



El Salvador: "Negotiated solution" means bloodbath

Smash the junta, workers to power!

Fighting has sharply increased in El Salvador's bloody civil war as leftist guerrillas are mounting a rainy season offensive that has built in intensity from week to week. From the northeastern province of Morazan to the western hills of Chalatenango, the entire northern tier of the country has been the scene of co-ordinated guerrilla assaults on the forces of the US-backed military/Christian Democratic junta. So far, insurgent advances contrast with the January "final/general" offensive that was called off after only ten days. But government troops and police are not the only obstacle facing rebel fighters — treacherous calls for negotiations with sectors of the junta pose a dangerous roadblock to a left-wing victory on the battlefield.

As rebel forces step up their attacks, Reagan continues to pour millions in weapons into the junta's armory. Meanwhile, imperialist liberals have launched an offensive of their own, pleading for a "peaceful solution" to the civil war which has claimed 20,000 lives since January of last year. But the Reagan regime isn't buying. While supplying the junta colonels with Huey helicopters and Green Berets, Washington tries to win over wavering Latin governments with prom-



Montes/Gamma

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Mass terror is everyday affair in El Salvador. Nothing to negotiate with junta butchers.

Strike now against AP/Telecom!

30 JUNE — As we go to press, the Telecom dispute seems set to escalate. In an attempt to break the campaign of bans on revenue collection by members of the Administrative and Clerical Officers Association (ACOA), Telecom management is threatening to refuse to pay *any* wages to its employees — including those not in dispute — and has reportedly instructed senior executives to do banned work. Communications minister Ian Sinclair has even threatened to consider selling Telecom off to private capitalists, in an attempt to cow the unions into submission. Already stand-down notices have been issued to several ACOA militants engaged in the bans campaign, and more are threatened. What

is needed now is an immediate, nationwide strike against Telecom to beat back management's union-busting offensive, to win the ACOA's 12 percent wage claim, and to smash the government's "No work as directed — no pay" legislation. Don't let management get away with its "divide and rule" tactics — an injury to one is an injury to all! For an all-out strike now!

The ranks of the Telecom unions have shown that they are more than willing to fight. When stand downs were announced on 23 June, the revenue section in Sydney walked out in response, as did clerks in Victoria, Queensland and South Australia and the Telecom pay office in Sydney the

same week. The following day a mass meeting of clerks in Sydney voted overwhelmingly to step up the bans and to raise a \$10 levy to support those workers who were stood down in the dispute.

The national and state leaderships of the ACOA, however, have worked overtime to prevent all-out strike action, and have adamantly insisted that the campaign be limited to bans. At the 24 June Sydney meeting ACOA tops successfully argued against a call by one militant — June Esposito, secretary of the Telecom section committee — for an immediate 48-hour strike, to be followed by meetings to discuss a proposal for an indefinite nationwide strike until the

12 percent increase was won. Esposito, who recently spoke at a Spartacist League (SL)-initiated rally against fees on 3 June at Sydney University and at the 13 June El Salvador Anti-Imperialist Contingent rally outside the US Consulate in Sydney (see articles this issue), also called for setting up picket lines, a union defence fund and a "tactics committee" to run the strike.

Speaking later to an *Australasian Spartacist* reporter, she took the ACOA bureaucracy to task for its do-nothing cowardice:

"The union leadership is afraid of a fight. It knows that it's up against the government. It knows there's

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El Salvador ...

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ises of a new "Marshall Plan" for the region.

The Reagan line in the Caribbean area has been challenged within the imperialist camp by the West German-dominated Socialist International (SI), which is leading the drive for a negotiated solution to the Salvadoran struggle. Meeting in Panama last March, SI leaders proffered West German Social Democrat Willy Brandt as a mediator to bring the warring sides together. When neither Reagan nor his junta leapt to meet with Brandt, German Social Democratic leader Hans-Jurgen Wischniewski met with governments throughout the region to push for mediation. No dice. The latest SI maneuver sent Canadian New Democratic Party leader Ed Broadbent on yet another regional junket, which predictably brought no better results.

Among the advocates of a "political solution" in El Salvador are the populist regime of Mexico's Lopez Portillo, Venezuelan Christian Democratic president Herrera Campins, the Nicaraguan Sandinistas and Castro's Cuba. All voice a common fear of the Salvadoran civil war expanding into a region-wide conflict. But another of the supporters of a "negotiated settlement" is the Salvadoran opposition popular front, the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), and the guerrilla coalition, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). Thus we have the self-defeating, ultimately suicidal spectacle of the FDR/FMLN leaders trying to strike a bargain with sectors of the butchering junta. By preventing a leftist victory, this would prepare a bloody massacre of the insurgent masses — and on a scale far larger than that already experienced following the installation of a "reform" junta in October 1979.

But the guerrillas entrenched on the volcanic slopes and in the FMLN border strongholds of El Salvador face an enemy in no mood to bargain. "Power is not negotiable", says a former military leader. "If we sit down with [the rebels] what would there be to discuss?" asks a top junta commander (*Washington Post*, 21 April). The junta killers know that behind them stands a US government which badly wants a leftist defeat in order to "draw the line" against the Soviets and Cubans in Central America. Reagan thinks he has a winnable war in El Salvador; his National Security Council considers it a "target" area where the US-backed butchers have a "clear advantage".

"Political solution"?

Despite the continued rejection of their peace overtures, the FDR's Mexico-based Political-Diplomatic Commission continually repeats its desire to "maintain conversations and explore all roads that could lead to a political solution" (*Noticias de El Salvador* [San Jose], 29 April-5 May). What exactly would such a so-called "political solution" or "negotiated settlement" mean? Alan Riding in the *New York Times* (7 May) cited a scenario "most frequently men-

tioned by optimists in the region":

"According to proponents of the idea, a regional mediating group would help the warring sides to negotiate the conditions for free elections.

"The armed forces would then be restricted to their barracks and the guerrillas to their camps, while the country would be policed by an international force. After the elections, a new army would be formed, eliminating undesirable elements from either side."

This scenario, known as the "Zimbabwe solution", is a scheme to defeat the "undesirable" leftist guerrillas at the bargaining table. It is a plan for the restabilization of Salvadoran capitalism, with the use of foreign troops if necessary. It is a formula for counterrevolution.

FDR/FMLN spokesmen plead ever more shamelessly for negotiations of any kind, on any terms. Last year Guillermo Ungo, a member of the junta who switched sides and now heads the FDR, declared that he would talk only with the US directly, with the "circus owner, not the acrobats". By February, Political-Diplomatic Commission member Salvador Samayoa (minister of education when Ungo was in the junta) was saying that "we're willing to give the Christian Democrats the benefit of the doubt" and that they would seek talks with the civilians in the junta (*New York Times*, 24 February). On April 24 an FMLN statement announced that the guerrillas were "willing to end the fighting if productive conversations are initiated with the civilian-military government".

Splits in the front?

By themselves the Ungos, Castillos, Samayoas and other middle-class reformers and dissident Christian Democrats in the FDR have no real power. In a civil war in which virtually the entire landlord-capitalist elite is on one side and the workers and poor peasants are on the other, they represent only the attempt of the popular front to paper over the deep class divisions by proclaiming a "democratic" rather than a socialist revolution. The presence of Ungo et al in the FDR leadership is a pledge to the domestic Latin bourgeoisies and to the US imperialists that the guerrilla struggle will not transcend the bounds of capitalism.

The blatantly counterrevolutionary implications of the popular front's ever more abject talk of ceasefires and negotiations without conditions, however, are causing tensions within the loosely allied guerrilla front. According to the 5 June *Latin American Weekly Report*, the leader of the Fuerzas Populares de Liberacion (FPL), Salvador Cayetano Carpio, has withdrawn from the FMLN's joint command. Moreover, the FPL organ *El Rebelde*, as well as the publications of other left groups, have reappeared after their suspension as part of the unity pact. An editorial in the April edition of the clandestine *El Rebelde* declared: "The diplomatic line cannot substitute for the military line, nor is it by itself a proposition separate from prolonged people's war" (*El Dia* [Mexico], 12 May). *El Rebelde* and FPL spokesman Comandante Ana Maria have insisted that no dialogue with the junta could be undertaken without stringent "minimum conditions" including "an end to repression throughout the country". In practice that is to rule out negotiations for the foreseeable future.

The FPL, a left-wing breakaway from the official pro-Moscow Communist Party, is the largest of the guerrilla groups and leads several tens of thousands of workers and peasants through unions affiliated to its Revolutionary People's Bloc (BPR). It is the FPL that has driven the junta forces out of Chalatenango and withstood repeated heavy assaults on the Guazapa volcano, in sight of San Salvador. When US journalist Alex Drehsler visited FPL camps this spring, an FPL guerrilla commander told him that they considered the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua to be "basically a revolt of the middle classes" and that "we want to form a society, a government, that will be more radical than Cuba". "So you see", he

Leftist guerrillas say:

Win the war in El Salvador!

SAN FRANCISCO — Alex Drehsler, a reporter for the *San Diego Union* and special correspondent for ABC News is one of the few North American bourgeois journalists, if not the only one, to have gone to an area under the control of left-wing rebels in El Salvador to get their story. A series based on his observations "behind the lines" of the guerrilla struggle was syndicated in several leading US newspapers last March. On May 14, Drehsler gave a forum in Berkeley, "El Salvador: A First Hand Account", where the Spartacus Youth League (SYL) drew a sharp class line with its call for a left-wing victory in the raging civil war.

The talk was sponsored by SAINTES (Students Against Intervention in El Salvador) which stands for negotiations toward a "political solution" with the oligarchy and military junta. However, despite SAINTES' best efforts to keep Spartacist speakers off the floor, they did not succeed. The speaker responded to an SYL question by reporting that many, if not most Salvadoran guerrilla fighters hold that only a victory on the battlefield by the leftist rebels will end the blood bath and genocidal junta terror in that beleaguered country.

Drehsler spoke about his stay in Chalatenango Province near the Honduran border, an area controlled by the guerrilla forces of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). Drehsler stressed, as he has in his articles, the wide support of the population for the guerrillas and their hatred for the government. He re-

counted how he asked some peasants about the junta's "land reform". A peasant took him to the top of a hill and showed him clouds of smoke rising in the distance: "That's the land reform — the government and ORDEN burning our fields". A guerrilla told Drehsler that the Salvadoran revolution would be more radical than the Nicaraguan revolution, which is "middle-class".

During the discussion, the SAINTES chairman's blatant refusal to recognize Spartacist speakers led one to send up a written question to Drehsler that read, "Given your description of the Rio Lampa massacre, don't you think the idea of reforming or negotiating with the armed forces is an illusion?" Drehsler replied that while the leadership of the FDR and FMLN seek some type of political settlement, the guerrillas in the field say, "There's no room for a negotiated settlement". He quoted one rebel who told an FDR leader, "You're sitting in town sipping your gin and tonic, talking about negotiations, but we're out here getting our asses blown off and we don't want any negotiations". A Spartacist speaker summed up at Drehsler's forum:

"You've done a real service by bringing out the guerrillas' story — what those people are fighting and dying for. People who are concerned with El Salvador must take a side in the civil war. On one side are the workers and peasants and on the other side are the landlords and capitalists with their army and death squads. The workers and peasants must win."

— reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 282, 5 June 1981

was told, "there is no room for compromise here" (*Chicago Tribune*, 8-10 March).

But FPL leaders, like those of the ERP, FARN and other guerrilla groups, have done plenty of compromising with their bourgeois liberal allies. The FPL/BPR reaction to the October 1979 "reform" junta, which overthrew the Romero dictatorship with State Department backing, was to call on it to carry out promises of reform. And the FPL dropped its call for a "worker-peasant government with proletarian hegemony" to help form the FDR popular front more than a year ago. If Cayetano and the other FPL leaders are wary of the dangers of the pursuit of negotiations at all costs, they are only facing the consequences of their own Stalinist-nationalist, popular-frontist line.

Military victory and workers revolution

Talk of a "political/negotiated solution" in El Salvador comes from diverse sources: from Latin American bourgeois governments, fearful of the spread of a revolutionary contagion in the region; from American liberals, fearful of "another Vietnam", a losing imperialist adventure; from social democrats of the SI, reflecting the interests of European capital in a continuation of "detente" as opposed to Reagan's Cold War II; from Stalinist bureaucrats in Moscow and Havana, who fear a victory of the Salvadoran working masses as a challenge to their own parasitic rule. Brezhnev and Castro are so intent on pursuing "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism (even hoping to seduce Reagan!) that they will willingly sabotage revolution in El Salvador. Asked about Reagan accusations of Soviet arms to Salvadoran rebels, Brezhnev spokesman Zamyatin replied haughtily, "The Soviet Union does not provide El Salvador with arms.

It never has. It never will". Traitors! The Soviet regime of Lenin and Trotsky would have considered this an inescapable internationalist duty.

Nicaragua's petty-bourgeois Sandinista leadership, only recently arrived in power and facing ominous domestic and international counterrevolutionary threats, might be expected to look more favorably on the struggles of leftist guerrillas next door. Not so, and the counterrevolutionary consequences of nationalism are dramatically revealed. After the FMLN's January offensive Nicaraguan interior minister Tomas Borge told the press: "In El Salvador, the guerrillas could not defeat the army and the army could not defeat the guerrillas... No defeat and no victory seems possible, so we feel that a political solution should be sought" (*New York Times*, 16 February). By mid-March, the State Department let it be known that Nicaragua had cut off arms to Salvadoran rebels, and now in their eagerness to placate Reagan they have begun to arrest people ferrying guns to the FMLN (DPA dispatch, 15 May). But where would Borge & Co be now if a "nego-

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Sungravure jobs auctioned off

SYDNEY, 1 July — Nearly 400 production workers at Sungravure have been sacked after a month-long, militant strike to protect their jobs against "restructuring" and the threat of closure by the management of John Fairfax & Sons, owners of the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Two days ago management announced the closure of the Rosebery factory was definite, and today a mass meeting of Printing and Kindred Industries Union (PKIU) members and representatives from seven other striking unions was presented with a virtual no-win situation — their jobs had been auctioned off by the union leaderships in exchange for a cash settlement by the company.

One older worker told *Australasian Spartacist* reporters before the meeting, "It was a set up. They wanted to close down and that would have been harder with us inside. With us out, all they had to do was turn the key". After the meeting, not everyone was very happy with the agreement, but most thought that they had achieved most of what they could get. But the strike itself had amply demonstrated that another course was available — a class-struggle fight to save the jobs, through the kind of labour solidarity shown by the wharfies and railway workers who put bans on the shipment of all Sungravure products during the strike.

With its "inefficient" gravure printing equipment and cheap, floundering publications (*Womans Day, Pix/People, Dolly*, etc), rumours of retrenchments had been rife at Sungravure for years. A PKIU information bulletin of 5 June (released for publication by union secretary Athol Cairn) traced the dispute back several weeks to the discovery of a company document which "referred to discussions held at a very high level as to the future of Sungravure by closure, merger, partnership with other companies etc". Thus alerted, a union struggle to protect jobs could begin. The struggle had an immediate ally at the Broadway printing plant of the *Herald/Sun*, where several hundred "permanent temporary" workers face the sack in the near future under an inadequate redundancy agreement dating back to the end of the strike in 1976. But the strategy adopted by the leadership of the PKIU Sungravure chapel from the beginning focussed exclusively on improving the terms of the redundancy agreement rather than the fight for jobs, despite the union's much-heralded 35-hour week "campaign".

Sungravure workers voted overwhelm-

ingly for an indefinite strike beginning on 2 June, following several phoney ploys by management (such as raising and then dropping a possible switch to offset), and an arrogant "get stuffed" message on any improvement in terms of redundancy. Management began using "staff" scabs at \$16 per hour(!), so workers began to picket the Rosebery plant. All the unions (except the Miscellaneous Workers which includes security guards; and clerks and apprentices) were out, having turned back management attempts to divide them. Taxis queuing to pick up scabs were chased off by angry workers, and the mass of broken windows on one side of the plant were testimony to the hard-fought struggle. The police of "Labor" Premier Neville Wran showed which side they were on by arresting at least five pickets. (Although the strike is over, these victimised militants must not be forgotten. The unions must mobilise to demand immediate dropping of all charges!) And supporters were brought to the picket line from Sydney University by the campus Spartacist Club, which also collected over \$100 on campus for the strike in a week of support work.

