

Spartacist banner at Sydney December "Right to Work" rally.



Hawke and Fraser: both promise Cold War and capitalist austerity.

- **Hawke's "Alternative": Cold War, Social Contract**
- **Bring Down Fraser Through Class Struggle!**

# No Vote to Labor!

When workers go to the polls on March 5 to vote in new Federal elections they face a choice between Fraser's incumbent Liberal/National Country Party coalition and the Labor Party of Bob Hawke. Some choice. Fraser called the snap election on 4 February to get a mandate for his government's wage freeze claiming he faced "confrontation" from Labor and the unions, and hoping to catch the ALP in leadership disarray. Instead he intersected a sudden but well-oiled purge that saw former ALP leader and loser Bill Hayden "resign" to make way for the "charismatic" Hawke, a move that marked a further rightward consolidation of Labor around Cold War austerity policies.

The following day Hawke called off the oil workers "campaign" against the freeze and promised that Fraser's wage freeze would be continued by a Labor government, up and until his own "prices-incomes" social contract plan for wage cutting is in place. Hawke's campaign message of "national reconciliation" is aimed straight at the country's capitalist rulers. Hawke warns that in the difficult times ahead the "divisive" Fraser can only endanger class and social peace as he offers up his party and ex-cronies in the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) as more effective police for Australian capitalism. For his part Fraser is making his election campaign a series of anti-union provocations. Immediately after he announced plans for enforced secret strike ballots and returning penal powers to the Arbitration Court, the High Court refused the Maoist Builders Labourers Federation

(BLF) federal secretary Norm Gallagher right to appeal against a 3-month jail sentence for "contempt of court" and sent him to jail. While the union ranks walked out in outrage, an action that should've been extended to protest strikes throughout the labour movement, the cowardly BLF tops sneered that this was just a "knee-jerk reaction" and promised no official action. And from Hawke? — "The law has run its course".

These elections take place in a context of dangerously escalating anti-Soviet war preparations and Cold War hysteria orchestrated by American imperialism, economic depression throughout the capitalist world and resurgent imperialist rivalries and national chauvinism. Under Fraser, Australia is one of Reagan's staunchest allies, backing his endless provocations and threats of nuclear war against the Soviet Union. Through the ANZUS American alliance, the key US military/spy bases in Australia and its own military capability Australia pledges itself as loyal ally and military agent in the Pacific/Asian region for Washington's war plans.

And Hawke's Labor Party promises no less. Almost immediately he became leader Hawke, a rabid Israel supporter, made clear he would renege on Labor's pledge to pull Australian troops out of the Sinai "peacekeeping" force (the only significant foreign policy difference with the Liberals) and has proposed instead a trip to the Near East to "consult" with Israel's genocidal Begin and Egypt's Mubarak before reviewing ALP policy. A Hawke Labor

government will be a government of Cold War and anti-worker austerity wrapped in the chauvinist mantle of Australian patriotism. These elections offer not the slightest pretence of a class vote for workers. Fraser's Liberals never! Hawke's Labor Party no! No vote to Labor's program of Cold War, racism and social contract!

## Tell Me Who Your Friends Are ...

Last year official unemployment figures jumped by a quarter of a million to 670,000, going over 10 percent for the first time since the 1930s. Hawke blithely claims that Labor will halt the spiralling unemployment but, vague talk of "economic expansion" aside, its real program is to put "a protectionist wall around Australia", a recipe only for racist chauvinism, industrial rot and war. Sharp reduction in real wages, abolition of long-held conditions, drastic cuts in social services, emasculation of the trade unions and the boosting of its armed forces — this is the program of the Australian bourgeoisie, reeling under the impact of the international economic crisis, to restore its profits and competitive position on the world market. Whoever wins these elections intends to make the workers pay.

Hawke's role as a certified labour traitor is well known. He first won popularity with the bourgeoisie in the 1970s selling out strikes as its "Mr Fixit" ACTU president. In particular he played a central role in derailing the burgeoning strike movement against the 1975 "Kerr coup" which threw out the Whitlam Labor govern-

ment. Hawke is also an open and declared enemy of the Labor "left", heading up a right-wing factional alliance in the ALP renowned for its strident anti-communism. The anonymous Labor MP from Victoria's Socialist Left faction wasn't entirely joking when he claimed he might seek political asylum in Eastern Europe if Hawke won these elections. In his Victorian home base Hawke's Centre-Unity faction continues to agitate for the reaffiliations to the ALP of the fanatically anti-communist CIA-lovers that head the "moderate" Catholic National Civic Council (NCC) unions that split from the "soft on communism" ALP in the 1950s.

For the last seven years Labor has assiduously disowned the ill-fated Whitlam period of partial reform (and rid itself of most of the personnel as well). In particular they clamped a tight lid on the traditional "anti-Americanism" of the Labor left, long ago giving the seal of approval to Washington's secretive spy bases like Alice Springs' Pine Gap and North West Cape. Still mindful that Whitlam's 1975 fall came in no small way from his meddling in the CIA's affairs at Pine Gap, then-leader Hayden and deputy Bowen only a few months ago sought an audience with Reagan's Dr Strangelove Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger to pledge their allegiance and get the Washington OK.

Remember too that Hawke is the man who in a 1974 interview said he could "understand" the Zionist fanatics who run Israel nuking the Arabs, who headed a platform a year

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## No Vote...

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ago protesting the Polish military crackdown that spiked Solidarity's counterrevolutionary bid for power with former Liberal leader Billy Snedden, and who boasts he is "personal friends" with George Schultz, Reagan's new Secretary of State. The Laborites hope to come to power through selling Hawke, the man. Well, as the old saying goes, tell me who your friends are and I'll tell you who you are.

The reformist left of course are gearing up to push the "vote Labor" fraud down workers throats. Even where they run their own candidates the message will be the same. The anti-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party's (SWP) election statement for example tells us that the election provides "a big opportunity" for "a real fight back by throwing Fraser out". The "big opportunity" turns out to be voting in a Hawke Labor government. In what must be one of the greatest displays ever of asinine reformism and electoral cretinism the SWP is running just about every cadre they've got and then some, a total of 48 candidates, whose program is to offer "the Labor leaders" (ie, Hawke, Keating & Co) a set of "socialist policies that the Labor government should implement to fight the crisis". And what are these "socialist policies"? At the top of the list is the SWP's call for Hawke to "nationalise all industries that lay off workers", and this at the same time as Wran's Labor government is preparing to break the rail unions and wipe out 5000 jobs in the "nationalised" State railways. How cynical can you get?

For the reformist SWP, the only purpose to any real struggle is to pressure the pro-capitalist Labor tops and union bureaucrats to the left. In contrast revolutionists want to *split* Labor hard into its class components, to break militant workers from this very right-wing social-democratic party, the chief strategic obstacle to workers revolution in this country. Critical electoral support to such bourgeois workers parties, as Lenin called them, can at times be a useful tactic to pursue this split and advance the communist program, its purpose being to support Labor "like a rope supports a hanging man" (Lenin). But the pre-condition to such a tactic is not only that Labor runs independently of the openly bourgeois parties but that at some level, deformed and partial though it may be, it represents a class against class vote.

For example in the 1975 federal elections critical support to Labor gave revolutionists a tool to reach the thousands of militant workers who had fought, against the treachery of the Labor tops, for mass strike action

## Wran's Cops on Anti-Gay Rampage

### Drop the Charges!

In 1978 the NSW Labor government of Neville Wran staged a massive crackdown on supporters of homosexual rights, arresting almost 200 at several demonstrations over a two-month period. Now, in a climate of increased social reaction, Wran's thugs in blue are at it again. In the early hours of Saturday, 29 January, the Vice Squad orchestrated a raid on Club 80, a gay club in Sydney's Oxford Street. The 200 patrons were detained for hours and systematically harassed; the cops outrageously demanding names, addresses and employers' names. The Vice Squad arrested 6 people, and 20 or so others who could not provide proof of identity were further detained at Darlinghurst police station before finally being released.

Four were charged under the notorious section 81a of the Crimes Act, with "indecent assault on an unknown male" where consent is not considered grounds for defence and there is a maximum jail sentence of 14 years. A sixteen-year old charged with "being a neglected child" in "moral danger" is still in custody.

The sixth man was arrested when he objected to the harassment and was charged with "causing serious alarm and affront". Such charges issuing from a raid on a private club are a serious and dangerous escalation of attacks on homosexuals and democratic rights in general. The Spartacist League protests and denounces these raids. We demand that all the charges be immediately dropped and the imprisoned youth freed! We oppose any and all legal restrictions on effectively consensual sexual activity which aim at viciously enforcing the sexual morality of the bourgeois nuclear family, the root of oppression for women, homosexuals and youth.

Wran and his ministers naturally stand by their cops. Interviewed by a delegation of gay activists, Police Minister Anderson stated that he would not drop the charges and directed all complaints to the Ombudsman. The whole strategy of gay groups like Gay Rights Lobby and the Gay Solidarity Group however is to tail "sympathetic" elements in the ALP like MP George Petersen who will supposedly pressure Wran to repeal the anti-homosexual laws and "control" his cops. Pathetically, one such

"sympathetic" element is former attorney-general Frank Walker, prosecutor-in-chief of those arrested in 1978! Those like leading gay activist Craig Johnston, who point out approvingly that the Anti-Discrimination Board report on homosexuality recommends liaison between the police and gay community, are only breeding suicidal illusions in the cops. The only liaison they want with gays is at the end of a baton.

The Labor Party is increasingly demonstrating in practice its role as gendarme for capitalist reaction. Its championing of Australian national chauvinism — protectionism, immigration restrictions — fuels the growing reactionary social climate which will target any "deviant" from the "Australian norm" in this brutally male chauvinist country. What is necessary is not pressuring bigoted Laborism but the forging of a revolutionary vanguard party which can, as Lenin said, serve as a "tribune of the people", mobilising the power of the labour movement to fight all forms of capitalist oppression on the road to state power and the creation of a new society. Drop the charges! Full democratic rights for homosexuals!

to overturn the Liberal/Kerr "coup" which sacked the Whitlam Labor government. At such times calling for a vote to put Labor in power can expose the contradiction between Labor's rhetoric and promises of reform and the realities of running the capitalist state. But today there is no contradiction between what the Labor Party is promising and what it will do in government.

Revolutionaries do not base their tactical manoeuvres against Labor on the consciousness of the relatively undifferentiated masses. Our orientation is to those working class militants and youth who are seeking an *alternative* to Laborite bankruptcy. To extend electoral support to the ALP in these elections, no matter how critical, on the grounds that workers continue to have illusions in Labor is a policy of capitulation to demoralisation and betrayal. For revolutionists the task is to sharply cut against the defeatism spawned by the Laborite bureaucracy by driving home the need for a political break with the Labor traitors and counterposing a program for class struggle that can *win*.

### ALP Strikebreaking — Wran Shows Hawke How It's Done

In January Wran threatened to sack on the spot thousands of railworkers to break a week-long strike by the Australian Railways Union (ARU). Then on 14 February the drivers union (AFULE) went out, the livelihoods of 2000 of their members on the line. Days later the bureaucrats sent them back, with nothing resolved, and Hawke backing Wran to the hilt. Unlike the "vote Labor" shellgame a hard strike by the NSW railworkers, breaking through craft lines by bringing out the largely immigrant ARU and extending to the other hard-pressed public transport unions, could've and still may well draw the class line in these elections — against ALP austerity and strikebreaking.

The despised Fraser is rightly widely hated, which is undoubtedly why many workers, lacking an alternative leadership, are resigned to voting Labor. But there are many who will choke on this prospect. All three state Labor governments — in New

South Wales, Victoria and South Australia — backed Fraser's wage freeze, differing only on how long it should last. And NSW Labor Premier Neville Wran has emerged as the frontrunner of union-busting capitalist austerity, rivalling Malcolm Fraser himself. In the September 1982 petrol strike the Labor statesman made no secret of his program to bust the powerful oil workers unions, promising to use scabs, cops and new anti-union laws to break the strike. In 1982 hospitals were closed down, nurses' wages cut, school staffing savaged — now Wran's State Rail Authority (SRA) wants to destroy 5000 jobs to "cut costs".

### It Is Desperately Necessary to Fight

The workers in this country desperately need to fight — the ALP-ACTU stranglehold must be broken! What is needed to win is a program of hard class struggle, centred on mass strikes and sit-ins to fight the capitalist onslaught on jobs and to smash Fraser's wage freeze. The trade-union bureaucracy, on the spot and running scared, tells workers to "wait" for a Labor government, only to pledge in advance support for Labor's no-strike, wage-cutting social contract. Across the Laborite political spectrum the union tops join with Hawke and Wran as the loudest advocates of chauvinist protectionism and restrictions on immigration, fuelling the poison of racism in the working class.

That the former head of the ACTU is Labor's candidate for top boss of the capitalist state speaks volumes about the nature of Australian Laborism, which has always identified with the privileges and xenophobic fears of its own ruling class. The Laborite scapegoating of immigrants and foreign workers — targeting first of all Asians and Pacific Islanders, but more generally all immigrant workers — dangerously intersects the reactionary social climate generated by the anti-Soviet war drive. All sections of the oppressed are in the firing line: women and gays are victims of the drive to shore up the nuclear family; Australian blacks,

always outcasts in White Australia, are increasingly the target of the racist backlash.

