



Militant strikers stop scab fuel deliveries; later (13 October), John Halfpenny preaches Arbitration Commission sellout.

ASp photo

Militant power strike betrayed as

Fraser calls election on union bashing

By the time it was all over, the strike by 2300 LaTrobe Valley power workers had clearly taken on a scope and significance which far surpassed their claim for a \$40 wage increase, justifiable as that in itself was. It led to a half million stand-downs, a state of emergency in Victoria and serious speculation that the army would be called in to break a strike for the first time in 28 years. It threatened to topple wage indexation and even challenged the arbitration system. It revealed the utter bankruptcy of the claim of the Communist Party (CPA) even to militant trade unionism and demonstrated as clearly as any strike in recent years the burning necessity for a revolutionary leadership in the trade unions. In the process it also provided Fraser with a long sought-for pretext to call federal elections to the lower house a year before they were due.

Fraser seized on the power strike with the familiar catchcry of "who's running the country?" -- a codeword for his central election issue: union bashing. But the 27 October announcement that the elections were on (to be held on 10 December) was certainly no surprise. Fraser knows that the longer he waits, the more he will lose in the next election, as the recession drags on and his vicious austerity policies aimed at foisting the cost of recession onto the backs of the workers become more and more unpopular.

Playing the strike for all it was worth, he used the opportunity to ram through Parliament amendments giving the IRB broad new powers to protect scabs' "right to work" and to force changes in union rules. Further measures expanded the powers of the Arbitration Commission. One sweeping provision virtually forbids strikes altogether: "unions which prevent, hinder or interfere with domestic or overseas trade or the provision of a public service will face deregistration" (*Australian*, 20 October).

Whoever wins, the coming election farce will change little in the current industrial situation's main features. Wage indexation was instituted under the last Labor government and the

ALP is no less committed than Fraser to the arbitration system as a method of shackling the workers -- if anything, it is more so. Although Labor reformists generally prefer more subtle methods to Fraser's big stick, workers must not forget that the last time troops were sent in to smash a strike, on the NSW coal fields in 1949, it was Labor that did it. The ALP's response to Fraser's undisguised union bashing is to play up to petty-bourgeois anti-uranium sentiment and try to ignore the class struggle altogether; in fact the Labor parliamentarians were hostile to the strike because it was likely to "embarrass" them in the eyes of the capitalists.

However distorted, the ALP is an expression of the political independence of the working class; thus we call for a vote to it against the open parties of the bosses. But that in no way entails the least support to the treacherous policies of the leadership. Fraser's reactionary policies can be decisively repulsed not by an electoral victory for the pro-capitalist ALP but only in the heat of the class struggle; had the power strike been victorious it would have dealt a major blow to the Liberals' union bashing and arbitration wage cutting.

When, after putting up with months of run-around from the State Electricity Commission (SEC), the maintenance workers walked off the job last August, they vowed not to return without "money in hand". When they finally returned to work on 25 October -- without "money in hand" -- they had not been broken. They had been betrayed. After eleven weeks

all they had was a promise from the Arbitration Commission for a work-value inquiry and an unspecified "interim" settlement which would be at least four weeks coming.

They could have had a lot more. The power facilities in the LaTrobe Valley supply 80 percent of Victoria's electricity. The maintenance workers who keep them running are generally highly skilled and not easily replaceable. Had they set up picket lines to shut the power generators down right from the start, they could have brought the SEC and the Liberal Hamer government to their knees within a matter of days. As it was, it took seven weeks before enough of the generators sank into disrepair for the strike to have a crippling effect.

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Shop stewards' head Sam Armstrong addresses 4 October mass meeting.

ASp photo

Mass arrests in Qld

Determined to uphold his reactionary ban on political marches Queensland's premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, ordered a ruthless police charge against 4000 anti-uranium demonstrators in Brisbane on 22 October. As the cops lunged repeatedly through the crowds they indiscriminately kicked, punched and elbowed anyone within their reach - children, the elderly, those with babies in their arms. In the biggest single arrest since the anti-Vietnam-war movement, 418 of the protestors were flung into prison, where they were packed in 25 to a cell.

The ultimate target of Bjelke-Petersen's rampage against democratic rights is not the middle-class anti-uranium movement, but the labour movement. Only the power of the organised working class can defeat it. The Queensland trade-union movement cannot procrastinate any longer. It must launch massive, state-wide industrial action and mass union-based mobilisations around the demands:

Reverse Bjelke-Petersen's ban!
Drop the charges against all its opponents and victims!

Avenge Biko — stop apartheid terror!

On 12 September Steven Biko, a 30-year-old founder of the Black People's Convention and leader of the South African Students Organisation, became the twentieth anti-apartheid militant to die - brutally murdered, as the recently leaked autopsy results proved - in South Africa's jails during the last year and a half. Three days later the apartheid regime's stormtroopers arrested 1200 student demonstrators at a memorial meeting at the all-black University of Fort Hare - nearly the entire enrolment. Since then the state terror against opponents of apartheid has escalated sharply. On 19 October the racist regime banned 18 anti-apartheid organisations, arrested 49 people, placed banning orders on five others and closed down three publications. A measure of the regime's desperation in the face of unceasing mass resistance to its brutal policies since Soweto is that among the banned organisations was the "respectable" Christian Institute, and one of the papers shut down - whose editor, Percy Qoboza is now under arrest - is the well-known black bourgeois daily, the *World*.

In response to the crackdown pressure has increased in the UN for international sanctions against South Africa. But the struggle against apartheid cannot be entrusted to the equally bloodthirsty "democratic" imperialists for which the UN fronts. An immediate, international campaign of labour action is needed - including temporary union bans on South African shipping - to stop the terror campaign in South Africa.

Last month Sydney wharves loading a South African ship stopped work for four hours in protest over Biko's murder. Maritime unions in Melbourne have blacked South African ships for the last few weeks in response to the vicious actions of the South African government. Such actions against the current crackdown must be multiplied, but without falling into the trap of supporting UN sanctions or indefinite trade bans and consumer boycotts.

