

Australasian

SPARTACIST



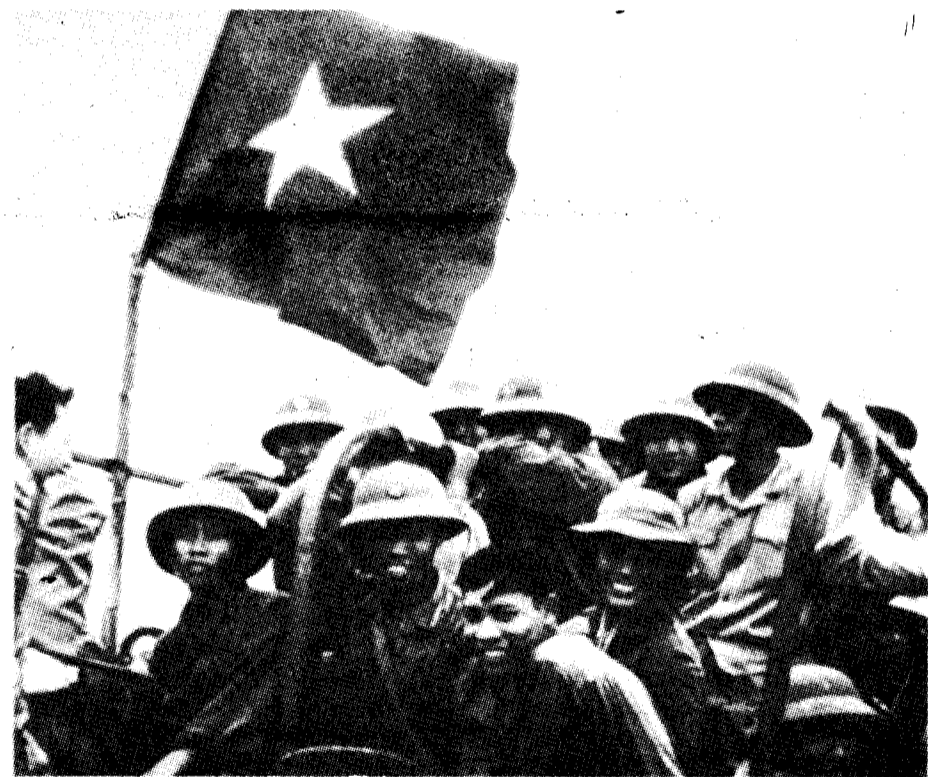
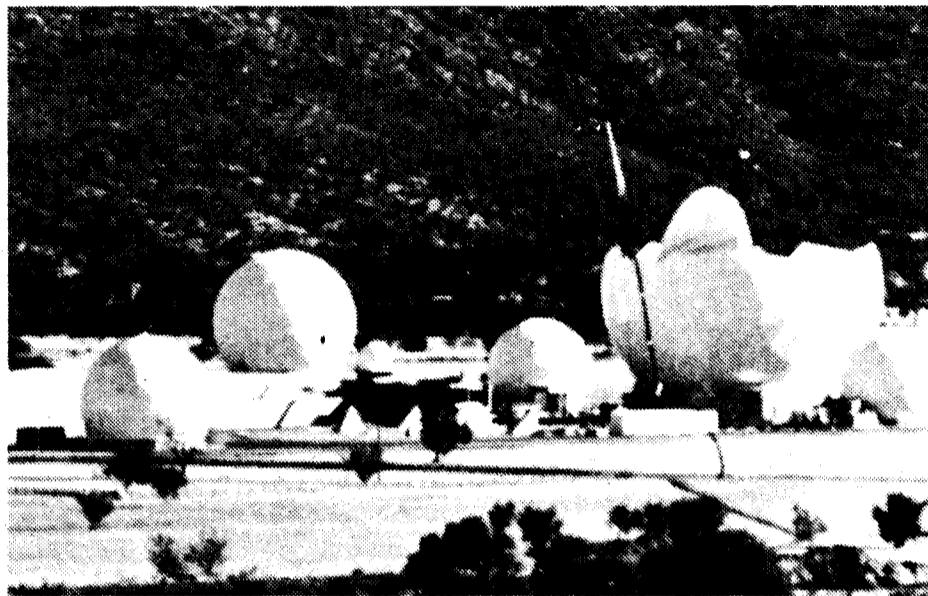
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April 1983

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Defend Vietnam/USSR! US Bases Out!

Cold War Labor in Power



Spiralling mass unemployment and a plummeting economy routed the Liberal/National Party coalition of Malcolm Fraser in last month's federal election. Fraser's anti-red, anti-union scare campaign about Labor's "socialist manifesto" hardly corresponded to Bob Hawke's program for "national reconciliation" backed up by an ALP-ACTU accord which promised to continue Fraser's wage freeze. And while the elections were chiefly fought around domestic questions, centrally the state of the economy, Hawke wasted no time in adjusting Labor policy to the dictates of the American alliance and Cold War anti-Sovietism.

Even before the election Hawke squashed long-standing Labor policy to withdraw Australian troops from the US-led "peacekeeping" force in the Sinai which acted as border guards for Israel's genocidal invasion of Lebanon. A Begin fan from way back, Hawke promised to "consult" with the Zionist butchers and, no doubt, the US envoys who arm-twisted Fraser into sending the troops in the first place. As soon as

the elections were over, Hawke shelved Labor policy to resume economic aid to Vietnam, once again promising to "consult" fully with the US and ASEAN before taking precipitous action. Then there is Labor's opposition to Indonesia's bloody annexation of East Timor, demanding an end to military aid to Australia's main ASEAN ally, which the new Prime Minister denounced as "an embarrassment". Meanwhile, joint Australian-Indonesian naval exercises continue. There can be no question: Hawke's Labor government, no less than the despised Fraser government, will be a government of capitalist austerity and Cold War.

The Labor Party offered not even minimal reforms to its working class base, but a "solution" of chauvinist protectionism, wage cuts and continued mass unemployment coupled with bipartisan support to Reagan's anti-Soviet war preparations. To Washington they pledged loyalty to ANZUS and no interference with the

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Top: The CIA's top-secret Pine Gap spy station, crucial for the US and its Australian partner's anti-Soviet war aims. Defence of Vietnam, USSR begins in Pine Gap, Diego Garcia and Trincomalee. Bottom: North Vietnamese Army troops following the liberation of Saigon in 1975. Vietnam was a victory: two, three, many defeats for imperialism!

Free Gallagher! Defend the BLF!

Labor Knifes BLF for Social Contract

One week after Fraser called his ill-fated snap election the High Court refused Norm Gallagher, the Maoist general secretary of the Builders Labourers Federation (BLF), his right to appeal a three-month jail sentence for "contempt of court". A day later Gallagher was behind bars in Melbourne's Pentridge jail. His "crime" was the statement that BLF walkouts had reversed an earlier jail sentence for contempt. "I believe that by their actions in demonstrating, in walking off jobs ... I believe that that has been

the main reason for the court changing their mind", said Gallagher, simply stating the obvious truth that bourgeois "justice" merely reflects the relationship of class forces.

The jailing of Gallagher is an attack on the entire working class. It should have been, and still must be, met by a mobilisation of working class power. The imprisonment of the BLF leader for "contempt of court" is undisguised union-busting, and sets a dangerous precedent for state repression against anyone advocating any form of work-

ing class action which challenges the bosses' courts and laws. Gallagher is still in jail under Labor. The more than one-year-long ruling class campaign to break the BLF is being continued by Labor as a public demonstration of its intention to subordinate the unions to the capitalist state, with the complicity of the entire trade union bureaucracy.

Two days after Gallagher was locked up, the Victorian Trades Hall Council, with full support from the CPA/ALP "lefts", expelled the BLF, ostensibly over a demarcation dispute — always

a favorite issue for back-stabbing craftist bureaucrats. Then Labor Premier Cain sent his cops against BLF pickets at scissor-lift hire companies (the demarcation dispute they were expelled for). Over 80 picketers were arrested, forcibly photographed, finger-printed and refused bail unless an undertaking was given not to return to the picket line. Next the emboldened building industry bosses announced that BLF members engaged in a campaign for a 36-hour

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BLF...

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week and \$40 pay rise would be stood down, to be applauded by ACTU head Cliff Dolan, who roundly denounced the BLF for "breaching" the ALP-ACTU "prices and incomes" accord. It could hardly be clearer that even the most elementary defence of the trade unions requires a hard struggle against the Labor traitors who presently "lead" the working class.

When Gallagher was jailed Hawke said, "The law has run its course", and then refused to withdraw the Labor government as a co-respondent in the Federal Court's deregistration proceedings against the union. By knifing the BLF the high priests of Labor officialdom hope to seal their sacred "social contract". The ALP-ACTU "prices and incomes" accord is a program for suppressing union militancy in the context of the worst depression since the 30s and intense imperialist preparations for anti-Soviet war, codifying and deepening the already existing ties, principally via the ALP, between the trade union tops and the capitalist state. For the new PM as with the last, it's "free trade unions" in Poland and union-busting at home.

Only now, the election over, are the BLF tops organising even the mildest protest, appealing only to "freedom of speech" in the hope of "uniting" with their Laborite witch-hunters. We can't remember when we've heard so much "unity" talk from the Maoists — other than unity with anti-Soviet "freedom fighter" Fraser, that is. The pro-Peking *Vanguard* (17 March) even carried a photo reduction of the back page of *Direct Action* headlined, "Free Gallagher!" with a caption reading, "unity is certainly needed these days".

While Gallagher tells reporters at Pentridge that Hawke's summit is a "con of the Australian working class", the now Labor-loyal *Vanguard* headed its 17 March issue with the following gem: "People's hopes will be a delegate at economic conference". Sure they will, along with Hawke's already openly stated plans to extend Fraser's wage freeze another six months while thousands of sackings continue at GMH, BHP's steel plants and in the coal industry. Apart from wage cuts Hawke's only promise is that the government will give its "full support", ie, its courts and cops, to the ACTU to discipline any "recalcitrant" unions who don't co-operate with Labor's "national reconciliation".

As the Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky wrote in the 1930s, in the epoch of imperialist decay the trade unions can either serve as the vehicles "of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers" or instruments of revolutionary class struggle (*Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay*).

The fight for independence from the capitalist state and to smash its Arbitration system, for industrial unionism to break through divisive craft lines — these questions will be crucial to forging the necessary alternative leadership that can indeed transform the trade unions, in Trotsky's words, into "the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat". Free Gallagher! Defend the BLF! Down with Labor's wage freeze! Break the ALP-ACTU stranglehold! For a class-struggle workers party to fight for a workers government!

Labor...

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US military and CIA bases in Australia, and likewise promised the Australian ruling class that ALP populist-nationalism and its links to the trade union bureaucracy could more effectively serve to implement the "sacrifices" necessary to revive profits and exports. And what they promised they intend to deliver.

In these elections the Spartacist League refused to call for a vote to Labor (see *Australasian Spartacist*, no 100, February/March 1983). With a solid ALP-ACTU stranglehold on union militancy and Labor running on an openly pro-imperialist and anti-working class program, even the most critical electoral support could only have been an endorsement of defeatist "better than Fraser" lesser-evilism, a capitulation to the betrayals and demoralisation on which Labor's wage-cutting, strike-breaking Cold War "alternative" was built.

For the workers, immigrant minorities and youth who face decaying imperialism's future of economic depression, racism and war the only alternative is the road of independent class struggle and socialist revolution. What is urgently necessary is the building of a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard that can lead the working class, as champion of all the oppressed, to the setting up of its own power, a workers government. But this strategy requires from the very beginning a clear political break from the class collaboration and national chauvinism of the Labor traitors. *Smash the wage freeze! Down with Labor's "social contract" — break the ALP-ACTU stranglehold! Not chauvinist protectionism but mass strikes and sit-ins to fight sackings! 30 for 40!*

Predictably the deeply Laborite left greet Hawke's election as a great victory. The "Euro"-Communist Party of Australia (CPA), which hailed the ALP-ACTU "social contract" as a "historic step forward", called it a "Strong Vote for Reform" (*Tribune*, 9 March). The Qaddafiite Socialist Labour League (SLL) say that this government will be worse than the Scullin government of the 1929-31 depression, yet proclaimed the election "A Victory For The Working Class" (*Workers News*, 8 March). And typically, the Pollyannaish reformists of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) queried, "Labor's choice: profits or jobs" (*Direct Action*, 8 March). (The SWP's 48 (!) candidates were a spectacular flop polling less than one percent of the vote except where their names

topped the ballot — considerably less than the CPA, SLL and Socialist Party (SPA) where they competed.) Only the pro-Moscow SPA was more subdued, no less capitulatory to the necessities of "restraint", but fully aware that a Hawke-led Labor government will be strongly pro-Reagan.

