

Australasian

SPARTACIST



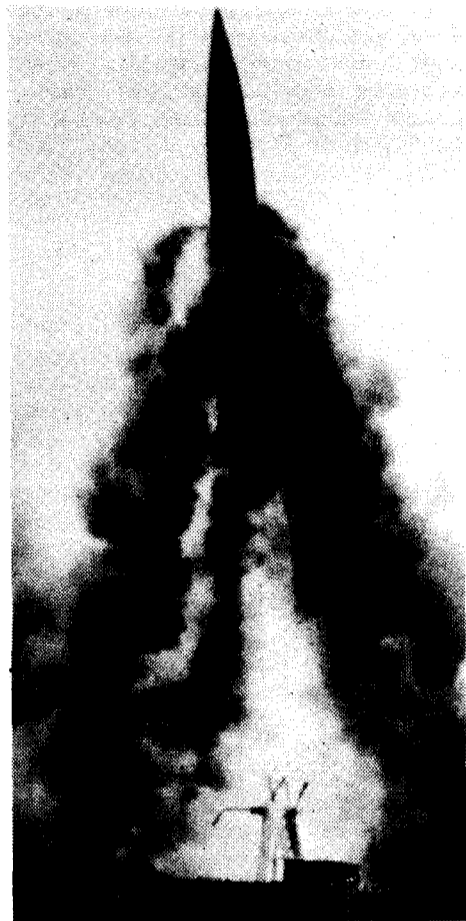
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Defend the USSR, Vietnam!

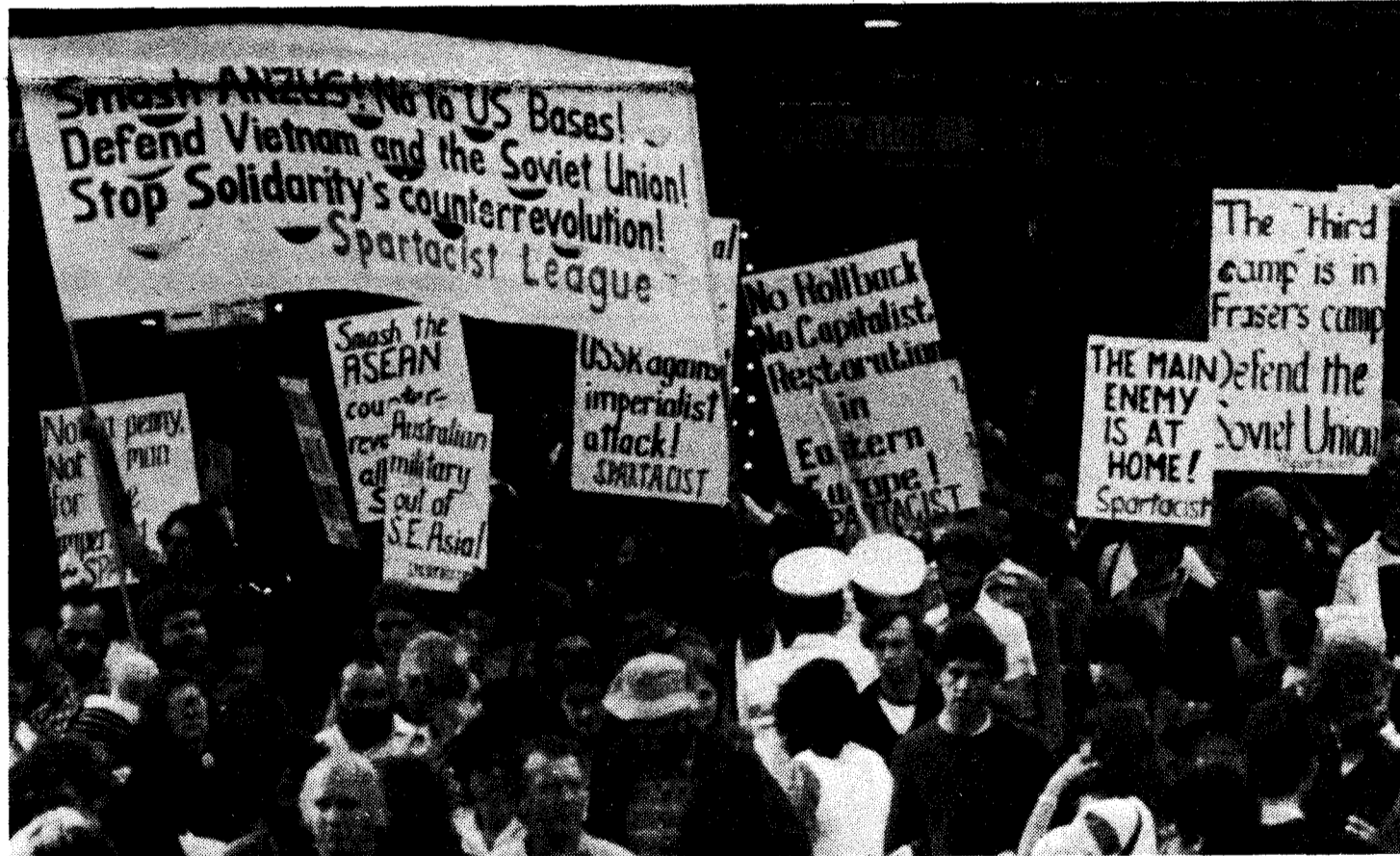
Down with the Anti-Soviet War Drive!



US imperialism's anti-Soviet war drive has brought the danger of nuclear Third World War closer than it has been for decades. A global war could erupt out of any one of a dozen local and regional conflicts — stretching from Central America to the Near East to South Africa/Namibia-Angola — where the US is aggressively provoking the USSR and its allies. The hopes of Reagan/Haig for a bloodbath in Poland between the counterrevolutionary Solidarity and the Soviets, to fuel their war drive to a white heat, were frustrated by the near-bloodless success of the Polish Army crackdown. Now Central America is once again the hottest spot in the Cold War, with yet further aid being rushed to the Salvadoran junta butchers and rising threats to invade Nicaragua and blockade Cuba.

In this region their particular target is Vietnam where the American imperialists work hand-in-glove with the Chinese Stalinists in trying to bleed it to death. While Washington's latter-day Goebbels, Alexander Haig, peddles tall tales about chemical "yellow rain" used by the Russians in Laos the Chinese menace Vietnam's northern border and in the south supply arms to the ASEAN-backed Khmer Rouge/Son Sann forces operating along the Thal-Kampuchean border. Reagan/Haig's lust for revenge in Southeast Asia, hopes vicariously shared by their Australian lackeys who also met defeat at the hands of the heroic Vietnamese, includes the very real option of direct military attack on Vietnam and is inseparable from US imperialism's overall anti-Soviet strategy.

The US strategy is to achieve decisive nuclear superiority over the USSR permitting a devastating first strike to destroy Soviet missile defences, following which the US could theoretically dictate terms under threat of total annihilation of Soviet cities. The US chiefs fervently dream aloud of "flexible" use of nuclear weapons in a "con-



Spartacist contingent at 1981 anti-nuke peace rally. Against anti-Soviet pacifism and nationalism.

trolled" or "limited" exchange, preferably on European soil, which they calculate on surviving. They want to win a nuclear war, not deter it. Their insane but all-too real plans have thus far only been frustrated by the fact that the USSR has attained, and maintained, rough strategic parity with the US. Had it fallen behind in the nuclear arms race, were it not for the "workers bomb" so decried by liberal pacifists, then the mass murder of Hiroshima/Nagasaki would have been repeated a thousand times over on the deformed workers states, from Vietnam to Moscow and Eastern Europe.

Defence of the Soviet Union is the

decisive question of proletarian class strategy today. The war drive dominates world politics and in this the working class has a clear side. The US ruling class hopes to halt its decline by realising its historic aim of restoring capitalism in the Soviet bloc and destroying the social conquests of the Russian revolution. This is a class conflict between a decaying and reactionary social system and the collectivised economies of the workers states which, though saddled with brutal and nationalist bureaucracies, are historic conquests of the world proletariat and part of the foundation of the socialist future.

Since Afghanistan Australian capital-

ism has rapidly built up its own military forces. It is a willing partner in the US anti-Soviet war drive, participating in the Sinai venture, helping to police the region against the USSR and its Vietnamese ally, and most importantly playing host to a number of highly important US military installations. These include the NW Cape nuclear submarine communications facility, the highly sensitive CIA-run Pine Gap and Nurrungar ground stations for communications/surveillance/nuclear early warning satellites, the Omega submarine navigation facility under construction in Victoria, the Smithfield

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US Bases Out! Smash ANZUS!

War Drive...

Continued from page one

facility controlling precision navigation satellites, the Darwin base where B-52s land on their way to the US' main Indian Ocean base at Diego Garcia, and a variety of other installations.

Together these bases integrate Australia very closely into US preparations for a first strike. In addition the US hopes to acquire Trincomalee harbour in Sri Lanka for its navy and plans to build a Trident submarine base at Palau in Micronesia. For Australian communists defence of the Soviet and Vietnamese workers states begins in struggle against these Australian and Indian Ocean bases. Against the anti-Soviet war drive it is the political equivalent of Karl Liebknecht's famous statement "The Main Enemy is at Home!"