Defence of all the oppressed and the first step on the road to victorious class struggle means a clear political break with the Labor traitors. Yet all the fake "socialists" fully partake of the ultimate Laborite myth — the "partnership" of Labour and Capital in running the bourgeois state. The only solution for the working class lies in its own battles and the forging of a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party to lead them, against the reformists and their ruling class masters, around a series of transitional demands that will lead to the setting up of its own power, a workers government.

- No vote to Labor's program of Cold War and social contract!
- Break the ALP/ACTU stranglehold! Smash the wage freeze! No social contract! For big pay rises and a sliding scale of wages! Bring down Fraser through class struggle!
- Jobs for all! For a sliding scale of hours — divide the available work among all workers with no loss in pay!
- Down with chauvinist trade protectionism! No to immigration controls! Full citizenship rights for all immigrant workers! Fight all forms of racial and sexual discrimination! For international working class solidarity!
- For the military defence of the Soviet Union, Vietnam, Poland and Cuba against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution! Down with the anti-Soviet war drive!
- Smash the ANZUS alliance! US bases out of Australia and the Indian Ocean! Australian troops out of Sinai! Australian military out of South East Asia!
- Break with the Labor traitors! Build a class-struggle workers party based on the trade unions to fight for a workers government!
- Expropriate capitalist industry and finance without compensation. For a planned socialist economy to end unemployment, inflation and poverty! For a workers Australia, part of socialist Asia! ■

Australasian Spartacist

Australasian

**SPARTACIST** 

Marxist monthly of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand, section of the international Spartacist tendency.

EDITORIAL BOARD: Greg Blythe, Darlene Carlson, Doug Flynn, Andrew Giannakis, Steve Hooper (editor)

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CIRCULATION: Brian Shannon

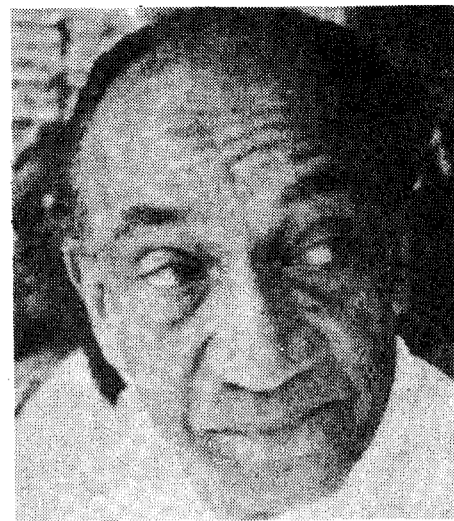
Printed by trade union labour. Registered at GPO, Sydney for posting as a publication — Category B. Subscription \$3 for 11 issues; overseas airmail \$10 for 11 issues. Address all correspondence to: Spartacist Publications, GPO Box 3473, Sydney, NSW, 2001. Telephone (02)264-8115.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.  
Printed by Eastern Suburbs, Waterloo, NSW.

Responsibility for election comment taken by S Haran, 112 Goulburn St, Sydney.

# "Reject Popular Front Politics!"

# Oppose Strong-Man Rule in Sri Lanka!



Right-wing strongman J R Jayewardene, dubbed "Yankee Dickie" during John Foster Dulles era.

Immediately following his victory in the October 1982 presidential elections, J R Jayewardene seized the opportunity to consolidate a dictatorial regime and rammed through a plebiscite to extend the life of the present Parliament until 1989 (thus maintaining his 5/6 parliamentary majority). On December 22 J R and his ruling United National Party (UNP) received 54 percent of the vote for his IMF-dictated austerity rule. We reprint

planned a coup to seize state power. This is a complete lie, fabricated by J R and the UNP.

At a meeting in Anuradhapura before the election, J R declared that when he returned to power the electoral map in Lanka would be rolled up for the next ten years. J R is now in power. J R and the UNP are ready to roll up the electoral map — not for ten years but forever. Instead of holding the [parliamentary] elections that are

percent of 6,522,147 votes cast in the presidential elections on October 20.

In the context of the world capitalist system, Lanka is so bankrupt, so decrepit, that it survives by pawning the suffering masses and workers to the imperialists' financial institutions. Lanka today stands pawned for over 30,000 million rupees [over \$14 million]. Before granting further loans, the world bankers are demanding that the UNP strangle Lanka — slash basic subsidies and raise the prices of essential goods. Today the UNP cannot avoid doing this. Even Reagan, the great saviour, is unable to step forward to aid Lanka. With a record unemployment figure of 13 million and a large balance of payments deficit, the US cannot come to Lanka's rescue. Nor can Helmut Kohl, who has slashed subsidies and welfare in West Germany and is now facing a restive labour movement. In this capitalist world, none of the imperialist countries is immune from this economic crisis, which is the worst in 30 years. Thus the chief party of the Lankan bourgeoisie, the UNP, is now in a quandary. Like the other capitalist rulers, crazed by the crisis, J R and the UNP have forced upon the Lankan workers and oppressed masses the burden of the economic disaster. Now it is necessary for the Lankan capitalist ruling clique to withdraw all subsidies and social welfare, from food stamps to free education....

The capitalist class in Lanka today is compelled to remove the veneer of bourgeois democracy and expose naked dictatorship. To carry out this task, the capitalist class in Lanka and its masters, the world imperialists led by America, have selected Junius Richard Jayewardene and his UNP as their candidate. This situation is not unique to Lanka. All undeveloped capitalist countries, from Asia to Africa to Latin America, compelled to bear the burden of capitalist exploitation, must increasingly face this situation. Clearly, the Lankan capitalist rulers are going down the same

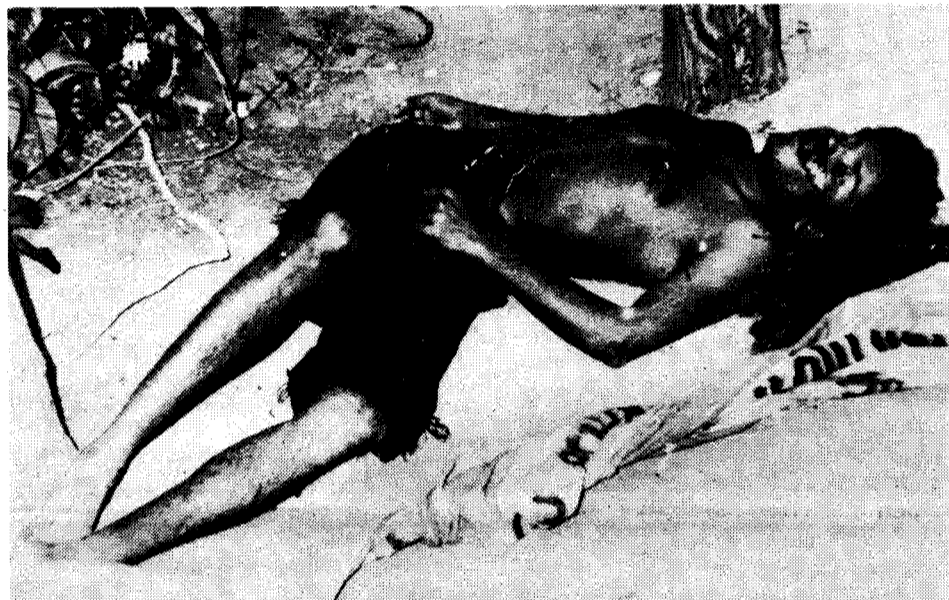
path as Pakistan, Singapore, Bangladesh, Philippines and Indonesia, which shed their democratic clothing and established one-party dictatorships. Under the pressure of the economic demands of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, one-party dictatorship is the natural response of the capitalists. Such advice is passed on to J R and the other capitalist rulers by Reagan's murderous political advisers like Jeane Kirkpatrick, who often visits Lanka....

The Spartacist League [Lanka] declares that today's persecution of the capitalist SLFP will be aimed at the left, trade unions and student movement tomorrow.

In the presidential election, J R faced humiliating defeat in the Jaffna district where 56 percent of the Tamil-speaking people boycotted the election. These results point to the unbroken determination of the Tamil people to win their fundamental rights. The capitalist system in Lanka is so bankrupt and so reactionary that it is incapable and powerless to provide any fundamental rights to the Tamil people. Therefore it has become its task to drown the liberation struggle of the Northern Tamil-speaking people in rivers of blood. The [plantation Tamil] Indian workers, who for decades have sacrificed themselves to inflate the profits of the Lankan capitalists, do not have the right to vote in Lanka. The Lankan capitalists have no answers for the plantation Tamils other than forcibly deporting them to India. The victory of the UNP led by J R in the December 22 fake referendum will no doubt be used to smash the liberation struggle of the Northern Tamil people.

Educated by the advice and experience of other murderous Asian dictators, the UNP rulers are also frightened by the potential threat of the student movement. They know

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TULF activist murdered by the army, a victim of anti-Tamil terror in Jaffna in 1981.

below a slightly abridged translation of the article published by the Spartacist League/Lanka in Sinhala and Tamil denouncing the plebiscite.

In the presidential elections of 20 October 1982, J R Jayewardene received 3.4 million votes out of 8.1 million registered voters and is again in power in Sri Lanka. After he returned to power, J R's first act was to go after the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the rival capitalist party of his United National Party. The UNP's main pretext for this was that "Naxalites" [an Indian variant of Maoism] had taken control of the SLFP and if, by chance, the SLFP candidate had won the election on 20 October, he and the SLFP

due in 1983, J R and the UNP are now attempting to extend the life of Parliament for six years. Preparations are being made to hold a fake referendum on December 22. Although this hoax, painted in various "democratic" colours, is new to Lanka, every murderous capitalist ruler in the world has used this trick to "throw sand" in the eyes of the people. After banning all opposition parties in Germany, Hitler too used such fake referendums five times to hide his barbaric deeds.

This referendum should properly be called "an election to end elections". Every worker and oppressed person should seriously consider why the UNP calls for a referendum instead of a general election even after winning 52

## "Struggle For a Workers and Peasants Government in Lanka!"

We reprint below slogans from Spartacist League/Lanka propaganda around the presidential elections and the parliamentary referendum.

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- Smash reactionary UNP and SLFP!
- Reject parliamentarism!
- Reject popular front politics! No new bloc with the capitalist SLFP!
- Reinstate all fired workers [from 1980 strike]!
- Abolish all repressive legislation! Down with the Emergency Law!
- Return state industries handed over to private capitalists and imperialists!
- Not one inch of Lanka to the imperialists!
- Land to the peasants! Provide low-priced fertilizer, water and other essential supplies for agriculture!
- Support the right of the Tamil people to self-determination (the right to a separate state)!
- Withdraw army and police sent to the North to repress Tamil people!
- Free all imprisoned Tamil liberation fighters immediately, including Kuttimani and Jeganathan who are sentenced to death!
- Smash deals between the TULF and the UNP butchers!
- Grant immediate citizenship rights to [Tamil] plantation workers!
- Stop the forcible deportation of plantation workers now! Grant the right for deported plantation workers to return to Lanka!
- Equal rights for women! Equal pay for equal work! Abolish night shifts!
- Stop treating women as a commodity!
- Grant the right for women to make all decisions on birth control!
- Don't hand over Trincomalee Harbour to the American imperialists!
- Remove "Voice of America" transmitting stations from Lanka!
- Defence of the Soviet Union/Vietnam/Cuba begins in Trincomalee and Diego Garcia!
- Forge unity of workers, peasants and Tamil people for the victory of socialist revolution in Lanka!
- Forward to the rebirth of the Fourth International!
- Struggle for a workers and peasants government in Lanka!
- Forward to a United Soviet Federation of South Asia!

## Whither the US SWP?

# Barnes Denounces Trotskyism

"Trotskyism, that term itself, I predict, none of us will call ourselves before this decade's out. In fact, if I'm right that what Trotskyism originated as was a fake term by the Stalinists... Trotskyism as such doesn't have much value as a term."

— Jack Barnes  
31 December 1982

On New Year's eve, at a Socialist Workers Party (SWP) public meeting in Chicago, SWP head Jack Barnes finally declared outright what has been the reality for two decades: the SWP is not the Trotskyist party in this country. Barnes announced that "80 percent of those on a world scale who call themselves Trotskyists... are hopeless, irreformable sectarians". Barnes' two and a half hour speech, delivered as the highlight of the annual convention of the SWP's youth group, centered on a barrage of attacks on the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution: "The permanent revolution, if these things are true, is not a correct generalization, or an adequate one, or one that doesn't open up more problems that it solves...."

By "these things", Barnes referred to his idea of a "fusion" with the "revolutionaries" of the Nicaraguan Sandinistas, the Grenadan New Jewel Movement, the Salvadoran and Cuban Communist Parties (CPs). "We are not Trotskyists..." Barnes revealed, and truer words have never passed his lips.

