



Fraser moves towards showdown

Partly in anticipation of the demise of wage indexation and partly in answer to a series of complementary employer attacks, a minor strike wave has swept the country over the past two months. Many of the disputes during the strike upsurge explicitly challenged the restrictive "guidelines" accompanying wage indexation that over the past year have been used to effectively reduce real wages; others have been responses to provocative actions or attacks by employers. Among the key disputes:

- * Wool stores throughout Australia faced near-complete shutdown during an eight-week strike after a lockout and widespread stand-downs in a dispute over bale weight handlings and a \$20 pay rise.
- * Airline transport workers began a campaign for their log of claims (including a \$20 wage rise) with overtime bans and rolling strikes.
- * Painters and dockers at Garden Island have been on strike for over 10 weeks following the Navy's refusal to grant a determination for penalty rates from their Federal award on the grounds that it breached the indexation guidelines. Recently the navy has threatened a lockout (see box, page four).
- * Meatworkers are threatening a national strike backed by the ACTU if employers go ahead with their threats to invoke State penal powers on "illegal strikes". Meatworkers in NSW, Queensland and South Australia are continuing strikes at abattoirs and bans on supermarkets



Continued on page two

Building workers demonstrate at recent Arbitration Commission hearings in Melbourne.

Appeal of the Committee for the Defence of Imprisoned Chilean Workers, Soldiers, Sailors:

FOR INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY TO SAVE THE LIFE OF MARIO MUNOZ!

The coup d'etat carried out by the armed forces in Argentina has presented to the world an image of moderation and respect for human rights. But the reality is brutally different. Silently the Argentine junta has unleashed a bloody repression against all revolutionaries, trade unions and people's organisations. Meanwhile rightist organisations continue to operate with impunity, including the criminal Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance (AAA), which has redoubled its attacks and assassinations.

This is the tragic truth that the entire world must know: raids, tortures, abuses, mass arrests. The lives of thousands of Argentines are in serious danger. Militants of other nationalities who happen to be there, in particular Chilean political refugees, are likewise victims of this persecution, being turned over to the Chilean military junta or shot on the spot without legal proceedings of any sort.

Among those condemned to death is Mario Munoz Salas,

Chilean revolutionary working-class leader. The brutal persecution of which Mario Munoz is the victim must be internationally publicised. Pursued and condemned to death by the Chilean junta, he is today threatened with the same fate at the hands of the new Argentine government, which claims to respect international conventions regarding asylum and human rights.

Only 48 hours after the demagogic declarations of the Argentine junta, a military patrol of national police, composed of 30 men in battle gear, raided his house at 3 am (March 25). By mistake they first invaded the house next door, violently breaking down the doors and brutally beating those they found inside. Upon discovering their error they proceeded immediately to the house of Mario Munoz. They entered, smashed up the interior and dragged out of the house his companera, Olga Meneses Ibaseta, their five children and a relative who was present, beating them all the while.

Continued on page two

Tailoring program
to practice

West European Stalinists delete "dictatorship of proletariat"

SEE PAGE 6

Continued

Fraser . . .

- in support of pay rises up to \$23.
- * Sydney nurses struck and instituted continuing work bans and limitations when a \$9 pay rise awarded last December was cancelled on the grounds that it was outside the "catch-up" provision of the guidelines.
- * NSW train guards and Wollongong steel workers pressed ahead with claims in open conflict with the guidelines, and AMWU leaders dusted off their \$20 claim that has sat for the past year in the Industrial Commission.

Many of the disputes have been channelled into arbitration, with the unions unable as yet to make any decisive gains. In response to the wool and airlines disputes Justice Moore, chief technician of wage fixation and president of the Federal Arbitration Commission, immediately brought forward the review of the indexation system, accompanied by stern warnings from Prime Minister Fraser and Employment and Industrial Relations Minister Street that there were to be no exceptions to the guidelines.

Exit wage indexation, enter open union bashing

Because indexation has already succeeded in producing a sharp fall in the rate of wage rises, and with unemployment showing no signs of abatement and a more accommodating government in Canberra, employers now feel in a position to take on the unions directly. The bosses tolerated indexation as long as they felt they needed it to help impose wage restraint. Now they argue that indexation is only guaranteeing rising costs and that wages will be reduced more effectively in the "open market". The collapse of indexation and a resulting showdown between Fraser and the unions appear inevitable; the upsurge in class activity is itself a practical demonstration that there is considerable determination among workers to resist the bosses' attack. In response to government and employer submissions to the indexation hearings, BWIU chief Pat Clancy has called on the ACTU to prepare for national strike action if less than the full 3 percent increase corresponding to the rise in the consumer price index for the January quarter is handed down. Such necessary defensive action cannot however be limited to defence of the present indexation scheme, itself a form of wage freeze. The demand of such strike action should be for a full, UNCONDITIONAL monthly cost-of-living adjustment to all wages and an immediate 35-hour week for all with no loss in pay!

The employers have also stepped up their offensive against union organisation. In the Garden Island dispute the Navy initially attempted to use sailors as scabs; in the building industry the Master Builders' Association is continually able to cleave deep divisions among building workers by exploiting the bureaucratic feud between the rival Gallagher and Clancy factions. But the clearest example of the planned and coordinated nature of the employers' moves is within the printing industry in Sydney. Backed by funds from the Packer family's Australian Consolidated Press, a management stooge who was expelled for scabbing from the Printing and Kindred Industries Union (PKIU) has had his expulsion ruled invalid by the Industrial Court; and through him the press barons are now attempting to have a form of union hire (the "okay card" and "classification" rules) declared contrary to law. Simultaneously the Fairfax press monopoly is moving ahead with its plans to introduce new technology to replace skilled printing labour, threatening drastic redundancies. More ominously still, the federal government is introducing legislation giving control of union ballots to the state, and an Industrial Relations Bill com-

plete with a wide array of vague and all-encompassing industrial "offences".

Fraser's austerity program, so far only minimally introduced, promises to be unveiled in its full draconian proportions in the August budget. The intention to drastically reduce government spending, which has drawn the fire of liberal economists fearful of increased class polarisations, is no Australian aberration. Throughout the entire advanced capitalist world an offensive against state-funded social services is taking place as the capitalist class is driven to seek a partial solution to falling profitability in a massive transfer of resources from the state sector to private capital. Naturally, the cuts in state expenditure always turn out to be at the expense of working people; not the bosses -- Fraser even wants to eliminate pensioners' \$40 funeral benefits!

Bureaucratic treachery threatens workers' resistance

The fear of an all-out confrontation with the labour movement is not restricted to nervous liberals. Some of the more perceptive anti-union ideologues such as *New Statesman* "socialist" Paul Johnson and fanatic anti-communist BA Santamaria have harked back to the 1973-74 Heath administration in Britain. The ruling-class "blunder" in Britain as Santamaria saw it was that

"instead of working with the 'constitutional' section of the trade union movement against the communist/fellow travelling section, it 'jammed' Mr Gormley, the miners' leader, into an alliance with his union enemies." (*The Australian*, 2 April)

With the public stand of leading ACTU executive members Cliff Dolan, Jack Egerton and John Ducker for an indexation increase less than the full 3 percent, openly lining up with Fraser, the possibility for such a bloc clearly exists. For Fraser, and the quislings of the labour bureaucracy, an effective alliance must include Hawke who also has already demonstrated, although less drastically, his openness to a "modus vivendi" with Fraser. However, such barefaced treason, in the face of a closing of ranks amongst the Laborites following the bitter public infighting and backstabbing after the election debacle and the Iraqi money "scandal", is certain to cause sharp factional divisions between the left and right wings of the labour bureaucracy.

The powerful, supposedly "left" AMWU leadership has announced that it will oppose any attempt to undermine a united "opposition" to the Fraser government (*Scope*, 25 March). It is undoubtedly true that only a united working-class struggle can turn back Fraser's offensive. However, Fraser is simply the capitalist state's present chief executive -- as was Whitlam before him -- and any serious class struggle to oppose his policies would necessarily come into increasingly sharp conflict with the whole system of capitalist production, a conflict the labour bureaucrats, "left" and right, must avoid.

The position of the bureaucrats at the top of the labour movement depends on the preservation of capitalism. Thus, while maintaining all the while that they really are for socialism "in the long run", they separate the struggle against Fraser from the struggle for socialism to ensure that their "fight" against Fraser doesn't go too far. Their call to "unite against Fraser" is therefore only a cover for the indefinite postponement of a fight against capitalism and is intended merely to return a new reformist Labor Government led by the same people who in three years of Labor rule consciously connived in the attacks on workers' living standards. The labour misleaders, both "left" and right, are the real threat to victory in the fight against Fraser as against capitalism. *Out all the bureaucrats! For a Labor Government pledged to expropriate the capitalist class!*

The reformist Communist Party of Australia (CPA) has outlined its own strategy for an "anti-Fraser coalition" in the draft 1976 CPA Congress Political Resolution (published in *Tribune*, 7 April) which in spite of the CPA's prattle about "independent mass action" is primarily directed at the aspirations of the ALP "left", including Uren, Cairns and the so-called Socialist Left, to run a "humane" and "socially aware" bourgeois state. Their "action program" to guide the prospective coalition is blatantly reformist. The call for "social control over profits[!] and investment policy designed to meet real social needs" and "a social decision of the proportions of the national income going to wages, social welfare and investment" is explicitly class-collaborationist, merely reformulating the old Stalinist/reformist demands for "advanced democracy"; the call for nationalisation is restricted to "strategic sections of the economy"; and the

Continued on page nine

Letters

Sydney

Sydney

Dear Comrades,

Dear Comrades,

The article "Workers revolution to smash apartheid" in *ASp* no 30, while making important documentation of the tradition and repression faced by the overwhelmingly black proletariat of South Africa made an important omission in not mentioning the role of white workers and the Marxist attitude towards it. Also in the context of an article that dealt exclusively with the "non-white" labour movement, the call for "the right of 'non-white' workers to freely organise labour unions" could well be misconstrued as a perspective of dual unionism.

In South Africa where, unlike black, Coloured and Indian workers, white workers do have the right to organise and strike and where the ratio of wages is often around 20 to 1 the reality of the class struggle does almost inevitably point in that direction. But although white workers clearly do constitute a materially-based "aristocracy of labour", they too, as Vorster organises the country on a war footing, will face increasing employer attacks....

Should a revolutionary crisis develop in South Africa before the working class seizes power in the major industrial countries of Europe and North America, there could well be a protracted race-class civil war following an uprising by the black proletariat. It is not excluded that a majority of white workers may line up behind their capitalist masters and in opposition to the vast majority of the working class. In such a situation, revolutionary Marxists would firmly place themselves on the side of the oppressed black workers, while continuing to fight for a multi-racial workers and peasants republic.

Despite this likelihood Marxists must, where possible, attempt to win over white workers under attack to a united class-struggle perspective while clearly realising that any adaptation to the backward consciousness of white workers will inevitably lead to class betrayal.

Fraternally,

Ern C
Vicky A

The lead article in *ASp* 29 (March 1976), after describing the "vendetta" of newspaper proprietor Rupert Murdoch against Whitlam, ended with the slogan: "Expropriate Murdoch and all the capitalist press barons!" This could give the impression that this is seen as an answer to Murdoch's lies *under capitalism*.

However, as the article on the press question in *ASp* 26 (25 November 1975) points out, it is only a workers state that will wrench the mass media from the hands of the historically and morally bankrupt capitalist class through expropriation (that is, without compensation). The press will then be run by the workers with space provided for the views of all those tendencies who support the workers state.

Any attempt by the capitalist state to nationalise the press must be opposed by revolutionaries, who know that any such attempt to silence political views will inevitably be used primarily against the working class. Such a move against the bourgeois press could only come from a capitalist government forced to suppress certain of the political rights of the bourgeoisie in the interests of the ultimate preservation of the capitalist system.

The class consciousness of the proletariat under capitalism can only be raised through irreconcilable ideological struggle against reactionary ideas and not through fake schemes of bourgeois nationalisation of the mass media. For this struggle the workers' press must be built.

As an SL banner at a demonstration against News Ltd during last year's political crisis demanded: Not nationalisation by the bourgeois state but expropriation by a workers government!

Comradely, Peter M

ASp replies: The writer correctly points out the ambiguity in the article which suggests that expropriation by a bourgeois state may be an answer to the capitalist media's bias, and that any moves by the bourgeois state to censor the press, through nationalisation or whatever, must be opposed. The slogan referred to was meant only to underline that the press barons' control of the media can be finally smashed only when, along with the rest of their class, they are expropriated -- by a workers government. ■

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Guerrillas in power

As part of a broader effort to "institutionalize" its rule, the recent congress of the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) approved a new "socialist" constitution for the country to replace the bourgeois "Fundamental Law" of 1940 (see "Castro Holds First Ever CP Congress", *Australasian Spartacist* no 30, April 1976). Prime Minister Fidel Castro also made use of the occasion to present the "revised standard version" of the history of the Cuban revolution.