Restore legal rights to the banned organisations and militants! For full black trade-union rights! Free all victims of apartheid repression! For permanent bans on all military shipments to South Africa! Open the road to proletarian revolution through smashing apartheid!

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EDITORIAL BOARD: Chris Korwin
Len Meyers (managing editor)
David Reynolds
Inga Smith (production manager)
David Strachan

MELBOURNE CORRESPONDENT: Steve Haran

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Roberta D'Amico

GPO Box 3473,
Sydney,
NSW, 2001
(02) 660-7647

GPO Box 2339,
Melbourne,
Victoria, 3001
(03) 62-5135

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But Hamer trod warily. The state of emergency and the newly-amended Essential Services Act were never implemented to break the strike. The sackings threatened for 21 October were postponed; the scabs recruited to replace the strikers were never bused into the valley -- in any case the SEC was unable to recruit more than a handful. Hamer's hesitation testifies to the widespread sympathy for the strike, despite its limited aims, despite the SEC's phony power cuts and the stand-downs, despite the massive media barrage of anti-strike propaganda; and to his fear that troops or arrests would provoke an upheaval of working-class anger.

The strikers' ranks were solid. Throughout the long weeks they and their families carried on an impoverished subsistence on loans, personal savings and contributions from supporters across the country. Four times they voted to remain out -- with scarcely a score dissenting. When, on 13 October, they were talked into returning to work by their leaders on the promise of a special "anomalies" hearing before the full bench of the Arbitration Commission, they stayed at work only five days. After a rebuff from the commission -- which arrogantly offered them not a cent -- they resumed the strike with even less opposition than before.

The strikers spontaneously and successfully set up picket lines -- the first ever in the valley -- to stop scab fuel deliveries by Transport Workers Union truck drivers. Toward the end, after the SEC had sent out letters to strikers telling them to return to work under threat of the sack, they re-established pickets to keep out any capitulators who might try to sneak back (four were reportedly turned away). These pickets were also observed by the plumbers. As shop steward Max Strong told *ASP*, "They may have used this as an excuse when they saw the picket line of coming out with us.... The sentiment [to come out in solidarity] was there". He added, "I believe [the picket line] will be used a lot more widely than it was before.... I think that gentlemanly period's ended". Sentiment spread to shut everything down by pulling out the Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association and Municipal Officers Association members who were instructed to continue working -- to scab on the strike -- by the union officials.

The strikers had few illusions in the trade-union bureaucrats. Initially they had even refused to lodge their log of claims through the Trades Hall Council (THC), as the SEC demanded, for fear of a sellout. Ken Stone, THC secretary, openly opposed the strike and sabotaged it by systematically ignoring it. As the number of workers locked out by SEC power restrictions mounted, the criminal THC bureaucracy made no attempt to mobilise them in support of the strike or even to oppose Fraser's threats to refuse them dole payments, much less to raise the demand for full pay for those stood down.

From bitter experience the LaTrobe Valley workers knew better than to trust Bob Hawke. Following a forty-day strike in late 1973, Hawke to his "disappointment" found that the workers rejected a sellout he had engineered. That claim was eventually buried in arbitration, and as the *Bulletin* (15 October) put it, "the lesson was again driven home: nothing was to be gained from going to arbitration".

Nor did they place any faith in left-talking John Halfpenny, CPA member and state secretary of the Amalgamated Metal Workers and Shipwrights Union, largest of the eleven unions representing the maintenance workers. Halfpenny was booed and jeered and interrupted by cries of "sellout" when he addressed the strikers' mass meetings. With a relatively militant and democratic shop-steward organisation, the power workers had maintained their distance from the treacherous THC/ACTU bureaucracy. They were not about to be sold out by the Hawkes and the Halfpennys behind the closed doors of the Arbitration Commission's chambers.

For reformist workerists like the International Socialists (IS), this should have been a recipe for certain victory. An IS speaker at a 12 October Sydney University strike support rally initiated by the Spartacist League (SL) declared that the strike showed the need for a strong, militant, rank-and-file organisation to build anything significant. He then attacked Hawke and Halfpenny for desiring a compromise. But, as the CPA speaker who followed him pointed out, the head of the shop stewards committee, Sam Armstrong, belonged to the same party as Halfpenny.

And, as was demonstrated by the strikers' mass meeting the very next day, where Armstrong was instrumental in having the first return to work adopted, he was no less capable of betrayal. In a leaflet entitled "Reject the sellout" which the SL distributed to the meeting, we warned that to accept Hawke's "settlement" would be to risk throwing away the determination and sacrifice of nine weeks' strike for nothing. Our warning was confirmed. "Well, you were right last week" was what one steward told an SL supporter several

days after the workers had voted to resume the strike.

But what the workers would not buy from the thoroughly discredited Hawke and Halfpenny they bought from Sam Armstrong, whom they trusted, and who overnight turned from adversary to ally in the eyes of the media:

"First, and most important, was the strong personal persuasion of the secretary of the valley's shop stewards' committee, Sammy Armstrong, who managed to overcome the workers' suspicion and distrust of such State union leaders as John Halfpenny....

"Having been a main force behind the strike from its early stages, Armstrong's turn-around was interesting to witness, especially his tirade of abuse over pamphlets handed around before the meeting by communist groups from Melbourne exhorting the men to stay on strike and smash wage indexation." (*National Times*, 17-22 October)

The leaflet Armstrong was compelled to single out for special attack was, of course, not the one distributed by the IS, but the SL's. While the IS tailed after the trade-union consciousness of the stewards, it was the SL which offered programmatic direction to the militancy of the strikers. Our leaflet replied to Halfpenny's protestations that the strike was not "political":

"The *Age* and the *Financial Review* at least ... know quite well that the \$40 wage claim is a direct challenge to the indexation wage freeze and Government policy of cutting real wages. They also know that the power workers' determined stand could be the first real test against the battery of anti-union laws compiled by State and Federal Governments this year. Power workers must confront these real political questions squarely and openly. The ACTU has refused. The Victorian Trades Hall Council ... has not even met for the past month.... These class traitors have taken their stand. Power workers must take theirs -- smash the indexation wage freeze! Down with the Arbitration system! Smash the Essential Services Act, the IRB and all anti-union laws!"

