

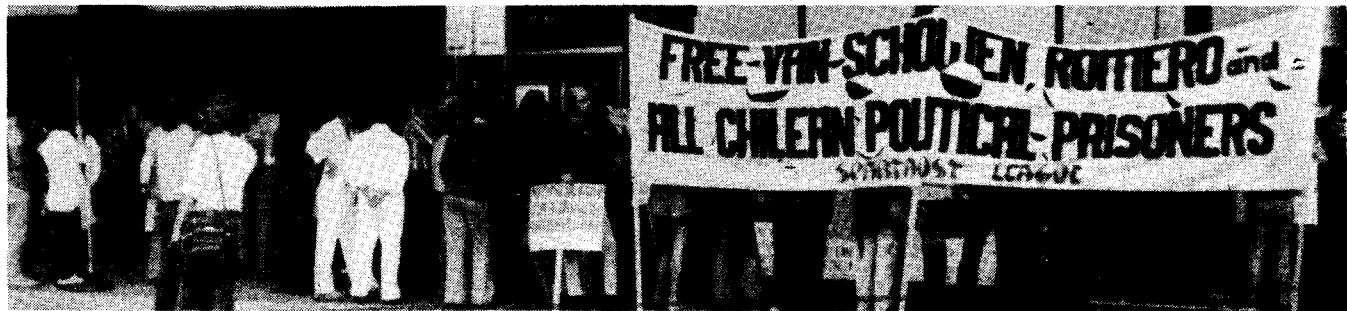
Demonstrations against Chilean repression

MIR militants face execution

Since the military Junta overthrew the Allende *Unidad Popular* government in Chile last September, the Chilean workers' movement has faced brutal repression. Thousands of workers and leftists are being tortured and murdered. It is an elementary duty of class solidarity to defend these victims of counter-revolution and to demand the immediate release of all the political prisoners who are the victims of the reactionary Junta's repression.

Hitherto defense campaigns have focused on the cases of such well-known figures as Luis Corvalan, General Secretary of the pro-Moscow Chilean Communist Party and Luis Vitale, a prominent intellectual associated with the pseudo-Trotskyist "United Secretariat of the Fourth International". The axis of these campaigns has been an attempt to awaken liberal bourgeois "conscience", rather than an appeal to international proletarian solidarity.

Less well-known are the cases of Bautista Van Schowen and Alejandro Romero. Both are leading members of the *Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria* (MIR -- Revolutionary Left Movement), the most significant group to the left of the parties of the *Unidad Popular* government. Van Schowen is a member of the Political Commission (leading body) of the MIR, and since his capture on December 13 has been subject to severe torture as a result of which he is reportedly being held in a military hospital. Romero, a member of the Central Commit-



The demonstration at Sydney International Airport -- Saturday, 23 March 1974. (photo: AS)

tee, was arrested in November and has been condemned to death by a military tribunal. Both men could be murdered at any moment.

The defence of these two men is particularly pressing. Because the MIR is substantially to the left of most of the political tendencies suffering repression, they have less chance of obtaining support from liberal bourgeois opinion and the deformed workers states than do former government officials and Stalinist supporters of Moscow.

The Spartacist League has initiated a campaign in the defence of these two men around the slogans "Free all Chilean political prisoners" and "Free Van Schowen and Romero". Already demonstrations have been held in Melbourne and Sydney, and further public meetings are planned in both cities. Information concerning these two militants has been sent to trade unions throughout Australia and ALP members of parliaments.

The Spartacist League of the United States (SLUS) has initiated a similar campaign in the US. The 15 March issue of *Workers Vanguard*, the bi-weekly organ of the SLUS, called on "all socialist and working-class militants and organisations to take up an immediate fight to save the lives of two leading members of the...MIR." *Workers Vanguard* pointed out that "so far no organisation of the US left has made a serious effort to mount protest actions or to publicise in its press the case of the MIR militants." In accordance with

its principles of international working class solidarity, the SLUS has organised demonstrations across the US around the slogans "Free Van Schowen and Romero! Free all victims of the reactionary Junta's repression!"

In Melbourne approximately 45 people attended a rally in Civic Square on March 22. Members and supporters of the Spartacist League (SLANZ), the Communist League (CL), the Socialist Workers Action Group (SWAG) and the Socialist Workers League (SWL) attended, as well as a number of independents. The Communist Party of Australia (CPA) and Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) when contacted about the proposed demonstration both thought that it was a nice idea and said that they would support it, but failed to do anything to build it or even attend it. Likewise the Socialist Labour League (SLL) expressed lukewarm interest, but never did anything, probably because its leadership prefers to keep its membership locked away in an ideological closet and dreads political confrontation with other tendencies. Speakers from the CL, SWL and SLANZ addressed the rally. Only the SLANZ spokesman spoke of the necessity of mobilising the Australian working class in the defence of the Chilean workers movement. Besides raising the demands to "Free Van Schowen and Romero" and "Free All Chilean Political Prisoners", the SLANZ called on the Australian trade union "fact-finding" commission to demand to see Van Schowen and Romero and to call for their release, and demanded that all union and Labor Party bodies and the Labor government demand the release of the two men, and other political prisoners, offer them asylum in Australia, and institute all possible sanctions against the Chilean government until all the political prisoners are released and martial law rescinded. The SLANZ called on the trade unions to back up these demands by renewing the ban on LAN Chile and putting a ban on all Chilean goods, and by organising demonstrations against the executions.

SLL REFUSES TO DEFEND ENDANGERED MILITANTS

In Sydney the Committee for Solidarity with the Chilean People (CSCP) called a demonstration at Sydney airport to "farewell" the joint "fact-finding" commission being sent to investigate the conditions in Chile by the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union, Plumbers Union, Miners Federation and the Transport Workers Union. Present at the demonstration which was called around the demand "Free all Political Prisoners in Chile!" were members and supporters of the CSCP, the CL and the SLANZ, as well as some individual Latin Americans and members of the CPA. Altogether about 50 people attended the demonstration. Prominent among the uninterested passers-by were two nattily dressed gentlemen from the SLL. When asked whether the SLL supported the demonstration one of them, SLL National Secretary Jim Mulgrew, was so overcome with feelings of proletarian solidarity for the Chilean workers movement that he could utter only obscenities. This pointed refusal to

Continued on page six

Protest Victorian YLA expulsions

We print below the letter sent by Comrade Anthony Naughton, a supporter of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand (SLANZ), to the Victorian and Federal secretaries of the Young Labor Association (YLA) in protest of his expulsion from the Victorian branch of the YLA in conjunction with supporters of the Socialist Youth Alliance (SYA). The SLANZ unconditionally supports the right of all tendencies in the workers movement to struggle for their ideas and programmes inside the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and the YLA. We condemn the cowardly and cynical expulsions engineered in a particularly grotesque fashion by a clique of ambitious young would-be bureaucrats and Zionists distinguished mainly by their extreme reactionary nationalism. But we in no way support the politics of the SYA which are not qualitatively better than those of the current YLA leadership. -- *The Editors*

Sydney
March 27, 1974

Dear Comrades,

I have received your letter of 25 February informing me of my expulsion from the Victorian Young Labor Association (YLA). I am writing to protest my expulsion, those of the 31 supporters of the Socialist Youth Alliance (SYA), and the two others, as a bureaucratic abuse of the rights of the members and a crude attempt to stifle political dissidents in the YLA.

The expulsion motion levels the blanket accusation against all of the expelled members of

"their support for the Fourth International and its political organisations...which are patently disloyal to the ALP and contrary to the platform of the organisation." This charge is not only vague and ill-defined in its unsubstantiated label of "patently disloyal" political ideas, but also inaccurate and contradictory.

First, the charge of supporting the Fourth International (FI) is one which requires some explanation which has not been forthcoming from the Victorian YLA leadership. In my view the FI does not now exist as an organisation based on its founding programme. It was destroyed as such by the political degeneration of its leading cadre (weakened by its partial physical liquidation in WWII). The programme of the FI retains its validity, however, and I support that programme. The SYA supports the United Secretariat, a body that falsely claims to represent the FI. The SYA in fact expresses a revisionist current that claims formal adherence to the programme of the FI while abandoning it in practice, limiting its political activity to the struggle for reforms compatible within the capitalist system. The fact that I was expelled on the same ostensible grounds as the SYA supporters reveals the fraudulent character of the charges against both them and myself. But regardless of whether the United Secretariat actually represents the FI, it is patently undemocratic to exclude anyone from the YLA simply on the grounds that their political opinions coincide with those of another organisation.

Secondly, I have not been attending YLA meetings since May 1973. According to the 7 March 1974 *Scope*, another "expelled" individual was not

Continued on page seven

I N S I D E

CRACK-POT NEW ZEALAND NATIONALISM ... page 2
TWO ROADS TO BETRAYAL (PART 2: CL) .. page 3
MAOIST DEAD-END IN VICTORIA page 8

Crackpot New Zealand nationalism — Gager and the Republican Movement

The Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand (SLANZ) (then the Spartacist League of New Zealand) first developed under the leadership of Owen Gager, on the basis of the 1966 document of the Spartacist League of the United States, "Declaration of Principles of the Spartacist League".

Gager's past contribution to Marxism in New Zealand is almost universally underestimated, so serious revolutionaries are encouraged to look at a short pamphlet on this history, the deficiencies in Gager's understanding all along, and his eventual degeneration and break from Marxism: "The Development of the Spartacist League" (published as Revolutionary Communist Bulletin No. 1, 1972, available from the SLANZ).

Subsequent to his break from the SL he set up the Red Federation (RF) which, despite its admitted break from the basic politics of the SL claims political continuity with it. Most of the work of the RF is directed through its front group, the strange, nationalist Republican Movement (RM), with whom it shares its two leading spokesmen, Owen Gager and Bruce Jesson, and a Post Office box.

A recent pamphlet published by the RF entitled "Spartacist: A Marxist Journal" (SAMJ) contains three contributions by Owen Gager which together constitute his attack on the SLANZ. Despite the obvious degeneracy of the position from which these articles are written, they must be taken very seriously in view of Gager's former theoretical ability and, more importantly, his long-vanished role as an individual in the New Zealand movement whose politics, though flawed, were in the direction of Bolshevism. While the first two articles in this pamphlet, "James P. Cannonism" and "Anti-Imperialism and Republicanism", pretend to be serious political contributions, the third, "Logan and the Spartacists" is such a transparent tissue of lies that friends have suggested we should decline to honour it with a reply.

It would indeed be fruitless to give a detailed answer to the scores of petty, baseless and ridiculous accusations against the SLANZ (such as that we willfully "suppressed" publication of an article by Trotsky which was actually readily available in New Zealand, or that we openly attack some of the most fundamental works in the arsenal of Marxism). But a brief look at one characteristic example will indicate the extent of Gager's degeneration and serve to make a useful political point.

NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA, AND THE SPARTACIST LEAGUE

Gager accuses comrades Bill Logan and James Robertson in the course of this article of being complicit in a lie with regard to the long-term perspectives of Bill Logan and Adaire Hannah.

"When Logan in the United States was first being encouraged by a sectarian American group to split the movement, the SL [i.e., Gager] was told that Bill [Logan] and Adaire [Hannah] 'had no perspective except the New Zealand movement'. Now the whole splitters rump have taken their whole organisation, lock, stock and gestofax machine, from New Zealand to Australia not even selling their literature in New Zealand... But what can be said now about Logan, when on the first occasion his loyalty to the organisation was questioned, he allowed it to be said he had no perspective but the New Zealand movement -- and then abandons New Zealand at the drop of a hat! There is only one interpretation possible: Logan is a liar; Robertson, the leader of the American Spartacist League in the United States, helped him to lie; and Logan's disciples, once so indignant about Logan's 'integrity' being questioned, are now reconciled to following a liar."

Gager's story is that because Logan moved to Australia in February 1973 Logan was lying when he allowed someone else to say of him in October 1971 that he intended to live in New Zealand. Hardly worth examining perhaps, but to do so will be revealing. When comrades Logan and Hannah opened up a political struggle in the SLNZ Gager sought to end it by accusing them of belonging to both the SLNZ and the SLUS, and by asking them to resign from the SLNZ. In this situation Robertson wrote to Gager saying:

"When comrades Adaire and Bill arrived here we worked out with them the usual arrangement when members of one fraternal organisation are working politically in the other group's country... Thus as Bill and Adaire expected, there was no question that they were to continue as members of the SLNZ since their stay here, while perhaps lengthy, is

only temporary, they have not emigrated, their central national preoccupation and past and future focus of interest being Australasia." (Letter, Robertson to Gager, 7 October 1971).

The phrase "quoted" by Gager was never written.

In view of the offence that Gager takes at New Zealand revolutionaries who leave for Australia, it is necessary to add that Robertson's choice of the designation "Australasia" clearly reflected the concern that the SLNZ *always* had for the Australian situation. Indeed only six weeks before the Robertson letter quoted above Gager had suggested that he *himself* move to Australia.

"What the question comes to is whether I should stay here long enough to rebuild everything. I think I could: but couldn't I do much better work for the revolution in Australia? The N.Z. revolution after all probably depends on the Australian and there is more working class political activity over there... If more people genuinely understood and supported our policy I would stay, but I think that fundamentally the lack of understanding is not only a result of our limited activities but also of the entire N.Z. social setting. This is, after all, a very petit-bourgeois country." (Letter, Gager to Logan and Hannah, 25 August 1971)



Owen Gager in 1968, now leader of the Red Federation. (photo: *Salient*)

Now Gager goes a bit far here, as he often does. New Zealand is no more a "petit-bourgeois" country, whatever that might mean, than Australia. The SLNZ had collapsed after Logan and Hannah went overseas, and Gager had become demoralised. But there is an element of political insight in what he says. Certainly the political expression of the class struggle has taken a sufficiently different path in Australia to create at this juncture greater opportunities for the development of a vanguard nucleus there than in New Zealand. This is why the Spartacist League chose to make Sydney and Melbourne the centres of its Australasian work for the coming period. But let us strip away any illusions that we have left New Zealand for good. We will return -- not to abandon our work in Australia but to extend it.

Gager's deep pessimism about New Zealand was misplaced. But since that time he's simply inverted it for a strange and rabid nationalism permeated by the assumption that the New Zealand class struggle is carried on in isolation from the rest of the world. The class struggle, which develops of necessity according to national conditions, nevertheless has an international character. Although sometimes developments are more confined, it is clear that in Australia and New Zealand the class struggle tends almost always to take not only a parallel but a closely interlinked course. This is as a result of the great cultural similarities between the two countries, their very similar roles in the world economy and close economic ties, the ease and frequency of communication between the two countries (for example, one in thirty New Zealanders visited Australia in 1971), and the myriad personal and family links between both the bourgeoisie and the proletariats of the two countries. Thus, though the course of the struggle is often, at least superficially, very different, events in each country profoundly effect the other. Nationalism just won't work.

Gager's conversion to nationalism was slow, but the signs have been there for a while. In 1971 he appointed a "Political Committee" of the SLNZ consisting of himself, Nevil Gibson (who was sympathetic to theories which deny Russia and China are in any sense workers states) and Bruce Jesson (at that time, and as far as we know still, a Maoist). Comrade Logan was hostile towards this "Political Committee" as a body unable to maintain a Trotskyist programme. One of the specific criticisms he made at that time was that it was likely to be soft on nationalism.

"After all, Bruce's main area of political work in the past has been nationalist, Nevil has shown a tendency towards nationalism and even in you one can perceive sometimes, certainly not nationalism, but perhaps an inward-looking approach to the development of theory." (Letter, Logan to Gager, 14 November 1971)

But if in 1971 Gager had only a certain softness towards nationalism, by 1973 he had developed a complicated crackpot theoretical structure to justify the most virulent form of nationalism, based on the subversion of the theory of permanent revolution and muddlement over the nature of political independence in the imperialist epoch, and involving a fetishised anti-monarchism and a reactionary-utopian concept of "Maori sovereignty".

Gager now comes to the startling conclusion that New Zealand is a colonial nation decisively subordinated to British imperialism. He argues that the ties of the New Zealand bourgeoisie to Britain have been so strong that they are afraid to declare "real" independence from Britain. Gager specifies what in his view has produced this situation: (a) for reasons never clearly indicated "real" independence implies Maori independence; and (b) cut off from Britain's military supplies, New Zealand capitalism would be at the mercy of insurgent Maoris. Therefore the bourgeoisie cannot achieve independence because of its fear of the Maoris.

Gager constructs this creaky edifice in order to justify an abandonment of any real struggle against New Zealand capitalism. If British domination is the keystone of New Zealand capitalism, one can pretend to attack capitalism by prating about British imperialism. But the construction is a fantasy violently at odds with reality. For if any country should have conformed to the dynamic imagined by Gager, it would have been South Africa, with its overwhelming majority of superexploited Blacks on whom the whole racist structure and the profits of the tiny white ruling class rests. Yet it was precisely because this pressure required a full-blown police state -- because the South African ruling class had so much to fear -- that South Africa broke from Britain.

There is little likelihood of a Maori insurrection in New Zealand, but it is ridiculous to think that the bourgeoisie could not suppress one unaided. Furthermore if aid were required, it could almost certainly be obtained more easily from the U.S. than from Britain.

Gager has confused colonial status with the ties to larger powers that are unavoidable for any small country. But this is scarcely reason to conclude that New Zealand still lacks its bourgeois revolution! As Lenin said:

"[F]inance capital, in its drive to expand, can 'freely' buy or bribe the freest democratic or republican government and the elective officials of any, even an 'independent' country. The domination of finance capital in general is not to be abolished by *any* reforms in the sphere of political democracy; and self-determination belongs wholly and exclusively to this sphere." (V.I. Lenin, "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination (Theses)", 1916)

Wealthy, mini-imperialist New Zealand is part of the advanced capitalist world. As independent as any other small nation, it can and has chosen to support different big powers at different times (the choice being determined, to be sure, by the political or financial rewards offering).

CRACK-POT ANTI-MONARCHISM

According to the RF/RM, the central means by which Britain holds its New Zealand colony in its imperialist grip is... the monarchy! Gager puts it best in an article written for the magazine "Counter-Culture" (No. 7, February 1974):

"Every privileged person in New Zealand considers an attack on the queen an attack on themselves. That is why in attacking the monarchy, WE BEGIN TO ATTACK THE WHOLE OF SOCIETY IN A NEW RADICAL WAY... It is the first step in transforming social protest into direct struggle against the most visible, most indefensible and malignant expression of class privilege in this country AT EVERY LEVEL." (emphasis as in original).

This is simply nonsense. While revolutionaries call for the abolition of the monarchy, to make a fetish of opposing it -- when it is currently a purely ideological and dispensable symbol representing no social power -- can only be

Continued on page four



CL leader
John McCarthy
(photo: AS)

Will the real United Secretariat please stand up? Two roads to betrayal . . . Part 2: "Communist" "League"

The Pabloist "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec) now finds itself split internationally even though a facade of unity is kept up. In at least six countries the split has become open, resulting in those countries in two competing sympathising groups representing USec. The World Congress of the USec recently held in Europe has decided to cover over the differences for the time being by formally recognising all these competing groups. Thus in Australia, the Communist League (CL), which split from the Socialist Workers League (SWL) in 1972, has recently claimed under the masthead of its paper, the *Militant*, that it is a "Sympathising organisation of the Fourth International", but neither the *Militant* nor the SWL's *Direct Action* has offered any explanation of this change in status.

The international split has centred primarily on three issues: the question of guerilla strategy in Latin America, backed by the centrist European-based majority led by Ernest Mandel, versus the reformist parliamentarism backed by the minority, led by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the U.S.; the attempts of the SWP to posture as orthodox on the popular front "Union of the Left" in last year's French elections, versus the defence by the French supporters of the USec of their support for this popular front; and the "strategy of the new mass vanguard" which is being pushed especially by the majority.

The USec was never a democratic-centralist international but a mutual non-aggression pact which allowed its various "sections" to pursue different opportunist policies and still claim the authority of affiliation to an "international". The new deal is no surprise but an organic development out of two decades of unprincipled combinations. But the workers' movement in Australia deserves an explanation of how these two hostile tendencies both claiming to represent the same international arose, and what they stand for.

In the last issue we discussed the reformism of the SWL. What was to become the Communist League actually represented a distinct tendency as long as a year before its attendance at the SWL's founding conference in January 1972, and had an entirely separate development.

Originally belonging to a Brisbane group called the Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP), headed by Brian Laver, John McCarthy visited Britain where he worked briefly with the International Marxist Group (IMG). Although associated with the USec majority, the faction-ridden IMG came to represent a distinct current, covering with a patina of ultra-leftism its tailing of petty-bourgeois movements.

Returning to Brisbane, McCarthy joined a group of people in the RSP around a vague endorsement of Trotskyism, initiated by Larry and Diane Zetlin (who had also worked with the IMG). In the course of a political fight leading to a split, Laver developed into a more and more consistent anarcho-syndicalist close to the British Solidarity group while the McCarthy/Zetlin wing founded the Labour Action group (LAG) in early 1971 as a

group which had leanings toward the USec and whose leaders looked to the IMG for political guidance.