The extensive overview was doubly significant in the context of the new constitution, since one of Castro's key original demands -- from the attack on the Moncada on 26 July 1953 until taking power from the dictator Batista on 1 January 1959 -- was precisely for a return to the 1940 constitution. This raises the crucial questions of the class character of the guerrilla movement, the nature of the revolution it carried out, and the causes and significance of the shift from a "democratic" bourgeois program to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie.

These issues are of tremendous significance for communists as they concern the most fundamental questions of revolutionary strategy in the backward capitalist countries. Can the petty bourgeoisie -- traditionally considered by Marxists as a vacillating group, incapable of giving independent class leadership -- carry out a socialist revolution, as the revisionist "United Secretariat" claims? Or has Cuba remained throughout a capitalist state, as the Maoists and Gerry Healy's fake-Trotskyist "International Committee" contend? On the other hand, if, as uniquely put forward by the international Spartacist tendency, the Castro regime has since late 1960 been a deformed workers state, how was it formed, and what implications does this have for the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution?

A closet communist?

In his opening speech to the PCC congress, "Comandante" Castro repeatedly praised the policies of the Stalinist leaders of the Soviet Union. Having long ago become locked into the Soviet orbit, Castro now seeks to project his current policies back onto the militant youth who stormed the army barracks in Santiago in 1953 and the nucleus of the Rebel Army that initiated guerrilla struggle in the Sierra Maestra mountains three years later.

Castro includes among the "solid pillars" on which the leaders of the 26th of July Movement based themselves "the principles of Marxism-Leninism". He goes on, "Even though this was not the way of thinking of all those who had embarked upon the road of revolutionary armed struggle in our country, it was that of its main leaders" (*Granma*, 28 December 1975). Castro also claimed that among the young combatants there was "a deep respect and admiration for the old Communists" of the pro-Moscow People's Socialist Party (PSP), who "had held aloft with unyielding firmness the noble banners of Marxism-Leninism".

The reality was considerably different. Castro's speech was silent on the program of the anti-Batista movement, but in an oblique aside for the benefit of those who know something of the struggle during the 1950s, he added: "... not only the most resolute action was necessary, but also astuteness and flexibility on the part of revolutionaries.... The proclamation of socialism during the period of insurrectional struggle would not have been understood by the people, and imperialism would have directly intervened in our country with its troops."

A similar theme can be found in many right-wing attacks on Castro, which charge that he "betrayed the revolution" against Batista and hoodwinked the people. Certain left-wing apologists for the Havana regime also put forward the myth of Castro the "closet Marxist-Leninist" who "pulled a fast one" on the imperialists. "The leaders of the Revolution had to know the people and talk to them in terms they were ready to understand," wrote Edward Boorstein in *The Economic Transformation of Cuba* (1968). Others, such as the ex-Maoist Progressive Labor Party (PL), who attempt to criticize Castro from the left claim they were initially captivated by "Che [Guevara]'s slick way of moving Cuba to socialism behind everybody's backs" (Jake Rosen, "Is Cuba Socialist?", *PL*, November 1969). Professing that they "no longer believe[d] in nifty gimmicks", PL concluded that Cuba was still capitalist. The truth is more complex -- more dialectical -- than such simple-minded talk of Castro and Guevara as con artists.

All these "explanations" come down to a conspiracy theory of history and ignore the real

social character of Castro's movement. To begin with, Castro himself did not even pretend to be part of the workers movement during the struggle against the US-backed dictatorship. Instead, he was a radical Jacobin petty-bourgeois democrat, following in the footsteps of "the Apostle" of Cuban independence, Jose Marti. His political background was as a liberal student leader and constitutionalist lawyer. He was for a time head of the student government at the University of Havana, and in 1948 voted for Eduardo Chibas, candidate of the Ortodoxo Party, who was running for president of the country on an anti-corruption program. In 1952, Castro was a candidate for the Cuban Congress on the Ortodoxo slate, but a coup d'etat by former military strongman Fulgencio Batista forestalled the elections.



Workers' militia in Cuba during early 1960s.

After the March 10 coup, the young lawyer's first action against the dictator was not to undertake agitation among the workers and peasants, but instead to appeal to an emergency court in the capital to arrest Batista for violating the Code of Social Defense! Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy's simplistic apology for Castro (*Cuba: Anatomy of a Revolution*, 1960) commented: "When his petition for the imprisonment of Batista was rejected by the court, Fidel decided there was only one way in which the usurper could be overthrown -- revolution." His goals were listed as "honest government" and a "truly sovereign Cuba".

The methods which the young lawyer then resorted to were well within the framework of traditional Latin American bourgeois politics. Various pseudo-Marxists -- from Castro himself to the followers of fake-Trotskyist Ernest Mandel -- pretend today that the Cuban guerrilla "strategy" was somehow to the left of traditional Stalinist reformism because it engaged in "armed struggle". They "forget" that in the unstable conditions of Latin America, just about every political tendency has at one time or another "picked up the gun". Castro's first attempt at revolutionary action, for instance, was nothing but an old-style *pronunciamento*.

The plan for the assault on the Moncada was to surprise the 1000 soldiers quartered there, seize their arms, then take over the radio station and broadcast the last speech of Eduardo Chibas (who had committed suicide in 1951), followed by a call to arms inviting the Cuban people to rise up against the dictator. Similar actions have been carried out scores of times in Mexico, Bolivia, Peru or Argentina. However, in this case it failed, partly due to bad planning, and most of the 200 attackers were killed during the attack or brutally murdered by Batista's torturers in the mopping-up operation which followed.

Program of the 26th of July Movement

At his trial the following September, Castro (who had been caught hiding in the hills around the eastern provincial capital) was able to turn the tables on the government with a dramatic speech indicting the regime for its oppression of "the people". In this speech, later edited into a pamphlet entitled "History Will Absolve Me", Castro laid out five "revolutionary laws" that would have been immediately proclaimed after the capture of the Moncada barracks.

These projected decrees show quite clearly the social content of the revolution which the July



Castro: radical Jacobin turned Stalinist.

26 rebels were planning. The first was to return to the constitution of 1940; second was to grant land titles to tenants and squatters (with the state indemnifying former owners on the basis of rental values they would have received over the next ten years); the third provided for profit sharing, the fourth that cane growers would get 55 percent of sugar production (instead of the lion's share going to the mills), and the last was to confiscate "ill-gotten gains of all who had committed frauds during previous regimes".

As the cold-warrior journalist-academic Theodore Draper wrote: "There is virtually nothing in the social and economic program of History Will Absolve Me that cannot be traced at least as far back as ... the 1935 program of Dr. Grau San Martins' Autentico party, let alone the later propaganda of Chibas" (*Castroism: Theory and Practice*, 1965).

Castro's anti-Batista struggle following the catastrophic landing of the yacht *Granma* in Oriente province in December 1956 is usually thought of exclusively in terms of a tiny guerrilla band gradually winning support from the *jibaros* (peasants). But the leader of the tiny 26th of July Movement was simultaneously negotiating with a number of prominent bourgeois politicians. Thus the "Manifesto of the Sierra Maestra", dated July 1957 and the most widely circulated of the rebel documents, was signed by Castro, Raul Chibas (brother of Eduardo) and Felipe Pazos, ex-president of the National Bank of Cuba.

The Castro-Chibas-Pazos manifesto called for "democratic, impartial elections" organized by a "provisional, neutral government"; "dis-social[ion] [of] the army from politics; freedom of the press"; "sound financial policy" and "industrialization"; and an agrarian reform based on granting ownership to squatters and tenants (with prior indemnification of owners). The ten-point program was to be carried out by a Civilian Revolutionary Front, made up of representatives of all opposition groups.

The final programmatic statement from the Sierra Maestra, issued in October 1958 as the Batista regime was crumbling, was "Law No 3" on agrarian reform. Based on the principle of land to the tiller, it did not mention cooperatives or state farms.

When Fidel and Raul Castro swept out of the Sierra Maestra to link up with Ernesto "Che" Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos in the plains of

Continued on page ten

**SIXTEEN
YEARS OF
STALINIST
RULE**



IN CUBA

Freney appoints himself attorney for bosses' goons

Cops are not workers

Since the March 18 Timor Moratorium march from Sydney University to Hyde Park a continuing polemic has been carried on between the Sydney University Communist Group (SUCG), the CPA's "independent" campus operation dominated by its Left Tendency supporters, and the Socialist Workers Party/Socialist Youth Alliance (SWP/SYA). The reformists of the SWP/SYA seized upon the SUCG's attempts to generate a confrontation with the cops (by such means as its infantile "Rules for Demonstrators" leaflet distributed prior to the march) in order to brand criticism of the SWP's responsible, respectable reformism with the stigma of adventurism. *Tribune*, the CPA paper, has made no official comment; but the "Trotskyist" SWP/SYA has gained unsolicited "Stalinist" support in a letter to *Tribune* (7 April) from the CPA's Denis Freney.

The SUCG's actions were clearly adventurist. Whether or not it is desirable for a demonstration to confront the cops for a specific tactical objective depends both on the relation of forces and on the political value of the objective. With over 100 cops to around 250 demonstrators, March 18 was not the time to force the relatively unimportant issue of marching in the street. Moreover the SUCG, far from acting impulsively, had decided to seek the confrontation in advance in full knowledge of the unfavourable relation of forces, consciously pursuing a policy which could have given the cops an opportunity to break up the demonstration. Thus there was no question of an *unavoidable* confrontation, as the SUCG has dishonestly implied (*Red Letter*, 24 March 1976), however vicious the cops may have been. The SUCG's infantile, petty-bourgeois con-

ception of confronting the cops as a moral imperative in itself is frivolous, stupid and dangerous.

However, what Freney found "particularly offensive and incorrect politically" about the SUCG leaflet, and moreover a "provocation", was its statement that "police are not part of the working class to be won to the revolution as public servants or soldiers are for example. The police force has to be totally destroyed: do not regard cops as misguided fellow human beings"

"The fact that the police was originally recruited in large numbers from among Social Democratic workers is absolutely meaningless. Consciousness is determined by environment even in this instance. The worker who becomes a policeman in the service of the capitalist state, is a bourgeois cop, not a worker. Of late years these policemen have had to do much more fighting with revolutionary workers than with Nazi students. Such training does not fail to leave its effects." (LD Trotsky, "What Next")

(SUCG leaflet as quoted in *Tribune*, 7 April). Freney went on to elaborate how "police come mainly from working-class families" and "a substantial minority are ALP supporters" although grudgingly conceding that "of course, they, like soldiers [are] an arm of state repression and therefore are heavily indoctrinated."

Apart from a certain imprecision, the SUCG statement which so horrifies Freney is an essentially correct statement of a basic Marxist truth. Police are not the same as soldiers. Their consciousness is determined through their role as the front-line day-to-day defenders of

bourgeois legality. The reality of Freney's "cops are (just heavily indoctrinated) workers" argument can be seen in the NSW Police Association's recent work-value case for a wage rise. Police deserve more money, complained the NSW *Police News*, because it is harder work these days brutalising and harassing Aboriginal militants (*National Times*, 22-27 March 1976)!

Some of these points were made in a reply to Freney's letter in the following week's *Tribune* by leading SUCG member and Left Tendency supporter Craig Johnston. But Johnston's rhetorical question: "Does he [Freney] deny the need to abolish all the repressive state apparatus, or is he suggesting the bourgeois state can be used by the working class for its own ends?" illustrates the Left Tendency's endemic failure to translate its confused insights or impulses into a serious political struggle against the CPA leadership. Of course Freney, Aarons etc believe they can use the bourgeois state -- as demonstrated by their everyday behaviour, the CPA's use of the bourgeois courts against opponents in the workers movement, their barely critical tailism of the ALP reformists, etc. Johnston calls the SWP/SYA "reformist", but Freney's line merely reflects the reformism of the CPA. Ironically, the SWP maintains an occasional orthodoxy on the police -- while its co-thinkers in the US often run candidates for sheriff! A clear class line on cops in both theory and practice is anathema to those including both the CPA and the SWP who preach class conciliation and promote illusions in the bourgeois state which a working-class revolution will have to smash up and destroy on the road to socialism. ■

Militant excluded from Painters and Dockers for political views

At the quarterly stop-work meeting of the NSW Ship Painters' and Dockers' Union (SPDU) on April 12, Garden Island worker, Graeme Grassie, was refused a union ticket following an exceptional challenge. Grassie had been a kindred labourer at Garden Island since last September, and before that worked at Cockatoo Island. According to the standard procedures of the SPDU, kindred labourers can obtain a union ticket after a period of work in which they pay union dues and are expected to fulfil basic obligations of union membership while not being formally part of the union. Unless a kindred labourer has violated union rules or practices, the granting of his brief is normally automatic.

