

Australasian

SPARTACIST



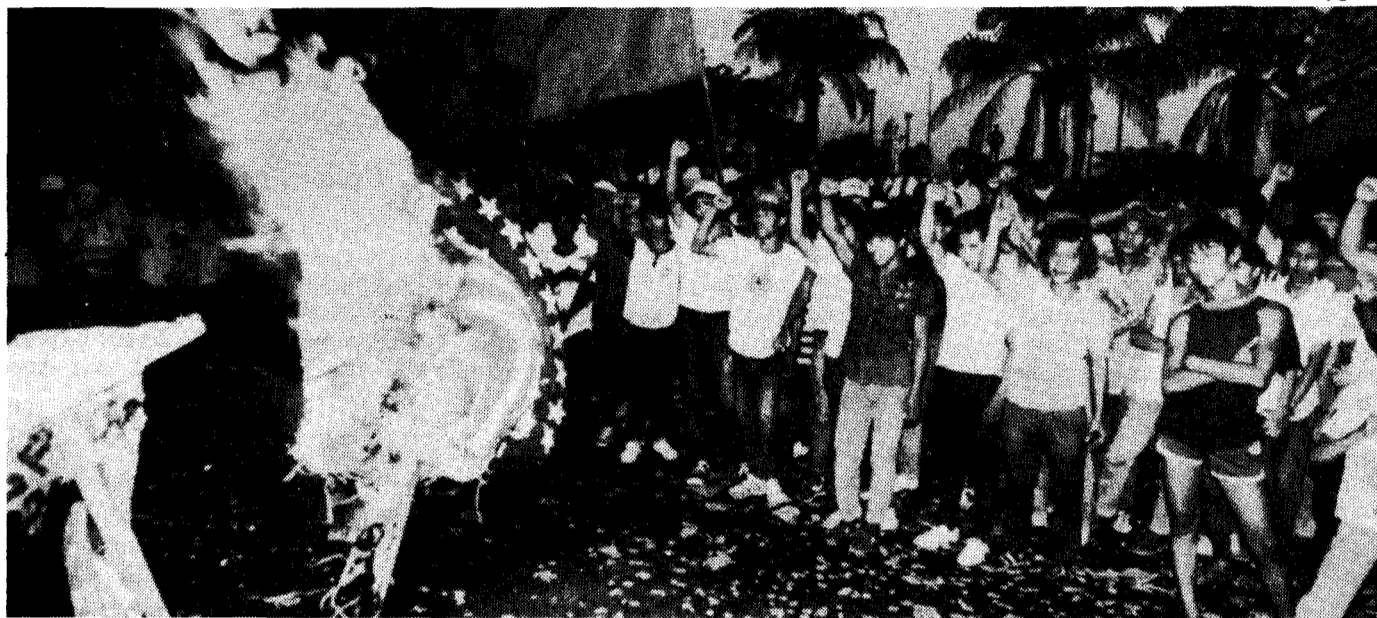
Number 114

Summer 1985/86

30 cents

Andy Hernandez-Syigma

Wayne Source-JB Pictures



Protesters burn US flag (left). Marcos builds monument to himself (right) as masses starve. Workers revolution must smash bloody Marcos dictatorship, drive out US/Australian imperialism.

Philippine Revolution Needs Its Bolshevik Party!

Philippines Heads Toward Explosion

For the Reagan gang in their White House situation rooms and their Pentagon bunkers, the immense social volcano that is the Philippines under the decaying regime of Ferdinand Marcos, his wife Imelda and their clique of cronies, is becoming a nightmare. The explosion that is brewing mortally threatens the whole strategic framework of the US-led global anti-communist crusade which targets the Soviet Union and its allies for nuclear annihilation. Not only is the

Philippines in every sense the prototype US imperialist neo-colony, but its strategic position is pivotal for the exercise of US military power from the Western Pacific through to the Indian Ocean as far as the Middle East.

The huge naval and air bases at Subic Bay and Clark Field are for the Pentagon simply irreplaceable, and their importance has increased since the 1975 defeat of US and Australian imperialism in Indochina resulted in the Soviets gaining access to the

former US bases at Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay, enabling them for the first time to challenge US military supremacy throughout the region. The loss of these bases would be a stunning blow to US imperialism and its Australian lackey. And what for Reagan and Hawke is a disaster in the making is for revolutionary internationalists, not least here in Australia, opening up an historic revolutionary opportunity. The rapid growth of the guerrilla insurgency of the New Peoples Army (NPA) and the parallel National Democratic Front (NDF) in the cities, both led by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), is giving the imperialist chiefs their nightmares at present. We Trotskyists, however, look to the construction of a revolutionary workers party to lead the strategic Philippine proletariat, and behind it the peasants, the urban poor, and all oppressed strata in a struggle for a workers and peasants government to smash capitalist rule and rip the country free from imperialist domination.

The Reaganites have been fond of talking up the Western Pacific Rim as the "dynamic capitalism" of the future, with Japan, South Korea and the ASEAN states replacing what they deride as an exhausted and soft Western Europe as central US trading partners. The Australian mini-imperialist ruling class is gearing up to grab

a piece of the action also, via increased economic penetration of what they see as the "fastest growing" economies in the world. But behind the imperialist fantasy of the Pacific as the "highway into the 21st century" lurks the reality of intensifying inter-imperialist rivalries between resurgent Japan and Reagan's de-industrialising America.

A victorious workers and peasants revolution in the Philippines would first of all have a massive impact on the essentially fragile ASEAN neo-colonies. Already the Suharto regime in Jakarta, backed up by Lee Kuan Yew in Singapore, has expressed grave anxiety to Washington. The Indonesian military junta fears that, were it not for their massive oil and gas reserves and a precarious "stability" built on the horrendous anti-communist massacre of 1965, their island archipelago would undergo a similar crisis. The recent sackings of thousands of oil workers supposedly for having been members of a communist-led union twenty years ago reflects their fear that the Philippine crisis could ignite the whole region. A Philippine revolution would also shatter the unholy US/Chinese blockade of Soviet-allied Vietnam.

Its reverberations would spread into the imperialist heartlands of the US, Japan and Australia. Without its military presence at Subic/Clark,

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Workers battle cops on picket lines. Philippine proletariat is key.

Philippines

Continued from page one

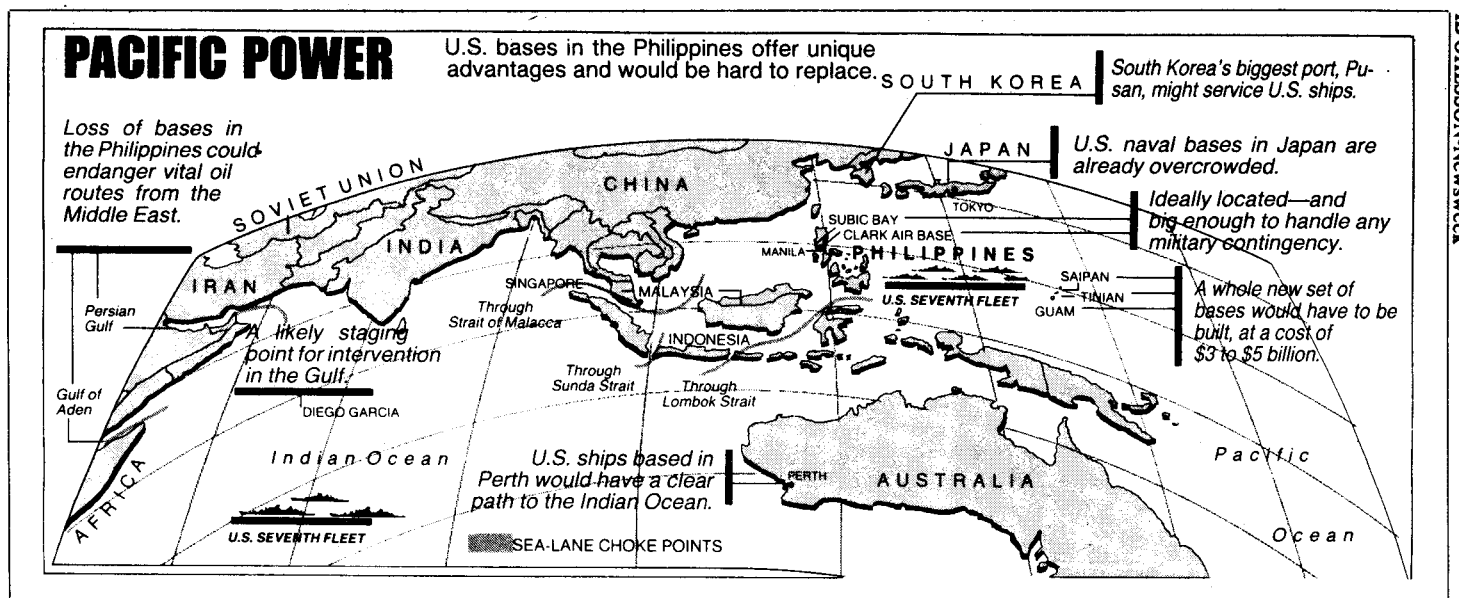
US pledges to protect this privileged white outpost in Asia under the ANZUS Treaty would be in tatters. ANZUS specifically mentions the US bases in the Philippines, and last May foreign minister Bill Hayden floated the "hypothetical scenario" that under ANZUS Australia would be "obliged" to send troops to help defend the US bases if asked. Australia already is propping up Marcos with various forms of military and "civil" aid but the ruling class knows from the Vietnam war that Australian troops fighting counterrevolutionary wars for the US in the jungles of Asia could produce a social explosion at home, especially if they're losing. The Australian ruling class still have to deal with the domestic "Vietnam syndrome", but their imperialist ambitions as a US lackey dictates an active counterrevolutionary role in Asia and the Pacific.

Hayden was not only testing the waters, he was making an offer. The Australian working class must serve these Cold War Laborites notice that any attempt to send troops to aid in crushing a Philippine social revolution will be met by massive labour action. A revolutionary explosion in the Philippines and especially another military defeat for US/Australian imperialism would smash the complacent stability of capitalist White Australia and open up vastly greater prospects for cracking Laborite chauvinism and building a mass revolutionary workers party in this country.

US: Trying to Ease Out Marcos

All this year, a continuous cavalcade of US military, CIA, IMF and congressional heavies have been passing through Manila, accompanied by a stream of reports in the US and Australian media of dire predictions from the "Western intelligence community" that give Marcos, five, three or just two years before the inevitable collapse. A typical CIA report outlined a steady trend "pointing towards catastrophe with a growing insurgency, declining economic growth, deeper intransigence by Marcos, a slipping from reality by Marcos, more intrigue and plotting by his cronies" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 October).

US pressure on Marcos came to a head in mid-October when Reagan intimate Senator Paul Laxalt hit Manila to have it out with Marcos. His message was blunt: the longer Marcos stays, the greater the threat to the



Subic Bay/Clark Field: keystone of Reagan/Hawke war plans for Southeast Asia/Western Pacific/Indian Ocean region. US Bases Out! Defend USSR/Vietnam, Smash ANZUS/ASEAN!

bases. In response, Marcos announced an early presidential election for 17 January, since changed to 7 February, but whether it takes place at all is up in the air. The constitution requires that he step down before the election but the dictator was having none of that. Knowing his bourgeois opposition to be hopelessly divided, as openly venal as his own gang and totally dependent on US goodwill, Marcos is relying on the usual massive ballot-rigging and terror by the army and his ruling KBL party to guarantee a "victory" that will leave the US no option but to continue backing his regime against the insurgents until the last.

The Reagan administration is in a real bind. It is a point of honour for these anti-communist fanatics to stand by their butchers. But they are fast recognising that Marcos is fuelling the growth of the NPA insurgency and the political radicalisation of the urban masses, cutting the ground under a credible bourgeois alternative. Some Washington "top-siders" have been muttering about "covert action" and the US embassy is ostentatiously cultivating a group of "reform-minded" young colonels, but whatever the US does could blow up in its face. Meanwhile the US has stationed counter-insurgency "special operations forces" units at the bases and US advisors with the army are reportedly taking a more active role in fighting the NPA.

Marcos may well ponder the fate of Diem in South Vietnam in 1963 when JFK decided he too was a loser. However even the Reaganites know that Diem's demise did not stabilise the *ancien regime* in Saigon, but instead opened a comic opera scramble for power by assorted generals, colonels and majors while the US expeditionary force headed remorselessly for defeat on the battle-

field at the hands of the Vietnamese workers and peasants. It is that historic defeat that haunts Washington still and today limits its options. Reagan would have loved to have blown Sandinista Nicaragua away long ago but fears sending in the US Marines would ignite a revolutionary conflagration throughout Central and South America and above all blow open the class struggle at home. Similar considerations certainly apply to the Philippines.