Calling for a statewide general strike if Hamer attempted to invoke penal powers or deregister unions and a nationwide general strike to meet any move to bring in troops or arrest strikers, the leaflet warned those militants opposed to the return to work that "unless their militant stand is linked to a class-struggle policy it can only ultimately lead back into the straitjacket of the union bureaucracy and the bosses' Arbitration Court".

And so it was to be. At the final mass meeting on 25 October only one steward, George Wragg, held out under pressure and spoke against the arbitration sellout: "I would oppose it to the last letter, I would oppose it vehemently, because I believed it was not the correct course for us to take". But Wragg offered no alternative course. Militant sentiment to stay out, to keep "the SEC on the run", to shut down the entire power industry throughout Victoria was present among the strikers, as the bourgeoisie was well aware. It was no accident that the leaflet the *Australian* (21 October) seized upon to launch a red-baiting attack on the Spartacist League was one distributed after the resumption of the strike which underscored the urgent necessity for shutting down the entire state's power supply by extending the pickets which had kept out truck drivers and brought out plumbers. But trade-union militancy and democracy alone could not steer the workers past the class-collaborationist trap of reliance on the Arbitration Commission. That required a leadership unalterably opposed to the bourgeois state and to the reformist bureaucracy which props it up.

The upcoming elections are, more than usually, a pale reflection of the class struggle. Our real "vote" goes to the LaTrobe Valley power workers and the militancy they exemplified. They waged a long and hard battle. That they went down to defeat reflects neither on their strength nor their determination. Rather it is a condemnation of trade-union reformism and of those who pursue it in the name of "communism". The power workers will only be vindicated when at their head and the head of the entire working class stands a party firmly committed to the overthrow of capitalism and its replacement by a workers government. Only when they are tossed out by the workers will Hawke, Halfpenny and their ilk be incapable of betraying. ■

Power strike leaflets

Complete set of six Spartacist League and Spartacist Club leaflets on the LaTrobe Valley power strike.

Including: "Reject the sellout"
"One out, all out!"
"Say no to the sellout! Vote it down!"

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25 cents

CPA, Murdoch smear Spartacist support for power workers

The best strike support is a class-struggle policy

The 21 October *Australian's* front-page headline decried Spartacist League (SL) "agitators" roaming the LaTrobe Valley "inflaming a dangerous situation". But Murdoch's sensationalism notwithstanding, victory or defeat for the striking LaTrobe Valley power workers hinged in large measure on the quality and policies of their own leadership. As we pointed out in a letter in reply (*Australian*, 24 October), the real target of the *Australian's* slanderous diatribe was the strike itself. Unable to scapegoat the "British disease" by singling out a "militant minority" among the strikers' solid ranks, Murdoch's yellow press instead resorted to the traditional red-baiting ploy of attempting to smear their just campaign for a much-needed wage increase as the product of "goading" by outside "agitators" with sinister "motives of their own".

The *Australian* was not without reason in singling out the SL in its "red menace" scare-mongering. Uniquely on the left, the Spartacist League responded to Hamer's provocative declaration of a state of emergency with an aggressive national campaign of strike support work. We stated our "motives" in supporting the strike clearly and openly: we recognised the central importance of the power workers' strike in the context of Fraser's wage-slashing, union-bashing offensive and we sought its victory -- just as we seek the victory of every struggle of the working class against the bosses. To discredit this elementary display of class solidarity the *Australian* invented unfounded slanders that our comrades were "living on the backs" of the strikers and that the strikers resented our presence but were hard put to turn down the financial contributions raised by SL-initiated strike support committees. Needless to say Murdoch's tripe did not impress the militant strikers. "This 'outside agitation' is real good", one of the stewards told ASP. "Give us more."

case the Shop Committee)." (*Red Letter*, 26 October)

While the CG was busily apologising for Halfpenny's sellouts our comrades were aggressively mobilising a united-front campaign through which they raised \$1200 in Melbourne and another \$1070 in Sydney out of the total of some \$50,000 in urgently needed strike funds collected. We were responsible for the first support rallies in Melbourne and the *only* support rallies in Sydney. We organised protest pickets at the Arbitration Commission hearings to denounce this "neutral" tool of the bosses and to warn strike militants against any reliance in it.

Our support to the strike was *unconditional* -- no strings attached -- but it was not uncritical. Non-striking supporters cannot counterpose themselves to the established leadership and organisation of the strikers. The strikers themselves must determine their tactics and strategy -- anything else would be sheer substitutionism. But what gored the CG's ox is that in the context of unconditional support to the strike we advanced a class-struggle strategy to the strikers, openly disagreeing with losing policies and criticising sellout manoeuvres. It was precisely because of our critical honesty that we won the strikers' respect. Even head shop steward Sam Armstrong, a CPAer, could not endorse the CG's slanderous piece, commenting: "we welcomed that support ... and if we set out to criticise anybody we'll do it constructively". Another steward, Max Strong, responded in plainer terms: "I've been getting the [CPA's] *Tribune* for many years ... I'll cancel that from now on. I'm finished with them". Unlike the cynical reformists of the CG, we do not believe that the workers' political confidence can be *bought*.

Shop steward chairman Armstrong felt compelled to attack a leaflet ("Reject the sellout") distributed by the SL in his successful attempt to convince the workers to (temporarily) return to work 13 October on the basis of false promises from the Arbitration Commission. But he also felt compelled to temper the attack in his summary by "clarifying" that the "outside" groups he had referred to had in fact given much help which was gratefully received. When the workers, demoralised by the dead-end manoeuvres of Armstrong/Halfpenny, voted finally to end the strike, we were there again to provide a class-struggle alternative to defeat: "Say no to sellout! Vote it down! Extend the strike! For mass organised picketing!"