Although those under consideration for briefs at a general meeting are open to challenge by any union member, such challenges are extremely rare. On this occasion, Grassie was singled out of a number of workers coming up for briefs when he was challenged by Gary Young, Vice President of the union. This challenge, strongly backed by Vigilance Officer Bobbie Galleghan, was based entirely on Grassie's association with the Spartacist League, because of Young's and Galleghan's objections to an article in *Australasian Spartacist* no 30 on the current strike by painters and dockers at Garden Island. (Grassie, a member of the reformist CPA at the time he began working at Garden Island, resigned from the CPA early this year in solidarity with the SL. His resignation was published in *ASp* no 29, March 1976.)

Garden Island Painters and Dockers Strike -- Lockout Threat

On Thursday 29 April, the State Arbitration Court ruled in favour of Garden Island Naval Dockyard Ship Painters and Dockers Union members who have been on strike against the Navy's decision to refuse penalty rates flow-ons from their federal award. But a letter sent from the Navy management to the union before the arbitration decision was handed down implied that not all painters and dockers, or other Garden Island workers stood down during the strike will be allowed back. This threatened lockout is a blatant provocation by the Navy. If this threat is carried out, it cannot be shouldered only by the painters and dockers alone but must be forcibly answered by action from the whole labour movement.

What were Grassie's "crimes"? He was a co-delegate for the dock section at Garden Island. He volunteered for the strike committee and undertook a large amount of work to win the strike. He was entrusted by the strike committee with raising funds from workers at job meetings in Brisbane as well as Sydney. He supported the strike at every step and made proposals for strengthening it to the strike committee. Yet despite this active support for the union, and despite the fact that no one has made the slightest allegation that he violated any union rule, standard practice or decision in any way, he has been debarred from union membership for the "crime" of having criticised the union leadership.

The thrust of the attack on the *ASp* article at the general meeting, conveyed through the reading of misleading excerpts taken out of context, was that the article had "slandered the strike committee", and had "slandered the union" -- by calling the union *leadership* reformist! Evidently the issue was not one of slander at all, but one of political views which it should be the right of any worker to express without being excluded from the union and deprived of his job. NSW branch Secretary Issie Wyner strongly defended Grassie's right to his political opinions within the union and NSW branch President John Rainford also spoke against the move to exclude him. But the meeting was evidently swayed by Galleghan's and Young's distortions and by their demagogic charges that political criticism would bring "politics" into the union and destroy its unity, appealing in part to honest militants' healthy desire to defend their union.

The specific charges against the article all collapse at a close look into a mishmash of red herrings, deliberate distortions, verbal tricks and intolerance to political criticism. First, the article's identification of Rainford as "a prominent member of the reformist CPA" was attacked as red-baiting in the NCC mold. But it is scarcely any secret -- Rainford has had signed articles in *Tribune*, the CPA paper, for years and is generally well known as a CPA member. Is Rainford red-baiting himself? A second charge was that public criticism of a strike leadership is divisive and helps the ruling class. This is ridiculous -- it equates criticism which is for the express purpose of helping to *win* the strike and *advance* the struggle, and "criticism" aimed at *destroying* and *defeating* a strike (such as right-wing anti-strike propaganda)! Whether the

criticism voiced is right or wrong, how can an attempt to openly persuade union members that *more* must be done to *strengthen* and *win* the strike possibly help the bosses?

A third issue was the one most dwelt on by Galleghan/Young and their supporters -- the article's characterisation of the SPDU leadership as reformist, and its statement that reformist leadership could only "fragment and frustrate" a strategy for socialist revolution. They were especially offended at the SL's call for the organising of caucuses to fight for a new leadership of the unions based on a class-struggle program. No one has denied them the right to their opinion that they are not reformist and to organise to persuade union members of it; but the question is, they refuse to recognise the right of those with a different opinion to do likewise. If they are right, it can be proved in practice -- what do they have to fear? The fact that, given fair and open debate, the membership might someday reject their policies?

Many militants who worked with Grassie, including most of the volunteer strike committee, of which Grassie was a member, were reportedly highly dissatisfied with Grassie's exclusion, and while disagreeing with many points in the *ASp* article, did not consider it "slandering" and saw no reason why Grassie shouldn't have the right to express these views. It is understood that the strike committee, following a discussion of the issues, decided to call on the management committee of the union to consider how it might bring about the reversal of the previous decision.

Political criticisms are not divisive; they are *necessary* if union members are to be able to work out the best way forward and democratically decide how to defend their interests. It is on the contrary the exclusion of workers for political views which opens a Pandora's Box of disunity. Not only does this result in the loss to the union of valuable militants; it runs the risk of fragmenting the workforce, violating elementary trade union principles. The basis of effective unity with workers' democracy is *unity in action -- freedom of criticism*. It is Galleghan and Young who are making politics a criterion for union membership. This precedent threatens any painter and docker who in the future may openly disagree with the leadership. It is in the clear, vital interests of the union membership that it be reversed at the next quarterly general meeting. ■

Argentine junta cracks down

The overthrow of the Argentine government of Isabel Peron by the armed forces on March 23 has opened up a wave of wide-ranging repression and terror. Immediately after the declaration of the coup a military administrator took over the General Confederation of Labor, all unions were put into receivership and their bank accounts seized, militant union headquarters (metal, auto, textile, construction and press workers) were occupied by troops and leaders of the bakery union have been charged with "possession of arms and explosives of war" -- arms absolutely essential for self-defence against the notorious death squads such as the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance which continue unimpeded their carnage of leftists and union militants. Over ninety assassinations, with many victims found mutilated beyond recognition on local rubbish tips, were reported in the weeks following the coup. And although the junta has not issued figures, an estimated 2000 Peronists and labour leaders, Communists and suspected "subversives" have been arrested (*Economist*, 27 March).

In the government apparatus military officers are replacing civilian administrators in all major institutions as the old regime is flushed out from top to bottom. A string of tough communiques dissolved congress, provincial legislatures and city councils, removed judicial authorities and suspended all political activity. In addition, six leftist parties were outlawed, including the ostensibly Trotskyist PST (Socialist Workers Party) and *Politica Obrera*. Other decrees closed the universities, ordered the death penalty for attacks on military installations, and death or indefinite imprisonment for sabotage and attacks on police or military personnel. The borders were closed and any strikes or other activity impeding production banned. Particularly endangered are tens of thousands of political refugees from neighbouring countries who now have nowhere to go and no borders to slip across.

Both the victorious junta and the capitalist press internationally have painted the coup as a transfer from anarchy, chaos and terror to a necessarily stern but, by Latin American standards, "moderate" national discipline. The new president, Army Commander in Chief Jorge Rafael Videla, wary of the worldwide revulsion against Pinochet's bloodbath in Chile with its attendant diplomatic and financial cost, has gone to pains to present the junta as reasonable and humane. In his initial speech over national TV and radio he pledged that

"For us, respect for human rights is based not on legal mandates or international declaration, but is a result of our profound Christian convictions on the pre-eminent dignity of man as a fundamental value" (quoted in *New York Times*, 1 April).

The brutal reality behind this lying hypocrisy proves that to the extent that rigidly enforced "moderation" is unable to break the back of organised labour -- which will now be made to pick up the tab for bankrupt Argentine capitalism -- the *gorillas* are prepared to drench the workers' quarters in blood. The Argentine labour movement, one of the strongest in South America, is not yet destroyed. Elementary class solidarity demands an immediate international working-class campaign to expose and fight the repression. *Free all class-war prisoners in Argentina!*

To deal with Argentina's shattered economy, on the brink of bankruptcy with an inflation rate over 400 percent, the generals have taken direct control of wage fixation, quashed price controls and removed any obstacles to foreign investment. Allowing the corrupt Peronist regime to drive the economy into the ground was a conscious and deliberate manoeuvre on the part of the generals with the obvious purpose of demolishing the myth of Peronism as the "great benefactor" of the working class.

But while many erstwhile Peronist youth and militant unionists are certainly disillusioned with the leaders who brought them to this disaster, they lack a revolutionary Marxist vanguard capable of drawing the lessons of the Peronist experience. In recent years the most publicised of those aspiring to this mantle were various guerrillaist groups ranging from the left-Peronist Montoneros to ostensibly Trotskyist groups. Yet the last months before the coup also demonstrated the utter impotence of the guerrillaists in the face of serious action by the military. On the other hand, the largest ostensible Trotskyist organisation in Argentina, the 'legalist PST, suffering under the legacy of two decades of Pabloist revisionism, adopted a policy of de facto "critical support" for the Peronist regime leading it to pledge itself to "institutionalisation" (bourgeois law and order), to defend the "continuity" of Isabel Peron's govern-

Continued on page nine



Argentine military junta: allegiance to god and the "process of national reorganisation".

Continued from page one

... Mario Munoz

All were taken into the street where the troops immediately began interrogating the women and children as to the whereabouts of their father, while the other relative was mercilessly beaten. During the interrogation of the children they were mistreated and savagely beaten, which produced a reaction from all the neighbours who witnessed the terrible scene of weeping and screaming. The troops then tried to snatch the smallest child, a two-month-old baby (born in Argentina) from the arms of its mother, to use it as a hostage. She replied that even if all her children were taken from her, she would not utter a single word that might endanger her *compañero's* life. Faced with the mother's courage and firm determination and the anger of all those present, the patrol was forced to retreat; but not without first informing Munoz's *compañera* that he was a dangerous extremist in Chile as well as Argentina, and that their orders were to shoot him on sight. Having completed this mission, they left a civilian guard in the neighbouring house.

The province of San Juan has been sealed off as the hounding of Mario Munoz continues. Inter-provincial transport is being stopped and searched to look for him.

Mario Munoz Salas, 36 years old, a mine worker: his life must be saved! By the age of 14 he was already working alongside his father in the mine; during his youth he was already involved in the struggles of his class brothers against the Yankee mining monopolies of northern Chile. Founder and leader of the Aconcagua Union of Workers and Miners; a tireless fighter, known and respected by all Chilean workers, at that time he was already being persecuted by the Chilean government in the service of the exploiters. Recognition from his class brothers made him a national leader of the Regional Miners Councils during the government of Salvador Allende. Without faltering, he took the lead in forming the *cordones industriales* [local councils] of workers, miners and peasants of Aconcagua and Valparaiso against the fascist mobilisation. Until shortly before Pinochet's bloody coup he was head of the North Aconcagua Regional Committee of the Socialist Party of Chile. At a meeting with President Allende shortly before the coup, in his capacity as a national leader of the miners' councils he promised the miners' unconditional defence of the government in case of an attempted coup. At the same time, Munoz asked Allende how long he would continue to place on the workers' backs the entire burden of the economic crisis which the country was experiencing.

In his Argentine exile he has been the only one to organise the hundreds of thousands of Chilean workers and peasants who crossed the Andes by foot, fleeing the horror and betrayal. For this crime the Argentine military junta has condemned him to death.

For him and all other revolutionary organisers, "national stadiums" have been set up for each province in Argentina. Torture and massacres are widespread and the current number of prisoners easily exceeds 100,000. UN refugee camps are ransacked three times a week.

Mario Munoz and his family had sought UN protection, but that organisation could not take responsibility for his life; he is now a temporary refugee, ie, if the government opposes asylum it then becomes invalid. Nor would the UN take responsibility even for the persecuted family members, instead demanding legal documents from

them which would never be provided by the Argentine and Chilean governments.

Only international working-class solidarity can save the lives of Mario Munoz and his family. The Argentine government must be forced to respect human rights. Not a minute must be lost in saving the life of Mario Munoz! It is an urgent task for the parties and organisations of the working class to mount a powerful international campaign of pressure on the Argentine military junta and the United Nations, to ensure respect for the freedom and lives of this exemplary leader of the Chilean proletariat and his family.

COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENCE OF IMPRISONED CHILEAN WORKERS, SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

*[recalling the infamous detention centre in Santiago where thousands were held and shot or tortured to death following the 11 September 1973 Chilean coup]

Mario Munoz must not die!

Stop the political repression in Argentina and Chile!

