCI of Pierre Lambert and its followers — have formally adopted this characterization. This is only a mask for their social-democratic Stalinophobia — and the furor over the Cuban "boat people" dramatically proves it. A Brazilian paper which follows the Lambertist line, *O Trabalho* (15-21 April), headlines: "Flight from Cuba — Castro's Fault". This is a grotesque capitulation to the imperialist onslaught. While not bending their political opposition to the Castroite regime, genuine Trotskyists must denounce Carter's anti-communist

"Human Rights" crusade and defend Cuba from the attacks.

Life is hard in Cuba. It is simply not possible to achieve a socialist society of abundance and equality in the confines of this small island — much less so than for Stalin's Russia. But the Cuban working people have won historic gains through overthrowing the Batista tyranny and expropriating the capitalists, both foreign and domestic. The Cuban masses want to defend these gains. We can well understand why they want to be rid of the "parasitic scum" who have prostituted themselves to the imperialist blackmail. So do we, Dr Castro, but it will take socialist revolution to do the job.

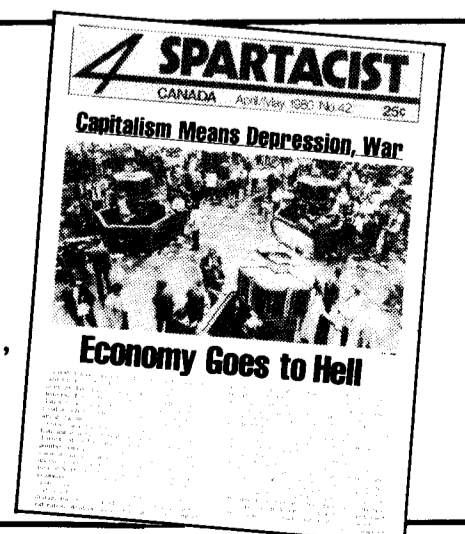
— reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 257, 30 May 1980

Reply to Intercontinental Press

"Schaefer's opus has very much a 'God that Failed' quality and one is reminded a bit of Angelica Balabanov. Formerly Mussolini's mistress, Balabanov later became disillusioned with Lenin, too. It was not 'god' that failed, though, but Balabanov."

From "Libby On the Road to Canossa" in *Spartacist Canada* no 42.

Single copies 25 cents, order from Spartacist League, GPO Box 3473 Sydney, 2001.



Qaddafi-lovers unmasked

The Socialist Labour League (SLL) of Jim Mulgrew, Australian gauleiter of the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) of Gerry Healy and Mike Banda, has long been notorious on the left for its organisational gimmickry, physical gangsterism and slander campaigns against leftist opponents. So when the 29 April issue of the SLL's twice-weekly rag, *Workers News*, ran a centrespread "polemic" entitled "Spartacist Exposed", we were not surprised to find that, while it tried to give the impression of being a political attack, it also rehashed many of the cop-baiting slanders and barefaced lies which the Healyites have used against the Spartacist tendency over the years. But what was noteworthy about this article, though, was its quite open defence of the sinister alliance which exists between these bandits and one of the more crazy capitalist dictators of our time, Colonel Muammar Qaddafi of Libya — an alliance which has taken the SLL/WRP out of the workers movement.

Since the advent of the WRP's trash daily *News Line* in 1976 — after its unlamented predecessor *Workers Press* folded in February of that year, ostensibly for "lack of funds" — the Healyites have been singing the praises of the devoutly anti-communist, oil-rich Qaddafi. In the summer of 1977, they uncritically supported Libya in its border clashes with Sadat's Egypt, then followed this by concluding what *News Line* called an "anti-imperialist alliance" with Qaddafi's "Libyan People's Jamahiriya [Congregation]". And last year, in the name of the "Arab Revolution" and this "anti-imperialism", Healy/Banda and their Australian henchmen loudly applauded the execution of 21 Iraqi Communists at the hands of Baghdad's ruling Ba'athist colonels. And *Workers News* makes it clear: it was the Spartacist League's (SL) vigorous exposure of these facts when the Healyites made a recent unaccustomed foray onto Sydney University campus which provoked the recent diatribe.

In March the SLL announced a "class series" entitled "Trotskyism — the Marxism of today" to be held at a campus venue, and *Workers News* hawkers suddenly appeared on the campus to get some students along. Spartacist Club supporters saw to it that those the Healyites approached knew what these frauds really stand for, and detailed Healy's brazen support for the murder of the Iraqi Stalinist militants. Most students understandably wanted nothing to do with publicists for repressive regimes in the Middle East. The Healyites dared not resort to their much-accustomed method of "polemic" — physical violence — despite occasional bombastic threats; and more than once they chose to beat a hasty retreat from the campus.



Workers News "exposes" opponents of Islamic fanatics Khomeini, Qaddafi.

When a few SL supporters then tried to attend one of the SLL "public meetings" on 24 March, the Healyites predictably excluded them. And equally true to form, when the SL comrades then protested this anti-communist attempt to suppress the truth about their political ties to Qaddafi and our Trotskyist program for revolution in the Near East, the SLL welcomed the arrival of four campus cops to order the protesters out of the building. But only a handful of students showed up to join the audience of SLLers and apolitical youth bussed in for the occasion.

Subsequently a Spartacist Club leaflet entitled "Workers News: Kill a commie for Qaddafi" was published in the student paper *Honi Soit*. It took up the Healyites' flimsy "justifications" for the Iraqi slayings:

"... according to *Workers News*, bourgeois nationalism in the Near East (and why only there?) is historically more progressive than the nationalism of the Soviet bureaucracy, a government based on a degenerated form of proletarian class rule. This kind of 'anti-Stalinism' places them in the company of Adolf Hitler, Chiang Kai-shek and Iraq's Kassem, who likewise condemned the Kremlin supporters as enemies of the 'national revolution'. For Trotskyists, Stalinist foreign policy is counterrevolutionary precisely in its support to bourgeois-nationalist regimes for the sake of Russian diplomatic manoeuvring. But the Healyites now condemn the Stalinists for betraying bourgeois nationalism through their support to the Soviet bureaucracy. The Healyite position on Iraq is equivalent to supporting Chiang Kai-shek's 1927 massacre of the Chinese Communists on the grounds that they had 'betrayed the Chinese Revolution'! And this is not simply an analogy. The Communist Party of Iraq is

not merely a Kremlin publicity agency. It is the mass party of the proletariat, centred on the strategic oil workers. And its mass base has a history of resisting Moscow's 'peaceful coexistence' with imperialism and alliance with bourgeois nationalism."