Solidarity from other workers was immediate and effective. The *Herald/Sun* PKIU chapel pledged not to handle any colour inserts, normally printed at Sungravure. More significantly, 13 journalists — later joined by 2 others — at the Sungravure editorial offices in Regent Street refused to cross the picket line despite a majority vote to stay at work! (The AJA branch executive had recommended honouring the picket line.) This act of solidarity should have been supported by organised, mass picketing by the PKIU at Regent Street! A few such acts of solidarity would quickly overcome the years of hatred between printers and journo's, which was disastrously compounded last year when the *Herald/Sun* PKIU chapel split over honouring the pickets of the national journalists' strike, bringing the present leadership to office. But neither the branch nor chapel leaderships lifted a finger, although it is rumoured that they asked the AJA if it would be "embarrassed" if a PKIU picket line was put up, to which the reply was that they would be "embarrassed" only because AJA members might cross the picket line, but invited the PKIU to put up a picket line anyway.

The failure to mobilise support for the journalists who risked their jobs to stay out — when the Sungravure strike itself depended on the solidarity of eight dif-

ferent unions plus bans on the shipment of Sungravure magazines by wharfies and railway workers — was just one indication of a badly organised strike. The failure of strike pay to materialise was one of the most common complaints on the picket line, and the pickets were never mobilised in sufficient numbers to finish the job by completely stopping the entry of scabs and of all production in the plant. The PKIU branch leadership of Athol Cairn & Co, under pressure from Sungravure workers, did call a 48-hour sympathy strike on 19 June which pulled out the *Herald/Sun*, and Fairfax newspaper chapels in Newcastle and Wollongong. But this action was limited to one weekend only, thus hurting some workers (such as the machine room) more than others in lost pay, and achieving nothing.

What was needed was an indefinite solidarity strike of all Fairfax newspapers in NSW to quickly bring the bosses to their knees on the threat to jobs throughout the Fairfax empire! Management's tearful story of economic losses, used to justify the Sungravure "restructuring" and to threaten jobs at other Fairfax facilities, of course make any unionist choke with rage. But the cover-stories and lies of the profit-gorged Fairfax empire need to be exposed to all the workers with the demand to open the books — let the workers see the accounts of the company! Furthermore, when the closure of Sungravure was seen to be the bosses' plan, the plant should have been occupied until Fairfax guaranteed no retrenchments, if necessary through an immediate reduction in working hours throughout the Fairfax empire! A victory of this magnitude, which could have been achieved through determined, class-struggle policies and leadership, would have been a real, fighting step toward the socialist demand of a sliding scale of wages and hours — a shorter work week at no loss in pay, plus pay rises to meet inflation, to make jobs for all.

But as it is, nearly 400 jobs have been lost, a major PKIU chapel is gone, and despite a sizeable cash pay-out promised to the sacked workers, the bosses have gained a reduction in their wage bill. Thanks to short-sighted, reformist leadership, there is no answer to the older Sungravure worker on the picket line who asked rhetorically, "where am I going to get another job?" Despite Fairfax' promise of priority in hiring at its other facilities for former Sungravure workers (many of whom would have to be

retrained), there will probably be no answer to this question for most of them without a big pay cut and a new start in another shop or industry. Apprentices will be worst hit; they also should have been pulled out, and involved in a militant fight against the sackings.

The last-minute increases in the cash settlement, mostly in the form of additions to severance pay etc, wrung from the reluctant bosses by the strike and the solidarity of other unions, demonstrated the fraud of Fairfax' lies about losses. These fatcats are laughing up their sleeves! But all the bosses' profits comes only from the labour of the workers. Some Sungravure workers, especially those with over ten years at the factory, have been promised a combined settlement (severance and holiday pay, superannuation etc) running into the tens of thousands. They deserve every penny of it, and more — it's not the bosses', it's theirs! And there is no reason that workers throughout the Fairfax empire could not wage a militant fight to save their jobs and get more money, except for the failure of the leadership to mobilise the unions behind a class-struggle program.

A program was raised in the last union elections for *Herald/Sun* chapel executive positions which pointed the way forward. Ron Rees, a TTS monitor and supporter of the Spartacist League, got about 8 percent of the vote in a campaign for Deputy Father of the Chapel on the basis of a written program (the only one!) which pointed out,

"Like other newspapers all over the world, we are faced with the complete restructuring of the industry due to the introduction of computerised typesetting. The question of forced redundancies is coming sooner or later. Despite its statements that there won't be any, the company keeps one-third of the PKIU members as permanent temporaries for this very purpose. The union must fight for no redundancies!"

The program, entitled "Get the union off its knees!", called for a militant strike policy to win, through mass picketing — one out, all out and picket lines mean don't cross — and the kind of labour solidarity shown by wharfies and railway workers in the Sungravure strike. Only with a class-struggle program such as this, and a struggle to build a leadership committed to it and capable of taking on and defeating the reformist betrayers, will Fairfax workers have an alternative to the prospect of being bought off and tossed on the scrap heap. ■

APTU/Telecom...

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a need to be seen doing something, but it really doesn't know how to fight and perhaps it doesn't even choose to fight."

"A joint strike of Telecom... would bring not only the government but Telecom to its knees", she added, and pointed out the futility of relying on bans:

"The bans campaign in my experience is a strategy for disaster. It does not make for solidarity, because nobody is ever aware who has bans on and who doesn't... We have found over past wages disputes that bans are continually put on, then we are told to lift them to use some form of negotiation that... is not satisfactory, and the bans are put back on. This results in mass confusion and demoralisation and because of the long dragged-out nature of the campaign, people are ready to take whatever is offered and are not all that ready to fight again for some time."

It is this sense of isolation and demoralisation which Telecom management is now consciously trying to exploit in an attempt to inflict a major defeat on the union.

Bureaucrats derail APTU/ATEA struggles

The ACOA dispute comes on the heels of last months' action by over 80,000

workers against Telecom and Australia Post. On 28 May, mass meetings of Australian Telecommunications Employees Association (ATEA) members voted virtually unanimously to place bans on the telecommunications network. The following day they were joined by members of the Australian Postal and Telecommunications Union (APTU) at Telecom. The workers were demanding an 8 percent wage rise, a 35-hour week and a \$24 per week industry allowance.

Within a week most interstate, international and telex services were down. One ploy after another was tried to get the bans called off. First the Arbitration Commission offered to let Telecom settle in exchange for the unions opting out of wage indexation and the next national wage case rise. When that failed, Telecom did a deal and granted rises — to be broken into instalments — of \$18 to \$32. In a bid to save face, the Fraser government then tried to get the Arbitration Commission to ratify the deal via the "anomalies" loophole to the indexation guidelines. But when that overture was rejected the government, after 30 hours talks, caved in on 11 June and told Telecom to settle — in open violation of its own wages policy.

Despite Fraser's embarrassment, the

deal was no victory. ATEA mass meetings in NSW and Queensland voted against the deal, and only a narrow majority nationally voted in favour. "It's not an offer, it's an insult" said one Sydney speaker. APTU boss George Slater motivated acceptance by saying "there is no more" for Telecom to give — a flat lie which Telecom's industrial relations boss, Barry O'Sullivan, refuted when he told the Arbitration Commission that the wages/technology trade off would "produce very little cost to Telecom" (*Financial Review*, 19 June).

Shut down Australia Post

Slater's dirtiest deed, however, was allowing the militant Telecom Supplies Section in Victoria to be cut out of the deal because the Razor Gang wants their jobs to go to private contractors. In response, these workers slapped on bans which gave way to a strike when the inevitable stand-down notices were handed out. But disgustingly, the Victorian APTU executive called an extraordinary general meeting on 23 June to withdraw union backing for the Supplies Section. As two militants there put it later: "The obvious and only conclusion is there has been a betrayal and sell out to the Razor Gang. Telecom workers

cannot trust the Slater Gang or the Razor Gang".

Soon after the Telecom settlement, the APTU put in a claim for \$25 plus 8 percent for its 23,000 members employed by Australia Post. But as with the Telecom dispute, the APTU's strategy was one of selective bans — the very strategy which lead to the defeat of Sydney's Redfern Mail Exchange workers in mid-1979 and the subsequent gutting of the union there.

AP workers have shown, though, that they too want to fight. On 18 June a protest strike was held over both the wage claim and the Razor Gang cuts, which threaten AP Courier. The following day, a militant rally at the Melbourne GPO was followed by a mass meeting which indignantly threw out a federal executive motion to lift the work bans; instead, the meeting voted to stay out for four days. But four days later, the state executive pushed through a recommendation that all bans be lifted and work resumed.

At the meeting, verbal opposition to the bureaucrats' sellout was voiced by the "Terrier" group, which is politically supported by the International Socialists.

Australasian Spartacist

Israeli nuclear terrorists bomb Iraq

Middle East war threat

We may consider ourselves lucky that we got through the 30 June Israeli elections without Menachem Begin provoking World War III. For his 7 June air attack on the Iraqi Osirak nuclear power plant outside Baghdad is only the latest criminal adventure by the increasingly desperate Zionist ruling class, coming on top of the Israeli-provoked crisis over Syrian missiles in the Bekaa valley, Lebanon. The borders of "Eretz Israel" have now been extended to anywhere within range of its US-supplied F-16s, making pre-emptive strikes against potential nuclear rivals the order of the day.

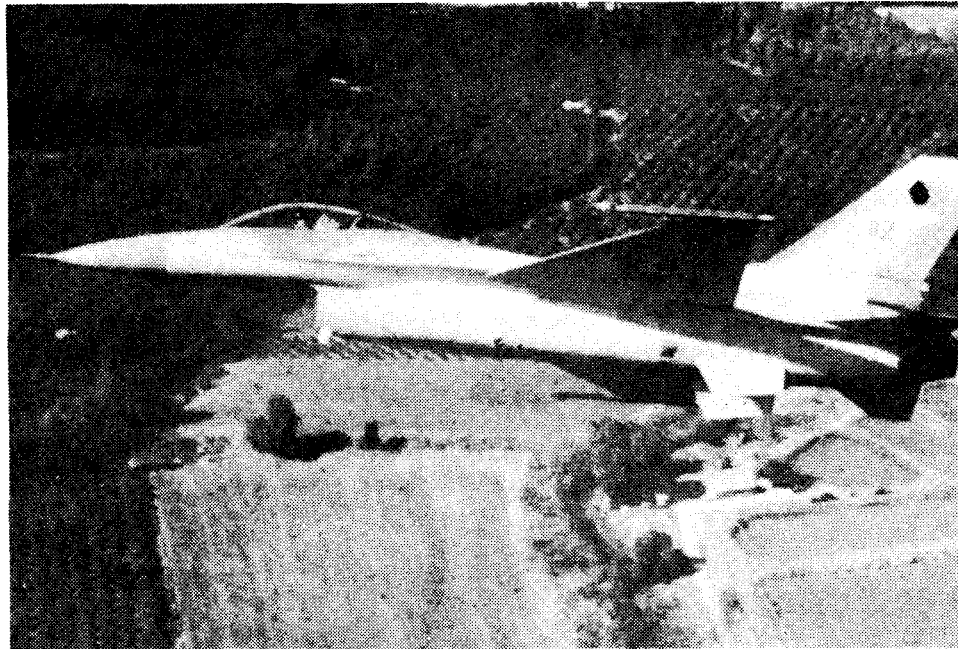
Begin's raid was ritually condemned around the world. Even Israel's US great-power protector disapproved its "unprecedented character" and delayed a shipment of F-16s. Snarling defiantly that "Israel doesn't equip itself with any weapons for parading purposes", the Zionist state's defence minister reminded the US that Israel does what it pleases with its US-supplied weaponry. To prove his "humanitarian" concern, Begin noted that the reactor had been destroyed before being fuelled to avoid supposedly irradiating Baghdad and was timed for Sunday when no French technicians were supposed to be present. "Never use arms against innocent and unarmed civilians" said Begin, whose Irgun terrorists massacred hundreds of defenceless Palestinian villagers at Deir Yassin in 1948 and who routinely bombs Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon today.

When the Israeli jets who have been massacring Palestinians and Lebanese villagers for five years shot down two Syrian helicopters on 29 April, Syrian ruler Assad immediately moved Soviet-built SAM-6 anti-aircraft missiles into the strategic Bekaa valley. The missiles posed a threat to the Israeli air force's ability to bomb the PLO camps in Lebanon unhindered, so Begin threatened to knock them out, a move which could plunge the Near East into full-scale war.

Domestic politics also played a role. Begin was lagging behind the opposition "Labor" party in the polls for the election, and needed to stage a confrontation with Syria to boost his popularity. With Egypt no longer a war threat and inflation over 100 percent, the Zionists need a new focus of national unity to keep the lid on the working class. With astounding arrogance, the Zionists moan about Lebanese Maronite Christians being "annihilated" by the Syrians yet

"Terrier" had come to the meeting with a motion proposing that the workers stay out, elect a strike committee and seek interstate support, while limiting pickets to "work centres where there is a reasonable [sic] suspicion of scabbing" (*Special Strike Bulletin*, 24 June). But "Terrier's" opposition was permeated with pessimism: "striking is hard, bloody hard, on our wages", militants were told. With this kind of defeatist approach, it was little wonder that the APTU tops had no trouble calling off the strike. As for the "Terriers", they ended up with their tails between their legs: their motion wasn't put, and they voted for an amendment which called for a return to work but keeping the bans!

As for the NSW branch of the APTU, led by "lefts" Merv Hawkins and Noel Battese, they lifted not a finger to implement even the half-hearted bans. "We are a conservative branch" was Hawkins' excuse (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 June). Federal Secretary Slater, long-time factional enemy of Hawkins/Battese, saw his chance to bring their simmering factional struggle to a head, and sacked them from their state positions. They were back the next



US-supplied Israeli F-16s like this attacked Iraqi reactor, terror-bomb Palestinians.

claim the "right" to systematically destroy the PLO, which means destroying every Palestinian in southern Lebanon. For the Zionist state is based on genocidal terror against the dispossessed Palestinians, whether in the Gaza strip, the West Bank, the Golan Heights or even beyond Israel's expanding frontiers.

That Assad had a deal to allow the Israeli air strikes so long as Syrian planes weren't shot down shows his claim to be the champion of the Palestinians to be nothing but hypocritical bombast. Within Syria, Assad's bourgeois-nationalist Ba'athist regime murderously represses the Syrian proletariat. And in 1976 the Syrians invaded Lebanon to protect the dominance of the Maronite Christian minority and "pacified" the Palestinians through such massacres as that of the Tel-Zaatar refugee camp. The Palestinians had allied with the Lebanese Moslems against the Maronites in a squalid communal civil war in which Marxists took no side.

Begin bombs US grand plan

Reagan did not add his whisper to the international outcry over Israel's raid on Iraq out of concern for "innocent and unarmed civilians". Rather, Begin had flattened not only Baghdad's nuclear reactor but also, for the time being, Washington's grand design for a "strategic consensus" in the Near East

day, courtesy of the Industrial Court, for the time being. But this whole squalid dog-fighting and cycle of betrayal and counter-betrayal demonstrates graphically that both wings of the NSW APTU bureaucracy are equally sordid, deserving no support from workers.

AP/Telecom workers will never win by relying on weak-kneed bans, impotent one-day protest stoppages and negotiations in the bosses' arbitration courts. Stop the pussy-footing around — bring all sections of Australia Post and Telecom out now, on an indefinite nationwide strike! Such militant action would not only win outright the workers' immediate demands; it could pave the way for an offensive by the whole labour movement against the Razor Gang cuts and the Fraser government's battery of anti-union legislation. The Slaters and Hawkinses of this world have shown conclusively, though, that they are incapable of leading such a struggle. What is needed to lead the workers to victory is a class-struggle leadership, committed not to the reform of this decaying capitalist system, but to its overthrow. Victory to the ACOA workers! Shut down AP/Telecom! Strike to win! ■

aimed at the Soviet Union. The US response to the SAM-6 missile crisis was to play it up as another example of Soviet designs in the region. Secretary of State Haig said the initial shooting which led to the crisis may have been "instigated from Moscow" (*Newsweek*, 20 April). The aircraft carrier *USS Independence* was sent from the Indian Ocean into the Mediterranean. Anti-Soviet columnist William Safire described the crisis as "the first Soviet test of the Reagan administration's will" (*New York Times*, 18 May), adding "The Reagan response to the Kremlin's probe has been dangerously soft". Behind the local conflict between the Arabs and Israel — in which revolutionaries take no side — looms the possibility of the escalation of the crisis into a global US-Soviet conflict, in which we would unconditionally defend the USSR against the imperialists.

Ever since the shah of Iran fell, the US has sought to re-establish a military foothold in the Persian gulf. Carter warned the Russians that the US was ready to defend its "strategic interests" in the region with nuclear weapons. Sadat in Egypt welcomed this and has since agreed to a US-controlled "peace-keeping force" to police Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai — effectively putting detachments of the Pentagon's Rapid Deployment Force on site.