An international campaign has been mounted to save the life of Mario Munoz. Among its endorsers are:-

AUSTRALIA

Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union, Meredith Bergman, Fred Betts (Actor)*, Gill H Boehringer (Senior Lecturer in Law, Macquarie University), Laurie Brereton (MLA, NSW), AE Bull (Secretary, Melbourne Branch Waterside Workers Federation of Australia), J Burnheim (Senior Lecturer, University of Sydney), Dr Jim Cairns (MHR), Dr Moss Cass (MHR), Senator Ruth Coleman, David Combe (Federal Secretary of the ALP)*, Steve Cooper (Research Officer, AMWU), Eva Cox, AF Donovan (Senior Lecturer, Dept of Behavioural Science, UNSW), Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association of Australasia (Victorian and NSW Branches), Firemen and Decklands' Union of NSW, M Fisher (Organiser, Storemen and Packers Union), Senator George Georges*, Senator Arthur Gietzelt, Caroline Graham, Frank Hardy (Author)*, Bill Hartley (Member Federal Executive of the ALP)*, WE Hotchkiss (Lecturer in Economics, UNSW), Ted Innes (MHR), Dr Michael Jackson (Lecturer in Government), Dr Evan Jones (Lecturer in Economics, University of Sydney), Senator Jim Keefe, Claire Kelly, George Rude (Professor of History, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada; Visiting Lecturer, LaTrobe University), David Scott, Ship Painters and Dockers Union (Victorian Branch), Socialist Workers Party, Spartacist League, W Sutcliffe (Senior Lecturer, Dept of General Philosophy, University of Sydney), MM Thompson (Tutor in Government, University of Sydney), Transport Workers Union of Australia (NSW Branch), Union of Postal Clerks and Telegraphists, Tom Uren (MHR)*, Victorian Labor College, Water and Sewerage Employees Union, Waterside Workers Federation of Australia, Mick Young (MHR)*.

* verbal endorsement only

USA

Stokeley Carmichael, Noam Chomsky, Dave Dellinger, Eugene Genovese, Tom Hayden, Florynce Kennedy, Salvador Luria (Nobel Prize winner, MIT), Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (District 8), IF Stone, United States Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA).

CANADA

Rosie Douglas, Jan Duksczta (NDP Member of Parliament), John Rodriguez (NDP Member of Parliament).

Partial listing

Individuals and organisations who wish to endorse the campaign and/or contribute financially should fill out the blank below and send it to the Mario Munoz Defence Committee, GPO Box 3473, Sydney, NSW 2001.

I and/or my organisation endorse the campaign to ensure that the freedom and lives of Mario Munoz Salas, Chilean working-class leader, and his family are respected.

Name _____ Endorse

Organisation _____ Endorse

Signed _____

I enclose a donation of \$_____ to the Mario Munoz Defence Committee.

Tailoring program to practice

West European Stalinists delete

This article was originally published in two parts in *Workers Vanguard*, weekly paper of the Spartacist League of the United States. Part 1 documents and analyses the French Communist Party's recent congress while Part 2 examines the worldwide tendency to outright social-democratic reformism in the Moscow-line Stalinist parties.

Part 1

On January 7 this year Georges Marchais dropped a bombshell during a television talk show. In his opinion, said the leader of the French Communist Party (PCF), the notion of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" must be abandoned.

"Well, today the word 'dictatorship' does not correspond to what we want... Even the word 'proletariat' is no longer appropriate, since we want to bring together, along with the working class, the majority of wage earners. But that does not mean we are abandoning our objective: socialism in French colors." (*Le Monde*, 9 January 1976)

He added that there were differences between the PCF and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) on the question of socialist democracy.

Coming in the middle of inner-party discussion preceding the PCF's 22nd congress, this seemingly off-hand remark touched off a furor which dominated French newspaper headlines for a month. What was the meaning of this change of position, confirmed at the congress? Was it simply a ruse, as *Time* magazine implied? Or did this mean that the "French CP Veers Sharply To the Right", as the Healyite *Bulletin* (10 February) proclaimed in a headline?

Actually, the French Communist Party ceased to be communist decades ago. For the handmaidens of the Kremlin bureaucracy who made up the Stalinized Comintern, their failure to lift a finger to stop Hitler's march to power represented the crossing of the Rubicon, the decisive passing over to the side of the bourgeoisie, comparable in magnitude to the social democrats' support for their "own" capitalist rulers during World War I. The unopposed Nazi triumph, said Leon Trotsky, meant that the Third International was dead as a revolutionary force: a new, Fourth International had to be built.

But the formal abandonment of fundamental Marxist principles is not unimportant. It brings the PCF's formal program into line with its overtly reformist practice, a step which may open the eyes of revolutionary-minded militants who have not yet broken with Stalinism. And the Stalinists' unambiguous promises to work within the framework of the bourgeois state are both a warning of the lengths to which the pro-capitalist leaders of bourgeois workers parties will go to maintain the rule of the exploiters and an indication of the pressure they feel from increasing working-class militancy. The wave of class-collaborationist popular-front alliances since the early 1970s is part of the same phenomenon, and the response to it by ostensibly Marxist tendencies is an important test of their ability to resolve the crisis of proletarian leadership which is the main obstacle to socialist revolution in the world today.

In defending the abandonment of the dictatorship of the proletariat as their aim, French

Right: Parti Communiste Francais (PCF) leader Georges Marchais spouts nationalism, puritanism, Kautskyism.
Below: Russian delegates at recent PCF Congress.



Communist Party leaders make much of their commitment to "democracy". This was further stressed by the PCF's support for Soviet dissident Leonid Plyushch, recently freed by the Russian authorities (see "Stop Stalinist 'Psychiatric' Torture in USSR!" *Workers Vanguard* no 96, 13 February 1976). In December, on the same day the political bureau of the PCF unanimously condemned conditions in Russian prison camps, PCF leader Paul Laurent declared: "From now on we completely assume the principle of alternation of power. That is, we admit that the installation of socialism in France might not be irreversible. We should bow before an unfavorable verdict of the electors" (*L'Express*, 22-28 December 1975).

Dictatorship and "immorality"

The issue is not classless "democracy", however, but parliamentary cretinism, bourgeois nationalism and... puritanism. As for democracy, the whole experience of the "debate" over the dictatorship of the proletariat shows how little the leaders of the PCF care about democratic norms in their own party. Barely a week after his remark on the "Telejournal", and before any of the party's *departement* federations had voted on the question, Marchais announced to a press conference that "almost the entire party" was in agreement that the reference to working-class dictatorship must be deleted from the PCF statutes.

After this display of "democracy" by telepathy, the PCF leader went on to raise another issue in the party congress discussion, "immorality" or, to be more specific, pornography. "I am a normal man," said the general secretary. "I like to see a pretty woman, even nude. But I say that pornography is immoral..." (*Le Monde*, 16 January). Not even bothering to back up this bald assertion with scientific arguments, Marchais simply remarked that one day in a cinema an anonymous couple had offered him a chocolate ice cream bar to thank him for declaring that pornographic works are immoral! This bizarre appeal to middle-class morality was obviously occasioned by Marchais' effort to broaden the PCF's "voter appeal".

During the three weeks that followed, there were a few flickerings of dissent within the party. In the Moselle district, PB member Jean Colpin ran into some difficulty after declaring that "we enrich the Christian heritage in its

most positive aspects..." The audience at the federal conference was not convinced. One militant replied: "Are you going to throw an anathema on homosexuals or those who masturbate?... The CP is taking on the taboos set up by Christian ideology, by the ruling ideology" (*Le Monde*, 20 January). By a vote of 101 to 79, the delegates adopted an amendment striking the passage of the conference document condemning immorality.

Concerning the dictatorship of the proletariat, discussion was considerably more restrained, particularly since the PCF tops had made clear they were determined to push through this "deletion" at all costs. In the discussion column of *L'Humanite*, PCF philosopher Etienne Balibar (co-author with Louis Althusser of *Reading Capital*) raised an impassioned plea: "Comrades, do not lightly reject the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat! Let us, more than ever, be Communists, both in theory and practice!" A group of rank-and-file members put out an oppositional journal, *Le Communiste*, and objected to Marchais' totally anti-democratic procedure of launching the "discussion" outside the party only a few weeks before the congress. But these were only voices in the wilderness.


PCF Congress

The congress, which opened in the Paris "red belt" working-class suburb of Saint Ouen on February 4, stressed the theme of "socialism in French colors". The backdrop was artistically draped with the blue-white-red tricolor for the occasion and the convention document called for not simply the "Union of the Left" (the popular front formed by the PCF, the Socialist Party and the bourgeois Left Radicals in 1972), but "The union of the people of France, [which] is the grouping of all democrats, of all patriots".

In his report, Marchais asserted that the word "dictatorship" automatically brings to mind the fascist regimes of Hitler, Mussolini, Salazar and Franco.... It is therefore evident that one cannot call what we offer to the working people, to our people, the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'" (*Le Monde*, 5 February). The term was not mentioned in the political bureau's document, and the PCF leader proposed eliminating the party statutes' reference to it at the next congress.

While the general secretary did not bother to defend this "up-to-date" revisionism theoretically, in the discussion central committee member Francois Billoux attempted to deal with a question which was bothering many serious party militants: if the PCF is no longer in favor of the dictatorship of the proletariat, then what has become of the "21 conditions" set by Lenin at the second congress of the Communist International, and which were the political basis for the split of the French Communists from the Socialist Party at the Congress of Tours in 1920? Billoux presented an "explanation" which was breathtaking in its cynicism:

"It is because we came out for the dictatorship of the proletariat 55 years ago that we can say today that it no longer corresponds to the situation. We are not changing our house." (*Le Monde*, 7 February)



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"dictatorship of proletariat"

There was no open opposition to "deleting" the dictatorship of the proletariat expressed from the floor of the congress, and the political resolution was adopted without controversy. But some of those listed as officially present were less than happy: the "fraternal" delegations, particularly the one from the CPSU, headed by Andrei Kirilenko. None of the foreign delegates were permitted to speak during the proceedings (after all, they aren't part of the people of France!), and the CPSU political bureau member was only allowed to open his mouth at a courtesy meeting in the city hall of another "red" suburb, Nanterre.

Speaking to a sympathetic audience, which thunderously shouted "Long live the Soviet Union!" Kirilenko said nothing about the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat and instead focused on the theme of combatting anti-Sovietism. His message was the disingenuous assertion that Soviet laws "clearly define and guarantee in a sure manner individual rights such as freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of conscience and religious belief, inviolability of the person and the home" (*Le Monde*, 8-9 February).

The Soviet press similarly reflected irritation over the PCF congress. The section on the dictatorship of the proletariat was deliberately deleted from *Pravda's* lengthy published text of Marchais' report, for example. But the most sensitive topic for the Kremlin was hardly the rejection of a key element of the Marxist program. Brezhnev is at least as opposed to a proletarian revolution in France as is Marchais.

With the logic of a nationalist bureaucratic caste concerned above all to maintain its own privileged position, the Stalinist rulers of the Soviet Union were upset mainly by the French Communist Party's several recent public attacks on the treatment of Russian dissidents. (This theme was also raised at the PCF congress in a report from a central committee member, who simply waved aside the usual objection that any criticisms of the USSR will be used by the bourgeoisie.) As a consequence, some issues of *L'Humanite* have reportedly been banned for sale in Moscow, and Marchais will not be travelling to the Soviet capital for an upcoming meeting of European party leaders!

"Italianisation" of the Stalinist parties?

For many years, the French Communist Party had the reputation of the most Moscow-loyal of the mass Stalinist parties outside the Soviet bloc. In contrast, the Italian Communist Party (PCI) was the author, in the late 1950s, of the thesis of "polycentrism" and independence from Kremlin dictates. Now, however, under the regime of Georges Marchais, the PCF has been moving increasingly close to the Italian party. This realignment was signalled by the signing of a joint PCI-PCF document last November.

The statement described socialism in completely classless terms which could easily have been agreed to by Karl Kautsky and other social democrats:

"The Italian and French Communists consider that the march to socialism and the construction of a socialist society ... must be realized in the framework of a continuous democratization of economic, social and political life. Socialism constitutes a higher stage of democracy and liberty, democracy carried through to the end." (*Le Monde*, 19 November 1975)

The bourgeois parliamentary cretinism implied by this statement was made absolutely explicit with the assertion that "the arrival of the laboring classes at the head of the state" was conceived of only in the framework of "democratic institutions fully representative of popular sovereignty" and "the free exercise of universal suffrage, proportional and direct". The need to smash the bourgeois state, the class dictatorship of the capitalists, which Marx said was the chief lesson of the Paris Commune, is totally ignored.