Crisis Deepens, Class Struggle Sharpens

Since the massive outpouring of popular anger over the assassination of "Ninoy" Aquino in 1983 the country has been sliding fast towards a full-blown pre-revolutionary situation. In addition to the terminal political crisis of the Marcos regime, the military is divided, demoralised and unable to deal with the NPA. The masses are being ground down by an unprecedented economic collapse — by official statistics GNP has fallen by 10 percent in the last two years. The key agricultural sectors of sugar and coconut production, controlled by Marcos cronies, are in free fall and the light industries of the low-wage, non-union Export Processing Zones have doubly felt the general ASEAN downturn. At one point this year, an estimated 70 percent of the workforce of Metro-Manila was unemployed or chronically underemployed. The IMF/World Bank and private creditors are loaning billions more dollars to the already massively indebted Marcos regime, relying on the military to ensure the implementation of austerity policies to ensure they are not throwing good money after bad.

The economic crisis, rampant corruption and state repression have provoked a rising wave of mass struggle, and the post-Aquino crisis opened up a certain leeway for the growth of legal and semi-legal mass organisations in the cities. Bloody repression such as the massacre of 27 worker and peasant demonstrators in Escalante on Negros Island in September, or the murder of two protesters outside the presidential palace on 21 October, has been unable to stem the upsurge. One ominous development has been the increasing activity of "death squads" El Salvador-style.

Of particular significance has been the growing combativity of the working class. In the first ten months of this year illegal independent unions mainly linked to the KMU (May First Movement — affiliated to the NDF) waged 342 strikes, some months long, involving about 100,000 workers — up 66 percent on last year (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 November). Eight workers have been killed on picket lines and the KMU reports at least 20 union leaders murdered by death squads. And the CIA has

stepped up its bribery of pro-government "union leaders" via the Asian-American Free Labor Institute, run by the US AFL-CIO labour bureaucrats. The duty of the US and Australian workers movements is to act in defence of this still weak trade union movement which is fighting brutal military/police/death squad terror. The chauvinist protectionism of the trade union bureaucracies is the chief obstacle to effective solidarity.

Not the Popular Front but Workers Revolution!

All the elements for a victorious revolution are maturing, bar one, revolutionary leadership. As the crisis deepens, the necessity for a tested revolutionary Trotskyist party to provide leadership to the working class and all the oppressed becomes more and more crucial. We wrote last year:

"The strategic Philippine proletariat is the natural leader of the peasants and the urban and rural poor against the landlords and capitalists. Armed with the program of permanent revolution, ie, Trotskyism, it has the power to bring down the hated Marcos regime and establish a workers and peasants government."

— *Australasian Spartacist* no 107, July/August 1984

Every question facing the masses — from the struggle for expropriation of the big estates and land to the tiller, for democratic rights and against military/death squad repression, against unemployment, for decent housing for the millions in the slums, for trade union organisation, even for a genuine democratic election — cannot be resolved short of smashing capitalist rule. The great Russian October Revolution showed how the proletariat of a backward capitalist country could lead the peasants, national minorities and all oppressed layers to victory and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat — the perspective of permanent revolution.

The NPA now operates in 67 of the 73 provinces with an armed strength recently estimated at 16,500 and mainly limited by the lack of arms.

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On the Revolutionary Party



In drawing the balance sheet of Stalinist manoeuvrism and liquidationism in the 1926 British General Strike and in the second Chinese Revolution of 1925-27, Leon Trotsky said in 1928:

It was not flexibility that served (nor should it serve today) as the basic trait of Bolshevism but rather *granite hardness*. It was precisely of this quality, for which its enemies and opponents reproached it, that Bolshevism was always justly proud. Not blissful "optimism"

but intransigence, vigilance, revolutionary distrust, and the struggle for every hand's breadth of independence — these are the essential traits of Bolshevism. This is what the communist parties of both the West and the East must begin with. They must first gain the right to carry out great manoeuvres by preparing the political and material possibility for realising them, that is, the strength, the solidity, the firmness of their own organisation.

— "Strategy and Tactics in the Imperialist Epoch", *The Third International After Lenin*



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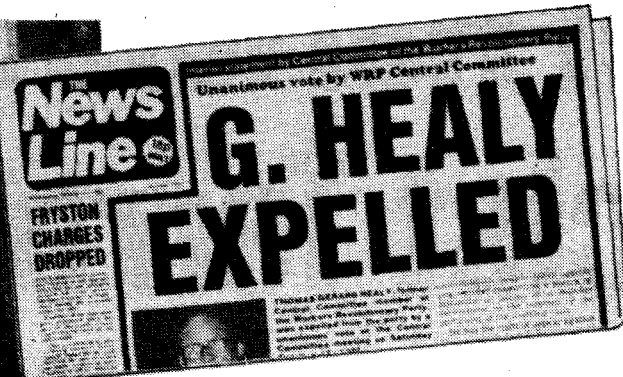
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Banda/Slaughter vs. Healy/Redgrave

News Line



Michael Banda, Healy's long-time hatchet man, now claims he was born yesterday.



Workers Press



Life-sized little Healy (foreground) dwarfed by his egomaniacal projection.

Healyites Blow Up

The article below is reprinted in its entirety from Workers Vanguard (WV) no 391, 15 November 1985, including the reprint of the article by Sean Matgamna from Socialist Organiser. We note that at this time the Socialist Labour League here in Australia who publish Workers News have gone with the Banda wing in the split.

The spectacular explosion of the British Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) is a sweet moment of revenge for a wide swathe of Trotskyists, ostensible Trotskyists, embittered ex-members and others who have been abused and slandered by the Healy/Banda machine of political bandits over the course of decades. The story broke late last month when two warring wings — one led by Gerry Healy and actress Vanessa Redgrave, the other by Healy's long-time hatchet man Michael Banda and above-the-battle intellectual Cliff Slaughter — expelled each other. The ostensible basis was the rather remarkable charge that the 73-year-old Healy had been sexually abusing women comrades for the last 19 years or so. What gives the event its impact is not the "Red in the Bed" angle so lavishly featured in the smarmy, prurient and vicious British bourgeois press but the fact that Healy's role in the WRP roughly mimicked that of Stalin in the CPSU. The WRP's supreme organisational principle was keeping the ranks in line by a combination of simple physical gangsterism and the cult of Healy as unique interpreter of the twin mystifications, "security" and "dialectics".

As we continue collecting and evaluating the information, we think WV readers will find informative the article reprinted below from Socialist Organiser no 251, 7 November 1985. The article, titled "The WRP Proves Us Right", appeared under the byline of Sean Matgamna, a sharp-tongued British centrist. Matgamna and his Socialist Organiser know whereof they speak. And they surely have earned the right to enjoy the WRP's downfall, having been hauled into the capitalist courts by Healy/Banda for having published "libelous" statements about the WRP which were manifestly true.

Matgamna's article presents, from his own political standpoint, as good an interpretation of the split as we are likely early to encounter. And he nails the whole WRP cabal for its

most corrupt political act — the explicit justification of the execution of Iraqi Communist militants by the Ba'ath military regime. "Healyites: Kill a Commie for Qaddafi" was WV's headline in 1979 when the WRP thus took to the loathsome logical conclusion its corrupt press agency for murderous bourgeois-nationalists like Libya's Qaddafi, Iran's Khomeini and the PLO's Arafat.

In bringing Matgamna's article to the attention of WV readers we of course are not endorsing Matgamna's centrist political views, particularly his stance toward the Labour Party — from which, we think, he also derives the characterization of Healy as a revolutionary in the immediate postwar period and the evaluation presented of the alignments in the British Trotskyist movement at that time, ie, around the demise of the Revolutionary Communist Party.

REPRINTED FROM
SOCIALIST ORGANISER
NO 251, 7 NOVEMBER 1985

By Sean Matgamna

Kennington Park Road, South London, last Saturday, 2nd. Four people are selling "Newsline" as they wait for the anti-apartheid march to come by. Two men and two women; all of them are in their late 20s or early 30s.

Suddenly a half-brick comes whizzing through the air from the other side of the road and lands at their feet. It has been thrown by a burly man, also about 30.

The brick is only the start. A steady rain of stones follows the brick across the road, and soon the intrepid four take refuge in the rhododendron bushes.

Triumphantly, the bombardier then jumps on a wall, raises both hands above his head after the fashion of football fans, and chants "Healy! Healy! Healy!" Then he drops back into the housing estate.

After the events of the WRP's week, it's a wonder they haven't been going for each other with guns and knives! The picture of what has happened in the WRP is now reasonably clear.

The organisation has split down the middle. The Healy faction's claim that

they have the majority of the members of the old organisation on their side may even be true. The bourgeois press credits the old WRP with five to seven thousand members, but it was probably not more than one-tenth of that.

So when the Bandaite jeer that Healy only has 250 supporters, they are admitting that he has something like half the organisation.

The Healyites have declared their expelled Central Committee minority to be the WRP, and claim to have held a special conference which "rejected" Gerry Healy's expulsion and instead expelled Michael Banda and the other "conspirators" who raised their hands against the great leader.

Their resolution explicitly gave Healy a special place in the WRP, making it an article of faith to believe Gerry Healy to be "the outstanding leader of the world Trotskyist movement in the post-war period". They have brought out one issue of their own "Newsline" (eight pages and without any sports section — which undoubtedly points to a propagandist deviation by them away from mass work) and an issue of "Young Socialist". They have launched an appeal for 250,000 pounds to bring out their "Newsline" daily from next January.

Gerry Healy is accused of sexual abuse of 26 and more women. This salacious "red-in-the-bed" stuff has been spread all over the tabloid press for the last week. But by far the most important and interesting developments have been the other charges that the Bandaite have laid against Healy and implicitly against their own organisation and its entire history.

In "Newsline" and in interviews with the bourgeois press, WRP general secretary Michael Banda has repeated SO's [Socialist Organiser] comments on the WRP — phrase for phrase and sometimes word for word.

Banda has:

1. Denounced Healy's followers such as the Redgraves as people who have the attitude of religious cultists towards their "guru" Healy. We were sued for saying that.

2. Denounced Healy for systematic and routine violence and brutality against members of the organisation. We were sued for saying that.

3. Denounced Healy for using pressure, intimidation and violence to coerce young women comrades into

sexual activity with him. We were sued for saying that the organisation "exploited" raw young people.

4. Newsline now denounces the Healy faction for having a morality of "anything goes for the organisation".

5. They challenge the Healy-Redgrave faction to sue them if what they say is not true. "In the days when they dominated the Workers' Revolutionary Party, newspapers, political opponents, trade unionists and individuals who happened to cross them were showered with writs" ("Newsline" 5.11.85). You can say that again!

Paranoid

6. Banda describes Healy as "a classic case of schizoid paranoia". Classic case or not, he has been publicly paranoid for at least a quarter of a century.

7. Banda denounces Healy's works on dialectical materialism, long the bible on which WRP members were trained, as "an outrageous piece of charlatanry".

8. Banda denounces Healy for justifying the execution of Communist Party members by the vile Ba'athist regime in Iraq. Reports have appeared in one bourgeois paper that militants from Iraq who came to the WRP school were later turned over to the Iraqi regime, which killed them. Banda is quoted as saying that the motive was to get "bags of money".

It is not clear whether this is true or not, though people within the WRP claim to have evidence that at least one person was so denounced to the Iraqi government.

Explosion

There are also some political shifts by the Bandaite, adding up to a small move away from the lunacy of Healy and towards a slightly more realistic appreciation of the world they actually live in. It is still too early to assess this, because many things are obviously being said for effect, and the anti-Healy WRP has not settled down politically yet.