In response, *Workers News* then ran its "polemic" in the guise of an "open letter" to *Honi Soit*. By publishing the Spartacist Club article, it blustered, the student paper's editors "bear the responsibility" for its "slandorous allegations", in particular the title, "Workers News: Kill a commie for Qaddafi". But the "open letter" goes on to calculatedly defend both the Qaddafi Connection and the Iraqi murders — in the name of Trotskyism!

This is the act of consummate cynics who can "justify" the vilest acts of bourgeois repression against the workers movement by reference to the "completely counterrevolutionary role" of the "Soviet Bureaucracy"; who explain their acknowledged "firmest political support" to the Libyan anti-communist megalomaniac by quoting Comintern theses on the necessity to actively support the anti-imperialist struggles of the colonial and semi-colonial masses. Such people know exactly what they are doing. And what they are doing is not fundamentally a case of betraying the working class through opportunist tailism, but a conscious choice to act as the political agents of a capitalist regime, including the unflinching defence of its blood crimes against the working class.

Indeed, it could have been any leftist opponent of the Ba'athist regime, something which the colonels no doubt appreciate. *Workers News* (8 December

1979) gave a blanket defence of "the execution of a group of Communist Party members and later of others who were seeking to overthrow the regime...." That same day, Mulgrew warmly welcomed onto the platform of an SLL "Trotsky Centenary" rally in Sydney one "Raad Rashad", who according to the next *Workers News* (11 December) "brought greetings to the rally on behalf of the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party, which forms the government of Iraq" (our emphasis). After Rashad observed that "we still find imperialist plots in the Arab region", Mulgrew obligingly announced that "The Communist Parties stand condemned as the most counterrevolutionary force on the face of the earth". And although *Workers News* doesn't mention it, an appreciative \$100 cash donation was then made on behalf of this same Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party.

With all its cop-baiting it is the SLL/WRP itself which is now manifestly dubious. Not only are they politically subordinated to a capitalist dictatorship; but the SLL's political corruption and "organisational methods" — gangsterism, cop-baiting — provide a fertile culture medium and suitable environment for genuinely dubious, provocative elements. And the SLL has recently instigated some real provocations of its own. At this year's May Day march in Sydney, Mulgrew directed a Healyite panel van to drive slowly into the back of the Spartacist contingent in the assembly area before the march. The Printing and Kindred Industries Union contingent got the same treatment when the Healyites drove through it. *Workers News* (27 May) also ran an "exclusive interview" with the mullah Mohammed Menhaj, "personal representative in Australia of the Ayatollah Khomeini", in which he was obviously pressed by the interviewer specifically to denounce Iranian leftists as tools of the CIA.

No one in the labour movement should be fooled. For a small propaganda group without a mass base, program is decisive in determining its class character. By becoming the conscious agents of a capitalist regime, the political bandits of the WRP and their small bands of acolytes in Australia, the US and elsewhere can no longer be considered part of the workers movement. Trotskyism stands for world workers revolution to wipe the capitalist system and all forms of oppression from the face of the earth. This group of thugs and publicity agents for Islamic colonels and ayatollahs, who stand for the suppression of workers, the bloody crushing of the rights of national minorities like the Kurds and the enslavement of women, cannot drag the revolutionary banner of Trotskyism into the slime with them. ■

Iran...

Continued from page 1

desert, followed shortly by the taking of the Iranian embassy in London by gunmen identifying themselves as representatives of the oppressed Arab national minority in the province of Khuzistan, must have seemed to Khomeini like gifts from Allah, a timely opportunity to refurbish his fake "anti-imperialist" credentials.

The contrast was obvious between the killer professionalism of the British SAS commandos — who stormed the embassy with the same gusto with which they shoot down Provo suspects in Northern Ireland — and the cowardly incompetence of Carter's multi-service "Blue Light" team in Iran. "Our finest half-hour", crowed the British press in a chauvinist orgy, as they lovingly recounted the details of the operation which ended with five out of six Arab gunmen dead — including two

reportedly shot by the SAS after they had thrown down their weapons and surrendered. Meanwhile in Teheran, the mullahs and their followers stopped every Briton in sight to applaud and thank them for the SAS' bloody success.

These days embassies are seized by those in a state of high moral dudgeon — like Khomeini and his disciples — who believe that their every act is sacred, that they are above "reasons of state". And more commonly, by those who never expect (rightly) to have state power. Marxists do not bow to the norms of "diplomatic immunity" — but they do intend to wield state power for their class, even if necessary for a time to coexist with competing state powers. So we do not look kindly on the fashion of embassy takeovers as political games of terror.

But the major difference between the London embassy takeover and that in Teheran was that the main demands of the gunmen in London — freeing 91 political prisoners (including many strike

leaders) and greater political autonomy for Khuzistan — were just, and aimed against Khomeini's Persian chauvinism, Shi'ite bigotry and exploitation of the oil workers. The mullahs' regime on the contrary holds the US embassy as an act of state terror, and has cynically exploited the justified hatred of the Iranian masses for the Shah and US imperialism to divert discontent away from its repressive policies. But Khomeini's "holy war" is directed against the US only in words. His major enemies remain the domestic ones who stand in the way of his reactionary rule: the national minorities, the left and the working class.

Annihilation for the Kurds

Khomeini's double oppression (national and religious) of Khuzistan Arabs along the Persian Gulf is tempered by his need for continued oil revenue and a pool of skilled oil workers. Against the historically rebellious Kurds in the barren Zagros Mountains his bloody Great

Persian chauvinism knows no bounds — except the instability of trying to build a modern centralised state based on medieval social institutions. The attacks on the Kurdish minority have become so ferocious in recent weeks that even those most servile apologists for the ayatollah, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and their Iranian followers, the HKE, must mildly protest.

An article in the 5 May issue of *Intercontinental Press* describes massacres in the hills which recall Deir Yassin or My Lai. To relieve a garrison besieged by Kurdish nationalist Peshmerga guerrillas in the city of Sanandaj, the Teheran government ordered in American-made Phantom jets and helicopter gunships which destroyed local hospitals and many homes. Then the military ordered that the city of 100,000 be completely emptied out so that they could conduct a "mopping up" operation in the style of the Pentagon's "free fire" zones in Vietnam. The second city of