Haig has been applying pressure to the Fraser government to supply a contingent of Australian troops for this force, but to date Fraser has refused to publicly commit himself. While both the Israelis and Egyptians have appealed for Australian participation in this imperialist advance party, sections of Fraser's cabinet, especially Deputy Prime Minister Anthony and the National Country Party are more worried about the future of the burgeoning Australian primary export trade with the Arab states. The Australian labour movement must demand: No Australian troops for this anti-Soviet adventure! Smash the Reagan/Fraser war drive!

In pursuit of a "strategic consensus" subordinating regional Arab-Israeli hostilities to an alliance against Moscow, the US has sold advanced surveillance aircraft (AWACS), F-15 fighters, air-to-air missiles, ground radar stations and US maintenance and operating personnel to the feudal Saudi monarchy. The true believers running the US think they can recapture the short-lived "American Century" of the 1950s, strengthening ties with Israel and taking a hard line on Moscow-allied regimes such as Syria while simultaneously deepening their anti-Soviet alliance with the Saudis. This won't work: after 30 years of nationalist

wars, Haig's anti-Soviet incantations aren't enough to get Begin and Prince Fahd marching together, Koran and Torah held aloft in an ecumenical Holy War against godless communism. In fact Begin staged these military provocations to frustrate any deal between the US and the Saudis, thus ensuring there will be fewer American weapons in Arab hands. Begin's ploy worked: the Saudis know that Israel's F-16s could just as easily have bombed Riyadh as Baghdad, while their much-vaunted AWACS failed to detect anything. Its no surprise that for now their denunciations of "international terrorism" are directed at Israel, not the Soviet Union.

Zionism is bad for the Jews

While the Israelis justified their raid by the threat of potential Iraqi nuclear weapons, Israel itself has had the bomb since at least 1974. Thus the Saudis, Iraqis, Libyans etc could turn this justification against them, removing the Zionist nuclear threat by bombing, at the cost of quite a few irradiated Jewish civilians. Israel is no "promised land" but a death trap for the Jews, and some day the Arabs will have the bomb. Many sense this and vote with their feet, resulting in a net outflow of Jews from Israel. In the minds of the fanatic Zionist rulers of this garrison state, every Jew who emigrates is a traitor. Increasingly the Zionist leaders seek to imbue their society with the "Masada complex", named after the mountain fortress where in 73 AD Hebrew zealots committed mass suicide rather than surrender to the Romans. The Begins and Peres are equally prepared to sacrifice every Jewish man, woman and child in Israel in a nuclear Masada should it come to this, and are willing to spark a global holocaust into the bargain.

Despite its dependence on US weapons and support, Israel is not a puppet on an imperialist string, having national/territorial ambitions of its own. Begin's mad-dog provocations, from the routine savage repression of Arabs on the occupied West Bank and the daily bombing of southern Lebanon to the increasing expropriation of Arab land for new Zionist settlements, elicited mild criticism from the Carter administration because such actions stood in the way of a US/Saudi/Egyptian/Israeli alliance against the USSR. Reagan has so far kept quiet, serving only to embolden the Zionists. But in the long term Zionist provocations run counter to the larger US ambition.

Capitalist rule in the Near East means continuing national oppression and fratricidal wars. Only its overthrow by the proletariat, led by a Leninist vanguard, will break the cycle of bloodshed and ensuring the national rights of both the Palestinian Arabs and the Hebrew speakers in a binational workers state. Not the classless "Arab revolution" but the socialist revolution is needed to sweep away the bourgeois nationalist butchers and the poisonous hatreds they exploit to maintain power.

The stakes are high. The Near East, long a powder keg, is a strategic part of US imperialism's drive against the Soviet Union. The Saudi AWACS go alongside "Euromissiles", large-scale aid to Pakistan and the US-China alliance. The US imperialists are trying to forge an unbroken anti-Soviet chain from Asia through the Persian Gulf and into Europe. A local explosion anywhere along that chain could be the spark that sets off World War III. It will be the socialist revolution, not detente or liberal disarmament schemes, which will destroy this threat once and for all.

— adapted from *Workers Vanguard*
nos 281 and 283

22 May and 19 June 1981



WHAT REALLY HAPPENED, Sydney CISCAC march: SWP/CISCAC thugs surrounded, shoved anti-Imperialists before march. Here, AIC pushes ...



forward against line of thugs. Cop comes to thugs' aid, telling AIC to stop, just after attackers tore "Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftists!" banner ...

Anti-Imperialist Contingents drive it home— "Military victory to Salvadoran leftists!"

"Workers and peasants must win the war! Avenge the blood of El Salvador!" was the militant chant of the Anti-Imperialist Contingent (AIC) which echoed up and down the line of march during the El Salvador "Day of Action" demos held in Sydney on 13 June and Melbourne on 20 June. Sixty militants marched behind the AIC's huge red-on-gold banner proclaiming "Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftists" in the Sydney march; seventy marched in Melbourne. The anti-imperialists said it loud and clear — we stand for the victory of the workers and peasants in their struggle against the kill-crazy junta and its US imperialist backers.

The Anti-Imperialist Contingents with their half dozen class-struggle banners, numerous red flags and colour guard bearing the flags of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), Cuba, Vietnam and Trotsky's Fourth International, were not only the most militant and reddest section of the marches, but the *only* ones to take a class stand. They were also amongst the largest organised contingents in the badly publicised, relatively small demonstrations — some 400 in Sydney and 300 in Melbourne.

Our revolutionary line proved attractive to numerous young leftists. In the days before the marches, the Spartacist League (SL) offices were filled with volunteers who had come around to help make placards, banners and discuss politics. Most were staggered by the refusal of the march organisers — the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Committee in Solidarity with Central America and the Caribbean (CISCAC) — to take a side in the civil war. Screenings of the already widely seen film "Revolution or Death" organised by the Sydney SL were attended by over 120 people interested in finding out what the AIC had to say. (True to lying form, the SWP later claimed only a dozen people showed up.)

Thousands of leaflets were distributed. Over 500 red-on-yellow badges proclaiming "Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftists" were sold. Spartacist supporters in the unions and on the campuses complemented their work against the Razor Gang cuts with building for the AIC. And after the Sydney march, the contingent was featured on television

evening news on Channel 10, and the ABC 7 pm national news program.

Our anti-imperialist stand and our systematic work to build the contingents had its impact on the SWP/CISCAC as well. The SWP, which usually feigns total uninterest in the activities of the supposedly "irrelevant" SL, produced a number of rather shoddy polemics — leaflets and articles in *Direct Action* — whose main refrain could have been taken from the Stalin school: our class-struggle demands, in particular our position that "Defence of Cuba and the USSR begins in El Salvador", are a "left cover for the imperialist propaganda". Our contingents' militant chants "1,2,3,4 — Leftist Rebels Must Win the War! 5,6,7,8 — Nothing to Negotiate!" also stood in sharp contrast to the SWP/CISCAC's grovelling before the sundry religious worthies and Labor parliamentarians they had inveigled onto their anti-communist closed platforms. And our call for military victory was clearly counterposed to their prattle about a "political solution" in El Salvador — a deal with the junta or its Washington puppeteers to cheat the Salvadoran masses out of the victory they are fighting and dying for.

Reformist thugs attack anti-Imperialists

The SWP/CISCAC organisers were so determined to prevent any mention of the "Military Victory" call, however, that in Sydney, CISCAC "marshals" — led by the SWP and backed up by the International Socialists (IS), who had previously claimed to support military victory, and the Communist Party (CPA) — launched a premeditated thug attack on the AIC as it was forming up at Town Hall Square to join the march. Their aim, ultimately unsuccessful, was to disrupt and destroy the contingent and to silence its message of proletarian class solidarity.

From its inception, CISCAC's strategy has been to avoid any class demands in order to win the endorsement of liberal bourgeois politicians and "left" social democrats. Thus at a Melbourne El Salvador rally in January, the main speaker was none other than Australian Democrat Don Chipp, Tory minister for the navy during the Vietnam War. CISCAC's slogan "No more Vietnams" is consciously designed to appeal to the likes of

Chipp, for whom Indochina was above all a *losing* imperialist adventure.

Prior to the marches, SWP/CISCAC representatives first tried to physically exclude SL members from attending allegedly "public" meetings. When that failed, they then consistently voted down or suppressed motions calling for the military victory of the leftist rebels. What they advocated instead was a more "sensible" imperialist policy, graphically revealed in a full-page *National Times* ad which complained that "Fraser has hastily committed his government to an uncritical support of U.S. aid" (emphasis added). "Military aid will not solve El Salvador's problems... Peace will only come to this troubled [!] nation by the Salvadorans settling their own problems". And if the junta "settles its own problems" by massacring 30,000 or more workers and peasants, as it did in *la matanza* of 1932, then CISCAC presumably couldn't care less.

In contrast to this liberal imperialist policy, our contingents said that the main question in El Salvador was the civil war: which side are you on? We took a side — with the insurgents, against the junta and its anti-Soviet Washington backers. But our uncompromising anti-imperialism

threatens the alliance which the SWP/CISCAC is trying to forge with "left" social democrats and bourgeois liberals; that is why they tried to silence us on the June 13 Sydney march.

At Town Hall Square, SWP honcho Ron Poulsen denounced as a provocation our stated intention of rallying outside the US Consulate — the traditional target of anti-imperialist demonstrations — with an open platform for all those who supported the demands, "Military Victory to Leftist Insurgents", "US/OAS hands off" and "Stop all US aid to the junta". But the only provocation was the SWP/CISCAC's pre-planned attack on the AIC.

After a poor turnout and a deliberately truncated rally at Town Hall, the demonstration started to move off, led by the CISCAC contingent. The AIC formed up, chanting, "Workers and peasants must win the war! Avenge the blood of El Salvador!" But five SWP megaphonists began a barrage of counterchants, and SWP goons surrounded the contingent, and then began shoving and pushing AIC marshals. The intention was clear — provoke a fight at the very beginning in order to isolate the anti-imperialists, and blame the SL for "disruption". As the march moved down George Street, the



Asp photo

Melbourne, 20 June — 70 march with Anti-Imperialist Contingent ...



As the march passes down George St, thugs continue attempts to seal off anti-imperialists . . .



ASp photos

But can't stop AIC from marching, holding aloft banner despite the attack.

anti-imperialists successfully pushed back the attackers and moved through the square and into the street. There they were again attacked by a second line of thugs. Leading the kicking, punching pack were SWPers Jim Percy, Poulsen, Jamie Doughney, Steve Painter, Paul Keig, Jon West and CPA and IS supporters. The lead banner — "Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftists" — was purposefully singled out and ripped by CPAer Warwick Neilly and SWPer Gail Cummings.

After the initial scuffles the AIC quickly reestablished formation, forcing the twenty or so thugs to retreat before it. At that point, one of Wran's cops stationed himself in front of the AIC and ordered it to stop, thus doing CISCAC's work for it. An ex-member of the Chilean MIR later commented that the SWP/CISCAC attack was akin to what the Stalinists did to the MIR in Chile! In this way the SWP, which gained notoriety on the Australian left for its refusal to call for an NLF military victory in Vietnam, and which ran in horror from the Brisbane street marches for fear it would get involved in a confrontation with Joh Bjelke's cops, showed that it is "peaceful, legal" only when it comes to the bourgeois state. When dealing with anti-imperialists it uses slander, thug attacks and blocs with the cops.

In a subsequent leaflet, the SWP scandalously claimed anyone on the march "would have been perfectly justified in requesting police protection from the Spartacists' violent attack, but to the best of our knowledge no-one did so". In fact, CISCAC did make overtures to the police — not for "protection" from a non-existent "attack", but to go after the AIC. For the very same cop that intervened to stop our march had earlier been incited by a CISCAC organiser saying, "Hey, did you know there was a counter-demonstration on today?" This is the despicable method of the frame-up: first egg on the police, then scream violence in

the full expectation that the cops will go after the genuine communists.

Despite the attack the AIC marched as planned to the US Consulate and held a 75-strong rally (see page 12 for speeches). The rally chairman read a statement from Izzy Wyner, Sydney secretary of the Ship Painters & Dockers and a one-time Trotskyist: "Every kind of support for the rally in opposition to American intervention in the affairs of El Salvador. Yankee go home — Military victory to the leftist insurgents in El Salvador!" A statement was also read out from the Australian support group of the Irish Republican Socialist Party which declared their "wholehearted support for the El Salvador people in their struggle for freedom from imperialism" and concluded, "the only solution in El Salvador is victory to the freedom fighters and like Ireland, freedom from domination, exploitation and oppression". Meanwhile, the SWP/CISCAC marched off to Hyde Park to lie on the grass and listen to the ALP's Tom Uren and Clyde Holding, and various trade union "lefts".

SWP's looking-glass polemic

At the following day's CISCAC "teach-in", at the Sydney University Mervether Building, some twenty SWPers barred the doors, despite previous repeated assurances that the "teach-in" would be "open to all". SWP leaders Jim Percy and Doug Lorimer flatly told AIC petitioners that "we are against the slogan for military victory being raised as a slogan for the mass movement". Helen Garcia chimed in that "we started to shout at you with megaphones because we didn't like your political slogans".

Such unusual candour didn't last long, and within days the SWP had produced a four-page foolscap leaflet which cynically tried to paint the SWP/CISCAC as the victims, and the AIC as the aggressors! But what is most striking is the inability of the SWP and its June 13 bloc partners to get their lies straight. The 17 June *Direct Action* absurdly claims that the

"SL tried to take over the head of the march", yet *on the very same page* it quotes a CISCAC statement claiming that the AIC tried to force its way "into the middle of the march". The SWP claims there was a "democratically" determined "general order of march", but the CPA admitted that "march organisers [ie, CISCAC/SWP] agreed the group could participate as a separate contingent at the back" (*Tribune*, 17 June; emphasis added). In any case, the "general order of the march" — the ALP and trade unions first, left groups last — was a transparent fraud. The demonstration was dominated not by ALP/union contingents but by the groups from the organised left. Furthermore, the attack on the AIC came before it had taken up any position in the march!

The SWP's central charge is that the AIC was a "counterdemonstration". But the thug attack on the AIC, the singling out and ripping of the lead banner "Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftists" — an act which SWPers boasted about the following day — speaks louder than any polemic: *their* march was built as a conscious counterdemonstration to the call for military victory. The SWP could have supported, at least on paper, a rally outside the US Consulate; in Melbourne they arranged for a short stop outside the Pan Am building. But had it attracted a large number of march participants, a protest outside the US Consulate would have gone a long way towards undercutting the SWP/CISCAC attempt to corral the demonstrators into a political bloc with bourgeois liberals and ALP shadow ministers who want to see the leftists lose in El Salvador. Such a militant protest would have pushed the march in the direction of anti-imperialist class solidarity. This is what the SWP could not tolerate.

"No troops! Class war! Revolution in El Salvador!"

The Melbourne demonstration was noticeably smaller than the 500-strong April 3 march. The 70-strong AIC marchers, including some 40 non-SLers, was the largest organised political contingent. When the march moved off after a rally featuring Uniting Church peacenik Dick Wooten, AMWSU bureaucrat John Halfpenny and local SWP big shot Dave Deutschmann, the SWP/CISCAC thought better of repeating their Sydney provocation and there was no trouble. But they stationed a 30-strong squad just in front of our line of march in an attempt to drown out the AIC's militant chants of, "1,2,3,4 — US out of El Salvador! 5,6,7, 8 — Defend the Soviet and Cuban workers states!" and "Abajo, abajo, abajo imperialismo! Que viva, que viva, que viva socialismo!" The SWP chant of "No troops, no war, freedom for El Salvador" was swamped by an AIC counterpoint of "No troops, class war, revolution in El Salvador!"

At the end of the march the impressive contingent marched in formation into the City Square past a mostly subdued CISCAC. As the SWP urged the rally to break up, AIC representatives addressed the crowd, stressing the need to take a side in the civil war and attacking the SWP/CISCAC for their uncritical hailing

of the FDR's popular-frontist class collaborationism.