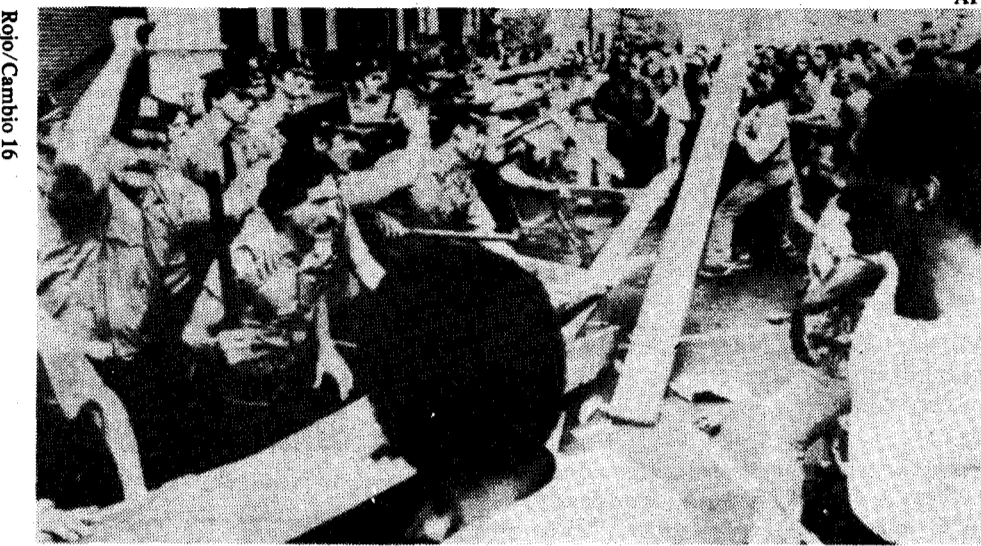
The probable reasons for the explosion and its dynamics are now pretty clear also. Healy had agreed to take a back seat or retire, no doubt under pressure, but apparently with the agreement of some who are now his supporters. But Healy is a half-crazy — and sometimes completely

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For a Fighting Workers Party!

Soweto to Harlem:

Smash Racist Terror!



Botha's cops smash march of Cape Town residents demanding freedom for Nelson Mandela, August 1985. Koch's cops smash blacks protesting closure of west Harlem's only hospital, September 1980.

We reprint below the edited presentation of comrade Marjorie Stamberg delivered on 24 September to a Spartacist League/US forum titled "From Soweto to Harlem: Smash Racist Terror!" held at the Memorial Baptist Church in Harlem, New York. Marjorie Stamberg, and her co-speaker at the forum Ed Kartsen, were Spartacist Party candidates in the recently held New York City elections — Stamberg for New York City mayor and Kartsen for Manhattan borough president.

In running these comrades in the elections, the SL/US looked to the example of the early Communist International, which used the capitalist elections and parliaments as a forum to mobilise the masses around the slogans of proletarian revolution. "From Soweto to Harlem — Smash Racist Terror!", "New York City: For the Working People!" was the theme of the Spartacist Party campaign, a campaign to mobilise labour and minorities against racist police bonapartism "at home" and the bloody apartheid regime backed by the US abroad. The lessons of revolutionary strategy and proletarian internationalism in this speech apply with equal force to the task of workers revolution in this white imperialist enclave Australia.

From Soweto to Harlem, it's a system of racist terror. The harassment, intimidation, terrorization, and now the bombing of black America goes back to the system of chattel slavery in this country. It took the Civil War, the second American revolution, to topple slavery in the South, and it will take a third American revolution, a socialist revolution to emancipate black people from their double oppression, as wage slaves segregated at the bottom of American society.

In South Africa today, a civil war is looming — and it will take nothing less than that to do away with the system of apartheid slavery. But for there to be a progressive outcome, for the hour of liberation of all the oppressed to strike, this must be a class war. It's the black proletariat in that country which has the power to

South African Revolution Awaits Its Lenin

bring the gold mine owners, the industrialists, the bankers, their politicians and their army, the whole apartheid system to its knees. From South Africa to the US, we're fighting for that workers revolution, and that is what the Spartacist Party campaign here in New York is all about.

In this country, the bourgeois politicians from the Teddy Kennedy liberals to the Reagan Republicans are scrambling around looking for their Bishop Tutus, looking for "moderates" in order to save South African capitalism for the "free world". They've deluded themselves into thinking it's just a simple question of reforms — maybe a South Africa-style civil rights movement. But formal elimination of Jim Crow [institutionalised segregation] in this country still did not free blacks from their oppression which is rooted in the racist capitalist economy. And particularly in South Africa, where there's a four-fifths black majority, it's crystal clear that the question is power. It's something Botha understands — and that is why they're digging in. In that society, "one man, one vote", a simple democratic principle, means the end of white domination, and the Afrikaners are prepared to fight to the death to defend their privileges.

For a full year now, intense apartheid repression has been unable to suppress the black revolt, which continues. "We are slaves now and we cannot be slaves any longer", a leader of the Crossroads township near Cape Town said recently. So the bourgeoisie from here to South Africa is asking despairingly, like this issue of *Newsweek* did, "What can be done?" But South African blacks are asking another question, they're asking "What Is to Be Done?" — echoing the title of Lenin's book that laid the foundations for the Bolshevik party in Russia. They're asking what is to be

done because they're looking for the road to revolution. The *Newsweek* article went on to say of the young anti-apartheid fighters in South Africa: "Their revolution awaits its Lenin." And in fact, building a revolutionary workers party is the burning question of the South African revolution today.

As Leninists and Trotskyists, one of our cardinal principles is to face reality squarely, to speak the truth to the masses no matter how bitter. And if the bourgeoisie is trying to delude itself that it can get by with a couple of reforms, most of the left in this country is also trying to delude itself that revolution is just around the corner in South Africa, that the ANC [African National Congress] has got Botha on the run. But the bitter truth is that as long as the struggle continues along purely national lines, just white vs black, with justice on one side, and the guns on the other, it is not going to be apartheid that is buried, but the oppressed black, "coloured" [mixed-race] and Indian masses. Because, brothers and sisters, those townships were built so they can be easily sealed off; the whole structure of apartheid is designed to perpetuate massacres and they are preparing to carry them out. But without black labour, which created South Africa's golden riches, the apartheid system cannot function. That is the key.

Double-Barreled Imperialist Hypocrisy

The struggle against white supremacy in South Africa has shaken up black America like nothing since the civil rights movement. The reason is clear, because black people here see in apartheid slavery a magnified mirror of their own oppression. I don't need to tell the people in this room about the racist police terror in New York City.

Mary Bumpurs is in this room tonight. Oh no, there's no apartheid in this country, like in the Crossroads township where they send the army in to evict black township dwellers. No, in this country they just send in the police emergency squad with a double-barreled shotgun, *both barrels*, to evict a black grandmother behind on her rent in the Bronx. And by the way, that triggerman cop Sullivan is back on the job — we saw him August 13 at the big anti-apartheid demonstration at the UN. The triggerman has turned fingerman, and he was up there on the police surveillance unit shooting video-tape of the demonstrators. Of you and of me.

And we don't need to tell the people in this congregation about police terror. This was Edmund Perry's church. And of course, there's no apartheid here — but Edmund Perry had the misfortune of being on the "wrong side", the Columbia side of Morningside Drive without a pass. And there may be some Haitian brothers here, who were there at that demonstration August 3 when [New York City Mayor] Koch, to back up his pal Duvalier in Port-au-Prince, sent a cop horseback charge wading into a crowd of peacefully demonstrating people in midtown Manhattan. And you know also about the system of police cover-ups in this city. There is a blue wall of silence all right, and it extends right up to the mayor, and into the district attorney's office, and to Koch's coroner, Dr Gross the ghoul, the one who gouged the eyes out of Michael Stewart.

Right now, that cover-up is continuing into the so-called trial of the transit cop lynch mob who murdered Michael Stewart, which is going on down at Centre Street. To date, a hearing scheduled for October 3 on state charges against Elliot Gross is still supposed to take place. We say Gross is not just incompetent or negligent — we say he's a criminal and he ought to be in Attica along with those cops who murdered Michael Stewart. And we're calling a demonstration outside the hearing, and we would hope everybody here would come down to that.

So over South Africa, we see the staggering, consummate hypocrisy of the American ruling class. Today Ed

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Koch was on the radio calling on Reagan to get him to ban all South African planes from landing in this country, and to ban all South African ships. Ed Koch is the bosom buddy of [Israeli] General Sharon; Koch walked in a parade in Queens with this general who organized the massacre at Sabra and Shatila. The hypocrisy of him condemning South African apartheid is really beyond belief. And besides the hypocrisy, we are not for a standing ban on all things South African. It is not as if the revolution is about to seize power and a little shove would push it over. In these conditions, who would be hurt most from such a standing ban? It would be the black workers.

And yet these people — Reagan, Koch — are the people the liberals and reformists today are appealing to for "sanctions" against South Africa. It is their government that was responsible for My Lai, that turned South Vietnam into a moonscape, that dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The American ruling class exterminated the people who were here before they came. And don't forget the many millions killed by slavery and the slave trade. Don't forget how the American ruling class mowed down the black power militants in this country, to wipe out that movement. "Divesting" themselves from South African stocks won't wipe the blood from their hands. It is a monstrous lie to tell black people that they have a friend in Chase Manhattan, or Edward Koch, or Ronald Reagan.

Moreover, the whole liberal strategy of pressuring Washington and Wall Street to pressure their junior partners in Pretoria and Johannesburg will not help the struggle for the South African revolution one whit. In the last month we have seen "divestment" on a billion-dollar scale. Reagan has decreed sanctions, which was the program of the Democrats. You have seen just about as much imperialist pressure on the apartheid regime as you're going to get, and the regime has dug in. And while divestment hasn't helped South African blacks one whit, it has helped Chase Manhattan's bottom line. Right now, with the South African economy in trouble, divestment is good business.

The United States is certainly propping up its anti-Soviet ally. They don't want that key naval base at Simonstown to fall into the "wrong hands". The US needs a regional gendarme to police southern Africa. And there is a strategic consensus on South Africa in the American ruling class, Democrats and Republicans alike, based on the anti-Soviet war drive. They both demand withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. Well we hail the Cuban troops in Angola as the main line of defense against apartheid imperialism. Real solidarity with our South African brothers and sisters heroically struggling against apartheid means class struggle at home. We say:

Campbell/Sygma



South Africa's 600,000 black miners are the powerhouse for workers revolution.

Summer 1985/86

from Detroit to Durban, workers to power!

For a South African Bolshevik Party!

The *New York Times* has a perceptive reporter in South Africa these days by the name of Alan Cowell. There was a story in the paper about a week ago where Mr Cowell had met several young anti-apartheid fighters in a black township near Cradock, in the Eastern Cape province, where a huge Soviet banner was unfurled at a funeral attended by tens of thousands last July. Unfurling that Soviet banner was a sign of defiance against the apartheid regime. Now that hammer and sickle tells a lot about the present radicalization of South African black youth. One young man Cowell interviewed, "Comrade Memory", told him that victory meant release of African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela. Mandela was jailed under the Suppression of Communism Act, and for more than three decades South Africa's rulers have been saying the only alternative to apartheid is communism. That's okay by us, black youths in the townships are saying. "South Africa is a capitalist country,



Spartacist candidates in New York City elections, Marjorie Stamberg (speaking) and Ed Kartsen (centre), at protest against racist cop terror, 3 October.

and that has oppressed us", 14-year-old Lucas told the *Times* reporter. "So now, all of us, in Cradock, are Communists."

They may not know much about communism; however the most conscious elements are clearly groping for a road to revolution. A banner at a recent funeral called on the ANC, "We are ready, give us AKs." But it will take more than a few thousand Soviet assault rifles to bring down apartheid capitalism. *Business Week*, an organ of American capitalism, recently ran an editorial on "What Pretoria Fears More than Rioting in the Streets" — namely, the power of black labor. Marx said of capitalism that it created its own gravedigger in the proletariat. And the six-million-strong black working class of South Africa, which extracts the diamonds and gold, which runs the industry, will be the gravedigger of apartheid.

A two-day general strike last November brought the Transvaal to a grinding stop. And last month the threat of a gold mine strike was met by an army mobilization as if for war. Yet in the past 12 months of rolling revolt in South Africa the black working class has been limited to isolated skirmishes. Both the ANC and AZAPO, the leading black nationalist organizations, talk a lot about how the workers are the "principal force", the "fundamental force", and so on. But then the ANC sits down in Zambia to talk with Anglo American Mining Corporation. And just to make sure the talks are not snagged, Anglo American was exempted from the aborted gold strike. So the proletariat is still pulling

the cart of nationalism.

Even if the Afrikaners were to crack this time around, what would you get? Some kind of Zimbabwe solution, where Nelson Mandela's picture would be on the currency, they'd cut a deal with Anglo American and supposedly it's "non-racial" capitalism. Meanwhile you've set the stage for all-sided genocide between the Afrikaners, the English, the coloureds, the Indians, the Xhosa, the Zulus, just as Mugabe sets the Shona against Nkomo's Matabeles in Zimbabwe. But the difference is, comrades, that South Africa doesn't have to go the nationalist road. A racially integrated internationalist workers party, forged in struggle against all forms of nationalism, could create a black-centered workers republic in which there would be a place for whites as well, which could marshal South Africa's tremendous resources on behalf of the entire starving continent.