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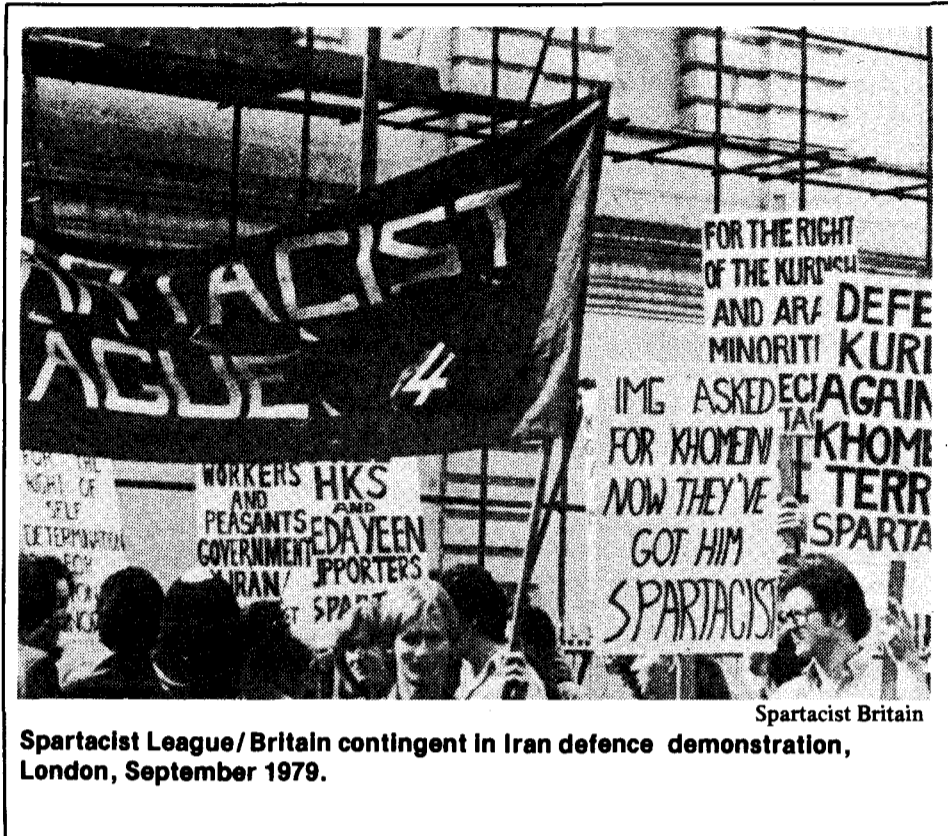
Leninist Faction fuses with Spartacist League/Britain

Three months after being expelled from the Workers Socialist League (WSL) for its defence of the Trotskyist programme, the Leninist Faction (LF) met in joint national Conference with the Spartacist League/Britain (SL), where the two organisations resolved to combine forces in the struggle for a Trotskyist party in Britain and the rebirth of the Fourth International. The deep-going character of this fusion was reflected not only in the extent of prior political agreement, tested through intensive programmatic discussions and a period of joint work, but in the full role played by the comrades in debating tasks and perspectives for the fused organisation in the coming period.

After months of factional struggle by the LF (and its predecessor, the Left Tendency) against the WSL's enthusing over Islamic "revolution" in Iran, unprincipled manoeuvres with revisionist fake-Internationals and shameless support to scabbing, the WSL leadership had only one "political" reply to these comrades — bureaucratic expulsion. The WSL's loss was Trotskyism's gain. Though substantially smaller than the Trotskyist Faction which preceded it in leaving the muddled centrism of the WSL for the intransigent Trotskyism of the iSt, the LF brings to our tendency a wealth of experienced and tested cadre with acknowledged authority and prior histories in the International Marxist Group and the International Socialists (now Socialist Workers Party). The calibre of this fusion was evidenced in the election of three of the LF comrades to the Central Committee of the SL.

Speaking as co-reporter for the LF on the fusion, Comrade Mark Hyde pointed to it as further "vindication of the perspective of fighting hard to polarise the opponents on the key programmatic questions of the day". The hard polemical orientation which our opponents slander as "sectarian" is in fact the opposite. As one comrade observed during the discussion, ingrown sects do not in general win fully formed political leaders from other tendencies — *interventionist, revolutionary* propaganda organisations do! This is particularly apt in the case of the LF, who were among the hardest and most serious fighters *against* the politics of the SL before going into opposition; indeed Hyde co-authored the only serious *political* reply to the Trotskyist Faction during that faction fight. "I remember being in this room about two years ago", he recalled, "screaming during the first SL public meeting ... about how the SL would never build anything in this country."

So the SL has built something in this country, and this fusion promises to lead to even greater future growth. Comrades



noted that with the expulsion of the LF, the anti-LF "united front" which has provided the WSL with a semblance of coherence in the recent period would fall apart, opening the possibility of yet another clarifying split and fusion, perhaps culminating in a third, "Sverdlov Faction". Drawing on his own experience, Comrade Phil Moore, former National Secretary of the WSL's youth group, explained that when "I started studying the politics of the Spartacist League seriously I knew I didn't particularly like the Spartacist League.... But I'll tell you one thing I did know, outside the WSL I'd two choices. One was to go out of politics and one was the Spartacist League.... And we want that feeling to be reflected on the rest of the left."

The opportunities for Trotskyist regroupment through programmatic splits and fusions such as the two which have already taken place are manifold, as are the openings for principled communist intervention into the mass struggles of a highly combative working class literally fighting for survival. But the concomitant pressures towards over-extension and substitutionism — sharply amplified by the palpable decay of British capitalism and the evident crisis of proletarian leadership — are inimical to the construction of a Leninist vanguard. Thus the Healyites in the 1960s, as one comrade remarked, though starting with a fundamentally more correct formal programme, tended away from the necessary task of political combat with the revisionists and the Labour Party and ended up careering wildly between sectarianism and opportunism before finally leaving the workers movement entirely.

Opportunities and obstacles

Befitting a gathering of the highest body of a Leninist organisation, the National Conference (and a subsequent extended plenum of the new Central Committee) devoted a good deal of attention to a critical assessment of the opportunities as well as the obstacles. The fusion capped off a period of intense and fruitful activity in which the organisation strained its modest forces to intersect the three-month-long steel strike. The 140 new subscribers to *Spartacist Britain*, at least 90 of them steel strikers, the receptivity to our propaganda among

thousands of militants who had never encountered the SL's politics before, were tangible evidence of the impact of a hard communist line. The main conference resolution noted the opportunity for a breakthrough:

"Since the last national conference the organisation has made a marked advance in its capacity for effective, living communist intervention, reflected most clearly in our work around the steel strike and BL, [British Leyland], and some advance in its internal functioning. The impact of this intervention and the general political crisis affecting many of our centrist opponents poses the possibility of significant breakthroughs in the coming period."

A number of comrades noted that the respect we had accrued from serious steel worker militants, like the modest authority gained by several BL [British Leyland] militants sympathetic to Spartacist politics during the course of the recent BL strike, could not be confused with the necessarily long and arduous struggle to establish authority as *communist militants* within the trade unions. The mass work fakery of the WSL et al leads only to opportunist betrayals and demoralisation. Likewise, as one comrade from the French section said, exemplary mass work in itself will not stop the cynical revisionists from continuing to peddle their false claims that the iSt are "abstentionist, passive propagandists" in order to evade our programmatic fire:

Thornett, you know, is not a very bright man.... On the other hand he was in San Francisco and he did see the fifty trade unionists that came to the meeting and he had to suspect somewhere in the dark recesses of his mind that at some time that would be replicated here in Britain....