We must stop here to alert our readers to the fact that our quotations from Barnes' speech cannot be up to our usual standard of accuracy, thanks to the SWP having excluded our known observers from the meeting. For the first time in years, the SL was not permitted an observer in the youth conference; one of the first points on the agenda was a proposal to exclude the SL, lumping us together with the dubious Workers League (which presently subordinates itself to squalid anti-working-class Near Eastern military and religious dictatorships and which is presently engaged in attacking the SWP through the capitalist courts). The exclusion was motivated by the claim the SL had tried to "disrupt the convention by passing out their leaflet and selling their newspaper"! Barnes' public talk was attended by about 1200, about 400 more than participated in the youth convention itself.

It will not be news to regular readers of WV that the reformist SWP is not Trotskyist. The Spartacist League, as the authentic Trotskyists of this country, has dealt extensively in our press with the key programmatic positions defining the SWP politically as a reformist party, from its calls for US aid to Nicaragua (fully in harmony with the imperialist liberals who fear Reagan's intransigence will force the Sandinistas down "the Cuban road") to its opposition to militant mobilizations based on the power of labor and minorities to stop fascist terror here at home. But we have been rather negligent in commenting on the "theoretical" disputes of SWP ideologues over "Trotskyism", which have about the



Like the Stalinists, SWP falsifies Leninism to attack Trotskyism.

character of Stalinist discussions about Leninism — the grotesque perversion of the revolutionary thrust in the service of reformist appetite.

But for any party the explicit renunciation of long-standing "isms" is a significant event and an unusual one. Organizations whose lip-service to Marxist tradition has been long since emptied of content nonetheless shy away from outright renunciation of their claims to "continuity". Take the furor of the last several years inside various West European CPs over the explicit dropping of the "dictatorship of the proletariat". In real political line, displayed a thousand ways, the craven reformist CPs have had for decades utterly nothing to do with the Leninist program of proletarian class power. Yet the repudiation of "d of the p" by the Spanish CP, for example, was nevertheless a real political event, brought on by the heightening of Cold War tensions which made pro-Moscow parties, no matter how slavishly reformist and social-patriotic in fact, unacceptable participants in capitalist "coalition" governments.

Even an organization on a vastly smaller scale, like the SWP, ordinarily possesses a considerable stake in its historic "labels", particularly since the SWP has been in the Trotskyist business — first in political fact and then as an empty label — for upwards of 50 years. The explicit anti-Trotskyism of the living thought of Jack Barnes will cost something. In the SWP right now there are two distinct, substantial right-wing minorities looking for a way out of Barnestown. Perhaps Barnes welcomes their further alienation as saving him the trouble of some expulsions. But even among the hardened Barnesite reformists of the majority, now rather desperately tailing after local Stalinists and radical-nationalists, some elements surely maintain a programmatically empty sentimental attachment to

Trotskyism; there are Pathfinder Publishers' Trotsky books which have brought in considerable revenues; there are surely some older ex-members who have continued supporting the SWP financially under the illusion it maintained some continuity with the organization they remember.

Then there's the tricky question of the SWP's relations with its European bloc partners of the "United Secretariat" (Usec), with whom the SWP has been in an almost constant state of war during the 20 years of SWP/Usec fraternal association. Hostilities are presently at fever pitch, and Barnes now explicitly writes the Usec off in declaring that 80 percent of the world's "Trotskyists" are hopeless sectarians. While Barnes certainly shouldn't mind splitting with these "hopeless" people, his explicit attack on Trotskyism provides them with unhopied-for polemical ammunition.

### "The Transition Years"

Jack Barnes has ruled the SWP with an increasingly iron hand since the mid-1960s. He has consolidated his control particularly against remaining party old-timers, with tactics ranging from the use of "emeritus" status to get older leaders off the National Committee to conspicuous sneering at the idea of listening to party veterans' reservations about his organizationally adventurist ideas of union "tactics".

As the SWP's machine-boss leader, Barnes' first contributions to SWP "theory" tended to consist mainly of slogans systematizing the SWP's reformist program, along the lines of "if you like feminism, you'll love socialism". But following the death of Joseph Hansen in 1979, Barnes emerged as the international "theoretician" of his party. Now Barnes' "new" creative contributions (actually, they are old, old menshevist/Stalinist attacks on Trotskyism) are

making their appearance in earnest.

Earlier signs included especially the recent articles by Barnesite hack Doug Jenness denouncing Trotsky's analysis of the 1917 Russian October Revolution, as well as some provocative symbolic acts. For example, the list of revolutionaries in the youth convention brochure was: Marx, Engels, Lenin — no Trotsky. Or take Barnes' description (SWP *Internal Bulletin* no 1 in 1982, September 1982) of upcoming titles in Farrell Dobbs' series on "Revolutionary Continuity": according to Barnes, Part III covering the years through 1959 is to be titled "The Trotskyist Years", while the next volume will be "The Transition Years".

Transition to what, you may well ask. In exchange for what influence, to conciliate what allies, does Barnes undertake the tricky business of explicitly disavowing Trotskyism? "Every time a party fuses with other parties it itself changes, and that's the road forward", says Barnes. That Barnes' eccentric, shrinking formation is in the mood for a "fusion" we don't doubt — but with whom?

Barnes' target, according to his New Year's eve speech, is Central America, "where the most important thinking in the world is going on". Barnes' modest proposal is for a "common world Marxist movement" comprising the SWP and the Central American "revolutionary" forces. And who are they? Well, there's the government of Nicaragua, the radical-nationalist Sandinistas whose program of conciliating the "anti-Somoza capitalists" in a "mixed economy" runs smack up against the necessity to break the social power of the capitalist class in Nicaragua, particularly in the face of US provocation and the regionalization of the Central American insurgency. Then there's the Castro regime in Cuba, which as an article of Barnesite faith is defined as bearing no resemblance to the Stalinist sellouts in Russia — this despite the fact that the Cuban and Russian Stalinist regimes demonstrably agree on just about everything. And let's not forget El Salvador, where Barnes' "revolutionaries worthy of the name" are the CP: a month ago, the SWP announced internally Barnes' discovery that the BPR faction of Cayetano Carpio (which the SWP, along with the Marcyites and others, had been assiduously courting all this time) was less "proletarian" than the CP wing.

The question of power is posed in Central America as the sadistic oligarchies backed to the hilt by US imperialism are confronted in one country after another with popular rebellions. The Nicaraguan leaders temporize with the "patriotic" bourgeoisie and seek to placate the Pentagon by refusing to provide arms to the Salvadoran insurgents; the Salvadoran leaders' perspective is a negotiated "political solution" which would rob the plebeian masses of the victory they are fighting and dying for; the Cuban leaders alibi

Australasian Spartacist

their support to "progressive" military juntas from Peru to Brazil with the argument that Latin America is not "ready for socialism". These nationalists and Stalinists, in the illusion of pacifying US imperialism, are only setting the Central American masses up for popular-frontist tragedies like Allende's "peaceful road" in Chile, which infuriated the domestic capitalists and militarists (and the multinationals and the CIA) without decisively breaking their power, thereby paving the way for General Pinochet's bloodbath. To be sure, American imperialist warmongering has the Central American left ideologues talking out of both sides of their mouths; along comes the SWP, selectively quoting like mad, and voila, new "revolutionaries of action" are revealed.

For authentic Trotskyists, the revolutionary struggles in Central America, the heroic resistance of the masses, the arguments over strategy present a crucial opportunity to win subjective revolutionaries in the region to the perspective of working-class independence from all wings of the bourgeoisie, the only road to victory. Our strategy is the construction of Leninist vanguard parties to lead the proletariat, at the head of the poor peasant masses, to the seizure of power (this is the core of the theory of "permanent revolution"). For Barnes & Co, this is precisely the time to formally denounce permanent revolution, smear Trotsky and relegate the struggles of the Fourth International explicitly to the "old days" before Castro.

#### Permanent Revolution: "Sectarian and Ultra-Left"

Barnes began his speech with extensive paraphrases from the recent works of one Schafik Jorge Handal, general secretary of the Salvadoran CP. But most of the talk had a more familiar ring — familiar, that is, to anyone who has ever read or heard the classical reformist arguments against Trotskyism. Barnes' recitation of the early Trotsky's errors as a left Menshevik in opposition to Bolshevism, for the purpose of dismissing Trotsky the Leninist revolutionary, might have

been lifted outright from Carl Davidson's "expose" of Trotskyism ("left in form, right in essence") which appeared some years back in the *Guardian*. Barnes then castigates the theory of permanent revolution as flawed in 1905, wrong in 1917 and flatly "ultra-left" in China in 1928.

The theory of permanent revolution was tested first and foremost in the Russian Revolution. The theory anticipated the change in Lenin's own thinking as he made the transformation, under the pressure of events, from revolutionary social-democrat to communist. By the time of the Prague Congress of 1912, Lenin was a communist on the organizational question. But his views on the precise class character of the revolution in Russia were still evolving. Prior to April 1917, Lenin sought to oppose the old Menshevik (subsequently, Stalinist) schema that Russia required a "two-stage revolution" — first a "democratic" revolution under the leadership of the "democratic bourgeoisie", and only after a period of capitalist development, a "socialist" stage. But his formula for drawing the line against Menshevik reformism was the inadequate formula of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry", postulating the class rule of two classes. Lenin's greatness was precisely that he did not pare down his revolutionary program to fit an inadequate formula, but seized the possibility presented in life to lead the proletariat to the conquest of state power, through the revolutionary combat party he had built for that purpose.

In so doing he confirmed the theory of permanent revolution, which had predicted that in the period of imperialist decay the weak ruling classes of the backward nations could not and would not play the progressive role associated with the bourgeois revolutions of the earlier epoch. Thus the "democratic tasks" once addressed by the old "enlightenment" bourgeoisie — eg, national self-determination, destruction of feudal class relations in the countryside, abolition of the monarchy, universal suffrage,

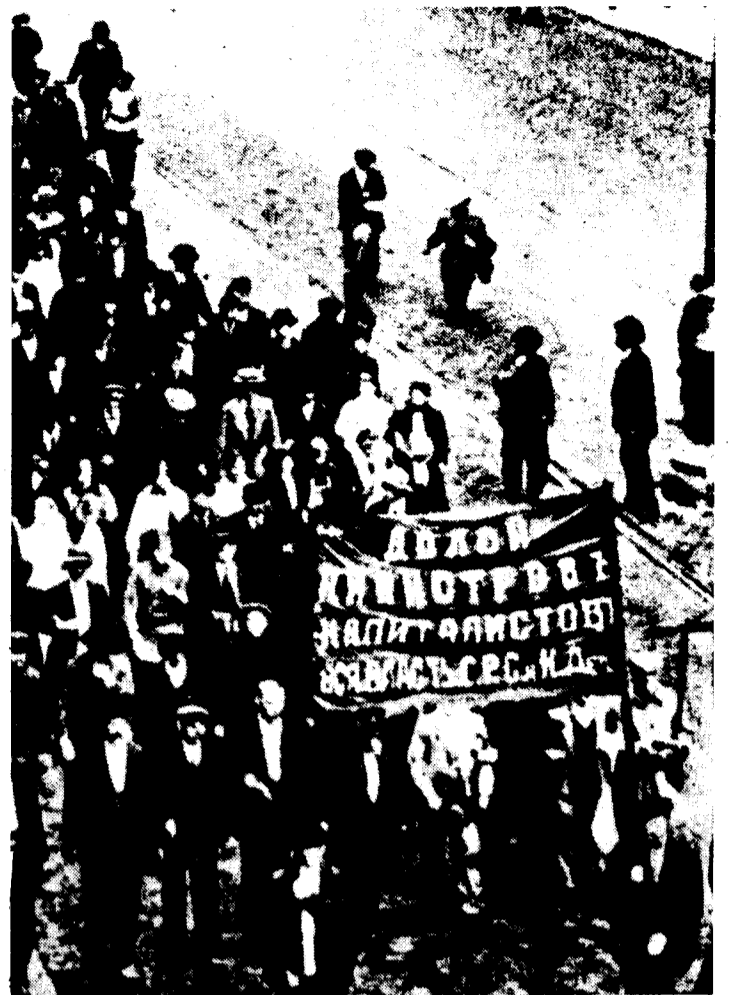
Workers Vanguard



Falling reformist party seeks Havana/Managua/Grenada franchise: will alter principles to sult Sandinista Daniel Ortega, New Jewel Movement's Maurice Bishop and Fidel Castro (below). Contact Jack Barnes (left).



Permanent Revolution in action: Russian workers march in Petrograd 1917. Bolshevik banner reads: "Down with the Capitalist Ministers! All Power to the Soviets!"



etc — could be achieved in countries like Russia only under the class rule of the revolutionary proletariat, which itself had become more powerful, being now concentrated in large industrial enterprises and sectors.

For Barnes, the theory of permanent revolution is "sectarian" and "ultra-left", and was never accepted by Lenin in word or deed. Indeed, Barnes goes so far as to delicately accuse Trotsky of lying about Lenin's positions: "This is the only thing I can remember Trotsky ever writing which I believe is factually false"! To explore this question, some review of the debates surrounding the Russian Revolution is in order.