There was one other "outside group" leafletting that meeting, offering its unconditional support and urging the strikers to remain out, albeit without proposing a class-struggle alternative. It was the Women's Assistance Committee -- a group of strikers' wives. What a sharp contrast to the whole lot of fake revolutionaries, and to the feminists who rave that working-class women do not have the same interests as those of male strikers! When approached by an SL supporter the day before to join in contacting the strikers' wives for joint support work, the feminist Melbourne "Working Women's" Centre and even Communist League (CL) member Ruth Egg refused.

The Melbourne united-front committee was based around the slogans: "Victory to the power strike! Down with the Essential Services Act!" (Following Hamer's threat to sack the strikers and replace them with scabs, the SL successfully proposed that the demands, "No scabs, no sackings, no to deregistration!" and "Full pay for all workers stood down!" be added. The other SL-initiated committees were based on similar demands.) In addition to the SL, the committee included the CL, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), and the International Socialists (IS), who generally carried out their own sectarian activities apart from the committee. Incapable as they were of advancing a strategy for the strike to

win, these groups were hardly more effective in building support for it.

Two support rallies at Melbourne City Square on 11 and 12 October were sponsored by the committee with the active participation of the Maoist Australian Independence Movement (AIM). Several LaTrobe Valley shop stewards addressed the first rally and were presented with funds raised earlier that day at a Spartacist-initiated rally of 400 students at LaTrobe University (LTU). But the Maoists receded into their sec-



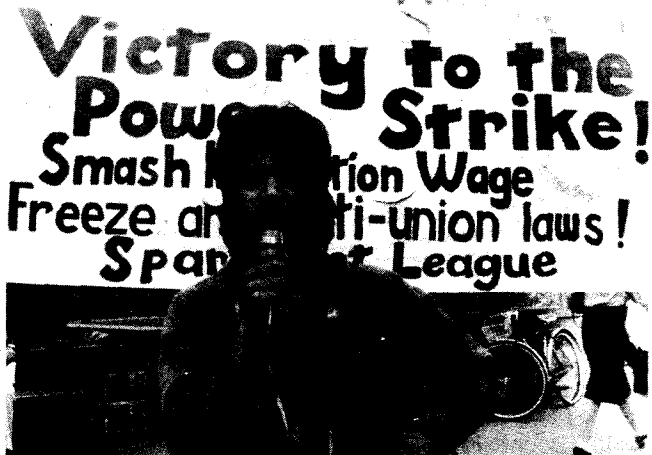
12 October march at Sydney University -- SL led support campaign.

tarian Stalinist shell and refused to engage in further united actions after the following day's rally, when an SL speaker pointed out that the policies of Maoist bureaucrats like Ted Bull (who was present but refused to speak) and Norm Gallagher were no less rotten than those of Halfpenny. The Maoists were quite willing to a attack the CPA misleaders, but demanded amnesty for their own. The AIM's analogue at LTU, the Students for Australian Independence, refused to endorse the strike support campaign from the start, counterposing a fund-raising raffle.

Particularly on campus, with its socially heterogeneous student population, strike support offers communists a valuable opportunity to concretely demonstrate the politics of the class struggle. But for all its workerist rhetoric, the IS at Sydney University was generally too busy promoting the "uranium diversion" to be overly concerned with building support for this crucial class battle. One ISer rejected a request to actively participate in support work because he was too tired ... from silk-screening anti-uranium T-shirts. As IS national leader Janey Stone explained in defending the IS's concern that a previously scheduled uranium discussion not be pre-empted by the 12 October strike support rally, it's all a question of "what people are interested in". For these professional tailists, the most important "struggle" is for petty-bourgeois popularity.

The Socialist Youth Alliance (SYA -- youth group of the SWP) and the Communist Group, on the

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SL speaker at Melbourne City Square rally, 11 October.

But it did seem to impress the strike's betrayers, as the Sydney University Communist Group (CG -- campus supporters of the Communist Party [CPA]) chose to become Murdoch's campus mouth-piece. For weeks the CG's only "contribution" to the strike "led" by their comrades was to white-wash Halfpenny's treachery and to try, unsuccessfully, to sabotage the united-front support campaign initiated and unstintingly built by the campus Spartacist Club. Having refused to endorse (much less build) a 12 October campus support rally, they then attempted to wreck an off-campus demonstration with a despicable splitting manoeuvre. The day before the 21 October rally a "La Trobe Valley Power Workers Sydney Solidarity Group" touted by the CG materialised which talked about backing the strikers "to the hilt" with "active solidarity and support" but proposed not a single *action*.

To provide a retroactive justification for their despicably sectarian refusal to offer the power strikers concrete support (though individual CGers did participate in the united-front support work) the CG turned to none other than Murdoch's slander mill:

"The thus far undenied allegations that at least one group -- the Spartacists -- have used strike fund donations to attempt to 'buy' political credibility in the LaTrobe Valley -- further highlights the way in which some small groups have attempted to use the Victorian powerworkers for their own super-revolutionary ends. 'Solidarity' means just that -- not conditional support or an attempt at subverting the workers' own organizations (in this



Australian's slander (21 October) and SL reply (24 October).

Maoists — "capitalist road" or road to oblivion?

China: Teng returns

When the smoke from the traditional fireworks had cleared, the assembled masses of Chinese mobilised by the Stalinist bureaucracy to "joyously hail" the recent Eleventh Party Congress in late August caught sight of a familiar little figure waving down from the heights of the Forbidden City. It was Teng Hsiao-ping -- back in power after twice being purged and vilified as a so-called "unrepentant capitalist roader". The re-emergence of Teng was not exactly a surprise. It was foreshadowed by the abrupt purge last October of the Chiang Ching clique -- the so-called "gang of four" who had been prominently associated with the earlier anti-Teng campaign -- in the short, savage intra-bureaucratic power struggle which erupted after the death of "The Great Helmsman", Mao Tse-tung.