That's not why his eyes go buggy when he sees us walk in.... It's a political struggle, perhaps sooner than he wanted."

Fighting for collective leadership

It is the Leninist perspective that revolutionary parties are built from the top down that underlies the importance of the acquisition of cadres, like those of the LF, through regroupment. A central theme of the discussions was the role which these comrades will play in helping to forge a central leadership collective, a particularly crucial task in a section as young and relatively inexperienced as the Spartacist League/Britain. Referring to the endemic, social-democratic chumminess of the British left which serves only to obstruct political clarification, one comrade recalled Lenin's dictum: "Better a good quarrel than a bad peace". Our opponents typically allow public expression of differences while suppressing or stifling internal debate; we in contrast recognise that internal political struggle is key to hammering out a correct line to guide the activity of the entire organisation. Central Committee member Alan Holford reminded comrades of James P Cannon's admonition of the price paid for failing to cohere a collective leadership in the early years of the American CP and the early Trotskyist movement because of the lack of *clear, programmatic* struggles. A leading representative from the more experienced American section added,

"Now I know that this is truly a deeply ungelled section. And comrades, there's nothing to be done about it, except a struggle-filled see-saw five or ten years. And you're going to feel pistol-whipped. You're going to be over the mark or under the mark. It's going to take a lot of fighting."

The contributions of the delegations representing other sections of the International Executive Committee of the iSt represented the invaluable experience of comrades coming from different national terrains — particularly given "little England" parochialism, which must necessarily have its effect even on the communist vanguard — but united around a common programme. This is in sharp contrast to the congenial and shifting factional line-ups along national lines of the revisionist rotten-bloc United Secretariat. Affiliation to a genuinely democratic-centralist International is crucial to combatting the corrosive effects of every sort of national parochial pressure.

The task before our modest forces around the world is posed starkly against the backdrop of Carter's anti-Soviet war drive and the threat of nuclear holocaust that hangs over humanity. Either we go forward to the rebirth of the Fourth International and world socialist revolution or the future holds the prospect of fascism and barbarism more terrible than ever before. Seen in this light this fusion represents a small, but real, step forward. ■

— reprinted from *Spartacist Britain* no 21, May 1980

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Iran . . .

Continued from page 8

Kurdistan, Saqqez, with 40,000 inhabitants, was turned into a ghost town. The watchword of Khomeini's forces is clear: annihilation of the Kurds.

Nonetheless, the SWP/HKE refuse to recognise the right of self-determination for the Kurds or other minorities in Iran. Instead they call for "autonomy", which turns out to mean whatever the Kurdish ayatollah Hosseini says it means. Thus they write:

"Despite the bitter experiences of the large-scale fighting in Kurdistan last year, the Kurdish leaders have constantly reiterated their determination, and the determination of their people, to defend the Iranian revolution and the borders of Iran." [our emphasis]

— *Intercontinental Press*, 12 May
Suddenly the borders of Iran, carved out from the defeated Ottoman Empire after World War I by the French and British imperialist victors, must be defended.

These frontiers dismembered Kurdistan between five states, subjugating this courageous people with a long history of fighting for its independence. And there is no question from whom the borders of the genocidal butchers of the Kurds must be defended: Iraq.

The SWP has suddenly discovered that Iraq is a "puppet" of US imperialism. Whatever happened to the "Arab Revolution" which the SWP once so loudly vaunted and which always found the Iraqi Ba'athists in its vanguard? (Of course, the Iraqi colonels are no more friends of the Kurds than the Iranian mullahs, and for ten years waged a savage military campaign against them in the name of the "Arab Revolution" just as Khomeini does today in the name of his "Islamic Revolution".) Working people in both Iran and Iraq have no interest in becoming cannon fodder in a border war, but according to the HKE "the absolute majority of Iraqi people" want to "have their share in the sacred struggle of the Iranian people against US

imperialism" (*Intercontinental Press*, 21 April).

Leaving aside the question of how the Shi'ite clergy "sanctified" the Iranian side against the Iraqis, how does the HKE know that an "absolute majority" in Iraq supports Khomeini? Here these pseudo-Trotskyists are shamelessly appealing to the 55 percent of Iraq's population who are Shi'ites against the Ba'athists, who are overwhelmingly Sunni. (Such a blatantly religious appeal is of little use to the predominantly Sunni Kurds.) The HKE statement sinks to even lower levels, appealing to the "Brother *pasdars*" — the hated clerical militia who are the main instruments for Khomeini's annihilation campaign against the Kurds, Arabs, Azerbaijanis . . . and the left — to train a mass army of 20 million to fight the US/Iraqi menace!

Purge of Left on campuses

While Khomeini was attempting to put down the rebellious Kurds by system-

atically destroying their villages and towns, he was also conducting a bloody purge of the Iranian left from its campus strongholds. Dozens were killed and hundreds wounded by the assault of Khomeini-loyal students and lumpen gangs recruited by the mosques. The guerrilla left played a key role in the overthrow of the shah, but from the moment of his victory Khomeini has been intent on disarming and disbanding "satanic" radical groups. Despite their continued (if critical) loyalty to his regime, the "imam" is determined to wipe out the "Marxist-Leninist" Fedayeen Khalq (People's Self-Sacrificers) and radical Muslim Mujahedeen Khalq (People's Crusaders). That these organisations still exist in Iran today is due not to the tolerance of the Islamic state but to its weakness. Khomeini intends to consolidate the repressive apparatus of his state power over the dead bodies of Iranian leftists.

Allied with the Kurds, armed and growing in their university recruiting grounds, the left posed an obvious challenge to the clerical reactionaries. The signal for an assault was given by Khomeini himself in a speech read by his son to a mass Islamic New Year's rally on 21 March. Three days after he had declared a general amnesty for the shah's SAVAK torturers and military butchers, Khomeini's "message to the nation" was reported in the *New York Times* (22 March):

"He called for a 'revolution in the universities' to purge them of professors who have 'connections with the East or West,' warned against 'irresponsible intellectuals' and, in a clear reference to the radical guerrillas, said that 'mixing Islam and Marxism' was wrong."

The purpose of this diatribe was hardly abstract. As the 23 April *Washington Post* noted: "[Iranian president] Bani-Sadr defined a cultural revolution that would not only instill Koranic precepts in society but would strengthen his own authority to crack down on labor agitators in Iranian industries, autonomy-seeking minorities and leftist political opposition."