The hallmark of British imperialism was the policy of "divide and rule", and the apartheid rulers have sought to recreate tribalism which was weakening with the emergence of a modern industrial economy. So the ANC and United Democratic Front are based on the Xhosa, and include the

organized proletarian defense guards to protect the Jewish community. There is a book, *Memoirs of a Jewish Revolutionary*, which talks about how in Warsaw in 1905, Jewish and Polish workers stood guard together 24 hours a day, block by block, house by house, defending the ghetto. They waited for those race-terrorists to come, and when they did they gave them a lesson they would never forget. A Bolshevik party, as Lenin said, must be the tribune of the people. And this defense of the most oppressed by the class-conscious proletariat was key to breaking open the tsarist prison house of peoples, laying the basis for the 1917 October Revolution.

The Question Is Power

So Reagan calls for "constructive engagement" with Botha. The Democrats want constructive disengagement. But both of them are trying to reform apartheid. So last week the US embassy in Pretoria came up with a new proposal to solve South Africa's problems: they said Botha ought to establish a civilian review board! You know, after the army busts down your door, drags you off to prison, tortures you, murders you and dumps your body on the roadside, then you'll have some place to appeal to! What's next, residency requirements for the SS?

Of course you laugh, because you see the absurdity of such a proposal in a situation where it's clear that police brutality is not the acts of a few "rotten apples" but of a system. But let's apply that lesson to the United States. One of our opponents in this election is the Communist Party, which is running on the "People Before Profits" ticket, and they're calling for the "democratization of the police" ... through a civilian review board. But it's ludicrous to think that you can "democratize" the cops. As Marxists we understand that they are the armed fist of the capitalist class. They exist to keep the ghettos down and to crush strikes.

We do not look to the capitalist state, but to building the power of our own forces. The Spartacist League calls for labor/black mobilizations, for integrated armed defense guards based on responsible union men and women, to stop the racist terrorists. This is the strategy that has kept the Ku Klux Klan off the streets, from San Francisco to Detroit, culminating in Washington on November 27, 1982, when a 5000-strong black labor-centered mobilization initiated by the SL stopped the Klan from marching in the nation's capital. And this was what the Spartacist League called for in 1964 in defending the Harlem ghetto masses against the police riot.

From Robert Williams in North Carolina, and the Louisiana-based Deacons for Defense, to Malcolm X and the Black Panther Party, the right of armed self-defense against racist terror has been a touchstone of the struggle for black liberation in this country. And if you read the recent book by Mark Naison, *Communists in Harlem During the Depression*, you will see how the Communist Party during the '30s organized mass defense squads against evictions. So when the police would go in and bring people's furniture out on the street, 500 people would be organized and they would go through the police lines and take the furniture back in. In 1964 we said that tenants councils and block organizations that already existed in Harlem could form a natural basis for the organization of defense patrols which could become the embryo of the workers militia which will defend the coming American revolution.

This holds true today. We're running in this election as a platform to

Continued on page ten

As US War Machine Targets Russia

Gorbachev and the Soviet Economy

Within Russia and without, the ascension of Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev has been seen as "galvanizing" the Soviet Union. The new first secretary of the CPSU has sharply criticized the sloth, the corruption, the stultifying complacency of the Brezhnev years, and has called for "profound transformations in the economy and in the entire system of social relations" of the USSR by the year 2000. And indeed a new generation of officials have been elevated to top posts in the Kremlin hierarchy. Visiting factories, holding impromptu street meetings, lecturing conferences on science and technology, Mikhail Gorbachev is preaching the need for dynamism and discipline.

The new style of the Kremlin leadership is captured in a joke making the rounds of Moscow wits. Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev and Gorbachev are all on the Trans-Siberian Express, crossing the vast taiga. The train breaks down. Stalin orders, "Shoot the engine driver." The train fails to move. Khrushchev says, "Rehabilitate the engine driver." Still no movement. Brezhnev closes the curtains, settles back in his seat and says, "Let's pretend the train is moving." Gorbachev jumps up and orders everybody off the train. "Everybody push", he says, "and I'll give you a pay raise later." But Gorbachev's message is not simply work harder. At his speech to the Central Committee following the death of Chernenko, he called on Russia to join the high-tech age:

"We are to achieve a decisive turn in transferring the national economy to the tracks of intensive development. We should, we are bound to attain within the briefest period the most advanced scientific and technical positions, the highest world level in the productivity of social labour."
— *New York Times*, 12 March

Can Gorbachev's program work? Certainly, in an economy governed by the aphorism, "we pretend to work and they pretend to pay us", cracking down on slothful work habits, absenteeism, drunkenness, etc can, and to some degree already has improved labor productivity. There is plenty of room for eliminating the worst instances of managerial corruption and inefficiency without basically altering the system. But the roots of the Soviet Union's present economic malaise go deeper. Bourgeois economists point to the parasitism and conservatism of the ruling bureaucracy, and ascribe this to Leninism and a planned economy.

On the contrary, bureaucracy is the enemy of rational economic planning. Already in the late 1920s, Leon Trotsky, co-founder together with Lenin of the Soviet state, pinpointed the source of the problems: there can be no fundamental revitalization of the Soviet economy without the restoration of workers democracy.

Gorbachev has been pursuing his program of galvanizing the bureaucracy like a man in a hurry. Already as hatchet man under Andropov, he fired one-third of all district party secretaries, a quarter of the 90 ministers and nine of the 23 CC department heads (*Der Spiegel*, 18 March). As head of the Communist Party he has ousted the ministers of agro-industry, petroleum and construction. This sense of urgency, especially over the flagging rate of Soviet economic growth, reflects at bottom the increasing pressure of imperialist militarism. The current gang in Washington is gearing up for war: Reagan's salute to the Nazi war dead at Bitburg only underscores the danger of a nuclear Operation Barbarossa. At the same time, the American right wing has long believed it can bankrupt the Soviet economy through an all-out



Soviet leader Gorbachev visits steel mill, June 1985, part of widely publicised campaign for intensified work.

arms race. Now in power, they're hell-bent on destroying the "evil empire".

"The USA must double its spending on armaments. We must get an effective military satellite into orbit and the Russkies had better know we'll use it . . . we must double our expenditure right away.

"... we spend ten percent of our gross national product at present. We could double that without suffering; but the USSR already spends twenty percent of her gross national product. If she doubles that, boy she will crack. Get me — she'll crack."

— Len Deighton,
The Billion Dollar Brain

Such was the worldly wisdom of "General Midwinter", Texas oil tycoon and fuhrer of a privately owned

anti-Communist espionage outfit, Crusade for Freedom. When Deighton wrote this spy novel in the mid-1960s, General Midwinter was presented and regarded as a certifiable nut case. Today he would be considered a middle-of-the-roader in the Reagan administration.

A typical view of the world according to General Midwinter is Richard Pipes' new book, *Survival Is Not Enough* (1984). This anti-Communist tract has received little attention except from the Reagan gang. The book jacket is filled with endorsements by Kirkpatrick, Weinberger, Nitze & Co. The Pentagon chief asserts, "I strongly agree with Pipes's main point." Pipes' main point is to restore capitalism in the Soviet Union through a combination of nuclear brinkmanship, an unrestrained arms race, total economic warfare and internal subversion.

Richard Pipes, a charter member of the Reagan gang, as director of East European and Soviet Affairs for the National Security Council in 1981-82 caused a small flap when he declared that "there was no alternative to war with the Soviet Union if the Russians did not abandon Communism" (*New York Times*, 27 March 1981). In his latest book he spells out his pipe-dreams of "peaceful" counterrevolution:

"The other [alternative] is wider scope for private enterprise . . . This probably calls for the decentralization of industrial decision making, the dismantling of collective farms, the adoption in industry and agriculture of the contractual principle as the rule rather than the exception, and the turning over of a good part of the consumer and service sectors to private enterprise. The consequence of such reforms would be a mixed economy . . ."

Australasian Spartacist



Soviet missiles on display at Red Square (above); Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov denounces US deployment of first-strike Pershing missiles, December 1983 (right). Need for massive military defence in face of US war provocations is a drain on Soviet economy.



TASS

TASS

It is not only the General Midwinters now running amok in Washington who think that the Soviet Union has reached such a sorry impasse that to survive its leaders must move toward capitalism. The associate director of Harvard's Russian Research Center, Marshall Goldman, entitled his latest book, *USSR in Crisis: The Failure of an Economic System* (1983). The liberal *Washington Post* (23 September 1984) wrote: "The existing economic structure does not offer the prospect of turning the backward Soviet Union into a modern industrial power, and it now faces unprecedented internal strains as it struggles merely to maintain forward momentum." "Any serious attempt to rescue the Soviet economy", declares the conservative *London Economist* (16 March), must involve "the freeing of part of the industrial sector, and most of the service industries, from all but the most general instructions of the central planning bureaucrats."

In short, Western bourgeois opinion has convinced itself a) that the Soviet Union has entered a period of deepening economic crisis, which cannot be resolved through traditional methods or piecemeal tinkering; and b) that the only feasible way out is the abandonment of centralized economic planning in favor of market-oriented "reforms" — competition between enterprises, giving managers the power to determine output and prices, the liquidation of collectivized agriculture for peasant smallholding, and allowing private entrepreneurs to take over much of the service sector, such as retail trade.

A Soviet Economic Crisis?

Reading Western discussions of the present state of the Soviet economy, one is reminded of Mark Twain's line: "the reports of my death are greatly exaggerated." The propaganda campaign about a Soviet economic "crisis" began in the early 1980s, at a time when the advanced capitalist world itself was suffering the worst depression since the 1930s. Thirty million workers were unemployed in North America, West Europe and Japan, while the Soviet Union has experienced *over-full* employment, that is, there are more jobs available than workers to fill them. In 1981-82 industrial production in North America fell by 6 percent and in West Europe by 4 percent. In these two years industrial production in the USSR increased by 6 percent. While every major capitalist government — Reagan, Thatcher, Mitterrand, Kohl — has imposed savage austerity measures and slashed social services and welfare, consumption levels in the Soviet Union have *improved* in recent years, albeit at a very slow pace.

What then is the basis for all the talk of an economic "crisis" in the USSR? It is the fact that the rate of growth has slowed markedly over the past decade. To put this slowdown in perspective one has to appreciate the rapid economic development in the previous decades. From 1950 to 1980 per capita consumption in the USSR nearly *tripled*. There were striking advances in practically every area of material life.

Take food, for example. The American public is told that the Soviet Union cannot feed its own people but must rely on massive imports of grain from the West. The reality is very different. Gross agricultural output more than doubled between 1960 and 1980. There has been a dramatic, qualitative improvement in the diet of the average Soviet citizen. Per capita meat consumption more than doubled, from 57 to 125 pounds a year, between 1950



TASS.

No bread lines in Moscow. Increased food consumption gives lie to US imperialists' fantasy of starving out Soviet people.

and 1982. Similarly, in this period per capita consumption of fish rose from 15 to 40 pounds, and vegetables from 112 to 222 pounds (David Lane, *Soviet Economy and Society* [1985]). At the same time, consumption of traditional Russian staples, such as potatoes and bread, have fallen as people upgraded their diet. Today the average Soviet citizen eats at least as much beef as a worker in Thatcher's Britain and far more pork and fish. The Soviet Union's large imports of grain, in some years amounting to a quarter of total consumption, are used for *cattle fodder*, not bread.

Insofar as one can speak of an economic crisis in the Soviet Union, it is a *crisis of expectations* both on the part of the working masses and the ruling bureaucratic elite. The Soviet people have gotten a taste, so to speak, of a Western standard of living and naturally want more. But in recent years there is little more to be had. Meat consumption — a key index of a Western diet — has been frozen for a decade. Apart from certain consumer durables (televisions, refrigerators), there has been no major improvement in Soviet living standards since the mid-1970s. Yesterday's promises have not been fulfilled. Gone are the heady days of the 1950s when the shoe-thumping Nikita Khrushchev boasted that the Soviet Union would overtake the United States and achieve full communism by the year 1980.

In 1980 the head of the central planning agency (Gosplan), Nikolai Baybakov, wrote, "we have been unable to achieve an abrupt change in direction in raising the efficiency of social production... without a radical improvement of affairs in the field of scientific-technical progress, it will not be possible to perform these large tasks which the party and government are setting" (quoted in US Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *Soviet Economy in the 1980's: Problems and Prospects* [1983]). In Anthony Olcott's Soviet crime thriller *May Day in Magadan*, the fictional KGB general Polkovnikov voices the same worries in more down-to-earth language:

"What the devil, you don't need figures to know that Gosplan has jumped the rails, that we're in a bad way. Everybody says that things are bad, and could get worse. What if we have to start buying more oil; what if there's another war or the Poles or God knows, there's a million worries...."