In his introduction to the first Russian edition of *The Permanent Revolution*, Trotsky noted that for Stalin & Co the theory of permanent revolution "represents the original sin of 'Trotskyism' ". He placed the debate in its distinct historical context. In his "Three Concepts of the Russian Revolution" (August 1939), a work of crystalline precision, he defined three major arguments on "the historical nature of the Russian Revolution and its future course of development". These were:

1) *The Menshevik view*: "the victory of the Russian bourgeois revolution was possible only under the leadership of the liberal bourgeoisie and must put the latter in power. Later the democratic regime would let the Russian proletariat, with incomparably greater success than heretofore, catch up with its elder Western brothers on the road of the struggle for Socialism."

2) *Lenin's perspective*: "the backward Russian bourgeoisie is incapable of completing its own revolution! The complete victory of the revolution, through the intermediacy of the 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry', would purge the land of medievalism, invest the development of Russian capitalism with American tempo, strengthen the proletariat in the city and village and make really possible the struggle for socialism. On the other hand, the victory of the Russian revolution would give tremendous impetus to the socialist revolution in the West, while the latter would not only protect Russia from the dangers of restoration but would also enable the Russian proletariat to come to the conquest of power in a comparatively brief historical period."

3) *Permanent Revolution*: "the complete victory of the democratic revolution in Russia is conceivable only in the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, leaning on the peasantry. The dictatorship of the proletariat, which would inevitably place on the order of the day not only democratic but socialistic tasks as well, would at the same time give a powerful impetus to the international socialist revolution. Only the victory of the proletariat in the West could protect Russia from bourgeois restoration and assure it the possibility of rounding out the establishment of socialism."

In 1917, "Lenin was obliged to alter his perspective, in direct conflict with the old cadres of his party". The October Revolution was the historic test, and confirmed Trotsky's prognosis. There ceased to be "debate" on the character of the Revolution after 1917 because the question was solved by the revolution's course. When Lenin appeared before the Petrograd Soviet several days after the insurrection, he announced, "We shall now proceed to construct the Socialist order!"

Lenin vacated his algebraic "democratic dictatorship" theory in April 1917. His "Letters on Tactics" states:

"We have side by side, exiting together, simultaneously, both the rule of the bourgeoisie (the government of Lvov and Guchkov) and a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, which is voluntarily ceding power to the bourgeoisie, voluntarily making itself an appendage of the bourgeoisie...."

"This 'second government' has itself ceded the power to the bourgeoisie, has chained itself to the bourgeois government.

"Is this reality covered by Comrade Kamenev's old-Bolshevik formula, which says that 'the bourgeois-democratic revolution is not completed'?"

"It is not. The formula is obsolete. It is no good at all. It is dead. And there is no use trying to revive it...."

Adolph Joffe's final letter to Trotsky, quoted in Trotsky's *My Life*, also verified Lenin's adherence to permanent revolution:

"This [decades of joint work and friendship] gives me the right to tell you in parting what I think you are mistaken in. I have never doubted the rightness of the road you pointed out,

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# Jack & Jim: A Tale of Two Opportunists

# SWP: the "Left" Face of Laborism

Since its foundation Jim Percy's Socialist Workers Party (SWP), Australia's major fake-Trotskyist organisation, was consciously modeled on the US SWP of Jack Barnes. For years the Australian SWP was the hardest and most stable factional ally of the American-led reformist minority in the fake-Trotskyist "United Secretariat" (USec) against the European-based centrist majority of Ernest Mandel. Well after the 1977 USec factional truce, which in Australia led to the SWP's absorption/destruction of the Mandelite Communist League, Percy continued to follow the twists and turns of Barnes' party, from the "turn to industry" and revived adulation of Castro's Cuba — which both organisations insist has nothing to do with Russia — to their continued infatuation with Khomeini's clerical-reactionary. Persian-chauvinist "Iranian revolution" long after the rest of the revisionist left, originally equally pro-Khomeini, backed away in embarrassment.

Now the increasingly bizarre Jack Barnes has formally disavowed "Trotskyism" in order, according to Barnes, to pursue his "modest" proposal for a "common world Marxist movement" with the unsuspecting Nicaraguan government, the Cuban and Salvadoran Communist Parties and tiny Grenada's "New Jewel Movement" (see "Barnes Denounces Trotskyism", reprinted in this issue). Without qualitatively breaking from the politics of the US SWP, Percy's organisation has in small ways over the past few years been testing the waters for a more "independent" policy ie, commitment to its own national-reformist appetites. Now events are bringing things to a head.

The most recent sign of serious trouble between the two SWPs was Peter (aka Pedro) Camejo's invitation to the Australian SWP's January 1983 national conference (Camejo was reportedly initially refused an entry permit by Australian immigration authorities). A Barnes man for over 22 years and one of the slimiest of Barnes' top clique, Camejo last year resigned/was expelled from the US SWP. The fall of Camejo (who squealed, "They're treating me like a Spart!" ) has apparently been used to incite hostility to Barnes. More to the point, Jack Barnes must surely have viewed the Camejo invitation, provocatively advertised in *Direct Action*, as an act of high treason, all the more so since Camejo is being backed by the "fraternal comrades" of the USec.

Certainly Barnes' denunciation of "Trotskyism" isn't what's bothering Percy. The Australian SWP moved to bring its "theoretical" dressings into line with its Menshevik program for coalition with the bourgeoisie in Central America and elsewhere over two years ago. In a recently-published September 1980 report (*Socialist Worker*, December 1982) Percy sneers at the "semi-sectarian existence of the Trotskyist movement for so long, which developed into a defence of Trotskyism and of every-



SWP leader Jim Percy (middle) on difference with SWP/US over Afghanistan: "We can't be a satellite, we can't be hostage to other needs and other views". Left, SWP/US machine-boss Barnes, and right, ex-Barnesite hatchet man Camejo.

thing that Trotsky said". Here Percy singles out "the question of Permanent Revolution" echoing the Barnesite scribblers: "There's the myth that Lenin was converted to 'Trotskyism' on that question." And like Barnes, the Australians have revived all the old Menshevik/Stalinist attacks on Trotskyism: "Trotsky underestimated the peasantry, Trotsky was a Menshevik", etc.

As for the SWP's membership in the USec, which Barnes writes off as "hopeless sectarians", Percy himself put it best. "It's been a tremendous experience", he said, "and we've learned a number of things from it":

"We've learned that in the final analysis you're on your own. You're on your own in the International.... What we've learned in this past period is that you either have your own party and team or you operate in a void. So whenever our comrades go overseas, they operate as part of our team... the real question for us if we want to be part of the International, is building our own party."

— *Socialist Worker*, December 1982

For genuine revolutionists, participation in and the scrutiny of a disciplined international party, the vital instrument for a proletarian revolutionary program, is a revolutionary necessity, not least as a crucial mechanism for political self-correction against the ever-present pressures of the national terrain. But Percy's SWP is, and always has been, a national-reformist organisation. Under the tutelage of Barnes the SWP flouted even the USec's grotesque parody of "internationalism", bitterly resenting even the mildest intervention from the Mandelite-dominated "international" centre — and not just for factional reasons. The only thing that's new in Percy's remarks is that this time they're directed against the Americans as well.

Still, the SWP seems to be approaching continuing relations with Barnes with some caution. Melbourne SWP leader Jim McLroy claimed shortly after the January conference that "many issues remain unresolved". A pro-Barnes grouping, at least on Afghanistan, exists within the SWP and SWPers have also admitted "tactical" differences with Barnes over "solidarity" with Polish

Solidarity. For now the "Permanent Revolution" debate will go on in the pages of *Socialist Worker*, and there's talk of another national conference in June. But what really matters for the SWP was perhaps best captured by SWP Political Committee member Jon West at the CPA's January Marxist Summer School: "the debates in the International don't mean a damn. What counts is our work here."

By "our work here" West undoubtedly means the SWP's ambitions to move in on the Communist Party's niche in the left labour bureaucracy as the demoralised CPA moves rapidly rightward. In the past the SWP's "Trotskyist" pretences were of particular value in defining its own brand of "anti-Stalinist" (read: anti-Soviet) reformism against the CPA. Some 12 years after the CPA's definitive break with Moscow towards mainstream social democracy the SWP continues to characterise it as "Stalinist". Now with the CPA's fulsome embrace of Cold War anti-Sovietism en route towards disintegration into the Labor Party, such considerations are increasingly irrelevant.

The SWP is doing its best to present itself as the party of left Laborism, pursuing in earnest a place in the trade union bureaucracy through various union election campaigns featuring openly-identified SWP members, expanding its paper membership and indulging in new depths of parliamentary cretinism by running an absurd 48 candidates in the current Federal elections under the slogan "For a Labor Government pledged to socialist policies". Like the CPA the SWP has adopted the practice of publishing major conference resolutions prior to their conferences, thereby ensuring that the organisation's "highest body" is no more than a rubber stamp while presenting an image of social-democratic openness a la their old slogan "our party is your party". At the same time the SWP has pretentiously established a "cadre school" where it teaches young members "where Trotsky went wrong" on the Permanent Revolution and how the Red Army leader and founder of the Fourth International is "a liar".

The SWP sure isn't talking about "Trotskyism" in the Victorian Vehicle

Builders Union where it recently ran for union office on a slate headed by the pro-protectionist Frank Argondizzo, a long-time supporter of the Italian CP, and including an assortment of local Turkish Maoists. In the Ironworkers (FIA) the SWP decided to go it alone — after Nando Lelli's CPA-backed Port Kembla "rank-and-file" group bounced their members some months ago — and managed to chalk up a few thousand votes against the badly-discredited "left" Lelli, and right-wing national FIA bureaucracies. The SWP ran afoul of Lelli by briefly campaigning for a strike against layoffs, only to drop the strike call like a hot potato when the bureaucrats predictably came out hard against it. But in Port Kembla the SWP obviously figures they have a crack at the big time, boasting in *Direct Action* (14 December 1982) that "significant changes will occur in the make-up of the official leadership of the FIA in the period that has been opened up by the 1982 elections".

## SWP Origins: Cuba and Vietnam

According to Percy the SWP's "problem" is that it "learned Marxism through Cannon and Trotsky" instead of "the same place that Castro's learning it". In fact Percy learned not from Cannon and Trotsky, but from Barnes/Sheppard — and well after the revolutionary US SWP founded by James P Cannon had ceased to be Trotskyist in anything other than name. The US SWP's qualitative break from the revolutionary program of Trotskyism took place in the period 1961-63 when the party, then led by Farrell Dobbs, discovered in the Cuban Revolution (which uprooted capitalism and established a deformed workers state in Cuba) a convenient theoretical excuse for junking the revolutionary perspective of building Trotskyist vanguard parties based centrally on the working class. The SWP's capitulation to Castroism was fought by the Revolutionary Tendency, forerunner of the Spartacist League/US and the international Spartacist tendency, which now represents the continuity of authentic Trotskyism.

The Cuba question was the political vehicle whereby the US/SWP "re-

unified" with the revisionist current internationally which, under the leadership of M Pablo, had destroyed the Fourth International in the early 1950s. But whereas the European Pabloite USec was an impressionistic centrist current which was to vicariously enthuse over the "guerilla road to socialism" for years to come, for the SWP Castroism was only a way-station in a headlong plunge towards outright reformism. By about 1965 the SWP had consolidated around a full-fledged reformist appetite on the domestic terrain, expressed centrally in the movement against the Vietnam war, where the SWP was instrumental in maintaining the political dominance of the pro-imperialist liberal-Democratic politicians over the mass of politically heterogeneous anti-war activists.

It was some years later, around 1969, that Barnes/Sheppard intersected Jim Percy's grouping in the youth-vanguardist Sydney Resistance which, after splitting with Bob Gould, founded the Socialist Youth Alliance (SYA) and later the SWP. The early Vietnam war movement was both the decisive formative political experience for the SWP's central cadre and the key axis of Percy's reformist convergence with the US SWP: both sought to tie the radical anti-war movement to their respective bourgeoisies — via the capitalist Democratic Party in the US and via the ALP in this country.

The growth of a *bourgeois* defeatist wing of the Australian ruling class, expressed mainly through the ALP, closely followed similar developments in the US when sizeable sections of the bourgeois establishment figured out that the Sino-Soviet split and (of critical importance to Australian imperialism) the 1965 Indonesian massacre of the PKI laid the basis for



SWP builds platform for right-wing, anti-communist, ALP deputy leader Lionel Bowen (standing) during FDR representative Rafael Gonzales' tour in 1982. Like SWP, Bowen supports negotiated settlement with junta in El Salvador to head off social revolution. Seated: Gonzales, flanked by SWPers John Garcia and John Percy.

as a suitable model. At times the SYA's insipid single-issue reformism placed it well to the *right* of the CPA and the left-Laborite bureaucracy. Thus the SYA opposed the official adoption of the CPA slogan "Stop Work to Stop the War" as a focus for the June 1971 Moratorium. Of course the CPA's appeal was based on the Moratorium's social-patriotic pacifist program. But the intervention of organised labour through political strikes, in particular such actions as the maritime unions' 1967-68 ban on Vietnam supply ships and the Seamen's union ban on US shipping over Nixon's Christmas 1972 bombing of North Vietnam, posed breaking through the accepted norms of middle class protest and attacking the very foundations of Australian capitalism. The call for labour political strikes against the war was central to the program of the American Trotskyists in the Spartacist League/US. In this

splintered and dissipated into Maoism or channelled back into the Labor Party which today pledges allegiance to the ANZUS alliance and US bases which integrate Australia militarily into US imperialism's war plans against the USSR and its allies from Cuba to Vietnam.