All the talk by West European Communist parties of dropping references to the dictatorship of the proletariat prompted the CPSU last summer to call on one of their kept parrots of Stalinized "orthodoxy", Konstantin Zarodov, the editor of the Moscow-line international journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism*. In a 6 August *Pravda* article on "Lenin's Strategy and Tactics in Revolutionary Struggle", Zarodov criticized the "majority fetishism" of parliamentarists. In a "personal, not official" interview with the Italian news magazine *L'Espresso* (7 December 1975), another CPSU leader, central committee member Alexei Rumiantsev, was even more explicit:

"We respect the opinions of the individual Communist parties, but we repeat that the dictatorship of the proletariat is and remains the basic principle which we have in common."

This kind of talk has led professional "Kremlin watchers" such as Victor Zorza to speculate about a supposed "left turn" in the Russian leadership recently. Actually, it is nothing of the kind. For the CPSU leaders, defense of the phrase "dictatorship of the proletariat" is not an affirmation of a revolutionary will to replace the domination of the bourgeoisie with that of the working class. Still less is it a commitment to *workers democracy*, which for Marx and Lenin was the aim of the proletariat's struggle. Instead, they are defending the continued suppression of soviet liberties for the citizens of the USSR, even after Stalin had falsely announced the attainment of socialism (in 1936) and his heirs proclaimed the Soviet Union to be a "state of the whole people" (in 1961).

In turn, the West European parties, by rejecting the term "dictatorship of the prolet-

"And now as to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: 1) that the existence of classes is only bound up with particular historical phases in the development of production, 2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat, 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society."

-Karl Marx, Letter to Wedemeyer, 20 February 1852

ariat", are not defending "democracy" but rather capitalist rule. Thus the Union of the Left has agreed to abide by the Gaullist constitution of the Fifth French Republic, probably the most bonapartist of any of the imperialist "democracies", and PCI leader Enrico Berlinguer has committed his party to accepting Italian membership in NATO until there is a simultaneous dissolution of the Warsaw Pact! Yet there is no difference here with the Soviet bureaucrats. When asked by the *L'Espresso* interviewer whether the CPSU objected to the PCI's strategy of a "historic compromise" with the Christian Democrats, Rumiantsev replied: "I don't see why there should be incompatibility." The bureaucrats commanding the Russian deformed workers state and their counterparts who control the bulk of French and Italian organized labor are in agreement that the West European workers must be bound hand and foot to the class enemy.

Part 2

While the speeches on domestic policy at the 25th congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) ran true to form, without a murmur of dissent, the "monolithic" unity of Stalinism showed some very large cracks when it came to the remarks of foreign party leaders. CPSU general secretary Leonid Brezhnev had already set the stage by noting in his report that "there can be no question of any ideological convergence between scientific communism and the reformism of the social-democrats ..." (*Daily World*, 27 February). This was clearly a slap at the French and Italian CPs, which have recently sought to stress their "moderation" and "commitment to democracy" by a barrage of fanfare disclaiming the Marxist concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In the same elliptical language, Italian Communist Party (PCI) leader Enrico Berlinguer spoke of the PCI's support for "a pluralistic and democratic system" (by which he meant not workers democracy but bourgeois parliamentarianism) and advocated "an Italian foreign policy ... in the framework of our country's international alliances" (ie, maintaining membership in the anti-Soviet NATO alliance). Berlinguer was followed by Guy Plissonnier of the French Communist Party (PCF), standing in for PCF leader Georges Marchais (whose absence was universally regarded as a snub to Brezhnev), highlighting the slogan of "a socialism in the colors of France" (*New York Times*, 28 and 29 February) -- ie, the tri-

color of French imperialism's wars against the workers and peasants of Indochina, Algeria etc.

This "debate" was indicative of important divergences between the Soviet party and what is by now a majority of the West European CPs. The depth of the rift (or at least its public expression) varies -- from the Spanish Communist Party (PCE), which for some years was openly spurned by CPSU leaders, to the British Communist Party which has been politely pushing for a relaxation of repression against political dissidents in the Soviet Union. But the themes are the same, and the centrifugal pressures are mounting.

Thus, in addition to the French and Italian parties, we have the following picture:

The Dutch party has stopped attending international meetings of Moscow-line CP's.

PCE leader Santiago Carrillo, like Marchais, deliberately boycotted the Moscow congress. In a meeting with a delegation of the PCF at the end of January, the Spanish Communists agreed that the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat is "outdated", and in an interview in mid-December Carrillo declared: "There cannot exist a common line between the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries and the party-states of East Europe... There cannot be a global strategy. If one existed, it would be a violation of the principle of coexistence ..." (*Le Monde*, 17 December).

The Finnish Communist Party is split between a pro-Russian majority led by chairman Arne Saarinen, and an "independent" minority barely contained within the framework of a single party.

In Britain, the CP's popular secretary for Scotland James Reid (the leader of the 1971 "work-in" at the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders and a member of the party's political bureau) resigned asserting that "the democratic credentials of Communists ... have not been established in the minds of the people." At the recent Polish Workers Party congress, a member of the British CP leadership openly acknowledged differences with Moscow (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 22 February).

During negotiations late last year for a projected conference of European Communist Parties, the CPSU wanted the conference to end with the signature of a declaration binding all parties to the same policy line. The French, Italian and Spanish delegations (together with the Yugoslav and Rumanian CPs) opposed this, with the British representatives leaning toward the "independents".

Social-democratisation of the Stalinist parties?

The Russian bureaucracy's concern with these developments is understandable, and a major article in *Pravda* (13 February) warned that "highly dubious arguments have been advanced in favor of the Union of the Left, and an eventual

Continued on page eight



Enrico Berlinguer.

... Stalinists

weakening of the political positions of the Communists is being considered, a 'social-democratization' of the Communist parties."

In a recent survey of West European Communist Parties, the London *Times* (16 February) found even the Icelandic party's loyalty to Moscow "at best fitful, at worst doubtful", and concluded that the only unconditionally pro-Brezhnev party was that of tiny Luxemburg.

Are the West European Stalinist parties becoming "social-democratized"? Certainly, their political programs and actions are thoroughly reformist, as is also the case with the mass social-democratic parties of France, Germany, Italy etc. Increasingly, even their language is the same. Thus in proposing to delete the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" from the party statutes, PCF leader Georges Marchais justified this with the comment:

"'dictatorship' automatically brings to mind the fascist regimes of Hitler, Mussolini, Salazar and Franco, that is, the very negation of democracy. This is not what we want." (*Le Monde*, 5 February)

This reference to supposedly classless democracy could have been lifted word-for-word from the writings of Karl Kautsky, who led the chorus of social-democratic pedants condemning the Bolshevik party of Lenin and Trotsky for setting up a "dictatorship". Kautsky's crowning argument was: "Literally, the word dictatorship means the abolition of democracy" (*Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, 1918).

To this, Lenin replied that the liberals speak of democracy in general, the Marxists ask "for which class?" Dictatorship does not necessarily mean abolition of democracy for the class that exercises dictatorship over the other classes. Dictatorship is, rather, "rule based directly on force"; "The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is rule won and maintained by the use of violence by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie..." (*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, 1918). Kautsky rejected revolutionary violence, and thereby the revolution itself. His devotion to supposedly abstract democracy was open support for capitalist rule.

Similarly, in a direct negation of Marx's dictum that "the working men have no country," West European Stalinists (particularly the French and Italians) now pose as the best patriots. In arguing for a policy of ever broader alliances and a "union of the people of France", Marchais de-

clared at the PCF's 22nd congress in early February that "Everything that is national is ours." Curiously, it is precisely this slogan that appears above the masthead of the French monarcho-clericalist newspaper *Action Francaise* (*Le Monde*, 19 February).

In justification for the overt and fundamental revision of Marxism involved in rejecting the dictatorship of the proletariat, the PCF general secretary alluded to "new problems" which had risen since the time of Marx. Other examples of "new answers" to such problems cited by Marchais were: Stalin's discovery of the possibility of socialism in one country, Khrushchev's discovery of the peaceful transition to socialism, and the popular front. This list is quite apt, for in each case the new "discovery" is in fact a justification for class collaboration and betrayal of the interests of the international proletariat. Marchais is quite right to insist that his "deletion" of the dictatorship of the proletariat is consistent with the rest of Stalinist dogma!

It was in struggling against these betrayals and in defense of Marxist principles that the Trotskyist movement has been forged. Already in 1928, LD Trotsky warned:

"If it is at all possible to realize socialism in one country, then one can believe in that theory not only *after* but also *before* the conquest of power. If socialism can be realized within the national boundaries of backward Russia, then there is all the more reason to believe that it can be realized in advanced Germany. Tomorrow the leaders of the Communist Party of Germany will undertake to propound this theory. The draft program empowers them to do so. The day after tomorrow the French party will have its turn. It will be the beginning of the disintegration of the Comintern along the lines of social-patriotism. The Communist Party of any capitalist country, which will have become imbued with the idea that its particular country possesses the 'necessary and sufficient' prerequisites for the independent construction of a 'complete socialist society', will not differ in any substantial manner from the revolutionary social democracy which also did not begin with a Noske but which stumbled decisively on August 4, 1914, over this very same question." ("The Theory of Socialism in One Country", in *The Third International After Lenin*)

The Stalinized Communist Parties have long since passed their August 4; Stalin dissolved the Communist International in 1943 precisely in order to better aid the "war effort" of the imperialist democracies, and the social-patriotism of Marchais leaves little to be desired from the point of view of the bourgeoisie. It is not surprising, therefore, that these reformist fake-Communists should adopt the social-democratic phraseology that fits their actual program.

Family of reformism

But the social-democratization of a party is not determined simply by a glance at its formal program. Thus Leon Blum and various other left social democrats at the time of the foundation of the Communist International verbally accepted the dictatorship of the proletariat. Moreover, among West European CP's inclusion of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the party program is not an indication either of the degree of support to Moscow, or of a division into "hard" and "soft" parties. Thus, for example, the Finnish party already dropped the term in 1965, during its participation in an earlier popular-front government; today the party is once again in a popular front and it is precisely the Kremlin-loyal faction of Saarinen that is most committed to maintaining the alliance with its "own" bourgeoisie. Again, the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), reputedly the "hardest" CP of West Europe, was the first party during the 1970s to eliminate the dictatorship of the proletariat from its program (in November 1974), replacing it with the "unity of popular forces in the political struggle". Among the "popular forces" it includes "even sectors of the middle bourgeoisie" (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 9 November 1974).

Moreover, as much as 40 years ago the Stalinists were openly admitting -- in fact crowing -- that their aim was not to establish a revolutionary working-class state. In August 1936, the PCF's *L'Humanite* published an article declaring: "The Spanish people are not striving for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but know only one aim: the defense of the republican order, while respecting property" (quoted in Felix Morrow, *Revolution and Counter-revolution in Spain*). As for Marchais' grotesque superpatriotism, already in the 1936 popular-front elections the PCF was calling for a "union of the French nation"! Those who are shocked by the recent speeches of Marchais and Berlinguer should read what American Communist Party leader Earl Browder was saying during World War II, when the CPUSA sang the Star Spangled Banner at cell meetings, ran ads for Victory Bonds ... and broke strikes for FDR.

French CP headquarters in 1936 proclaims virtues of Popular Front.

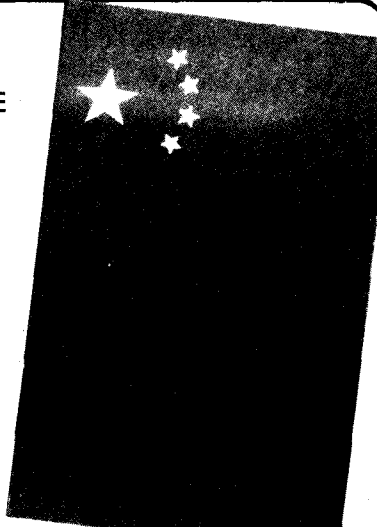


Stalinist parties are those who are subservient to -- who act as agents of, as transmission belts for -- the ruling bureaucracies of the deformed workers states. In Stalin's time, Moscow was the "Third Rome" and there was rigid control from the Kremlin. Today, there are a number of deformed workers states outside the Soviet bloc (eg, China, Vietnam, Cuba, Yugoslavia) and in the capitalist countries there are frequently two or more competing Stalinist parties, usually Brezhnevites, Castroites and Maoists (and often several shadings of the latter).

West European Communist Parties have by no means totally broken with Moscow. In small CPs such forms of subsidy as a guaranteed 4000 subscriptions to the party newspaper from Soviet libraries are of considerable relative weight. Even the several million strong PCI reportedly obtains a substantial part of its financing from companies which serve as brokers for Italian-USSR trade. But this does not mean that Stalinist parties could not become social-democratic, dropping their ties to Moscow, Peking or Havana. In Europe, the Italian and Spanish Communist Parties are already well advanced along this road.