According to McCarthy, writing in an internal CL bulletin following the split from the SWL ("Statement by the Political Committee of the Communist League on the split in the Socialist Workers League and Socialist Youth Alliance"), the LAG had approached the Socialist Review (SR) group in early 1971 for fusion negotiations:

"We had discussions and decided it was best not to fuse given the extent of the differences (anti-war movement, the policy of entrism) at the time."

Instead of uniting with the SR group, the LAG sought to build itself as an independent organisation, entering into discussion with the Sydney-based Workers Action group which was moving rapidly towards Healyism and became the nucleus of the Socialist Labour League (SLL). So unable was the McCarthy group to withstand the distorted criticism from the left by the Healyites that LAG split, losing three members (including Terry Cook and Greg Adler) to the SLL.

Frightened by this split, the LAG sought salvation from the Healyite menace by going back to the SR/SYA. No change in political line had occurred -- yet now it was decided that fusion was principled after all. The fusion, consummated after the January 1972 SWL founding Conference, was prepared by the LAG's attendance at the conference. For their part, the Percys prepared the fusion behind the back of the SR/SYA membership; many did not know that LAG existed until they appeared at the Conference.

MUDDLED "FUSION" LEADS TO "SPLIT"

The fusion statement produced after the Conference (written jointly by Dave Holmes (SWL) and Diane Zetlin) says not a word about the year intervening between the initial talks and the conference. Nor does it mention the earlier talks, nor for that matter the origins of the LAG. The fusion statement proclaims that "While differences remain between the two groups a principled basis for unification exists in their mutual support for the programme and organisational principles of the Fourth International [i.e., the USec]." The differences themselves are not mentioned; nor the fact that the USec which supposedly provided the basis for fusion was already deeply divided.

In the period following the fusion McCarthy and Zetlin began to recruit members of the SWL and its Socialist Youth Alliance (SYA) to IMG politics. At no point, however, was a faction or a political tendency established, not even when a distinct minority emerged at the June 1972 NC plenum with counterposed resolutions, and an "extraordinary discussion" (of sorts) authorised. Yet only three months after the plenum, the McCarthy group simply walked out.

The main political differences at the June plenum revolved around the positions of the IMG majority versus the reformist, pro-SWP line of the Percys. The criticisms of SWP work in the anti-war and women's movements went to the heart of one aspect of the SWL's reformist practice, and on these questions the Percy-led majority could not afford an open, thorough-going discussion. But the minority also proved incapable of carrying the struggle through to completion. To do so it would have been necessary to come to grips with the roots of the SWP's degeneration and Pabloist methodology.

There was in addition a political weakness on both sides regarding the ALP. While the Percys compared the ALP to a deformed workers state or a trade union, they abandoned any pretence of Marxist orthodoxy and declared their *unconditional* (political) support for the ALP, implying critical support for the reformist ALP government -- a capitalist government run by the ALP reformists. McCarthy argued the IMG's ultra-left view of that time that the BLP and the ALP are essentially bourgeois parties. Two issues of *The Metal Worker* (#3, and #4, 28 July 1972) issued by the Brisbane SWL under McCarthy's leadership, instead of critical support for the ALP, demand "Throw out the Liberals! For a workers government based on democratic trade unions." Other leaflets written and distributed by the SWL minority in Brisbane put forward the same line.

The resolution of the SWL majority at the plenum to "organise" the internal discussion --

entitled, "The Differences in Our Party and the Need for an Extraordinary Discussion" (*SWL Internal Bulletin*, No. 2 in 1972, June 1972) -- is certainly an "extraordinary" example of the SWL's gross bureaucratism and cynical contempt for the membership of the SYA. The major differences concerned the IMG attacks on the SWP which had direct relevance to the activity of the SWL; but discussion of these was virtually forbidden:

"Written discussion may continue on the CPA, tactics in the union movement and on ecology.

"In addition, the PC may authorise the initiation of oral and written discussion on other questions (such as the IMG positions) if it feels this is necessary [!] and that sufficient written discussion material is available." (emphasis added)

On the SYA, which at its April 1972 Conference had finally declared openly its political solidarity with the SWL:

"The SYA is the main arena [!] where we put our line into operation at this stage. We do not work in it as a fraction but questions that have been settled in the League are not to be raised in the youth unless authorisation is given by the national leadership.

"Given the existing low political level of most SYAers, it is not possible for SWLers to put forward clear political propositions and hope to have them acted upon if the debate about these takes place between SWLers and SYA.

"Exceptions to excluding SYAers may be made by the national leadership [i.e., the majority] when the SYAer is very close to the SWL [!] and politically developed enough to be considered a sympathiser [!]." (emphasis added)

Not only was the SYA officially in political solidarity with the SWL but since March the newspaper, *Direct Action*, had had a *joint SWL/SYA editorial board*. So the SYA was competent to co-edit the SWL's paper but not to discuss its political line!

Stung by the Percys' heavy-handed organisational measures, the minority disdained a real factional struggle and substituted provocations, such as openly breaking the SWL's bureaucratic discipline. In some cases the minority published leaflets (the ones noted above) in the name of the SWL with the minority line. Finally the minority in the Melbourne branch simply walked out in response to an organisational provocation by the majority (who denied full membership in the SWL to a candidate member on purely factional grounds). They walked out in a bloc with two other members, Rod Quinn and Jill Jolliffe, who did not support the politics of the minority, but issued a joint statement with them consisting exclusively of organisational complaints. A couple of weeks later, the minority members in Brisbane resigned *en masse* in response to no particular development, followed shortly by the minority in Sydney.

USEC SPAWNS MISTAKE

The split was unserious, taking place only six weeks before the opening of SWL pre-conference discussion. Moreover the split did not have a clear political basis, as the differences had hardly been clarified. The method of the minority was the same Pabloist method as that of the majority. The newly formed CL still claimed to support the USec. But the USec allowed the SWL to remain its official Australian sympathising section! On this basis alone, members of the CL who sincerely felt the split to be *politically* necessary should have immediately concluded that something was wrong with the USec. Instead, McCarthy first tried to explain away the obvious contradiction; then, capitulating to the needs of the faction fight in the USec, about-faced, declaring the split a "mistake".

The obverse of an arbitrary split on political grounds whilst evading a political struggle (an organisational solution to a political problem) is arbitrary expulsions, not for breaking democratic centralist discipline but for political opposition. In October, 1973, John Ebel, a member of the CL National Committee, was expelled apparently for no reason other than his allegiance to a minority tendency in the USec, the Revolutionary International Tendency. Members of this tendency

Continued on page four

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

a monthly organ of revolutionary Marxism for the rebirth of the Fourth International published by the Central Committee of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand

EDITORIAL BOARD:

Bill Logan (chairman)
David Reynolds (managing editor)
David Scott (labor editor)
John Sheridan (production and circulation manager)
Marie Hotschilt
Joel Salinger (Victorian editor)

GPO Box 3473,
Sydney, NSW.

GPO Box 2339,
Melbourne, Victoria.

Telephone 660-7647

Telephone 429-1597

SUBSCRIPTIONS: One dollar for the next twelve issues.

Two roads to betrayal

have been bureaucratically expelled from the SWP in the U.S. as well.

The continued Pabloism of the CL, albeit in an unstable, somewhat hysterical form, soon became clear. An early issue of the *Militant* (Vol. 1 No. 2, 13 October 1972) ran an article on the terrorist attack of the Black September guerillas on Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics, giving political support to random terrorism in general. Later on, the CL printed -- without comment or retraction of their earlier view -- an interview with a member of the Revolutionary Communist Group of Lebanon (USec majority) strongly criticising the Black September actions and terrorism in general (*Militant*, 22 January 1973).

On the war in Vietnam the CL introduced a note of rhetorical frenzy to its crass apologetics for the North Vietnamese bureaucracy. While the CL called for "victory to the Vietnamese revolution", they saw this revolution as one to be carried out by means of a class-collaborationist popular front coalition government. The NLF would be forced by the objective development of events to expropriate the capitalists (*Militant*, 22 January 1973). They lauded the Vietnamese Stalinists, butchers of Vietnamese Trotskyists, as revolutionaries. The CL supported the signing of the peace pact, which guaranteed private property and called for a "peaceful re-unification" of North and South -- deceiving the Vietnamese masses and betraying their struggle.

The CL's endorsement of popular frontism in Vietnam and elsewhere (not only in France, but now also in Chile; they deny that Allende's government was a popular front at all, repudiating the USec's highly "orthodox" December 1971 statement that said it was -- "Resolution passed unanimously by the United Secretariat..." reprinted in *Socialist Review*, May 1972) is part and parcel of the centrism of the USec majority and merely the reverse side of irresponsible adventurist tailism.

MANDEL "ENTERS" VANGUARD SUI GENERIS

Mandel, who went along with Pablo's theory of "new world realities" and liquidationist entrism in the 1950s, subsequently developed a sophisticated revisionist schema to explain away the tasks of revolutionists in a period of isolation and hiatus of the class struggle. Pablo's first "new world reality" fell through when the "war-revolution", in which he predicted that the bureaucracies in the deformed workers states would be forced to overthrow capitalist property relations internationally, never materialised. Its replacement was the idea that the "epicentre of world revolution" had migrated to the colonial world. Mandel accepted this idea. Its corollary was that the stabilisation of capitalism in the advanced capitalist world was a qualitatively new development that had put the revolution off the agenda in those countries pending general success of the colonial revolution. Its theoretical expression was Mandel's "neo-capitalism", which postulated that capitalism had overcome its internal contradictions sufficiently to prevent serious periodic economic crises through the intervention of the bourgeois state in the form of military and social welfare expenditures and state subsidies to technological development. In fact, this is a demonstrably false theory.

In the basic document of the USec majority (written in 1972) Mandel elaborates a smokescreen for continued opportunism, in the new situation faced by the USec since the events of 1968. The document contains a considerable body of rhetoric concerning the need (in the abstract) for revolu-

tionary parties, for a political struggle for the transitional programme, etc. But from behind the smokescreen there emerges the outline of revisionist reality. Two aspects are of particular interest: the "theory" of the "new mass vanguard" and an outline of the actual role which it is projected the USec will play in the workers movement.

According to Mandel, "A new vanguard of mass proportions has appeared, by and large eluding the control of the traditional workers organisations..." Supposedly first emerging among petty-bourgeois students, after 1968 "a powerful current of radicalised workers joined the specifically youth current..." Mandel goes on to describe the "worker current" of this "vanguard" as consisting mainly of "vanguard worker militants" who lack class consciousness but also lead economic, trade union struggles.

Central to Mandel's sleight-of-hand is a hidden shift in the definition of the vanguard. This is key because for Leninists the role of the *vanguard* -- the class-conscious political leadership of the working class -- is *decisive* for the victory or defeat of the revolution. Mandel's use is intended to provide an orthodox appearance to the *abdication* of the role of revolutionary leadership, which he invests instead in a layer of working-class militants who according to Mandel's description are not in any sense class-conscious political leaders.