Vietnam remains a defining question for the Australian proletariat. That the troops of Australian imperialism fell to humiliating defeat along with those of its US patron is forgotten neither by revolutionists who salute that victory nor by the ruling class which seeks its bloody reversal. And what does the SWP say? "No More Vietnams!", ie, *no more defeats for imperialism*. The SWP made this slogan the centrepiece of its Committee in Solidarity with Central America and the Caribbean (CISCAC) front, for it captures perfectly the program of the Laborite-liberals who wanted Australian imperialism to cut its losses during the Vietnam war.

The SWP's pop-frontism and anti-Sovietism stands flatly counterposed to a revolutionary internationalist defence of the Vietnamese deformed workers state, the toughest — and in this region just about the only — ally of the Soviet Union. Everyone knows that without Soviet nuclear weapons Vietnam would today be no more than a patch of scorched earth. The SWP pays lip service to this fact, conceding in a lengthy document on "The class struggle road to peace" (*Socialist Worker*, November 1982) that "it is of course correct for the USSR to extend its nuclear umbrella over the other workers states". Yet the SWP concludes this section of the document by quoting in full the late US SWP leader Joe Hansen's infamous 1977 call for Soviet disarmament:

"Brezhnev must be blamed for failing to seize the initiative on disarmament... Naturally, it would have been preferable if Brezhnev had proposed in addition a schedule leading at short intervals to one half capability, one fourth capability, one eighth and so on."

#### Barnes vs Percy over Afghanistan

If Vietnam demonstrated the political identities of the SWP "sister organisations" then Afghanistan illustrated how the twin tracks of Barnes/Percy reformism curve to their respective national terrains. When the Soviet Red Army first crossed the border into Afghanistan in December 1979 both Barnes and the Australians supported it, albeit in the name of "self-determination" for a fictitious "Afghan Revolution". Still, being on the same side as the Soviet Union in a military conflict wasn't business as usual for the SWP. The SWP went to considerable lengths to digest the position, launching something of a campaign in *Direct Action* and including a section on "the truth about Afghanistan" explaining why

the Afghan government "invited" in Soviet troops in a broadly-distributed 1980 election leaflet.

At the time the Australians were still recovering from the purges (aimed mainly at gay radicals and Communist League leftovers) associated with the "industrial turn", not to mention increasing isolation within their former pet "movement" milieus, thanks in part to their Iran line and revived infatuation with Castro. No doubt the Afghanistan line helped to consolidate the organisation's turn. Certainly, the position went down well with the local Latin American Stalinists the SWP was then busy tailing. But above all, the SWP saw in Fraser's massively unpopular Olympic boycott a key opportunity to reestablish its then tenuous links in the ALP. This was particularly true in Victoria where elements of the Socialist Left, a bastion of traditional Laborite anti-Americanism, maintained a notable softness towards the Russians (the SWP was later to bait these same types as "Stalinist" over Poland).

So when Barnes did an about face under mounting demands for bourgeois respectability arising from the US SWP's "Watersuit", (its civil suit against the US government, whereby Barnes & Co are seeking a special license to practice reformism — see "Reformism on Trial", *Workers Vanguard* no 286, 31 July 1981) and called for Soviet withdrawal, the Australians for the first time in their history refused to follow suit. The US line shift was codified as early as August 1980. About a month later Percy, though noting that his organisation "wouldn't exist without the [US] SWP", declared:

"We can't be a satellite, we can't be hostage to other needs and other views. Within that framework, with that understanding, we'll go as far as anybody in building an international and collaborating and taking (and sometimes giving) all the advice we can get."

— "Four Features of our Revolutionary Party",  
22 September 1980, printed in  
*Socialist Worker*, December 1982

Sure enough, out popped a 101-page document on "Afghanistan: Where the New Line of the American Socialist Workers Party Goes Wrong", defending the Australian SWP from Barnes' charges of "Spartacism" and not-so-implicitly accusing Barnes of "third campism".

In an internal speech on the US SWP line change, Barnes was most upset that the Australian SWP press "carried a giant front-page headline: 'Soviet Troops Aid Afghan Revolution!'" and so tried to frighten his Australian comrades with the spectre of Spartacism: "I also read the press of the Spartacist sect. 'Hail Red Army', was the main headline in the first issue after the Soviet intervention." In particular Barnes was irked that the Australian SWP (like the Spartacist tendency) maintained that a victory of the imperialist-backed counterrevolutionaries in Afghanistan, which shares a thousand mile border with the USSR, might constitute an imperialist military threat to the Soviet degenerated workers state. "That puts the entire discussion in the framework of the immediate military defence of the Soviet Union", he protested.

In fact, the Australian SWP position (ie, the original US SWP position) shares with Barnes an underlying "third-campist" methodology, casting the Afghan events in terms of big bully America ganging up on poor little Afghanistan. The Australian SWP attacks the Russians for their "failure to encourage the PDPA

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14 December 1981: Anti-Soviet SWP joins with fascistic Captive Nations to demonstrate "solidarity with Solidarnosc".

an anti-communist stabilisation of South-East Asia without the continuation of the losing Vietnam adventure.

And there was Percy, baiting the "ultra-lefts" who chanted pro-NLF slogans and insisting that what Vietnam was all about was "the right of nations to self-determination" in order to avoid drawing the class line in Vietnam and at home. Percy could hardly have been more explicit about his pop-frontist appetites, counselling that "it's not the role of the left to exclude" forces like the openly bourgeois Australia Party, whose "weight adds enormously to the possibilities for building really large actions" (*Direct Action*, January 1971).

The SYA worked overtime to maintain "the movement" as a low-level popular front around the exclusive demand "troops out" while indulging in the same kind of "peaceful-legal" cretinism for which it later earned notoriety during the Brisbane campaign against Bjelke-Petersen's ban on street marches, when it suggested Gandhi's mass "civil disobedience"

country Trotskyists would have fought for the *extension* of these political strikes, and like the SL/US, the mobilisation of proletarian power in class solidarity with the Vietnamese revolution against US/Australian imperialism. Where the SYA did stand *formally* to the left of the CPA, eg, criticising the 1973 Paris "peace" accords, their position was characteristic of a Stalinophobic appetite to draw distance from the Stalinist Vietnamese Communist Party/NLF. Certainly the SWP today shows no scruples in backing a "negotiated settlement" when championed by the bourgeois dissident Ungo's Salvadoran FDR or Arafat's petty-bourgeois nationalist Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

The war in Vietnam cleaved a breach in the wall of White Australia racism and anti-communism, creating enormous opportunities for the crystallisation and growth of a Leninist vanguard nucleus. It is largely the responsibility of reformist "socialists" like the CPA and SWP that this potentially revolutionary energy was

# Barnes...

continued from page five

and as you know I have gone with you for more than twenty years, since the days of 'permanent revolution'. But I have always believed that you lacked Lenin's unbending will, his unwillingness to yield, his readiness even to remain alone on the path that he thought right in the anticipation of a future majority... I told you repeatedly that with my own ears I had heard Lenin admit that even in 1905 you, and not he, were right."

## China and Permanent Revolution

The rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy in Russia, its acquisition of counterrevolutionary consciousness codified in the slogan of "socialism in one country" and the Stalinization of the Communist International resulted in defeat after defeat for the world proletariat. In China, Stalin's policy was not the ambiguous "revolutionary democratic dictatorship" but the Menshevik theory of "stages". It could hardly be otherwise, as 1917 had resolved once and for all the question of whether there could be any genuinely democratic solution short of proletarian rule. In *The Permanent Revolution* Trotsky had summarized:

"The great historic significance of Lenin's formula lay in the fact that, under the conditions of a new historical epoch, it probed to the end one of the most important theoretical and political questions, namely the question of the degree of political independence attainable by the various petty-bourgeois groupings, above all, the peasantry. Thanks to its completeness, the Bolshevik experience of 1905-17 firmly bolted the door against the 'democratic dictatorship'."

Elsewhere in the book, Trotsky quotes Lenin:

"... the whole history of revolution, the whole history of political development throughout the nineteenth century, teaches us that the peasant follows the worker or the bourgeois... The economic structure of capitalist society is such that the ruling forces in it can only be capital or the proletariat which overthrows it."

— "The Deception of the People by Slogans of Freedom and Equality", May 1919

Permanent revolution, confirmed positively in 1917, was confirmed in the negative in the defeat of the Chinese proletariat in 1927-28 at the hands of their bourgeois Kuomintang "allies". The debate on China was simply over whether or not to subordinate the Chinese workers and peasants to the native bourgeoisie, a debate in which Barnes says Trotsky "bent the stick to the left". Since 1924, in the China debate and up to the present day, the debate over "permanent revolution" between Stalinism (Menshevism) and Trotskyism (Bolshevism) has been the struggle between the advocates of "alliances" with the bourgeoisie ("anti-fascist", "anti-feudal", "anti-imperialist" to be sure) and those who struggled for the independent mobilization of the proletariat, the vanguard of all the exploited and oppressed, against all wings of the class enemy.

In *The Permanent Revolution*, Trotsky imagines a conversation between a Communist from the East and an apologist for the Stalinized Comintern over the question of what is the "democratic dictatorship":

"But won't you please tell us what this slogan looks like in actuality? How was it realized in your country?"  
"In our country it was realized in the shape of Kerenskyism in the epoch of dual power."

"Can we tell our workers that the slogan of the democratic dictatorship will be realized in our country in the

Communist be-headed in 1927 by Kuomintang in Shanghai. Barnes denounces Trotskyism as "ultra-left" for warning that coalition with "progressive" nationalist Chiang Kai-shek would lead to massacre.



shape of our own national Kerenskyism?"

'Come, come! Not at all! No worker will adopt such a slogan; Kerenskyism is servility to the bourgeoisie and betrayal of the working people.'

'But what, then, must we tell our workers?' the Communist of the East asks despondently.

'You must tell them', impatiently answers [the Stalinist] Kuusinen, the man on duty, 'that the democratic dictatorship is the one that Lenin conceived of with regard to the future democratic revolution.'

If the Communist of the East is not lacking in sense, he will seek to rejoin: 'But didn't Lenin explain in 1918 that the democratic dictatorship found its genuine and true realization only in the October Revolution which established the dictatorship of the proletariat? Would it not be better to orient the party and the working class precisely toward this prospect?'

'Under no circumstances. Do not even dare to think about it. Why, that is the per-r-r-manent r-r-r-evolution! That's Tr-r-r-otskyism!'

Barnes' attack on Trotsky's 1928 China position is a fundamental statement of anti-Trotskyism. In the year 1928, the Left Opposition issued its *Criticism of the Draft Program of the Comintern*, which marked the decisive extension of Trotskyism from a revolutionary opposition to the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet Union into an international political tendency. It was over China that Trotsky first put forward the theory of permanent revolution not as particular to Russian conditions but as generally applicable to the whole colonial world. In dismissing Trotsky as some kind of ultra-leftist on China, therefore, Barnes is actually attacking Trotsky's program for all the countries under the yoke of imperialism.

The refusal of reformist working-class leaderships to break with the bourgeoisie and struggle for proletarian state power has led to bloody defeat from Spain to Indonesia to Chile. Less frequently, under certain exceptional conditions (including centrally the absence of the organized working class as a contender for power in its own right), Stalinist- or petty-bourgeois-led peasant-based guerrilla movements have come to power in countries like China, Cuba, Vietnam. The result has been new bureaucratized workers states on a national-Stalinist program — ie, counter-revolutionary in their policies beyond their own borders, thus minimizing the shift in the world balance of forces. Yet these deformed social revolutions are themselves partial confirmation of the theory of permanent revolution, as these leaderships were forced — in opposition to their stated programs — to go over to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the adoption of the socialized property forms first established by the victory of the October

Revolution, as the only way to achieve genuine national liberation and to address classically bourgeois-democratic tasks like land reform.

The applicability of permanent revolution to the struggles of today has never been more urgent, or more obvious. Take for example the struggle of the Palestinian masses against class and national oppression. For as long as we can remember, the SWP and its USec allies have hailed something called "the Arab Revolution" as a great anti-imperialist struggle embracing the hideously oppressed Arab workers and peasants and their rulers. Has it ever been clearer than it is today that the "anti-Zionist" oil sheiks, the nationalist colonels, etc who rule the Arab states are not "allies of the Palestinian struggle" but grotesquely subservient to imperialism? The road to Palestinian liberation lies through united class struggle by the Arab, Hebrew-speaking and other toilers of the Near East against Zionism and against all the Arab exploiters, and the creation by the proletariat of a Socialist Federation of the Near East.