The clearest example of such a transformation is the Communist Party of Australia (CPA). As did most West European CPs, the CPA criticized the 1968 Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia. For various reasons, internal tensions in the party escalated and by 1971 Moscow-loyal elements felt so excluded from the top leadership that they split off to form the Socialist Party of Australia. This proved to be the watershed. Henceforth opposing an unambiguously Moscow-backed party on its national terrain, the CPA has evolved into a social-democratic party whose reformist commitment to the maintenance of bourgeois rule is unencumbered by any ties to the Russian bureaucracy. Commenting on the CPA's


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- ◆ Verso la rinascita della IVa Internazionale (1963)
- ◆ La conferenza di Londra del Comitato Internazionale (1966)
- ◆ Dichiarazione di Principi della Spartacist League (1966)
- ◆ Genesi del Pablismo
- ◆ Conferenza internazionale provvisoria (1974)
- ◆ Le origini del Nucleo Spartacista d'Italia (1975)

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attempt to gain hegemony over the Australian left by absorbing every tendency into one big social-democratic swamp, the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand wrote: "The bureaucratic centralism of Stalinism is replaced by the bureaucratic anarchism of social-democracy" (*Australasian Spartacist*, June 1974).

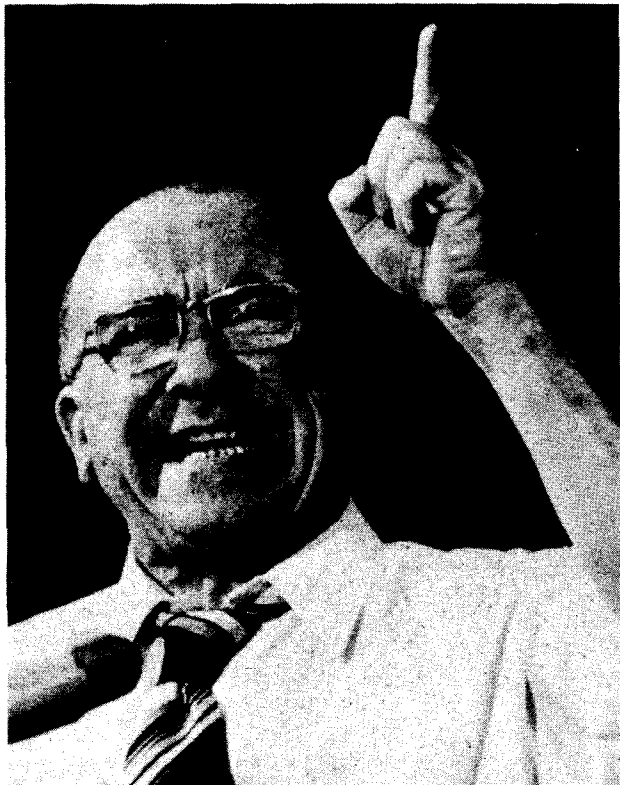
Bourgeois workers parties

In a document concerning the "Evolution of the Communist Parties in Capitalist Europe", the political bureaux of European sections of the self-proclaimed "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec) wrote of the Stalinist CPs that:

"their political line at any given moment is a reflection of the interests of neither the bourgeoisie nor the petty bourgeoisie, but of the bureaucracy that has usurped power in the workers state of the USSR. It is this allegiance to the USSR, a degenerated workers state, that fundamentally differentiates the

October Revolution became in the hands of the Stalinists a powerful tool in the service of class treason. In the United States during World War II, it was the Communist Party that was the most rabid strikebreaking, scabherding force in the labor movement, standing well to the right even of many reactionary bureaucrats. In France and Italy at the end of the war, the bourgeois regimes could not have been stabilized without the aid of the Stalinist leaders in disarming their own militants.

During the 1970s there has been a rise in working-class militancy in West Europe and sections of Latin America. While for a time in the 1950s and early 1960s the Stalinists were rigidly excluded from governmental participation -- outlawed in West Germany, put in concentration camps in Chile -- now their services are once again urgently needed by the bourgeoisie. Hence the rise of a new wave of popular fronts, whose purpose is to brake the labor struggles, to bind the workers hand and foot to the class enemy. The



Santiago Carrillo.



Alvaro Cunhal.

CPs from the Social Democratic parties, the objective foundations of whose political orientation consist of conciliation and capitulation to the imperialist bourgeoisie. Even when they render historically decisive services to the bourgeoisie, as they did at the time of the Popular Front or in the 1944-1947 period, the CPs do so not because of any allegiance to big capital, but because of the counterrevolutionary politics of the Soviet bureaucracy." (*Imprecor*, 12 December 1974)

The document also refers to the PCI as a "workers party historically marked by Stalinism and more and more inserted into a reformist logic". Elsewhere, the USec has written that "The Spanish and Italian CPs are developing a policy more openly reformist ..." (*Rouge*, 26 September 1975). All of these comments are clearly intended to mean that the Communist Parties of Europe are only now becoming reformist, that there is a qualitative difference between them and the social-democratic parties that is currently being bridged.

This is historically false. With the formation of the popular fronts during the 1930s, the parties of the Stalinized Comintern codified their passing into the camp of pro-capitalist reformism. Trotsky called them "Mensheviks of the second mobilization": they were not simply loyal to Moscow, but also to their own bourgeoisies, as they themselves stressed repeatedly. Moreover, the Stalinist parties outside the USSR were during the late 1930s and the Second World War if anything, more dangerous to the proletariat and the cause of socialist revolution than were the social democrats.

For example, in 1934 left-wing elements in the Spanish Socialist Party were calling for a break from the bourgeois parties and making plans for a workers insurrection if conservative forces should cut off their access to governmental office via the parliamentary road. (While the Madrid leadership decided to call off the insurrection at the last minute, SP sections in the Asturias region did rise up together with the anarchists and were brutally suppressed by the army.) In Austria, too, social democrats took up arms against a bourgeois government. In a number of countries the Socialist Parties or split-offs from them became for a time centrist formations distinctly to the left of the Stalinists.

Moreover, because of their subservience to the counterrevolutionary diplomatic policies of the Kremlin bureaucracy, the Stalinist parties were capable of crimes which the social democrats often did not have the internal cohesion to carry out. The CPs' claim to the authority of the

bloody consequences of these class-collaborationist policies were seen in the 1973 Chilean coup and loom on the horizon in Portugal.

In the same USec document which denies that the Stalinist parties are loyal to big capital, or even to petty-bourgeois forces, the followers of Ernest Mandel go to great pains to distinguish recent Communist-Socialist blocs with small bourgeois formations from the "classical" popular front. They did so also in Chile, where instead of denouncing Allende's class-collaborationist Popular Unity (UP) coalition as a popular front and calling on the workers parties to break from the bourgeoisie, they instead conciliated the UP, terming it "reformist", calling on it to adopt more militant policies, etc. By their failure to warn the masses of the grave threat represented by the Allende regime, the Mandelites share in the responsibility for the bloody coup.

Ever since the early 1950s, when Michel Pablo (then head of the Fourth International) abandoned the Trotskyist understanding of Stalinism as a counterrevolutionary current in the workers movement -- instead terming it centrist and ordering sections of the FI to submerge into Stalinist parties -- the liquidationist current now embodied in the USec has fostered illusions in a succession of non-proletarian misleaders from the "centrist" Kremlin to the "unconscious Marxist" Castro. The characterization of the pro-Moscow Stalinist parties as not quite yet reformist is another aspect of this Pabloism, with consequences potentially as dangerous as those flowing from the USec's failure to recognize the existence of a popular front in Chile.

The Stalinist leaders often appeal to the October Revolution and Lenin; social democrats frequently deny any connection with Marxism or even to be a working-class party: both, however, are profoundly reformist, pro-capitalist currents within the workers movement.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is not just "a single phrase from Marx" as Kautsky said. For the communards of Paris, for the Russian Bolsheviks, for authentic Trotskyists today the dictatorship of the proletariat is not a phrase to be deleted in contempt or added in cynicism. The struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat -- for workers revolution -- demands the construction of Trotskyist parties capable of breaking the working class from both forms of bourgeois workers parties -- Stalinism and social democracy. ■

(reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 97, 20 February 1976, and no 99, 5 March 1976)

Continued from page two

Fraser . . .

tax reform gimmicks that call on the bourgeoisie to undertake a major redistribution of wealth from the rich to the poor are just a hoax.

Centrists tail reformist strategy

Centrists, who oscillate between reformism and Marxism, often attempt to cover an inadequate alternative to the reformists with a barrage of militant-sounding but vague slogans and rhetoric. The Socialist Labour League (SLL) with its present fake-agitational campaign for the slogans "force the Liberals to resign" and "return a Labor government pledged to socialist policies" is an example. In giving such strategic importance to these open-ended slogans, the SLL's propaganda merges with and gives support to the left talk of the reformists who claim the path to socialism lies through a series of pre-ordained stages, the first of which is to get rid of Fraser, thereby "reforming" the capitalist state.

What else does the SLL mean by the call to "force the Liberals to resign"? When it comes to explaining how this should be done the SLL is a real model of precision: "[wage struggles] must begin with an understanding of the necessity to create the industrial and political conditions to bring down the Liberal government" (*Workers News*, 22 April). But then, the whole question is what are these conditions? How are they to be prepared? The SLL has no answer despite its "revolutionary" pretensions precisely because to give an answer would destroy its deliberate attempt to mimic the "anti-Fraser unity" rhetoric of the left reformists. And the SLL's alternative to the Fraser government is the deliberately vague slogan of an ALP pledged to "socialist policies", designed to foster confusion with the left reformists to give the SLL the false appearance of influence.

While the SLL tries carefully to guard its left flank the Communist League's capitulation to the left labour bureaucracy is more explicit:

"The call to bring down the Fraser government ... is the only way to unite the present struggles on the wage front and against the cuts in government spending and guarantee[!] their success." (*Militant*, 6 April) (emphasis in original)

This is a flat denial that the question of leadership is decisive to victory in the class struggle. When workers are united in struggle against Fraser, presumably the bureaucrats will be automatically swept aside. This gross economist tailism is false to the core and leads directly to betrayal. Thus less than three months ago when there weren't many strikes around the CL attacked the SLL's slogan as premature and labelled Halfpenny and Clancy "adventurists" for calling for limited industrial action against Fraser's proposed wage cut! Now with the widespread strike action the CL, still tailing the class, has flip-flopped and like the SLL gives a left veneer to the reformists' "unity of the left" designed to prevent a clear revolutionary alternative from emerging.

To establish the conditions for a revolutionary movement to bring down the Fraser government, communists must raise the call for political strikes for a sliding scale of wages and hours, against any cutbacks in Medibank and social services, against any state interference in the labour movement. This call must be linked to a program which shows the way to workers power, including workers' control of production, nationalisation of all basic industry without compensation, for a workers government based on workers' organisations, and an end to the special oppression of minorities, women and youth. A revolutionary workers' party must be built in the struggle for that program against the present misleaders of the class and all their reformist and centrist appendages. ■

Continued from page five

Argentine junta . . .

ment and to lump the guerrillas into the same category as the rightist death squads.

The task of an authentic Trotskyist vanguard is not to undertake isolated military adventures, nor to engage in popular-frontist alliances with "progressive" capitalists but rather to demonstrate to the workers the need to break with all wings of the bourgeoisie, including the most left as embodied in sections of the Peronist movement. Its task must be to construct an independent workers' party, as part of the struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International, to prepare for workers' revolution to smash the junta. ■

Continued from page three

Guerrillas in power . . .

Camaguey province and then march on to Havana, the Rebel Army was far from being a mass organization, counting only 1100 soldiers, most of the them peasants.

The provisional government, installed with Castro's approval, was hardly dominated by 26th of July ministers. The president was Manuel Urrutia, a former judge; the prime minister was Jose Miro Cardona, former head of the Havana Bar Association; the foreign minister was Roberto Agramonte, the Ortodoxo presidential candidate in 1952; and Felipe Pazos was again head of the National Bank. In the new armed forces, the head of the Revolutionary Air Force was Pedro Diaz Lanz. By the end of the year, all of these men had defected to the US joining the ex-batistianos in Miami. Miro was later to be the puppet head of a "Revolutionary Council" set up by the CIA to serve as the front for its Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961.

The policies adopted by the new regime during its early months were certainly a radical departure from the laissez-faire debauchery and wholesale corruption of the Batista "government", which was something akin to having Al Capone in the White House. However, the actions of the revolutionary government did not exceed the limits of the capitalist regime.