Drive Out US CIA/Military Bases!

Labor's triumphant return to the Canberra treasury benches was prepared by continued disavowal over the last seven years of the 1972-75 Whitlam Labor government. The Whitlam government left a legacy of resentment and deep distrust of Labor in Washington. Whitlam was an imperialist politician *par excellence*, but from the outset of his government the links of the Labor lefts, particularly anti-Vietnam Moratorium leader and deputy PM Jim Cairns, to Stalinist or CPA-influenced trade unions was seen as highly dubious by the Nixon administration, its CIA spooks and their Australian ASIO apprentices. The mountain of evidence confirming CIA involvement in the ouster of Whitlam in the 1975 constitutional "coup" is still growing. But it was Whitlam's meddling with CIA operations at the super-secret Pine Gap base at Alice Springs that finally brought down the axe.

Above all it was Bob Hawke, then ACTU President, who along with Whitlam was centrally responsible for derailing the militant, spontaneous strike movement that erupted in response to the ruling class plot that threw Labor out. Concerning relations with its American imperialist god-father, Labor has today assimilated what Whitlam never fully grasped (and what comes naturally to Tory parties): a lackey may be a junior partner, but is always a lackey. As it was with Fraser, Australian imperialism under Labor will be the US's slavish junior partner in Southeast Asia in the service of regional reaction and global anti-Sovietism. Capitalist White Australia is strategically critical to US war plans, and not only for its spy/communications and refuelling/maintenance bases. Increasingly Washington is demanding a more aggressive role for Australian imperialism as its proxy in Southeast Asia, using its ANZUS links to help build ASEAN into a fully-fledged military alliance. And the central target of imperialism's stepped up war plans in Asia is Vietnam, the Soviets' toughest ally, which militarily humbled the US imperialists and their Australian ally only a decade ago. The Spartacist League says: *Defence of the USSR and Vietnam begins in Alice Springs, Diego Garcia and Trincomalee! Smash ANZUS and ASEAN! US bases out of Australia and the Indian Ocean! Australian and all imperialist troops out of the Near East! Australian military out of Southeast Asia!*

Smash Reagan/Hawke Anti-Soviet War Drive!

The Whitlam period was something of a transitory aberration, a domestic reflection of "detente" as US imperialism and its junior Australian partners withdrew from defeat in Indochina, an interlude between Cold War I and the bellicose anti-Sovietism of Jimmy ("Human Rights") Carter and now Reagan. What Brezhnev hailed in 1972 as "the era of detente" is long dead, having provided US imperialism crucial time to rearm. Now the Reaganite nuclear madmen are openly planning a nuclear first strike against the state which issued from the October Revolution and where, despite the subsequent Stalinist degeneration, collectivised property and the planned economy represent historic gains that must be defended.

Just compare the 1980s "peace movement" to the movement against the Vietnam war. To be sure, the heterogenous mass of the Vietnam anti-war movement never broke from the bourgeois defeatism and "little Australia" nationalism of Whitlam's Labor Party. But today we have a "peace movement" which fails even to oppose US imperialism in those areas where the Cold War rages hottest — especially where Australian imperialism is involved as in the Near East, where the Sinai force represents the first concrete example of US-Australian military collaboration involving troops since Vietnam.

Most telling, the recent demonstrations on March 27 (Palm Sunday) in Melbourne and Sydney quite consciously refused to take a stand against US bases in Australia, instead raising the slogan, "US bases make Australia a nuclear target" and calling for "Disarmament East and West". And who are the "Peace Chiefs" in 1983? None other than Bob Hawke's ruling Labor Party, which while not openly endorsing the demonstrations, assured their political character. In Melbourne the march was led by a donkey, Labor Premier Cain and ACTU head Cliff Dolan, who made clear his support for the ANZUS alliance and US bases just prior to the demo in an interview printed in the *Age*. In Sydney the "peace festival" began with a church service in Hyde Park where thousands of ecologically-minded citizens littered the area with leaflets warning of the "spiritual" threat posed by nuclear war and balloons carried the message: "Blow up Balloons, not People". Fully half an hour after the front of the church-led march reached the Domain, the relatively tiny left contingents still hadn't left the park.

The CPA called for "internationalising" the US bases (ie, Reagan should ask Bob Hawke before they nuke 'em) and proclaimed, "If you've seen one nuclear war, you've seen them all". They ought to know. The CPA supported the US bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the last war, the one instance in which nuclear weapons have been used thus far. And the SWP, which along with its front groups got bounced from the Nuclear Disarmament Coordinating Committee (NDCC) last year precisely over the question of US bases and ANZUS, changed their old slogan, "Stop Reagan/Fraser War Drive" to "Stop Reagan's War Drive", carefully omitting any reference to the new boss of the Australian imperialist state.

In general the left-Laborites like Tom Uren (or the CPA), understanding the "responsibilities" imposed by power, have made their peace with the ANZUS alliance and US bases, once a favourite target of left-Laborite opposition. But while fully endorsing (and sometimes surpassing, as over Poland) ALP anti-Sovietism, groups like the SWP currently maintain a commitment to *nationalist anti-Americanism*, which they try to pass off as "anti-imperialism". In this the SWP reflects the "little Australia" nationalism on which they cut their teeth during the Vietnam anti-war movement. The problem is: if you want to hate the Russians, you've got to love the Americans, as the SWP found out from the NDCC.

The notion that Australian imperialism can pursue an "independent" course from its US patron is a grotesque myth, fanning only the flames of jingoist nationalism, which in this white imperialist outpost in Asia is necessarily racist and anything but anti-militarist. World War III means *global* nuclear holocaust, and it will take victorious workers revol-

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Australasian Spartacist

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Spartacist League/ANZ Greetings to "Women and Revolution"

The Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand (SL/ANZ) joins our comrades in the international Spartacist tendency in celebrating International Women's Day, a proletarian holiday. In deeply chauvinist "White Australia", anti-Soviet war preparations and economic depression have fuelled nationalist-racism and social reaction reinforcing the bourgeoisie's "sacred" nuclear family — the central pillar of women's oppression under capitalism. And it was Labor premier Neville Wran's cops that raided a Sydney gay club last month, charging six people under sections of the Crimes Act prohibiting consensual homosexual acts and a sixteen-year-old under the "age-of-consent" laws. Unlike Australian feminists and the fake-lefts who preach class collaboration and anti-Sovietism, mainly through their political commitment and ties to the Australian Labor Party (ALP), we understand that the fight against domestic reaction cannot be separated from revolutionary defence of the Soviet Union against imperialist war plans.

Australia is a weak, vulnerable imperialist power, with a very modest military capacity. Capitalist Australia's protection is afforded by the ANZUS military alliance with the United States, with the Australian bourgeoisie playing the role of most craven junior partner to Reagan's anti-Soviet war drive. Australian troops lend "international" credibility to the US military bridgehead in the Sinai, while in this region Australia is playing an increasingly aggressive role as US proxy in Southeast Asia, bolstering counterrevolutionary alliances such as ASEAN, whose main target is the Vietnamese deformed workers state. The fate of Australia is nonetheless indissolubly bound to that of Asia; as we have insisted:

"The deadly fear of the massively exploited, starving masses of Asia in their hundreds of millions to the north has similarities with apartheid South Africa, except here the racial threat to white supremacy is exter-

Life in a Remote White Imperialist Enclave



Sydney, May Day 1982: Smash ANZUS! US Bases Out! For a Workers Australia, Part of Socialist Asia!

nal.... The nationalists' attempt to maintain Australia as a privileged white outpost against Asia must be mercilessly combatted; it is completely counterposed to our program of a racially integrated Australia, part of socialist Asia."

— "The Main Enemy Is At Home!", *Australasian Spartacist* no 90, Summer 1981/1982

With the international recession devastating Australia's highly vulnerable manufacturing industries, women have been among the hardest hit,

particularly the mainly immigrant women concentrated in unskilled factory labour. Racist reaction is on the rise, not only in the country towns where black unemployment runs at 90 percent, but in the industrial cities, like the coal and steel towns of Wollongong and Newcastle, where unemployment stands at 20 percent and protectionist poison is fueling anti-Asian racism. Women — especially youth and migrants, unskilled and poorly educated — in the most menial jobs and sweatshops of the dying

textile industry are especially vulnerable. Social services are being ravaged, among them remnants of concessions from days gone by such as childcare centres and women's refuges, often the last recourse for women in a country where wife and child-beating are a "normal" part of life. Meanwhile the craftist Laborite union tops have not lifted a finger to save these women's — or anyone else's — jobs, instead joining the bosses in enforcing wage cuts and the four-day week. The fight for industrial unionism, sit-in strikes to fight sackings, a political break with the Labor traitors, the forging of an internationalist class-struggle workers party — these are among the critical issues facing the woman worker today.

In this penal settler-colony outpost in Asia, first of British and now American imperialism, "little Australia" social-democratic nationalism is not only white racist, but proud of its brutally male chauvinist and self-indulgent parochial philistine "national character" — best described as the culture of white pigs. Just as an index, in this land of "sport and drink", less than a decade ago women were still banned from drinking in hotel public bars. It is not surprising that the feminist movement of the mid-'70s, a direct product of revulsion at this male chauvinist culture, took on a mass character. Yet the reformists and feminists who claim to champion women's rights do not in any way challenge the white racist pro-imperialism of the labour bureaucracy, which thoroughly identifies with ruling-class privilege.

The Australian working class has historically been militant in pursuing its economic interests, but remains dominated by the reformist Labor Party bureaucracy. In November 1975 there was an enormous working-class response to the ruling-class offensive that deposed the Whitlam government, the first Labor government in 23 years. But the union tops refused to channel it in the direction

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Over eighty people in Sydney and Melbourne attended showings of the powerful and moving video of the Labor/Black Mobilisation which stopped the Ku Klux Klan cold when it tried to march in Washington DC last November 27. Many who attended donated money towards the costs of the mobilisation, and we are pleased to announce that so far nearly \$1900 has been raised in Australia. But big victories cost big bucks, and donations are still urgently required.

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Labor

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ution in the imperialist centres to stop it. Anti-imperialism means class struggle at home! As the German revolutionary Karl Liebknecht said: the main enemy is at home!

Labor — Cold War Social Imperialists in Asia

"I said it in 1914, and in recent years, that this country, with its resources of manpower, cannot afford to be a policeman in Europe. I now say it in 1943 and for all the years to come that this land may remain free only by Australia remaining the policeman in the Pacific."

— John Curtin, quoted in Humphrey McQueen, "Living Off Asia", Arena no 26 (1971)

During the election campaign Hawke continually identified his future government with the 1941-45 Curtin Labor government that ran Australia for the Allied imperialists during World War II. "In very different times, in a very different sort of crisis, the task and the challenges remain the same — to bring Australia together in a united front until victory" (Age, 17 February). But in Cold War II the times are not so different; Labor under Hawke in the 1980s is only reverting to type.

The ALP historically has always been one of the world's most right-wing social-democratic parties. Its White Australia racism kept it out of the Second International until 1965, when it formally dropped white racial homogeneity from its platform. Its populist nationalism expresses the imperialist xenophobia of the Australian ruling class which maintains Australia as a privileged white imperialist enclave against Asia through racial exclusionism, chauvinist economic protectionism and necessary

subservience, given its military weakness, to a stronger imperialist power as its protector.

The Cold War alliance with US imperialism, including policing Southeast Asia against revolution, has always been a truly bipartisan policy. It was the Labor government of Hawke's hero Curtin which in the crisis of World War II transferred Australia's allegiances from British to American imperialism. In the wake of the nuclear holocaust at Hiroshima and Nagasaki American imperialist hegemony replaced the Japanese occupation forces across Southeast Asia. But the nationalist and revolutionary ferment sparked amongst the Asian masses by the defeat of their colonial overlords generated an increasingly hysterical anti-communism within the Australian ruling class. Anti-communism and anti-Asian racism fused in common fear of the spectre of social revolution in Asia, particularly after the victory of Mao's Red Army in China in 1949.

The postwar Chifley Labor government aided the British in Malaya against guerrillas led by the Malayan Communist Party, despatched warships to run supplies and relief up the Yangtze to Chiang Kai-shek in Nanking while, closer to home, it attempted to sell fraudulent "self government" under continuing Dutch rule to the Indonesian nationalists. At the same time Chifley's foreign minister H V Evatt was obsessively pressing Washington for a formal US-Australian military pact. But the ANZUS alliance was not signed until 1951 under Menzies as one of a series of "containment" pacts across Asia. In part it was bought with Australian acquiescence to a "soft" peace treaty with Japan, who the US, as with postwar Germany, sought to rebuild as an anti-communist bastion. What was consummated and codified by

Menzies' Liberals was agitated and prepared for by Labor.