## Fidel Castro or Judge Griesa?

Whatever emotional satisfaction Barnes may derive from sneering at those who "read Comintern documents through permanent revolution eyes", denouncing Trotsky still doesn't make the SWP much of a candidate for the Sandinista or Fidelista franchise. The SWP's yearning for reformist "respectability" necessarily conflicts with its passion for Castro when push really comes to shove — Fidel Castro or Judge Griesa? An early indicator of the already rotted fibre of the SWP was the party's response nearly 20 years ago to the assassination of John F Kennedy, mortal enemy of the Cuban Revolution, architect of the Bay of Pigs invasion, whose CIA buddies made numerous attempts on Castro's life. When Kennedy was shot, allegedly by Lee Harvey Oswald, publicly identified as a member of the SWP's "Fair Play for Cuba" Committee, the SWP wrote: "We extend our deepest sympathy to Mrs Kennedy and the children in their personal grief... Political terrorism, like suppression of political freedom, violates the democratic rights of all Americans..." (*Militant*, 2 December 1963). The same issue of the *Militant* approvingly featured a statement by Chief Justice Earl Warren, with the SWP adding the headline, "At the Moment of Crisis There Were Voices of Sanity". To his credit, Castro did not send condolences; in fact, he used the occasion to remind the world that the US imperialist chief had acted in "a spirit of aggression and hostility" to Cuba.

On the 20th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution, Barnes displayed his unique brand of Castroism: "The

Castro leadership began their struggle not by taking up arms, but by doing something we emulated 20 years later — they filed suit against the government. When Batista made his coup in 1952, Fidel went to court...."

Or take the question of the arms race, not a small matter in a period of frenzied anti-Soviet war drive. In 1977 Joe Hansen excoriated the Russians: "it is clear that Brezhnev must be blamed for failing to seize the initiative on disarmament". In a 1980 speech on Afghanistan, Barnes suggested Brezhnev "go on television and announce that the USSR is destroying a big part of its nuclear arsenal and propose to Washington a schedule to destroy the rest". If the SWP's counsels of unilateral disarmament for the Russians had been heeded by the Kremlin, who can doubt that Cuba would already have been smashed or reduced to irradiated rubble? That's "defense of the Cuban Revolution", SWP style.

But the real question is: what does Barnes think he has to offer the Central American and Cuban CPs that anybody could possibly want? We are reminded of a diplomatic mission made by Mikoyan to Cuba after Castro's revolution, at a time that both Russia and China were bidding for Cuba's allegiance. What Mikoyan told the Cubans was, roughly: look, we can supply you with all kinds of things — petroleum, grain, machine tools from Czech factories, the most advanced weaponry, you name it. And what can you get from the Chinese? Only an unlimited supply of human blood plasma.

Well, at least the Chinese had something to offer — after all, they do have state power in China. What does Barnes have? Now if the SWP were the dominant force in a major wing of the Democratic Party, that could be worth something to the Cubans and Central Americans looking down the Americans' gunsights — they might believe the SWP's influence in leading bourgeois circles could mitigate the drive toward American military intervention. But the main asset the SWP has is the copyrights on some of Trotsky's books.

Fidel is unlikely to pay much attention to Barnes' speech. Somebody who surely will pay attention is Ernest Mandel, leading spokesman for the SWP's not-so-fraternal fraternal buddies of the European USec. The USec has been fuming as the SWP tears up Mandel's English section; meanwhile, the USec has been monkeying around among the SWP minorities and expellees. Particularly in this context, we can expect some erudite reams from Mandel in defense of "Trotskyism" against the SWP.

Of course the USec has already shown itself equally willing to junk the "Trotskyist" label in pursuit of bigger-time alliances. In 1976 Mandel, envisioning a maneuver with the

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social-democratic PSU group in France, declared:

"What difference do labels make? If in the political arena we encountered political forces which agreed with our strategic and tactical orientation and which were repulsed only by the historical reference and the name we would get rid of it in 24 hours."

What difference do labels make? Trotsky once replied simply to this question, "In politics, the 'name' is the 'banner'" (*Writings*, 1935-36).

To be sure, the SWP for 20 years has had about as much use for Trotskyism as a blind man for eyeglasses — that is, it can serve some functions, but none involving the purpose for which it was intended: the making of proletarian revolution. Still, Barnes' explicit disavowal of Trotskyist pretensions signals new heights of instability for Barnes' party. For our part, we welcome Barnes' speech as a step toward clarity on the American left, tending to resolve the competing claims to Trotskyist continuity. And we hope that among the SWP old-timers, degenerated long since into practicing social-democrats, a few may still be found who won't follow Barnes as he spits on the revolutionary activism of their younger days. We urge them to instead make their experiences accessible to the Trotskyists of today.

The international Spartacist tendency was born as the Revolutionary Tendency of the SWP, expelled in 1963 for defending the authentic revolutionary program of Trotskyism. This is our label, and we wear it proudly, confident of its future decisive victory through international proletarian revolution.

— reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 321, 14 January 1983

## SWP

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government to lead a political and social struggle against the right-wing guerillas". Certainly, instead of capitulating to mullah reaction by limiting land reform and literacy campaigns, the Soviets should be pouring the money in there on a massive scale — land to the tiller and cheap credit, health programs etc — in short, breaking the backbone of Islamic-feudalist reaction through social revolution. But this is hardly what the SWP has in mind. By portraying the PDPA as some kind of "independent" revolutionary force and the main issue as "outside interference" the SWP lays the basis for supporting Soviet withdrawal in exchange for a "negotiated end to the civil war". "In one sense such a solution would be easy to achieve", writes the SWP's Allen Myers:

"From the beginning the Soviet government has stated that its troops will be withdrawn when outside support for the guerillas ceases and when the latter are no longer provided with bases in Pakistan from which to launch their attacks".

— *Direct Action*, 25 January 1983

### Barnestown in Trouble

The US-Australian Afghanistan divergence highlights what the Australians have that the Americans don't — namely the "cushion" of a social-democratic Labor Party of mass proportions. The Australians even try to give their Castroism a Laborite twist, like the suggestion that Sandinista-style "mass involvement" would improve the ALP's electoral chances, or pointing to Maurice Bishop's Grenadian regime to show how a "Labor government with socialist policies" would work. The SWP's peculiar combination of "Castroism"

and "third-campism" does at times put them at odds with elements of the left-Laborite/CPA milieu. Most grotesque is their courtship of the Croatian Movement for Statehood (HDP) ostensibly on the basis that this highly dubious and sinister outfit "identifies" with "the revolutionary Cuban leadership" against Tito's Yugoslavia. Even the CPA couldn't stomach the SWP's scandalous apologies for the HDP, and no wonder! Not only does the HDP refuse to disavow the Ustashi, which has for years operated in Australia, terrorising leftists and carrying out numerous bombings of Yugoslav consulates, travel agencies etc, but this "leftward moving Croatian organisation" explicitly holds up the bloodthirsty fascist 1941 Pavelic regime as a model for "Croatian independence"!

The Australian SWP is hardly less weird than their US counterparts. But Barnes' eccentricities only compound the US SWP's major problem — the social-democratic niche that the SWP wants to occupy is already being filled by the Democratic Socialists of America, an organisation several times the size of the SWP, with more consistent reformist politics and the inside track on what reformists in the US really aspire to — influence among the pro-Democratic Party union officials who run the American labour movement. Whenever the US SWP turns, it has been getting bounced around by red-baiters and outmanoeuvred by larger (or in the case of the Marcyites, probably smaller but more effective) competitors. The ailing organisation has been shrinking at the rate of about a hundred members a year for several years, producing a first-rate financial crisis, as Barnes moves to complete the final round of "age purge", removing from even ceremonial standing within the party the remaining old-timers whose dusty memories of the once-revolutionary, pre-Barnes SWP are deemed a threat to Barnes' absolute bureaucratic control.

If Barnes seems perfectly happy as the machine-boss leader of an eccentric and shrinking political formation, some among the previously faithful seem to dimly perceive the intimations of irrelevance. So it's hardly surprising that an interpenetrated oppositional milieu has emerged in the SWP to demand the party become more minimalist, more anti-Soviet, more consistently a creature of "State Department socialism". The US SWP minorities could feel in their bones that no softness on Stalinist-ruled workers states like Cuba (the bourgeoisie's new term is "Soviet surrogates") would be permitted among the true devotees of "free trade unionism" in Poland. They urged the SWP to back away from its 20-year infatuation with Castro, dredging up orthodox-sounding arguments to give themselves a left cover. So it's Castro versus Walesa — a dilemma for the SWP. The minorities want to choose Walesa while Barnes sticks his head in the sand.

### Enter the USec

The factional situation in the US SWP has been further complicated by the outbreak of renewed, and quickly escalating, hostilities in the USec. Not only did the USec tweak Barnes' tail over the Camejo affair, but the Mandelites have also been playing footsie with the SWP's dissident minorities. Meanwhile the US SWP is tearing up the USec's British section. In Europe rumours of an impending split have been circulating since the USec began publication of an English-language journal to

compete with the *S Intercontinental Press* in early 1982.

No sooner had *International Viewpoint* appeared than a furious polemic broke out in both publications over whether it is permissible to join with counterrevolutionaries in support of counterrevolution in Poland and on Castro's condemnation of Polish Solidarity, which the Mandelites seized upon to bait the US SWP. For his part, Barnes attacked the French Mandelites for participating in right-wing Poland demonstrations led by the ruling Socialists on the grounds that this "leaves out... opposition to our own capitalist government, and genuine proletarian internationalism, which necessitates defense of the workers states against imperialism" (*Intercontinental Press*, 1 March 1982).

Since then things have heated up a lot, with the most significant divergence probably being on the Lebanon question. The US SWP's 1982 Oberlin educational was marked by extreme uncritical enthusing over the nationalist PLO:

"Yassir Arafat, chairman of the PLO, is displaying capacities that any working-class fighter must recognise and identify with", [Malik] Miah continued. "... He is also placing the PLO in the strongest possible position for the next phase of the struggle".

— *Militant*, 3 September 1982

The shameless SWP sees no reason to modulate its position now that the "strongest political position" is shown to entail the Israeli/Phalangist massacre of 1800 Palestinians after the PLO had been disarmed and dispersed by the imperialist "peacekeepers".

But a USec statement on Lebanon (*International Viewpoint*, 1 November 1982) characterised the situation as a "military defeat" and stated that "The 1982 war and the Battle of Beirut register a radical evolution in the relationship of forces in favour of imperialism in the region". The statement is classically centrist in its born-yesterday quality, lecturing the PLO on the need to base itself on the class oppression of the Arab masses by their own bourgeoisies and on "internationalism", as if the USec had not been among the biggest cheerleaders for PLO nationalism right up until the defeat in Lebanon. The statement, which scandalously refuses to demand imperialist troops out, is nonetheless miles away from the "Palestinian victory" line of the US SWP.

Where do the Australians stand in the Poland and Lebanon USec "debates"? True to form, Percy castigated the Europeans with the sub-inane criticism that "they think Poland is more important than Central America" ("Imperialism's Drive to War and the Fight Against It", *SWP Party Organiser*, May 1982). But the Australians are not unaware that Barnes' unbelievably hypocritical charges against the French over Poland apply equally well to them, and Australian SWPers brag that they intend to "teach Barnes a lesson" on "solidarity" with Solidarity.

When the fascist "Captive Nations" and anti-communist "Free Poles" demonstrated outside Sydney's Polish Consulate the day after the counter coup the SWP was right there with them, their "Freedom and Socialism" signs mingling with placards reading "Down with Red Fascism in Poland". The SWP's Steve Painter claims "our quick response cut across attempts of rightists to take up the issue" (*SWP Party Organiser*, February 1982), but it was the creatures of the National Civic Council (NCC) in the trade union bureaucracy who toured Solidarity reps Jerzy Milewski and Magda

Wojcik last September. The SWP cringed with embarrassment, though did its best to pretend that "these progressive fighters" were somehow duped into associating with the Catholic-inspired Cold War NCC, in particular by avoiding any mention of the NCC's CIA connections, hardly the least important of the ties that link it to its Polish cousins.

Besides, as Painter continued, "active support" for Solidarity means "working with people who have very different ideas from us about what should happen in Poland". And who might these people be? None other than the veteran Cold Warriors who head the very unions in which the SWP is running its "oppositions":

"But what the most vocal right-wingers in the unions are saying at present — Laurie Short of the FIA and Joe Thompson of the VBEF for example — is that union rights should be defended in Poland, that workers in this country wouldn't tolerate troops occupying their workplaces and internment of their union leaders, and that the union rights of Polish workers should be defended. With that we can only agree."

Over Lebanon the Australians have predictably identified themselves with the US SWP, reprinting several *Intercontinental Press* articles with the message that "the imperialists have never forced the PLO to capitulate" (*Direct Action*, 9 November 1982). When confronted by SLers on their support for Pax Americana in the Near East the normally-biased SWP membership gets especially hysterical, simultaneously denying their support for the imperialist "peacekeepers" and slandering the SL as "Zionist" because we denounced Arafat's treacherous surrender of the courageous Palestinian fighters. The SWP's cheerleading for PLO nationalism in fact goes hand in hand with opportunist capitulation to the Zionist "doves". Thus the 30 November *Direct Action* approvingly quotes an "Israeli revolutionary paper *Derech Hanitotz*", which grotesquely parrots the line of the Zionist "Commission of Inquiry" into the Sabra/Shatila massacres:

"Israeli refusal to recognise South Lebanon as an occupied territory and to implement international war laws on it, are signs of continuing refusal to shoulder its responsibility... The tragic consequences of previous reluctance to take its responsibilities the whole world was witness to in Sabra and Shatila."