Soon the Islamic fanatics were carrying out Khomeini's instructions for a bloody purge of the left. The mullah-organised thugs who invaded the universities last month killed at least 26 people and wounded many hundreds. But at the Teheran University headquarters of the Fedayeen, the attackers ran into stiff resistance. The intent and authorship of these attacks were obvious to almost everyone. The Mujahedeen refused to join the Fedayeen in defending their offices because "to resist is to fall into the trap aimed at making us appear opposed to the imam Khomeini, when in fact we support him" (*Le Monde*, 22 April). But even they knew who was calling the shots. "Before long our parties will be outlawed", one Mujahedeen member predicted. "It is a return to the days of the Shah" (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 4 May). Only the mullah-loving SWP/HKE tried to pass off the murderous anti-left assault as an "anti-imperialist mobilisation of the Iranian people" (see article page 7).

The Iranian people suffered for decades under the blood-soaked American-sponsored shah, and one of Khomeini's main political assets is his reputation as a fire-breathing Yankee hater. In exploiting this sentiment he has even gone so far as to charge that the left are all foreign agents — not for the Russians but for the Americans! Yet the Iranian left has portrayed Khomeini's xenophobic opposition to Western culture (including such "Western" notions as Marxism and democratic rights) as "anti-imperialism". The ayatollah has shrewdly used the embassy seizure to bolster these credentials. Without this anti-American sideshow — and without the complicity of the left in hailing this diversion — Khomeini and his mullahs would be in deep trouble politically.

Compared to the disgusting capitulation to religious obscurantism by such "leftists" as the pro-Moscow Tudeh Party and the HKE, the program and actions of the Fedayeen guerrillas seem positively militant. Founded ten years ago by the merger of groups led by

Qaddafi's Murder Inc.

On 10 May Omram el-Mehdawi, a former official of the Libyan embassy in West Germany, was shot to death in Bonn. That same day Abdullah Mohammed el-Kazmi, a Libyan who had sought Italian citizenship, was murdered in a Rome cafe. According to the German news agency, Italian police arrested one of el-Kazmi's cousins, who had reportedly arrived from Tripoli two days before "to urge his relative to return to Libya" (DPA, 11 May).

In telling el-Kazmi to go home, the cousin was not expressing a personal opinion. The 10 May slayings were evidently the latest acts in a campaign of intimidation and "liquidation" of dissident Libyan exiles announced by Libya's fanatical dictator, Colonel Muammar Qaddafi.

Four Libyans who initially refused to leave the Libyan embassy in the US (re-baptized a "people's bureau" last September) after the State Department had ordered them expelled from the country as "would-be assassins" have now been escorted out of the country by the FBI; in a similar move, the British government has expelled four men connected with the Libyan mission as "suspected of having taken part in a campaign of harassment against Libyan exiles" in England (*New York Times*, 13 May).

In a speech last February to his "revolutionary committees", Qaddafi had threatened the "physical elimination" of his enemies abroad. The threat did not get much coverage in the Western press. On 27 April Qaddafi announced to the students at Tripoli's Military College that Libyan emigres must by 10 June "return to the Jamahiriyah [Congregation] or they are doomed wherever they might be" ([London] *Financial Times*, 2 May). A recent US State Department press office handout prominently displayed a translation of excerpts from the 27 April dispatch from Tripoli: "The commander of the revolution addressed an ultimatum to the remnants of the defunct regime — the regime of exploitation abroad — to . . . register their names for their repatriation . . . Anyone who returns will be safe, but he who does not return will have only himself to blame."

This warning was front-page news in London because grisly deeds had already underscored the point. On 21 March the body of Libyan businessman Mohammed Salem Riemi was found stuffed in the trunk of an abandoned car in Rome. On 11 April Libyan journalist Mohammed Mustafa Ramadan was killed "while handing out copies of an Arab publication" outside a London mosque. On 19 April another Libyan businessman in Rome, Abdul Geli Aref, was shot to death at a fashionable cafe. And on 25 April Libyan lawyer Mahmoud Abu Nafa, "probably the most important op-



ponent" of Qaddafi "to have been killed in Western Europe in recent months" was shot to death outside his London office ([London] *Sunday Times*, 27 April).

London press reports also indicate a concerted campaign of terror against the opposition press. According to a story in the London *Guardian*, in early February a bundle of Libyan publications was doused with gasoline and set afire; in April two newspaper stands which sold *Al Sharq al Jadid*, an anti-Qaddafi paper which reported the arrival in London of a Libyan hit squad, were torched (*Guardian*, 12 April).

The *Times* (12 April) quoted "diplomatic sources" as saying that "the campaign to silence Colonel Qaddafi's opponents began last summer in Libya, where the bodies of several political dissidents were found in abandoned cars. . . . The death teams are said to have moved abroad in February with the assassination of a political exile in Malta". It must be assumed that more political murders of Libyan emigres have occurred in Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco (where most of the estimated 30,000 Libyans living abroad reside) without reaching the Western press.

The Cairo daily *Al Gumhuria* has published a list of names (including former government figures and diplomats representing Libya at the UN, in Austria and the United Arab Emirates) who are allegedly slated for death at the hands of Qaddafi's henchmen (DPA, 11 May). Qaddafi supporters (termed "revolutionary students") have continued to take over Libyan embassies (which are then renamed "people's bureaus") in "15 European and Asian capitals", according to Libyan "students" at Tripoli's mission in Yugoslavia (UPI, 12 May).

So far, no political assassinations of Libyans in the US have been reported. A former CIA "employee" has been arraigned on charges of illegally exporting weapons and explosives to Libya;

another ex-CIA man involved in the case is believed to have fled to Libya to avoid prosecution (*New York Times*, 3 May). So after all those stories about how "Carlos" is behind everything from the "Baader-Meinhof Gang" to the Red Brigades and how the Palestinian PFLP has trained every terrorist group from the IRA to the Basque ETA, it seems that Qaddafi's hit squads have an American connection — equipped by (allegedly former) CIA men.

This vindictive political murder campaign is the clearest possible demonstration that the "Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah" is a brutal capitalist regime run by a madman whose deep affinity for Uganda's Idi Amin is no accident. All of Qaddafi's "socialist", "anti-imperialist" rhetoric cannot conceal the fact that the Libyan "Jamahiriyah" is a regime of capitalist terrorism. Indeed, Qaddafi and his hit squads are eclipsing even the Israelis, whose practices of strafing refugee camps, blowing up blocks of houses in Arab districts and the peremptory expulsion of Arab notables as means of "law enforcement" had previously been perhaps the most shameless example of the exercise of the methods of criminal terrorism backed up by the awesome resources of state power.