"Leave us out of it"

It was Reagan/Haig's chilling bravado about "limited" nuclear war in Europe that triggered last year's massive outpouring of protest in European capitals. As anti-Soviet as they were anti-American, their dominant theme was European nationalism, more against a war on their own territory than against the war drive as such. "No annihilation without representation", said the British. "Leave us out of it", said the Germans. Led largely by social-democrats, the protests reflected inter-imperialist conflicts between the US and European powers, particularly West Germany. The German bourgeoisie prefers at present to pursue the aim of counterrevolution in the Eastern bloc by economic subversion rather than military means.

In the German, British, French and Italian demonstrations only the sections of the international Spartacist tendency raised the banner of defence of the USSR in opposition to anti-Sovietism and national chauvinism. From London to Rome, its banners read: "Smash NATO — Defend the Soviet Union!" and "Stop Solidarity's Counterrevolution!" At the big rally against Alexander Haig's September visit to the Berlin wall, the Trotskistische Liga Deutschlands proclaimed, "Defence of the USSR begins in Berlin!" In Paris the Ligue Trotskyste de France said, "Down with Mitterrand's Force de Frappe — Detente is a Criminal Illusion!" Posing a revolutionary opposition to the war drive, beginning in struggle against their "own" rulers, the Trotskyist contingents had a political impact out of all proportion to their small size.

The upcoming April rallies organised by coalitions like the "Australians/People for Nuclear Disarmament" are consciously modelled on the Euro-pacifist upsurge, although there is scarcely the same force or motivation. The Pentagon is after all not planning

to run its central theatre of war against the Russians on Australian soil. The Australian "peace festivals" are organised around themes of "Celebrate Peace" and "No Nuclear War", vacuous pacifism tailored to provide the Labor Party with the pretence of anti-militarism and nationalist concern for Australian interests but without committing them to anything. With figures like Joe Camilleri and Tom Uren as leading spokesmen the Laborites hold the whip hand politically. In reality the ALP is as deeply committed to anti-Sovietism and the American military alliance as the Liberals. But as in Europe this pro-imperialist pacifism will be challenged by militant Trotskyist contingents saying "Defend the Soviet Union and Vietnam!" and "The Main Enemy is at Home!"

The touchstone for any genuine opposition to the imperialist war drive in this country is the US war bases. In Sydney at least, the call for removal of the bases being made part of the official demands was rejected outright for fear that left ALP parliamentarians like Uren and Bruce Childs would pull out. The 1983 elections are approaching and the Labor left has already closed ranks to support Hayden's pledge that the ALP won't touch the US bases. To the extent that the organisers raise the question of the bases at all, they focus not on their crucial role in facilitating a US first strike against the USSR, but the danger of Soviet retaliation in defence. Once the pressure is on, this "get us out of the firing line" little-Australia nationalism will dissolve into pure and simple anti-Sovietism.

ALP — Party of Australian Imperialism

Writing against social-democratic pacifism in the 30s Trotsky pointed out, "In a period of peace it's not stingy

"The most influential pacifist force is the Social Democracy. In a period of peace it's not stingy with cheap tirades against war. But it remains tied to 'national defence'. This is decisive. Every war, however it may begin, menaces each of the warring nations. The imperialists know in advance that the pacifism of the Social Democracy at the first roar of cannon will be transformed into the most servile patriotism and become the most important reserve for militarism. That is why a most intransigent struggle against pacifism, unmasking its treacherous character, is the very first step on the road toward a revolutionary struggle against war."

— Trotsky "Declaration to the Antiwar Congress" Writings 1932

with cheap tirades against war. But it remains tied to 'national defence'. That is decisive". This could not more accurately pinpoint Australian Laborism. Despite their differences, Fraser, Hayden and the pacifist "lefts" are united by concern for Australian capitalism's "national interest". The ALP accepts ANZUS, the US bases and the Fraser war budget and the "lefts" toe the line. Hayden's arguments with Fraser over what defence allocations should be spent on reflect the ALP's desire for more relative latitude within the ANZUS

Toni Randell 1943-1982



Our comrade Toni Randell of the Spartacist League/US died on 12 February of cancer. A cadre of the SL/US for over ten years, Comrade Toni had been a founder of the Partisan Defense Committee (PDC), a member of the SL/US Central Control Commission and a candidate member of the SL/US Central Committee. Tragically, she was only 38-years old at the time of her death.

Most SL/ANZ comrades had not personally met Toni. Several knew of her mainly from her invaluable work on behalf of the PDC, in particular the successful campaign to free Chilean Miners' leader Mario Munoz from the Argentine Junta. It was with a deep sense of loss that we heard of her death. Toni Randell lived and died a hard communist. She stands as an example to all of us in this period when so many have cut and run in face of the first chill winds of anti-Soviet Cold War.

An obituary to this comrade is printed in Workers Vanguard no 300, 5 March 1982, fortnightly paper of the SL/US.

framework. Thus Fraser bought the aircraft carrier Invincible to give Australia more relative weight in the US military operations with which it will be closely integrated; Hayden pushed for submarines for coastal defence instead.

The nationalist isolationism of the "lefts" expresses the aspirations of a more "self-reliant" Australian imperialism, of which the ALP is the party *par excellence*. The slogan "No More Vietnams" pushed by Laborites and liberals expresses not only their hostility

protect US strategic interests. Last year he toured the major US bases to see if they infringed Australian "national sovereignty". Significantly, he gave the CIA-run Pine Gap and Nurrungar a clean bill of health — undoubtedly mindful that it was Whitlam's threats to blow the lid off the top secret Pine Gap base that played a big role in his downfall in 1975. Hayden has effectively promised a free hand to these sinister spy bases.

CPA: "ANZUS-Communism"

The rightward-moving "independent" Communist Party of Australia (CPA) strongly opposed the "US bases out" for the Sydney march. Here the CPA is not simply appeasing the Labor politicians but has dumped this position itself. This is clear from an article by CPA leader Mavis Robertson in *Australian Left Review* (December 1981) which, pleading that "foreign installations could not be removed at the stroke of a pen", praised Hayden's promise last May to renegotiate the North West Cape treaty. Robertson criticises "the Left" for an "all or nothing" approach in its opposition to military bases and the US alliance" and, pushing the CPA's anti-Soviet credentials, cautions against placing all the blame on the US for the war drive.

In the mid-1970s the Spanish and Italian CPs dropped their opposition to NATO. Such "NATO-Communism" was designed to persuade US imperialism to let them into the government. Today the CPA's fast slide towards liquidation into the pro-imperialist ALP, could well be termed "ANZUS-Communism". Hitching themselves to the right-wing social-democrat Hayden's wagon, the CPA leaders, though they have no mass base, talk as though they will be running the government next year.

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CLASS SERIES

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to the victorious Vietnamese revolution but a desire to prevent further such defeats for the Australian bourgeoisie.

Australia is not, as the social democrats would have us believe, a small-nation victim of superpower machinations but a regional imperialist power in its own right, with its own sphere of influence and expansionist appetites in the South Pacific and Southeast Asia. But appetites aside, the Australian bourgeoisie is economically and militarily incapable of providing continental defence against Asia. Historically it has protected this rich white man's country through slavish dependence on a more powerful imperialist patron. Nevertheless these appetites produce certain tensions within the US alliance, without ever questioning the fundamental framework. Thus, while Fraser in 1980 was the most fanatically anti-Soviet of the US allies over Afghanistan, in 1982 he is not buying into the US-Europe differences and for domestic and regional consumption is pursuing a more "independent" line than Reagan's fulsome support for the South African apartheid regime.

Necessarily the upgraded \$17.6 billion Australian military budget for the next five years will be financed through sharpened austerity against the working class. The Australian economy is heading into more troubled waters as unemployment creeps over 7 percent and the "resources boom" cushion is deflated as mineral exports are hit hard by falling demand and looming international depression. If the ALP wins in 1983 it will have the task of administering this anti-Soviet austerity. Hayden knows that to stay in office his government must guarantee to

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Sydney University: 200 Rally Against PNP Fascists

No Platform for Fascists!

Drive the PNP Off Campus!

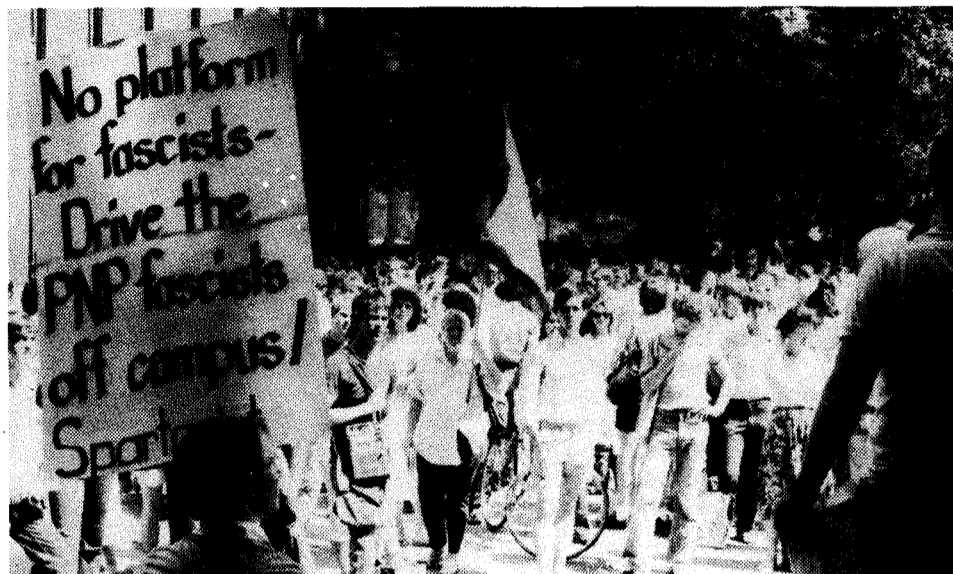
SYDNEY — Over two hundred rallied here on 23 March outside the Sydney University's Fisher Library in what was the first significantly-sized action against the PNP fascists held on or off campus. They came in response to a call to action demanding "No Platform for Fascists!" and "Drive the PNP Fascists Off Campus!" — to the place where a week earlier the fascist Progressive Nationalist Party (PNP) had set up a bookstall. The fascists had hoped to establish a front group, the "Australian Students Association" (ASA) whose five-point "program" is centred on driving "non-citizens" and overseas students out of the universities. With this militant show of force, endorsed by Asian and other immigrant students and associations, trade unions, socialists and campus left groups, these race-hate creeps didn't dare show their faces. For close to an hour, the crowd listened to speakers from participating organisations and enthusiastically took up chants of "No platform for fascists, smash the PNP!" and "No free speech for fascists, drive them off campus!" initiated by the large and militant Spartacist contingent.