In order to absolve the PLO of any responsibility for the Sabra-Shatila massacres and the historic defeat suffered by the Palestinian people in the

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Lebanon war, the US SWP makes a big distinction between the "international force that the PLO had to accept in order to obtain a withdrawal" and the return of this same "international force" last August (*International Viewpoint*, 29 November 1982). *Direct Action* makes no such distinction; instead it simply mimics Arafat's line that the imperialist troops shouldn't have left in the first place:

"To make the best of this situation, PLO leader Arafat insisted in negotiations that the 'peacekeeping force' protect the Palestinian camps from attacks. But the imperialist troops showed their true role when, in leaving 10 days early, they gave another symbolic green light to Israel."

— *Direct Action*, 28 September 1982

"We cannot be in favour of imperialist troops carrying out so-called 'peacekeeping' roles anywhere in the world, even when progressive regimes or groups may be forced to permit or request them", the SWP sanctimoniously declares in the wake of the Lebanon defeat ("The class struggle road to peace", *Socialist Worker*, November 1982). Like hell! At no point prior to Sabra-Shatila and the return of the US-led imperialist "peacekeepers did the SWP raise a single demand in any article or leaflet, on any placard or banner, against the intervention of imperialist troops in Lebanon. In campaigning exclusively for Australian withdrawal from the US-led Sinai force which allowed the Israelis to mobilise for the Lebanon invasion, while apologising for these same imperialist forces (minus the Australians) in Beirut, the SWP, like the capital-L-Laborites they tail, expresses its own bourgeoisie's fear of getting dragged into a messy war beyond the frontiers of what it perceives as "its" region.

**"Little Australia" Nationalists for Pax Americana**

That the SWP's opposition to Australian troops in the Sinai turns out to mean Pax Americana in Lebanon speaks volumes about the social-democratic "little Australia" nationalism that defines its world view. With the CPA's abandonment of even a pretence of opposition to ANZUS and the US bases the SWP has been bidding to corner the "anti-imperialist" (read: anti-American) market. But anti-Americanism does not an anti-imperialist make. The SWP's program is not for the destruction of the US-Australian imperialist axis through socialist revolution, but rather to pressure American imperialism via its junior Australian partner. This is what all the Laborite claptrap on "standing up to the Americans" over the Sinai is all about.

The SWP's fundamentally pro-imperialist program corresponds to its chosen instrument: the Australian Labor Party, with its smug parochialism and white racist chauvinism. According to SWP mythology, a "Labor Government with socialist policies" will, duly elected, come to power and do all kinds of wonderfully "progressive" things, from bailing out BHP to taking out the Indonesians over East Timor. All this will be thanks to a "class struggle left wing" which will "transform" the ALP from a "political instrument of the union bureaucracy to a political instrument of proletarian militants" (*Socialist Worker*, October 1982).

Such pollyannaish reformism is all the more grotesque in a period of heightened anti-Soviet militarism and capitalist economic crisis, where the ALP openly flaunts its ambitions to act

as gendarme in "its" region and loyal servant against Russian Communism abroad and "irresponsible" unionism at home. Meanwhile, the opportunist SWP is more than anxious to ingratiate itself with some of the most pro-ANZUS, anti-communist elements of the labour bureaucracy. Take CISCAC for example, the SWP's most-favoured front group over the last couple of years. Thus far CISCAC's two chief accomplishments are (1) drawing a blood-line in 1981 against the SL-initiated Anti-Imperialist Contingent which called for "Military victory to the Salvadoran leftist insurgents!" and "Defence of Cuba, USSR begins in El Salvador!" and, (2) getting touring Salvadoran FDR rep Rafael Gonzalez up on the same platform as the ALP's ANZUS-loyal deputy opposition leader Lionel Bowen, a man whose political circuit reportedly includes attendance at Kataeb (Lebanese Phalange) parties. "CISCAC and its aims are still an adequate vehicle for us at the moment and our work", Percy explained in an April 1982 National Committee report:

"We have not found that the aims of CISCAC have cut us off from getting Labor Party support, or getting trade union support. It hasn't done that. In fact, we've been rather successful in doing that sort of work even before the Gonzalez tour. But the Gonzalez tour put the cap on it. We got Gonzalez, the FDR/FMLN representative up on the platform with all stripes of reformists."

— "Imperialism's Drive to War and the Fight Against It", *SWP Party Organiser* May 1982

Bowen, it happens, considers Cuba a "Soviet surrogate" and despite Castro's (unfortunately truthful) disclaimers of arming the rebels — trumpeted by the SWP/CISCAC at every opportunity — has denounced Soviet-Cuban "foreign interference" in El Salvador. But why not build a platform for Bowen? After all, he supports the FDR's program for heading off social revolution in Central America through a disastrous "negotiated settlement".

With CISCAC the SWP figured it would be Vietnam all over again; "the good old days", a real mass movement, only this time with the SWP, not the CPA, as the brokers for the Labor Party tops. Things haven't worked out that way — the CPA and the pro-Moscow Socialist Party split out, setting up a token competitor for form's sake (RACLA) and turned their attention to the "broader peace movement". Worse yet, the SWP and its front groups got booted out of the "peace" movement, mainly because the ALP-CPA "peace chiefs" don't want to touch the anti-Soviet US bases stationed in Australia with a ten-foot pole.

Consequently the SWP has reached new heights of idiocy in trying to maintain its anti-American credentials without in any way suggesting that it might be for defence of the Soviet workers state, centrally by denying that the USSR is the target of the imperialist war drive. In order to bolster its contention that US imperialism's enormous nuclear arsenal is really directed against the "Third World" — as if Reagan's provocations around the globe from Central America to the Near East have nothing to do with "rolling back" Communism — the SWP ludicrously argues that it's a "mistake" to "consider that the new deployment of weapons in Europe is primarily directed to a European war" (*Socialist Worker*, November 1982)!

The closer to home the SWP gets, the more open becomes its identification with the "national" interest of Australian imperialism. Two years ago the SWP and its Committee Against Repression in the Pacific and Asia

(CARPA) front supported French and British troops going into Vanuatu and, likewise, the intervention of the Australian-officered PNG army, defenders of White Australia's neo-colonial enslavement of Papua New Guinea. And over East Timor, CARPA's submission to the Australian Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence advises that Australian support for the Indonesian annexation of East Timor "has been based on a short-sighted perceived need to accommodate to the present Indonesian government. There is no certainty that a future Indonesian government would continue the occupation of East Timor" (*Carpa Bulletin*, 10 May 1982). If CISCAC is the pop-front program for Central America, then CARPA is the pop-front program for the region that most directly concerns the Australian ruling class.

The SWP's claim to "Trotskyism" has always been grossly misplaced. Be it in the unions or through their various front groups, the politics of Percy's organisation represent only the "left" face of Laborism, trapped within the US-Australian alliance and thoroughly anti-Soviet. The program of the Spartacist League is counterposed down the line: in defence of the gains of October from Poland to Vietnam; for permanent revolution from Central America and the Near East to the Indonesian Archipelago; for a break with the Labor traitors and the forging of a class struggle workers party that will lead its class to bring down racist Australian imperialism, the main bastion of white privilege and reaction in the Pacific-Asian region. This is the program of Trotskyism. For the rebirth of the Fourth International. ■

**Lanka** ■■■

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that the official university student unions, which today have been lured away by the petty-bourgeois JVP parliamentarians, may in the future break away from parliamentary politics. Colombo and Jaffna Universities have already shown motion in this direction. It has therefore become necessary for the Lankan capitalist class to smash the student movement...

The Spartacist League has always emphasised to the workers, oppressed masses and Tamil-speaking people of Lanka that the programme of those who represent the ruthless capitalist system, J R Jayewardene and his UNP, to establish a dictatorship in Lanka cannot be stopped by parliamentary elections nor by referendums nor by simply defeating J R. The Spartacist League declares that the only way to stop the whole murderous programme of J R Jayewardene and his government is to overturn his rule and the Lankan capitalist class by a struggle led by the workers, oppressed masses and Tamil-speaking people.

Today in Lanka it is only the working class that has the strength to defeat Jayewardene's attempt to establish naked dictatorship. However the LSSP, the CP, the NSSP, Bala Tampoe [head of the Ceylon Mercantile Union and ex-member of the United Secretariat group] and Thondaman [head of the Ceylon Workers Congress, the company union of the plantation Tamils], having usurped leadership of the workers organisations, strongly oppose utilising the power of the working class. The so-called left parties have already formed a coalition with the capitalist SLFP without a concrete programme. This has proved the readiness of the so-called left leaders to form coalitions regardless of the real needs of the workers and

oppressed masses. The call of these left parties that a vote for the "pot"\* could defeat J R is only another reactionary trap for the working class. The Spartacist League/Lanka comrades urge the workers, oppressed masses and Tamil-speaking people not to fall into these traps.

The call of the SLFP as guardians of democracy, for sovereignty of the people, is really a call for more seats in Parliament. It is for this that the SLFP needs the so-called left parties and organisations. The Spartacist League states emphatically that the coalition of left parties and the capitalist SLFP is not an alliance to fight against J R's plans for dictatorship. Neither the capitalist SLFP nor the fake-left parties have a programme to smash the UNP and J R's moves toward dictatorship, beyond the mark on the ballot. In the electoral sphere, the SLFP is the competitor of the UNP. It is not for J R's personal reasons that it is being suppressed. Capitalist politicians are forced to take such actions to create the environment for dictatorship. If the competitor were some other party, then that party would have been suppressed. The programme for dictatorship is aimed at all parties. The Spartacist League declares that Jayewardene is persecuting the SLFP for this reason and not because the SLFP "stands for democracy".

The American imperialists will be there to help when J R and his UNP put their murderous plans into action. On October 29 the *Wall Street Journal*, paper of the American millionaire bankers, wrote in an editorial that it is keeping an eye on Lanka. As the *Saturday Review* disclosed recently, the American gift of modern arms to J R Jayewardene will soon arrive. Lanka, while allowing itself to suffer exploitation by the imperialists, is also supposed to march in step with their military appetites. Fulfilling the greedy desires of the imperialists to reconquer the workers states — the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Cuba and Vietnam — for their camp is supposed to be the responsibility of Lanka too. Secret arrangements have been made to take over the militarily important harbour of Trincomalee. UNP rulers have also allowed the infamous "Voice of America" to install modern equipment to collect intelligence on the just struggles of the people of Lanka and South Asia.

In a frenzy to forestall its death, the Lankan bourgeoisie is burying the vestiges of capitalist democracy. This can be stopped only by a workers and peasants government under the dictatorship of the working class that will overturn the capitalist state. For this a Bolshevik revolutionary party, like the party that was led by Lenin in Russia, is required. The working class of Lanka lacks such a party. The Spartacist League is dedicated to building such a party. We declare that as a first step in this direction, the vote should be cast for the "pot" in the fake referendum of December 22. The SL declares firmly, however, that the vote for the "pot" will not defeat the ruthless capitalist class.

The Spartacist League comrades appeal to the workers, oppressed masses and Tamil-speaking people to join our struggle in Lanka which, united with Bolsheviks throughout the world, is forging a powerful weapon of the proletariat — the Bolshevik party — which is crucial to successfully meeting the challenge of the barbaric dictatorship in Lanka.

Spartacist League/Lanka  
25 November 1982

\* The "pot" was the symbol for a "no" vote on the ballot, while the "lamp" was the symbol for a "yes" vote.

## Racist

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by fostering Aboriginal ambitions and supplying weapons and know-how for terrorist activities”!

And then there's Malcolm Fraser's "punishment" of "rebel" West Indian cricketers now touring South Africa for breaking the sporting boycott imposed by the Commonwealth, that relic of British colonialism, and its equally "imperial" cricket boards. In an act of monumental racist hypocrisy, Fraser borrowed a leaf from Botha's apartheid regime and imposed a *life-long* ban barring the black cricketers from White Australia. This repulsive effort to prettify "democratic" Australia (not to mention enlisting the "third world" in struggle against, not apartheid of course, but US and EEC agricultural protectionism) won the support of fake-socialists like the reformist Socialist Workers Party and "third camp" International Socialists who joined Fraser in agreeing that the "rebels" are "getting everything they deserve thrown at them" (*Battler*, 29 January).

At the very core of Australian nationalism is vicious white racism, the outlook of a privileged but vulnerable white ruling class policing Asia and the Pacific for imperialism. And integral to building the revolutionary proletarian party that will bring down racist Australian imperialism is militant defence of Australia's desperately oppressed black population. ■

## Klan

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with givebacks, union-busting, mass unemployment — know that hooded labor-hating racists want to finish them off. . . .

"We don't need an impotent protest that amounts to a hat-in-hand appeal to Democratic politicians to fight Reagan reaction. We need to mobilize above all the power of labor and blacks, independently and fighting in their own interests. . . .

"America must complete the Civil War. . . . The Klan arose to eliminate black political rights and bury Reconstruction. It was the violent arm of the reaction which robbed newly freed blacks and a young working class of most of their gains. Now the US has grown into the imperialist world power opposing social revolution from El Salvador to Southern Africa. The KKK wants to nail America to a cross with the nails driven through black flesh! The KKK's protectors in the White House want to extend this crucifixion throughout the world and above all to Russia, for its original sin of revolution."