To implement this perspective, the USec is to create "a trade union tendency that will openly fight for democracy in the union" which will fight "for class struggle militants taking the leadership of the union". But the question is, taking control of the union in support of *what programme?* By calling for the creation of a trade union tendency based solely on the demand for union democracy, the USec throws out the transitional programme as the basis to fight for an *alternative leadership* to the current misleaders. The USec's "single issue" union programme, no matter how often it is labelled "class-struggle", is *not qualitatively better* than that of the reformists because it is *qualitatively insufficient* to the tasks of the working class.

Earlier in the document Mandel lets slip what the USec majority really has in mind:

"Conducting a systematic propaganda campaign in the organised workers movement around transitional demands and helping in the regeneration of this movement [!] by *getting these demands* -- especially the demand for workers control -- adopted by *radicalising factions* in the trade union movement and in the *traditional workers' organisations* [i.e., the reformist workers parties]." (emphasis added)

Mandel has invented the myth that the "new mass vanguard" is a new kind of ethereal entity -- a sort of *de facto* centrist party without an organisation -- in order to justify the same liquidation by "entering" it as the USec has carried out in the past with its "*entrism sui generis*" in the reformist parties of Europe (not evidently wholly abandoned even now). Mandel's "new mass vanguard" has the character of a force "in its own right" which is a necessary product of the crisis of capitalism in the current period. Its convenient catch-all character puts it on the same plane of trans-historical categories as the traditional Pabloist "ever-deepening objective process of radicalisation".

TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMME REDUCED TO WORKERS CONTROL

The one area in which the CL has carried out any systematic trade union work is the Metal Trades, where its activity focused on an attempt to build a caucus mostly from the outside (particularly at the Evans-Deakins Shipyard in Brisbane) via a CL publication called *The Metal Worker*. The CL now seems to have dropped its work in this industry.

Here we have a concrete test of what the CL's politics would look like in practice if they were to do something serious. A special issue of *The Metal Worker* (21 August 1972) published a "Draft proposal for the metal trades fraction -- a call for national rank and file committees in the Metal Trades". Preceded by a long "introduction" asserting the need for proletarian revolution, the actual programme contains only three points: against state intervention in the trade unions; for democracy and rank and file control; and for "workers control". This skeletal left reformism is then described as a "Socialist program"! The CL has resolved the transitional programme into a minimum and a maximum component exactly as does the SWL in different milieus.

The "introduction" to this programme outlines quite explicitly the consequences of such a perspective -- the role of a pressure group on left-wing bureaucrats:

"The labour lieutenants of capitalism and the bureaucratic, self-seeking, Stalinist leaders must be forced to fight this struggle on a political level [!], or be replaced with political [!] proletarian leadership."

The CL substitutes the demand for workers

control for the rest of the transitional programme on a purely organisational level:

"It [workers control] asserts an alternative social regulator (workers' mass meetings) against the vagaries of the capitalist market".

The CL's attempt to reduce the transitional programme to the issue of workers control rests on the premise that the organisational experience of workers control (rank and file bodies which, borrowing a concept from syndicalism, are assumed to be *politically* independent of reformism and revisionism) necessarily leads to heightened class consciousness. It thus avoids the task of *combating* the bureaucrats politically.

On one of the most important questions facing revolutionists in Australia -- how to break the hold of the Labor Party over the masses of workers -- the CL has been wildly inconsistent and thoroughly confused. In its earlier period, the CL never expressed any disagreement with the IMG's former position that the British Labor Party was really a bourgeois party. The statement on the split from the SWL settles for an equivocal statement that critical support for the ALP is "never a question of principle, but solely of tactics" and tends to suggest opposition in principle to the tactic of entrism. Then, McCarthy's perspectives document for the CL's founding Conference puts at least *two different views* of the Labor Party at once. First, in relation to the separation and friction between the parliamentary wing and the trade-union bureaucracy which has always characterised such parties as the ALP, he says:

"It is not enough to reassert ad nauseum that the Labor Party is the political arm of the trade union movement ... [This expression] ignores the changing situation inside the Labor Party in favour of the petit-bourgeois Whitlam wing which has its basis in the bureaucracy of the bourgeois state as against the representatives of the trade union bureaucracy ... The Labor Party could quite satisfactorily be characterised as two parties in one."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE TWO

Crackpot New Zealand nationalism

characterised as crackpotism. By the same logic, the most revolutionary thing to do in the U.S. would be to attack the "stars and stripes".

The other element in Gager's new nationalism is an obscurantist, moralistic conception of the Maori problem.

"The bourgeoisie dare not press for complete national independence because that might mean the Maori people would press for *real* rights [whatever they might be], and not those allegedly 'guaranteed' by the Treaty [of Waitangi under which the Maori chiefs are supposed to have given the sovereignty of New Zealand to Queen Victoria in 1840]. The struggle for national self-determination becomes therefore a struggle for a return to the 1835 Declaration of Independence, which recognised the sovereignty of the Maori people. In fact the only way in which Maori 'rights' under the Treaty can become real rights is by recognition of the Declaration as the basis of New Zealand's existence as a nation, that is, the dependence of any government on the free consent of the Maori people. The only way the pakeha [white] workers can escape conviction together with their bourgeoisie swindlers is to abandon the rewards of swindling, that is, tear up the Treaty, restore the stolen lands, break with Britain, and build an independent country on the basis of the historic sovereignty of the Maori people [!]. Only on this basis can pakeha workers become part of the broad workers movement." (Gager, "Anti-Imperialism and Republicanism", in SAMJ)

Gager later claims that "Maori people still hold the sovereignty -- that is, that their right to self-determination must be ... the basis of any New Zealand independence." He abstracts the situation from the 135 years of historical development, which has, whether Gager likes it or not, well and truly stripped the Maori's of their "sovereignty". Perhaps it would console Gager to learn that most nations are built on the usurpation of the "sovereignty" of some original inhabitants. Most important, however, is the *result* of his mystification -- putting Maori and white workers in conflict. For Gager and the RF/RM we must no longer call for workers to fight for their interests as a *class* but instead must call on everyone to fight for the interests of the Maoris as a *race*!

LLENINISM VS NATIONALISM

Nationalism is a bourgeois movement, which,

CORRECTION:

In the article "Melbourne feminists ban communists", (*Australasian Spartacist* No. 6, March 1974) we listed the chair of the 30 September General Meeting as Cathy Gleeson. The chair was not Gleeson but Zelda D'Aprano.

The article also listed Patricia Filar as a member of the Socialist Workers Action Group (SWAG). Filar is not a member, only a consistent political supporter of SWAG.

subscribe

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST (published monthly by the SLANZ) -- enclosed is one dollar for the next twelve issues

All publications of the SLANZ and SLUS -- enclosed is three dollars for one year

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ POSTCODE _____

mail to: Spartacist League,
GPO Box 3473,
Sydney, NSW.

To begin with this formulation is totally inaccurate. Whitlam out of power does not have access to the government bureaucracy. In order to fulfill his ambition to run the bourgeois state he must be elected. Whitlam is utterly dependent on trade union support and knows it. Moreover the bureaucrats need the Labor Party to continue to better deceive the masses -- they need the Whitlams. The necessary and organic friction between the labour bureaucracy and the Whitlams results from the need for the Labor government as a *capitalist administration* to uphold capitalist profits in opposition to the strivings of the trade union rank and file to resist encroachments on their living standards. The union bureaucracy has a dual character: in order to betray, it must maintain its authority in the ranks with an occasional gesture of militant struggle. The conflict is one inherent in reformism (wherever its purveyors are located), which seeks to check the class struggle with the promise of bourgeois reforms. To describe the ALP as two parties is ridiculous. And if it were a "coalition" between a bourgeois and a reformist workers party then it would be a popular front, for which even the most critical support is unjustifiable.

Later in the same document, McCarthy rejects his earlier description for the anti-dialectical view of the earlier IMG.

"The Labor Party is the party of the working class as distinct from a working-class party [?!]. It is a bourgeois party in terms of its program which is for the alternative administration of the capitalist system and also in terms of its role which is to act as the main vehicle for bourgeois ideas in the working class. It is a party of the working class in that it holds their electoral allegiance. We do not, however, draw the conclusion that the Labor Party has a dual nature, i.e. is both bourgeois and working class. This is pseudo-dialectics at its worst. *The Labor Party is best defined as a bourgeois party, of the working class.*" (emphasis in original)

It is a party of the working class with a

bourgeois programme -- but does not have a dual nature? If not, then it must be either bourgeois or proletarian and the latter has just been excluded. Hence, according to McCarthy, the ALP is not different in kind from the Peronist *Justicialista* party or the American Democratic Party. But the CL had just given critical support to the ALP in the Federal elections. Thus the CL's apparent ultra-leftism turns out to be a formula for popular frontism -- critical support for a bourgeois party. This is no isolated "mistake". Last year, as part of an indistinct rightward shuffle, the IMG called for a coalition of all political tendencies opposed to the Tories (*Red Weekly*, 31 August 1973).

Even this incredible muddle is surpassed by the report of the CL's founding Conference in the *Militant* which contradicts the *Perspectives* document just adopted. This report simply drops the denial of the ALP's dual character. Well, Comrade McCarthy, what is it?

Two representatives of the SL attended the CL's Founding Conference on the invitation of McCarthy. The SL comrades were able to intersect the development of one CL member, Keith Olerhead. Olerhead had been introduced to Spartacist publications while still in the SWL by McCarthy himself, not because McCarthy agreed with SL politics but because his own partial divergence from SWP/SWL reformism converged with certain SL criticisms of the SWP. Olerhead had been a member of the SYA and SR in Melbourne before the fusion, and was recruited by McCarthy to his minority in the SWL.

By the end of February, 1973, Olerhead had come to agree with the SL -- one CL member to have carried its partial, temporary break with Pabloism through to completion. He launched a struggle within the CL, calling for an orientation toward fusion with the SL on the basis of the SL's consistent Trotskyism and the call for the rebirth of the Fourth International, rejecting the USec's pretensions. In April, McCarthy precipitated his resignation by stating for the CL Political Committee that "Comrade Olerhead's latest position is incompatible with membership of the Communist League", thereby indicating McCarthy's refusal to de-

bate the issues. Olerhead then joined the SL. (The documents of Comrade Olerhead's struggle are published in Revolutionary Communist Bulletin #7, *The Struggle for Trotskyism in the Communist League*).