Among the first steps were the slashing of electric rates by half in rural areas, up to 50 percent cuts in rents for the poor, and the implementation of the agrarian reform law of the Sierra Maestra together with seizure of the estates of Batista henchmen. In the United States, the bourgeois press, led off by *Time* magazine, whipped up a reactionary publicity campaign against the war crimes trials of the blood-stained butchers of the Batista regime (of whose bestialities the imperialist media had reported nothing). In all, only 550 of the most notorious criminals were executed, with the broad approval of virtually all classes of the Cuban population.

But while this first post-Batista government was headed by authentic liberal bourgeois politicians, real power was in the hands of the Rebel Army, which is why the openly counterrevolutionary leaders left without waging any kind of fight. The guerrilla struggles in the hills had been militarily marginal, but they succeeded in crystallizing the massive popular hatred for the Batista regime. By the time the leaders of the 26th of July Movement entered the capital, the official army and police apparatus -- the core of the state power -- had collapsed. The Castroites proceeded to sweep it away, and organize a new repressive apparatus recruited and organized along quite different lines.

The guerrilla army was a petty-bourgeois formation, politically heterogeneous, with its leadership recruited from among ex-students and professionals and the ranks from the peasants of the sierra. While Castro and the rest of the leadership had signed various programs, manifestos, etc, with oppositional liberals, their previous direct connections with the bourgeoisie had been broken. Most importantly, the Rebel Army was not faced with a combative and class-conscious proletariat, which would have polarized the petty-bourgeois militants, drawing some to the workers' side and sending others straight into the arms of Urrutia, Miro and co. Consequently, what existed in Havana following the overthrow of Batista was an inherently transitory and fundamentally unstable phenomenon -- a *petty-bourgeois government* which was not committed to the defense of either bourgeois private property or the collectivist property forms of proletarian class rule (see "Cuba and Marxist Theory", *Marxist Bulletin* no 8).

While such a regime was temporarily autonomous from the bourgeois order -- that is, a capitalist state, namely armed bodies of men dedicated to

defending a particular property form, did not exist in the Marxist sense -- Castro could not escape from the class struggle. After 1 January 1959 a new bourgeois state power could have been erected in Cuba, as occurred following the departure of the French colonial rulers in Algeria in 1962. In the Algerian case, this process was aided by the conclusion of the neo-colonial Evian Accords, explicitly protecting the property of French colons, and the fact that power was handed over to a regular army which played little role in the guerrilla fighting.

The consolidation of a deformed workers state

However, in Cuba US imperialism was far from accommodating and soon began a sharp economic struggle against the new rulers in Havana which rapidly grew into military actions. This imperialist pressure, in turn, pushed the core of the Cuban leadership to the left, while leading other segments of the 26th of July Movement to join the bourgeois liberals and *batistianos* in exile.

The first sharp clash with the domestic bourgeoisie came over the proclamation of a moderate agrarian reform law in May. The new law expropriated all land over 999 acres, to be paid in bonds of the revolutionary government which could be redeemed in 20 years. The reaction was predictable: landowners declared this was "worse

Matos, tried to launch a regional rebellion together with two dozen of his officers, but was quickly overpowered and arrested.

Not only in the new armed forces was the differentiation taking place. The Havana organization of the 26th of July Movement and its newspaper *Revolucion* throughout early 1959 were a source of aggressive anti-Communism.

The crisis between the right and left wing came to a head in the battle over the trade unions, where David Salvador had been installed as head of the Cuban Labor Federation (CTC) to replace Batista's gangster crony Eusebio Mujal. Salvador immediately dissolved the working unity between the PSP and the 26th of July in the labor movement which had been established in late 1958, and assigned all seats on the CTC executive committee to non-Communists. In the November 1959 CTC congress there was a showdown, and after a personal intervention by Fidel Castro the back of the anti-PSP wing (which reportedly included a number of ex-*mujalistas*) was broken. Salvador resigned a few months later, and control of the unions passed to longtime Stalinist Lazaro Pena (see JP Morray, *The Second Revolution in Cuba*, 1962).

The culminating step in the nationalizations came in the fall of 1960, with a series of rapid-fire seizures (tobacco factories, American banks,



Che Guevara at news conference in Havana, October 1960.

than Communism" and the US State Department sent a pious note deploring that American investors had not been consulted beforehand.

The next move by Castro which stirred the ire of the capitalists was the removal of Felipe Pazos from the National Bank where he was replaced by Guevara. In February 1960, Russian deputy prime minister Mikoyan visited Cuba and signed an agreement to purchase 1 million tons of Cuban sugar yearly. This relieved Cuba of its hitherto almost exclusive reliance on the US for foreign trade, and when on 29 June 1960 US-owned oil refineries refused to accept crude petroleum imported from the USSR, they were nationalized. On July 3, the American Congress approved a law cutting off Cuba's sugar quota, and two days later Castro seized US-held property (primarily sugar mills) on the island.

Meanwhile the polarization within the diverse Castroite movement had proceeded apace. Already in July 1959, President Urrutia had provoked a government crisis by denouncing the PSP and Communism; almost simultaneously, air force head Diaz Lanz called on defense minister Raul Castro to purge Communists from the armed forces. Diaz soon fled to the US, and Urrutia resigned and was replaced by Osvaldo Dorticos. In October, the military commander of Camaguey province, Hubert

and then, on October 13, all banks and 382 business enterprises). By mid-October all agricultural processing plants; all chemical, metallurgical, paper, textile and drug factories; all railroads, ports, printing presses, construction companies and department stores were nationalized. Together this made the state the owner of 90 percent of the industrial capacity of Cuba.

The Permanent Revolution

With the takeover of capitalist property in Cuba, for the first time in the Western Hemisphere -- and only "90 miles from Florida" -- the world witnessed the expropriation of the bourgeoisie as a class. This naturally made the Cuban revolution an object of hatred for the imperialists. It also made Castro and Cuba into objects of adoration by would-be revolutionaries of all sorts and a large spectrum of petty-bourgeois radical opinion. The New Left, with its hard anti-Leninism, grabbed instinctively for a revolution "by the people" but without a Leninist party or the participation of the working class.

For ostensible Trotskyists, however, the Cuban revolution posed important programmatic questions. The theory of permanent revolution held that in the backward capitalist regions the bourgeoisie was too weak and bound by its ties to the imperialists and feudalists to achieve an agrarian revolution, democracy and national emancipation -- objects of the classical bourgeois revolutions. Trotsky's analysis of the Russian revolution of 1905 led him to his insistence that the proletariat must establish its own class rule, with the support of the peasantry, in order to accomplish even the democratic tasks of the bourgeois revolution; and it would from the beginning be forced to undertake socialist measures as well, making the revolution permanent in character.

The Cuban revolution demonstrated that even with a leadership that began its insurgency with no perspective of transcending petty-bourgeois radicalism, real agrarian reform and national emancipation from the yoke of Yankee imperialism proved to be impossible without destroying the bourgeoisie as a class. It vindicated the Marxist understanding that the petty bourgeoisie -- composed of highly volatile and contradictory elements lacking the social force to independently vie for power -- is unable to establish

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any new, characteristic mode of property relations, but is forced to fall back upon the property forms of one of the two fundamentally counterposed classes in capitalist society, the bourgeoisie or the proletariat.

Thus the Castro leadership, under exceptional circumstances due to the collapse of the Batista regime in the absence of a powerful working class able to struggle for state power in its own right, was pushed by the pressure of US imperialism's frenzied hostility into creating a *deformed* workers state which in power increasingly duplicated the mode of rule of the degenerated USSR as the Castroists consolidated a bureaucratic state apparatus. The evolution of the Cuban leadership from petty-bourgeois radicals to the administrators of a deformed workers state (and the incorporation of the Cuban Communists) confirmed Trotsky's characterization of the Russian Stalinists as a *petty-bourgeois caste* resting upon the property forms established by the October Revolution. Moreover, the Cuban revolution provides a negative confirmation that only the class-conscious proletariat, led by a Marxist vanguard party, can establish a democratically governed, revolutionary workers state, and thus lay the basis for the international extension of the revolution and open the road to socialism.

Unlike the Russian Revolution -- which required a political *counterrevolution* under Stalin to become a bureaucratically deformed workers state -- the Cuban revolution was deformed from its inception. The Cuban working class, having played essentially no part in the revolutionary process, never held political power, and the Cuban state was governed by the whims of the Castroist clique rather than being administered by democratically elected workers councils (soviets).

The revisionist current which had emerged from within the Trotskyist movement in the late 1950s saw in Cuba the perfect justification for its abandonment of the construction of Trotskyist vanguard parties. By ignoring the crucial index of workers democracy and thus sliding over the qualitative difference between a deformed workers state such as Stalinist Russia or Castroist Cuba and the healthy Russian workers state of Lenin and Trotsky, the European supporters of the "International Secretariat" (IS) embraced the Cuban revolution as proof that revolutionary transformations could take place without the leadership of a proletarian vanguard. Cuba became the model of the "revolutionary process" under "new conditions" -- and the schema to which the revisionists have clung despite the failure of countless guerrilla struggles in Latin America to duplicate the "Cuban road".

For the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP), however, Cuba was a watershed in the degeneration of that party as a repository of revolutionary Trotskyism. During the 1950s it had fought Pablo's notion of "deep entrisim" in the mass reformist parties. But with its revolutionary fibre weakened under the impact of McCarthyism, the SWP leaders were desperately searching for a popular cause which could enable them to break out of isolation.

SWP leader Joseph Hansen crowed enthusiastically:

"What provisions are there in Marxism for a revolution, obviously *socialist in tendency* but powered by the peasantry and led by revolutionists who have never professed socialist aims.... It's not in the books!... If Marxism has no provisions for such phenomena, perhaps it is time provisions were made. It would seem a fair enough exchange for a revolution as good as this one." ("The Theory of the Cuban Revolution", 1962) (our emphasis)

Having declared the revolution "socialist in tendency" and equated it with Russia under Lenin, Hansen could not simply ignore the crucial question of workers democracy. "It is true that this workers state lacks, as yet, the forms of proletarian democracy," he wrote. But he immediately added, "This does not mean that democracy is lacking in Cuba."

The SWP tops took the convergence on the Cuba question as the opportunity to propose a reunification with the IS. In a 1963 document, "For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement", the SWP wrote of "the appearance of a workers state in Cuba -- the exact form of which is yet to be settled"; the "evolution toward revolutionary Marxism [of] the July 26 Movement" and concluded:

"Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerrilla warfare conducted by landless peasant and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial and semi-colonial power.... It must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries."

In response to this open revisionism, Healy and his International Committee followers simply thrust their head in the sand like an ostrich and declared that Cuba, even after the 1960 nationalization, is "a bonapartist regime resting on capitalist state foundations", one not qualitatively different from Batista's regime. But within the SWP the Revolutionary Tendency (RT -- forerunner of the Spartacist League/US) was able to analyze the post-1960 Cuban regime as a *deformed workers state* and point out the significance of that characterization for Marxist theory.

In a resolution that was submitted as a counter document to the "For Early Reunification ..." document of the SWP leadership, the RT made clear that "Trotskyists are at once the most militant and unconditional defenders against imperialism of both the Cuban Revolution and the deformed workers' state which has issued therefrom." But it added: "Trotskyists cannot give confidence and political support, however critical, to a governing regime hostile to the most elementary principles and practices of workers' democracy ..." ("Toward the Rebirth of the Fourth International", June 1963).

Directly rejecting the SWP's embracing of guerrillaism and Castroism in place of the Trotskyist perspective of proletarian revolution, the RT resolution summarized:

"Experience since the Second World War has demonstrated that peasant-based guerrilla warfare under petit-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime. The creation of such regimes has come about under the conditions of decay of imperialism, the demoralization and disorientation caused by Stalinist betrayals, and the absence of revolutionary Marxist leadership of the working class. Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive significance only under such leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. For Trotskyists to incorporate into their strategy revisionism on the *proletarian* leadership in the revolution is profound negation of Marxism-Leninism...." ■

(reprinted from Workers Vanguard no 102, 26 March 1976)

Continued from page twelve

... Gallagher

union democracy. In this case, despite the fact that there is no qualitative difference between the BWIU and the BLF leaderships which are equally treacherous, amalgamation would be a real step forward for building workers, laying the basis for a real industrial union. Not the least of the benefits would be a better framework for political struggle against the misleadership of both Clancy and Gallagher.

This, however, does not mean that the specific merger that has already taken place in Canberra was a step forward. On the contrary: to carry out what was virtually a takeover in one isolated branch will induce a bitter and divisive struggle between the two unions which can only seriously obstruct any fight for a genuine merger at a federal level. Furthermore, the fact that the BWIU leadership has made its move at a time when it can take advantage of the deregistration of the federal BLF to move in violates an important principle against raiding deregistered unions (and in fact contravenes a standing ACTU policy).