Until recently the PNP has only been able to operate semi-clandestinely with their "Smash Marxism" and Asian-hating stickers and graffiti. However, with imperialist anti-communism finding a base in increasingly conservative moods on the campuses, these scum are now crawling out of their sewers hoping to build a base for their real "program" — terror against Asians, leftists, and anything "alien" to their hoped-for White-Australia "New Nation". Last year at the University of NSW the PNP were quickly sent packing when they tried to set up a table. This was the message the Spartacist Club made its central focus in its campaign to build the 23 March action — *crush the fascists in the egg!*

The Anti Fascist Committee which called the rally included the Spartacist Club, the International Socialists (IS), the Left Action campus coalition and supporters of the Maoist Australian Independence Movement. Over fifty people attended its first planning meeting on 18 March, which enthusiastically adopted the Spartacist Club proposal for the demonstration around the two demands. The Spartacist League threw its resources into heavily building this action in the short time available, gaining endorsements from not only students and aca-



Spartacist speaker calls for labour/student action to crush fascists in the egg!



ASp photos

demics but also some major trade unions (see box). But a perspective of militant mass action to *stop the fascists* inevitably draws the line against "democratic socialist" reformism which looks to the bourgeois state (in this case its university administration) to ban the fascists or panders to dangerous "democratic"

purely paper support on the eve of the rally, with the lying claim that they hadn't known what the demands were! This left the Spartacists and the IS as the only real forces building the action. The closer the rally came and the more that the CPA/Left Action saboteurs whined about a possible "confrontation" with

spective in an "expanded" marshalls meeting just before the rally.

Who are the dewy-eyed innocents the CPA is so fearful of alienating? Their spokesman at the rally spelled it out — the "conservative groups" and "many Liberal students" who would "undoubtedly be concerned". Bowing to this class-collaborationist appetite, the IS chair, Steve Sherlock, went on to insult the 200-plus students and the small but significant number of off-campus trade unionists who attended by saying the rally was "not an attempt to be one group of thugs beating up another group of thugs" implicitly equating the fascists with their intended victims.

The IS' contemptible turnaround was only beginning. Two days later they tried to exclude Spartacist supporters from a public talk on campus entitled, "Fascism, Nationalism ... And How to Fight Them". When one Spartacist supporter moved to enforce workers democracy by removing IS leader John Minns from blocking the doorway, Minns baited us as just the "flip side of the coin" from the fascists. Iser Sherlock even charged, "the PNP hasn't even done anything yet, you people have"! This slander echoes the bourgeois authorities which "even-handedly" lump fascists and communists together as just rival factions of "violent extremists". In under a week, the IS had discarded its anti-fascist verbal militancy in favour of anti-communist slanders which can only serve to set up the Spart-

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March 23 Rally Endorsers

Tom Alegounarias, president, Greek Society, Sydney Uni*
 Australian Independence Movement, Sydney Uni and Uni of NSW
 Chris Birch, Labor Club*
 Jack Cambourn for Federated Engine Drivers & Firemen's Association of Australasia — NSW Branch
 Communist Left
 Ricky Divers, union organiser, acting president, Waterside Workers Federation of Australia — Sydney Branch*
 International Socialists
 Kwan Ha Kim, president, Korean Students Society*
 Left Action, Sydney Uni

Malaysian Students Association, Sydney Uni
 Merv Nixon for the South Coast Trades & Labour Council
 Bob Rose, Waterside Workers Federation of Australia — Newcastle Branch*
 Bill Smale for Australian Coal & Shale Employees Federation — NSW Branch
 Spartacist League
 Spartacist Club, Sydney Uni
 Tom Supple, secretary, Waterside Workers Federation of Australia — Sydney Branch*
 Women's Collective, Sydney Uni
 Young Socialist League

*for identification purposes only

illusions ("free speech for fascists"). As the rally date approached this political logic played itself out with increasing momentum.

The day the committee was set up, the IS led a small march to demand that the University Union ban fascist literature from its newsagency. The next day, the Communist Party pulled its Left Action supporters into line and insisted that its name be removed from the leaflet advertising the demo. The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) also withdrew their

the fascists, the more nervous and capitulatory became the "third camp" IS.

On the day of the demonstration the CPA, now claiming to "endorse" the rally, issued a leaflet condemning the demand "No Platform For Fascists!" as merely a "gut reaction" which "will not appeal to those with little idea of what fascism means". Instead they called for "demonstrations which are strictly non-violent on our part". Contrary to their earlier verbal militancy, the IS blocked with the CPA around this per-



"A short history of liberalism" — from US Trotskyist press, 1939.

Campus Spartacist Call to Action

Today's demonstration outside Fisher Library has one purpose: to drive the Progressive Nationalist Party (PNP) fascists off this campus! Last Tuesday the PNP set up a table outside Fisher Library. They have defaced the doors of leftists and staff with Jewish names in the Merewether building. They have littered the campus with copies of *Audacity*, their newspaper, along with vile racist leaflets under the masthead of their creature, the "Australian Students Association", calling for the expulsion of Asian and overseas students from the universities. And they are peddling their anti-Asian racist filth not only here but throughout Sydney's western suburbs.

That these scum dare to show their faces in public is ominous testimony to a political climate poisoned by anti-Soviet Cold War, renewed imperialist militarism and deepening economic recession. Their presence is a threat and provocation to Asian and overseas students, to Jews, socialists, trade unionists, women and gays. There is nothing to debate or discuss with the PNP. As a matter of elementary self-defence they must be driven off campus!

The PNP, like the fascist National Alliance from which it emerged, has taken great pains to distance

itself from "imported" strains of fascism, in particular, Nazism, not out of any objection to its genocidal aims, but because these "home grown" fascists realise that a mass, native Australian fascist movement will not be built through identification with Hitler's Third Reich. Instead their pitch is to the "yellow peril" xenophobia endemic in this outpost of "white civilisation" off the shores of populous Asia.

That the fascists can claim Jack Lang, NSW Labor Premier during the late 20s/early 30s, as one of their national heroes is a damning indictment of Australian Laborism. And it is not just the ALP. During WWII the then-Stalinist Communist Party of Australia, today enthusiastic champions of nationalist economic protectionism, descended to the most repulsive anti-Japanese racism. The PNP represents the right-wing, fascist fringe of Australian nationalism. Their symbol, the Eureka flag, is also the emblem of the Maoist-inspired and now-dwindled Australian Independence Movement (AIM), one of the endorsers of this demonstration. We Trotskyists understand that the nationalists' attempts to maintain Australia as a privileged

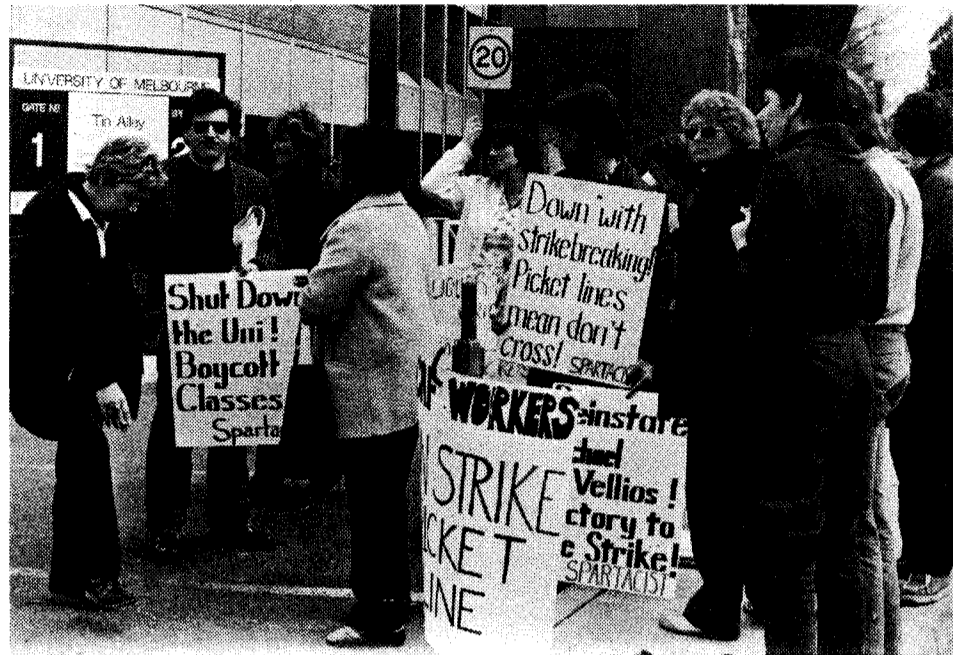
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Anti-Communist Witchhunt Defeated at Melbourne Uni

An important victory for democratic rights was won at Melbourne University with the defeat of a vindictive McCarthy-style witchhunt against the campus Spartacist Club. Publicly set into motion by Clubs and Societies officer and Socialist Club leading light Joe Belbruno, the witchhunt was carried out with gusto by the University's Activities Committee, which through the Union Board is answerable to the administration's top University Council. Over Belbruno's strident objections the first Clubs and Societies meeting voted to affiliate the newly-formed Spartacist Club. However within days the Spartacist Club found itself "suspended", under "investigation" and dubbed an "outside" group, a familiar code-word for red-baiting (see *Campus Spartacist* reprinted opposite).