Labor Under Whitlam — Australia's Imperialist "Doves"

If there continue to be illusions in Labor's "independence" rhetoric they are rooted in the Whitlam period, particularly Labor's opposition to a continued Australian military involvement in US imperialism's long, dirty and losing war in Vietnam. But fundamental to the bourgeois defeatism that Labor under Whitlam represented was the 1965 CIA-abetted holocaust by the Indonesian generals under Suharto that annihilated the millions-strong pro-Peking Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). More than half a million workers and peasants died in the bloodbath and more than 100,000 today still rot in concentration camps on the outer islands. The Indonesian masses were left defenceless before imperialist and Islamic reaction by the PKI Stalinists' subordination of the class struggle to the nationalist demagogue Sukarno, then allied to Maoist China.

The 1965 counterrevolution was welcomed with relief in Australia by Labor no less than Menzies' Liberals. The Australian government had run guns secretly to the CIA/British-backed "outer islands" rebels in 1958, and came close to war with Indonesia over its "confrontation" with Malaysia in 1964. Earlier in 1962 ALP leader Calwell, a visceral racist neanderthal, had called for war over Indonesia's takeover of West New Guinea from the Dutch. Calwell's line was that the Dutch colonial remnant was what stood between Australia and the Dutch but he was overruled when US imperialism sided with Indonesia.

The generals' savage slaughter decisively stabilised Southeast Asia for imperialism. Not long after, it became apparent that American imperialism was losing the war in Indochina despite massive commitments of troops and firepower. But it was the 1965 coup, together with the development of the Sino-Soviet split, that laid the basis for the emergence of a wing of American imperialism that wanted to end the running sore of Vietnam, cut its losses and withdraw the troops. This program was carried out in part by Richard Nixon — his policy of "strategic withdrawal", "Vietnamisation" of the war and "detente" allowed the imperialists to rearm and laid the basis for an anti-Soviet alliance with Peking.

The ALP under Whitlam became the spokesman for bourgeois defeatism, which was perfectly in accord with the "Nixon doctrine". Both Labor "lefts" like Cairns and the US imperialist "doves" saw it as a more effective long-term strategy for counterrevolution abroad and social peace at home.

Much of Whitlam's "new nationalism", promoting more "independence" from the US and so-called "anti-racist, anti-colonialist" policies, was a purely cosmetic clean-up of Australia's image for a more aggressive regional role, or merely a continuation of what the Liberals had begun. By 1972 the main Australian forces had already been withdrawn from Vietnam; Whitlam merely removed the remaining "advisors".

Vietnam, a poor country of some 40 million people, fought alone against the greatest military power in the world, and won, while the treacherous Russian and Chinese Stalinist bureaucracies stood back in the name of "peaceful coexistence". While the workers state that resulted from the victory of the Stalinist-led peasant armies was bureaucratically deformed and nationally limited, Vietnam's revolutionary victory was a victory for all proletarian internationalists. In this country it exposed and cracked

apart the ruling class's smug imperialist arrogance and "yellow peril" anti-communism, but the subjective radicalism of the generation of leftists that the war threw up was mostly squandered by a left that tailed Labor or was diverted into the deadend of Maoist Stalinism.

In hard opposition to the imperialist social-patriotism of the Laborite left we stress that Australia's future lies with the working masses of Asia. The struggle for an Australian workers republic must go hand-in-hand with a perspective of social revolution throughout Southeast Asia. For only workers revolution can break the bloody yoke of imperialism that stands behind the military juntas and despots that stretch from the Indonesian archipelago to the Indian subcontinent. Above all this means building internationalist communist (Trotskyist) parties in Australia and across Asia, the struggle for the re-birth of the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution. For a racially-integrated workers Australia, part of socialist Asia! Reforge the Fourth International! ■

Women and Revolution...

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of independent class struggle. The pompous, elitist Whitlam, who found out the hard way over Pine Gap that you don't mess with the CIA's strategic spy stations, was no more a friend of the working class than any other ALP bureaucrat; he just happened to be Prime Minister during a period of relative economic stability when the workers could be a bit more effectively bought off. The early '70s feminist movement got its crumbs too, many organisations directly dependent on funding from the Labor-administered capitalist state.

The rapid decline of the "autonomous" feminist movement actually began in its refusal to organise women along class lines and effectively intervene in the 1975 "political crisis". By the late '70s sections of the moribund women's movement were emulating the chauvinist, bourgeois leaders of the 20th century suffragette movement, while others were marching in utterly reactionary anti-pornography mobilisations to "reclaim the night". The Eurocommunist Communist Party of Australia (CPA), reformist to the core, played a dominant role in the feminist movement — and in fact the CPA broke its back on the woman question in Australia. An entire layer of older CPA women cadre turned to feminism in bitter reaction to male chauvinism, and the CPA's own adaptation to the feminist movement figured importantly in its break toward social democracy. For the CPA there is no inconsistency in claiming to fight for women's rights and being a strike-breaker for "sisterhood". Its bureaucrats are typified by then CPAer and Victorian State Secretary of the metal workers union (AMFSU) John Halfpenny. His most grotesque betrayal in a long list since is probably that of women workers at the Everhot factory outside Melbourne in 1975 — all members of the AMFSU, all sacked illegally on the basis that "women's place is in the home". Halfpenny refused to defend them and covered for the male scabs that replaced them. The "consistent feminists" dismissed the betrayal by reference to the "male-dominated trade unions". Today the CPA debates the virtues of the central institution oppressing women — the bourgeois nuclear family — in its press, as it

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Free Class-War Prisoners in Turkey!

In the thirty months since the NATO junta of General Evren seized power in Turkey, vowing to crush political terrorism and end economic chaos, an intensified reign of terror and brutal torture has been unleashed against workers, the oppressed Kurdish minority and leftist organisations. Torture of political prisoners has been so widespread and savage that even West European bourgeois governments that originally hailed the coup began telling the generals to clean up their act if they wanted to keep getting their loans. Partly in an attempt to establish international credibility, last November Evren stage-managed a referendum to rubber-stamp a new constitution which "legalises" the repression of workers and national minorities and suppression of virtually all political dissent. In the five months since, eighteen people have been executed by the now "constitutional" junta butchers. And immediately after the referendum, cheered as a "step towards democracy" by their NATO patrons, the junta reopened the mass show trial of 72 leaders of the outlawed Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions (DISK), who face execution alongside hundreds of other class-war prisoners.

Begun in December 1981 with 52 defendants, the DISK trial was delayed because the military authorities tried to gather evidence linking DISK with the pro-Moscow Turkish Communist Party (TKP), which itself has been outlawed since 1923. Jailed for over a year with virtually no legal rights before the trial began, the DISK leaders are charged with seeking to "overthrow the established constitutional order". In April 1982 the former chief defence lawyer for the DISK defendants was also arrested.

Among the many other trade-union activists and Kurdish leftists currently in the hands of the military butchers are 689 miners charged

last April with "illegally" striking the Yeni Celtik mine five months before the generals' coup. The death sentence has been demanded for 64 of them, including the chairman of Yeralti Maden-Is (Underground Mine Workers Union), the union which organised the occupation/strike of the mine to counter a closure threat in April 1980. On the day of the coup, the army moved in to arrest the strikers, gunning down any who tried to escape. The torture



The NATO generals' military coup resulted in savage repression against workers, Kurds, leftists.

to which the imprisoned workers were subjected before their trial was so brutal, in many cases resulting in severe paralysis, that the junta did not even attempt to deny the defendants' courtroom protests that their "confessions" had been exacted under torture. Instead, all those who had protested in court were taken back to the military barracks and tortured by other means: their families were brought to the prison and beaten before their eyes; their wives, sisters and daughters raped in front of them by prison guards.

In another mass trial, 759 people are being charged with having participated in a left-controlled municipal government in the town of Fatsa, which was smashed by the army even before the coup. The death sentence is being demanded for 261 of them. In addition, 572 members of the Guevarist Dev Yol

(Revolutionary Way) are still on trial, 184 of them facing the death penalty. In a trial in Eastern Turkey, 99 of the 578 members of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in the dock also face the threat of execution.

Even outside Turkey — in Australia, Lebanon and elsewhere — the murderous junta has spread its tentacles to hunt down left-wing militants. In both Sydney and Melbourne anti-junta Turkish and

Kurdish militants received letters from the Turkish consulate threatening their Turkish citizenship rights while in Sydney their names were prominently printed in the leading right-wing Turkish-language daily paper. The labour movement must protest all such harassment and intimidation, particularly in this period of growing anti-immigrant chauvinism.

In West Germany, where the two million Turkish workers and other foreign workers face racist victimisation, deportations and all-sided attacks, collaboration with the Turkish regime has been particularly invidious. Despite occasional mutters against the junta's "excesses", particularly over its treatment of bourgeois luminaries like RPP leader Bulent Ecevit, the West German regime is firmly committed to suppressing any threat to the stability of its massive investments in

Turkey. In late January the Kohl government outlawed two left-wing Turkish organisations, Dev Sol and Halk Der, staging dark-of-night police raids against their offices on the same day as a visit by the Turkish foreign minister.

German minister of the interior Friedrich Zimmermann didn't mince words in justifying his terrorist action: "Activities threatening security" by groups like Dev Sol were "increasingly" directed "against aspects of German policy ... against the Federal Republic as NATO-partner of Turkey, against German military and economic aid to Ankara, and against its foreign policy" (*Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 10 February). Our comrades of the Trotzistische Liga Deutschlands have actively combated these vile attacks against leftists from Turkey, demanding: "Down with the ban! Defend Dev Sol/Halk Der through class action! Stop the witchhunt against foreigners! Full citizenship rights for foreign workers and their families! German workers, foreign workers: same class, same struggle!" (see *Spartakist* no 46, March 1983).

It is only through class struggle in Turkey and international class solidarity abroad that the NATO junta will be defeated. For NATO imperialism, Turkey is strategic as a military bastion on the Baltic flank of the USSR. The left and labour movement internationally must demand immediate release of the DISK leaders and all prisoners opposed to the junta and the ultra-rightist gangs. Trade unions must black all military aid to the junta as an act of international solidarity with the workers and peasants of Turkey under the gun. Free all class-war prisoners — Unchain DISK! Down with NATO! Down with the NATO junta! For a workers and peasants government in Turkey!

— adapted from *Spartacist Britain* no 48, March 1983

moves rightward toward liquidation into the Labor Party, dropping even its pretence of opposition to US bases and ANZUS.

Our perspective is diametrically opposed: to break the working class from its treacherous, nationalist misleaders, and to mobilise working women in united class struggle to bring down the capitalist system of racism, economic depression and war. The liberation of women can only come through socialist revolution, led by a communist (Trotskyist) vanguard that will truly serve as the tribune of all the oppressed.

The connection between international counterrevolution and domestic reaction was made absolutely clear last September, when the National Civic Council (NCC), whose leadership for decades has worked closely with the CIA against "atheistic communism", and which represents the bastion of organised Catholic reaction in the working class, sponsored a tour of two Solidarnosc reps. It was a natural alliance. The NCC has been waging its holy war to save Australia from communism for 41 years through anti-union sabotage and anti-communist witchhunting, subversion on the campuses and in the anti-abortion movement — backed by the authority of the bourgeois state. Solidarnosc, the company union for Western imperialism, with its umbilical cord to the Catholic hierarchy, is no liberator of

Polish women. The historic role of the church as a political institution for fomenting anti-communism, and perpetuating the nuclear family, enslaving women in the home and ensuring they stay barefoot and pregnant, has not changed. This tour was a victory



Heroic Vietnamesee woman captures US B-52 pilot. Defend Vietnam against US and its Australian junior partner's war threats!

for the NCC in its campaign to reforge its Cold War II alliance with the mainstream Labor bureaucracy, who joined these dangerous forces of imperialist-clerical reaction in hailing Reagan's favorite Polish "freedom fighters".

The Spartacist League/ANZ has recruited and trained a layer of women cadres in political combat with feminism and the reformist left. And the woman question continues to be central to our recruitment to the internationalist communist program, as shown around Iran and Afghanistan. The international Spartacist tendency's line of "Down with the

Shah! Down with the Mullahs! The Workers Must Rule in Iran!" and especially "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" drew the class line against the reformist left which, capitulating to anti-Sovietism, covered for religious reaction and the barbaric oppression of

women in the East. The historic advances against feudal backwardness and against the degradation of women in Soviet Central Asia made possible by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution inspire us and show the only road forward for the desperately oppressed and exploited women of Asia and the Pacific — the dictatorship of the proletariat.