Meeting under the watchwords of "order" and "stability", the Eleventh Party Congress put the official seal on a new triumvirate consisting of Hua Kuo-feng as party chairman and premier, Yeh Chien-ying as minister of defence and Teng as deputy premier and party vice chairman. The new leadership line-up represents the victory of veteran Stalinist bureaucrats and technocrats who

Soviet-style central planning, more technologically sophisticated imports, material incentives for "increased productivity" -- which had in any case been implemented willy nilly since the fall of Lin Piao in late 1971. Profits in the state enterprises, anathema under Mao and the "gang of four", are now declared honourable in the daily press. Qualifying examinations in education, which went out with the Cultural Revolution more than ten years ago, are back again. Beethoven is no longer banned (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 7 October 1977). Teng's "right deviationist wind" has truly "reversed verdicts".

The new emphasis on "profits" -- which in the context of socialised property forms such as exist in China and the USSR are not the basis of production -- is noteworthy, as Khrushchev's emphasis on "profit" incentives in state enterprises was one Maoist "proof" that the USSR had gone capitalist. But now it is proved that Peking's rabidly anti-Soviet stance was simply an expression of its bureaucratic-nationalist policy. And indeed there is one significant area which has seen no change at all. In foreign policy, the Hua-Teng-Yeh leadership is determined

spread dissatisfaction and questioning of the purge of the "gang of four". Some party members have evidently choked on Hua; and over the last few months the Maoist press has "exposed" and publicly vilified its own (as yet anonymous) "gang of four" who are said to be pursuing a "r-r-revolutionary line".

The main charge against the opposition is that they deny that the Soviet Union is "the main danger to Australia" and assert that "in struggling for independence the main blow should be struck at US imperialism" (*Vanguard*, 1 September 1977). One cannot, of course, expect from the Maoist press any accurate accounting of the politics of opposition groupings, but it is quite possible that the opposition looks back nostalgically to the supposedly pure Mao/Stalinism of the late 1960s and early 1970s -- the heyday of the Cultural Revolution -- when US imperialism was supposed to be the "main enemy".

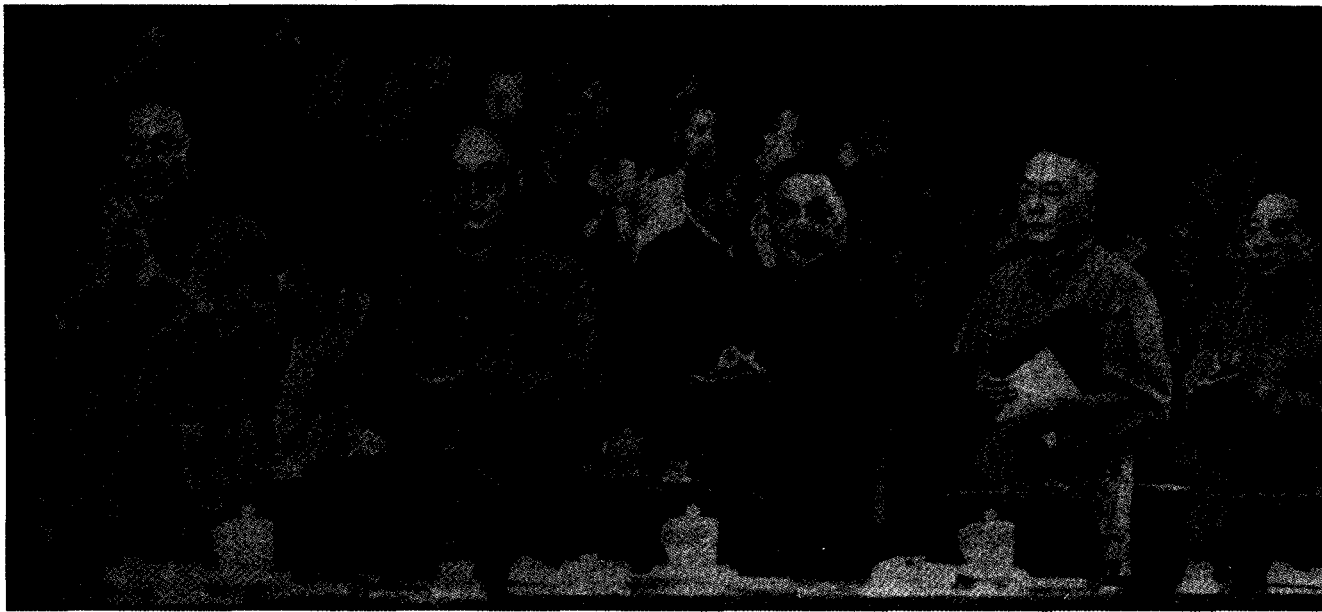
But there can be no return to the past. Unlike the Maoist movement in many other countries where the Chinese bureaucracy has in the past refused to take sides amongst a number of competing local pro-Peking currents, leaving no clear, officially endorsed group, the CPA(ML) has always had the Peking "franchise" and has proven its determination to keep it. Any serious opposition in the CPA(ML) faces the same fate as the "gang of four" -- purge and vilification; and this in turn means permanent severance from Peking. As Hill's pamphlet underlines, for a Stalinist, factional opposition to the official leadership is equivalent to being the class enemy.

While those anxious above all to ensure their future free tickets to banquets in the Heavenly Palace will swallow anything Hua feeds them, those Maoists capable of the slightest independent thinking must know that the "gang of four" have the better claim to be the Mao loyalists. As subsequent events have demonstrated, they could not have lasted in power a single day without the continuing patronage of Mao himself. Whatever criticisms of Chiang Ching by the late Chairman Mao Hua can now "produce" ex post facto are minor compared to Mao's long-time opposition to Teng and his supporters and to their current policies, which are not qualitatively different from those formerly denounced as "representing the bourgeois class in China".