As Marxists, working-class revolutionaries engaged in the struggle to make the truth prevail, we believe in consciousness. We detest political assassination, which seeks to wipe out the most conscious political spokesmen of any persuasion who embody the concentrated historical experience of the classes they represent. The "tactic" of assassination is sometimes employed by misguided defenders of the oppressed whose isolated and despairing terrorism only brings forth and legitimizes the state's vastly more efficient apparatus of repression. And we do not mourn the terminated tsar or duke or sadistic minister. But by rights political assassination belongs to those for whom consciousness is the deadliest enemy, and is the weapon of choice of semi-official rightist terror squads like the Argentine AAA as well as the secret spy agencies. And it is disgusting that the FBI — which physically exterminated the Black Panthers and employed its more subtle "dirty tricks" to drive a Panther sympathizer, expatriate actress Jean Seberg, to suicide — is now made to appear as the champion of Libyan refugees, the defender of their right to life against Qaddafi's vendetta. From the halls of Jimmy Carter to the shores of Tripoli, world socialist revolution must sweep away the madmen for whom human life is worthless and the only ideology is glorification of the ego of the leader.

—Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no.256, 16 May 1980.

After 11 weeks on strike in response to a management assault on union rights and safety, metal workers at John Fairfax & Sons in Sydney returned to work in mid-May. The militant strikers didn't picket, but they held off the company's attempts to broaden the dispute into a permanent threat to conditions and wage scales. In the end the bosses' attack on established gains was merely postponed, not smashed.

The crucial Printing and Kindred Industries Union (PKIU) kept the scab-repaired presses rolling throughout most of the strike, even violating their own traditions by working (in disguised forms) with non-union labour. Now, the same "arguments" are used by a majority of the PKIU to cross the picket lines of striking journo. Solidarity depends on not working during strikes — "one out, all out" — as much as it does on not crossing picket lines. These principles are the life blood of the labour movement even though they are sometimes honoured only by minorities, even minorities of one.

Australasian Spartacist obtained the following interview with the one member of the PKIU at Fairfax, compositor Ron Rees, who did refuse to work during the metal workers' strike. Rees has been in the union for 9 years.

Question: You're in the PKIU at Fairfax, could you tell us why you refused to work while the metal workers were on strike?

Answer: Yes, to me it was clear that the situation was similar to when there's a picket line up, where most unionists would recognise that you don't go to work across a picket line. It was quite clear that Fairfax was struck and you don't work in a struck shop. The strike of the metal workers was a clear safety issue and the PKIU at any rate should not have been working while their fellow workers — the metal workers, who they had been previously very close to industrially — were on strike. In my books, this would go for any union in the place that was on strike.

Q: How did the metal unions and the metal workers respond to your stand? How did your stand and the strike generally affect relations between the printers and the metal workers?

A: I think the metal workers themselves received my action in a dual way. On one hand, they recognised that what I was doing was dictated by trade-union prin-

Interview with PKIU militant "A line drawn in blood"

ciple. On the other hand, I think they fell somewhat into the attitude that prevails in the union movement at the moment, namely, that in a situation like this the best way that I could have helped them was to continue to work among my fellow union members on the inside. They accepted my attitude though and after some time, when they realised that I was serious in supporting them and in continuing to stay out with them, they offered me the opportunity to help them in their fund raising. In return I would share their strike pay.

Particularly since the 1976 strike, which brought together the Combined Unions Committee, the relations between the metal workers and the printing workers at Fairfax had been extremely close. I'm afraid that this strike, where the printing workers continued to work during the metal workers' dispute, certainly affected relations between the metal workers and printers adversely.

Q: The PKIU has been pretty hard against crossing picket lines in principle, hasn't it? How do you see the relationship between that tradition and your attitude of honouring this strike where there was no picket line?

A: Yes, the PKIU had always said it was pretty hard against crossing actual physical picket lines. What I was faced with wasn't a picket line but physical picket lines aren't always put up when there's a serious dispute on. And they're not the only way in which workers have expressed the need for solidarity and support. In this particular strike, the metal workers although they didn't put up a picket line for tactical reasons of their own, had quite clearly called Fairfax publications black. Their literature called for people not to buy these publications which were being produced on machines that weren't being maintained by union labour. They had the idea that it was possible for the printing workers to continue to work and support their strike inside the factory, and I think one of the lessons they may have drawn from the period of this strike is that this is not really possible. The only way that

workers are supporting a strike is when they're actually out in solidarity with it.

Also one of the things I noticed during the strike was a tendency for the more militant PKIU members who were continuing to work who perhaps would rather have been out supporting the strike to become continually more demoralised as the weeks drew on and as they realised that continuing to keep the presses rolling was holding their fellow workers out for week after week.

Q: The bosses tried to victimise you for your stand, and I believe it went to the NSW Industrial Commission. Could you tell us what happened there?

A: The company responded by saying that I had abandoned my employment, and towards the end of the dispute, the case was put into court by the PKIU. The metal workers' unions sought leave to intervene into the hearing and an organiser for the AMWSU also spoke in my defence at that hearing. The secretary of the PKIU had to represent me in the defence despite questions about my action that had been raised. The court ruled to reinstate me as of that hearing as the metal workers had made it quite clear that they didn't intend to return to work without everyone who had supported their strike, and as I had been told that I had abandoned my employment by the company, this could have stood in the way of any possible solution.

Q: How do you respond to the argument that your action was in fact detrimental to the union because you defied a democratic decision to stay at work?

A: In the present journalists' dispute, the PKIU decision to continue to work is being defied by quite a large number of members of the PKIU who recognise that the principle of not crossing a picket line is more important in many ways to the union movement than the question of simple democracy of a meeting. Without the picket line, which is a line drawn in years of blood and struggle throughout the history of the union movement, the union movement would be struggling to survive. The only way in which trade union solidarity can be welded is by

workers recognising the call that the picket line represents for them to express in action their solidarity with a strike.

The question of democracy is of course important but taken to an extreme conclusion it becomes absurd. I see it as much more important to recognise an arm of the working class when it puts up a picket line or goes on strike than to recognise the democratic vote of a meeting when it says it will violate that.

Q: Now the journalists are out on strike, the hostility between them and the printers seems pretty strong. What's the background to this and how can it be overcome?

A: This hostility has quite a long history though you don't have to go back very far to recognise where it came from. The PKIU in recent strikes had to watch the members of the journalists' union daily cross their picket lines, but the really important question today is how to overcome this fairly virulent hostility between the members of the PKIU and the journalists. Really, the question of achieving unity between these two unions is key to the media industry today. The real power to shut down and stop production in large metropolitan dailies can only be achieved by combined action of these two groups of workers.