The line was drawn on June 13 and 20. On the one side were the reformists, who demonstrated their determination to try to silence the voice of militant class struggle and to build a "solidarity" movement based on political submission to the liberal bourgeoisie. On the other was the SL-initiated Anti-Imperialist Contingent, which alone stood in class solidarity with the workers and peasants of El Salvador in their struggle to militarily defeat US imperialism and the butcher junta. That is why dozens of non-party militants marched with the AIC, why others moved to join the SL in the immediate wake of the AIC's campaign, and why many others are beginning to see — in the words of one previously hostile marcher — that "the Sparts are the only leftists around". We have a world to win — join us! ■

Petition protests thug attack

At the June 13 El Salvador demonstration in Sydney, members of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), Communist Party (CPA) and the Committee in Solidarity with Central America and the Caribbean (CISCAC) physically attacked the Anti-Imperialist Contingent in an attempt to prevent it from participating in the march. The attackers singled out and ripped the Contingent's lead banner, "Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftists". There is no place for this outrageous behaviour in the workers movement. The undersigned condemn this act of thuggery as a gross violation of workers democracy. While not necessarily agreeing with the politics of the Anti-Imperialist Contingent or its initiator, the Spartacist League, we affirm the right of political tendencies in the left and labour movement to carry their own banners without threat of physical assault.

Partial list of signatories include:

A Albenese, ALP; Rebecca Albury; S Bakri; Bob Bath, Ed *Rabelais*; Robert Bell, PKIU; Jeff Benjamin; Jeff Bloor; Colin Bray; Alan Bray; Peter Broadhead; Roger Cameron; A Costa; D Crusoff, PKIU; Pauline Dewar, ACOA; B Donnelly, PKIU; Brian Dooley, APTU; A Eaton, ACOA; John Paul Esposito; June Esposito; John Franchella; Sydney Uni CISCAC; Owen Gager; B Garthwaite, Deputy Exec Rep, ATMOEA; P Gould; A Griffith, PKIU; E Haig, ATMOEA; W Harris, APTU Union Rep; Jane Henderson, APTU; Mike Hickey; Pat Hickey; R E Jessop; Richard Lauf; John Layfield; L Leabon, APTU; Gary Lubimowski; T McDonald, PKIU; David McEvoy; Peter McGrady; Alex McIntosh; B Markovic, UNSW Socialist Club; Frank Micallef; K Mitchell, ATMOEA; Shane Moore, VSTA; L Moran; R Moran, TTUV; S Morrell, ATMOEA; Therese Mount; Adrian Murrer; Peter Musicka; Michael Potter, ALP; Les Potts, ACOA; R Rees, PKIU; John Ried, ACOA; Michelle Robertson; Daniela Rosas; Debbie Sarmonikas; B Schaffer; W Senanayake; Harry Singh; V Smith; B Stebbing, PKIU; Helen Tait; Bono Testini, ATEA; Allison Thorne, ex IS, GCN; Adam Tiller, Melb Uni Soc Club; Isi Unikoski, Politics Dept Melb Uni; Rob Watson; Michael Watkins, ALP/ACOA; Glen Waterhouse; Mickey Waterhouse; Laurie Wheeler, ACOA; Aarn Whitehouse

Organisation listed for identification purposes only.



80 solidarise with AIC in City Square. Anti-imperialists address crowd after closed CISCAC rally.

British IMG expels Communist Faction

On 16 May the International Marxist Group (IMG), British section of the Pabloist rotten-bloc "United Secretariat" (USec), carried out the largest and most significant political purge in its history: the wholesale expulsion of sixteen members who constituted the left-oppositional Communist Faction (CF). Though nine members of the CF were expelled for political collaboration with the international Spartacist tendency (iSt), the CF as a whole was expelled for its refusal to submit to a unprecedented political loyalty oath affirming that the IMG was "revolutionary Marxist" even as it presented scathing critiques of the IMG's blatant attacks on the Marxist programme.

This purge shatters the pretence of internal democracy which the traditionally faction-ridden IMG once boasted. More importantly, the political questions posed in this bureaucratically aborted factional struggle are the key issues confronting ostensible proletarian revolutionaries today — the Russian question, the Labour Party, Ireland, Iran. They cannot be suppressed. On the contrary, having erupted dramatically to the surface as a result of this purge, these questions compel every IMG member to confront the choice which faced the members of the CF. Veteran IMG leader Bob Pennington posed it himself several years ago, when he said that ostensible Trotskyists would be forced to choose between the two "mainstreams", the USec and the iSt — by which he meant to suggest that the USec would be "where the action is" while the iSt represented the "sectarian wilderness". But what was patently evident to those elements of the CF who have pursued the political logic of their programmatic struggle, as it was to the comrades in France and Germany whose break from the rightward-moving USec is documented elsewhere in this issue, the choice in reality is between increasing adaptation to Cold War anti-Sovietism and liquidation into the social democracy, or allegiance to the revolutionary banner of Trotskyism upheld by the Spartacist tendency.

Today the IMG is poised for liquidation into Labour's left wing headed by Tony Benn, and the question is posed more starkly than ever. Indeed it was on this question that the internal factional struggle came to a head. As a CF statement distributed to a *Socialist Challenge* rally in London the week after the expulsions put it:

"The expulsion of the Communist Faction (and any serious opposition to liquidation into the Labour Party) is the tribute offered for full membership in the Tony Benn supporters' club."

The rally itself — featuring a Soviet dissident who pronounced "a plague on both your houses" on Brezhnev and Reagan, GLC Labour "left" Ken Livingstone and a tame Ernest Mandel — provided a graphic display of the anti-Trotskyist revisionism of the IMG which the CF had struggled against: an un-



Long gone the days of "Victory to the NLF" and scorn for Labour Party reformism. IMG now hastens to join anti-Soviet social democracy.

critical platform for anti-Sovietism and "left" Labourism.

IMG in crisis

In recent years the IMG has staggered from crisis to crisis, plagued by disorientation. Sharpened Cold War tensions and an increasingly rightist climate internationally have exercised a powerful corrosive effect on the leftist impulses which first impelled the IMG's core cadre into revolutionary activity a decade ago, producing significant demoralisation and defections. One get-rich-quick scheme after another has failed, with increasing rapidity and increasing rightist concessions. Years of incessant factional warfare — which at its peak mounted to six different tendencies (at the 1973 and 1976 conferences) — never escaped a framework of centrist impressionism and served only to dull the political senses and demean political struggle.

In mid-1979, one longtime oppositional cadre, Stephen Harney, alarmed over the USec's capitulation to clerical reaction in Iran, made a decisive break with the centrist politics of the IMG. As Harney put it recently,

"Perhaps I didn't know a lot about Iran at that time, but one thing I knew was that there was no way a movement led by feudalistic Persian-chauvinistic religious fanatics like Khomeini was going to 'open up' the road to proletarian revolution!

On the contrary, here we had a 'mass movement' that would be used to crush the national minorities, the workers movement and women who wanted equal rights. Yet only the Spartacists recognised and acted on this simple obvious fact."

A former member of the Political Committee and Central Committee and then member of the Control Commission, Harney initiated a struggle within the IMG different to that he had waged as leader of Tendency/Faction A — one of the two major groupings inside the IMG in the mid-1970s — this one was to be based on a coherent Trotskyist programme. In the wake of a series of failed "unity offensives" directed against various small state-capitalist groupings, the IMG in late 1979 was moving towards its grand unity offensive — aimed at unprincipled fusion with the state-capitalist SWP of Tony Cliff. The programmatic reflex in this appetite for fusion with a Soviet-defeatist tendency was rapidly demonstrated by the initial line in *Socialist Challenge*, authored by Tariq Ali, of Soviet troops out of Afghanistan — unadulterated third campism. Harney submitted a document titled, "So you thought defence of the Soviet Union was not a central issue?":

"The whole 'regroupment project' of the last few years has been based on finding 'common ground' with the ISA, Big Flame and, most important of all, the SWP. When the leaders of both major tendencies argued that defence of the USSR is not a burning issue today, they revealed how far they have already moved towards

the SWP's position. Defence of the USSR against imperialism and internal counterrevolution is always a central question for Trotskyists.

"The line on Afghanistan is simply the most shocking evidence to date that underlying the leadership's search for 'common ground' with the SWP is an anti-Leninist practice — adaptation to programmes other than the programme of revolutionary Marxism."

And indeed Harney's position on Afghanistan received nearly twenty per cent of the delegate votes at the February 1980 National Conference, while a resolution submitted by Harney demanding recognition that defence of the Soviet Union was a principled question for revolutionaries (and thus implicitly counterposed to the majority project of fusion with the Cliffites) was passed with a larger majority than any other resolution put to the conference. One notable exception voting against it was soon-to-be IMG national secretary Steve Potter!

The fight for principled politics in the IMG had begun. And with it began the majority's campaign of bureaucratic suppression. All four tendencies combined against Harney's demand that a line discussion take place before the membership. The clear contrast between the unprincipled character of all the other tendencies and the programmatically-based grouping around Harney which was to become the Communist Tendency and later the Communist Faction was to be demonstrated by the fact that the CF picked up supporters from all four of the tendencies represented at the conference.

Already by the time of the conference, Harney was collaborating closely with another longtime member and with one of the IMG's leading youth cadre, Tony Vanzler. Vanzler took the fight for a Trotskyist position into the founding conference of Revolution Youth, which had responded to the Afghanistan events with an explicitly Soviet-defencist line.

With the outbreak of the Iran/Iraq war, a document authored by Vanzler responded to the IMG's craven support for Khomeini's jihad against the "infidel" Iraqis with a consistent revolutionary defeatist line, and explained:

"In practice, supporting the mass movement led by Khomeini amounted to reducing the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution to just a 'good idea' for discussion, whilst operating on the basis of a two-stage conception of revolution: subordinating the question of what

CF statement on expulsion, 16 May:

Cde Harney smiled and then made a statement roughly as follows:

'Well, comrades, we knew it was going to be end-game, that you were going to throw us out one way or another this weekend. We were hardly going to declare the IMG revolutionary Marxist having produced five documents demonstrating that it was not. We appeal to comrades of the IMG to study those documents carefully, and we are sure there are even comrades in this room who know we are right. We are proud to be supporters of the iSt, and we think that everybody who wants to be a Trotskyist should be a supporter of the iSt. That's where the future lies — it certainly doesn't lie with the IMG which, with the CC document on the Labour Party, is set on a course towards political and even organisational liquidation into the Labour "left". We then picked up our stuff, and as we walked out, cde Khalid raised a clenched fist and called out 'Join the iSt!' and cde Harney shouted 'Forward to the rebirth of the Fourth International!'

— from Purge in IMG, Documents of the Communist Faction of the IMG, part II

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Part II

PURGE IN IMG

May 1980

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REGROUPMENT

should replace the Shah to the achieving of maximum unity against him."

This was the only document to which the IMG leadership so much as attempted a political response, a pathetic rehash of slurs about opposition to Khomeini being "pro-imperialist" and "sectarian", and quite consciously aimed at branding the authors, Vanzler et al, as alien to the IMG.

With the Cliffites' rebuff of the IMG courtship, the Potter majority's perspectives were reduced to shambles — and quickly replaced with a new, equally liquidationist drive into the renaissance Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). A struggle against the turn to CND culminated in the submission of a document in December, entitled "Warning! Disarmament slogans only disarm the working class!" Disorientation over the new turn to CND — which the IMG had always opposed in the past — was rife within the organisation, as members were effectively being directed to repudiate the Leninist position on imperialist war in order to build CND. The leadership's response to the challenge on the disarmament line was simple — it was never allowed to see the light of day. To this day, six months after it was submitted, the IMG leadership has never released a document submitted by eight members of the organisation, five of them of ten years or more standing. The document pointed to the chauvinist conclusions inherent in this line:

"The target of the war-drive, the Soviet Union, receives only the minimum mention logically necessary. The initial excuse for the war-drive, Afghanistan, is kept carefully boxed off in separate articles. The issue of the war-drive itself is narrowed down to opposition to the siting of Cruise missiles in 'our' country — because it makes us a target for 'Soviet retaliation'."

It was at this point that the oppositionists consolidated in the formation of a tendency. An "Appeal for the formation of the Communist Tendency" dated 31 January 1981 advanced a rounded platform on the key programmatic questions of the day. It concluded: "Build the IMG in the Bolshevik tradition! Fight for the Trotskyist programme!"

Taking a cue from the reformist American SWP the IMG leadership



Spartacist Britain

"To disarm the bourgeoisie the workers must arm themselves" — Trotsky. IMG backs pacifist CND, which calls for Soviet disarmament; SL/Britain defends the gains of October.

sought to assert as a "norm" that formation of tendencies and factions be restricted to pre-conference periods, a denial of factional democracy. As the majority reacted to the growing rift inside the Labour Party by seeking to become the best boosters for "left" reformist Tony Benn, it grew increasingly apprehensive of the possibility of growing support for the oppositionists. When the CT put resolutions in the branches demanding repudiation of a *Socialist Challenge* article offering explicit support to Benn's reformist programme "as far as it goes" — a programme which included the call for a "non-nuclear defence strategy" — and it passed unanimously in one branch, the IMG decided the time had come to crack down. Three CTers were brought up on frame-up charges for discussing internal matters with other members. The tendency declared itself a faction and submitted a document entitled "Reverse the liquidationist course on the Labour Party!" It warned:

"The fight for a clear policy of 'No political support to "left" reformism in the Labour Party', as advanced in the Communist Tendency platform, could not be more urgent than it is today. What is at

stake is the complete political and organisational liquidation of the IMG into the Labour Party."

On the basis of an informer inside the CF who had renounced all sense of political principle, the IMG Political Committee charged nine members of the CF with collaboration with the Spartacist League. The CF delegation to the Political Committee meeting proudly accepted responsibility for their principled behaviour in fighting for the Trotskyist programme inside the IMG (see inset).

For the rebirth of the Fourth International

The question now facing IMGers is whether they too wish to accept the proud responsibility of fighting for the Trotskyist programme. In the wake of the purge, the IMG has reacted with a furious campaign designed to whip up an anti-Spartacist hysteria inside the organisation, thus far with limited success. In an attempt to poison IMGers against the politics of the CF and SL it has simply lied through its teeth, verging on Healy-style slanders that the SL is a "weapon designed solely to smash up left-wing

organisations" and that the SL sees the IMG as a "counterrevolutionary organisation that had to be smashed". At the same time the leadership has sought to cultivate a virtual reign of terror and paranoia about SL "infiltration" inside the organisation. Anyone who so much as speaks to the SL or the CF or questions the bureaucratic purge is immediately suspect. One IMG'er replied to a *Spartacist Britain* salesman recently: "I could be expelled just for talking to you the way things are going."

There is more involved here than sour grapes over the loss of cadre to the iSt. The IMG in its current state, demoralised, politically diffuse, with a membership which still recalls the days of perennial multi-tendency "democracy", would rapidly disintegrate under the pressures of a liquidationist entry. The CF was expelled in order to expedite that liquidation, and now the purge is being used to harden up the membership — not politically, but organisationally.

At the same time, having expelled the only organised opposition to such a liquidation, the IMG evidently feels compelled to assuage doubts among the membership about the CF's telling political points. Thus the latest *Socialist Challenge* (4 June) carries a double-page spread ostentatiously explaining "Our differences with Tony Benn". Among the more conspicuous "differences" is an attack on "any idea of a 'non-nuclear defence policy' if this means an alliance with imperialism". But what else can it mean under a "left reformist" — ie capitalist — government?

To IMG members who, like the comrades of the CF, are fed up with apologising for clerical reaction, anti-Soviet pacifism and Labourism, we say: the construction of an authentically Trotskyist vanguard is an urgent necessity. Examine the platform of the CF, currently engaged in discussions with the Spartacist League. Follow their principled lead. In its "Dossier" the IMG PC agonises over the danger of Spartacist "sleepers" and the prospect of a "second wave" and serious losses from Revolution Youth. We can assure the PC there will be a second wave, if not a third, of comrades who awaken to the recognition that there is a consistent Trotskyist alternative to the USec's politics of capitulation — perhaps sooner than they think. ■

— reprinted from *Spartacist Britain* no 33, June 1981

France, Germany

Trotskyists break from USec

The European groupings of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec — the international bloc to which the Socialist Workers Party belongs) are today plagued by disarray and disorientation, poised for another liquidationist plunge into the mass reformist parties of the sort which marked the political destruction of the Fourth International nearly thirty years ago. The policy of "entrism sui generis", authored by Michel Pablo, posed a period of long-term entry into the social-democratic and Communist parties premised on pressuring the reformist bureaucracies to the left in the hope that they could serve as "blunted instruments" for proletarian revolution. The conclusions were explicitly revisionist: a denial of the struggle for the Trotskyist program as the sole vehicle for socialist revolution.

The past year has seen the USec make a big play toward social democracy in Europe. At its February 1980 National Conference, a majority of the German Gruppe Internationale Marxisten voted against electoral support to the SPD. But at the insistence of the USec, the GIM leadership caved in and went all the way for Helmut Schmidt in the German elections, just as the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (LCR) did with

Mitterrand in the recent French elections. In Britain the International Marxist Group (IMG) is preparing for liquidation into the Tony Benn-led left wing of the British Labour Party. As the rightward motion of these followers of Ernest Mandel has accelerated apace, it has become increasingly difficult to discern the political cleavage between the European-based centrist sections and the reformist wing led by the American Socialist Workers Party which once threatened to rip the USec's rotten-bloc "International" apart.