Indeed within the framework of Maoist ideology it is difficult to avoid concluding that China has gone "capitalist". Maoist dogma is based on the idealist fiction that under the dictatorship of the proletariat capitalism can be peacefully and gradually restored by cunning "revisionists" worming their way into the top echelons of the party and government and then "putting profits in command". But in reality the class character of a state -- including a proletarian state -- is based on the existing property relations (the Marxist criterion) and not on the ideology or psychology of its rulers. The restoration of capitalism in China would require a massive social counterrevolution to destroy the collectivised property forms and reinstate the rule of private capital. The Maoists' anti-Marxist conception simply runs the film of reformism in reverse.

The new triumvirate does not represent a new capitalist class and neither was the "gang of

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Mao's heirs at Eleventh Party Congress (from left): Hua, Yeh, Teng (far right, secret police chief Wang Tung-hsing).

were fiercely assailed as "capitalist roaders" by Mao during the sham "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" and later by the Mao-sycophantic "gang of four" during their "anti-rightist" campaign. More than half of the 90 new members of the Central Committee are officials who came under fire during the "Cultural Revolution" and have since been "rehabilitated". As the markedly uncharismatic if now officially "much beloved and wise" Hua appropriately remarked, the congress marked "the triumphant conclusion of our First Great Cultural Revolution".

Much of the congress was given over to furious denunciations of the once high-flying "gang of four", who were officially expelled from the party "forever". Chiang Ching, Mao's widow, and Chang Chun-chiao, former party vice chairman, have now been retroactively labelled "active counterrevolutionaries" -- Kuomintang agents and renegades -- while erstwhile leading propagandist Yao Wen-yuan has been designated an "alien class element" and Wang Hung-wen simply a "degenerate" and "new bourgeois element". Adding new "quotations" from Mao to his repertoire, Hua regaled the assembled delegates with a story about how the Chairman allegedly "summed up" Chiang Ching's famous speech to the 1975 Tachai Conference: "Shit". Thus Chiang Ching and her supporters have become victims of the same practice of slander and wholesale historical falsification that they, and Mao himself -- following in the long, dishonourable tradition of Stalinism -- had systematically perpetrated against their own factional opponents.

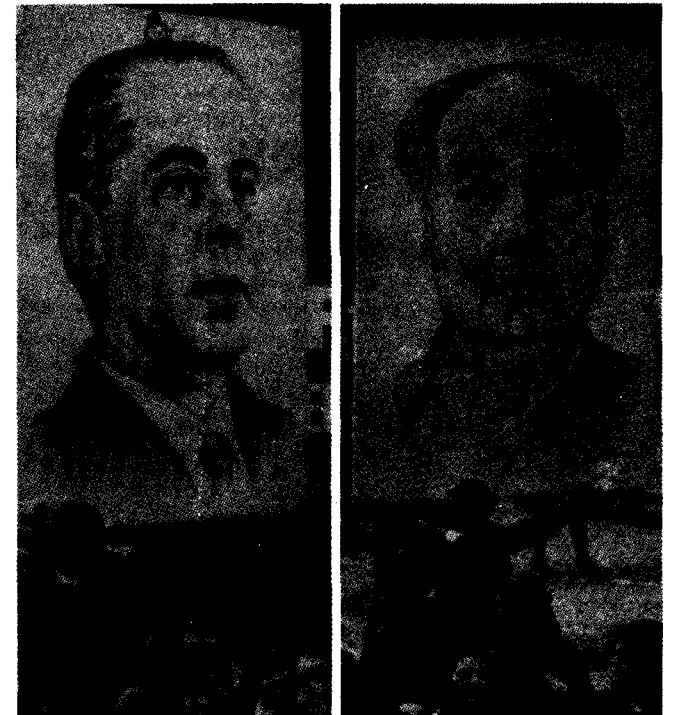
The congress rubber-stamped the economic policies long associated with Teng -- increased

to continue to pursue the strategy of alliance with US imperialism against so-called "Soviet social-imperialism". Thus shortly after the Eleventh Congress the US secretary of state, Cyrus Vance, was warmly received by both Teng and Hua.

The restoration of Teng in itself has probably had more immediate impact in international Maoist circles than in China, where the Chiang Ching clique was not particularly popular and Hua/Teng have promised a higher standard of living, including a 15 to 20 percent wage increase for urban workers (*Newsweek*, 24 October). For foreign Maoists Teng has long been the embodiment of "arch-revisionism" and "capitalist roadism". Indeed, the bulk of the present-day Maoist cadre were recruited out of identification with Mao's "revolution" against Liu Shao-chi and Teng in the late 1960s. Now it is clear that many will not take the plunge with that old "demon and freak" Teng; kowtowing to him as a leader of "People's" China and an official interpreter of "orthodox" Mao-thought will be even harder than accepting Mao's widow as a life-long counterrevolutionary and "ultra-rightist".

Already West European "critical Maoist" groups such as the West German Kommunistischer Bund, the Swedish Forbundet Kommunist and the French Organisation Communiste des Travailleurs have decided that Hua/Teng have set China on the "capitalist path". These formations are aware of the fate of "orthodox" Marxism-Leninism-Mao-Tse-tung-Thought groups in Europe, which have tended to collapse into pitiful, marginal sects. Devoting oneself to promoting NATO against the Soviet Union is not exactly popular in leftist circles in Europe, where the reactionary character of US imperialism's strategic military alliance is blatantly obvious.

The continuing fallout from the purge of Chiang Ching has now reached the Australian Maoist movement, sparking what is clearly the sharpest factional polarisation in the history of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) (CPA[ML]). There was little doubt that the central leadership of the CPA(ML), trained for decades in cur-like loyalty to their Stalinist masters, would endorse Hua and the purge of Chiang Ching. Sure enough, EF Hill, chairman of the CPA(ML), quickly came out with a pamphlet entitled *Class Struggle within the Communist Parties* which sets some sort of record for nauseous grovelling and shameless Stalinist "self-criticism", but in any case reveals wide-



Erstwhile allies Hoxha (left), Mao lauded by May Day marchers in Albania.