Concretely at this moment I think the only way that this can be worked towards significantly is by members of the PKIU recognising the picket lines of the striking AJA members. As one PKIU member said to me recently, "it's been a long time since the journalists have acted like a union, but now that they are acting like a union it's up to us to treat them like a union", to give them a lesson in trade union principles by not crossing their picket lines. Many times in the past we have asked their members not to cross our picket lines and I think now that the journalists are actually out there on the picket lines themselves some of them are beginning to learn what trade unionism is all about. But this lesson won't last very long if the PKIU members cross the journalists' picket lines. ■

individuals who had broken from Tudeh and the secular wing of the bourgeois-nationalist National Front, the Fedayeen are by the far the most subjectively revolutionary current of any size in Iran today. Thus the first demand in their "minimum" program is the destruction of the "dependent capitalist system". With their nationalist program for an "Iranian Revolution", they call only for "complete autonomy" for national minorities (thus treacherously opposing their right to self-determination or secession from the Persian state). Yet the Fedayeen have fought alongside Kurdish and Turkoman rebels against government troops and *pasdars*. They reject the characterisation of the USSR as "imperialist" and ascribe Khomeini's anti-communist tirades to "American puppets inside the Iranian government" and to the "Iranian capitalist class" (*Kar*, 3 April).

Nevertheless, the Fedayeen remain committed to a Stalinist-populist strategy of support to the clerical leaders as a component of a "union of all the anti-imperialist forces from progressive national forces and religious forces to communist revolutionaries". While they recognised at the time that the embassy takeover was primarily a diversion whipped up by Khomeini, they see the infamous New Year's speech as a "turn" by the "imam" from his position at "the time when the American spy nest was occupied". And a Fedayeen spokesman told *Le Monde* after the university fighting that his organisation still favoured "critical support" to the Khomeini government.

It is necessary to build a Trotskyist

party in Iran, a party that tells the plain truth that Khomeini's Shi'ite theocracy is every bit as oppressive as the shah's dictatorship. Such a party would no doubt draw many of its cadres from among those who prove able to transcend the left-Stalinist limitations of the Fedayeen. The Fedayeen are fighters, against the shah and — reluctantly — against the attacks of the clerical right. But the HKE has never fought anyone for anything. These are the craven opportunists who, only a few months before the outbreak of mass struggles against the shah, declared that the slogan "Down with the shah" was "ultraleft"! These "peaceful, legal" petty bourgeois, as foreign students in the US, learned their politics from the reformist SWP. They didn't learn to tell the truth — but they did learn how to finger rival Iranian student radicals to Houston cops. All this was good practice for their current role in Iran, where a decade from now they will be remembered as the "leftists" who justified the murderous goon attacks on the Fedayeen.

The most significant thing the HKE will ever do is to hideously discredit the name of Trotskyism in Iran. The future cadres of a revolutionary Trotskyist party in Iran will have to absorb the lessons that the HKE cannot teach: that Khomeini and the mullahs did not "betray" the revolution but intended from the beginning to build a clerical dictatorship, and that genuine national liberation from imperialism requires a struggle leading the oppressed masses to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

— adapted from *Workers Vanguard*
no 256, 16 May 1980

Journalists...

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must write what their masters demand. Bourgeois journalism engenders cynicism and demoralisation by its very nature. In the Sydney *Clarion* (23 May) one Frank Crook admitted:

"I used to write the editorials for a large Sydney newspaper and I wrote about strikes so often I could probably do it standing on my head with my eyes closed and my hands tied behind my back."

The *Clarion* has been an enormous success in all states. The journalists' example in producing a regular strike newspaper to counter the pressure of the capitalist media upon so-called "public opinion" should be emulated in all strikes. But the *Clarion* has been merely a more honest replica of the bourgeois press with a slightly more liberal editorial stance, and very little news on the AJA strike. Murdoch-style propaganda excesses involving KGB agents changing ships in the middle of the night off Sydney have been refreshingly absent, although one issue carried an article on the Queen's smile! A fighting working-class strike paper would be openly partisan: it would appeal to the workers class consciousness, and include political discussion from all tendencies in the workers movement while excluding capitalist advertising.

Both the PKIU and the AJA have never had an answer to the problems posed by the introduction of new technology in the printing industry. Lacking a class-struggle leadership, both see the only alternatives as either fighting each other

along craftist lines for a diminishing number of jobs, or flatly opposing the introduction of automation. The Sydney *Clarion* has come out against the VDTs full stop and for a return to the good old days of "typewriters, pens, paper and paste". "Technological barbarism is not progress", declared a special *Clarion* supplement on technology. But it is the irrationalities of capitalism not new technology in itself which destroy workers' jobs through speed-up and the quest for ever greater profits. However, in a rationally planned socialist economy technological advances which raise the productivity of the total labour force would allow a *reduction in working hours* simultaneously with rising living standards. Right now, this means a struggle not against technological progress, but for a shorter working week at no loss in pay as part of the struggle to overthrow capitalism. This fight requires the ousting of the current reformist union bureaucracy by a class-struggle leadership.

PKIU federal secretary Ted Bennett may sigh that "Amalgamation is inevitable" between the AJA and PKIU (quoted by Ian Reinecke in the Melbourne *Journalists' Clarion* no 2) but what is needed is more than lip service. The first step to shutting down production is that all unions honour picket lines. The only road to overcoming the craft divisions and to a united defence of jobs is through building an industrial union in the newspaper industry. Such a union cannot be built by bureaucratic amalgamations at the top, but can only be forged in common struggle on the picket lines. ■



Murdoch, Fairfax provoke Journos' strike

SYDNEY, 6 June — Picket lines went up at Sydney media moguls John Fairfax & Sons and Rupert Murdoch's News Ltd this week as the national journalists' strike took a militant turn in NSW. The scene resembled the bitter Printing and Kindred Industries Union (PKIU) strikes of recent years at the Melbourne dailies in 1975, at News Ltd last year, at Fairfax in 1976 and again in January this year. Militant trade unionists are once more on the streets battling it out with the avaricious press barons, while company executives and strikebreaking "unionists" are crossing the picket lines to bring out the bosses' scab rags. But this time members of the Australian Journalists' Association (AJA) are the strikers while the traditionally militant PKIU — except for an important minority at Fairfax — is crossing their picket lines.