But this liquidationist course has been challenged head-on by USec militants in Europe. Rejecting the Pabloite counterfeit of Trotskyism, two members of the GIM and one comrade of the LCR have recently resigned from their respective organisations with a perspective of joining the Troztkistische Liga Deutschlands and the Ligue Troztskyiste de France, sections of the international Spartacist tendency. Combined with the expulsion of the Communist Faction from the IMG, this represents the greatest single accretion of USec cadre to the banner of authentic Trotskyism yet seen in Europe. Nor will it be the last. We reprint below excerpts from the resignation statement from the GIM by Comrades Bernhard and Claudius, and

an abridged adaptation of Comrade Demos' struggle within the LCR.

GIM oppositionists: "Enough! Build a Leninist party!"

... the crisis of humanity is the crisis of proletarian leadership: this sentence from the Transitional Program is today more valid than ever before. But it gets clearer and clearer: the so-called "Fourth International" will never be able to solve this crisis. We have seen how this "Fourth International" became the apologist for the clerical reactionary Khomeini and how in Nicaragua, capitulating to the FSLN, the perspective for a Trotskyist party was sabotaged and its own comrades were denounced. We saw how the line of support to the bourgeois SPD/FDP coalition was rammed through and how now the pro-capitalist VGB and SPD trade-union bureaucracy are called upon to bring its influence to bear in Poland — which means nothing other than paving the way for social counter-revolution. We have seen this International put out to pasture did not even manage to draw the class line in Afghanistan and take sides with the Red Army against the reactionary

mullahs and khans, whose social program means only the enslavement of women, as well as the slaughtering and skinning alive of communist schoolteachers. But for us the question is at all times and in all cases the class standpoint: we had a side in Stalingrad and we have one in Afghanistan. We've had enough! We want to build a Leninist party which will lead the working class to the revolutionary seizure of power before it is too late — the GIM is nothing but an obstacle on the path to this goal. . . .

We have sought the causes of the growing social democratisation of the GIM, which is logically bound to lead to liquidation into the SPD/Jusos/Falken [Jusos are the SPD youth, Falken the students and schoolchildren]. . . . Anyone who investigates the history of the USec (or its predecessors) and the GIM — which we urgently call upon the comrades to do — must see that it is not a matter of individual errors which can be corrected, but since Pablo, a method of liquidationism and tailist politics. Pablo, Mandel and Frank paved the way for 1953 at the latest for liquidationist entrism into the Stalinist and social-democratic parties. Ben Bella's regime in Algeria was glorified by the international leadership as a "workers and peasants govern-

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SWP vs "Military victory to Salvadoran leftists" —

Popular-frontist thugs in a frenzy

"How Spartacist League member broke with sectarian politics"; "In reply to the Spartacists — How to defeat imperialism"; "Attempted sabotage of El Salvador solidarity"; "Which side are the Spartacists on? — Sectarians try to disrupt Sydney El Salvador march". Over a period of one and a half weeks, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has devoted page after page of polemic and vituperative slander aimed at justifying its opposition to the anti-imperialist call for "military victory to Salvadoran leftists!" These cynics have to explain why, though protesting that they support the Salvadoran rebels, they refuse to raise this demand and even launched a thug attack on the Spartacist League (SL)-initiated Anti-Imperialist Contingent (AIC) at the Sydney June 13 march, featuring a premeditated attempt to tear down the only banner on the demonstration which carried that slogan.

The centrepiece of the SWP's efforts is the four-page, printed foolscap leaflet ("Which side are the Spartacists on?") put out the week following the June 13 march. Here they "prove" SL "disruption" by citing such "dishonest and provocative" actions by the SL/AIC as ... "organising screenings of the film *El Salvador: Revolution or Death*" (and sending the money where we said we would); a supposed plot to have the same colour armbands as the Committee in Solidarity with Central America and the Caribbean (CISCAC) marshals; trying to "secretly" book their hall for the 14 June teach-in; and obtaining a separate police permit for a rally at the US Consulate! Sounds like something straight out of J Edgar Hoover's *Masters of Deceit*, eh?

Class solidarity vs class collaboration

Behind the litany of charges stands one simple fact, though: *it was the SWP/CISCAC, with their platforms excluding genuine anti-imperialists, which counter-demonstrated against military victory.* The SWP says that a "movement" calling for "US hands off El Salvador" is good enough. The reality is that there is a class civil war going on in El Salvador — that is the real issue, and the SWP studiously avoids taking a side. To call for military victory to the leftists is, after all, a simple statement of class solidarity. But that's what the SWP is against — class solidarity.

Instead, they argue that "if the 'pacifist preachers', 'moralising liberals' and 'boss-class politicians' decide, for their own reasons, to support such a movement [as "US hands off"], we think it's all to the good". It's all a matter of "exploiting contradictions within the enemy camp". What crap! The SWP not only goes down on its knees to beg the liberal wing of "the enemy camp" to give it respect-



Workers Vanguard
Defeatism on Vietnam War, revolutionary vs bourgeois: SL/US called for NLF/DRV to win (left); SWP said "support our GIs".

ability, they suppress calls for a proletarian class solution in order to make that possible. So they have discovered that "military victory to Salvadoran leftists" is "abstract sloganeering" (unlike CISCAC's neutralist "Let the Salvadoran people decide", of course). After all, Don Chipp wouldn't like it.

To give this open capitulation to bourgeois liberals a "left" veneer, the SWP occasionally adds that "the demand for military victory of the FDR doesn't speak to the mass of Australian workers... The SL isolates itself from the consciousness of the working class" (*Direct Action*, 10 June, quoting ex-SL renegade Dawn McEwan). Thus the SWP tailors its demands on El Salvador to suit the consciousness of workers in... Australia! But the Marxist program is precisely not dependent on the level of consciousness of the working class at any given point in time, but reflects the objective situation and state of the class struggle. As Trotsky put it:

"The program must express the objective tasks of the working class rather than the backwardness of the workers...."

"Our tasks don't depend on the mentality of the workers. The task is to develop the mentality of the workers...."

"That is why all the arguments that we cannot present such a program because the program doesn't correspond to the mentality of the workers are false. They express only fear of the situation. Naturally, if I close my eyes I can write a good rosy program that everybody will accept. But it will not correspond to the situation. I believe that this elementary argument is of the utmost importance."

— "The political backwardness of the American workers", 19 May 1938; emphasis added

The SWP's role over El Salvador is nothing new. When the South African army, backed by the CIA, invaded Angola in late 1975, the SWP refused the necess-

ary military defence of the Cuban-backed MPLA forces: "At some point, the situation could change in such a way that we would call for material support to the MPLA" (*Militant*, paper of the US SWP, 23 January 1976 — emphasis added).

In early 1978, a year before the fall of the shah of Iran, the SWP even denounced the slogan "Down with the shah!" as... "very ultimatic and ultraleft" (*Militant*, 13 January 1978)! When the mullahs won, however, the SWP went all out to defend their attacks on leftists, women, homosexuals and national minorities, while denouncing the SL's call for "Down with the shah! Down with the mullahs! For workers revolution in Iran!" They even chose to walk off their own demonstration in defence of the HKE prisoners, in mid-1979, rather than stand alongside a militant Spartacist contingent!

In the middle of the 1979 Sandinista offensive against the Nicaraguan dictator Somoza, the SWP shamelessly printed articles co-written by one Fausto Amador (a man who had previously given an interview on Somoza's television, where he urged other guerrillas to lay down their arms) denouncing the Sandinista preparations for the final offensive as "a fatal course" (*Intercontinental Press*, 11 June 1979). The FSLN was "voluntaristic and precipitate" (read: ultraleft) in trying to stage an uprising in September 1978. But as soon as the Sandinistas won, the SWP jumped on the bandwagon to become the best apologists for the Sandinistas' breaking of strikes and their attempts to make a deal with Washington.

The real lessons of Vietnam

By far the best example is the Vietnam War. The SWP's four-page diatribe remarks in horror: "The Spartacists' own June 13 leaflet actually boasts that 'the Spartacist League/US campaigned for "Labor Strikes Against the War", "Military Victory to the NLF/DRV" and raised funds with the slogan "Every Dime Buys a Bullet for the NLF"'" (emphasis in original). Yes, we are proud of the fact that we stood for the victory of the Vietnamese workers and peasants in their civil war against US imperialism and its Saigon puppets. The SWP wouldn't have been caught dead with such militant expressions of internationalist class solidarity, though, because the US SWP was busy trying to unite with the "antiwar" wing of the Democratic Party — the party that gave the world the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba, the bombing of North Vietnam, the marines in Santo Domingo and... the "reform" junta whose heirs rule in El Salvador today.

Today they say: "It was not sideline rants for 'Labor Strikes Against the War!' that encouraged workers like the wharfies and seamen here to impose bans of shipments of military supplies to Vietnam,

but the millions of people who took to the streets around the world...." At the time, the SWP (then in the form of the Socialist Youth Alliance) actively campaigned against such labour action, arguing that "it would be a tragic mistake to abandon the existing movement... by throwing a major part of our resources into factory agitation" (*Direct Action*, August 1971). And this polemic against antiwar strikes came after the wharfies and seamen had taken exemplary action! As for the "millions who took to the streets", hundreds of thousands did demand "Victory to the NLF!" As for the peace crawls, Isaac Deutscher put it well when he said of one march in April 1967 in Washington, DC, that he'd exchange the whole demonstration for just one dock strike.

In Vietnam, too, the US SWP pretended that the issue was only "self-determination", thereby ignoring the question of defending the North Vietnamese deformed workers state as well as the question of what side to take in the civil war. When asked who ought to win, SWPer Fred Halstead replied: "I don't know — I'm not Vietnamese"! But the slogan we raised in the aftermath of Nixon's bombing of Cambodia in 1970 and in the wake of the Kent State killings was a felt, immediate demand which corresponded to the objective tasks in hand: "All Indochina Must Go Communist!" Today, Indochina is out of the capitalist orbit — but no thanks to the "peaceful, legal" marches organised by the SWP. After the SWP's "boys" came home in the early seventies, the antiwar movement disappeared and it was left to the heroic Vietnamese fighters to win their victory on the battlefields of South East Asia.

The US SWP cemented its alliance with liberal Democrats by drawing a line of blood. At the July 1971 conference of the National Peace Action Coalition in New York, SWP thugs attacked supporters of the SL/US and the left-Stalinoid Progressive Labor Party who protested the presence of imperialist politician Vance Hartke on the platform. Over El Salvador, the SWP has again drawn a line of blood against the advocates of class solidarity, in pursuit of the same popular-frontist appetites. In their book "disruption" means opposing the consolidation of class-collaborationist alliances.

Military victory vs negotiated settlement

Under pressure after its attack failed to silence the Anti-Imperialist Contingent, "fully support, not only their [the rebels] military victory, but their political victory, and the creation of an FDR government"! The SWP's deeds show where they stand on military victory, but what about "pol-



SWP frenzy — reams of lies, slanders against "irrelevant" Spartacist League

itical victory" and the call for an "FDR government"?

The SWP's statement is a declaration of political confidence in the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), a cross-class alliance in which the leftist workers and peasants organisations are subordinated to the liberal bourgeois component — in other words, a popular front. The FDR's current leader is Guillermo Ungo. In 1972, Ungo was the running mate of current junta chief Jose Napoleon Duarte. In October 1979 he joined the "reform" junta; three months later he resigned. But his resignation came *after* the army had massacred striking workers at the Lido, Diana, Arco Ingeniero and Apex plants and machine-gunned peasants in Morazan, Chalatenango, San Miguel and other provinces. He has been described by a former US ambassador to El Salvador, Murat Williams, as an "authentic anti-communist" (*Age*, 17 March).

Ungo & Co have little popular support, but their role in the popular front is to ensure that the struggle does not go beyond the bounds of capitalism. The SWP denies this and quotes the FDR's call for "a new army for our country, one that will arise fundamentally on the basis of the People's Army to be built in the revolutionary process" in support of its claim that the FDR stands for "abolishing the capitalist army". But the SWP omits the FDR's call, just a few paragraphs later, for the People's Army to "include the soldiers, noncommissioned officers, officers and chiefs of the current army who conduct themselves honestly ..." (emphasis added). This is not a call to abolish the junta's armed forces, but an invitation to sections of the officer corps — carefully selected and trained for decades in the bloody suppression of the working masses — to join the FDR. The "revolutionary democratic government" is likewise to include "small and medium industrialists ... the progressive clergy ... advanced sections of the Christian

Democracy, worthy officers of the army"; in other words, it is to be a capitalist government.

"Selective quotation", whines the SWP, which prefers to quote the program's pledges to nationalise the banking and financial system, foreign trade, electricity, petroleum refining etc, and to carry out a land reform. But in El Salvador today, the junta has *already* nationalised banking and foreign trade. As for the land reform, the FDR nowhere calls for expropriating the coffee plantation owners — the major base of the country's landholding oligarchy. In reality, the FDR policy is no more radical than the junta's current "land reform", which likewise doesn't touch the coffee barons, but which like the FDR talks about putting the land "at the disposal of the broad masses who work it".

We "selected" what happens to be the *decisive* sections of the program because they are pledges which Ungo & Co will throw back in the face of the masses in the event that the junta falls and the masses want to go further: we can't "alienate" those "medium industrialists", they will say, just as the SWP says we can't "alienate" Don Chipp. The one thing the FDR program does not call for is the one thing that can carry out in practice the expropriation of the landlords and capitalists — the workers taking power in their own name, the *dictatorship of the proletariat*.

In El Salvador, the bourgeoisie is solidly united behind the junta, leaving in the FDR popular front only individual bourgeois politicians. Writing of a comparable popular front coalition — the government of Republican Spain during 1936-39 — Trotsky spelt out the role of these individuals:

"Having staked everything on a military dictatorship, the possessing classes were able, at the same time, to make use of their political representatives of *yesterday* in order to paralyse, disorganize and

afterwards strangle the socialist movement of the masses in 'republican' territory ...

"[T]he left republicans ... represented no one but themselves. Thanks, however, to their allies ... these political phantoms played the decisive role in the revolution. How? Very simply. By incarnating the principles of the 'democratic revolution', that is, the inviolability of private property."

— "The lessons of Spain: the last warning", December 1937

It was the Stalinists, the social democrats and the Anarchists who oriented to the "progressive" bourgeoisie and the "democratic" imperialist powers — France, Britain — for support, rather than mobilising the workers internationally to fight for a military victory over Franco and for socialist revolution in Spain.

In order to prove its loyalty to these "liberal" capitalists, the Stalinists launched an attack on the Barcelona Telephone Exchange — the symbol of the revolution — in May 1937, and began a murderous campaign against the Trotskyists, followers of Andres Nin's centrist POUM and other leftists whom they denounced as "disrupters" who were providing a "left cover for Franco". The end result of this counterrevolutionary repression was the fall of Barcelona to Franco in early 1939. Today, in defence of its own popular-frontist aims, the SWP repeats these Stalinist slanders — even going so far as to try to silence our revolutionary-proletarian call for the military victory of the leftists in El Salvador.

In Chile in 1970, the US SWP said it would be "suicidal isolation" to fail "to recognize the positive elements" in Allende's Unidad Popular (*Intercontinental Press*, 5 October 1970). We alone warned that "any 'critical support' to the Allende coalition is class treason, paving the way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people" (*Spartacist* no 19, November-December 1970).

Tragically, our warning was bloodily confirmed when Pinochet struck in September 1973. Today in El Salvador we again warn that the FDR popular front will lead to the defeat of the masses, if the workers and peasants do not break from this bourgeois formation in time. By telling the masses to put their political confidence in the FDR, the SWP criminally helps pave the way for another Chile.

Defence of Cuba, USSR begins in El Salvador

Reagan repeatedly threatens to blockade Cuba, to cut off "support" for the Salvadoran masses "at the source". Nothing is ruled out, the Pentagon says. They've done it before — remember the Bay of Pigs! And 20 years after the Cuban Revolution, the US still has a base on *Cuban soil* — Guantanamo Bay. When Reagan's aides say El Salvador is a "textbook case of Communist subversion" and "Soviet aggression", these lies are part of a campaign to whip up war fever against the USSR.