At stake in this campaign was more than the normally routine matter of club affiliation. In an effort to keep Melbourne University "safe" from communism, the witchhunters had issued a direct challenge to the basic democratic right to political dissent at the university, a threat to the entire left and labour movement. A young Greek woman in the Spartacist Club, with direct experience of anti-communist repression, spoke powerfully to this point at the reaffiliation meeting: "This undemocratic action reminds me of the junta which was in Greece from 1967 to 1973, and just as I was against the undemocratic actions in Greece, I will oppose them here too."

At a 24 March Activities Committee meeting held to vote on the Spartacist Club's reaffiliation, Committee member and ALP Club leader Maureen O'Brien stressed that "a lot of people are watching how this committee performs tonight". Indeed there were. Over 750 students, campus workers, academics, trade unionists and ALP figures had signed the Spartacist Club's petition demanding its immediate reaffiliation and protesting the witchhunt, including Indian Studies Department Chairman J Dunham, Plumbers Union General Secretary George Crawford, FEDFA State Secretary Stan Williams, Liquor Trades Union Secretary Joe Goddard, Municipal Employees Union Secretary Paul Slape, Building Workers State



Caf workers picket 1981: joined by Spartacists, crossed by Socialist Club

Secretary Alf Zeeno, and ALP State Member of Parliament Joan Coxedge who, at a Melbourne University "Women and Labour" forum held hours before the Activities Committee meeting, spoke out in defence of the Spartacist Club, pointing to the importance of defending democratic rights in the current right-wing political climate. O'Brien got the point. "If I could get 600 students on this campus to sign a petition on anything", she said, "we'd really be happy".

The 8 to 5 vote for reaffiliation drew a line between those who, like O'Brien, are sensitive to public opinion on campus and in the labour movement, and the fanatical anti-communists around Belbruno who couldn't care less about who was "watching" the Committee — from the labour movement, that is. To O'Brien's motion for reaffiliation, they counterposed putting the Spartacist Club on ice for a 3-month "trial period". O'Brien assured Belbruno, with whom she and Activities Director Kay Dyson had worked so closely, that she and Dyson had gone "through their membership list with a fine tooth comb", carefully adding that "if the Spartacist Club performs in a way that we don't like, we can disaffiliate them".

To emphasise their position, half a dozen of Belbruno's right-wing ALP and Liberal Club cronies brought billiard cues and heavy sticks to the meeting, as did a member of the NCC-inspired Moderate Student Alliance, who sat silently throughout the proceedings, repeatedly thumping his stick on the ground. This deliberate provocation set the stage for the dubious Belbruno to take the floor. Adopting the tone of a "scholar" educated at the Hoover Institute, Belbruno opened his remarks with a resume of Spartacist League history, replete with plenty of highly specific and suggestive organisational detail on SL size and personnel (mostly inaccurate and hardly sensational), his sources of course undisclosed.

Then came the core of his "case" branding the SL, with which the Spartacist Club stands in political solidarity, as an "American-controlled", "extreme left-wing", "violent", "outside" group of "infiltrators" with a penchant for "disrupting meetings... which have anything to do with Russia" and who "ideologically" cannot tolerate dissent of any kind. This was followed by Activities Committee Chairman Warwick Frost,

mention Dyson's letters? "What about the sticks?" asked one Spartacist Club member at the meeting. Or the case of J O Peck, who like Belbruno happens to be a fourth-year law student. Peck, supposedly "duped" into joining the club, sent a "complaint" to Dyson written by the Melbourne University's Solicitors Office. One of his tutors who knows him as a right-winger expressed amazement that Peck could possibly have involved himself with the Spartacist Club, whose membership list Peck had signed during Orientation Week. From day one the campaign against the Spartacist Club smacked of being a set-up, and not only for administration harassment, as indicated by the repeated and never substantiated slanders of "violence" and "fraud", or Belbruno's thinly-veiled suggestion that the Trotskyist Spartacists are really sinister Russian spies!

Spartacist Club spokesman Christine Stephens cut through the lies and innuendo to lay bare the basis for the witchhunt: "I would like to point out that the Spartacist Club suspension is unjust, discriminatory and based in political considerations only. I would assert that the rules have never been in question here." As if to confirm this point, ALP Per Watson blurted out that the Spartacist Club "do not have a right to interfere and to destabilise the political comment (!) on this campus, and I think that is one of the fears that many members of this committee and other people have...". Perhaps the "other people" Watson had in mind were the capitalists who sit on Melbourne University's Council, the Regiment which recruits for the Australian imperialist army, or the cops who broke the cafeteria workers strike last year — the "outsiders", as Comrade Christine pointed out, "who don't belong on this campus".

Ironically for the witchhunters, the Spartacist Club emerged through its defence campaign as a well-established and broadly-known campus club, with many new supporters and friends impressed by our frank and aggressive approach, a stark contrast to the snotty "house socialists" of the Socialist Club who throughout the campaign maintained

Union Leaders Condemn Witchhunt

March 22, 1982

Activities Committee,
c/o Melbourne University,
Parkville, Vic, 3052

Dear Comrades,

I write in support of the attempts by a group of Melbourne University students to set up a Spartacist Club at Melbourne University.

One does not have to support the political views of these students to appreciate that the denial of the right to form such a club is a denial of the fundamental democratic right which in my opinion should be defended by the Activities Committee rather than be undermined.

As a trade union official who never enjoyed a University education or had the opportunity to engage in the broad and genuinely democratic activities and exchanges experienced on a University campus it comes as something of a shock to learn that such narrow bigotries and unenlightened views hold sway in this day and age. I therefore add my protest and ask that the

affiliation rights be granted to these students forthwith.

Fraternally,
A N Zeeno
Victorian State Secretary,
Building Workers Industrial Union

March 16, 1982

Chairman,
Activities Committee,
c/o University of Melbourne,
Parkville, Vic, 3052

Dear Sir,

It has been brought to our notice that the Spartacist Club is being excluded from your University.

Whilst not necessarily agreeing with the policy of this body, we are of the opinion that the democratic rights of this club are being denied and we as a union wish to voice our disapproval of your undemocratic action.

Yours sincerely,
Stan Williams
Victorian Secretary,
Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association



"Socialist" witchhunter Joe Belbruno (left) with Liberal Club member and Activities Committee "colleague" Charles Richardson "checks out" Spartacist Club Poland forum.

SRC President Bill Watson and Union Board careerist Robert Chappell throwing out accusations of "fraud", "stand-over tactics" and "actionable" statements in *Campus Spartacist* as if they'd already made the big league in a fully fledged HUAC chamber.

"Standover tactics", intimidation and slander were exclusively the methods of the witchhunters, however. What about Belbruno's harassing phone calls to Spartacist Club members, not to

a complicit silence on the dirty work of their colleague Belbruno.

The Spartacist Club looks forward to continuing its work at Melbourne University, winning fresh forces to the struggle for workers revolution. For as Leon Trotsky wrote in *Their Morals and Ours*, "... to participate in this movement with open eyes and with an intense will — only this can give the highest moral satisfaction to a thinking being!"

Reprinted below is the slightly

abridged 18 March Melbourne *Campus Spartacist*, titled "Anti-Red Witchhunt at Melbourne University".

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Some very dirty work is being done at Melbourne University. Clubs and Societies Officer and Socialist Club member Joe Belbruno — a fourth year Arts/Law student — has set in motion a McCarthy-style witchhunt against the Melbourne University Spartacist Club, newly formed by students on the campus. On 9 March the Spartacist Club applied for affiliation to the Clubs and Societies Committee, normally a routine procedure. Though we consider the rules governing the formation of campus clubs as restrictive and undemocratic, we nevertheless fulfilled them scrupulously, submitting a constitution and more than the required number of signatures. The procedures we followed were entirely normal, collecting signatures in Orientation-week to our membership list from students interested in revolutionary politics and our activities who wished to see the Club established.

With the sole exception of Joe Belbruno, the 9 March meeting voted in favour of our affiliation. Belbruno himself admitted that the requirements for affiliation had been "impeccably fulfilled". "The rules are just a formality", he flatly stated, "we don't want the Sparts here". Belbruno then announced his intention to "check up" on students involved in Spartacist activities and proceeded to telephone and interrogate members of our club.

On 12 March, Activities Director Kay Dyson told a Spartacist supporter that our affiliation had been "suspended" pending an "investigation" due to two "complaints" from students who wanted their names removed from the Club's membership list, one in writing c/o Melbourne University Solicitor's Office dated 5 March and signed by student J O Peck. The Spartacist Club had not previously seen Peck's statement. We had, however, spoken to Peck on the telephone on 8 March when we called him to inform him of a Spartacist Club forum on Poland. Peck, who happens to be a fourth year student at the university, explained that he was mistaken in joining the club and did not want to maintain his membership, which was fine by us as we told him. At no point in the conversation did he mention his 5 March written "complaint".