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## Spartacist League Video Showings:

### "We Stopped the Klan!"



Videotape of Labor/Black Mobilisation to Stop the Ku Klux Klan, Washington, DC, United States.

On November 27 the fascist Ku Klux Klan, attempting to stage a march for racist terror in the US capital for the first time since 1925, were chased out by 5000 overwhelmingly black demonstrators led by the Spartacist League/US. Come and see how this victory over fascism was won!

<b>Melbourne University</b>	<b>Melbourne</b>	<b>Sydney</b>
1.15 pm	7.30 pm	7.30 pm
Wednesday 2 March	Thursday 10 March	Thursday 3 March
Upper Theatre, 4th floor, Babel Building	For venue ring 654 4315	Spartacist League office 2nd fl, 112 Goulburn St, Sydney

was key. The first support came from Norfolk, Virginia and the predominantly black waterfront unions in the tri-city Tidewater area, the largest working-class concentration in the Southeast. In little more than a week some 70 union leaders, exec boards and union locals nationwide endorsed the Labor/Black Mobilisation.

The thousands of black working people and unemployed who turned out to stop the Klan got a little taste of power on November 27. The Klan was stopped and when the cops pulled out, the anti-Klan protesters poured into the streets and surged up Capitol Hill chanting "We Stopped the Klan!". They took over the route the Klan was to have taken, stopping traffic as they marched past the White House, chanting "Down with Reagan! Build a Workers Party!" and streamed into Lafayette Park, claiming for their own the spot where the Klan had intended to rally for genocide. "There are no white sheets here — only the red banner of the working class", declared SL spokesman Al Nelson as the cops' tear gas canisters were popping at the outskirts of the park.

At another, much smaller rally earlier that day in McPherson Square, miles away from the mobilisation that stopped the Klan, the All-Peoples Congress (APC), a front for Sam Marcy's Workers World Party (WWP), held a tepid rally aimed at channeling anti-Klan outrage into votes for Democrats. The Marcyites had promised anti-Klan action but delivered only windy reformist speeches, and finally had to *link arms*

against the people they had mobilised to try and keep them there. Some of the frustrated youth broke out and set off on their own, a setup for the cops who clubbed and tear-gassed them.

### Media, Reformists: Why They Lie

The sight of blacks and reds together in action, backed up by the power of organised labour, running the KKK out of town, shook the American ruling class. From the Reaganites to the liberals, including many of their black front men, they responded with lies, racist slander and redbaiting about mob terror. To top it off, the reformist left, enraged over the fact that the black masses followed the revolutionary Trotskyists of the SL, while its own diversions for the Democrats flopped, has taken up the bourgeoisie's "wild in the streets" scenario. They hope to steal in newsprint the victory over Klan terror we won in the streets of Washington.

The white bourgeois media took its headlines from the incidental clashes started by the cops in the vicinity of the far smaller rad-lib APC diversion. So in the editorial offices of the capitalist media, November 27 became not the day the Klan was stopped but "violence" as well as "riots" and "looting". The *New York Post* headlined "War in the Street" and "Cops blame radicals for anti-Klan riot". The UPI story flashed around the globe was typical:

"Anti-Ku Klux Klan demonstrators hurled bricks, rocks and bottles at police and overturned cars Saturday in a rash of violence triggered by a peaceful KKK rally across from the White House."

This is nothing but lies to conjure up racist images of marauding ghetto youth attacking whites. It is a license for the police to murder black anti-Klan protesters in the streets.

But the black press wasn't buying the racist "looting and rioting" line. "5000 Chase Klansmen" headlined *New York's Amsterdam News*, quoting SL spokesman Don Andrews: "It was an enormous victory for labor, Blacks and every decent

American." "Ku Klux Klan Catches 'Hell' in DC", was the banner on the *Cleveland Call and Post* over a picture of Labor/Black Mobilisation demonstrators. Internationally, there was a sharp class line in the coverage of November 27, seen most vividly in the divided city of Berlin. In the capitalist West the *Tagesspiegel* published a small piece, "Clashes at Ku Klux Klan Demonstration in Washington". On the other side of the wall, the East German Communist Party's *Neues Deutschland* reported: "Klan Provocation in Washington Prevented".

But most of the American left painted the same lying picture as the bourgeois media. Both tried to hide the central fact that the *cop riot* was launched *after* the KKK had been stopped by thousands of demonstrators at the Labor/Black Mobilisation who blocked the Klan's march route at its starting point. In particular, the APC/WWP has big problems with November 27. To begin with, it was the SL (and not them) which organised the mass mobilisation. By picking a site a couple of miles away, and starting a couple of hours late, *the APC was going to let the Klan march*. Now in trying to squirm out of the "looting" charges, the WWP/APC goes along with violence-baiting (from its own liberal allies) directed not only against "Trotskyist radicals", but also against thousands of Washington's best black militants.

For the reformists, clashes with the cops after it was over were everything, the fact the Klan was stopped was nothing. But when the violence-baiting hit the fan, they tried to hide behind talk of a "spontaneous" mass upsurge. These pseudo-socialists didn't have anything to do with organising it, that's for sure. But how and why did 5000 militant black workers and youth show up at the site of the Labor/Black Mobilisation ready to stop the KKK? The SL-initiated demonstration struck a deep chord in black Washington. Congressional delegate Walter Fauntroy points to "Trotskyist radicals", the quarter million leaflets distributed all over town, the thousands of posters, sound trucks, etc. He leaves out the important role of black radio stations and above all the active participation of hundreds of DC black militants who in turn mobilised thousands. The reformists say it was just instinct, militants decided to show up at the Klan's assembly point. But then why did the fake-lefts set up their rallies miles away? *Their* instinct was to let the KKK ride while they spouted hot air. Thousands of Washington blacks know from their own experience: *without the SL-initiated and -organised Labor/Black Mobilisation, the Ku Klux Klan would have marched on November 27.*

A successful Klan march in Washington would have given the green light to stepped-up KKK terror against blacks, immigrants, Jews, leftists, strikers. It was the intersection between the communist program of the Spartacist League and the bitter determination of the black masses of Washington that stopped the Klan's provocation on November 27. That's why we need a Marxist vanguard party, like the Bolsheviks of Lenin and Trotsky: to act as the collective memory of the revolutionary working class and as a "tribune of the people" fighting on behalf of all the oppressed. There's plenty of will to fight back among the oppressed and exploited of capitalism; what's needed is the leadership with the program for victory. Black Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

— adapted from *Women & Revolution*  
no 25 and *Workers Vanguard* no 320,  
31 December 1982

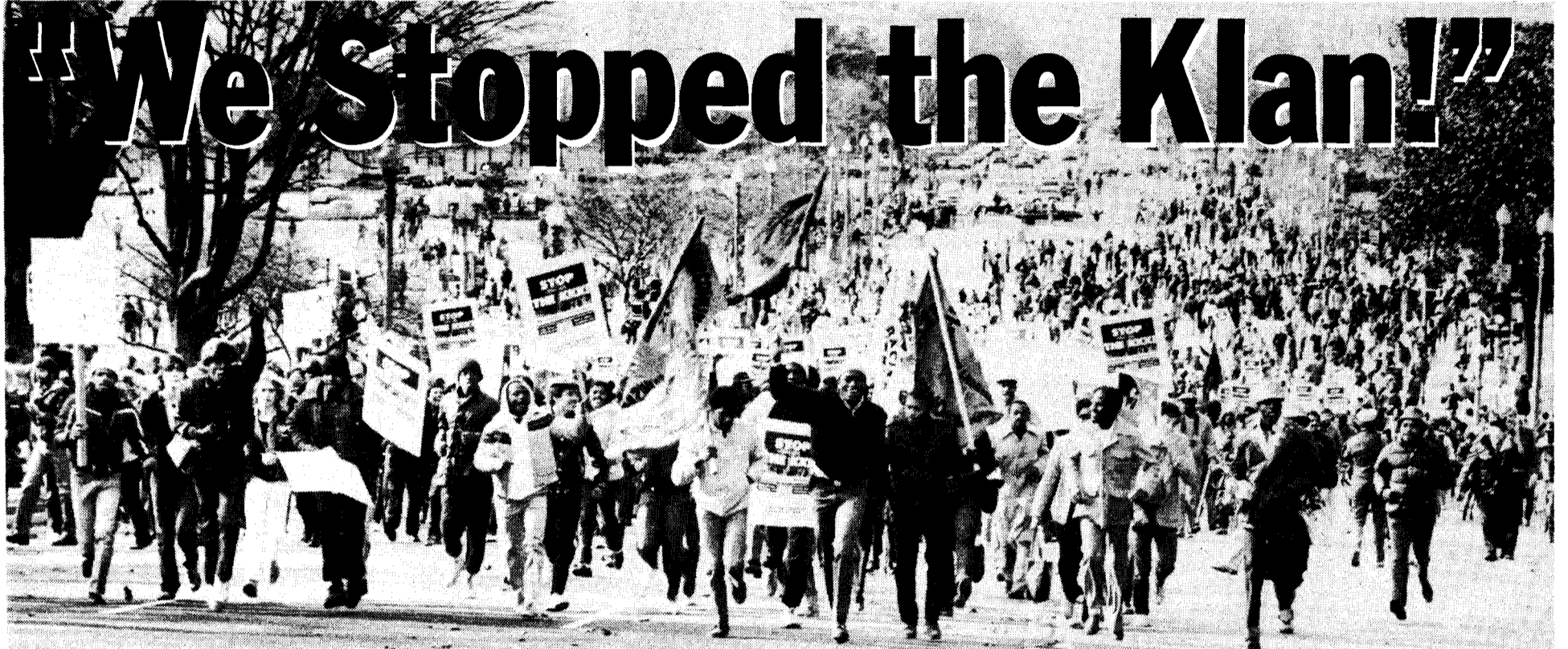
Australasian

# SPARTACIST



## Labour/Black Mobilisation Shakes Washington

WV photo



WV photo



More than 5000 protesters — mostly black people and many of them unionists — chased the Ku Klux Klan out of the US capital Washington, DC on November 27. The race-terrorists had said they would rally at the Capitol and march past the White House in their white sheets, for the first time since 1925. The Reagan government had shown itself determined to force this provocation down the throats of the mainly black DC population. But the Klan did not march, did not rally, did not even put on their robes! Instead, thousands of anti-Klan militants at the Labor/Black Mobilisation rally blocked off the Klan's starting point and the cops had to sneak the Klansmen away in defeat.

The Labor/Black Mobilisation to Stop the Klan was initiated by the Spartacist League/US (SL) after discussions with area unionists showed a shared determination to militantly stop the cross-burners

from marching in the nation's capital. The leaflet (250,000 copies were distributed) said:

"... if we don't stop them [the Klan] here and now, decent people will continue to pay with their lives. We want a massive counterdemonstration against these terrorists, right where they say they're going to start their march...."

"The KKK is the naked expression of what the racists in the White House, the Congress, and city halls think and feel. The Klan carries it out in ugly word and bloody deed...."

"But the KKK better know that Washington is not Klantown. This city is filled with black residents who know exactly what the Klan is. Many families here have experienced firsthand the terror of the Southern nightriders.... Within reach of Washington are powerful integrated unions whose members — hit hard

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## Drop the Charges Against Sydney Land Rights Protesters! Racist "White Australia" Day 1983

What could better capture the racist "spirit" of White Australia than the 26 January ceremonies commemorating Australia Day, the anniversary of the arrival of the First Fleet and the launching of colonial genocide against the Aboriginal peoples? There was NSW Labor Premier Neville Wran mouthing off about "fair treatment" for blacks while across from Wran's office his cops goose-stepped into a group of black demonstrators who tried to set up a "Tent Embassy" in protest at the Labor Government's mis-named "Land Rights" Bill. The cops tore the tent down, beat up the protesters and then charged seven of

their victims with assault and resisting arrest.

Last November the seething racism of Labor-administered New South Wales blew up when rampaging white racists murdered 19-year-old black Ronald McIntosh in the north-western NSW town of Moree. Now the surviving victims are being set up for legal repression. Take for example the *Sydney Morning Herald's* account (28 January 1983) of the "questioning" of black witness Lyall Munro Jr, the vice-chairman of the Aboriginal Legal Service and a special target of the white racists:

"Mr Halligan: Every time you come down to Moree something goes wrong. Mr Munro: Not necessarily. You are a stirrer? — No. You look for trouble? — No. You like the publicity that goes with trouble? — I refute that, I deny that. In this context and in its entirety I deny it, I refute it. I put it to you Mr Munro that the whole tragedy was orchestrated by you? — That is a complete lie."

We demand: Jail the killers of Ronald McIntosh! Drop all charges against Sydney Land Rights protesters!

With white racism on the rise, all the diehard racists are crawling out of

their holes. Last July the Mayor of Nowra on the NSW South Coast, burned an Aboriginal flag, but it's not just the overlords of the rural backwaters who are getting into the racist act. The *Adelaide Advertiser* published an "Australia Day" message that could have been approved by Hitler's Auschwitz "doctors" from Nobel-Prize-winning biologist Sir MacFarlane Burnet, calling for limiting the miserable welfare sops given to blacks to those with "more than 50 per cent of Aboriginal genes" because "a foreign power might attempt to disorganise Australian civilisation

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