The SWP's response? "Spartacist slogans like 'Defence of Cuba and the USSR begins in El Salvador' are nothing more or less than a 'left' cover for the imperialist propaganda that tries to portray the Salvadoran masses' struggle for liberation as 'Soviet (or Cuban) aggression'." With this Stalinist-style allegation, the SWP tries to wrench El Salvador out of the context of Reagan's Cold War threats against Cuba and the USSR. It is an attempt to avoid the central question of world politics today: defence of the deformed/degenerated workers states against imperialism.

From the beginning of the civil war, we pointed out that "if there had been adequate Soviet, Cuban and Nicaraguan aid ... there wouldn't have been more than 12,000 victims of the junta ... in 1980! It

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Dawn McEwan's flight from Trotskyism

"I was a teenage sectarian"

The successful Spartacist League (SL) campaign to build Anti-Imperialist Contingents for the El Salvador "Days of Action" in Sydney and Melbourne exposed the refusal of the reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) to take sides for the military victory of the Salvadoran leftists. It therefore came as something of a godsend when a defector from the SL, Dawn McEwan, turned up on the SWP's doorstep early last month. Days before the Sydney El Salvador march, the 10 June *Direct Action* ran a two-page spread by Allen Myers, based on an interview with McEwan: "How Spartacist League member broke with sectarian politics". McEwan "broke out of the framework of historical pessimism" and found "the way from sectarianism to Marxism", says Myers, thanks to "the rise of the class struggle in recent years" — no less!

The truth about McEwan's defection is several orders of magnitude less earth-shaking. While the SWP leadership has hinted to its members this was only the beginning of a deep split in the Melbourne branch of the SL, their new recruit is so incapable of facing a political argument with her former comrades that the SWP has virtually put her in political "purdah". Let an SL comrade start an argument and four or five SWP shepherds immediately appear to cluck-cluck that it's "cruel" to argue with poor little Dawn and take her away. Some regroupment!

So rapid and demoralised was her flight from Trotskyism that she refused to conduct a political struggle for her new-found ideas within the SL. She even voted *against* a motion requesting that the differences be put in writing, at the one local meeting at which she bothered to argue for hers at all. The next day,



Quick-switch McEwan: past, present ... future?

12 May, she quit — exactly *two weeks* after first raising "questions" about the SL's line! A unanimously adopted motion at the following branch meeting (17 May) characterised this hasty exit:

"After suddenly raising fundamental differences with our line on Poland tending toward third-campism on the Russian question and embracing the SWP/CISCAC popular frontist position on El Salvador, [McEwan] walked out of the SL without a fight, deserting her duty — both to the party and to herself — to fight her differences out. This political defection seems based in despair of the proletarian revolution, the abandonment of any class struggle perspective, and a total collapse of revolutionary will."

Contrast the recent break of new forces from the politically bankrupt, rapidly

rightward-moving European centrists of the United Secretariat (USec), the SWP's "International", toward the Trotskyism of the international Spartacist tendency. The International Marxist Group in Britain, for instance, has just *expelled* an oppositional tendency of 16 — the Communist Faction — for refusing a bureaucratic ultimatum to sign a statement effectively repudiating their political views, after an energetic political struggle against the IMG leadership's opportunism. In Sri Lanka, the iSt won new supporters as the result of a protracted political struggle with the tired, centrists of Edmund Samarakkody's Revolutionary Workers Party. Contrast, for that matter, the revolutionary enthusiasm of the 45 new members who have joined the SL/US

since May 3 under the impact of our stand on El Salvador.

McEwan's collapse of will after five years' membership, at the age of 22, was asymptomatic and generalised. She began to exhibit signs of extreme political confusion and disorientation last year — even questioning whether god didn't exist after all. *Now* she denies her break was a failure of revolutionary will. But this is what she wrote to a comrade overseas on 18 November last year:

"... I feel like for most of this year I had just been going through the motions of being a party member — not really fighting politically or consciously working things through, just being.... And I thought hell you know, I'm a pretty competent person I could really go forward in the SL and still just be going through the motions, and not really have my heart or my guts into it, like I felt I used to have, and this would be really fake. "And if I don't have my guts into things, why not? Maybe I don't believe in it anymore. Plus I was restless — I don't want to live the way I'm living — what else is there in life.... And then it worried me ... that *my personal life could shake me politically*."

— emphasis added.

At the time SL comrades temporarily talked her out of a descent into Christian superstition or middle-class political apathy. But her disaffection suddenly resurfaced in early May, this time in the form of deep-going political differences beginning over Poland and rapidly extending over a range of questions. While still protesting — and demonstrating — great "confusion", she claimed that the SL was sectarian, that it deliberately "cut itself off" from political movements and would be unable to break out of small-group existence.

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El Salvador -

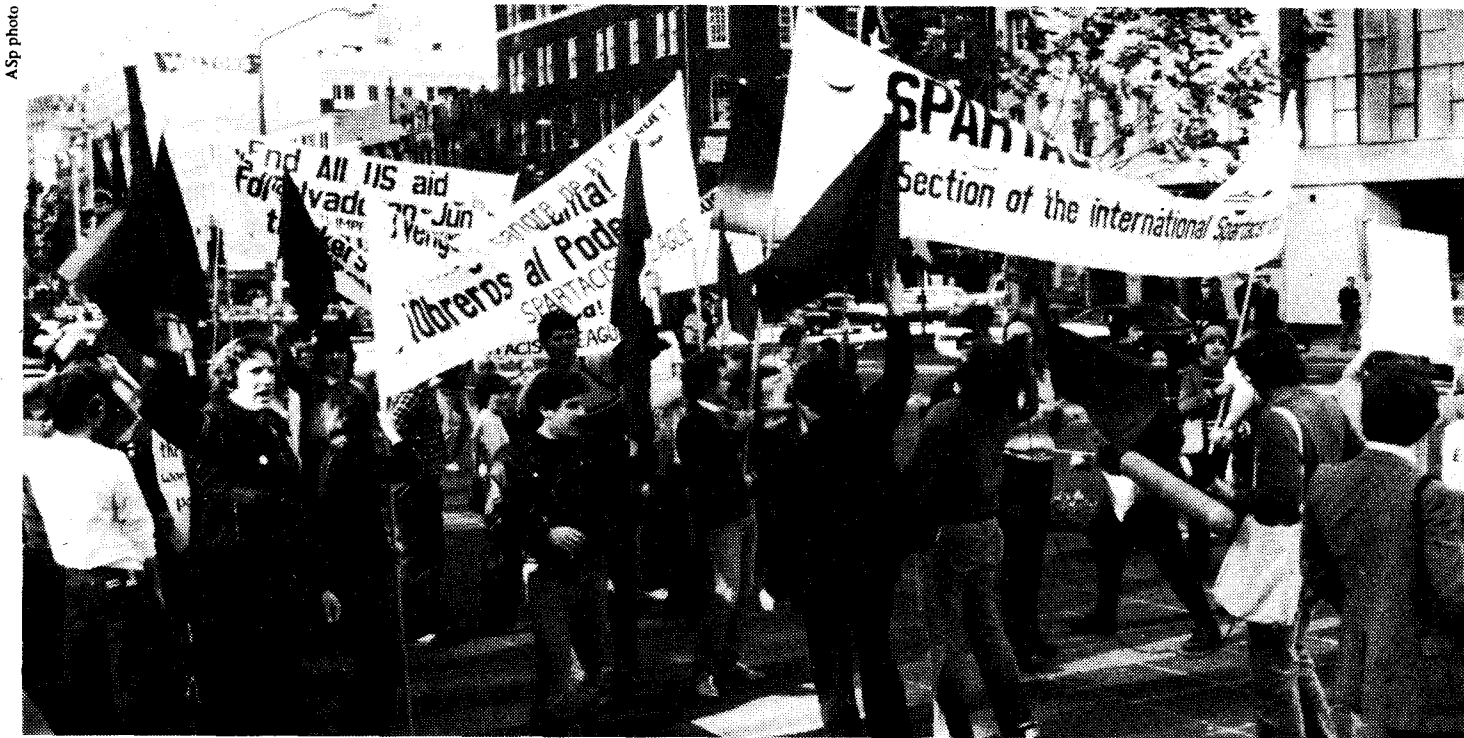
"Leftist rebels must win the war!"

Excerpts from speeches at Anti-Imperialist Rally, US Consulate, Sydney

David Grumont, Sydney Spartacist League Executive Committee

In El Salvador, it is really basic and elementary. It is a classic class war. On one side, the fourteen families — the landlords, capitalists, military junta and their death squads. And they're backed by US imperialism, with the CIA, the Green Berets and the Huey helicopters. Their methods are massacre, rape, torture. On the other side there's the workers and peasants and youth, fighting for their very lives and for their social liberation. In a war like that we have a side. Sure, we're for "US hands off" — of course. But it's hardly adequate in a class civil war. We're for the workers and peasants *winning* that war. We're for the workers and peasants achieving their liberation. Because, comrades, communists don't hide their goals, aims and methods. We're for social revolution in El Salvador, we're for social revolution throughout Central America. That's why we're here and that's why we've got an Anti-Imperialist Contingent. And also because we know that Reagan and Haig's ultimate goal is Cuba and the Soviet Union. He said so; Haig said so. And that's why we say that defence of Cuba and the Soviet Union begins now in El Salvador.

I would like to ask anyone here who believes it is enough to call for "US hands off": what about Indonesia in 1965? What about Chile in 1973? The massacres of the left in those countries were carried out by the local bourgeoisie and its army. There was no direct Green



Anti-Imperialist Contingent rallies outside US Consulate, Sydney, 13 June: "1,2,3,4 — Leftist Rebels Must Win the War! 5,6,7,8 — Nothing to Negotiate!"

Beret interference. Certainly, the CIA had its hands in it, but there was no direct interference. Yet those who say that "US hands off" is an adequate slogan, by the logic of their own position stand mute and silent before the massacre of the Indonesian workers in 1965 and the massacre of the Chilean workers in 1973.

And that is precisely the position in 1965 that Australian social democracy had. Tom Uren, Clyde Holding — who were supposed to speak up then — were silent. Because, in fact, the Labor Party supported the junta coming to power, because it removed the possible Asian communist threat, as they saw it. That was their position in 1965. So our position is clear: the workers and peasants must win in El Salvador.

But there's another response; we've seen it today, and that's the reformist response, typified by those who have built the CISCAC committee, such as the Socialist Workers Party, the CPA and the SPA. These people are frightened by the prospect of the Reagan years and they see around them plenty of other people who are frightened. Liberal bourgeois politicians like Don Chipp, some social democrats and some religious worthy figures, who they keep parading on their platforms. So they reach out to these people in the most pacifist way they can. They claim it's supporting a broad campaign. That's got nothing to do with class solidarity. So they've done it in this country around El Salvador. In the first demo in Australia, in Melbourne last

January, CISCAC's main speaker was Don Chipp, Australian Democrat. Now during the Vietnam War, Chipp was navy minister in this country. He was up to his neck in the bloody imperialist crimes in Indochina. So to have this scum speak at an El Salvador rally is an insult and brutal slap in the face of the workers and peasants of El Salvador and Vietnam.

Now today, they've moved at least verbally to the left. They've got a few social democrats on their platform, as well as the odd priest. Now the social democrats, as we know, are supporters of reform capitalism, and are not in favour of social revolution in El Salvador or anywhere else. They want a cleaned up capitalist act in El Salvador and that's all they care about. Sure, Uren can come out

JOIN THE SPARTACIST LEAGUE!

"... Dear friends, we are not a party as other parties. Our ambition is not only to have more members, more papers, more money in the treasury, more deputies. All that is necessary, but only as a means. Our aim is the full material and spiritual liberation of the toilers and exploited through the socialist revolution. Nobody will prepare it and nobody will guide it but ourselves. The old Internationals — the Second, the Third, that of Amsterdam, we will add to them also the London Bureau — are rotten through and through.

The great events which rush upon mankind will not leave of these outlived organizations one stone upon another. Only the Fourth International looks with confidence at the future. It is the World Party of Socialist Revolution! There never was a greater task on the earth. Upon every one of us rests a tremendous historical responsibility.

Our party demands each of us, totally and completely. Let the phillistines hunt their own individuality in empty space. For a revolutionary to give himself entirely to the party signifies finding himself.

Yes, our party takes each one of us wholly. But in return it gives to every one of us the highest happiness: the consciousness that one participates in the building of a better future, that one carries on his shoulders a particle of the fate of mankind, and that one's life will not have been lived in vain.

The fidelity to the cause of the toilers requires from us the highest devotion to our international party. The party, of course, can also be mistaken. By common effort we will correct its mistakes.



In its ranks can penetrate unworthy elements. By common effort we will eliminate them. New thousands who will enter its ranks tomorrow will probably be deprived of necessary education. By common effort we will elevate their revolutionary level. But we will never forget that our party is now the greatest lever of history. Separated from this lever, everyone of us is nothing. With this lever in hand, we are all."

— L D Trotsky, "The founding of the Fourth International", October 1938

The June 13 El Salvador demonstration in Sydney drew the line: the Spartacist League and the Anti-Imperialist Contingent stood for the military victory of the Salvadoran leftists; the rest of the left opposed this elementary, immediate demand for the workers and peasants

of El Salvador. Just as workers take a side when picket lines are thrown up — with good unionists on one side, and scabs and company dupes on the other — so we must take a side too — in El Salvador and in all the struggles of the working masses internationally against their capitalist oppressors. There can be no neutrals in the class struggle.

The SL has made its position clear: where do you stand? If you believe in the military victory of the Salvadoran leftists; if you stand for the unconditional defence of the USSR against Reagan's imperialist war drive; if you believe that picket lines mean "don't cross"; if you want to build the party which will lead the working class to power internationally, then you belong with us — the party of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, the party of the Russian Revolution. Join us!

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Sydney: 18-19 July

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Sessions:

1pm, Saturday:

The Popular Front:
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Drawing the Class Line

7pm, Sunday:

Defend the Gains
of October!

Sydney: 2nd floor,
112 Goulburn St

Melbourne: Room 2 YWCA,
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\$2.00 registration fee (includes
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ASp photo

David Grumont.

with the Sunday May Day speechifying, but that's their policy. The Australian Labor Party doesn't even have to the guts to come out and oppose US bases, the bases of this consulate, in this country. Hayden welcomes them, with conditions. Like the government will know when the B-52s are carrying nuclear weapons. What a joke, Hayden!

So, because they're reaching out to these people, the SWP, CPA etc cannot and will not take a side in El Salvador and stand for the victory of our class brothers in that country. Instead they're *opposed* to victory. They say it openly. Poulsen [SWP/CISCAC leader] has said this to me: we're in favour, not of victory, as you people say; we're in favour of a negotiated deal with the junta — [a position] which can only leave the capitalist state intact.

Now comrades, in the El Salvador work, the reformists make a lot of analogies to the Vietnam War — and they're all dead wrong. They still say, "No more Vietnams". We heard it today; it's outrageous! Sure, Chipp can agree with "no more Vietnams"; his side *lost* in Vietnam after all. Our class won! Now it was too long, and there was too much blood spilt, but that was mainly because of the paltry aid from the Soviet Union and the Hanoi Stalinists' own class-collaborationist politics. Now these people don't want aid to the Salvadoran leftists to come from Cuba and the Soviet Union — they're dead against it. So we sympathise with Che, Che's famous slogan — "Two, three, many Vietnams!"

The SWP in particular likes to say that the US lost in Vietnam, not because of the heroism of the Vietnamese workers and peasants, but because millions of people around the world mobilised supposedly on their basis, their peace slogans, which went no further than "troops out now". And they want to recreate this in El Salvador. In point of fact, this is a lie. A large part and certainly the best part of the anti-Vietnam War movement developed in solidarity with the Viet Cong. I remember the slogan in Australia, "One side right, One side wrong, Victory to the Viet Cong!" In France, it was the pro-Moscow Communist Party who campaigned for peace by diplomatic solutions, just like CISCAC say we should today. The young leftists in that country marched through the streets of Paris chanting "Victory to the NLF!" And a few months later, those same young leftists played a key role in igniting the great general strike of May '68.

In the US the student struggles at Columbia, Kent State and Berkeley were based on the same basis. Sure, the SWP over there organised peace crawls through Washington. What happened was thousands of kids marched on these rallies only to have to listen to bourgeois, Democratic liberals speaking, rebuilding illusions in the Democratic Party. This was a crime against the Vietnamese revolution and against history, because these marchers became disillusioned in the Democratic Party and you had the "me decade", and now we've got the Reagan years as a direct result. And anyway these demos stopped dead in the early '70s, when Nixon said he wanted to negotiate. And it took three more years of bloody fighting for the Viet Cong to win their victory.