The NSW AJA's decision, after three weeks on strike, to set up picket lines in an attempt to bring out the production unions and shut down the presses has brought the strike to a critical point. The whole future of militant unionism at Fairfax in particular depends on these picket lines being honoured. *One out, all out! Victory to the journalists' strike!*

The 2000 or more journalists on metropolitan newspapers around Australia walked out on 13 May in protest at the sacking of twenty-nine sub-editors — twenty-eight by Rupert Murdoch's News Ltd and one by Fairfax — who had upheld an AJA ban on the operation of Visual Display Terminals (VDTs). For two and a half years, an AJA claim for a fifty-dollar allowance for members required to operate the VDTs had lain a-mouldering in the Arbitration Commission. On 12 May a Mr Justice Alley emerged from relative obscurity to hand down an insulting five-dollar decision in the case. When the outraged AJA immediately banned the VDTs, the bosses retaliated with the sackings and the first-ever national AJA strike was on. Four weeks later, only Kerry Packer's Consolidated Press has broken the bosses' front by offering a thirty-dollar allowance for operating VDTs which have yet to be installed.

The journos' unexpected militancy is transforming the AJA from an association of "committed and creative" professionals into something resembling a real union. They have produced strike newspapers entitled *Clarion* in four states and have voted to stay out at a succession of mass meetings. A victory by the journalists over the arrogant Murdochs and Fairfaxes would be immensely popular throughout the working class and particularly among militant unionists who — along with the Soviet Union — are the favourite target for these capitalist merchants of lies.

Picket lines mean don't cross

The *Australian* and the *Financial Review* at least are off the streets. But the mass-circulation tabloid money-spinners are still rolling from the presses, albeit reduced in size and even trashier than usual, we are told. They are being produced by executives, clerks, AJA members "exempt" from strikes and by PKIU members who have remained at work. In NSW the AJA put up "informational" picket lines on 2 June at Australian Associated Press and News Ltd, where Murdoch was heard to have brought in three high-level scab-herders from the US and Britain. They directed the picketing at "exempt" AJA members

All out now! Crush the press barons!



Journalists picket Fairfax, 3 June. PKIU chapel split by vote to cross.

and attempted to halt the delivery of copy coming into the building, while explicitly exempting the production unions.

The next day, the situation changed dramatically. Against the wishes of the AJA federal executive, the state AJA leadership met with the other newspaper unions, calling upon them to support the strike by honouring the picket lines. On 5 June the NSW branch mass meeting passed a series of resolutions calling for an agreement among all newspaper unions based on a qualified call to "respect each others' picket lines should they be called to do so", and vowing to refuse all arbitration or negotiation if there is any victimisation of members of other unions for supporting the strike.

At Fairfax the PKIU chapel executive attempted to convince the afternoon shift to honour the lines and were overwhelmingly defeated, whereupon they resigned their positions and joined the pickets outside. When the vote went the same way at a meeting of a later shift, a minority of 40 walked out. Perhaps 90 to 100 militant PKIU members, including the resigned father of the chapel Don Paget and former father Ian Jolliffe, are defying the union's state leadership and a "democratic" vote to scab: the union "does not recognise us as out on strike", Jolliffe told an *ASP* reporter. Jolliffe was seen carrying a sign saying, "Not all printers cross picket lines", similar to the

one carried by Linda Menzie ("This clerk doesn't scab"), the only clerk to honour the PKIU picket line last January. The News Ltd printers reportedly voted unanimously to stay at work, but the militant centre of the PKIU in NSW, the Fairfax chapel, is effectively *split*. Unless mass picket lines can be built and the decision of the majority of the PKIU to scab reversed, militant unionism at this important plant will suffer a tragic setback. Only the bosses will gain.

This betrayal has been prepared by the PKIU leadership itself. For three months, the PKIU on the recommendation of all sections and levels of its leadership has been at work while militant maintenance tradesmen have been out on a safety issue, as reported in our last issue. There were no actual picket lines set up outside so none were crossed — but the result was the same. The PKIU turned a blind eye to staff scabs performing maintenance work and, except for one militant (see interview, this issue), kept working. In contrast, the militant Fairfax metal workers, having just ended their three month strike, responded immediately to the AJA call by voting to honour the picket lines. Metal workers at News Ltd are likewise out, despite the fact that the journalists have scabbed on them in the past too. "Just because they're scabs doesn't make us scabs", said one metal worker to a printer.

Why this debacle? The printers'

hostility toward the journalists is an antagonism born of watching journalists cross their picket lines and perform their work for years. The feelings of many of those who did come out were expressed by one PKIU militant, who, walking out to the cheers of the journalists, yelled at them: "Get it right, we supported trade unionism, we couldn't give a fuck about the journalists". Printers honouring the picket generally stayed away from the line itself, saying that they weren't supporting the AJA strike, just refusing to cross picket lines. Still, the militant tradition was visible, as many PKIU members refused to even attend their union meeting, being held inside the Fairfax building on 3 June, until the AJA agreed to take down their picket line for 10 minutes to let them in.

Technology and the threat to jobs

The deep divisions between the PKIU and the AJA have been exacerbated in recent years by the introduction of new technology which is revolutionising the newspaper industry. The VDTs will enable the bosses to boost productivity through elimination of large numbers of jobs. At Fairfax the bosses' job-slashing offensive against the PKIU resulted in the bitter nine-week strike of late 1976, a principal demand of which was a 35-hour week to save jobs threatened by automation. Every day, the AJA crossed the picket lines to the taunts and jeers of the militant printers. The newspaper bosses had promised them big money to take over the VDTs and go along with the destruction of PKIU members' livelihoods — 400 at Fairfax alone. But the bosses, in the form of the Alley decision, double-crossed them.

The AJA is now learning the hard way that scabbing doesn't pay. The main danger to their strike is that the printers will keep crossing their picket lines. Before the strike the left-liberal *New Journalist* (May 1980) had the nerve to complain of "the inevitable indignities of crossing the PKIU picket line" which "AJA members suffered" last January! But the "tradition" of mutual backstabbing between the PKIU and the AJA is the bosses' trump card, as Ian Reinecke writes in the Melbourne *Journalists' Clarion* (no 2):

"They tell printers that journalists are after their jobs and tell journalists that printers are a relic of the past. Then they sit back and watch the fray."

As the strike has progressed, rank and file journalists have begun to realise what their "sorry history" meant by watching printers go through their lines. Now the more militant journos on the picket lines are saying they will never cross another picket line no matter what. That's right! No good unionist scabs, even if ordered to by "democratic" vote or "official directive". The vicious cycle of treachery can be broken by simply refusing to work during other unions' strikes — whether the striking union has put up a picket line or not. And the ball is now in the PKIU's court!

Unless the PKIU comes out in solidarity, the advance in consciousness of the journalists will not be consolidated, and they may very well cross the next PKIU picket line. The journalists occupy an unusual position relative to the rest of the working class. Daily they must keep the capitalist propaganda machine turning, feeding it with a constant stream of lies and anti-union hysteria. Regardless of their own political opinions, they

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