What is the CL? It is without any firm programmatic basis, not even a coherent centrist one. What does the CL have to say about the ALP? What is its position on popular fronts? How does it propose to build a revolutionary alternative to reformism in the unions? Is it, after all, for or against indiscriminate terrorism? Does it still think of Ho Chi Minh, Le Duc Tho and Castro as stalwart revolutionaries? Do they think these people should belong to the "Fourth International"?

Even on the basic Trotskyist stand for the military defence of the deformed workers states the CL has equivocated. One member of the CL in Melbourne has consistently argued publicly against the defensive use of nuclear weapons by China and the USSR. Warned of this fact, the CL as an organisation has made no clarification. Is the CL to extend its break with Trotskyism by refusing to defend against imperialism the collectivised property relations in these countries?

If the split from the SWL was a mistake, why has not the CL reunited with it? If the SWL in the CL's view is totally devoid of revolutionary potential, why have they not denounced them for their renegacy? The pages of the *Militant* maintain a pristine silence.

The falling apart of the USec's federated revisionism exposes sharply the bankruptcy of Pabloism. One tendency in the USec, the Revolutionary International Tendency, seems to represent a revolutionary alternative to both the SWP and Mandel. It is only by a victorious struggle against both major tendencies in the USec that an International dedicated to the Bolshevik programme of Lenin and Trotsky can be re-forged, by regrouping around its banner revolutionary currents among the cadres of the ostensible Trotskyist movement. The Spartacist League is dedicated to this task.

Smash Pabloite revisionism in all its forms!

For the rebirth of the Fourth International!

whilst to attack its right to exist would merely deepen the divisions it creates in the working class, must be transcended in order to unify the proletariat against the international bourgeoisie. Trotsky, like Lenin, knew that to support the right of self-determination is not to support politically the nationalist bourgeoisie or nationalism as an ideology; rather it is one concrete expression of the struggle for democracy and equality of oppressed national and cultural groups, whose oppression cuts across class lines. This struggle is necessary for Bolsheviks in order to break down the suspicion and hatred fostered under capitalism between such groups within the proletariat. Such distrust prevents the development of cross-cultural international class solidarity. The fight for democracy must be guided by demands appropriate to the circumstances. In many instances the slogan of self-determination is appropriate, but certainly only when there is a possibility of the oppressed people setting up a new state on a separate territory; that is, where that oppression has a national basis. "[I]t would be wrong to interpret the right to self-determination as meaning anything but the right to existence as a separate state." (Lenin, "Right of Nations to Self-Determination", p. 39).

MAORIS AND THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION

The recognition of the right to self-determination does not mean advocating a separate state. It means only that the oppressed nation concerned must be allowed to make the decision.

The proletarian vanguard must support the right of an oppressed nation to self-determination, cutting the ground from under bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalist demagogues. But only in some specific circumstances -- for instance, where colonial domination retards the development of a country -- do Marxists advocate national independence as part of their programme.

There is no significant area of New Zealand with a predominantly Maori population. Maoris are spread throughout the country and, indeed, thoroughly integrated into the political economy, with the highest concentration being in Auckland, the largest New Zealand city. To set up a separate Maori state would shatter the economy and be to the severe material detriment of everyone, but particularly Maoris. However, Gager's self-determination has nothing to do with that of Lenin or Trotsky. He does not use it as a *democratic* slogan to make the relations between cultural groups those of equals, and so he does not propose a separate Maori state, but rather, Maori control of the existing one. For Gager, self-determination in New Zealand applies *only* to Maoris:

"... independence demands the undoing of the Treaty of Waitangi and the recognition that the Maori people still hold the sovereignty -- that is, that their right to self-determination must be, once the con-

sequences of imperialist deception are overthrown, [?!] the basis of any New Zealand independence..."

So self-determination is transformed into the slogan of utopian liberal guilt.

It is no use moralising about the fact, but of the three million people in New Zealand, rather under a quarter of a million are Maoris. They are, on the whole, a specially oppressed section of the working class, and seen in this way by revolutionaries can come to play a vital and leading role in the revolutionary movement. But it is the job of revolutionaries to unite, not to divide, the working class, and "recognition that the Maori people still hold the sovereignty" is, to the extent that it is meaningful, a call to divide the interests of white workers from those of Maoris.

The divisiveness of the RF/RM orientation is emphasised by the fact that while on the one hand it goes overboard in promoting the interests of one quarter-million section of the New Zealand population in order to suck up to petty-bourgeois nationalist utopians, it engages in racist attacks on another, slightly larger section -- those born in Britain. A few quotations from an article by Bruce Jesson (an editor of SAMJ and a member of both the RF and RM) in *Counter-Culture* No.7 will show how blatantly:

"Of all the immigrant groups, the poms are the largest and probably the most unpopular"

"Scratch a pom and you find an imperialist"

"They treat all foreigners patronisingly, or arrogantly, or a mixture of both."

"At the moment we are receiving a flood of xenophobic pommie migrants."

"... anti-pommie bigotry is to be welcomed as a healthy development."

If the Red Federation is to make race the issue, they will, to the extent that they are successful, encourage vicious anti-Maori racism among an important section of white workers.

MAORIS AND THE NEW ZEALAND REVOLUTION

The New Zealand revolution depends on the building of a united and combative working class behind a vanguard drawn from the most class-conscious elements of both the Maori and white sections of the working class. Such a vanguard can only be built in the struggle for revolutionary programme, and that programme in New Zealand must be especially sensitive to the special oppression of Maoris. For example, despite the relatively small number of people who speak Maori as a first language, the programme must guarantee equal rights with English for Maori language and culture in the educational system. Anyone should be able to opt for tuition in Maori.

While the *existing* Maori land rights must be guaranteed for as long as their present owners

want to keep them, the Transitional Programme's call for the nationalisation of the land and collectivisation of agriculture has a special importance in New Zealand. The land which was stolen and became the basis of New Zealand capitalism will be expropriated from the expropriators and put to the service of the workers state. Maoris must be led not to look backwards to their forebears' former land rights, but forward towards socialism, and to the benefits for all mankind to be derived from a really scientific use of the land which will become possible under workers democracy.

GAGER'S MYTH OF CANNON'S "ECONOMISM"

In his article on "Anti-Imperialism and Republicanism" Gager puts the national struggle before the class struggle, and says that the working class as a whole must too. Some sort of justification for this has been long prepared in Gager's fake "anti-economism", the most recent expression of which is to be found in his article on "James P. Cannonism". As we said in our 1972 document "Development of the Spartacist League":

"Gager's 'anti-economism' is no more than an unsuccessful attempt to dress his denial of the proletariat's role in orthodox clothing."

The article on "Cannonism" claims that the Spartacist League is rotten because it stands by the tradition of the SWP of the 1940's. He "proves" his point by attacking a document which he claims we "adhere" to: the main 1946 political resolution of the SWP, published together with Cannon's convention speech under the title "The Coming American Revolution".

We recognise the 1946 resolution as a clear statement of a proletarian revolutionary perspective. Some of Gager's criticisms of the resolution are not *quite* wide of the mark, of course. They are the ones he borrows, if only to distort,

Continued on page six

SPARTACIST

SYDNEY CLASS SERIES

for contacts of the Spartacist League

on The Revolutionary Party

Stalinism

The Permanent Revolution

Telephone 660-7647 for information

Chilean repression

defend Chilean political prisoners contrasts with their energetic campaign for the restoration of Solzhenitsyn's citizenship.

The demonstration was addressed by two of the delegates from the commission, speakers from the CSCP, the CL and the SLANZ. The delegation members stressed how they were going to find out what was happening but gave no commitment to demand to see specific political prisoners. The CSCP is one of a myriad of pressure groups that float around (and in) the CPA, and the speakers from this group confined themselves to tales of horror and to urging that more pressure be put on the Minister of Immigration (through respectable means of course). John McCarthy, speaking for the CL, did little more than repeat the stories about the Junta's repression and call for an ongoing broad-based campaign which would appeal to trade unionists, students and "all progressive people" in Australia.

In contrast to this a speaker from the Spartacist League explained the importance of working class defence of the Chilean political prisoners. He pointed out that it was not enough simply to call for the defence of the Chilean workers movement, but that it was crucial that the lessons of the disaster in Chile be assimilated. In particular he pointed out that the popular front Allende government was based on an alliance with a section of the Chilean bourgeoisie and had paved the way for the military coup. Only by breaking completely with the bourgeoisie could the Chilean working class advance on the road to socialist revolution. A second speaker from the SLANZ spoke of the cases of Romero and Van Schowen. He pointed out that though the SLANZ had severe political differences with the MIR it regarded it as absolutely imperative that the international workers movement take up the defence of these two men and all other Chilean political prisoners. Spartacist banners and slogans in English and Spanish highlighted the defence of Van Schowen and Romero and demanded: "Free all Victims of Junta Repression"; "Smash the Reactionary Junta! For a Workers Revolution in Chile!"; "Free Corvalan, Free Vitale!"; "For International Working Class Solidarity! Defend the Chilean Workers Movement!"; "No popular front! For a Workers Government in Chile!"; and "Ban LAN Chile! Ban Chilean Shipping!".

In Sydney the Spartacist League also called a meeting to organise a united front public meeting to defend Romero and Van Schowen. At the initial organising meeting only the CL and the SWL turned up, though the CPA and the SLL had given vague assurances of attending. The SWL quickly made it clear that it was not very interested and did not plan to do anything to build the defence campaign, a policy it confirmed by not turning up at either the airport demonstration or a subsequent organising meeting. The SLL, in the person of Jim Mulgrew, came to this second meeting, only to provide a further example of its sterile sectarian posturing. Mulgrew demanded that any defence

bloc must be based on the demands "Down with the *Unidad Popular*, Down with the Popular Front". Rejecting a united front, which operates on the principle of *unity in action, freedom of criticism* (as Lenin said, march separately, strike together), Mulgrew proposed what amounted to a bloc for propaganda. Such blocs are inherently unprincipled. Mulgrew argued (echoing Stalin and Thaelmann) no real defence is possible without a strategy for socialist revolution. But the politics of the SLL are *qualitatively insufficient* for a successful revolution in Chile. The IC helped reinforce illusions in the Allende government in 1970 by urging Chilean workers to "hold Allende to his promises". Mulgrew, of course, is not serious in proposing the slogan "Down with the Popular Unity" after it has been smashed by the military. This is merely a way of avoiding any real defence of the Chilean workers movement. By their abstention from united action of concrete defence the SLL helps to betray the workers.