In this country it was the same; it was a sharp and close fight between those who wanted to take a stand in Vietnam

and the pacifist liberals and social democrats. I remember in Melbourne, hundreds of us wanted to take a stand and there was "Jimmy Jesus" Cairns, who's now building mudcastles somewhere, saying no, don't alienate the middle class. And to his right was the SWP, who even opposed labour actions against the war. Because, again, it might alienate the middle class. Now Fraser's silent majority. The trouble with the New Left during the Vietnam War was not that they tried to take a stand, but that they were politically confused and disoriented, so that many of them looked to Maoism as an answer. But as the Chinese bureaucracy moved right into its present alliance with US imperialism, they were politically destroyed. But, comrades, they were a thousand times right to want to take a side in Indochina, to want to take a side in the class war.

It's because we want those young radicals coming into politics now in opposition to US imperialism that we've taken a clear stand. We've built the Anti-Imperialist Contingent because we want them to have a clear revolutionary program to help direct their anti-imperialist energies to the victory of socialism. Because in a very real way, comrades, El Salvador is the front line, but it's not gonna be the last crime of imperialism, that's for sure. Reagan's already preparing the rest. And in a very real way, the greatest act of solidarity that we can give the workers and peasants of El Salvador is to hasten the building of revolutionary parties in the imperialist heartland, dedicated to overthrowing capitalism root and branch and establishing workers power internationally.

And, comrades, you can't do that, you can't even make a start, unless you can take a side in a class civil war in El Salvador. The organisation I represent, the international Spartacist tendency, is dedicated to one central aim and task — that is to build the revolutionary workers international that will destroy capitalist imperialism once and for all. Join us! Leftist rebels must win the war! Avenge the blood of El Salvador!

Ron Rees, Printing & Kindred Industries Union (PKIU) member, Spartacist League supporter.

Rallies like this and contingents fighting against imperialism and fighting for the victory of insurgents have a tradition... The Waterside Workers Federation in Melbourne, during the Vietnam War, showed the way for working-class action in such a situation as we face today in El Salvador when they idled for months on end US shipping in Port Melbourne.

In the United States, supporters of Spartacist politics in the Longshore union, the waterside workers, the wharfies on the West Coast, put a motion in their union which called for a black ban on shipping to the junta in El Salvador. This is the kind of militant action... which is necessary for the working class to take up everywhere. Of course, they are now faced with a real problem of making this motion something real by fighting for it to be implemented because there, as here in Australia, the misleaders of the working class, the misleaders of the trade unions do not want the working class mobilised around this kind of militant action.



ASp photo

Ron Rees.

June Esposito, Administrative & Clerical Officers Association member.

You'll notice my voice is a bit hoarse; it's hoarse because I got very upset when I saw members of my own union, being Socialist Workers Party representatives, attack the Spartacist League for raising an important demand that should be very clear to all unionists. And that is "military victory" is the only demand that can be genuinely called for. The simple reason being that the experience in the union would be a very good thing to go by.

I know that the level of struggle in the union is nothing like a military struggle in El Salvador. But the lessons to be learnt are identical. I have struggled as a militant in my union for the last three years. We come up against the bureaucracy. We come up against the labour misleaders, these people who want to do deals with the bosses. I've been with them in the backrooms, I know what they do...

There is no middle road. It comes to the point of which side are you on. I have called for strikes in my union; the labour misleaders don't want the strikes, because if they have to go on strike then every member of that union — including members of Telecom's P&IR department [Personnel and Industrial Relations, management representatives within the ACOA] — would have to go on strike with us. And I just can't see them doing that — can you? And a clear class line would be drawn...

I know that the workers in my union, the ACOA, are currently under attack by the government, and the government wants to teach them a lesson; it wants to set the scene for the capitalists to launch an attack on other workers as well. And we have literally begged our leaders to



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June Esposito.

allow us to become involved in the ATEA dispute, and in the APTU dispute. But I'm informed that they can't do it!

What I'm saying here, and why it has relevance to El Salvador, is because these misleaders who are calling for "US out" are calling for some concession from the system, just as our labour misleaders call for. And they just say "US out"; they're not pointing to victory. They're misleading those people, because what happens is that they make deals. And for a while it might seem to be okay, but in order to stay there those people who might wish to lead the workers... have to give concessions to the landowners and their representatives in that Democratic Front.

And so the end of it is that the revolution is not complete; it's not a complete revolution... What happens when you go there is that you say, "Well, we've won something". But then the conditions of the workers continue to become eroded and eroded and they [the capitalists] gradually win back everything they've lost. And there's no real or long-lasting benefit that's going to come to a worker unless the workers themselves have power. And if you don't call for military victory in El Salvador the workers will never have power... And here we have these same people saying "US out of El Salvador" attacking us, attacking us for wanting these people to win, in the same way as the union bureaucrats attack me because I want our workers to win (applause). And so I say the lessons of the union are the lessons of El Salvador. We must take a side. I know

which side I'm on; I don't know which side you're on, but I'm on the side of the workers and peasants in El Salvador and I say "Military victory to the left-wing insurgents in El Salvador!"



ASp photo

Phillipa Naughten, Spartacist League Central Committee.

Many of us saw the film "Revolution or Death" and in it there is a working woman and she yelled out very loud, "The workers battalions are coming; the workers battalions are coming". And that is what we want to do internationally, because the international support we can give is working-class international solidarity — that's the only support that counts.

There's another international force, and that is the force which pretends to be in support of the workers and peasants, but in fact wants to bring about their defeat. And that force is led up by such people as Helmut Schmidt, the German social democrat, leader of the German capitalist state, who wants to advise Reagan that maybe economic aid is the way to solve the problems, that maybe negotiations with the leaders of the FDR would solve the problems, that maybe a new "reform" junta could be built. Maybe using those same leaders, like Guillermo Ungo, who were once in a "reform" junta, which in its turn turned upon the workers and peasants with butchery. The Australian Labor Party, whose representatives are speaking there in Hyde Park, wants to push for the US to stop military aid, but to step up what they call "humanitarian" economic aid. Precisely to bury the possibility of victory of a military struggle that is going on right now in a sellout. Because negotiations can only mean a sellout. ■

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USec...

Continued from page nine

ment", Nasser's Egypt was "centrist" and people like Tito, Mao or Castro were glorified as "unconscious Trotskyists"; guerrillaism was a way to power — of course preferably in places where it is most "successful", for example in Cuba; not, however, for example in the "German Autumn" where the GIM caved in in the face of the rabid West German bourgeoisie's anti-guerrilla witchhunt and disgustingly printed the vicious headline in *was tun* no 175, 15 September 1977, "Individual terror only benefits the right"....

Comrades, Mandel said some time ago that one could only pray for the GIM. We can imagine something better. We want to struggle for the worldwide proletarian revolution and not be "partners in dialogue" for Glotz, Voigt and von Oersten [popular social democrats] or sell reformist/pacifist fairy tales such as "Jobs not Armaments" (*was tun* no 310, 14 April 1981) until an imperialist war decides the question of "socialism or barbarism" in favour of the latter (see our document "For revolutionary anti-militarism" in *RB* no 4, 27 March 1981). Therefore, we are breaking with the GIM, which cannot be reformed, on a comprehensive basis. We are resigning from this rotten organisation in order to take up contact with the international Spartacist tendency, with the TLD.... Break with Pabloite opportunism! Forward to the rebirth of the Fourth International! Long live the proletarian world revolution! Bernhard, Freiburg Claudius, West Berlin

CGT militant quits LCR

One of the key political questions in France today is the popular front. Since the formation of the Union of the Left in the early seventies, the Ligue Trotskyste de France has resolutely combatted this class-collaborationist alliance, and has refused to give even the most critical electoral support to either the Communist Party (PCF) or Socialist Party (PS), as long as they remained tied to this popular frontist formation.

Recently a worker at the Renault-Cleon car plant for ten years, and a member of the CGT who has been a member of the LCR for two years, resigned from the LCR in solidarity with this program. Comrade Demos began his opposition to the class-collaborationist politics of the LCR last October. In an internal bulletin of the Rouen branch he criticised the LCR's political support to "Union dans les luttes", a collection of Eurocommunists, dissident PCF members and social democrats who campaigned for an electoral accord between the PCF and PS.

"The call of the one hundred is a call to reconstruct the popular front Union of the left 'in struggles'. Those who are nostalgic for the Union of the Left... have made an appeal to sign a petition. To amend this petition on struggles, the general strike, does not suffice to generate an anti-popular front content. This is only, as Trotsky said, an appeal for a 'fighting popular front'...."

Discussion in the Renault cell and with the city leadership did not convince Demos that the LCR line was correct. In a more recent document "No, Mitterrand's victory is not a 'first victory' for the working class", Comrade Demos exposed LCR leader Krivine & Co's present capitulation to the popular front: "To justify its support to Mitterrand [the LCR] had explained that throwing out Giscard was the way to encourage workers' struggles. But now you can't find calls for strikes to win our demands anywhere in *Rouge* and even less mention of the general strike". And he presented this alternative to the LCR militants:

"Deceive, calm, demoralise and defeat the working class, that's the aim of the popular front. In these conditions to give it 'credibility' or 'efficiency' is helping the reformists to deceive, demoralise and defeat the working class. If tomorrow the workers begin to fight at Cleon and

oppose Mitterrand they will turn to us and accuse us of having hid the truth, of having strengthened illusions in Mitterrand and of being responsible for putting a bourgeois government into power.... It is necessary to say clearly to the working class: it is the popular front which leads to reaction."

Comrade Demos also had to fight the proposal of Jerome, a leader of the Matti faction at Rouen, to do an entry into the Socialist Party, the ultimate conclusion of the opportunist policies of support to the popular front. With the LCR's current positions such an entry could only be a liquidation in the service of social democracy. But this "entrism" may soon be the official scheme of the USec. As shown by the expulsion of the Communist Faction of the IMG, the leadership of the IMG understands that the future choice for the members of its organisation will be social democracy or Spartacism. We hope that other members of the IMG, the LCR and GIM will also understand it and that they'll make the choice of Trotskyism and the international Spartacist tendency. ■

Ireland...

Continued from page sixteen

British population now favours troop withdrawal while only 29 percent are for maintaining British rule in the Six Counties.

But let us be clear what this new spate of Labour "troops out" calls mean. Tony Benn, like the overwhelming bulk of the new "troops out" politicians, has not been reborn as an anti-imperialist — far from it. His position in the BBC interview made it clear:

"The time has come when we may have to ask the United Nations to set up an international commission, ask for a United Nations peacekeeping force in Northern Ireland, and when the UN peacekeeping force is established to withdraw British troops."

This is hardly even a *liberal* imperialist policy. All Benn wants to do is to remove "our boys" from the seemingly intractable mess that is Northern Ireland before too many more of them get blown away — and even then only after a new gang of imperialist thugs has been sent in under UN auspices.

This is the same Tony Benn who over the last twelve years has supported Westminster's bipartisan terror policies for Northern Ireland every step of the way. Where was Benn only two-and-a-half months ago, when 44 other MPs voted against the renewal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act? Where was he throughout the long and agonising fasts to the death by Bobby Sands and his comrades? Despite constant pressure from Irish activists he refused to come off the pro-imperialist fence where he still sits, opposing the prisoners' demands for political status and searching for alternative ways to defeat the "gunmen". Yet Benn's pro-imperialist musings — symptomatic of a wave of bourgeois defeatism on Ireland — have been seized on with something approaching ecstasy by Benn's camp followers in the pseudo-revolutionary left!

In contrast to these servile opportunists, the Spartacist tendency says: UN troops are imperialist troops — No to Benn's "solution"! Workers: fight for trade union blacking [black bans] of military goods to Ireland! Demand that your organisations campaign for the *unconditional, immediate* withdrawal of the British troops! Oust the Labour/trade union misleaders, betrayers of class struggle at home, accomplices in butchery in Ireland!

British imperialism has reached a dead end in Northern Ireland. "British rule in Ireland", admitted ultra-Tory columnist George Gale in the *Daily Express* last May, "is in the lengthy and bloody business of winding itself up". An important *Economist* leader (23 May) fretted about the current impasse and called for a new initiative to find a federal solution for Northern Ireland. Liberal-imperialist weathervane Conor Cruise O'Brien published a major article in the *Observer* (31 May) arguing for repartition

(perhaps along the River Bann) because: "I am inclined now to believe that the present Northern Ireland can hardly be retained in the United Kingdom, and that the effort to retain it all is likely to lead to a growing 'troops out' movement in Britain."

— emphasis in original

A massive economic liability, subsidised to the tune of more than 1.2 billion pounds a year, Northern Ireland is also increasingly a political liability for Britain. A constant cycle of death and destruction, a horrendous "human rights" image throughout the world, an army locked into a peripheral theatre of war, and one whose morale is reportedly fast on the decline — and for what? British imperialism would genuinely like to wash its hands of the North, let the whole thing go and centre its future dealings with the island on ties with Dublin inside the EEC and NATO. But they are stuck with the consequences of decades of divide-and-rule policies centred on shoring up Protestant ascendancy in the once (but no more) economically strategic North.

Polarisation in the North

Not one of the various imperialist "solutions" now being offered up has even a semblance of reality about it — and for good reason. There is no solution to imperialist oppression and sectarian division in Ireland short of the mobilisation of the proletariat on both sides of the Irish Sea in a struggle for power. So while standing intransigently against the imperialist presence, no revolutionary can be lightminded about the current mounting sectarian tension in Northern Ireland.

The communal polarisation was shown in the 20 May Northern Ireland local government elections. The "middle ground", epitomised by the liberal middle-class Alliance Party, collapsed, while in the Protestant camp the Paisleyites eclipsed the Official Unionists for the first time. Among the Catholics, the milquetoast Social Democratic Labour Party lost ground to the new Irish Independence Party, while four republican candidates who centred their campaigns on the H-Block issue — two each from the Irish Republican Socialist Party and People's Democracy — won surprise victories to the Belfast City Council.

What is urgently needed in Ireland today is a revolutionary vanguard with a program which both stands foursquare against imperialism and shows the way to cut through the Catholic/Protestant sectarian web. Among the key points of such a program are complete opposition to all Loyalist privilege and discrimination, the fight for integrated workers militias to combat both imperialist rampage and Orange and Green sectarian terror, and opposition to the Green nationalist project of forcible reunification of a capitalist Ireland, a sure design for driving the Protestant workers deeper into the arms of the Paisleyites.

The recent elections put the outstanding features of the 26-county Republic into focus: rampaging unemployment, galloping inflation and clerical reaction. Both major bourgeois parties, Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, did their level best to sweep the North under the carpet (RTE television even *banned* the H-Block candidates' campaigning), and both parties in office have carried out their own viciously anti-Republican, anti-working class measures. In fact, two Republicans recently narrowly escaped judicial murder in Mountjoy jail: their sentences having been commuted to 40 years because, no doubt, it would have been a bit embarrassing for Fianna Fail Prime Minister Charlie Haughey to have executed Republicans three days before polling day.

There is no peaceful way to end the imperialist domination of Ireland and the misery and oppression of the Catholic masses. This brutal ruling class, which has committed mass murder upon colonial peoples of all races for centuries must be swept away through the mobilisation of the only force capable of dealing it a death blow: the proletariat.

The task of revolutionaries in Britain is not to cajole the Labour traitors who prop

up and apologise for the imperialist torture machine but to intransigently expose and oppose all their pro-imperialist schemes in order to build a campaign of proletarian solidarity with the Irish people. Not UN troops, no to "phased withdrawal" — get the imperialist butchers out of Ireland now! Avenge the Republican martyrs through workers revolution!

— adapted from *Spartacist Britain* no 33, June 1981

Teenage sectarian...

Continued from page eleven

The attribution to McEwan of standard SWP anti-SL nostrums and distortions in *Direct Action* is supposed to lend them some special validity. Thus Myers/McEwan try to make out that, in Poland, the SL line is... pro-Stalinist. In response to the renewed threats of Soviet intervention into Poland's political life, claims McEwan, "the SL tries to give the bureaucrats a left cover by arguing that the Polish workers shouldn't resist them and by attacking Solidarity", in her only attempt to defend her views i.r.s. the SL, however, McEwan knew such crude straw men wouldn't cut any ice with her comrades. "I know no one's saying that it's [ie, Solidarity is] just a force of capitalist restoration", she said at one point. And she conceded it was correct to call for an "alliance between the Polish and Russian working class, in a league against the US imperialists... [and against] the Catholic Church" — on such questions, she admitted, "sections of the leadership like Walesa won't go along with you".