USSR Under Reagan's Missiles

At the center of these million worries is the enormous and deforming pressure of Western imperialist militarism. Despite significant economic development over the decades,

per capita national income in the Soviet Union is still only 60 percent that of the United States. Thus, keeping up with the Pentagon arsenal is a terrible drain on the Soviet economy. Hence the extreme importance the Stalinist bureaucracy attaches to arms control agreements with the NATO powers. Hence also the perennial right-wing notion, a la General Midwinter, that the US can break the Soviet Union economically through an all-out arms race.

According to the CIA and other professional Kremlin and Gosplan

economist Stanley Cohn explained, "the intensive R and D effort required to support production of strategic weaponry has further deprived civilian production sectors of the most important growth ingredients" (US Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *Soviet Military Economic Relations* [1983]).

Despite the increasing burden of military defense and the slowdown in economic growth, consumption levels have *not* been cut back and in certain areas have improved: more guns (or missiles) and no less butter (or meat). How has this been possible? The Kremlin bureaucrats have mortgaged long-term economic growth by slashing to the bone new investment in plant and equipment. In the 1976-80 Five Year Plan investment growth was cut in half, from 7 to 3.5 percent a year. In the current (1981-85) plan it has been almost halved again, to 2 percent a year, by far the lowest rate since the early 1920s! "The Soviet Policy Favoring Arms Over Investment Since 1975" is the title of a presentation to Congress by a "scholar in residence" for the CIA (now, there's a job title for you). Richard Pipes writes with glee, "the choice before the Soviet leadership is not one between guns and butter... but between guns and factories." Now that *is* true. The Soviet Union cannot meet the massive Pentagon arms buildup without cutting into living standards unless it reverses, and sharply, the deceleration of economic growth in recent years.

Viktor Bulla



Workers' meeting of Putilov factory for re-election of Petrograd Soviet, 1920. Only return to workers democracy can release full potential of nationalised economy.

watchers, the Soviet Union has continued to increase real military spending by 4.5 percent annually over the past decade even though overall economic growth has fallen below this rate. As a result the share of the military sector has increased from an estimated 12 percent in the 1970s to 14 percent of gross national product currently (compared to 7 percent in the United States). Moreover, this figure *understates* the actual burden of defense on the Soviet economy. The military sector absorbs a far greater proportion of the most advanced scientific and technological resources (scientists, engineers, sophisticated machinery, computer time). It takes up the cream of research and development expenditure. As American

What the General Midwinters do not and cannot understand is that the Soviet people, who keenly remember the 20 million killed when Nazi Germany invaded their country, are determined that this will never happen to them again. They are willing to make the sacrifices to ensure military preparedness against the madmen in Washington. An American academic specialist in the Soviet economy, Daniel Bond, tried to explain this fact of Russian life to the United States Congress:

"The Soviet people do feel defense is a very positive thing; contrary to the American public, which does not really value defense spending

Continued on page eight

Gorbachev . . .

Continued from page seven

positively or think about it in a positive sense. The Soviet population, in part, because of their experience in World War II, views it positively."

— *Soviet Military Economic Relations*

Bureaucratic Parasitism and the Soviet Economy

In the 20-year period from the mid-1950s to the mid-'70s the Soviet economy grew sufficiently rapidly to catch up with the US in the arms race and achieve rough strategic nuclear parity, to more than double its citizens' living standards and even subsidize East Europe on a massive scale. Why is this no longer possible? What is the basic cause of the current Soviet economic malaise?

Soviet industrial development in the past has been based on what economists term *extensive* growth, that is, the construction of new factories drawing upon seemingly unlimited labor power from the countryside. Thus, the *structure* of Soviet industrial investment has historically been very different from that of the advanced capitalist world. For some decades about 50 percent of investment in the US has gone to replace obsolete machinery (retooling). By contrast, in the 1970s almost 80 percent of Soviet industrial investment was expended on *new* construction projects. Furthermore, this construction takes forever to complete because the different bureaucracies in charge (often competing for resources) invariably overestimate productivity and underestimate costs. Thus, Soviet industrial plant is increasingly aged, falling further behind the most advanced Western and Japanese techniques.

By the early 1970s it was clear the Soviet Union was fast exhausting the basic resource for extensive growth, namely, surplus labor. Since then the problem has gotten progressively worse. Whereas during the 1976-80 Five Year Plan eleven million new workers entered the labor force, only three million additional workers have become available in the current five year plan. Of these, 2.5 million are Turkic-speaking people from Soviet Central Asia, who are unlikely to migrate to the regions of severe labor shortage in European Russia, the Ukraine and Siberia. Thus, economic growth depends critically upon raising the productivity of the *existing* labor force working in *existing* factories. This is called *intensive* growth. For more than a decade the need to shift from extensive to intensive growth has been a standard theme, almost a cliché, in official economic pronouncements.

However, this much proclaimed and promised transition has encountered a fundamental obstacle: pervasive bureaucratic parasitism at the base of the economy. Managers and administrators routinely understate actual capacity in order to be given a plan easy to fulfill. They hoard labor and use raw materials wastefully. They achieve the plan target but with poor-quality goods or goods in odd sizes and assortments. For example, if the plan is measured in tons, unusually heavy items are produced. There's a famous cartoon from the 1950s of a nail factory which meets its annual quota by producing a single mammoth nail. Managers and administrators resist innovation and risk-taking for fear they will not meet the plan target on schedule.

As long as growth was mainly a matter of building new factories and other facilities, the Soviet Union could and did achieve high rates despite the heavy drag of bureaucratic parasitism and microeconomic inefficiency. But

these factors are now dragging down the Soviet economy. Discussing the mounting economic problems, Gorbachev stated:

"The main emphasis should be laid on the technical re-equipment of plants, saving of resources and ensuring of a marked improvement in the quality of products.

"It is crucial to give up, without hesitation, the determining economic management stereotype of the past, under which new construction was considered the main way of expanding production, and many operating plants were not technically modernized for many years . . .

"Hence the main task of this work today is to bring about, by all means possible, a change in the minds and moods of personnel from top to bottom, by concentrating their attention on the most important thing — scientific and technical progress.

" . . . optimism does not free anybody of the need to work. We will have to work a lot."

— *Pravda*, 12 June [translation adapted from *Moscow News*, June 1985]

In one sense there is really nothing new in what Gorbachev is saying. For decades the top Kremlin leaders — Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev — have exhorted the managers and administrators below them to be more dynamic, more innovative and, at the same time, more cost-conscious. Yet decades of exhortation — in Stalin's day backed by the gulag and executioner's bullet — have not, in Gorbachev's phrase, changed the psychology of economic activity. Bureaucratic commandism on top cannot purge bureaucratic parasitism at the base. And as the Soviet economy becomes more developed, bureaucratic mismanagement becomes an



In '30s Stalin held up coal miner Stakhanov (right) as model. Workers who objected to Stakhanovite speedup were branded "Trotskyist saboteurs" and sent off to labour camps.

ever greater obstacle to further progress.

Bourgeois spokesmen and propagandists in the West, of course, blame the current Soviet economic malaise on the very existence of collectivized property and centralized planning. A common argument runs: central planning may have worked more or less when the Soviet economy was relatively primitive, but it cannot meet the needs of a more complex and technologically advanced society. In his *USSR in Crisis: The Failure of an Economic System*, Marshall Goldman asserts:

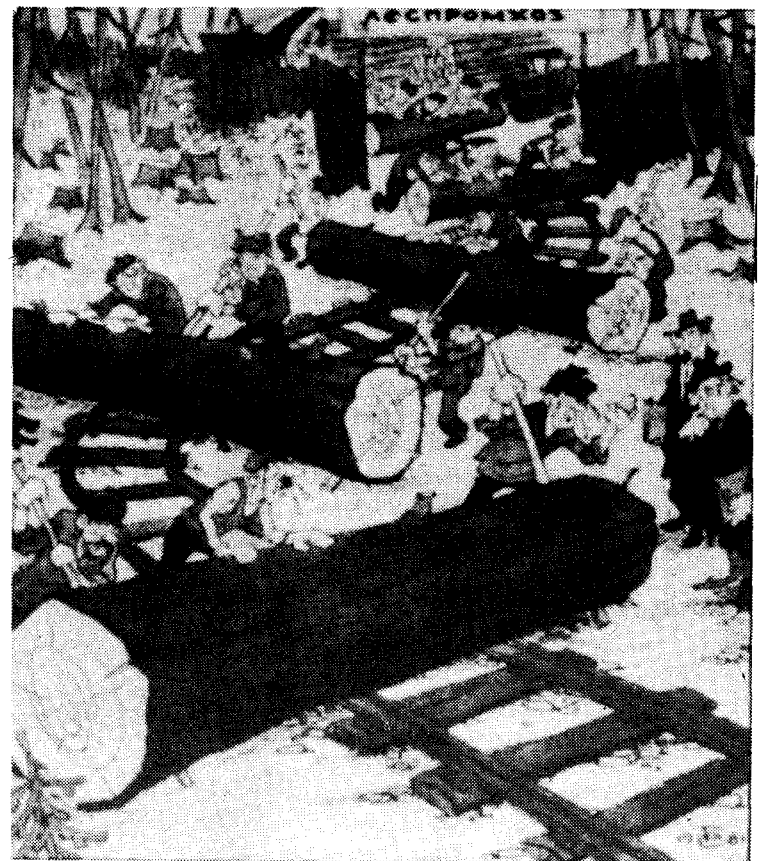
"It turns out that Marxism is ill-suited for the kinds of needs the Soviet Union presently has . . .

"Ironically, the industrialized countries of the noncommunist world seem to handle ongoing and evolutionary change better than the so-called revolutionary communist world."

Anti-communist ideologues like Goldman identify Marxism with Stalinism, a point of view they share with the Stalinists.

In reality it is not Marxism but Stalinist bureaucratic mismanagement

Cartoon from Soviet humour magazine *Krokodil*, 1981, ridicules management of forestry collective. Caption reads: "They didn't supply the freight cars again . . .?"



Krokodil

which lies at the root of the Soviet economic slowdown. Half a century ago the great Russian Marxist Leon Trotsky, leader of the Left Opposition against Stalin, predicted the present economic impasse of the Soviet Union and its fundamental cause. In his classic account of the Stalinist political counterrevolution, *The Revolution Betrayed*, Trotsky wrote:

"The progressive role of the Soviet bureaucracy coincides with the period devoted to introducing into the Soviet Union the most important elements of capitalist technique. The rough work of borrowing, imitating, transplanting and grafting, was accomplished on the bases laid down by the revolution. There was, thus far, no question of any new word in the sphere of technique, science or art. It is possible to build gigantic factories according to a ready-made Western pattern by bureaucratic command — although, to be sure, at triple the normal cost. But the farther you go, the more the economy runs into the problem of quality, which slips out of the hands of the bureaucracy like a shadow. The Soviet products are as though branded with the gray label of indifference. Under a nationalized economy, *quality* demands a democracy of producers and consumers, freedom of criticism and initiative — conditions incompatible with a totalitarian regime of fear, lies and flattery."

The terrible destruction of World War II postponed the day when the Soviet economy would have to make the transition from raw quantity to quality, from extensive to intensive growth. But that day has now arrived with a vengeance.

Not Market-Oriented "Reforms" But Political Revolution!

Mikhail Gorbachev reportedly told the central committee of the ruling Communist Party that he intends to seek "revolutionary" changes in the economy (*Wall Street Journal*, 23 March). To date there have been no significant, much less radical, changes. The anti-corruption and labor discipline campaigns inaugurated a few years ago by the late Yuri Andropov can, at best, have a limited impact and then only for a limited period. Doubtless Andropov himself and his protegee Gorbachev regarded these campaigns as no more than partial, stopgap measures to eliminate the worst abuses. If the Kremlin leadership seems uncertain how to overcome the current Soviet economic malaise, no such uncertainty exists in the imperialist West. There is a consensus, ranging from anti-Communist fanatics like Richard Pipes to self-

described liberal socialists like Alec Nove, that what the USSR desperately needs is, in Reagan's words, the "magic of the market". There is also widespread expectation or, at any rate, speculation that Gorbachev will act the role of magician. Shortly before he took over the reigns of government, the *Washington Post* (23 September 1984) wrote: "According to some reports, Gorbachev has overseen drafting a new variant of NEP that he would like to implement now, making room for much more private enterprise in the service sector and in agriculture."

Whether or not Gorbachev lives up to his advance billing as a market-oriented reformer, Western bourgeois opinion that the Soviet Union will move in this direction is not simply ideological prejudice or wishful thinking. Within the framework of Stalinism there is an inherent tendency toward economic decentralization as an *alternative to workers democracy*. Since managers and workers are not subject to the discipline of soviet democracy — and a return to the totalitarian terror of Stalin's day is not now feasible — a section of the bureaucracy sees subjecting the economic actors to the discipline of the market as the only answer to the Soviet Union's serious economic problems. However, this cure is worse than the disease.