As Australian communists we have a particular responsibility to combat our own ruling class, American imperialism's proxy in Southeast Asia, and to defend the USSR and the Vietnamese revolution, which despite

bureaucratic deformations represents a tremendous historic victory for the working class throughout the world. America has ten military installations in Australia, including the CIA's Pine Gap and the Darwin B-52 refuelling base, en route to Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. The Australian working class must break with its pro-imperialist misleaders — defence of the USSR and of our class brothers and sisters throughout Asia means opposition to imperialist military installations from Darwin to Diego Garcia to Trincomalee!

We salute International Women's Day in the knowledge that powerful fuel for the revolutionary movement will come from the specially oppressed sectors of the working class, in particular the women. As Trotsky said in the *Transitional Program*:

"The sections of the Fourth International should seek bases of support among the most exploited layers of the working class; consequently among the women workers. Here they will find inexhaustible stores of devotion, selflessness and readiness to sacrifice."

We look forward to the future Australian section of a reborn Fourth International where communist women will stand with their comrades as leaders of the Australian workers revolution. For women's liberation through international proletarian revolution! Forward to a workers Australia, part of socialist Asia! ■

SWP Whitewashes Sinister Croatian Nationalists

In World War II, Ante Pavelic's Ustasha turned the Axis satellite state of Croatia into a vast slaughteryard, its atrocities even surpassing those of the occupying Germans and Italians. As the Red Army advanced across Eastern Europe in 1945, the communist-led partisans in Yugoslavia swept away the Ustasha fascists and their Nazi overlords in a social revolution. Their defeated remnants fled to the imperialist "free world", including Australia where, protected by the bourgeoisie and its state, these fascists have used their hegemony over the Croatian immigrant community as a base for anti-Yugoslav terror in preparation for launching bloody counterrevolution to destroy the Yugoslav workers state.

Recently a new Croatian nationalist outfit has appeared on the scene, the HDP (Hrvatski Drzavotvorni Pokret — Croatian Movement for Statehood), which seeks to present a "democratic" and even "left-wing" face of Croatian nationalism. It eschews open identification with Ustasha tradition and symbolism, and ostensibly "strongly rejects the use of force or any other illegal undertaking", ie, terrorism, "on the territory of other countries" (HDP Declaration and Introductory Statement). This is but a thin veneer for the same reactionary Croatian nationalism avowed by the open

Pavelic's envoy to Hitler. Srecko Rover, notorious head of the Australian HNO (Croatian National Resistance) once wrote to the Communist Party (CPA) protesting he was a "socialist". His organisation was founded by Ustasha chief of concentration camps, General Luburic, and Rover is himself wanted in Yugoslavia for war crimes! Behind the HDP's "left-wing" pretensions could well be simply another Ustasha front.

HDP contingents began appearing at left demonstrations in 1981. They were chased away from an Irish defence demonstration, then at the 1982 May Day they carried Croatian flags and a banner reading "Death to the fascist regime of Tito's Yugoslavia". Yugoslavs protested this and marshal Jim O'Neill tried to remove them (*Tribune*, 5 May 1982). The SWP's *Direct Action* (2 June 1982) printed HDP'er Yure Lasic's letter in response, which protested that "we had nothing to do with the Ustasha, that we were socialists and opposed to the right wing" and claimed to stand for "independent socialist states in Croatia and the Balkans" and to oppose "Australian imperialism and world-wide imperialism". Others were suspicious. Dave Davies of the CPA, a long-time anti-Ustasha campaigner, denounced the HDP's "dubious views" (*Tribune*, 8 September 1982),



ASp photo



ASp photo

Melbourne, 19 February 1983: Top, HDP demo. Slogans read "Stop Terror, Dissolve Yugoslavia", "Dismembering of Yugoslavia is a Must", "Croat Socialists

are Dying in Fascist Yugo-Jalls". Below, SWP/HDP member (on the left, looking at camera) leaflets the demo while SWP leader Jim McIlroy (to the left of the Croatian national flag) takes notes.

The SWP has entered into extensive organisational relations with the HDP. The HDP boasts membership in the SWP's CISCAC front group for a liberal imperialist "negotiated settlement" in El Salvador and at last year's 13 June El Salvador demonstration in Melbourne comprised almost half the demonstration. At least one HDP'er is also a member of the Melbourne SWP branch and the 9th SWP National Conference in January was addressed by Stipe Suto from the editorial board of the HDP paper *Hrvatski Tjednik* (Croatian Weekly), touted by the SWP as the most widely-read Croatian paper. *Direct Action* (24 February) favourably reported recent HDP protests on behalf of imprisoned Croatian nationalist Dr Marko Veselica — without mentioning slogans raised like "Dismemberment of Yugoslavia is a MUST!" In return the HDP obligingly reprints the SWP's laudatory articles in English and Serbo-Croat, as well as Suto's speech at the SWP conference with Jim Percy speeches and ads for the SWP election campaign thrown into the bargain.

HDP — Defenders of Pavelic Genocide

Available HDP documents in English make abundantly clear the reactionary Croatian nationalism behind the "democratic" trappings. Based in Sweden, its stated aim is a "free, independent and sovereign state of Croatia" through the disintegration of Yugoslavia, which it denounces in terms like "the fascist Belgrade regime", accusing it of "Great-Serbian imperialist terror" and "genocide". Its "socialist" pretensions are strictly reserved for dealings with the Australian left. The HDP itself declares it will unite with anyone against Yugoslavia. Even *Direct Action* (24 February) calls it "a militant current within the Croatian national movement". Suto told the SWP the HDP is "not a political party, but a very broad national liberation movement" including not only emigre Croatian "socialists" but also what he coyly termed "non-socialists". "Everybody who is willing to work for the establishment of the independent and neutral state of Croatia is welcome to our ranks, regardless of the political views one might have" (*Hrvatski Tjednik*, 25 January), he said, ie, every fascist war criminal, every Ustasha terrorist and standover

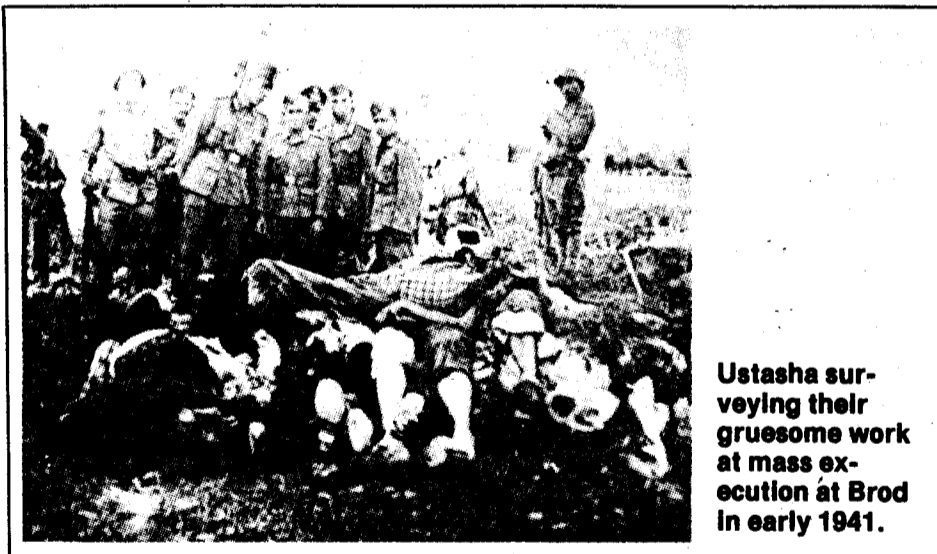
man. If this explicit statement doesn't sink in it is only because of the wilful, scandalous and dangerous opportunism of the SWP leadership.

Worse is to come. The 1941-45 Pavelic regime was, relative to the size of the country, the most genocidal regime in modern European history. Yet it is telling that the HDP documents neither repudiate its record nor even criticise it but obviously sympathise with the Ustasha's "Independent State of Croatia":

"...the Croatian people used the opportunity brought about by the war situation and proclaimed the Independent State of Croatia. This was short-lived, however, because Yugoslavia was again established in 1945, against the will of the people. The renewal of Yugoslavia brought with it the continuation of the planned genocide of the Croatian nation" (Interview with SWP, 8 July 1982).

The same document further on justifies the Pavelic regime:

"The right-wing movement ... accepted the inevitability of the Axis power and did what it could to establish a separate Croatian state (which was only possible by collaborating with the Germans and Italians), while the left-wing movement, led by the Communist Party, decided to fight the occupying force, with the emphasis on class war and building a new Yugoslavia, which they hoped would be more just, democratic and socialist. The greatest majority of the Croatian people supported the right-wing Government, however, because it represented the long-awaited Independent State of Croatia. The



Ustasha surveying their gruesome work at mass execution at Brod in early 1941.

Ustasha organisations. Scandalously, however, the sinister HDP, in its bid to clean up the image of Croatian nationalism, has found an ally on the left: the reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which has leapt to the defence of the HDP's "left-wing" credentials.

We warn the left and labour movement to beware this sinister outfit. Its history is murky, its purported "break" from, and organisational relations with, what the SWP refers to as "the previous right-wing-controlled umbrella Croatian organisation" is at best unclear. The Croatian fascists have been known before to pose as "democrats" and even "socialists" to suck in liberals and social democrats. For example, a West German-based "Croatian Democratic Committee" was set up in the 1950s by a self-styled pro-Soviet "socialist", Dr Branko Jelic, who in 1941 was

noting its identification with and refusal to criticise the bloody Pavelic regime.

The SWP responded by deepening its scandalous apologetics. An article by SWP leaders Jamie Doughney and Jim McIlroy headed "Yugoslavia is defaming socialist ideals" claims the HDP's "progressive anti-imperialist political stands on many crucial international issues indicate its strong leftward evolution" (*Direct Action*, 5 October 1982), without mentioning the Ustasha (!) or attempting to clarify the origins of these sinister "progressives". A second article claims the SWP aims "to help overcome" the "prejudice within the labour movement that all Croatian migrants have a right-wing political outlook" (*Direct Action*, 20 October 1982). In reality the SWP is whitewashing pro-Pavelic Croatian counterrevolutionaries.



The Black Legion, guilty of such bestial atrocities that the Nazis disarmed it and arrested its commander.

movements of the left in Croatia lost most of their popular support". There is not a word against the Ustasha horror! Instead the only "massacre" the HDP documents complain about is that of the retreating Ustasha butchers who got their just deserts when they were handed over to the partisans by the British on the Austrian border in 1945.

Yet after quoting much of the above, *Direct Action* (20 October) still concludes that "the HDP doesn't trace its traditions to the Pavelic regime" and politely disagrees with the HDP claim that the Ustasha was "not a fascist movement in any sense". "It is our view that the overthrow of this government... was in the interests of working people" says the SWP, as if this could conceivably be a debatable question among supposed partisans of the working class, let alone so-called "socialists"! To appreciate the full enormity of the SWP's pimping for the HDP, a review of what happened in Croatia in 1941-45 is necessary.

Croatia Under the Ustasha Jackboot

The invading Germans brought in Ante Pavelic's Ustashi bands from Italy to set up the puppet state of Croatia on 10 April, 1941. In the following years of horrific butchery, the Ustasha in collaboration with the Nazis and Italian fascists slaughtered an estimated 750,000 Serbs, 60,000 Jews, 26,000 Gypsies and a large number of Croats. Its nationalism reached its genocidal extreme in the Croatian versions of Auschwitz and Treblinka. Jasenovac, south of Zagreb, was its most infamous concentration camp. Indefatigable anti-Ustasha campaigner Marijan Jurjevic, in his book, *Ustasha under the Southern Cross*, said: "its slaughteryard worked hardest from 1941 to 1942 when 200,000 were killed, some with hammers, mallets and axes and the rest were burned in a furnace, especially constructed to consume the living". Ustasha victims were buried alive, eyes gouged out, limbs slowly hacked off — "a good Ustasha is he who can use his knife to cut a child from the womb of its mother", Fuhrer Pavelic told his henchmen.

Such bestial atrocities even turned the stomachs of the German and Italian officers, who several times intervened to halt them, realising they were fuelling support for the partisans. Jurjevic (op cit) wrote: "The Ustasha 'Francetic' regiment, known also as the Black Legion, was disarmed by German field police in June 1942... and in August 1943 the Germans had to threaten to use military force against one Ustasha regiment to halt some massacres." Not so the Catholic church, the major social support of the regime. Many Catholic bishops and priests helped run its government, its army and its death camps. Pope Pius XII blessed

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Spartacist/SWP Exchange

SWP Threats and Whimpers

February 22, 1983

The Spartacist League
GPO Box 3473
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Comrades,

The Socialist Workers Party protests at the increasing incidents of harassment carried out by your organisation against our party's political activity.