Dyson sent out a letter of her own to members of the Spartacist Club, asking that they confirm their membership in writing to her. On 12 March Dyson told one Spartacist supporter that a failure to reply would be interpreted as a desire to terminate membership on behalf of the recipient, although this is not mentioned in her letter. The same day Belbruno told us that the Clubs and Societies Committee "executive" had held an emergency meeting, of which we were not informed, and had voted to suspend the Spartacist Club. Dyson has upheld the suspension charging that the Spartacist Club is an "outside group", a notorious red-baiter's codeword.

This undemocratic and anti-communist witchhunt has a significance well beyond the normally routine matter of club affiliation. The witchhunters want to portray communists as non-people with no rights, "outsiders" from whom students and others in the community must be "protected" lest they be "duped". This familiar refrain has long been used not merely by campus administrations, but as a pretext for bourgeois state repression against leftist, labour and minority militants and is all the more ominous in the context of a political climate of Cold War anti-Sovietism and renewed imperialist militarism....

Old Hands at Repression

Of course, repression of left-wing and labour activity at Melbourne University is nothing new. In 1971 Maoist student leader Albert Langer, a Monash honours student, and three of his cothinkers were refused admission to Melbourne University, despite the fact that the requirements for admission had been "impeccably fulfilled". The protests in response to this blatant attempt to

IS/SWP - Noske and Scheidemanns' Little Grandchildren

On 25 March the International Socialists (IS) excluded Spartacist supporters from a "public" Melbourne University IS forum on Poland, and tried to do likewise the same day at a publicly advertised IS forum at Sydney University. Sound routine? Certainly this is hardly a first for the IS. Along with the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) they have for years carried out a systematic policy of political exclusionism directed against the SL aimed at sealing off their respective memberships and peripheries from our revolutionary criticism, a policy which neither tendency, nor any other, has previously succeeded in enforcing on the campuses.

What made the 25 March incidents so gross were two events that immediately preceded them. The Sydney University forum, entitled "Fascism, Nationalism ... And How to Fight Them" was held only two days after a 200-strong anti-fascist demonstration on the campus, initiated and built centrally by the SU Spartacist Club and Spartacist League (see article page 3). The forum at Melbourne University took place one day after the Spartacist Club on that campus beat back a vindictive McCarthy-style administration-backed witchhunt (see article facing page). The timing here is anything but coincidental.

The Melbourne University witchhunters were defeated thanks largely to

the 750-plus students, campus workers, academics and prominent ALP and trade union officials who without hesitation signed a petition demanding the club's immediate reaffiliation. But when the IS was asked to sign, IS leader David Lockwood flatly stated: "I don't defend your democratic rights ... you people are Soviet imperialists". Tony Forward, a cadre of the SWP also refused to sign and, like Paul White of the tiny *Socialist Fight* group, charged the Spartacists with "violence" and "disruption", slanders that the SWP has been busily circulating at least since their thug attack against the SL-initiated Anti-Imperialist Contingent last June (see *ASp* no 86, July 1981).

Political exclusionism (and the accompanying slanders of "disruption" and "violence") is itself soft-core violence, an attempt to create a climate of opinion of communists as non-people, undeserving of workers democracy. Nor should anyone miss the sinister import of Lockwood's ludicrous suggestion that we Trotskyists are some kind of Russian agents. Accusations of "disruption" and "violence", entirely unsubstantiated, along with dramatic "revelations" of the SL as an "extremist left-wing", "pro-Soviet", "American-controlled", "outside", group of "infiltrators" (which reads like a tract by J Edgar Hoover) formed the core of Melbourne University Clubs and

Societies officer Joe Belbruno's "case" against the Spartacist Club at the 24 March Activities meeting.

It is also worth pointing out that the Melbourne University IS forum was sponsored by the Socialist Club, of which the dubious Belbruno is a leading light. Our exclusion from this meeting was not merely an endorsement of Belbruno's witchhunt: it was a *provocation*.

The same slander of "disruption" was also used as a pretext for our exclusion from the Sydney University forum. In fact, the SL and the international Spartacist tendency have a long and scrupulous record of *aggressively defending* workers democracy against all forms of political suppression, be it slander, exclusionism or outright thuggery. We are not disrupters, nor are we prone to "violence" as the SWP, IS et al well know. We are communists who simply seek to exercise our democratic rights as members of the public to attend public meetings and speak from the floor during discussion periods. This is what the reformists are really afraid of.

As it happened, although a few Spartacist supporters were forcibly barred from entering the Sydney University meeting, a number did manage to attend after one Spartacist supporter removed an ISer who was blocking the

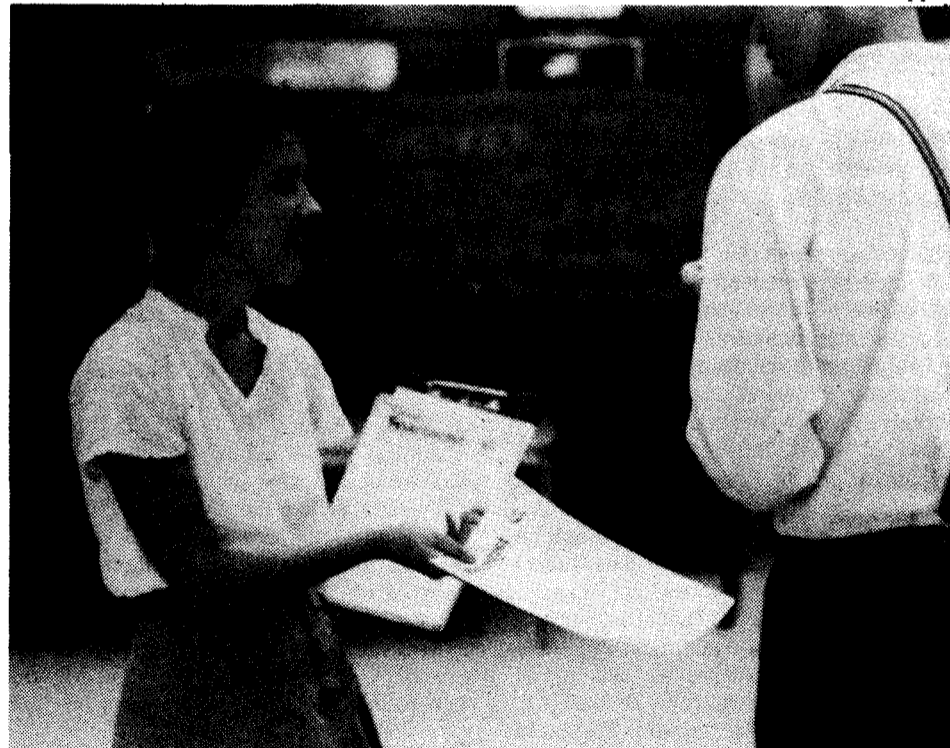
Continued on page six

suppress political dissent marked the peak of the late 60s, early 70s student movement on this campus. When the Nationwide catering company took over Melbourne University's cafeterias in early 1981, the administration called the cops to break up an on-campus demonstration in support of Cafeteria workers striking for job permanency and decent pay rates. The Socialist Club, at that time heavily involved in supporting the strike, was threatened with disaffiliation, its members "investigated" and

Carlton last October the Doctor brandished a shifting spanner at a young woman selling *Australasian Spartacist*. When he lifted it to strike the comrade who intervened, Szrednicki was quickly disarmed and sent packing, but even as he left he promised to return with a knife! One can imagine that the unsavoury Knopfmacher and Szrednicki could at least approve of Belbruno/Dyson's vindictive campaign against the Spartacist Club....

An article entitled "Know Your"

ASp photo



Spartacist Club member Christine Stephens campaigns at Melbourne Uni.

leading activist and Politics tutor Isi Unikowski was suspended and fined \$800.

Melbourne University has a well-earned reputation as one of Australia's foremost uppercrust and politically conservative campuses. Amongst its best-known luminaries is Frank Knopfmacher, a veteran anti-communist witchhunter who made his name in the Cold War Menzies period as an outspoken advocate of purging reds from the universities. Then there is the sinister Dr J Szrednicki, a notoriously right-wing Pole and Reader in philosophy at Melbourne University, who twice threatened and physically harassed *Australasian Spartacist* salesmen. In

Enemies" by Isi Unikowski (*Comrades Own socialist annual*, March 1982) points out a few of the powerful "outsiders" who sit on Melbourne University Council: Council Chairman Sir Donald Hibbard, president of the Australian Mining Industry Council and director of CRA and Comalco; Council Vice-Chairman Leslie Brewster, Treasurer of the Victorian Chamber of Manufacturers; Sir Bernard Callinan, Commissioner of the SEC and a director of BP Australia; Charles Trethowan, SEC Chairman. Undoubtedly, a campus like this would be a prime recruiting arena for yet another "outside" force, ASIO, which like all capitalist spy agencies and governmental departments is always on the lookout for

promising young "braintrusts" from amongst the privileged campus elite.

"Socialist" Joe Belbruno: Who is he working for?