The pioneer country of "market socialism" is Yugoslavia. Shortly after its break with Stalin's Russia in 1948, the Tito regime introduced autonomous and competing enterprises based on workers' self-management. During the 1950s liberal Stalinists and many left social democrats lauded "the Yugoslav road to socialism" as a healthy alternative to Soviet-style centralization. Today, after almost three decades of "self-management", Yugoslavia has managed to achieve both the highest unemployment and inflation rate in Europe, East or West! Unemployment would be far greater still save for the fact that the country exports labor on a massive scale to the capitalist Common Market of West Europe. Today no one now holds up the "Yugoslav road to socialism", especially not in Yugoslavia.

So the advocates of market-oriented "reform" now point to Hungary as their preferred model. For example, Marshall Goldman projects "a far-sighted Soviet leader might therefore begin to experiment with reform on the Hungarian model". Hungary under Janos Kadar's New Economic Mechanism has not to date turned into the total economic disaster area that is Yugoslavia, primarily because the system is far *less* decentralized. All

Australasian Spartacist

workers are guaranteed a basic wage, to be paid, if necessary, out of the central government budget. Bankruptcies and resulting mass layoffs are prevented by state subsidies.

Nonetheless, "market socialism" in Hungary has generated gross inequality in all sectors of society. This is nicely captured by a joke retailed in the country's factories. Party leader Kadar visits a factory and asks the manager: "Have you had a bonus under the economic reform, and what have you done with it?" Reply: "I bought a country cottage, and the rest of the money I put in the savings bank." He asks the chief engineer the same question. Reply: "I bought a car, and the rest of the money I put in the savings bank." Finally Kadar asks a worker. He replies: "I bought a pair of shoes." Kadar: "And the rest of the money?" Worker: "The rest of the money I had to borrow from my mother-in-law."

However, the most anti-socialist and truly dangerous feature of Hungarian-style "market socialism" is the emergence of a large number of private entrepreneurs, each employing and exploiting half a dozen or so workers, in retail trade and other services, housing construction and the like. Many of these people are, by Hungarian standards, millionaires. The liberal British historian A J P Taylor, whose wife is Hungarian, observed after an extended visit there, "conditions are much like those in England. There are plenty of well-to-do people, though maybe living a little more modestly" (*An Old Man's Diary* [1984]). Hungary's much-vaunted (in the West) economic "reform" has produced a new class of petty capitalists — numbering in the tens of thousands — who form a concentrated social base for counterrevolution.

If in Hungary we can see a developing social base for capitalist restoration, it is in Poland where the counterrevolutionary danger has been and remains most acute. Poland was the one country in Stalinist East Europe which did *not* collectivize agriculture. The mass of peasant smallholders not only blocked agricultural modernization but also provided a potent social base for the reactionary Catholic church. In the wake of the 1970 workers uprising, sparked by food price increases, the new "reform" regime of Edward Gierek promised an "economic miracle" to be achieved through massive loans from Western banks. When export markets didn't materialize and the loans to the Frankfurt bankers fell due, the result was a catastrophic economic collapse in the late 1970s, giving rise to the clerical-nationalist Solidarnosc of Lech Walesa. In the fall of 1981 the country stood on the verge of civil war,

Der Spiegel



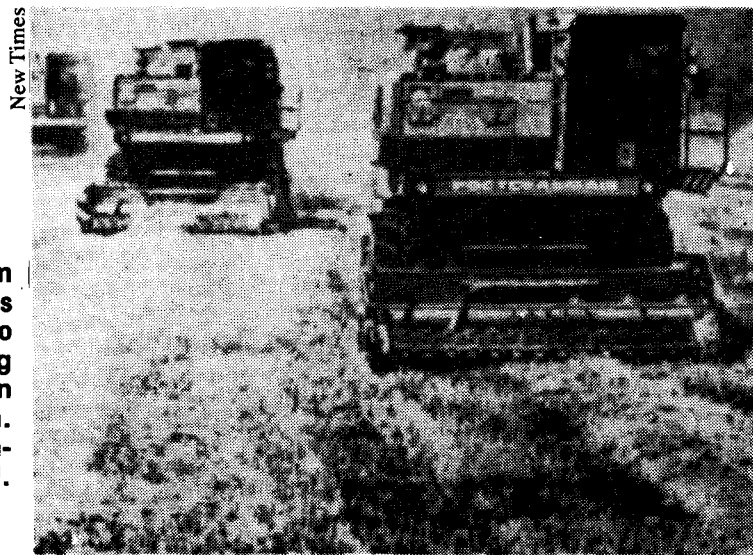
Computerised control room in an atomic power plant near Leningrad.

as Walesa & Co launched their counterrevolutionary bid for power using Richard Pipes' watchword of "decentralization" (ie, abolition of the planned economy). The Polish bureaucracy spiked Solidarnosc' power grab at the last minute. However, decades of Stalinist conciliation of reactionary forces — socially, economically and politically — have driven Poland into bankruptcy and much of its population to look for salvation from Reagan's America, the Common Market and Pope Wojtyla's Vatican.

While Soviet workers are probably not that familiar with the Yugoslav, Hungarian and Polish experiences, they are instinctively suspicious, if not downright resistant, to all this talk about economic "reform". The right-wing London *Economist* (25 May) is hardheaded enough to recognize: "The idea of economic reform is not as

into consideration the market position of each kind of goods".

In the 1930s the Polish socialist economist Oskar Lange developed a theoretical model for combining a centralized market for consumer goods and services with long-term planning for basic economic construction. Clearly it makes no sense to apply long-term targets to the number of shoes delivered to specific department stores or wrenches supplied to various garages. The central economic administration should continually adjust the output of different goods to satisfy market demand. The objects of the long-term plan are the construction of new factories, mines, railroads, airports, etc, major retooling operations, urban renewal and the like. And to harmonize final consumption with planned production of primary and intermediate goods, planners can



Improved farm equipment is key to increasing grain production. Here, threshers are tested.

popular with the average Soviet electrician or machine-minder as is sometimes assumed in the west. At the very least, reform will mean a widening of pay differentials." Soviet workers, with their strong sense of egalitarianism, do not want to earn 10 or 20 percent less for doing the same job as in a neighboring, but more profitable, factory. They do not want to be laid off because they are unfortunately working in an enterprise that is losing money through no fault of theirs (for example, because it has old and obsolete equipment). Any move toward market-oriented "reform" will cause the Kremlin bureaucracy considerable trouble with the Soviet proletariat.

This is not to say that Soviet workers are or should be satisfied with the economic status quo. Bureaucratic centralism generates enormous waste, especially in the consumer goods sector. Unwanted items pile up in warehouses or can be sold at only a fraction of the cost of production, while other commodities are chronically in short supply. Soviet shoppers spend hours waiting on line or looking for goods they want and need. Even that personification of bureaucratic complacency, the late Konstantin Chernenko, complained of poor quality and shortages of consumer goods, pointing out, for example, that children's shoes are hard to find.

However, the answer to these problems is *not* atomized competition between enterprises while turning much of retail trade and the rest of the consumer sector over to private entrepreneurs. As far back as the 1920s the Trotskyist Left Opposition denounced bureaucratic arbitrariness in economic administration and indifference to consumer well-being. The 1927 Platform of the Joint Opposition called for "the lowering of prices [which] primarily applies to consumer goods needed by the mass of the workers and peasants". It further specifies a "price-lowering policy, more adapted to the conditions of the market, and more individualized — that is, taking

use the "input/output" model developed by Russian emigre economist Wassily Leontief, growing out of his study of Soviet planning problems in the 1920s.

Combining Lange and Leontief, so to speak, and with the modern computer technology capable of millions of computations a second, a planned Soviet economy can adjust supply and demand and promote economic development far more efficiently than the chaos of the most theoretically "perfect" market. But as with any information system, the key is the accuracy and relevance of the inputs. With the systematic distortion of data engendered by bureaucratic rule (hoarding, wasteful use of resources, etc), no wonder the result is endless bottlenecks and shoddy products. In the lingo of computer programmers: garbage in, garbage out (GIGO). To solve *this* problem, you need not only modern technology but soviet democracy.

The main economic problem facing the USSR today is not the elimination of waste in the consumer sector, important and desirable as that is. It is the renewal of an increasingly aged industrial plant, applying and going beyond the most advanced techniques of Western and Japanese capitalism. In short, the Soviet economy must, in Trotsky's words, make the transition, from quantity to quality. It is precisely here that bureaucratic parasitism and commandism stands in the way of further progress. What Trotsky wrote during Stalin's first Five Year Plan possesses, if anything, even greater force today:

"The participation of workers themselves in the leadership of the nation, of its politics and economy; and actual control over the bureaucracy; and the growth in the feeling of responsibility of those in charge to those under them — all these would doubtless react favorably on production itself; the friction within would be reduced, the costly economic zigzags would likewise be reduced to a minimum, a healthier distribution of forces and equipment would be assured, and ultimately the coefficients of growth

would be raised. Soviet democracy is first of all the vital need of national economy itself."

— *What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat* (1932)

There can be no fundamental and sustained revival of Soviet economic growth without the restoration of workers (soviet) democracy. And there can be no restoration of soviet democracy without a proletarian political revolution which ousts the Stalinist usurpers of the Bolshevik Revolution. A democratically elected soviet government will revise the economic plan from top to bottom in the interests of the producers and consumers. Thus, workers and peasants will have a direct stake in maximising labor productivity for they will no longer see the product of their labor often wasted on ill-conceived projects or spent to build *dachas* (villas) for the Kremlin oligarchs and their hangers-on. Factory committees will elect the managers and oversee the plan's most efficient implementation. This is the only answer to bureaucratic parasitism at the base. Consumer cooperatives will oversee the price and quality of products.

To be sure, proletarian political revolution is not a cure-all for the problems of the Soviet economy. The Soviet Union would still confront the terrible pressure of a hostile and economically more advanced capitalist world. It is precisely this pressure which was the prime cause of the Stalinist degeneration of the Bolshevik Revolution. Workers revolution in the advanced capitalist countries would in short order sweep away the Kremlin bureaucracy. At the same time, there is no historical law that the Soviet workers and peasants, who in 1917 shook the world, must now await revolutionary impetus from the West. A revolutionary workers government at the head of the Soviet state would, like the early Soviet government of Lenin and Trotsky, possess the most powerful weapon of all against imperialist militarism: the program, perspective and moral authority to lead the world socialist revolution.

— reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 386, 6 September 1985

Correction

The article "We Honor the Vietnamese Trotskyists" printed in *Australasian Spartacist* no 113, October/November 1985 was in fact not reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 388 as noted. It first appeared in *Australasian Spartacist* no 113 and was later reprinted in *Workers Vanguard* no 389, 18 October 1985.

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Soweto...

Continued from page five

call for the forging of a fighting workers party, that can organize labor/black mobilizations to stop the racist terrorists in white sheets and blue uniforms, that can organize mass defense of workers' strikes, strikes that *win*, strikes that will wipe anti-strike legislation like the Taylor Law and reduce it to the piece of toilet paper that it ought to be! I see some of the brothers from the TWU [Transport Workers Union] here tonight, and everybody remembers the 1980 [New York] transit strike when all of the Democratic bigwigs, both Koch and Bellamy were on the Brooklyn Bridge organizing union-busting. You remember Koch down there, hollering "How'm I doin'?" — and Bellamy leading the joggers across the bridge to work with big smiles on their healthy faces. Well, we needed a fighting workers party to lead a mass march down there and *close* the bridge, so those yuppie joggers would have turned around and hightailed it back to their Brooklyn Heights townhouses and stayed home for the day!

Now we are not pollyannish about this. And we know, once we start talking about strategies that bring the financial and political capital of US imperialism to a halt, pretty soon we're going to be going eyeball to eyeball with the 82nd Airborne [elite US paratroop division]. Just like the British *Economist* said of the recent gold strike, they called it "The strike nobody dares to win", because it was clear that a strike at that time required revolutionary leadership and posed the question of power. That is why the South African army was ready to go in and smash that strike. Any serious class struggle poses the question of power. What the Spartacists are about is building a party to lead the working class and the oppressed, on the streets, in the factories, on the picket lines, the battle lines of the class struggle. Building a party that will be the tribune of the people, the memory of the working class, incorporating the lessons of past struggles into the strategy for socialist revolution.