Clancy seems to have "forgotten" the disastrous effects of flouting this principle on the BWIU itself in the past. The 1948 deregistration of the BWIU was used by NCC-backed forces to help split the union and form the Australian Society of Carpenters and Joiners -- the damage is still felt today. BWIU members should insist that the federal BLF be reregistered as a precondition to further merger steps, to make sure there is no hint of coercion in unity proposals and to take the credibility out of any accusations of raiding.

However, since the merger in the ACT has gone ahead with apparent majority backing from ACT builders' labourers, the new merged branch must be defended against the MBA/Gallagher attempt to destroy it. This defence must be coupled with the demand for reregistration of the federal BLF and a call to put the question of seeking amalgamation with the BWIU to a nationwide vote of builders' labourers.

The Builders' Labourers for Democracy grouping in NSW, which is supported by the CPA and the old NSW BLF Pringle-Owens leadership, has taken a position in some respects similar to this, but with an entirely different thrust, making amalgamation conditional on autonomy for the BLF within the amalgamated union with proportional representation among officials and on committees, which would make any such "amalgamation" a virtual fraud. This condition is nothing more than an attempt by the CPA to guarantee their return to positions in the bureaucracy that they lost with the demise of the NSW BLF.

Gallagher, Clancy, Owens, Pringle -- all wings of the reformist labour bureaucracy subordinate workers' unity against the bosses -- whether it involves trade-union amalgamation or any other important need of the workers -- to the defence of their own influence and perks. That is why the struggle for the fighting unity of workers' industrial organisations is inseparable from the fight for the revolutionary leadership needed to consistently carry through the fight against capitalism. ■

Continued from page twelve

... abortion

(thus intentionally limiting the struggle in advance to the framework of bourgeois-democratic "rights"). Justifying this "single issueism", WAAC (the class-collaborationist vehicle of the fake-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party) has stated, "While there is any law, no matter how 'liberal', women are still at the mercy of others (whether doctors, politicians, husbands or religious pressure groups) ..." (WAAC Newsletter, February 1976).

So, repeal the abortion laws and women will no longer be at the "mercy of others" (including everyone but capitalists) -- what liberal, legalistic nonsense! Women's oppression will only be

ended once capitalism is overthrown. No legal reform will prevent the bourgeoisie from resorting to extra-legal repression to defend its rule. It cannot even approach the achievement of real equality for women; it leaves untouched the material barriers which imprison women in the nuclear family and enforce systematic social inequality of the sexes.

Only the working class has the potential capacity and objective need to overthrow capitalism and smash the foundations of women's oppression. But part of the struggle for that revolution is the defence of all those capitalism victimises or oppresses; and only the organised workers movement has the social muscle to decisively repulse the attacks of the ruling class.

A Liverpool Abortion Defence Campaign has been set up based on the demands: Drop the charges against the Liverpool women! Repeal all abortion laws! Action to date has included pickets outside the Liverpool courthouse committal hearing, the circulation of a petition, and the organisation of a public meeting to be held on 28 April. But an appeal to public opinion is not enough. While support from any quarter against the persecution of the Liverpool health workers should be encouraged, it is especially important for the defence campaign to approach the trade unions for backing, pointing out the importance of the issue for the whole working class.

But as the criminal stance of NSW ALP tops indicates, the existing leadership of the labour movement is incapable even of consistently defending basic democratic rights, much less of taking up the battle for women's liberation or any serious fight against capitalism. A new leadership is necessary, one committed to class struggle, not timid token reforms and cringing before the bosses. For a revolutionary leadership of the labour movement! For a communist, working women's movement! ■

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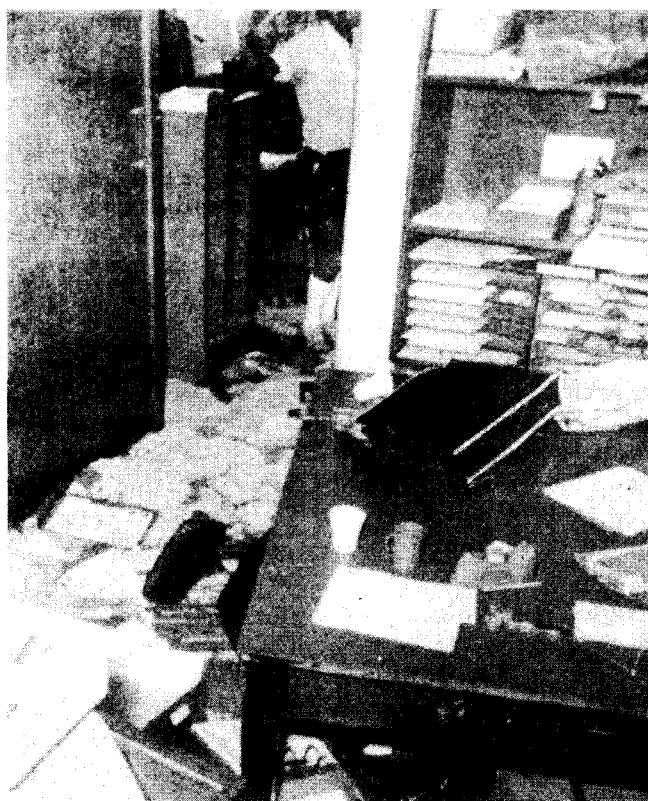
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As building trades bureaucrats feud over amalgamation . . .

Gallagher makes sellout deal with MBA



Sydney BWIU office after Gallagher's raid.

The sporadic infighting and competitive empire-building which the rival Stalinist bureaucracies of the Building Workers' Industrial Union (BWIU) and the Builders' Labourers' Federation (BLF) have inflicted upon workers in the building industry over the last few years has recently come to a head as a result of the BWIU's attempted absorption of the BLF's Canberra branch. Pat Clancy, who doubles as federal president of the BWIU and president of the pro-Moscow Socialist Party of Australia (SPA), has been looking for a breach in the BLF's ranks since that union was deregistered federally in 1974. In March, he consummated a deal with Canberra Secretary of the BLF, McHugh, which was subsequently ratified by a mass meeting of builders' labourers.

Norm Gallagher, federal president of the BLF and a prominent member of the pro-Peking Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist), responded in typical fashion with intimidation of his ex-members and a raid on BWIU Sydney offices in which union property was destroyed and office workers physically attacked. In the course of his long campaign to oust the previous, elected leadership of the NSW BLF, Gallagher showed his willingness to violate all trade-union and working-class principles through his close collaboration with the NSW Master Builders' Association (MBA). With his latest deal, designed to regain his hold in Canberra, Gallagher has further extended his dirty deal with the bosses.

Because of the deregistration of the BLF at the federal level, it has no legal standing with

the Commonwealth Arbitration system and is thereby denied normal avenues of industrial representation. Consequently, to eliminate this weakness, Gallagher has done a deal selling out wholesale the union members' interests to obtain assurances that the MBA will not support the merger, will not oppose reregistration, and will continue to pursue the deregistration of the old NSW state branch. The payoff for the MBA is Gallagher's agreement to drop a \$10 wage claim, to lift all work bans (including Green Bans), and to end stoppages before arbitration hearings!

According to *Tribune* (31 March), Clancy, too, had tried to secure the acquiescence of the MBA by allegedly promising that the old BLF leadership would not be allowed back into the amalgamated union. Clancy was evidently offering less than Gallagher was prepared to, and so, after Clancy initiated the Canberra merger, the MBA switched sides and threatened Canberra builders' labourers with the sack if they did not revert to the BLF. It is testimony to Gallagher's extreme lack of rank-and-file support that 60-80 percent have reportedly stayed in the new union.

Because revolutionaries always strive for the best objective conditions for the working class in its struggle against the employers, they always favour genuine advances in trade-union unity, and in particular moves towards industrial unionism, as long as the merger facilitates unity in struggle and does not involve the sacrifice of any existing standards of wages and conditions or

Continued on page eleven

NSW reactionaries mobilise against abortion

With the election of the Fraser government committed to increased attacks on the working class has come a threat to abortion reform as part of the general right-wing offensive. The limited availability of abortion allowed in recent years has been under attack in NSW on two fronts. Last month the NSW Legislative Assembly voted on the "Infant Life Preservation Bill" presented by DLP member Kevin Harrold. This draconian bill would make it a felony punishable by up to 20 years imprisonment to perform an "unlawful" abortion.

At present, under Judge Levine's ruling in the 1971 Heatherbrae case, social and economic considerations can be taken into account in determining the effect on the mother's "physical or mental health", a formula which allows a fair degree of leeway in what is considered legal. Only one doctor's opinion is necessary and an abortion can be performed in a doctor's surgery, a private clinic or a hospital. The Harrold bill would have required *two* medical practitioners to certify on oath that the operation was "necessary to preserve the life of the mother or her mental and physical health". Furthermore, lawful abortions would have to be performed in public hospitals and be registered with the District Registrar.

Harrold's bill was fortunately defeated, due to the opposition of both the Liberal/National Country Party government coalition and the ALP -- for substantially the same reasons, that no change in the present laws was necessary. On behalf of the ALP, deputy leader of the state opposition Jack Ferguson stated that the existing restrictive laws were adequate and served the people well (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 March)! Meanwhile Premier Eric Willis, who has been praising the reactionary, rabidly anti-abortion Festival of Light outfit recently, has asked the Attorney General to "look into" the existing

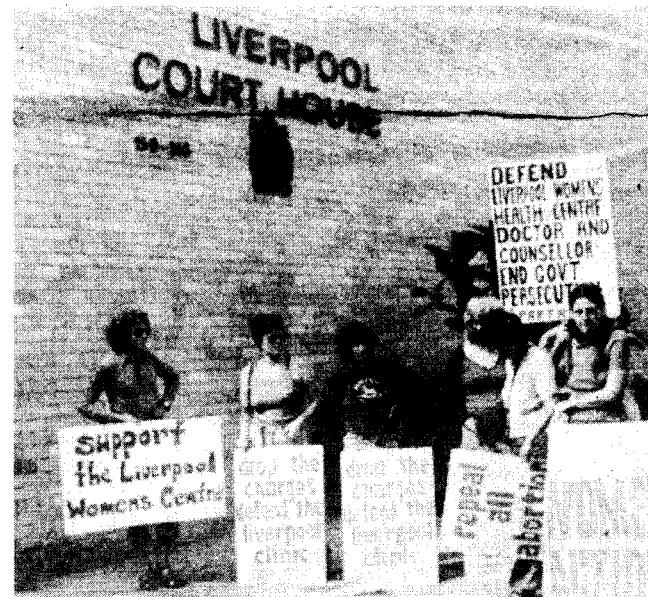
abortion legislation with a view to reinforcing restrictions.

Exactly how fragile and inadequate the present laws are is shown by the case of a doctor and health worker from the Liverpool Women's Health Centre who were charged last October with performing an "unlawful" abortion on a 15-year-old girl (the legal age at which a person is entitled to confidential medical advice and treatment is 14). Last month the case was committed to trial, in spite of the obvious fact that the abortion was legal according to the Levine judgment, in a transparent attempt to reverse that ruling. Just to show that the state really has people's welfare at heart, the girl has now been placed in a "corrective" institution and her boyfriend has been charged with carnal knowledge.

All the laws on abortion, "carnal knowledge", etc are important props to the repressive nuclear family, an institution integral both to the continued rule of capital and to the continued oppression of women. As such these laws, in themselves not essential to capitalist rule, are strongly defended by the bourgeoisie. The availability of safe, legal abortions is a simple democratic right. But like all such purely formal rights, even if won it will continue to discriminate against working-class and poor women unless abortion is provided free of charge on demand. Repeal all abortion laws! Free abortion on demand! Free quality health care for all!

The present attacks on even the severely limited existing gains in women's rights show once again the precarious, ephemeral character of any reforms wrenched from a bankrupt capitalism. Likewise they reveal the bankruptcy of those like the Women's Abortion Action Campaign (WAAC) which advances a reformist strategy, refusing to call for anything but "repeal of all abortion laws"

Continued on page eleven



Protesters picket Liverpool Court House.

Drop the charges against the Liverpool women!

A committee to defend the two health workers against prosecution on "illegal" abortion charges, the Liverpool Abortion Defence Campaign, has been established based on the demands "Drop the Charges!" and "Repeal all Abortion Laws!" For information on defence activities ring 617 325.

Send letters of protest to: The Attorney General, Goodsell Building, Chifley Square, Sydney, 2000.

Donations for legal and campaign costs should be sent to: Liverpool Abortion Defence Campaign, 25 Alberta Street, Sydney, 2000.

FOR FREE ABORTION ON DEMAND!