Two incidents are clear examples of this.

One was the harassment of a *Direct Action* seller in Glebe on February 19 for an extended period of time. All efforts by him to avoid the verbal abuse and obstruction to press sales — by moving several times — was met by continued obstruction and abuse. We find this ploy of your members intolerable.

The second incident concerns your paper sales outside our bookshop. Whilst we consider that you have the right to sell your press in George Street any time of the day or night, we cannot accept the situation where every person attending our meetings or visiting our shop must walk through a "picket" of Spartacist League members and be subjected to harassment and abuse with your "sellers" actually blocking our doorway.

We believe that these activities by the Spartacist League are an infringement of our democratic rights to distribute our press, hold meetings and conduct political activities. We have no intention of relinquishing our democratic rights in these areas because of Spartacist League harassment.

The Socialist Workers Party calls on you to cease this harassment before a serious incident develops. In the meantime we will take what measures are necessary to stop your disruption of our political activity.

Comradely,
Peter Anderson
National Executive
Socialist Workers Party.

★ ★ ★

13 March 1983

Socialist Workers Party,
PO Box K208,
Haymarket,
NSW, 2000

Dear Comrades,

We have received your letter dated 22 February. It is itself a provocation, intended to justify in advance the threatened "serious incident" you so transparently want to set up, ie, attempted violent suppression of the Spartacist League and/or the use of the bourgeois police authorities towards that end. Still, given your organisation's chronic practice of violence, exclusionism and limitless slander against the SL, we could not but be amused at your "protest" alleging that "activities of the Spartacist League are an infringement of our democratic rights to distribute our press, hold meetings and conduct political activities".

Aside from the Orwellian logic that SLers are violating *your* rights in selling outside SWP "public" events from which we are excluded, it is your members, not ours, who have on

several occasions blocked the entrance to your public George Street bookshop. Take February 26 for example, four days after the date on your letter (and prior to our receipt of it), when two Spartacists sold outside a publicly-advertised Resistance forum on unemployment. In a consummately puerile act of SWP-style harassment, one of your members drew two parallel lines in chalk across the George Street pavement to "protect" the doorway to your premises, threatening to attack the one Spartacist salesman then present if he stepped across.

On the same day in Melbourne, outside an SWP election fund-raiser held at the YWCA, one of your members dashed out of the building towards our salesman and invited him "around the corner" for a fight. Shortly before, when entering the venue along with SWP National Committee member Jamie Doughney, this same individual threatened our salesman and, expressing the worst sort of bigotry, baited him over the SL's defence of a small US group of homosexual activists, the North American Man/Boy Love Association, which is currently the target of a vicious state vendetta in defence of reactionary age-of-consent laws aimed at reinforcing the oppressive morality of the bourgeois nuclear family.

The one "incident" that you do cite a date for concerns the "harassment of a *Direct Action* seller in Glebe on February 19". Your letter fails to note that the *Direct Action* seller allegedly subjected to "abuse and obstruction" by an SL woman salesman was SWP National Secretary, Jim Percy; by no means a small man in terms of physical stature. Percy was not averse to using his considerable size in an attempt to bully our comrade, twice grabbing her paper and the second time crumpling it up before storming off and screaming from the midst of Glebe Point Road that *his* "rights" had been violated. Percy's boorish and hysterical behaviour when politically challenged by our salesman was witnessed by two apparently amused members of the Communist Party, including Brian Aarons, which no doubt fuelled your leader's highly irrational outburst.

Evidently these latest incidents, including your letter, are the SWP's "answer" to our polemical tracking of your group's ever more "bold" moves to social-democratic "independence", posing a break along national-reformist lines with your long-time mentors in the eccentric and shrinking Barnesised US SWP while, like Barnes, aggressively ditching your always badly misplaced claim to the program of Trotskyism. Clearly you hope to provoke a "serious incident" in time to justify an anti-Spartacist exclusion from your upcoming Karl Marx centenary conference, featuring none other than Ernest Mandel, that centrist for all seasons and the leader of your erstwhile factional opponents in the USec's parody of Trotsky's Fourth International. Moreover, your pretentious efforts to replace the CWA as the left social-democratic formation in this country are bound to generate something of a crisis of expectations in the SWP, giving greater urgency to the usual attempts to seal off your membership and periphery from the SL's authentic Trotskyism. Witness the dismal results of your (48!) candidates in the recent federal elections, surely the SWP's most ambitious

display of Labor-loyal parliamentary cretinism.

Contemptible as your macho bully-boy antics are, past experience demonstrates that not just petty bureaucratic harassment, but also calculated viciousness characterises the conduct of your organisation. Thus at an El Salvador protest in June 1981 the SWP and its CISCAC front drew a bloodline against our call for "Military Victory to Salvadoran Leftist Insurgents!" and "Defence of Cuba, USSR begins in El Salvador!" by orchestrating a thug attack against the SL-initiated Anti-Imperialist Contingent. More recently, at a Sydney demonstration in September 1982 protesting the Zionist holocaust in the Sabra-Shatila Palestinian camps, SWP provocateurs joined the notorious Qaddafi-loving Healyite outfit in slandering the SL as "Zionist", peddling the lie that the SL called for "crushing" the petty-bourgeois nationalist PLO in order to cover your support for the US-led imperialist force that disarmed the defenders of West Beirut.

Your attempt then to set up a bloody clash, thereby threatening the entire, heavily immigrant demonstration with cop intervention, was fortunately unsuccessful thanks to the warm reception with which our militant protest against imperialist/Zionist butchery and proletarian opposition to PLO leader Arafat's betrayal was greeted by scores of protesters. Finally there is your support, along with other assorted "democratic socialists", to the NCC-Liberal witchhunt against the campus Spartacist Club at Melbourne University early last year — but then, especially over Poland, your group has been more than happy to join with the NCC and worse in defence of the Vatican's favourite "union".

The above is hardly an exhaustive account of SWP violations of workers democracy, but does sufficiently illustrate the multi-faceted political opportunism that necessitates your resort to Stalinist-style political suppression. Those rare occasions on which the SWP does choose to pay lip service to the norms of workers democracy inevitably coincide with your being under the gun from some force or another. Jim Percy's mealy-mouthed objection to an attempt to stifle an SL speaker at last November's "Australian Marxist Forum" is a case in point, following as it did the SWP's falling-out with the badly discredited FIA bureaucracy in Port Kembla and the purge of SWPers from the "peace movement". Or take your short-lived lifting of the anti-Spartacist ban from SWP "public" meetings some years ago, when in 1976 you sought to enlist our support in a campaign against Healyite thuggery. Of course, our principled opposition to all forms of political suppression in the workers movement — the mortal enemy of struggle for proletarian class consciousness — mandates our defence of the legitimate rights of all left tendencies, including yours, should they be threatened by any quarter. Needless to say, it is with no less vigour that we will continue to defend our own democratic rights, including the sale of our press at every and any public venue.

Fraternally,
Darlene Carlson
Central Committee
Spartacist League

For Workers Revolution in Central America!

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out a proletarian insurrection establishing a workers and peasants government and extending the revolution internationally. That can only be a Trotskyist party following the road of October 1917, the road of permanent revolution.

Guerrilla Road to Disaster

There are, of course, many different brands of guerrillaism. In Latin America during the '60s the dominant theme was Guevarism, also known as "focoism". In contrast to Maoist "people's war", which seeks to build up a peasant army led by a bonapartist officer corps calling itself a Communist Party, Guevarism relies on a small nucleus (or *foco*) of guerrilla fighters who are supposed to act as the detonator to ignite the masses. In his how-to-do-it manual on *Guerrilla Warfare*, Guevara gave as the first lesson of the Cuban Revolution that "it is not necessary to wait until all the conditions for making the revolution exist", guerrilla struggle would create them. The second was that in Latin America "the countryside is the basic area for armed struggle". His voluntarist/militarist theory was further elaborated by the French cafe guerrilla Regis Debray (*Revolution in the Revolution?*), who proclaimed that "the people's army will be the nucleus of the party".

In the first instance, Guevarism is an updating of the pre-Marxian petty-bourgeois revolutionism exemplified by August Blanqui — adapted to a rural setting and in an entirely different social and historical framework. Even the peasantry is not to be trusted but rather used by rootless petty-bourgeois heroes ("a prestigious leader" is necessary, said Guevara, who was later canonized by Castro as "the heroic guerrilla") in direct armed conflict with the state. At the beginning, the guerrilla *foco* is deliberately isolated from the masses; and in almost every case, this was the stage when it was crushed. The most famous example was Guevara himself, tracked down in the Bolivian rain forest many miles from the nearest villages. When the guerrillas did get some support from the peasantry such as in Guatemala, counterinsurgency experts just "removed the water from the fish" by rounding up *campesinos* in fortified camps. What failed in Indochina with its vast rural masses, worked in Guatemala.

Blanquist in its tactics, strategically Guevarism comes down to peasant war:

"The guerrilla is above all an agrarian revolutionary. He interprets the desire of the great mass of the peasants: to be the owners of their land, of their means of production, of their animals, of all that they have yearned for for years."

— Ernesto Che Guevara,
Guerrilla War (1962)

As the mass of petty-bourgeois small commodity producers, the peasantry does not have the collective strength and the independent class interest of the proletariat. There is no characteristic peasant mode of production, much less a "socialist peasantry", and therefore the peasantry cannot lead a social revolution. But the vast peasant masses are driven by a thirst for land, and to get it they will even follow a guerrilla band, or the revolutionary working class, if these forces can demonstrate the ability to defeat the oligarchy and its army. Once they have their plots that will end the peasants' role as a revolutionary factor. For instance, in Bolivia, where the peasants became landowners in 1952 as the result of an extensive land reform, they became allies of the army against the workers in the so-called "military-peasant pact". Peasant militias were even sent into the mines to massacre the combative tin miners. Thus a peasant-based guerrilla war, although directed initially against a landlord-capitalist oligarchy, contains within it the seeds of a restabilized capitalist regime. But even though numerically small, the urban working class in backward capitalist countries as in Central America can become the revolutionary vanguard, by placing itself at the head of a stormy agrarian revolt in the struggle for a workers and peasants government, for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The petty-bourgeois Guevarists had only disdain for the urban proletariat. "The city is a cemetery of revolutionaries", proclaimed Castro. Debray denounced the Trotskyist conception of permanent revolution, working-class armed self-defense and proletarian insurrection as a "provocation". All that Guevarism offered the working class was to "liberate" themselves by abandoning the factories. Thus in Bolivia, Communiqué no 5 of Guevara's National Liberation Army (ELN) called on the historically class-



Mass trade union demonstration in Mexico. Proletarian revolution in El Salvador would have a powerful impact on the millions-strong Mexican proletariat.

conscious tin miners to leave the mines and join them in the jungles! This would have meant giving up their tremendous social power which time and again has enabled the miners to defeat counterrevolutionary onslaughts. The shameless Debray went even further and condemned the *entire Bolivian proletariat* for the "hypertrophy of class consciousness" (*Che's Guerrilla War*) because the workers were convinced that they must lead the peasants!!

Programmatically practically all the Guevarist guerrillas were not socialist, but called only for "national liberation" through armed struggle to establish a "democratic" regime. As we explained in our "Theses on Guerrilla Warfare":

"One of the reasons that a guerrilla movement is forced to represent the interests of segments of the 'patriotic' bourgeoisie is its own concomitant property-hungry peasant base. . . . On different occasions, the guerrilla leadership will have to rely on the financial backing of 'patriotic' bourgeois and landlord sectors."

— *Spartacist* no 11,
March-April 1968

The Guevarists were fully aware of this. Debray wrote that "If it is more difficult, after Cuba, to integrate any sizable fraction of the national bourgeoisie in an anti-imperialist front, this latter can and must be the prime objective". And in the one case where a Latin American peasant guerrilla movement adopted a socialist platform, the Guatemalan MR-13, it was met with a vitriolic anti-Trotskyist onslaught not only by the Moscow-line Stalinists but from Castro himself at the 1966 Tricontinental Congress (see "Posadas in the MR-13", *Spartacist* no 9, January-February 1967).

All this is not to say that Leninists can never resort to forms of guerrilla struggle, but only as a secondary civil war tactic. The issue was posed in Russia following the defeat of the 1905 Revolution, when the Mensheviks (along with Trotsky and Rosa Luxemburg) criticized the Bolsheviks' bank "expropriations". Lenin misestimated the pace of events, expecting a new upsurge soon, but he correctly pointed out that guerrilla warfare is an inevitable form of struggle in certain periods, particularly "when fairly large intervals occur between the 'big engagements'" of the revolution. But he added, "the party of the proletariat can never regard guerrilla warfare as the only, or even as the chief, method of struggle", and that it must be subordinated to other methods, particularly the mass insurrection ("*Guerrilla Warfare*", September 1906). Any strategy of guerrilla warfare is utterly anti-Marxist and anti-Leninist because it is not based on the mobilization of the revolutionary class, the proletariat.