The courageous struggle of South African blacks against apartheid has inspired a fight against racist oppression worldwide. Recently West Indian youth in Birmingham, England who are up against Maggie Thatcher's racist cops repeated over and over, "Soweto and Handsworth, Same Fight". And our comrades in the Spartacist League of Britain agitated for mobilizing the muscle of organized labor to defend Handsworth against Thatcher's police terror, appealing especially to the miners who had experienced plenty of the same during their year-long strike. Our comrades in the Trotskyist League of France held a demonstration in Rouen calling on port workers to "hot cargo" [black ban] South African coal. Here in New York, following the imposition of a state of emergency in August in South Africa, we were calling for a one-day political strike against police brutality from New York City to South Africa.

So the struggle against white supremacy in South Africa inspired

revolutionary fighters all over the world. And the bourgeoisie has noticed. You know Leon Sullivan, the black minister who sits on the board of General Motors and who designed the "Sullivan Guidelines" for good behaviour by American capitalist corporations in South Africa. He recently warned the United States Congress that if South Africa explodes, "Riots would occur in Harlem and other cities all over this country." The rulers of this country fear that revolution in South Africa could spark revolutionary struggle here at home. And how right they are. They fear it, we're for it.

From its very inception, the Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky closely linked the struggle for black liberation in America and Africa. "The history of the American blacks has prepared them to play a major role in the liberation struggle of the entire African race", proclaimed the Comintern's Fourth Congress in 1922. We of the international Spartacist tendency seek to continue the struggle of Lenin and Trotsky, fighting to reforge the Fourth International as a world party of socialist revolution. We'd like you to join us. From Soweto to Harlem — Smash racist terror!

— reprinted from *Workers Vanguard*
no 388, 4 October 1985

Philippines...

Continued from page two

NPA-initiated clashes with the military are up 50 percent on 1984 and it is killing 100 soldiers a month. Its military impetus is now running hard up against the need to secure a reliable arms supply other than the military. While Marxists side militarily with the NPA in clashes with the army and police, we give no political support to its guerrillaist strategy.

Parallel to NPA growth has been the expansion of the NDF in the cities. The CPP/NPA armed struggle aims not for outright victory but to pressure the anti-Marcos bourgeoisie to join it in a popular front, for which the NDF and its legal fronts are a vehicle. This flows from the CPP's Stalinist dogma of a "two-stage revolution"; first the "national democratic" stage in unity with the venal Manila bourgeois oligarchy, then only much later the socialist stage.

This popular-front line dictates the subordination of the workers movement and the struggles of the peasants, squatters and all the oppressed to the "made in USA" bourgeois opposition. It is the path to disaster for the toiling masses, just as it was in Indonesia in 1965 when upwards of half a million communists, workers and peasants paid with their lives for the Maoist PKI's (Indonesian Communist Party) suicidal subordination to the bourgeois-nationalist Sukarno, a fact of which Philippine leftists cannot be unaware. The lesson must be learnt. All wings of the bourgeoisie in the imperialist epoch are fundamentally intertwined with international capital and local reaction and, more afraid of the aroused masses than anything else, will always unite with the landlords and imperialism to smash the workers and peasants.

The deepening crisis is driving the masses away from the opposition politicians with their small rallies with appropriate yellow flags and pictures of Aquino in the business district, into the arms of the NDF, which pulls much larger crowds of workers and students with red flags outside the palace. While the bourgeoisie has taken fright at the mounting class

struggle, the CPP/NDF keeps trying to cement together an anti-Marcos front. Last year the New Peoples Alliance, known as Bayan (Nation), was formed as the legal expression of the "parliament of the streets" and is dominated by the illegal NDF. Yet several months ago Butz Aquino and other bourgeois figures stormed out of Bayan on an explicitly anti-communist basis. The CPP/NDF is considering abandoning its opposition to participating in any elections under Marcos and, via Bayan, endorsing some bourgeois candidates. Yet the two possible opposition presidential candidates, Cory Aquino and UNIDO leader Salvador Laurel, are both committed to the US bases and the extermination of the NPA. The CPP's popular front line can only help to stabilise a post Marcos, pro-US capitalist regime, and bind the masses hand and foot to one or other gang of exploiters, thus derailing the revolutionary upsurge and paving the way for defeat. In this they are assisted by those in Australia, such as the Socialist Workers Party, who glorify the CPP/NPA precisely because of its "two-stage revolution" popular front strategy.

The CPP/NPA owe allegiance to neither Moscow nor Peking, both of which in turn have cultivated good relations with Marcos. The Chinese Stalinists, in alliance with the US, support the US bases and have propped up Marcos with interest-free loans and by providing 20 percent of the Philippines' crude oil as well as rice imports. And Imelda Marcos won a pledge of "non-interference" from Soviet president Gromyko on her seventh trip to Moscow in October. The CPP's nationalist "self-reliance" is no alternative to such betrayals, however. Via the bases the Philippines is a vital part of US anti-Soviet war plans; only by breaking with all wings of the CIA-loyal Philippine bourgeoisie and taking a stand in defence of the Soviet Union and Vietnam can the Philippine workers and peasants wage a victorious anti-imperialist struggle. Moreover a victorious revolution on this island archipelago would depend from the beginning for survival on both aid from the Soviet Union and Vietnam, but most critically on its extension to Indonesia and ASEAN and beyond that to the imperialist centres of Australia, Japan and the US itself. ■

Healyites

Continued from page three

crazy — old man, who would not find that congenial.

There may have been political differences or nuances in play, but that would have had no autonomous weight. Healy seems to have been forced to sign a written agreement to retire. But the Political Committee bloc that had pushed for his retirement then began to break up.

Two prominent WRP leaders, Mitchell and Torrance, seem to have changed sides, and perhaps others did too. The Political Committee reversed the decision that Healy would retire. A minority led by Banda revolted and appealed to the Central Committee, whose majority backed them.

They decided on drastic action against Healy, and grabbed the weapons to hand. Hence the charges.

For the Bandaites it was probably a matter of survival. Theirs is a world where nobody has the right to disagree with the caliph, where disagreement is heresy against the leader in his capacity as pontiff and treason against him in his capacity as monarch. To "conspire" and lose, or to usurp and be overthrown, is to lose your head.

Healy has politically "executed" other long-time associates for a lot less than forcing him to retire. For example, Tim Wohlforth, leader of the US clone group for a dozen years, was purged because he was slow to join Healy when Healy denounced Wohlforth's wife as a CIA agent.

If Healy regained control, his defeated opponents would not have lasted long. So Banda and his allies acted as Healy had long taught them to act: brutally and without concern for decency, credibility or consistency.

The WRP's atmosphere was saturated with incipient or actual violence, intimidation and terror. The organisation was a cult, built on the leader principle around Healy. Within it Healy did more or less what he liked.

It is as certain as anything is that in that organisation sexual exploitation, and where necessary harassment, intimidation, or worse, would be part of the great leader's way of life.

In one notorious case — I know the people involved — Healy beat up a woman comrade, a full-time organiser, because she wanted an abortion rather than to have his baby. (This is probably the case that got to the Control Commission in 1964 — she had two brothers and a husband in the organisation, one on the Central Committee.)

But nevertheless it is also true that a considerable part of the ballyhoo against Healy's sexual antics is both frame-up and an appeal to backwardness. Insofar as anything was voluntary in the WRP, many of the "harem 26" must have acted voluntarily.

Revolutionary

Despite the political and personal weaknesses and inadequacies that over 20 years ago turned Gerry Healy into a bitter enemy of the Trotskyism he set in in his youth to fight for, Healy was once a revolutionary. He was one of a small group at the end of the '40s and the beginning of the '50s who had the courage to set out to rebuild the Trotskyist movement when it collapsed and fell apart under the leadership of Ted Grant and Jock Haston.

If today there is poetic justice in his treatment at the hands of his pupils, as well as essential truth in what they say against him, that is the measure of how degenerate Healy had become.

Machiavelli might draw the lesson for him thus: "He who rules by fear and terror should not live to get old and feeble."

Politically the Bandaites are in a hopeless situation. Everything they say against Healy condemns them too. They were not rank and file activists or raw youth, but Healy's close associates for many, many years.

And what WRP tradition exists apart from the one Gerry Healy made and shaped for three decades? What do they know about politics except what he taught them? What have they ever been but Gerry Healy's stooges, deferring when they felt inclined to take a view different from his?

Teeth

Some of them may have gritted their teeth at various times — but if so, that's all they did. Whether or not the WRP turned would-be communists over to the Ba'athist execution squads in Iraq, the WRP's public justification of the execution of CPers by the Iraqi government was there in black and white in "Newline".

And "party discipline" is no excuse for going along with Healy and the WRP across the class line — in glorifying the Iraqi regime, or Gaddafi for example.

Banda's attempt to "blame Healy" is already going to preposterous lengths. Did Michael Banda and others beat up a Central Committee member in the north-west last June?

SPARTACIST LEAGUE

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Yes. "But Healy told me to", says Banda!

Nobody who went through Healy's "machine for maiming militants" will fail to find some satisfaction in the present explosion. Public vindication for Socialist Organiser's stand against the WRP is, of course, satisfying.

But if the Healyites and Bandaites eat each other up like the Kilkenny cats, that won't undo the damage they have done to the Marxist movement and to the name of Marxism in the British labour movement.

We can only undo the damage by building the Marxist movement.

Honest members of the WRP can take the word of the Banda faction leaders for nothing. They should study the record, debate the issues that have divided the WRP from other leftists — like those who support Socialist Organiser — and break out of the WRP ghetto and into discussion with other socialists. ■

Students ■■■

Continued from page twelve

Wran's Tactical Response Group, Federal and State Police and numerous plainclothes spooks besieged the GPO. One Asian student was arrested inside, the cops at first claiming he was a "drunk and disorderly" case. This absurd frame-up was strongly resisted by the demonstrators, who repeatedly held up the progress of the police van along Pitt Street demanding his release. Two more Asian students, including a leader of the UNSW Overseas Students Collective (OSC) were arrested soon after. Protesters then marched on Central Police Station demanding the release of the three students. Finally the cops carried out a mass arrest of another 28 students and their supporters on "obstructing [non-existent] traffic" charges.

Inside the lock-up the cops interspersed physical threats with overt racist abuse. One particularly rabid desk clerk sergeant screamed at an overseas student, "Yes, I am a racist, I am a racist, I am a racist!" Doubtless this pig would have liked to provoke a cell block bash-up, standard operating procedure against Aboriginals throughout Australia. The Asian students generally got rough treatment from the cops and the first three arrested face phony charges ranging from "unreasonable obstruction" to "offensive manner" and "malicious injury". Two other students arrested were already on the government's deportation hit list for not paying the racist "visa" fees. The thirty-one arrests on 10 October were on purely political grounds. We demand that all the charges be dropped!

All defenders of democratic rights and simple human decency have a vital interest in protesting these cop attacks and frame-ups. All out on the trial date, 10 am Thursday 24 October, to picket outside the City Court, 302 Castlereagh Street, around the demands: "Drop the Charges! Stop the Deportations! No Racist Fees or Quotas!"

Hawke has targetted overseas students — a particularly vulnerable sector of the student and general population and one he'd like to keep isolated — as the cutting edge of his plans to bring back fees for all students. Overseas students have been singled out to pay \$3500 this year and up to \$10,000 in "full cost" fees in future — an outrageous sum that most simply cannot afford. The government is desperately trying to cut back spending particularly in the fields of education and health. Nurses, teachers, postal workers, builders



Overseas students and their supporters occupy the Sydney GPO building roof, 10 October.

labourers, meatworkers in the Northern Territory and the Queensland SEQEB workers are among those fighting constant government attacks on their jobs and conditions. But the ALP and ACTU bureaucracy are around the anti-fees campaign. The Spartacist program for the universities has *always* been centred around the demands for open admissions, no fees, TEAS as a living wage, and no discriminatory quotas, ie against racial and class bias.

As part of the drive to implement their austerity measures and regiment "White Australia" for anti-Soviet war, the Labor government is using intimidation and scapegoating tactics, actively trying to drive out most overseas students and cracking down on "illegal" immigrants and political refugees — except the most open reactionaries. Immigration Minister Hurford refused asylum to five Irian Jayans fleeing the military terror of Australia's ASEAN ally, Indonesia, explicitly on the basis of racial exclusion. A Tamil refugee, Roben Arumugam Alahantham, has been held in an Immigration Detention Centre near Melbourne for the last three months, as the Hawke government prepares to deport him to the bloody Sinhala chauvinist regime of JR Jayawardene — another anti-Soviet ally — and to almost certain death. In the last week a Malaysian student, Ahmad Razani Othman, from the New England University in Armidale was arrested by the Immigration Department and has been imprisoned in the Villawood Detention Centre in Sydney. He is facing deportation as early as *this Wednesday!* So much for Hurford's contemptible remark that "the wheels of deportation grind mercifully slowly" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 October).