Bourgeois repression always aims first to deprive the working class of its leaders. But the revolution in Chile is not yet decapitated. Many class-conscious workers and revolutionary intellectuals remain who can assimilate the lessons of the disastrous consequences of the popular front and the parliamentary road. The objective potential for a new revolutionary outbreak -- and hence for the development of a revolutionary party -- grows as the isolation of the Junta increases. But a genuinely revolutionary party capable of leading the Chilean working masses forward to a victorious proletarian revolution can only be built by ruthlessly combatting illusions in the "Chilean way" and the apologists for the Allende government. To campaign to preserve the lives of misguided but subjectively revolutionary cadres, including many undoubtedly attracted to MIR centrism, without analysing the experience of the *Unidad Popular* and the failures of the Chilean left groups, is to abandon the struggle for a revolutionary leadership.

THE POPULAR FRONT AND THE MIR

The Allende *Unidad Popular* government was a classic popular front, a government which included sections of the Chilean bourgeoisie (represented by the Radicals and Left Christian Democrats and at times the military which later overthrew it!). The participation of these bourgeois elements guaranteed that the *UP* would not go beyond the bounds of capitalism. To characterise the *UP* as simply a "reformist" government as does the CL and some of its international cronies, allows for the abandonment of the Leninist policy of complete opposition to such coalitions with the bourgeoisie in favour of "critical support" for these formations, exactly the policy of the *Ligue Communiste*, French supporters of the USec majority followed by the CL toward the popular frontist *Union de la Gauche* in the French elections.

The authority of the established political leadership of the Chilean proletariat -- concentrated overwhelmingly in the reformist SP and CP -- was used to bind the workers to this bourgeois-reformist bloc. The Allende regime opposed

strikes and sent the army against peasants who had occupied the large estates; sought to prevent or smash factory occupations; and refused to arm the workers against the military, proclaiming instead the "loyalty" of the military to the constitution. The *UP* thus left the working class disorganised, leaderless and defenceless to face the inevitable reactionary attacks. Allende was finally toppled not because he threatened the capitalist order in Chile but because he proved incapable of controlling the Chilean working masses whose expectations had been aroused by the empty promises of the *UP* government.

Although the MIR has stood clearly to the left of the reformists, its politics, a variety of new left Castroism, have fallen qualitatively short of revolutionary Marxism. The MIR abstained during the elections of 1970, but with the *UP* victory declared its "critical support" of Allende. The only possible road for a revolutionary vanguard was implacable opposition to and exposure of the *UP*, demanding that the mass workers parties break from the coalition and take power in their own name, calling for the creation of armed work-

Bautista Van Schowen, MIR leader held by Chilean Junta in military hospital. (photo: Rouge)



ers militias and the extension of the industrial cordones, as the potential nucleus of workers councils counterposed to the bourgeois state.

Since the September coup, the MIR has called for a new popular front, a "political front of the anti-gorilla resistance, incorporating all left forces and a sector of the Christian Democratic Party (CDP) (the democratic petty-bourgeoisie)". (MIR Statement, "*A los trabajadores, a los revolucionarios, y a los pueblos del mundo*", January 1974). The MIR has not learned the lessons of the *UP* debacle.

Right from the time of the establishment of the Allende regime the international Spartacist tendency took a clear stand on the question of the popular front in Chile, at a time when those like the American Socialist Workers Party (co-thinkers of the SWL) and Healy's "International Committee" (of which the SLL is the Australian section) were capitulating before the *UP* government by giving it some form of critical support. The military coup tragically confirmed our analysis and warnings.

Only the resolute defence of the MIR and the other tendencies suffering repression can preserve the possibility of political struggle against their false conceptions, necessary to the development of a vanguard party that can lead the Chilean workers to victory. In accordance with this principle the Spartacist League will continue to press forward that defence.

Crackpot nationalism

from the Spartacist League, whose published record does not entirely correspond to Gager's picture of uncritical acceptance. We refer the reader to "Genesis of Pabloism", an article published in *Spartacist* #21, Fall 1972 (available from the SLANZ), for a clear and correct evaluation. The Spartacist League sees the post-war SWP as flawed but still open to the alternative possibilities of later correction, or the degeneration which in fact took place, much later. Gager thinks they constitute a fundamental break from a revolutionary perspective. But it is not unusual for the leaders of the RF/RM to get things a bit out of proportion.

Gager claims that his mythical Cannonite "economism" caused the SWP in the forties and the Spartacist League of today to capitulate to trade union politics. In fact he is twice wrong, for both the old SWP and the Spartacist League see that entering the trade unions is important precisely *in order* to fight the politics and practices of the bureaucratic leading strata through which they increasingly become the instruments of the bourgeois state, in the knowledge that only in the fight for political leadership by the revolutionary party can the proletariat be welded into the conscious instrument of revolution.

It is evidently in order to disprove the validity of the fight for revolutionary leadership in the trade unions that Gager says:

"Some 'anti-revisionists', with their usual glibness, try to confuse the issue: is the problem the unions or ... the leadership? The answer is clearly stated in Trotsky's 'The Unions in Britain': 'the trade unions [not just the leadership] now play not a progressive but a reactionary role.'" (Ellipsis and brackets as in Gager)

Here, Gager's petty falsifications have descended to the pathetic. Gager's insertion runs

counter not only to the rest of the article from which his "quote" is torn, but everything that Trotsky (and Lenin too) ever wrote on the trade unions. We place the quotation in context:

"The trade-union bureaucracy ... turned all the accumulated authority of the trade unions against the socialist revolution and even against any attempts of the workers to resist the attacks of capital and reaction. "From that point on, the most important task of the revolutionary party became the liberation of the workers from the reactionary influence of the trade-union bureaucracy ... As was said, the trade unions now play not a progressive but a reactionary role. Nevertheless, they still embrace millions of workers... Under these conditions, the thought easily arises: Is it not possible to bypass the trade unions?... The fundamental mistake of such attempts is that they reduce to organisational experiments, the great political problem of how to free the masses from the influence of the trade-union bureaucracy. It is not enough to offer the masses a new address. It is necessary to seek out the masses where they are and to lead them." (Leon Trotsky, *Writings, 1933-34*, pp 74-75)

GAGER'S CALL FOR UNION-SMASHING

Gager's only actual example of our "economist" "Cannonism" is that we "refuse to fight against the enforcement of union membership by the capitalist state, so supporting unions which can be smashed by the same hand which created them, and giving up the struggle to win workers to unionism by rank and file organisation, militant industrial action and the political programme of Trotskyism."

The SL once said of Gager's call for "voluntary unionism" that it "in New Zealand is clearly a call to end the system under which all unions have won from the employers union membership as a condition of employment. Thus 'voluntary union-

ism' would in itself smash all but the strongest unions." ("Development of the Spartacist League") We do *not* support (and never have) the use of the state to enforce union membership and we oppose unions taking workers to court to enforce membership. But we support the *union* forcing it out of the employers. This is in part actually the situation in New Zealand; most unions have negotiated clauses in their awards (the documents regulating conditions of employment) which effectively make membership compulsory. Whilst it is true that the state on paper enforces the awards, the fact is that it plays no more important role in enforcing union membership than any other provision. Gager's position can only be construed as denying that New Zealand trade unions are legitimate workers organisations at all, a denial of the necessity of defending their right to exist. Workers in New Zealand are already unionised, and if they are to be won to communism, they must be intersected in the existing unions -- something the RF/RM certainly has no perspective of doing. Despite their weakness and complicity with the bourgeois state, we stand together with the unions against those like Gager and the bourgeoisie who would really prefer their demise. At the same time revolutionaries must fight politically against the *bureaucracies* through which they are increasingly integrated into the state, by organising caucuses -- arms of the Leninist vanguard -- as an alternative union leadership, based clearly on the transitional programme.

As we said in "The Development of the Spartacist League":

"... Gager's inability to see and exploit the contradictions between the bourgeois interests served by the union leadership and the working class membership has resulted in a sectarianism so extreme that it amounts to an attack on the working class."

His subordination of the class struggle to a manufactured "national" struggle, must be seen as merely the latest manifestation of his anti-working-class position.

Maoist dead-end

from the "fascist" state was part of a general programme of turning the universities into "sanctuaries", most notably for draft resisters. The Maoists in this instance endorsed a form of petty-bourgeois protest, eventually quite fashionable, which recoiled from any thought of carrying out political work inside the conscript army. The WSA tailed along behind the Students for a Democratic Society and left Young Labor Association leadership of the Draft Resisters' Union.

The early period of Maoism came to an end in late 1970 when it was decided by leading cadre of the Monash Labor Club, who were under the influence of the CPA(ML), to set up the Worker Student Alliance which was to give the Maoist students an off-campus identity. From the beginning, WSA was conceived as a "non-sectarian" "anti-imperialist" front. In practice, people close to the CPA(ML) took up leading positions in the organisation and while liberals and pacifists were welcomed, militants of other ostensible revolutionary groups, such as the CPA and the Healyite Socialist Labour League were driven out of WSA as "wreckers". Although considered sympathetic to the CPA(ML), the WSA was not a youth group but rather an organisational arena for CPA(ML) recruitment and activity, with the political domination of the CPA(ML) remaining indirect, based on discouraging internal political discussion and debate.

WSA was organised in branches with little contact or interaction with one another, making for easier bureaucratic control. Inside some WSA branches, usually the most important, an apparatus kept secret from the membership was formed to direct the various struggles -- the Young Communist League (YCL), clandestine youth wing of the CPA(ML). The political health of the organisation could not fail to be sapped by such an administrative method, tailor-made for cliquism, bureaucratism and cynicism.

WSA, SYA COMPETE FOR MORATORIUM CARRION

In its first ventures off campus, the WSA devoted the better part of its energies to building the Vietnam Moratoriums. They added their own brand of anti-American chauvinism which in the guise of anti-imperialism was used to attract more radical elements. In addition WSA cynically attempted to create artificial confrontations with the cops in order to assist the radicalisation with some dramatic bashings of students. The cynical manoeuvres of the Maoists often appeared revolutionary to those disgusted with the reformist, impotent "peace crawls" and those on the left who tailed them. The role of the Socialist Youth Alliance (SYA) branded Trotskyism as reformist in the eyes of many Maoists who took SYA "Trotskyism" for good coin.

The Maoists' political line in the anti-war movement was usually superficially to the left of the SYA. The Maoists held to a view of the struggle in Vietnam as that of the "patriotic People" against the imperialist invaders and their puppets, not really different from the SYA's idea that the war was all about self-determination for Vietnam. The Maoists explicitly, and the SYA less openly, applied the formula of a "two-stage" revolution in Vietnam, choosing to ignore the fact that in half of the country capitalist property relations had been overthrown. In addition, the Maoists were more enthusiastic than the SYA in their uncritical endorsement of the treacherous North Vietnamese Stalinists and the popular frontist NLF. But there remained another difference: the Maoists wanted to call on the Australian people to support the struggle of the NLF in a positive sense, and to help smash US imperialism. For the SYA, it was a question of simply letting the Vietnamese alone. This difference, combined with tactical adventurism, allowed the Maoists to posture as revolutionary by comparison with the staid, legalistic SYA. On the other hand, the WSA refused to agitate for strikes against the war, one concrete, class-struggle measure that CPA(ML) leaders in the WWF and BLF bureaucracy were manifestly in a practical position to carry out.