This same point was made in the

course of discussions in 1974-76 which led to the fusion of the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) with the Chilean Organizacion Trotskista Revolucionaria (OTR). The OTR, while rejecting Guevarist focoism and Tupamaro-style urban guerrillaism, had advocated "irregular war" by the working class. This was the application of guerrillaist conceptions (in this case derived from Ernest Mandel's pseudo-Trotskyist United Secretariat) to their particular milieu of miners, where skirmishes with the police and army were a regular occurrence. The "Declaration of Fraternal Relations" between the iSt and OTR established that:

"The proletariat cannot sustain guerrilla war, for the very concept implies the absence of a revolutionary situation and the kind of irregular fighting which requires an ability to retreat rapidly. In addition to its clear class interest, it is the organization of the proletariat which gives it political superiority over the atomized peasantry. This organization is the result of the position of the working class in the structure of capitalist society; to retreat into the hills would eventually destroy the class or the class character of its vanguard. . . .

"The revolutionary party must, of course take an active role in organizing the self-defense of the working masses, and the use of guerrilla tactics is often vital as a subordinate civil war tactic. However, the road to power for the proletariat is through mass insurrection against the bourgeois state; the central military organization of the uprising must be an arm of and directed by the mass organization of the working class, led by the Leninist party."

— *Workers Vanguard* no 111,
28 May 1976

The Spartacist tendency was born in the discussion over the nature of the Cuban Revolution. From our inception we have held that guerrillaism represents a petty-bourgeois reaction to the absence and delay of proletarian revolution. Following the long string of defeats after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, many impressionistic leftists seized on the Chinese and Cuban revolutions, declared themselves Maoists or Fidelistas and discovered the peasant vanguard. In our first international document, "Toward Rebirth of the Fourth International", written two decades ago by the Revolutionary Tendency in the once-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), we noted that although under exceptional circumstances the petty-bourgeois guerrilla leadership can be forced to expropriate the capitalists, at best this will lead to a bureaucratically deformed workers state as occurred in Cuba. Adoption of the so-called "peasant guerrilla road to socialism", we wrote, would be "a suicidal course for the socialist goals of the movement, and perhaps physically for



Petty-bourgeois guerrillaists took to the hills, refused to organize for proletarian insurrection.

the adventurers" (*Spartacist* no 1, February-March 1964).

Tragically, this last warning proved to be true indeed. While the Spartacist League (SL) was one of the few tendencies to swim against the guerrillaist current in the early '60s, we noted in a Political Bureau meeting (12 October 1967) not long after Che Guevara was assassinated by Bolivian army and CIA operatives that "the passing of Guevara is regrettable, as he strived, within the limits of his own conceptions, to be a genuine revolutionary". PB member Harry Turner had argued that it was no loss, comparing Guevara to Adam Clayton Powell, the demagogic black Democratic politico! Today Turner is with the one-time Guevarists and sometime guerrilla-posing Nahuel Moreno outfit — a strange marriage indeed. We also pay our respects to a courageous reformist like Salvador Allende. The pictures of him in front of the burning La Moneda palace carrying a Kalashnikov automatic rifle given to him by Fidel Castro give the lie to all the Pinochet propaganda about Allende committing suicide. At the end of the "peaceful road" some of the popular-fronters end up in the enemy camp, while others pay the supreme price.

But if we have respect for these martyrs, that is more than one can say for the likes of Debray, an unprincipled literary camp follower who first enthused for Guevara, then publicized Allende, and now as an official of the French government of social democrat Mitterrand gets a former Batista cop, the phony "wheelchair poet" Armando Valladares, released from Castro's prisons. The ease with which Debray switched from the "guerrilla road" to the "peaceful road" makes the description of cynical personal careerist a compliment.

The "Guerrilla Road" In El Salvador

El Salvador is hardly suited for Guevara-style focoism. It is a tiny country the size of Massachusetts with the highest population density in Latin America. Even most of the rural areas are semi-urban and there are no mountains, at most rugged hills and dozens of volcanos (which have now become guerrilla base camps). So there was no guerrilla movement in the 1960s, only an abortive attempt by the Salvadoran Communist Party (PCS) to set up an "armed branch" just in case ... which in three years of existence didn't carry out a single action (interview with Salvador

Cayetano Carpio, *Punto Final Internacional*, October 1982). Later in the '70s when the so-called "politico-military" organizations appeared, they were still imbued with Guevarist conceptions. Since Che had said you had to have mountains for a guerrilla struggle, and El Salvador had none, they coined the slogan, "the people are our mountains".

The original "armed struggle" group was set up in 1970 by the former general secretary of the PCS, Cayetano Carpio. It was so undergroundist that for the first two years it didn't have a name; Cayetano refused to wage a struggle inside the CP, or even to talk with sympathetic former party members! Instead it was totally conspiratorial, preparing the heroic gesture of the defiant guerrilla sounding a clarion by picking up the

Castro in the Sierra Maestra in 1957. The peasant-guerrilla road to power can at best lead to a bureaucratically deformed workers state.



gun and galvanizing the masses with his example. The results were predictably negative. Later this became the Popular Forces of Liberation "Farabundo Marti" (FPL). In 1972-74 came the Revolutionary People's Army (ERP) recruited from Catholic sectors, particularly the Christian Democratic youth, Catholic-led peasant unions and the so-called "grass-roots communities" of the church which were spreading in the rural areas. The ERP was rent by a vicious faction fight in 1975, in which a minority accused the leadership of "militarism", whereupon the minority leaders were shot! The remaining ERP dissidents formed the National Resistance (RN). The two other members of the FMLN guerrilla coalition today are the small Central American Workers Party (PRTC) and the PCS.

FPL leader Cayetano Carpio later maintained that, "From the start we ruled out the guerrilla foco theory", on the basis of "the experience of some guerrilla movements in Latin America and in other countries that were removed from the people ... and that succumbed to militarist designs" (*Granma* [weekly edition], 30 March 1980). The other "politico-military" organizations also reject "focoism", as has virtually the entire Latin American left following the tragic finale of Guevara's adventure at Nancagua (Bolivia). But fundamentally the entire FMLN coalition is guerrillaist, lacking a belief in the ability of the working class to make the revolution and advocating policies diametrically opposed to proletarian insurrection. This is seen most clearly in the FDR/FMLN popular-front

alliance and its program for reforming Salvadoran capitalism. Carpio, for example, wrote an article last year calling explicitly for a "democratic revolutionary government, not for a Socialist government", in which there would be room for everyone from "large businessmen to small farmers and merchants" (*New York Times*, 9 February 1982). But this opposition to proletarian revolution can also be seen in the nature of the armed struggle which they carry out.

While the FMLN has made an impressive showing on the battlefield, the leftist insurgents have suffered a number of reverses — and in each case it has been because of their failure to rouse the urban masses to struggle. That was what happened in the junta's phony elections of March 1982, which the guerrillas did not effectively disrupt, handing the government a propaganda victory at home and abroad. The so-called "final"/general offensive of January 1981 failed to achieve its announced goals, in particular because there was no rising in San Salvador. An attempted general strike in August 1980 also collapsed, and it was in the wake of that defeat that the Salvadoran left abandoned the cities en masse. But even earlier, in October 1979, a key revolutionary opportunity was missed when the so-called "human rights junta" took over from General Romero with the aid of the US State Department ... and the Salvadoran left. And as the struggle nears a conclusion, the battle for San Salvador will loom large. Then once again guerrillaism and popular frontism threaten to strangle the potential for proletarian revolution.

Take the case of the January 1981 offensive. In a recent interview, Joaquin Villalobos, commander-in-chief of the ERP, talked about why there was no urban insurrection. He complains that "the development of the mass movement ... obviously generated expectations about the

insurrectional possibilities". But "the explanation for why we didn't achieve our objectives is to be found in the deterioration of the mass struggle in the last months due to the terror imposed on the cities... What happened is that we lost the appropriate moment". He notes that general strikes repeatedly paralyzed the country during 1980, and "it took the enemy a year to wear down this movement and ... exhaust its insurrectional possibilities". All very true. He places the key moment at March-April 1980, particularly around the time of the assassination of Archbishop Romero. The Salvadoran prelate had protested the government's repression, and his murder touched off a massive protest in the capital and local rebellions to the battle-cry of "Viva Monsignor Romero!"

But what is most significant is what Villalobos picks this point: "At that time there were even sectors of the bourgeoisie willing to establish alliances with us and we had political weight" (*Punto Final Internacional*, November-December 1982). Thus the ERP leader hinges successful insurrection on support from the bourgeoisie — making it clear that their slogan of "armed people's insurrection" refers not to a proletarian uprising establishing a workers and peasants government but to the installation of a new capitalist regime. And what about the future? At the end of the lengthy interview, Villalobos remarks: "So what will be the form in which the masses participate in the final phase of the war? It's hard to predict... Whether they will appear at that moment in an insurrectional form or in the form of a general strike, or by massively joining the revolutionary army, we will have to see." Who knows, who cares — that is his position. In fact, the title of Villalobos' interview, "El Salvador: From the Insurrection to Revolutionary War", perfectly expresses the anti-revolutionary strategy of guerrillaism. They have it exactly backwards: a proletarian insurrection must be the crowning moment. But they're not talking about workers revolution.

Let's take another of the FMLN commanders, Ferman Cienfuegos of the RN and their Armed Forces of National Resistance (FARN). Cienfuegos admitted in an analysis of the January 1981 offensive that, during the previous year, "there were situations in which it was possible to carry out a general strike that did not develop into an insurrection... The general strike ran ahead of us; we didn't implement the insurrection, nor was the structure of our army prepared for it." He notes that there were three general strikes during 1980, but excuses the fact that they were not transformed into insurrection by referring to "an imbalance in the development of the power of the masses and military power"! However, by the next January the masses had been intimidated and therefore, he concludes, "it was an error to have resorted to the classic form of calling for a strike" (*Commander Ferman Cienfuegos Speaks*, March 1982). So Cienfuegos, who bombastically proclaimed the "final" offensive in the first place, concludes that there should have been no attempt to raise up the masses!

Cienfuegos, too, emphasized the importance of "alliances" with the bourgeoisie, trying to develop a new ideology of "Farabundismo". This, he says, allows for an alliance of the workers and peasants with the petty bourgeoisie "and the small and medium business sectors". He rails against "some authors" who "try to portray the Salvadorean struggle as

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Salvadoran workers stage one-day political general strike on 17 March 1980 against murderous junta.

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the classic struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie". In *Farabundismo*, according to Cienfuegos, "there also exists the distinctive form of incorporation of the Christian movements". In another pamphlet (*El Salvador: La revolucion inevitable*) he remarks that, "Our process is very similar to that in Nicaragua but our policy of alliances will be much broader", including "private enterprise, sectors of the army, democratic forces not yet in the FDR" and others. Call it what you may, this conception, common to all the sectors of the FMLN, has nothing to do with the actual program of Salvadoran Communist leader Farabundo Marti, who led the 1932 insurrection that was brutally suppressed in the infamous *Matanza*. His program was:

"The Communist Party calls all the poor workers and peasants of El Salvador to bloody struggle against the national bourgeoisie, who are unconditionally allied to Yankee Imperialists.... Down with the imperialist oppressor and his national dogs!"

Stalin's Comintern condemned the 1932 Salvadoran uprising as "ultra-left", and with all its phony talk of "Farabundismo", so would the FMLN today.

Thus the ERP and FARN openly say that they are not for socialist revolution and seek an alliance with large sectors of the bourgeoisie. What of Cayetano Carpio's FPL, which calls for a "prolonged people's war". A small pamphlet entitled "Chalatenango Heroico" (distributed by the Casa El Salvador "Farabundo Marti") gives an idea of what the FPL's line looks like in the field of battle. It reports that the local militias were demanding "industrial arms", that the masses "who have been hearing for years about armed struggle, who have been dreaming for years about having a gun, are not going to be content with a machete". Yet, says the article, "at the level of the masses and the militias, we'll never see weapons of war, not even after the victory". This is the logic of guerrillaism, which relies not on the mobilization of the working masses but on a "professional" party/army. No wonder there is discontent.