As for Education Minister Susan Ryan, a former ALP "left", in true Blaineyite fashion she's laid the blame for incidents of racist abuse on the victims. Ryan's call for an end to, in her words, "large concentrations" of Asian students on such campuses as UNSW is being enforced by racially selective quotas. The labour movement must be brought into the struggle to actively combat Hurford/Ryan/Hawke's racist victimisations. Full citizenship rights for all foreign-born workers and students!

An effective fight to defend overseas students requires combatting illusions that the Labor government can be pressured into altering its allegiance to the ruling class it serves. The real allies of overseas students — who can be mobilised for joint struggle — are among the ranks of the oppressed,

decent students, and particularly the working class which has the potential power to transform this whole society. For the last two years the Spartacist Club at UNSW has fought consistently for such a perspective around the anti-fees campaign. The Spartacist program for the universities has *always* been centred around the demands for open admissions, no fees, TEAS as a living wage, and no discriminatory quotas, ie against racial and class bias.

CPA/SWP: Ryan's Running Dogs

Last April the Spartacist Club acted jointly and successfully with the OSC to foil moves by the Liberal and Labor Party-aligned student bureaucrats to disappear the question of fees and quotas for overseas students at a Students Union General Meeting on fees. In May, when Susan Ryan visited the campus and was met by protest action we denounced the racist Hawke government. The OSC leadership blocked with "independent" lefts and feminists to prevent us from speaking lest we "alienate" Ryan with whom they still hold hopes to plead their case. But as the escalation of state repression against the campaign has shown, such "ultra-respectable" lobbying of this government is utterly futile. Our call for the broadest possible campaign in defence of overseas students has yet to be realised, but we have been there in joint struggle with these students in every militant action — including on 10 October where three Spartacist Club members were among those arrested. So now who's calling us "sectarians" and why?

The quickest way to kill any struggle is to scale it down to the lowest common denominator, contain it and isolate it. The hardcore instigators of this strategy for defeat are supporters of the mis-named Communist Party of Australia (CPA) from Sydney University led by Peter Colley and his "Left Action" sidekick Adam Rorris, who have been supported in this by the anti-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP). They hate our class-struggle perspective and they hate the fact that we tell students the truth about *their* Labor government. So, in classically red-baiting fashion they've launched an attempt to politically censor and slander the communist Spartacists.

Rorris, it should be noted, was prevented from ripping a placard out of the hands of a Spartacist woman at the Education Department occupation on 27 September by angry students, who defended her. At the 10 October Hyde Park rally Colley unsuccessfully attempted to censor Spartacist placards. The slogans they objected to linked the fight to defend overseas students with the struggle against Hawke and his ANZUS alliance with

US imperialism, and also addressed the central *class question* in the region — the defence of the Vietnamese revolution against its US, Australian, ASEAN and Chinese Stalinist enemies.

Then at a 14 October planning meeting these campus-bound careerists stepped up their campaign against us with the filthy slander cooked up in their back rooms that the Spartacists — who have stood by the overseas students all the way and are proud of it — in fact "endanger" them. They are fear-baiting the overseas students themselves to subvert further united action. *The real danger lies in isolating overseas students and opening the door to victimisation both here and abroad.*

The demoralised remnants of the CPA are nothing more than the political agents of the Hawke government. They support the Accord and attack all workers struggle against it. They support the US nuclear first strike bases in this country and the ANZUS alliance. They supported the jailing of Norm Gallagher and the drive to crush the BLF. They support Laborite racism urging a more aggressive role for Australian imperialism in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Their SWP waterboys are no less reformist and anti-communist. Last year they denounced New Zealand shearers, mostly Maoris, for taking "Australian jobs", the self-same racist argument embraced by Ryan against overseas students. Chinese Malaysian students may well ask whether these Khomeini-lovers also support the "Islamification" of Malaysia.

For a Workers Republic of Australia, in a Socialist Asia!

The fight to defend the rights of overseas students in Australia demands an internationalist response cutting against the whole reactionary order of "White Australia" imperialism and its decades-long regional role as counterrevolutionary gendarme and junior partner of US imperialism. From its inception in the Colombo Plan of 1951 Australia's overseas students program was seen as part of the Western attempt to prop up anti-communist regimes in Asia. The Australian bourgeoisie eagerly provided mercenary contingents for US imperialism's war against social revolution from Korea, through Malaya to Vietnam. At the same time as it throws Chinese Malaysian youths back to the anti-Chinese chauvinist Malaysian dictatorship, Hayden warns of sending Australian troops to the Philippines to prop up the crumbling Marcos regime.

Unchaining the working class from the dead hand of Labor requires an *internationalist, class-struggle* perspective, key to which is the forging of a multi-racial working class party in this country, the fight for Trotskyist parties throughout the Australasian and Southeast Asian regions. This demands active solidarity with the struggles of the workers and peasants of Asia against imperialism and their own despotic bourgeois regimes. Solidarity with the struggle of overseas students against racist discrimination is an immediate task of the working class here against its main enemy — Australian imperialism. Overseas students are an important potential bridge linking the struggle of the Asian masses to the necessary task before us — a workers republic of Australia in a socialist Asia.

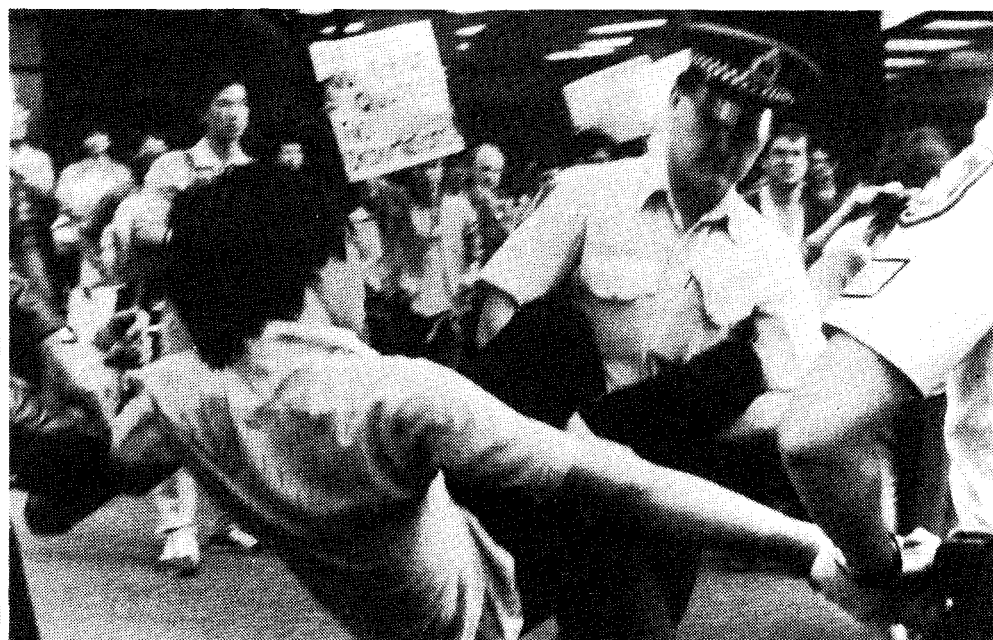
The UNSW Spartacist Club is holding the meeting advertised below to publicise and build the campaign against the victimisation of overseas students. We urge all students, campus workers and other partisans of this struggle to attend and debate the way forward. We need a fight to win! ■



A Sp photo



A Sp photo



Rally against Hawke's racist fees and quotas at UNSW (left). Wran's cops bust overseas student leader, 10 October (right).

Fight to Defend Overseas Students!

- Stop the Deportations! • Drop the Charges!
- No Racist Fees or Quotas!

The Hawke government's ongoing campaign to drive overseas (predominantly Asian) students from Australian campuses sharply escalated with the deportation of Malay student Ahmad Razani Othman on 26 October. Othman, 22, was a student at the University of New England in Armidale, NSW, who had almost completed an economics degree. After being arrested at the university he then spent ten days imprisoned at Villawood Detention Centre in Sydney, where he was held in isolation and systematically intimidated by Immigration Department officers until he was forced to "voluntarily depart".

An emergency demonstration was called by the University of New South Wales (UNSW) Overseas Students Collective (OSC) to protest this racist atrocity at Mascot Airport on the Saturday morning of the deportation. Spartacist League telegrams sent to Hayden, immigration minister Hurford and education minister Susan Ryan demanded: "Immediate halt to deportation of Ahmad Razani Othman. Reinstate him at New England University. Racist victimisation of overseas students and immigrant workers must stop. Full citizenship rights for foreign-born workers and students." As well a Spartacist contingent joined the 40 protesters with placards including: "Smash ANZUS and ASEAN! US and Australian bases out of SE Asia! Union power must defend blacks/overseas students!" The demonstration received extensive media coverage but what was urgently needed was trade union action to ground the Malaysian Airlines jet. Spartacist League trade union supporters accompanying an OSC representative contacted airport unions to do just that, but the call to action was blocked at the top by state officials of the Transport Workers and Clerks unions.

Susan Ryan lied that Othman was

deported because of a "poor academic record". The truth is he was unable to pay her racist fees. This was exposed by University of New England staff. Ryan and Hurford targeted Othman to intimidate all overseas students. The immigration department has a deportation hit list of dozens of Asian students, including OSC leaders, and more deportations may be carried out over the summer vacation. It is the immediate task of the workers movement to come to the defence of overseas students and all Asian and Pacific "illegal" immigrants, the scapegoats in Labor's drive to shore up "White Australia".

Three days before the Othman deportation the UNSW Spartacist Club held a forum entitled "Fight to Defend Overseas Students!" Nearly 40 attended, half of them Asian students. The Spartacist Club speaker stressed that a winning strategy for the defence of overseas students flows from an internationalist, class-struggle perspective designed to politically break the working class from this government of anti-Soviet Cold War, austerity and chauvinism. Hawke's promotion of social reaction on every front flows from Australian imperialism's role as regional junior partner of US imperialism and its class hostility to the workers and peasants of Asia — concretely expressed in its unrelenting hatred of the Vietnamese Revolution.

As an act of solidarity with the overseas students struggle against the racist government attacks we invited OSC leader Steven Gan, one of those on the deportation list, to address the meeting. His remarks reflected the clear political differences between Spartacist and the OSC leadership, in particular their core strategy of reliance and pressure on the Labor government. Gan summed up this perspective with the remark: "Education is the best form of foreign aid for the 'Third World' ". Gan is promoting

dangerous illusions in the nature of the Australian bourgeoisie. For Canberra there has never been any contradiction between its overseas students program and sending mercenary contingents to Korea, Malaya and Vietnam, and providing military aid to Marcos, Suharto and the rest. On the contrary, from its inception in the early fifties the narrowly-based overseas student intake was seen as a component part of imperialism's overall effort to defeat communism in Asia — by training a layer of pro-capitalist government and business elites the better to administer their own pro-imperialist, anti-Soviet client states.

The soft-core "Third World" nationalism promoted by Gan in-

olution, despite its Stalinist deformations, was a victory for the workers and oppressed internationally and its defence is the basic class question in the region. To defend this historic gain, and to break the grip of grinding oppression and poverty imposed on the toiling masses by capitalism, what is needed is workers revolution throughout Southeast Asia and Australasia — to open the road to the socialist reconstruction of the entire region.

We reprint below a Spartacist League leaflet dated 22 October presenting our working class perspective for defence of overseas students and exposing the treachery of our social-democratic opponents. The trials of



Demonstration at Sydney Airport protesting deportation of Malay student Ahmad Othman, 26 October.

variably functions as a cover concealing underlying political identification with despotic Asian capitalist regimes against the working masses. Indeed, Gan has recently admitted to sharing the hostility of ASEAN, US and Australian imperialism and the Peking Stalinists to the Vietnamese liberation of Kampuchea from the genocidal Pol Pot gang. Earlier this year Gan and other OSC leaders refused to take a stand in defence of left and trade union meetings, commemorating the liberation of Saigon in the face of rampaging local Vietnamese fascist elements, with the excuse that the issue was "divisive". The Vietnamese rev-

the thirty-one protesters arrested on 10 October, as reported in the leaflet, are set for 17-19 March next year.

A fight to defend overseas students against deportations and racist fees and quotas is now desperately necessary. On 10 October Hawke's and Wran's cops attacked a 100-strong demonstration of students, in the end busting thirty-one protesters. The demonstration initially assembled at Hyde Park South and then staged a protest occupation in the clock tower of the GPO building. In short order

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