Although attracting for a short period students who were seriously looking for a revolutionary alternative, the WSA's adventurist, jingoist reformism was unsuccessful in breaking the grip of the Labor Left on the Moratorium movement. With the successful co-optation of the movement by Cairns and Co. which channelled protest into the successful 1972 ALP election campaign, and the rise of bourgeois defeatism in a section of the American bourgeoisie and their Australian counterparts, the movement declined in significance and impact. WSA was then faced with the need to harden up its own organisation and to develop some sort of strategy to guide it in the next phase of its work.

The search for such a strategy led straight back to the Menshevik theory of a Popular Front struggle for an "independent Australia". But the WSA proved incapable of repeating the historic betrayals of Stalinism except at the level of farce. Retreating from the pretence of principled proletarian politics at astonishing speed, the WSA began to engage in increasingly frenzied attempts to unite with all sorts of liberals.

pacifists and bourgeois politicians -- including the Australia Party of millionaire Gordon Barton and Liberal Party figures such as Edward St. John. *Vanguard* went so far as to publish in full a reactionary chauvinist speech by St. John, proposing an *alliance* to him in the most unctuous terms (*Vanguard*, 27 January 1972)!

A brief catalogue of WSA campaigns over the past couple of years gives an idea of the enormous appetite of the Maoists for class collaboration. There has been a continuing campaign against the foreign military bases, particularly American, in which the WSA promoted as leaders Socialist Left figures such as Bill Hartley and George Crawford. Now all socialists would support the destruction of the US bases, not because they are foreign, but because they are a weapon of international capitalism directed against the working class. But for the WSA the issue was not a class one but one of national independence. WSA has also attempted to unite with petty-bourgeois elements -- doctors, lawyers, artists and trendies -- to oppose the Housing Commission and the construction of freeways in the now fashionable inner suburban area of Melbourne. There could not be and was not any class content to this campaign. On environmental issues the WSA has in general acted as the adventurist, violent wing of the ecology fad.

Passing over such absurdities as the "long march" around rural Victoria, it is important to mention the anti-Nazi campaign in 1972-73. Once again the motivation was an intended bloc with morally outraged liberals against a currently insignificant group of psychopaths. (For the anti-Nazi campaign and its meaning see the Spartacist League leaflet, "Free WSA -- Smash Australian Nationalism", issued February 24, 1973, available from the SL on request). The retreat from Marxism reached an all-time low in this campaign as WSA highlighted United Nations resolutions on Fascism in its propaganda (*Struggle*, 21 January-3 February 1973).

Paralleling the degeneration of the WSA was the right turn of Mao's bureaucracy following the completion of the Cultural Revolution purge. A series of blatant betrayals from the Sudan to Ceylon, faithfully tailed by the CPA(ML), spread confusion and disillusionment among those who had regarded Maoism as a guide to revolution. A revealing example is the history of an article by this writer on the JVP uprising in Ceylon in April 1971 in the first days of the rebellion before the line had come through from Peking. First appearing in *Red Moat*, the Maoist paper at LaTrobe, and

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

YLA expulsions

even a member of the YLA at the time of the expulsions! It appears that the only basis for these two expulsions is that we were both associated with the SYA in some way at one time. Such "guilt by association" purge techniques threaten to destroy any semblance of democracy in the YLA.

The basis of these expulsions is *political*. *Workers democracy* is one of the basic principles of the labour movement. It is absolutely essential that differing political perspectives are freely debated in order to develop a programme that can best guide the struggle against capitalism. Otherwise, the labour movement will remain dominated by alien, capitalist ideology. Stifling political debate in the labour movement *weakens* the working class in the face of an enemy that commands all the resources of social and governmental institutions.

I believe that the current leadership of the ALP is one that *has* betrayed and *will* betray the real interests of the working class. It has, in the past, supported real, if modest, reforms and on that basis it has won recognition by workers as the political party of their class. It is this contradictory character of the ALP that makes a struggle for an alternative revolutionary leadership of the ALP necessary. Recent developments in the ALP confirm the bankruptcy of the programme of the Whitlam/Hawke leadership and also demonstrate that the current expulsions are a highly unequal, biased application of discipline.

The prices and incomes referendum last December is one example. Whitlam's policy was totally counterposed to the needs of workers and offered no answer to the effects of inflation on real wages. In effect it was a wage freeze which no one in the labour movement should have supported. A "Yes-Yes" vote was also supported by capitalists, including the bourgeois Australia Party.

Another issue in the expulsions is apparently the conflict in the Near East. According to accounts in *Direct Action* and other newspapers, supporters of Zionism have been instrumental in carrying out the expulsions because of the SYA supporters' endorsement of the Arab regimes in the last war. Here as in the case of the prices and incomes referendum the charge against the SYA supporters appears to be that they supported positions that were at variance with those of the leadership -- a "No-No" vote in the referendum and pro-Arab sentiments. But in both cases the *Federal President* of the ALP, Bob Hawke, took public stands against the

later published in edited form in *Vanguard* in May 1971, the article sided with the JVP, criticising the pro-Moscow Stalinists in the bourgeois Bandaranaike cabinet for reformist parliamentarism, and supporting the "strategy" of armed struggle: "the armed road is the only road". Within the month, word of the Chinese support for the bloody repression got out; and there followed a confused retraction in *Vanguard* supplemented with numerous apologies reprinted from the Ceylonese Maoists.

In its process of decline WSA has, on the whole, decayed rather than suffered splits, although there have been a few of a political nature. One group of LaTrobe University students who had been important in making LaTrobe a Maoist stronghold, notably Fergus Robinson, split to the right in 1972, publishing a shortlived paper *Continent* which combined small "l" liberalism rejecting any kind of working class orientation with extreme national chauvinism. Members of the Footscray-Sunshine branch arrived at a syndicalist position. They held that the USSR was not yet state capitalist but did not know exactly what it was. More importantly, they saw themselves in the tradition of Lawson and the Australian IWW, retaining, however, their social patriotism. Members of this group, which has since disintegrated, included Danny Purcell, now an "independent" syndicalist who recently merged a group in the Melbourne BLF with the CPA's caucus in that union.

The Maoist student movement in receding has left much political refuse cluttering the terrain. While it is unlikely that Maoism will become as important a tendency in the near future as it has been, it is still important to salvage the maximum number of potential revolutionaries first radicalised by Maoism. This can only be accomplished through an unsparing political exposure of Maoism, and a Marxist analysis of its origins as the ideology of a privileged caste in the Chinese deformed workers state. Only Trotskyism is capable of providing such an analysis, as the modern continuator of Marxism-Leninism, and the framework for real revolutionary internationalism which alone is capable of defending the gains of the Russian and Chinese revolutions by restoring the political power of the working class in those countries through political revolution, and laying the basis for the development of true socialism through world-wide workers revolution, led by a reborn Fourth International.

by David Grumont

[Comrade Grumont, now a member of the Spartacist League, is a former member of the Worker Student Alliance and the Maoist Young Communist League.]

government. He called for a "Yes-No" vote in the referendum, and is well-known for his rabid enthusiasm for Zionism, which led him to criticise the Labor government for not having backed Israel in the October war. One can only conclude that the expulsions have nothing to do with any "disloyalty" and are designed to get rid of particular opponents of the current YLA Victorian leadership.

The question of the struggle in the Near East is an extremely important one for the labour movement. Zionism is a reactionary nationalist ideology which like all nationalism, is used to pit workers of different ethnic and national backgrounds against each other in the interest of the capitalists' national ambitions for which workers must pay with their blood.

The SYA draws from the reactionary way in which the state of Israel was created with the aid of imperialism the conclusion that Arab nationalist ideology and the designs of the Arab ruling classes to replace the Zionist capitalists as the oppressors in Palestine are "progressive". But the nationalism of the Arab capitalists is as brutal and self-serving as that of their Israeli counterparts. Both sides have attacked the Palestinian masses and the Arab rulers have carried out massacres against the Kurds in Iraq and the one million South Sudanese blacks. The conflict in the Near East cannot be resolved by bourgeois nationalism of any variety.

The right to self-determination of *both* the Palestinian Arab and the Hebrew-speaking nations in the region must be defended in order to unite the workers in these countries against all the capitalists. But the solution lies *not* in separation under capitalism but in the formation of a *bi-national socialist state* in the region as part of a Socialist Federation of the Middle East. The SYA's stand can only help to drive the Israeli workers into the arms of the Zionists, perpetuating the impasse. It is clear that I do not agree with either side in the Victorian YLA dispute.

It is because I see a struggle for a revolutionary programme in the YLA as necessary that I have attempted to make my own views clear. If the expulsions are allowed to stand, it will only be a defeat for the working class and for workers democracy. The expulsions must be rescinded and all the expelled members reinstated with full rights. It is through *political struggle* and neither organisational manoeuvres nor bureaucratic methods that the YLA can achieve the necessary political clarity to advance the labour movement toward its socialist goal.

Faternally,
A. Naughton

The rise and decline of the WSA

Maoist dead-end in Victoria

At its height the Maoist student movement in Melbourne could claim roughly 400 to 500 members and periphery. Now the Maoist Worker Student Alliance (WSA) has been formally disbanded, the influence of Maoism having shrunk back almost entirely to the cadre of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) (CPA-ML). Maoists today confront the need to account for this precipitous decline. Individuals who have left the Maoist movement because it has empirically proven devoid of a revolutionary perspective can transcend its limitations only by understanding the roots of the particular betrayals of Maoism, internationally as well as in Australia, in its fundamental rejection of revolutionary Marxism from the outset.

Maoism became a distinct tendency on the Australian Left with the establishment in 1964 of the CPA(ML) as a split from the then pro-Moscow Communist Party of Australia (CPA). The CPA(ML), based largely in Melbourne, consisted mainly of a number of long-time Stalinist functionaries and a stratum of union bureaucrats based primarily in the Waterside Workers, Builders Labourers, and Tramway Workers unions who blocked with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in the Sino-Soviet split.

The leaders of the CPA(ML), successful labour lawyer Ted Hill and union officials Ted Bull and Clarie O'Shea had a long history of complete subservience to every zigzag of the Moscow bureaucracy from the 1930s onward. But after the Sino-Soviet split had become open, they retrospectively expressed their dissatisfaction with Krushchev's feeble de-Stalinisation, launched at the 20th Congress of the CPSU with the famous "secret speech". They had, it seems, inexplicably kept their own counsel until the early 1960s when the Hill group (about 200-300) transferred their allegiance to Peking, where it remained.