And on negotiations, according to the pamphlet: "If you tell them to put down their arms, these people would probably shoot anyone who came to tell them that.... In Guazapa the people have made it clear that it cost blood for them to get those guns and they are not going to give them up." Good. But in fact, the FDR/FMLN are calling for precisely that. Concretely, in FDR spokesman Zamora's Washington press conference during the January offensive he called for a ceasefire to achieve negotiations. (Later he tried to cover up by claiming he was only advocating laying down arms "in the context" of negotiations.) And he made clear why the FDR/FMLN tops reject a "military solution". According to the *Guardian*, Zamora said that, "To win only in a military sense, could mean 'to lose in the end'. One purpose of military pressure is to insure that the US administration eventually will accept a negotiated solution that gives the rebel forces a share of the power."

For Workers Revolution Throughout Central America!

So who is it that "loses in the end" if the leftist insurgents win on the battlefield? Zamora, a dissident Christian Democrat, is speaking here

in the higher interests of the Salvadoran bourgeoisie. For liberals like him and FDR leader Guillermo Ungo, calls for a "political solution" are no compromise. The destruction of the genocidal army, the core of the Salvadoran state, would remove the very basis of their plans for a "democratic, pluralist" capitalist regime. We understand on the basis of Marxism, and Zamora grasps out of an acute sense of defending his class interests, that *there is no "middle way"* such as the Sandinistas are attempting. In El Salvador, where the classes are far more polarized than in Somoza's Nicaragua, the life of such a precarious interregnum could be measured in weeks rather than months. Yet a social revolution would provoke a confrontation with US imperialism which, from the standpoint of tiny El Salvador, the nationalist-reformists feel they cannot win. So the guerrillaists and "democratic" politicians of the FDR/FMLN join hands to stave off a military victory. But the fighters in the field will pay the price. For them it is literally a choice of revolution or death.

The Trotskyists have a fundamentally counterposed strategy, based on the theory and program of permanent revolution. In the epoch of imperialism the weak bourgeoisies of the backward capitalist countries are unwilling and incapable of carrying out even the democratic tasks of the bourgeois revolution. Their intimate ties to imperialism and domestic reaction, combined with their fear of a militant working class and the huge landless peasantry, places them in the camp of counterrevolution. On the agrarian question, for instance: the Trotskyists call for the revolutionary seizure of the estates, the peasants should take the land. No section of the Salvadoran bourgeoisie advocates this program, for there is no separate industrial and agricultural bourgeoisie: they are all the same families. It is significant that the land reform advocated by the FDR is no more advanced than that enacted by the Christian Democratic/military junta two years ago. And they are all tied to imperialism. FDR leader Zamora was installed in the October 1979 junta at the behest of the US State Department. Today he goes around vituperating against a leftist military victory.

Leninists base themselves on the proletariat, and a Central American working class exists, especially in El Salvador, which in turn can have a powerful impact on the millions-strong Mexican workers movement. The majority of all industrial workers in the isthmus are located in this tiny country. They are employed by US multinationals such as ARCO, Phelps Dodge, Westinghouse, Maidenform Bras, Texas Instruments, and in the Free Trade Zone at San Bartolo where they are paid \$4 a day to assemble semi-manufactures for the US market. And they have a recent history of militant struggle. In March 1979 workers at two bottling plants won their demands when the electrical workers union (STECCEL) cut off power for an hour nationwide in solidarity with the bottlers' strike. A week later STECCEL occupied the power plants again, electrifying the surrounding fences with high voltage and blacking out the country for a day in support of their own demands. The government utility company was forced to give in. And in September 1979, workers struck five factories along San Salvador's strategic Army Boulevard, occupying the plants and taking managers hostage in order to forestall a military intervention.

For the first half of 1980 there was a constant stream of mass protests. As the liberals were slowly eliminated from the ruling junta, opposition

mounted in the streets. The formation of the Revolutionary Mass Coordinating Committee, the nucleus of the later FMLN, was greeted in a January 22 mass march of 200,000 which was fired on by the security forces leaving 100 dead. In March there was a one-day general strike that shut down urban transport. In April tens of thousands poured into the streets to mourn the slain Archbishop Romero: the toll, 40 killed by government snipers. In June a second general strike paralyzed the capital: nothing moved in San Salvador for two days. Finally, the leftist coalition called a three-day general strike for mid-August. But instead of waging an offensive struggle, they told the workers to stay at home or in the plants. At most some barricades were built in the working-class suburbs and militias took pot shots at the police. The strike was a failure as petty-bourgeois layers, mini-bus owners and shopkeepers, buckled under to government repression.

The year of mass mobilization dissipated because the leaders of the Salvadoran left held back the struggle in the name of their guerrillaist, popular-frontist programs. Instead of placing themselves at the head of the workers and leading them to proletarian insurrection, they worried about an "imbalance in the development of the power of the masses and the military power". Marxists understand that in a revolutionary situation the course of events takes on its own rhythm. Thus Lenin stressed that in the Russian 1905 Revolution by December an uprising was absolutely essential: "A general strike could no longer take the government unawares: it had already organized the forces of counterrevolution and they were ready for action" ("Lessons of the Moscow Uprising", August 1906). But in Moscow the Bolsheviks attempted to lead such an insurrection, setting the pattern for 1917, while in San Salvador the guerrillaist/popular-frontist left was able to prevent it. (As for the level of military power, at the time of the Moscow uprising the workers militias had only 80 rifles going up against machine guns.)

This is the logic of guerrillaism, not just in El Salvador but everywhere, whether it is called focoism or the "armed struggle road". The guerrillaists have no faith in the revolutionary power of the working class. They believe that only a "professional" party/army is capable of waging military struggle. In Chile this was the program of the MIR (Revolutionary Left Movement), the largest left organization outside of Allende's Unidad Popular (UP). The MIR had considerable influence among sectors of workers, peasants and students; it talked of armed struggle and carried pictures of Guevara. But it "critically" supported the UP to the end, and never called for arming the masses. Instead the MIR created artificial groups, the so-called *comandos comunales*, which didn't get off the ground. And when the bloody end came, it could offer no serious resistance.

Following the defeat of the August 1980 general strike, the Salvadoran left abandoned the cities to build a "people's army" in the hills. Partly in response to repression, partly obeying the dictates of their "politico-military" strategies, hundreds of militant workers left San Salvador for nearby Guazapa volcano to build a "people's army". Elsewhere the composition of the guerrilla forces is overwhelmingly peasant in origin. And this exodus to the countryside will inevitably have an impact on the class outlook of the leftist insurgents. The FMLN has created a *peasant army* led by declassed intellectuals, ex-

peasant youth and some former workers. Built out of mass organizing in the late '70s, particularly by two Catholic-led peasant unions, it can unleash a powerful storm against the murderous landlord/capitalist/army oligarchy that has run El Salvador as its fiefdom for half a century and more. But it can also be used *against the working class*.

Trotsky raised this possibility in the case of China during the 1930s, when Mao's Communist Party had transformed itself into the leadership of a peasant "Red Army". Should the Stalinist-led peasant troops occupy the industrial centres and come face-to-face with the workers, he wrote, it is quite likely that it will be used to repress the proletariat, particularly in the name of crushing "counter-revolutionary Trotskyites". He wrote:

"The peasant movement is a mighty revolutionary factor, insofar as it is directed against the large landowners, militarists, feudalists and usurers. But in the peasant movement itself are very powerful proprietary and reactionary tendencies and at a certain stage it can become hostile to the workers, and sustain that hostility already equipped with arms. He who forgets about the dual nature of the peasantry is not a Marxist."

— Leon Trotsky, "Peasant War in China" (September 1932)

This possibility has already occurred in neighboring Nicaragua. During the last moments of the Nicaraguan civil war, when the Sandinistas had temporarily retreated from the capital, the workers and slum dwellers took over Managua the day after Somoza fled. They sacked the barracks and military headquarters, obtaining many arms. It took the Sandinistas months to get the guns back. They began by arresting the members of the "Simon Bolivar Brigade", led by the pseudo-Trotskyist Moreno tendency, after it staged a demonstration for "workers power" in August 1979. They shut down the Maoist paper *El Pueblo* after it called for peasants to occupy haciendas of the "anti-Somoza bourgeoisie". They arrested leaders of the Frente Obrero group and of the dissident Communist Party of Nicaragua, as well as local ostensible Trotskyites. They broke several strikes for higher wages and workers control, sacking the offices of the CAUS union federation. And when workers at one textile factory (FABRITEX, the largest in Nicaragua) could not be intimidated in any other way, they brought in the Sandinista People's Army to *dismantle the factory*, removing the raw materials and machines! Should the Salvadoran army collapse before a "negotiated solution" is worked out, the FDR/FMLN leaders promise to do the same. Whether they can succeed is another matter.

The "guerrilla road" of the Salvadoran left is an expression of petty-bourgeois forces opposed to the Leninist-Trotskyist program of workers revolution. It is no accident that Castro's models on military matters were not Marx, Engels and Lenin (or Trotsky, the founder of the Red Army), but Jose Marti and Simon Bolivar — leaders of the bourgeois national independence movements. This corresponds to the Castroites' "democratic" program and orientation to the peasantry. They reason that in the "Third World" the bourgeoisie is so weak that it must rule through a praetorian guard army, which in fact acts as a political party; their answer is to counterpose their own army/party, a left version of a military coup. But for communists who seek to lead the proletariat, followed by the oppressed masses of the city and country, in a socialist revolution, what is necessary is to build a Bolshevik vanguard party of the working class and soviet organs of workers

power. This will also lay the basis for the exercise of genuine workers democracy, including bringing to justice the criminals responsible for the murder of Salvadoran leftist poet Roque Dalton, leader of the "anti-militarist" faction of the ERP in 1975 who was shot on phony charges of being a "CIA agent".

For a Trotskyist Party!

Summarizing the experience of the Russian Revolution and the first years of the Communist International, Leon Trotsky wrote: "Without a party, apart from a party, over the head of a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot conquer" ("Lessons of October"). A Trotskyist party must be built in struggle against the guerrillism, popular-frontism and nationalism of the Salvadoran left. Workers revolution in the Central American area must be international from the beginning. A workers insurrection in San Salvador must not only combine with a peasant war throughout the country, but also with proletarian revolution from Nicaragua to Mexico. For it's not a question of tiny El Salvador taking on the Yankee colossus to the north by itself. Right next door is the sleeping giant of the Mexican proletariat, now facing a government that has imposed drastic austerity measures which (together with a push from events in Central America) can take millions onto the path of revolutionary struggle.

The Salvadoran struggle can also have a tremendous impact on the United States far exceeding that of the liberal-led El Salvador protests. The matter of working-class solidarity is not at all abstract. Thus the Spartacist League and class-struggle unionists have fought for a labor boycott of all military goods to Central American rightist juntas. And this is part of an overall struggle for the American revolution — for labor/black mobilizations against racist terror, for sitdown strikes against mass layoffs and so on. Because the only way to secure revolutionary gains for the people of El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Mexico and the rest of Latin America is through socialist revolution in the United States itself.

The reformists call for agrarian reform, a mixed economy, purging the army and a non-aligned foreign policy, carried out by a revolutionary democratic government of a "free El Salvador". The Trotskyists fight for agrarian revolution, expropriation of the bourgeoisie, destruction of the present butcher army and the creation of a proletarian red army, and unconditional defense of the degenerated/deformed workers states, through military victory by the leftist insurgents and a proletarian insurrection installing a workers and peasants government, as part of a soviet federation of Central America in a Socialist United States of Latin America. As Trotsky wrote of Spain in the early '30s: "For a successful solution of all these tasks, three conditions are required: a party; once more a party; again a party."

— reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 325, 11 March 1983

HDP

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Pavelic as he was departing Italy in 1941 and the primate of Croatia, Cardinal Stepinac, was an active leader of this clerical-fascist regime, excusing its atrocities and even

attempting to maintain resistance when Pavelic fled.

Defend the Gains of the Yugoslav Revolution!

Josip Broz Tito's guerrillas were victorious precisely because they alone stood above the bloody national conflicts, enabling them to extend their base to the non-Serb nationalities, including the Croats, and forge an all-Yugoslavia resistance. Advocating equality between nations and smashing the old state apparatus in the liberated areas, the CPY was able to lead the peasant masses of the various nationalities to victory in a prolonged and bitter struggle against not only the Germans but also native fascists like the Ustashi and the anti-communist Serbian monarchist Chetniks. The common endeavour of this struggle and of reconstructing Yugoslav society on a new social axis went a long way toward defusing the murderous national hatreds that had plagued pre-war Yugoslavia. The international proletariat must defend this historic gain, embodied in the Yugoslav workers state, against the bloody capitalist restorationist/separatist designs of Croatian nationalism.