In other words, McEwan knows perfectly well that we were never "against Solidarity" — an acutely contradictory movement — but focused on the necessity to *split* the workers in it away from the reactionary influence of clerical nationalism. In fact, under pressure of the crisis there have been the beginnings of such a polarisation, as we pointed out in our article, "Whose Poland?" (*Australasian Spartacist* no 84, May 1981). What's urgently needed is a *Trotskyist party* to combat the nationalism exploited by the reactionary forces and to lead a successful political revolution. But for McEwan, that is now an excluded possibility: if you are against the clerical-nationalists, you must be for the Stalinist bureaucracy!

And what is McEwan/SWP for? Soviet troops out — something General Haig, for one (and Wojtyla for another) would dearly love to see because those troops have been in Poland for 35 years as an objective obstacle to the counter-revolutionary plots of the NATO imperialists. In fact, Washington has been trying to provoke Soviet intervention — which would be a *defeat* for socialism — because they want to see a bloody conflict between Soviet soldiers and Polish workers. Yet what McEwan seized upon to oppose as justification for her flight was this position in "Whose Poland?":

"Should the Kremlin intervene militarily, the immediate fate of the Polish workers would in large measure depend on their ability to influence and win over Soviet conscript soldiers — that is, young Russian, Ukrainian and Central Asian workers and peasants in uniform. Anti-Russian Polish nationalism, and especially violence directed at Soviet soldiers or officers, would sabotage the proletarian cause."

McEwan tries to have it both ways, wanting Polish workers to resist a Russian intervention while claiming that "no

Spartacist League

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revolutionary would want to go around organising people to kill Soviet troops". But it won't wash: the SWP's endorsement of all "resistance" and opposition to our internationalist program puts it on the side of the attempted imperialist provocation. For McEwan, giving up on revolution means accommodating the imperialists' renewed anti-Soviet frenzy. And the SWP is a good place for that.

McEwan in a veil?

On her way out the door, McEwan insisted: "Of course I don't agree with the SWP line on Iran", which is undoubtedly why Myers left the "Iranian Revolution" out of his diatribe against the SL. A year ago the SWP put the wretched Khomeini apologist Fatima Fallahi on tour to boast that she herself put on the *chador*, symbol of the feudal enslavement of women in the family, for prayers at the mosque! Today her organisation and the SWP hail "Women's Day" rallies of women in *chadors* (celebrating the birth of Muhammed's daughter!) to pledge loyalty to a caste of mullahs whose program for women is Koranic feudal barbarity. Last year McEwan gave a public forum for the SL denouncing this travesty. Is she now ready to "put on the veil" for the SWP?

If she stays, she will also have to learn how to defend the fascists' "right of free speech" against angry unionists and minorities, including having polite debates with Klansmen — as the US SWP has done — and how to boycott actions like the SL/US-initiated united-front rally of 1200 in San Francisco last year which routed a planned Nazi provocation. (Stop the Nazis? How "sectarian" can you get?) And she will also find herself crossing strike picket lines, like Andrew Pulley, the US SWP presidential candidate in 1980, did — and defended!

For those who give up on the revolutionary potential of the working class, the SWP is a natural resting place. For those with the will to build a party that seriously proposes to lead the workers to power and has a tested program of class struggle to guide it, the Trotskyist Transitional Program, the place to be is in the Spartacist League! ■

SWP...

Continued from page eleven

is criminal that the Soviet ambassador can truthfully plead innocent to Reagan's charges" (*Workers Vanguard* no 275, 27 February). But what if Cuba and the USSR were doing their duty and sending arms to the leftist rebels? Implicitly, the SWP comes out against such aid. They would rather see the insurgents die than give Reagan more "ammunition" with which to frighten anti-communist liberals away from the "mass movement". After all, Teddy Kennedy — prime candidate of the SWP's "broad front" — also denounces military support "from Communist and other radical states to the insurgent forces in El Salvador". And the

SWP's formula is: Kennedy in, revolutionists out.

As an SL/US spokesman told a 250-strong El Salvador rally called by the Spartacus Youth League at Ann Arbor on 6 March:

"We have stressed the issue of the Soviet Union, not only because Reagan has decided to make it an issue, but because it is not accidental that reactionaries see behind every progressive movement ... the hand of the October Revolution.... Reagan's ultimate target in his war drive against El Salvador is the gains of the October Revolution in the Soviet Union that remain intact despite the fact that there was a Stalinist expropriation of the working class politically."

— *Young Spartacus* no 90, April 1981

The logic of the popular front is physical violence, slander, censorship of the left in the service of the "democratic" bourgeoisie. That is the path of the SWP; but they will not succeed. Our tendency represents the program of Trotskyism — the only program incorporating the strategic lessons of the class struggle historically, the only one capable of leading the working masses to victory over their oppressors internationally. The SWP marches for the program of liberalism and reformism; we march for proletarian revolution, for socialism. Join our fight — join the Spartacist League! ■

Students...

Continued from page sixteen

Labour/Student Mobilisations! Strike Against Razor Gang Cuts!" These congenital liars also claimed that trade-union activists who addressed the rally — including Jim Jane of the Teachers Federation, ACOA militant June Esposito, and Sandra Nori of the Leichhardt Women's Health Centre — "were in fact Spartacist League members". (Excerpts from Esposito's statement exposing these crude fabrications appear below.)

The militant-posturing International Socialists (IS) joined the united-front rally and spoke from its democratic platform (which contrasted sharply with the IS' practice of physically excluding Trotskyists from "public" political events). Despite its left talk, the IS ties itself firmly to the left wing of the trade union bureaucracy — and that means *stalling* class-struggle action rather than fighting for it.

The 13 June *Battler's* account of the Sydney Uni rally was headlined "Sydney Uni strike" — implying that a strike actually eventuated from the motion put by the IS and adopted by the rally calling for a one-day campus strike on 11 June. *What strike?* On 11 June class schedules were merely rearranged to accommodate the protest march to Hyde Park. That the IS can enthuse about such a "strike" exposes the fraudulent, purely rhetorical quality of their strike call. The *Battler* account was no more honest than the one by the Qaddafi-lovers — conveniently neglecting to mention that it was organised by the Spartacist League or even the demands it was based on.

As usual, these accomplished opportunists were also working both sides of the fence. The IS is in the misnamed Left Action clot at Sydney Uni, which dawdled for days about even endorsing the rally, then tried to sabotage it by helping organise a counterposed rally the day before. At the rally itself, it was only Spartacist supporters who offered a class-struggle program. A militant bus driver and SL supporter who addressed the students told the truth: the Labor misleaders "have proven to be no better in power [than Fraser] to give the working class what it needs". All the IS has to offer is "Fraser out" and vague calls to throw "the system" out too. What this means in practice is the IS' "two cheers for Labor" — another "reform" ALP government with perhaps a bit of "socialist" talk.

Over 400 people attended a front lawn rally against the Razor Gang cuts at Sydney University on 3 June. The rally,

initiated by the Spartacist Club, was a genuine united front. Over 30 endorsers supported the demands around which the rally was organised:

- No to Fees! Free education for all! Open admissions to Unis and CAEs!
- For TEAS to be equal to at least the minimum wage with full indexation!

Each endorser had the right to speak at the rally and seven endorsers did address the crowd, including Jim Jane, Organiser of Trainee Teachers in NSW; Sandra Nori from the Leichhardt Women's Health Centre; ACOA militant June Esposito and Dianne Fieldes from the International Socialists (IS). In addition, speakers were recognised at the rally itself. Peter Baldwin, of the *Challenge* group in the state ALP, who was unable to attend the rally, sent a telegram of apologies pledging "full support of your campaign against reintroduction of tuition fees".

These demands — which the Spartacist League has always raised — provide a class-axis to the struggle against the cuts. Access to a free, secular education should be a right, not a privilege. As PKIU militant Ron Rees said at the rally: "Who's the people that are going to be affected by the attacks on education? Not the sons and daughters of the Frasers or the sons and daughters of the factory owners but the sons and daughters of the working class people who ... need TEAS and need no fees so they can get through and get an education". Since the introduction of TEAS, the Spartacist League has argued for TEAS to be at least equal to the minimum wage, opposing AUS policy that students should be happy to starve to get an education!

Spartacist Club spokesman Angelo Rosas pointed out: "The education cuts in themselves are part of a general attack on the working class as a whole and they're in the context of the attacks on free health care; they're being installed by the same person who sent in the air-force to smash the Qantas strike earlier this year". And the attendees of the rally felt much the same way as they voted *overwhelmingly* to endorse the following motions:

"This rally denounces the Fraser Razor Gang cuts on health, education and the jobs of government employees as a vicious, calculated attack on the living standards of students, pensioners, unemployed and all working people. This arrogant, union-hating government must be stopped in its tracks by mass student mobilisations linked to co-ordinated national union industrial actions up to and including a general strike. Reverse the cuts!"

— moved by Sydney University Spartacist Club

"This meeting calls for a student strike on Thursday, 11th June. The strike is to be organised by picketing of the main entrances to Uni/College on that day. The meeting demands that the SRC/Student Union approach representatives of all campus unions asking them to call strikes of their members on the 11th June in support of the fightback against the cuts."

— moved by International Socialists

In stark contrast to the militant, democratically-run united front rally on June 3, the previous day SRC President Paul Brereton gave the campus a lesson in the SRC's no-struggle plan to "fight" the cuts. After a failed attempt to grab the front lawn one day prior to the June 3 rally in order to undercut the Spartacist-initiated united front, (and after a free ad for the June 3 rally mysteriously disappeared from the pages of *Honi Soit*), an "informational meeting" was held in Steven Roberts. "Informational" meant speakers carefully selected by Brereton and no discussion from the floor! At the meeting, Brereton pleaded that Fraser had made a "mistake" in reinstating fees! When Dianne Fieldes of the IS did manage to get the motion for a one-day strike read to the meeting in the guise of an announcement, Brereton immediately stifled any attempt at discussion and didn't allow it to be voted! Following in the footsteps of the Hawkes, Dolans and Haydens, Brereton decreed in high-handed fashion that students should remain virtually silent and motionless in the face of these attacks.

The campus group Left Action, whose politics loosely parallel those of the Communist Party (CPA), formally endorsed and spoke at the June 3 rally, but refused to help build it beforehand, throwing every ounce of their effort instead into building the June 2 closed platform for Brereton. Because LA has no program with which to fight Fraser's Razor Gang, they can do little more than build platforms for Brereton and tag along behind the SRC's limp call to "rearrange classes" on June 11.

Even though Brereton would like the whole issue to just go away, it won't and because of the pressure from rallies like the June 3 rally, he has been forced to call a rally on June 11 to build for the citywide rally. Make no mistake though — it's only to be a half-hour rally and it's pretty clear that Brereton plans to repeat the no-discussion rule from the previous SRC-sponsored meeting. The Spartacist Club will be at the rally and will raise the June 3 united-front demands as the minimum around which students should be mobilised. We will also oppose any attempts to limit discussion from the floor. Let the buses wait! For full discussion and voting of all motions at the rally! Come to the rally and support the Spartacist Club as we raise the only program that will open the Universities and CAEs to the children of the working class and fight to reverse the cuts. Come to the June 11 rally at Sydney Uni! March from Hyde Park under the June 3 united front banner! Join the Spartacist Club! ■

ACOA militant June Esposito exposes Workers News lies

I was invited to attend a rally held at the University recently regarding Razor Gang Cuts. I was invited to speak on the basis of being an ACOA union militant and because it is our union which will bear a large brunt of the Razor Gang attacks....

Since I work in an area where I am well known as a militant and where there is a large workforce (approximately 700), and since the SLL [Socialist Labour League] paper is distributed in that area I have a strong objection to the false and/or misleading statement in the article in that paper referring to the University meeting [*Workers News*, 9 June].... I dare any SLL member or supporter to ask any member on my job whether I have ever suggested that protest action is good enough or that we could successfully reform the system....

The statement that speakers were all SL [Spartacist League] members or supporters and that unionists were not in attendance is clearly inaccurate, as your reporters heard me speak at a recent ACOA meeting and subsequently interviewed me. I therefore feel that they should issue, through the columns of their paper, an apology to the unionists and others who were in attendance at that meeting — for to seek to discredit the validity of the meeting is to seek to discredit the genuinely held views represented by union militants and the whole credibility and readership of their paper must suffer as a result.



Idiotic slanders from the messengers of Qaddafi — *Workers News* attacks Sydney Uni rally, SL.

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Avenge the murder of H-Block hunger strikers! Troops out of Ireland now!

27 JUNE — Bobby Sands, Frankie Hughes, Raymond McCreesh, Patsy O'Hara: four more names have been added to the roll of Irish martyrs, killed by the arrogant butchers of Westminster because they dared oppose British imperialism. Now the stage is set for another round of callous murder by the Thatcher government, with five young men in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh having taken the place of their dead comrades on hunger strike for political status.

Despite a bitter, tense relative calm on the streets of Belfast and Derry after the death of Patsy O'Hara, Northern Ireland is now polarising visibly by the day. Hundreds of new recruits from the beleaguered Catholic ghettos are flocking to the Republican banners. Sinn Fein claims, quite plausibly, a 40 per cent increase in its Belfast membership in a single week in May. A handful of Republican candidates standing in the recent local government elections swept long-time imperialist toadies like Gerry Fitt out of office. In the South, IRA hunger striker Ciaran Doherty and fellow prisoner Paddy Agnew won the seats of Monaghan and Louth, respectively. In turn, the Northern Protestant majority increasingly looks for leadership to the bigots of the Reverend Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party, which rallies the Orange *laager* by thundering about

an impending British "sellout" to the "papist banana republic" to the South.

As the "troubles" grind remorselessly on, Westminster keeps up its show of imperialist intransigence. Its troops shoot down and kill more unarmed H-Block protesters in the streets, including most recently two girls aged 14 and 11. In May, Thatcher flew to Belfast to show the Protestant Loyalists that her government still sees the Six Counties as an "integral part of the United Kingdom". Behind her traipsed sundry royal luminaries and junior imperialists like the Liberal Party's David Steel. And cheering on the Iron Maiden and her killer troops are Labour Party leader Michael Foot, the contemptible Don Concannon and the rest of the Opposition Front Bench.

The Labour leadership's stance is a shame and disgrace to the British workers movement. Thatcher's toadies Foot and Concannon are not fit to lick the boots of the likes of Bobby Sands. While Labour marches in lockstep with the Tory murderers, we say: Not one more hunger striker must die! The Republican fighters against imperialist oppression are not the criminals; the British army and its political masters are. The left and labour movement must demand: *Political status for the prisoners now! Free all victims of*



Don't mourn, organise! Spartacist contingent on 31 May Sydney march for hunger strikers said: "Smash Britain's torture camps! Troops out now!"

imperialist repression in Ireland! Troops out now!

Even as the Labour leadership disgracefully holds the line with Thatcher, the last few weeks have seen significant unravelling of the long-accepted bipartisan imperialist policy towards Ireland. Most dramatic has been the

surge of "troops out" demands within the Labour Party, beginning with Tony Benn's sudden conversion during a BBC radio interview on 12 May. Benn et al are tapping an apparent groundswell of political sentiment: a recent opinion poll claimed that fully 59 percent of the

Continued on page fourteen

Successful Sydney Uni rally shows the way—

For labour/student action to smash Fraser's cuts!



Sydney, 11 June — SL slogans get good response from outraged students on march against Fraser's cuts.

Following the announcement of the Razor Gang's vicious attacks on education, students all over the country reacted with anger and outrage. In every major city in Australia, thousands rallied and demonstrated in opposition to Fraser's cuts. Most recently, on 11 June, hundreds of students marched from Sydney University to a rally at Hyde Park where they were joined by some 3500 students and staff from other colleges in NSW. From Hyde Park, the demonstrators moved to Town Hall Square for an AUS-organised rally.

This militancy and willingness to take action against the proposals to reintroduce fees is a welcome development. But the current strategy of the AUS leadership (which welcomed the Williams Report which initially recommended the cuts the Razor Gang now plans to implement) only serves to dissipate this militancy, by keeping it confined to exclusively student-centred demands, and by appealing to liberal bourgeois

politicians like Don Chipp to "fight" the cuts for them.

Students on their own do not have the social power to reverse the government's attacks. To win, students must link their struggles to those of the working class; they themselves must become conscious partisans on the side of the proletariat. It was with this program and perspective that Spartacist League supporters at Sydney University recently initiated a united-front rally against fees on 3 June. We reprint below the *Campus Spartacist* article which appeared immediately after the 400-strong demonstration.

Obviously infuriated by our success, the Socialist Labour League (SLL) — a tendency no longer in the workers movement, by virtue of its role as the mouthpiece for the bonapartist dictator Muammar Qaddafi — lied in *Workers News* (9June) that the rally called only for "protest". Yet this was under a photo of our banner calling ... "For

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