Joe Belbruno, the public initiator of the current witchhunt against the Spartacist Club, may well be a relatively ordinary reformist fink, motivated by smug anti-communist prejudice and small-minded aspirations to make Melbourne University the exclusive political turf of the Socialist Club. The guy seems almost uncannily to personify the snobbish middle-class elitism of crackpot, campus-bound "socialism". In the editorial introduction to the SRC's *Arts Faculty Counter Handbook*, Belbruno provocatively compares his own felt alienation as a self-described capricious petty bourgeois in the "academic community" with the Nazi genocide against the Jews! ... In his capacity as Clubs and Societies Officer with access to the Activities Office and Clubs and Societies student files — which he has boasted of using to check up on Spartacist Club members — Belbruno is very well placed indeed to act as the front man in a vicious witchhunt against student leftists.

The Melbourne University Spartacist Club was initiated by student supporters of the Spartacist League to make the revolutionary views of Trotskyism ie, communist internationalism, known on campus. The constitution of the club openly states its political solidarity with the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand and the international Spartacist tendency. In this there is nothing unusual. The various political clubs on campus reflect and represent many political programs which one also finds in organised public groupings and organisations. The Labor and Liberal Clubs are obvious examples. The Socialist Club, whose members identify with various political programs — that of the ALP Socialist Left, the fake-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, the "third-camp" International Socialists, etc — is hardly an exception.

The political differences that separate our Club from the Socialist Club are wide-ranging and deep-going. There are plenty of issues to be taken up in open political debate, and plenty of reasons for why the Socialist Club is afraid of doing just that. Last September Spartacist supporters built Caf workers picket lines and said,

Continued on page six

War Drive...

Continued from page two

Robertson worries that:

"Another factor, which does not assist the credibility of the left when foreign policy is considered, is the tendency to 'spend' defence allocations over and over on proposed hospitals, nursery schools, pensions, etc. This approach adds to the impression that opponents of traditional defence policies are unconcerned with the legitimate defence of Australia."

With talk like this and "realistic" eyes fixed on Labor's chances in 1983 the CPA have virtually given up trying to present themselves as any sort of left opposition to mainstream Laborism. The CPA's figleaf of an "independent, non-aligned" foreign policy is, just like the Laborite left, empty utopian chatter. "Independence" is no option for the Australian bourgeoisie. To have any meaning it would have to be as a necessarily reactionary solution to the highly unlikely prospect of Australia being abandoned by the US. Such a scenario would mean transforming Australia into a garrison state armed to the teeth, slashing workers standard of living, and poisoning the class struggle with greatly intensified white chauvinism, a program most consistently expressed by fascist outfits like the Progressive Nationalist Party.

The choice for the Australian working class is not between "independence" and subservience to US imperialism. The alternative to the capitalist irrationality of a world divided into hostile national states is proletarian revolution, opening the road to a racially-integrated Australia as part of a rationally-planned division of labour in socialist Asia.

The anti-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) made much out of the CPA's gross capitulations in a series of *Direct Action* articles, also attacking the refusal of the "peace" marches to oppose US bases. But there is no substance here. The SWP is not about to take this literary left face into the streets. Instead it intends liquidating into the contingents of its front group, the Committee for Solidarity with Central America and the Caribbean (CISCAC), a propaganda creature for liberal imperialist policy in Central America — the line of the Schmidts, Mitterrands, Portillos and Teddy Kennedys — who, in fear of a military victory by the leftist insurgents, urge a "negotiated settlement" with the FDR/FMLN that would preserve the imperialist status quo in blood-torn El Salvador. The SWP absurdly claims the principal target of the war drive is the "colonial revolution", a fools' paradise constructed to deny that defence of the Soviet Union is posed. The US needs the destructive power of the MX missile and the ability to land its

submarine-launched ballistic missiles on a target thousands of miles away with pinpoint accuracy not because of ill-armed Central American guerrillas but to smash Soviet missiles in their hardened silos.

As for the Stalinists of the pro-Moscow Socialist Party of Australia (SPA), their answer to deep-going internal divisions fuelled by intensifying anti-Sovietism has been to ward off further threats of disintegration by falling back on their Moscow ties. Their chief propaganda for these marches is Leonid Brezhnev's "letter to Australians" which couples to standard Laborite pap about "non-alignment" the bizarre call for a Soviet-Australian "nuclear peace pact"! Detente is long dead but the Stalinists continue doggedly to push their UN peace petitions with their pacifist illusions and petty-bourgeois fantasies of imperialist "disarmament". Reagan/Haig have reaffirmed for all to see Lenin's dictum that "the existence of the Soviet republic side by side with imperialist states for any length of time is inconceivable. In the end one or the other must triumph". Not Stalinist class collaboration with a non-existent "peace-loving" section of the bourgeoisie but international proletarian revolution is the program to defend the USSR and defeat imperialism.

While petty-bourgeois pacifism mopes in despair communists point to the looming nuclear danger to show the urgent need for proletarian revolution that alone can abolish it. What Lenin wrote in WWI is even more true today:

If the present war arouses among the reactionary Christian Socialists, among the whimpering petty-bourgeoisie only horror and fright, only aversion to all use of arms, to bloodshed, death, etc then we must say: Capitalist society is and always has been *horror without end*... But the disarmament 'demand' or more correctly the dream of disarmament, is, objectively, nothing but an expression of despair at a time when as everyone can see, the bourgeoisie itself is paving the way for the only legitimate and revolutionary war — civil war against the bourgeoisie."

Lenin's Bolsheviks brought that war to an end, through revolution; our task today is to end World War III before it begins. To repeat Trotsky's words in his 1934 *War and the Fourth International*, "The struggle against war means now the struggle for the Fourth International!" ■

Melbourne Uni...

Continued from page five

"picket lines mean don't cross". Socialist Club members crossed them. In Poland, where we look to the forging of a Trotskyist proletarian vanguard in the traditions of Lenin and Luxemburg, we said that Solidarnosc's clerical-nationalist counter-revolution must be stopped, and the gains of the Bolshevik Revolution, bureaucratically extended to Poland when the Soviet Red Army liberated the country from Nazi occupation, must be defended. The Socialist Club was and is wildly pro-Solidarnosc, as is Reagan, Fraser and the Pope (not to mention Knopfmacher and Szrednicki). In face of the imperialist drive to anti-Soviet nuclear holocaust, we say: Defend the Soviet Union! Defend Vietnam! The main enemy is at home! ...

The Cold War anti-Sovietism of Melbourne University's Socialist Club is not inconsistent with Cold War-style witchhunting on campus. Still, we suggest to members of the Socialist Club that they take a good hard look at Belbruno and what he is doing; even the most "democratic" of "socialists" will lose if this creep and his more influential backers are able to suppress democratic rights on campus.

Aside from the highly dubious aspects of this case, the attempt to keep the university "safe" for its capitalist masters is down the line counterposed to everything that we stand for. We seek to bring closer the day when admissions are open to all and the administration abolished, when Melbourne's oldest and most prestigious campus is made

available to the masses of "outsiders" who are today denied access to higher education because they are working class, poor or minorities...

We appeal to all those who have a stake in defending democratic rights to join us in defeating this anti-communist witchhunt. If successful, this attack will not stop with the Spartacist Club. An injury to one is an injury to all! ■

No Platform...

Continued from page three

acist Club and all militant anti-fascists for attack by the administration.

The PNP/ASA fascists didn't show their faces on 23 March, instead scattering leaflets around the campus headed "DEFEND FREE SPEECH" which denounce "Left/Spartacist lies" and threaten that "our right to freedom of expression will be enforced — by us if necessary". Under cover of "free expression" the fascists hope to legitimise race-hatred and gather the forces to launch racist terror. Those who defend the fascists' "democratic rights" or argue that action should be postponed "until they strike first" are rendering the PNP fascists practical aid in establishing themselves. The SWP were by far the most shameless. Having opposed the rally straight out they sat sullenly behind their literature table well away from the crowd.

The PNP are now relatively small and weak but their White-Australia program of fomenting anti-Asian racism has the potential to tap deep-seated xenophobic fears in a climate of domestic austerity and anti-Soviet militarism. Above all a program for crushing the incipient fascist threat must see as central the independent mobilisation of organised labour to crush these creeps whenever they raise their heads. No platform for fascists! ■

IS/SWP...

Continued from page five

doorway and pushing and shoving Spartacist comrades. The IS responded hysterically to this partial enforcement of workers democracy, claiming that their member had been "thrown across the room" (contrary to the written testimony of two independent witnesses) and warning that in future, Spartacists attempting to enter IS "public" meetings would be "beaten up". Consistent with their cowardly and bureaucratic policy, the IS later refused to recognise any of the Spartacist supporters present during the 10 minutes (!) set aside for "discussion" on the grounds that they were "excluded".

Most despicable and dangerous, however, was IS leader John Minns' statement that the Spartacists are the "flip side of the coin" of the PNP fascists, and ISer Steve Sherlock's staggering charge that "the PNP hasn't even done anything yet; you people have!" Minns/Sherlock's vicious red-baiting smear of the Spartacists who were centrally involved in the 23 March anti-fascist demo, and *whitewash* of the

fascists, mimics the standard refrain of bourgeois authorities who "even-handedly" denounce the fascists and their intended victims as rival "violent extremist factions". *This is both a green light to the fascists and a set up for administration action against the Spartacist Club and all militant opponents of fascism on campus!*

Both the anti-communist witchhunting at Melbourne University and the emergence of the PNP fascists at Sydney University reflect a broader political climate increasingly dominated by Cold War anti-Sovietism. This is the context in which the reformist left has escalated its campaign of slander, exclusionism and violence against the communist SL. The repeated baits of "Russian Stalinist" from the SWP and IS, all the more useful to cement their alliance with anti-Soviet imperialist reaction, gives the game away.