MAO & KRUSHCHEV PURSUE "PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE"

As one could have foreseen, the split in the Australian Party and the debate which preceded it led neither wing to seriously consider their Stalinist past nor the history of the international workers movement. This failure was inherent in the nature of the Sino-Soviet split which represented only the increasingly open clash between the competing national interests of two privileged, bureaucratic castes beyond the reach and control of either the Russian or the Chinese proletariat. When the Chinese condemned the CPSU for a "one-sided understanding of peaceful co-existence" what they condemned was the Kremlin's pursuit of "peaceful co-existence" with US imperialism at the expense of the national ambition and interests of the Peking bureaucracy.

China's own pursuit of "peaceful co-existence" had been no less "one-sided"; witness the Geneva Conference of 1954, where the Chinese bureaucracy helped compel the Vietminh to withdraw troops from roughly half of the territory of Vietnam that they controlled, and the Bandung Conference in 1955 at which Chou En-Lai declared the "five principles of peaceful co-existence".

The depth of the split represented the working out of the logic of "socialism in one country", the ideology and *raison d'être* of both of the rival bureaucracies. The nationalism which lies at the core of "socialism in one country" makes it impossible for there to be any real and meaningful proletarian internationalism. Stalin disbanded the Comintern in 1943; Mao has never so much as mentioned the need for a new international. Thus it was no accident that there was a basic continuity in the theory and practice of the CPA(ML) and that of the "revisionist" CPA of previous decades. This continuity was strengthened by the fact that both continued to be based on their allegiance to parasitic bureaucracies in deformed workers states.

In the main polemical document of the split, E.F. Hill's *Looking Backward, Looking Forward ... Revolutionary socialist politics versus trade union politics*, Hill criticised the rampant "economism" of the CPA's trade union work (which in fact centred around support for the machinations of CPA union officials), its fawning conciliation with the ALP, and its eager pursuit of parliamentarism. However, Hill himself stuck tenaciously to the "revisionist" CPA's main theoretical plank, the originally Menshevik two-stage theory of revolution. The first stage of the revolution was to consist of a democratic anti-imperialist struggle which would free Australia of foreign economic and political control in collaboration with the "patriotic progressive national bourgeoisie", to be followed by the socialist revolution -- in the indefinite future, of course. Only the "foreign devils" have changed; Britain having been replaced by America, and lately by Japan.

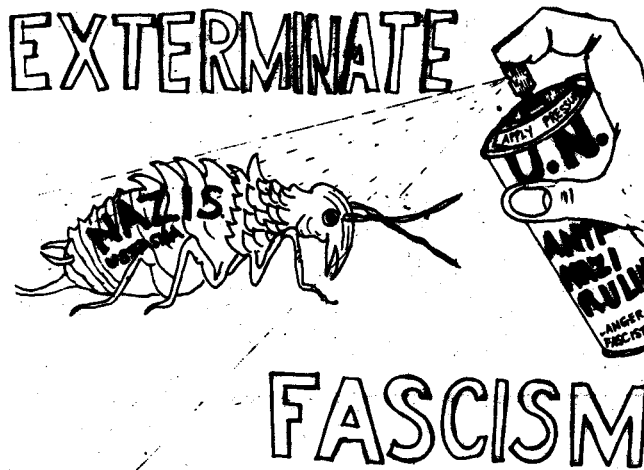
The outlook of national chauvinist liquidation was summed up in the conclusion of *Looking Backward, Looking Forward*:

"Supreme optimism and supreme confidence in victory of the struggle for genuine Australian Independence from Anglo-US Imperialism, and then for socialism are fully warranted."

For a workers' party in mini-imperialist, bourgeois-democratic Australia to place upon its banner the slogan of "national independence" for that country is simply to tie the proletariat to its own national bourgeoisie, promote national chauvinism, and destroy proletarian internationalism. Moreover, it postulates that the bourgeois revolution in Australia (a part of the advanced capitalist world) is still on the agenda!

Undoubtedly, many elements in the Australian bourgeoisie, long the dutiful servant of British and American capitalism, would like more room to manoeuvre, to play a more independent role, the role of a nation balancing between the great powers. Indeed this kind of a role becomes a greater possibility as the world divides into more or less equal rival imperialist camps. But the working class can have no interest in aiding the manoeuvres of Australian capitalism for greater profits at the expense of the proletariat overseas and in Australia. The "two-stage" theory applied to Australia reduces to reformism and class collaboration indistinguishable from Gough Whitlam's "new nationalism".

The Menshevik two-stage theory of revolution, refuted by the course of the Russian revolution, reappeared on the historical stage with the Stalin-Zinoviev-Kamenev bloc against Trotsky in 1923. At the time it was used to attack the theory of permanent revolution vindicated by Oc-



Cartoon from WSA's *Struggle* (23 Jan-3 Feb 1973) depicts empty UN bombast as "weapon" against fascism.

tober in order to undermine the authority of Trotsky, the author of the theory, within the CPSU. But by the late twenties, the two-stage theory had come to occupy a central place in Comintern strategy, particularly for colonial or semi-colonial countries. This metamorphosis was the result of the rise of a privileged bureaucratic caste in the Soviet Union, the product of the isolation of the new workers state and its poverty, which gave rise to privileges within the state apparatus and a weakened and passive working class. The new bureaucracy saw its own interests not in the spread of world revolution -- for the spread of the proletarian revolution would have been a direct threat to its privileges. Instead, it sought friends amongst ruling classes in the capitalist world -- Stalin's policy of "neutralising" the imperialist bourgeoisie at the expense of the revolutionary movement in those countries.

In the colonial world, the Communist parties were to forgo any thought of revolutionary initiative, and instead dissolve themselves into the "progressive national bourgeoisie". This policy led to unparalleled disasters as the bourgeoisie used the Communists and then destroyed them when they felt strong enough. The most tragic example was China in the 1920s, when Stalin ordered the fledgling CCP to liquidate into the Kuomintang (the Chinese bourgeois-nationalist movement) which prepared the CCP's massacre at the hands of Chiang Kai-Shek after this "progressive" (whom Stalin had made an honorary member of the Comintern!) had suppressed the Shanghai revolt. The lessons were not learned by Stalinists of any kind: the Indonesian Communist Party, under Maoist influence, was destroyed in similar fashion as a result of their long-standing bloc with Sukarno. In the advanced capitalist world, the Stalin-led bureaucracy used the Comintern parties as so many instruments of their manoeuvres between the imperialist powers. Out of the same degeneration of the Comintern developed its criminal betrayal in Germany in permitting the Nazis to take power without firing a shot, followed by the Popular Fronts of the 1930s designed to prop up capitalism in countries with a "friendly" attitude toward the USSR. In the second imperialist war the Stalinists embraced the most frenzied social-

patriotism. It was with this heritage that the CPA(ML) proposed to make the Australian socialist revolution.

The immediate period after the split in 1964 was taken up with furious polemics in the CPA(ML) press against the "revisionists" and manoeuvring against the CPA for influence and office within the trade-union bureaucracy. On the whole, however, the Maoists did not gain in prestige or numbers in this period. This changed dramatically in the late 1960s when antagonism to US imperialism's assault on Vietnam produced widespread unrest amongst Australian students. At the same time the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" in China, consciously portrayed by the Maoists as a popular uprising against bureaucratism (in reality an inter-bureaucratic fight in which rival cliques manipulated sections of the population against each other) aroused deep responses amongst many left-wing youth. There was considerable irony in E.F. Hill touring campuses praising the Red Guards and denouncing Liu Shao-Chi as "China's Krushchev" as he, like the rest of the original CPA(ML) had been won to China's anti-revisionist campaign by those who had been on top at the time -- the Liu Shao-Chi group!

The student Maoists made their breakthrough at Monash University in anti-war work in the late 1960s and then extended their influence to LaTrobe University. The influence of Maoism outside Victoria (except at Flinders University, South Australia) was to remain small. They were to attract considerable support amongst the student population because, firstly, they acquired a reputation of militancy and hardness -- in contrast to the wishy-washy left liberalism of the New Left -- accompanied by an extreme activism. This activism had a mindless quality, as the Maoists took on university administrations on a bewildering range of issues, from collecting money for the NLF to the problem of insufficient parking lots. With no coherent strategy, they adopted whatever issue would appeal to sufficiently large numbers to get a campaign going.

Maoists at Monash and LaTrobe were originally scornful of New Left movements for the "radical university", not openly criticising but ignoring campaigns for structural reforms to achieve "student/staff control", Marxist courses, etc. But guided only by an appetite for short-term success in mobilising students, and lacking a Marxist analysis of students and their role in society, they soon capitulated. Thus the Maoist-led Monash Labor Club backed with almost no criticism the student government reforms which produced the Monash Assembly of Students (MAS), revealing in their later attitudes toward MAS a substantial potential for parliamentary cretinism (see *It is Right to Rebel*, pp 62-66).

MAKE-BELIEVE RED ARMY VS FANTASY FASCISTS

The Maoists eventually took their student power politics to ludicrous extremes with their campaign in 1971 for a "Monash People's Militia" to "train in street fighting, tactics and military theory, to protect the campus from police invasion and to unite with off-campus struggles against the State" (*It is Right to Rebel*, p 206). Maoists justified their call by appealing to liberal moral outrage with proclamations that fascism was around the corner. Their appeal contained a kernel of truth, recognising in a distorted way the real nature of the bourgeois state which will resist revolutionary change -- and sometimes even modest reforms -- with armed force. But to call for a revolutionary army based on petty-bourgeois students to defend the bourgeois myth of the "independent university" reflects a lack of basic common sense, not to mention Marxist understanding. A "Monash People's Militia" (who are "the People"? ... for socialism on one campus? Any serious student Maoists should have asked themselves why Gallagher, Bull *et al.* were not busy organising armed workers militias, since if it is a question of imminent fascism, only a unified, armed working class can successfully smash it, opening the road to the direct seizure of state power by the proletariat. Hill and Gallagher were willing to let the student Maoists play at armed revolt as long as it did not threaten the CPA(ML)'s toehold in union officialdom.

The Maoists' conception of "creeping fascification" encompassed basically mistaken ideas both of the nature of the state and the nature of fascism. It depicted the enemy not as the bourgeois state as a whole but only particular repressive acts of the state, reducing the definition of fascism to the use of repression by the state apparatus.

Fascism to be successful must acquire a social base among desperate sections of the petty-bourgeoisie in a social crisis to use as a battering ram against the organisations of the working class. In becoming the bourgeois state power, supported as a last resort by a capitalist class threatened with destruction, fascism must destroy the framework of bourgeois democracy, the preferred, "normal" form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Protecting the "autonomy" of the campuses

Continued on page seven