The bureaucratically deformed Yugoslav workers state, a product of peasant guerrilla war, has of course been unable to achieve a lasting and complete solution to the national question. Bureaucratic rule, standing for "socialism in one country" and peaceful coexistence with imperialism internationally, constantly regenerates nationalist-inspired conflict thereby nurturing dangerous capitalist-restorationist forces. Thus the post-1965 economic decentralisation policy of "market socialism" (a more extreme version of which was advocated by the counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarnosc) had by the 1970s rekindled Croatian separatism, expressed in the bureaucracy, at the expense of the poorer republics, leading to a sharp crackdown by Tito. The HDP's "democratic" posturing is undoubtedly calculated to intersect this — thus it defends victims of the post 1971 Croatian purges like ex-party member Veselica and former partisan general/self-styled Euro-communist Franjo Tudjman. To defend the gains of the revolution from capitalist restoration, which could well be cloaked in the form of a "national liberation" struggle, a Trotskyist party must be built to lead a political revolution to oust the bankrupt Titoite bureaucracy.

HDP: Disillusioned with Reagan

The SWP claims the HDP is "anti-imperialist" by citing its "strong identification with the revolutionary Cuban leadership". This is only because it clashed with Tito at the 1979 non-aligned conference. For Croatian nationalists there is only one main enemy — Yugoslavia. As for opposition to Reaganite imperialism a HDP document, "The Irony of 'the American Dream'", begins: "Croats in America welcomed the election of Ronald Reagan". Why? Because years ago he proclaimed the 10th of April "Croatia Day" in California. They hoped Reagan would target Yugoslavia, along with the USSR, Poland, Cuba, Vietnam etc in his imperialist war plans. But they were disillusioned when the US anti-Soviet warmongers supported as "a positive factor of security in Europe" the Yugoslav bureaucracy's treacherous anti-Soviet policy of "non-alignment". Or there's the Falklands war, where the HDP supported Argentina which, after all, has been very good to the Ustasha, eg, harbouring war criminals like Pavelic's deputy Stjepan Hefer. The rest of the HDP's "progressive" pos-

itions are equally spurious, always nationalist, and indeed appear to be carefully tailored to suit the SWP.

The Ustasha in Australia

For decades the US protected war criminals like Pavelic's secret police chief, Artukovic, from justice. So too in Australia. The slogan of the post-war ALP-initiated immigration scheme was "populate or perish". It was motivated by White Australia racism and not just the demand for cheap factory fodder. It meant populate Australia with white immigrants or perish at the hands of the "Asian hordes". Whites only, no reds, but fascist refugees from the East European social revolutions were welcome. John Playford's pamphlet, "The Truth behind 'Captive Nations Week'", exposes some of these creatures who rose to political prominence during the Cold War, eg, the Hungarian Laszlo Megay, whose brutal supervision of the deportation of thousands of Jews to Auschwitz in 1944 earned him the sobriquet "the mass murderer of Ungvar", and who later became an influential figure in the Liberal party.

Organised Ustasha terror has flourished in Australia since World War II. The HDP ostensibly renounces terrorism *outside* Yugoslavia (while reserving "the possibility of using force against force" within the country), to better appeal to "democratic" imperialism. Yet the HDP mentions (barely) the well-known history of Ustasha terror only to alibi it: "The Yugoslavs organise many terrorist acts through their agents in order to cause adverse public reactions against Croatian activists. Nevertheless it is true that some such acts have been committed by young Croats out of despair" (interview with SWP).

As the SWP knows, the history of Ustasha terror in Australia is well documented, including repeated bombings and other attacks on Yugoslav consulates and embassies, travel agencies, community social functions, Serbian churches, as well as numerous murders and attacks on political opponents. The late Marijan Jurjevic, who waged a long and courageous campaign against them, was the target of repeated murder attempts. The Ustasha have also used Australia as a major base for terrorist training and attacks on Yugoslavia. The secret terrorist outfit HRB (Croatian Revolutionary Brotherhood) was founded in Australia in 1962, and Australian-trained HRB terrorists were a large component of HRB raids in 1964 and 1972, the latter killing 13 Yugoslav citizens before being wiped out. In 1963 Ustasha terrorists were discovered undergoing joint military training with Australian army units.

For decades the Croatian community has been dominated by groups glorifying Pavelic and the Ustasha, centrally through the Croatian Catholic Churches, a domination maintained through intimidation, murder, extortion rackets, as well as control of cultural and sporting clubs. These fascists have only been able to conduct their activities with impunity because of the protection afforded by the bourgeois state. Prior to 1972, leading Liberal politicians who defended the Ustasha and patronised functions like 10 April celebrations included Attorney-General Ivor "there is no Ustasha in Australia" Greenwood, Philip Lynch, rabid anti-communist W C Wentworth, ex-Prime Minister McMahon and many others.

And of course there are the connections with ASIO. Joan Cox's *Rooted in Secrecy* documents the deliberate obstruction, by the pre-1972 Liberal governments and ASIO, of attempts to find out information and act against the Ustasha. ASIO con-

tinued this when the ALP won office, to the point in 1973 when its non-co-operation with Labor Attorney-General Murphy's urgent requests for information necessary to the protection of the visiting Yugoslav Prime Minister forced Murphy to launch his famous raid on ASIO headquarters, an action which drove the CIA up the wall and thus contributed to the ALP's downfall in 1975. For the bourgeoisie, the Ustasha are useful as a reserve fascist force domestically and also for all manner of imperialist dirty work internationally — the HOP (Croatian Liberation Movement, founded by Pavelic and led in Australia by influential Liberal Fabian Lovokovic) reportedly offered the Government 1000 men for the Vietnam war — just as US imperialism has put the Cuban gusanos to work.

Only a deeply Laborite outfit like the SWP could discern "leftward movement" because the HDP campaigned for the ALP in the 1982 Victorian elections. The Croatian reactionaries were badly burned by the experience of the Whitlam government, Murphy's raid on ASIO etc, having before 1972 put all their eggs in the Liberal basket. With Cold War II driving Labor hard to the right, the HDP's orientation to Labor represents no more than a division of labour within the "Croatian national movement".

The SWP will have to answer for its scandalous conduct in building up the "left" pretences of this sinister group. Certainly the SWP's "consistent nationalism equals socialism", their "democratic socialist" hostility to Stalinist "totalitarianism" and a classless reformist Alice-in-Wonderland worldview which sees political power in terms of peacefully altering "public opinion" makes them perfect suckers for an outfit like the HDP. Nor is the SWP a novice at painting up the blackest reaction in "progressive" colours. Look at Khomeini's Iran for example. Or Poland, where the SWP demonstrated with the "Captive Nations" gang outside Sydney's Polish consulate in December 1981 against Jaruzelski's counter-coup.

Percy's announcement to the *Sydney Morning Herald* (13 January) that the SWP "was the most closely aligned to Solidarity in Australia" surely was bombastic (as the SWP unhappily discovered, Santamaria's NCC has the Solidarnosc connection), but it did convey the very real political identity between anti-Soviet SWP social democracy and Solidarnosc brainstrusters like Polish social democrat Jacek Kuron. The HDP, however, is hardly a social-democratic formation. And unlike Poland or, at least in the early period, Iran, the SWP's scandalous apologetics for the HDP is likely to place it at odds with much, if not all, of the left-Laborite milieu which is its *raison d'etre*.

Gross organisational opportunism is a major motivation for the SWP. While it promises its membership big things and short cuts to mass influence, the rightward-moving Cold War political climate presents a different reality. The Percy clique uses the HDP to bolster its pretensions to be the left social-democratic umbrella, for which they have little else to show apart from a few trade union electoral campaigns.

The Percy clique is deeply compromised by its apologetics for the HDP and, to judge from the SWP membership's sensitivity, there is not total indifference to relations with this highly sinister group. But whatever the motivations for this scandalous opportunism, it should be understood that reactionary Croatian nationalism, with its inextricable links to the Ustasha and the secret police/spy agencies, is a deadly threat to the international working class movement.



Permanent Revolution vs the Guerrilla Road

For Workers Revolution in Central America!

In the three years that a civil war has been raging in El Salvador, a curious phenomenon has been observed. The harder the leftist guerrillas fight, the more successful they are militarily, the more insistent their leaders are in offering to exchange what has been won on the battlefield for some cabinet seats and promises of reform. At the height of the recent fighting a Salvadoran opposition spokesman held a press conference in Washington to call for immediate negotiations and offer a cease-fire. According to the rad-lib *Guardian* (5 February), "[Ruben] Zamora cautioned that the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] is not trying to achieve a military victory in El Salvador, because the country's problems must be 'solved through dialog, through negotiation, and not ... a military solution'". Meanwhile, in the US El Salvador protests exclude the Spartacist League for carrying our slogan, "Military victory to leftist insurgents!" Why? If the guerrillas defeat the government army, in class-polarized El Salvador it could unleash a mass uprising and social revolution. But if the butcher army is *not* smashed, a cease-fire will just mean giving a free rein to the death squads and the massacres will continue.

Another curious fact: in this region of mini-countries smaller than most US states, the leaders of the Central American left do everything possible to keep the struggle within narrow national bounds while the right-wing dictators aid each other constantly and are openly supplied by the United States. Neither the Sandinistas, the Cubans or the Soviets provide substantial amounts of weapons to the Salvadoran rebels, and the FMLN refuses to call for international brigades. Moreover, even though the various "armed struggle" organizations all grew out of the Cuban Revolution, when the Trotskyists of the SL proclaim "Defense of Cuba, USSR begins in El Salvador" their American supporters start screaming "provocation". These groups which were inspired by Che Guevara and the Vietnamese struggle now raise as an official slogan "No more Vietnams", while the Spartacists say: "Vietnam was a victory: two, three, many defeats for imperialism!" But Ronald Reagan has placed Central America in the front line of his global war against Communism, like it or not. And he has his own "domino" theory, beginning with drowning the



Combative Salvadoran trade unions played key role in repeated mass mobilisations such as the 200,000-strong protest in San Salvador, January 1980.

US Hands Off Nicaragua! Military Victory to Leftist Rebels! Defend Cuba, USSR!

Salvadoran rebels in blood, overthrowing the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, then rolling back the gains of revolutions from Cuba to Poland and the Soviet Union.

For the last 20 years, ever since the Cuban Revolution, the Latin American left has been dominated by two main currents: first in the 1960s the "guerrilla road" inspired by Castro and Guevara, and then in the early '70s the so-called "peaceful road" of Allende's popular front in Chile. The Chilean debacle is still fresh in people's minds with its tens of thousands of workers, peasants and students massacred in cold blood. However, guerrillaism was no less a road to disaster. A whole generation of leftists throughout the continent picked up the gun and Che's handbook and headed into the hills, only to be ruthlessly slaughtered by Pentagon-trained counterinsurgency squads. Guevara himself, the most heroic advocate of guerrilla warfare, tragically was murdered by the CIA and its local flunkies in Bolivia in 1967. But the Guevarists were not just out-

gunned — their guerrilla road *could not* lead to socialist revolution.

Now we are witnessing a new round of guerrilla warfare, and would-be revolutionaries must look to the lessons of the past as well as the events of today. Guerrillaism seems very militant, even adventurist, while an Allende-type popular front explicitly aims at holding back the masses from "going too far" by tying them to a section of the bourgeoisie. Yet politically guerrillaism and popular frontism are not necessarily contradictory by any means. In El Salvador, for instance, the FMLN coalition of five "politico-military" organizations is allied with the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR), including several marginal liberal parties and politicians. And *all* sectors of the FDR/FMLN popular front are committed to a program for a "revolutionary democratic" government — that is, for a reformed Salvadoran capitalism.

In Cuba, Fidel Castro originally put forward a bourgeois-democratic pro-

gram of land reform and return to the 1940 constitution. But not long after the rebel victory, the hostility of the United States and a massive departure of Cuban capitalists forced the guerrillas in power to expropriate the imperialists and the entire domestic bourgeoisie simply in self-defense. Even in this exceptional case, however, the result was a bureaucratically deformed workers state rather than the soviet democracy of the Bolsheviks. (The usual result of such a guerrilla war would be the consolidation of a nationalist-bonapartist bourgeois state, as in post-independence Algeria.) Constant US aggression also explains the more militant tone of the Cuban leaders, compared to the cautious Kremlin, and their sometime support (more ideological than material) to guerrilla warfare elsewhere in Latin America.

The guerrilla episodes of the '60s mostly ended in defeat within a few months, or else degenerated into banditry. But in Central America the Nicaraguan Sandinistas managed to defeat Somoza's mercenaries, and the Salvadoran FMLN has the upper hand against the army, National Guard, Treasury Police, death squads and their American "advisers". However, there is another factor: the combative Salvadoran working class, which has not been defeated but has been politically misled and abandoned. What is needed is above all a communist vanguard to lead it at the head of the urban and rural masses, to carry

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