The already deep-going and fundamental political lines of division between ourselves and the IS and SWP have hardened visibly as these groups have moved right under the impact of the anti-Soviet war drive, most dramatically with their shameless support for counter-revolution in Poland. Here their virulent anti-Sovietism and anti-communism echoes not currently-held sentiments amongst the general working class public, but the mood of bourgeois ruling circles and the traditional anti-communist right. While the IS and SWP were demonstrating shoulder to shoulder with the fascistic "Captive Nations" at the Polish Consulate last December, the organised labour movement, outside of a few anti-Soviet bureaucrats, refused to turn out for the pro-Solidarnosc mobilisations.

For their own petty factional reasons the SWP and IS are making use of the notorious Stalinist tactics of exclusionism and slander which have played no small role historically in undercutting genuine solidarist defence of those victimised by the capitalist state or its "extra-parliamentary" thugs. In IS/SWP lingo, "disrupter" serves the same function as "terrorist" in the mouth of the government, which on a much more ominous scale uses these same tactics to itself do violence to leftist, minority and labour militants.

Both of these groups have more than once attempted to write our organisation out of the workers movement so as to justify their role in helping to set the stage for repression against the Spartacists, whether at the hands of the capitalist state or its representatives on campus. What these little Noskes and Scheidemanns are doing poses a threat not only to the SL, but to the entire left and labour movement. ■

Campus Spartacist...

Continued from page three

white outpost against Asia must be mercilessly combatted. In the spirit of proletarian internationalism we seek to build a class-struggle bridge to the workers and peasants of Asia in our struggle for a racially-integrated workers Australia, part of a socialist Asia.

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At a meeting of the Anti-Fascist Committee on 19 March supporters of the International Socialists (IS), the CPA, the Young Socialist League (YSL) and the AIM argued for calling on the Administration's Union Board to ban fascist literature from the campus. These people never learn. This is the Administration that suspended IS supporter Martin Hirst for two years and fined several other leftists for taking part in a 1978 protest against racist apologist Hans Eysenck, the Administration which last year sent its "grey men" (ie, cops) to harass leftists selling socialist literature on campus. It doesn't take much to figure out that an Administration "ban" on fascist literature, like state bans against the fascist right, will always be applied "evenly" (read: most stringently) against the left. The reformists can only conceive of "militant" action as a mechanism to pressure the established authorities, be it the capitalist state or its representatives on campus. *Ours* is a perspective of mass labour/student action to stop the fascists. The fascists understand one thing and one thing only, and that's the same treatment meted out to scabs!

Anti-Soviet war drive spawns fascist filth — Defend the Soviet Union!

The YSL's touching faith in the University Administration is entirely consistent with its search for a "peace bloc" with bourgeois "progressives" against the threat of anti-Soviet nuclear holocaust. The YSL representative at the 19 March meeting went out of his way to stress that no "confrontation" with the fascists take place. It's like nuclear disarmament, he said. Quite right — we Trotskyists are for Soviet missiles which stand guard against imperialist war! In contrast the reformist anti-Soviet left capitulates to the imperialist anti-Soviet hysteria which feeds the fascists' growth. Last December the SWP, IS and CPA members actually joined hands with the fascist "Captive Nations" outside the Polish consulate in defence of the counterrevolutionary Solidarnosc!

The Stalinist YSL aren't the only ones to oppose militant action to stop the fascists. In quick succession the Communist Party and, on the eve of the demonstration, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) withdrew their endorsements, a despicable stab in the back after the public decision to launch this united-front demonstration. However at the same time leading trade union bodies such as the Miners Federation, the Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association (FEDFA), Merv Nixon for the South Coast Trades and Labour Council, several officials of the Waterside Workers Federation in Sydney and Newcastle, and various Asian student groups such as the Malaysian Students Association, have endorsed.

The SWP, who initially endorsed only under pressure at the first planning meeting, suddenly "discovered" 4 days later that, like the CPA, it disagreed with denying the fascists a platform to spew their racist filth. Such "turn-the-cheek"

pacifism can only embolden the fascists.

The PNP is on this campus to recruit the cadre-core of a fascist movement based centrally on genocidal anti-Asian racism. Their aim of "extraparliamentary action" to rid the campuses of leftists and all those who are not "white" is but the tip of the iceberg. Their "program" means racist terror, anti-communist thuggery, and ultimately barbed wire and death camps. They must be stopped. The PNP fascists are now small and have yet to openly flex any muscle. We intend to ensure that they do not get the opportunity to do so. *Now is the time to act!* ■

El Salvador...

Continued from page eight

revolutionary mercenaries to overthrow the Sandinistas. Reagan seems determined to force Nicaragua onto the "Cuban road", finally to forcibly create the evidence of their "communism".

The FSLN comandantes are petty-bourgeois nationalists, not communist internationalists. Immediately after taking power in 1979 they expelled several score Latin American radicals in an international brigade which organized a demonstration demanding workers to power. The Sandinistas have periodically arrested leftists, broken strikes and currently hold several leaders of the pro-Moscow Communist Party in jail. They have channelled the bulk of government investment funds into the private sector. They claim, evidently correctly, not to be providing arms to the Salvadoran insurgents and right now are whining that FMLN plans to disrupt the junta's phony "elections" could have adverse effects on Nicaragua. This is treacherous, repulsive, petty nationalism with a vengeance! They have given ample proof of their desire to uphold national capitalism. But when threatened with a challenge to their own state power, the Sandinistas occasionally threaten to hand out rifles to every militant in Central America. And they are certainly threatened now.

Faced with the overt declaration that the CIA is pouring in huge sums of money to prop up their domestic enemies and mobilize counterrevolutionary military forces in a campaign of terror and sabotage, the Sandinistas will have to act. They cannot tolerate an internal and external enemy at the same time, and with Washington set on its present course this will oblige the Sandinistas to liquidate the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie. (This is clear to the local capitalists themselves, who have been bitterly complaining about Reagan/Haig's counterproductive policies.) While they're at it, a deep-going purge of the Sandinista junta, to get rid of the worst "moderates" who have repeatedly blocked the road to social revolution, would be an indicated step.

What makes Reagan and Haig do it? Have they decided that with their repeated failure to produce evidence of

Nicaraguan-sponsored revolutionary subversion they're just going to have to make them Communists, like it or not? These failed Big Liars, who make Idi Amin and Dr Goebbels look rational in comparison, seem determined to create a truth behind the lies.

Class Struggle at Home

El Salvador is not just an isolated "foreign policy" issue but the reflection of a global program to remove every obstacle to the rearming of American imperialism in order to "roll back" Communism. As the *New York Times* (14 March) reported: "A senior Administration official said today that the problem in El Salvador was global in nature and that the United States should involve the Soviet Union, Cuba and other Latin American nations in the search for a solution". The anti-Soviet war drive is a bipartisan policy uniting all wings of the American bourgeoisie. Thus while Democratic liberals differ with Republican conservatives over Central America, they all join hands over Poland (along with most of the reformist left). And this program of war preparations with selective, substantively trivial, mini-austerity is necessarily a war against the American working class, minorities and poor. With the economy collapsing, union givebacks and savage budget cuts are demanded as "necessary sacrifices" for the "national defense". The domestic program of the pro-imperialist "doves" who call for a "political solution" in El Salvador is for higher, not lower taxes to finance the war budget, ie, the sanity of Adolf Hitler in 1938 as opposed to Reagan's 1945 version.

Yet important sections of the US ruling class sense and fear the growing economic desperation of the working people and their deepening hatred for the political rulers of American capitalism. Liberal and not-so-liberal bourgeois forces would like to offer some social amelioration, not just naked reaction on all fronts. The haughty *New York Times*, which hasn't shed a tear for the masses in 100 years, now runs interviews in practically every issue exposing the growth of truly desperate poverty among large sections of the population. But the liberals have no policy except being against Reagan. They can't admit, even to themselves, that the arms budget is really a war budget because they support the basic aim of that war — the destruction of the Soviet Union.

At the same time the Reaganite far right is openly bridling at the restraints of bourgeois democracy, from sniping at the liberal media to the objections of Congressional budget committees. A Republican California state senator was recently expelled from the John Birch Society for openly advocating a coup d'etat to do away with the parliamentary process and Jewish lesbians. And further to the right of the Birch Society the Klan and Nazis are growing and becoming more active as the fascist fringe of Reagan's anti-Soviet war drive. This gives increasing urgency to efforts by the

Spartacist League and class-struggle union militants to stop the race terrorists in their tracks through labor/black mobilization.

The Reagan policy aims at destroying Russia in a war that they think will be painless for middle-class Americans. There is to be no drafting of white college boys or heavily taxing the upper layers of the American population. Instead there are to be Buck Rogers weapons, laser beams in space and the like, which probably won't work at all, and certainly not with the high school dropouts who form the bulk of the present volunteer army. But this does not mean that they don't intend to nuke Russia. The \$2.3 trillion scheduled to be spent in Reagan's arms budget is not simply waste as many liberals contend (although Admiral Hyman Rickover has demonstrated that there is plenty of that). The gang in Washington is dead serious about launching the war for which they are preparing.