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Into the reformist cesspool

Canadian fake Trotskyists "fuse"

EDITOR'S NOTE: Since the appearance of the following article (excerpted from Spartacist Canada no 19, September 1977) Perry G, a founding member of the old Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG) and supporter of its Principled Fusion Tendency (PFT), has resigned from the newly fused organisation in solidarity with the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) and its Canadian sympathising section, the Trotskyist League (TL). The comrade joined the League for Socialist Action (LSA) in 1971, splitting from it along with the oppositional Revolutionary Communist Tendency, one of the components which formed the RMG in 1973. A letter from Comrade Perry published in Spartacist Canada no 20 (October 1977) describes the PFT's programmatic inadequacy in opposing the RMG's liquidation into the reformist LSA:

"... the PFT was an unprincipled bloc, containing some (like myself) who considered the LSA to be reformist and were opposed to the fusion on principle, and others who felt that the LSA was centrist and that the fusion could somehow be made principled. Eclectic, heterogeneous and confused, the PFT had no real explanation for the rightward degeneration of the RMG and could provide no programmatic alternative. Challenged by no clear Trotskyist opposition, the Political Committee was able to avoid the question of program and railroad the fusion through the August convention."

Comrade Perry thus follows the dozens of others who have broken from the Pabloism of the United Secretariat to the revolutionary Trotskyism of the iSt.

On August 7, the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG) and Groupe Marxiste Revolutionnaire (GMR) (Canadian representatives of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat's [USec] centrist International Majority Tendency [IMT]) once again found themselves a home with the reformist League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvriere (LSA/LSO). Despite a great deal of internal resistance and opposition, the leaderships of the RMG and GMR succeeded in pushing through a fusion with the LSA/LSO at their conventions in Toronto and Montreal.

The reunification of the RMG and GMR with the organization from which they split in 1972-73 was hailed by all three groups as an "historic occasion" for Canadian Trotskyism. But far from being historic (or having anything to do with Trotskyism), the coming together of the RMG, GMR and LSA/LSO into the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) is but a new page in the USec's book of unprincipled combinationism.

Five years ago, a large minority of the LSA/LSO -- at that time the sole Canadian representative of the USec and the only visible Trotskyist organization in Canada -- insurrected against the reformist politics of the leadership. While their fight was deformed and partial, many of the comrades who split to form the Quebec GMR and English-Canadian RMG did so out of a commitment to find the road to authentic Trotskyism.

The early GMR and RMG denounced the LSA/LSO and its American big brother the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) as "reformist" and "lost to Trotskyism", and looked for leadership to the European-based IMT leadership. Their perspective was "the reconstruction of the Fourth International in North America" ("The Struggle in the Fourth International", document adopted by the North American IMT groups in July 1973). But, unable to transcend centrism, the only thing the RMG and GMR have succeeded in "reconstructing" is the LSA/LSO....

"Building the Fourth International" by building the Second

While the SWP seeks to become the American version of the Canadian New Democratic Party [NDP -- a reformist labour party similar to the ALP], the LSA has historically sought to give the NDP some of the SWP's "socialist" veneer. For many years the LSA/LSO's central political slogan was "Win the NDP to Socialism!" In recent years however the LSA/LSO has lowered its sights somewhat -- now aiming simply to "Build the NDP!" This ostensibly "dramatic" line change was offered to the RMG leadership as evidence that the LSA/LSO had moved to the left since the split of its long-time leader Ross Dowson in 1974.

The early RMG adamantly rejected the LSA/LSO's pro-NDP cretinism. Its desire was to build the Fourth International, not the Second. But by late last year, as the organization met with failure after failure, the leadership had begun searching frantically for some excuse to liquidate the RMG back into the LSA/LSO. Thus the RMG's top leaders seized on a few hypocritical

"self-criticisms" by the LSA/LSO leadership for its extremely right-wing NDP line under Dowson, taking them as good coin, and finding them sufficient justification for fusion....

The extent of agreement between the leaderships on this question was underlined by RMG National Secretary Bob Mills in his convention report on "Social Democracy and the English-Canadian Workers Movement". To the delight of the assembled LSA/LSOers, Mills stated that, in the RMG Political Committee's opinion, the



French Mandeliste leader Alain Krivine in Toronto, 1974.

Canadian working class will not go forward to socialist revolution until it has become "completely disillusioned" with the NDP in power. Therefore, according to Mills, the central demand of revolutionaries must be for an NDP government.

Mills's report, which incorporated some of the worst rationalizations used by the LSA/LSO to justify liquidation into the NDP, provoked the most heated and confused debate of the entire RMG convention. Liquidating one's organization is, after all, as we have noted before, not without its hesitations and agonies; and not all RMGers were as willing as their National Secretary to swallow in one gulp the LSA/LSO's NDP line. In a last-ditch effort to hold on to some of the RMG's threadbare leftism, two opposition tendencies gave counterreports following Mills's presentation.

Choking on the thought of calling for NDP governments everywhere and always, one oppositional clot sought to sweeten the pill by suggesting that the NDP government slogan be raised in only four provinces (British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario), but not federally! The other report correctly opposed the NDP government slogan, offering in its stead, however, a call for critical electoral support to the NDP under most circumstances (implicitly including periods, like today, when NDP coalitionism with bourgeois parties should preclude even the most critical support from Leninists).

During the discussion many delegates grudgingly supported the leadership's position ("I support the document but ..."), while complaining that Mills was beginning to sound like a typical LSA/LSO hack. After various counterpositions and amendments were withdrawn by their movers, resubmitted by other delegates and then withdrawn again, most of the opposition had worn itself out, and the Mills position was carried by 26 votes to 2, with 4 abstentions.

Like the vote against the NDP line change, the actual vote against fusion was quite small (only two delegates to the RMG convention voted against, while one other RMG delegate and two from the GMR abstained). Nevertheless, this did not reflect the depth of rank-and-file discontent over what was widely recognized as a shotgun wedding with the LSA/LSO. Without a large turnout of international USec honchos to ram through the "unity" offensive, the opposition would likely have been larger.