Meanwhile, the crushing burden of this military budget is enormously intensifying all of the contradictions of American capitalism. The country is now in a deep recession which prominent bourgeois economists fear could plunge into a full-scale depression comparable to the 1930s. General Motors, for example, the symbol of American industry, is now operating on the margins of profitability. GM management doesn't want to lay off workers; it prefers to make money off those workers through exploiting their labor power. But this corporate giant is also subject to the capitalist business cycle aggravated by the irrationality of Reaganomics, and thus throws hundreds of thousands of auto workers into the streets.

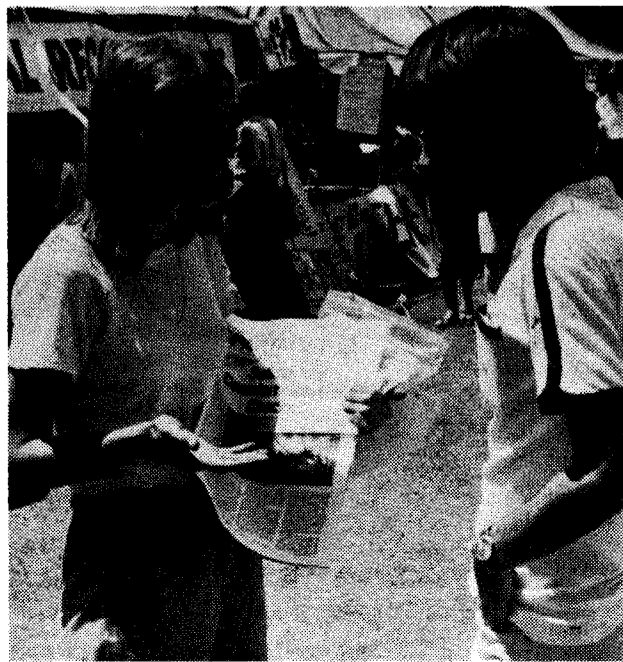
In the present conditions of severe capitalist economic crisis, any real labor struggle must ever more directly confront the capitalist system itself. Accepting the logic of the system means submitting to the givebacks which are gutting the unions. The union bureaucrats have absolutely no answer to the mass layoffs and concessions to the companies except nationalist economic protectionism, directed especially against the Japanese, which sows further seeds of war. Deeply complicit in imperialism's war drive, from the 1950s through the Vietnam years right up to the present, the Cold War labor officialdom cannot credibly present itself as an opponent of the domestic consequences: economic crisis, "givebacks" and cutbacks.

It is Desperately Necessary to Fight

El Salvador, Klan/Nazi attacks, layoffs in Detroit and all over — they are all linked, not by some kind of imposed schema but by the logic of capitalism in deep crisis. It is desperately necessary to fight, and the only successful struggles will be those on a class basis, with a revolutionary leadership fighting to overthrow the entire destructive boom-bust system of production for profit, not social need. Already most of the fake solutions are rapidly being excluded, openly and in the minds of thoughtful militants. The bankruptcy of trade-union reformism — which yesterday said "more" and today says "less" — is patent. What's needed is the Marxist, Trotskyist vanguard to unite all of the oppressed behind the proletariat and direct its struggle beyond piecemeal reforms (today less than marginal) to the question of power. To stop the anti-Soviet war drive, to put an end to US aggression in Central America and elsewhere, it is necessary to bring Reagan down through workers action on the way to a workers state!

— abridged from *Workers Vanguard* no 301, 19 March 1982

Sub Drive Success



Our 1982 Subscription Drive, with less than one week to go, has been a success, the national quota being reached mid-way through the drive. With the hysterical imperialist campaign in support of the counter-revolutionary Polish Solidarnosc, our Trotskyist opposition to Solidarnosc in particular has attracted considerable interest, in both new and old subscribers. This year our priority was pursuing regional trips, which were highly successful, especially Canberra which netted 73 subs and Brisbane, 39. We also sold a good number of subs to our international press, notably *Women and Revolution*.

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Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftists!

As the murderous Salvadoran junta totters and left-wing rebels advance, this is sending shock waves through the United States. Reagan and Haig dig in their heels, still trying to convince themselves that they can get a victory on the cheap in their global war on Communism. The liberals respond with empty talk of a compromise "political solution" in El Salvador and "butter plus guns" economic programs at home. The reformists merely tail after the Democrats, but the revolutionaries of the Spartacist League have a fundamentally different aim: we fight for military victory to the Salvadoran leftist insurgents, for defense of Cuba and the USSR, for US labor to take the offensive against Reagan reaction's assault on workers and blacks. We want to sweep away the bankrupt capitalist system that spells poverty and oppression for millions while threatening to plunge the planet into a nuclear third world war.

Reagan/Haig's "Big Lie" campaign of recent weeks has made it clear to all that the US government seeks nothing but a savage military solution in Central America, if necessary creating opponents out of those who had wanted only to conciliate them. When the Nicaraguan Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) toppled the Somoza dictatorship in 1979, it was possible to envision a (utopian) middle way. But in El Salvador today there is no middle ground. The *New York Times* reports that the leading candidate in the March "elections", Roberto D'Aubuisson, is a psychotic mass murderer, who assassinated the archbishop primate, attempted to kill the US ambassador and now calls for indiscriminate napalming of the peasantry. Soon Christian Democrat Duarte, who has served as a wormy fig leaf for the most hideous massacres, may be on the run. At the same time, as guerrillas of the Salvadoran Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) are able to withstand an all-out offensive by the junta's elite US-trained kill-crazy battalion within 20 miles of the capital, the call for leftist military victory is urgently posed. And the reformists who call for a negotiated settlement look increasingly like fools... or saboteurs. This creates a tremendous opening for revolutionary propaganda.

Today the call for the rebels to take the capital city, San Salvador, is on the agenda. Yet the dissident bourgeois politicians of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR) are necessarily opposed to a working-class uprising sweeping away the bloodthirsty junta. This would destroy their dreams of a reformed capitalist government by posing a profound social revolution. The Salvadoran guerrilla leaders also join the FDR in calling for a "political solution" which would leave the junta army and the structure of landlord capitalist rule intact. This was made explicit in their letter to Ronald Reagan pleading for a deal with US imperialism. Leftist leader Cayetano Carpio reaffirmed that the goal of the



Defend Cuba and the Soviet Union! US Labour - Bring Down Reagan!

FMLN/FDR was *not* a socialist government but "pluralism" and a "mixed economy" — that is, capitalist reform.

But even if such statements were merely a smokescreen, as the guerrillas' leftist cheerleaders eagerly maintain, what the Salvadoran rebels with their nationalist program seek at best can be nothing more than another Cuba, a bureaucratically deformed workers state. The last thing they have in mind is the creation of the Bolshevik soviet democracy of Lenin and Trotsky. This is not merely a reflection of Stalinist ideology, but also of the social reality of populist guerrilla war. Nevertheless, the overthrow of capitalism in Nicaragua or El Salvador would set Central America aflame, above all threatening to ignite Mexico with its sizeable industrial base and proletariat.

Whose "Political Solution"?

Currently attention in the El Salvador protests is focused on plans for a negotiated settlement in Central America, particularly the French-Mexican initiative. For right-wing "hawks" this is the product of lily-livered liberals who are "soft on Communism". For imperialist "doves" it is a means of avoiding the catastrophe of "another Vietnam" — ie, a *losing* military adventure. For the Nicaraguan Sandinistas it means sidetracking a rebel military victory that would threaten capitalist rule, and therefore their delicate balancing act, through-

out the region. For the workers and peasants of El Salvador, such a treacherous "political solution" leaving the landlord-puppet army and oligarchical rule intact means the greatest bloodbath in the bloody history of their oppression.

So what's in it for the French and Mexicans? What we are witnessing here is some big-power and middle-power rivalries within the framework of imperialism. Mitterrand, the French Socialist president, is manifestly as virulently anti-Soviet as the Cold Warriors in Washington, and pro-Israel besides. But the French have their own visions of national glory going back to the Emperor Maximilian, and consequently a semi-adversary relationship with the Americans. Thus Paris has decided to cultivate some friends in Central America, delivering a few million dollars of inoffensive trucks and band-aids to the Nicaraguans. (Lest anyone think they're gone pinko, however, the French are supplying the military strongmen in neighboring Honduras with advanced Mirage jets.)

Mexico, meanwhile, is the most populous Latin American country next to Brazil, and for 150 years it has seen Central America as part of its natural sphere of influence (annexation currently being out of fashion). Despite occasional rhetorical flourishes and bear hugs for Fidel Castro, Mexico is a capitalist country with a large, wealthy and very conscious bourgeoisie. And lately it has

discovered vast new oil reserves which greatly improve its bargaining power with the *yanqui* colossus to the north. Far from being even slightly favorable to revolution, Mexican president Lopez Portillo has just created an elite army unit to keep the Central American insurgents from spilling across the border. And in proposing a "political solution" in El Salvador, the Mexicans explicitly offered guarantees against a Marxist government. Whether they can deliver will be another matter.

Sandinista Nicaragua with Its Back to the Wall

Ever since he got into office Ronald Reagan has been going after the Sandinistas with a vengeance. (The Republican platform declared Nicaragua already lost to Communism, and the UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick labelled former dictator Somoza, the jackal of Managua, a benevolent "authoritarian".) Starting with cancellation of US aid agreements, Washington has now escalated to more military forms of "destabilizing" the radical nationalist FSLN regime. There have been mounting border raids by ex-Somoza National Guardsmen operating out of Honduras with evident CIA support. Then came the threats of a Caribbean blockade directed against Nicaragua. And now it has been confirmed that the US is spending \$19 million to train a force of counter-

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