The RMG and GMR leaderships decided quite early on that they had "no principled political

differences" with the LSA/LSO -- after all, both agreed that the USec was the continuity of the Fourth International, and what more could possibly be required! But a large reservoir of resentment against the leaderships of both organizations was created, due mainly to the rapid-fire pace at which the fusion was forced through.

Less than two months before the convention date, the RMG and GMR leaderships announced to the ranks that the fusions -- originally scheduled to occur only pending the success of a long period of joint work -- would instead come immediately after the August conventions. Clearly the need for a shotgun fusion was motivated by growing discontent with the idea of fusion in sections of the ranks, and by recognition by the RMG/GMR/LSA/LSO leaderships that a lengthy period of "joint work" would only widen the groups' differences.

Right away, oppositional clots sprung up across the country against the leadership's "fast fusion" proposal. Doubtless desiring more time to mull over their organization's failures before actually committing political suicide, disgruntled elements grouped around various tendencies arguing for fusion at Thanksgiving, at Christmas, or -- for the more "militant" -- Easter weekend.

By convention time, all oppositions had been predictably whipped into line, save two: the small "Principled Fusion Tendency" (PFT) of the RMG, which opposed the fusion as unprincipled; and a rank-and-file "Working Group" of the GMR, centered on its trade unionists and its CEGEP (community college) students. The Working Group was a hodgepodge of disaffected and unhappy elements -- ranging from left-wingers repelled by the LSA/LSO and by the GMR leadership's rightward motion, to feminist and gay-liberation lifestyleists, to extreme Quebec nationalists upset that the group was abandoning its Bundist position for a separate Quebec section of the USec.

The only unifying factor in this melange (which by convention time included forty percent of the GMR membership) was its opposition to the leadership's bureaucratic "fast fusion" tactics. Yet not a single member of the Working Group could muster a "no" vote when the hands were raised for fusion -- let alone present anything remotely resembling a programmatic critique of the GMR and LSA/LSO leaderships.

"Principled Fusion Tendency"

Thus the delegates of the RMG's Winnipeg-based PFT were the only ones to vote against the fusion. Substantially smaller than the Working Group, the PFT was however almost as confused and eclectic. Among its supporters were hardened feminists and anti-feminists; "native nationalists" and anti-nationalists; some who supported the IMT, others who rejected it as opportunist. The only thing holding the PFT together was a well-placed revulsion for the LSA/LSO.

Yet even on this question the position of the PFT was extraordinarily muddled. In its original founding declaration the tendency came up with a rather novel characterization of the LSA/LSO as "revolutionary centrist". When this was withdrawn, PFTers split on the issue -- some condemning the LSA/LSO as reformist; others characterizing it as centrist.

In the PFT's anti-fusion report to the convention, the RMG leadership was attacked for capitulating to the LSA/LSO on a series of questions -- the most notable being the NDP and international democratic centralism. The report challenged the RMG's "closet leftists" to "come out", warning them that after the fusion they would face a "block of three" against left oppositionists: the RMG leadership, the LSA/LSO leadership and the LSA/LSO's hand-raising ranks. However the

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Canadian fusion . . .

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triumvirate did not wait until after the convention to coalesce -- the PFT was attacked heavily, and the "closet leftists" stayed in the closet.

The PFT's reports and documents were a pot-pourri of confused and contradictory left-Pabloism, harkening back to the "good old days" of the early RMG. Yet, as the tendency was quick to discover, such positions had become anathema to the RMG in its death throes -- another uncomfortable reminder of its "ultraleft" youth.

When a PFT document attempted to point to the international differences in the USec and the unprincipled maneuvers of the international faction leaderships, the RMG Political Committee's response was to mock the document's author, who "obviously pours [sic] over the fine print of all manner of relatively unimportant bulletins of the International with a magnifying glass" (Matlowe, "In Response to Eugene and the PFT", Joint Internal Information Bulletin no 10, July 1977). For the consummate cynics in the RMG leadership, "pouring over" the voluminous pages of prose turned out by its own international leaders is obviously irrelevant.

The concern with international democratic centralism during the pre-convention discussion and at the convention was not limited to the PFT. As befits such latter-day Kautskyites, the SWP and other LTF [the SWP-dominated Leninist-Trotskyist Faction] sections openly demanded a federated "International", in which they are allowed to control all aspects of political work in the countries where they have a majority. Obviously, this demand does not sit too well with the ex-members of the RMG and GMR -- now a minority in the fused organization.

In his greetings to the GMR convention, the USec's [Charles] Michaloux [a leader of the IMT] stated that the IMT could not accept in theory, even if it had to in practice, a breakdown in democratic centralism to the level of federalism. He went on to argue that international democratic centralism could not be viewed in the same way as national democratic centralism -- one must be "flexible" internationally, and each national section could not be expected to apply "to the letter" every decision of the International leadership. As members of the RMG and GMR paled before Michaloux's scarcely-veiled defense of the federalist status quo, the LSA/LSO and SWP leaders in attendance glowed in approval....

And, beyond the manifold differences over international questions, despite the RMG and GMR's rightward motion enough differences persist on domestic questions to ensure that the new RWL will have its hands full. Already, unable to resolve their differences over interventions into the pro-abortion movement (the RMG called for "free abortion on demand", while the LSA/LSO deemed this "sectarian"), the new organization has simply resolved, for the time being, to carry two banners on abortion demonstrations.

Given time, the RWL will come to possess a clear and consistent political line -- that of the ex-LSA/LSO. But in its early period, before the heterogeneous ranks of the RMG and GMR have been sorted out, the new organization promises to be rather spectacularly unstable and subject to internal rebellion. Particularly in Quebec, where disgruntlement about the fusion and distrust toward the right-wing LSA/LSO leadership is widespread among former GMR members, the new group is in for a great deal of immediate internal difficulty....

The PFT's summary report to the RMG convention warned the membership to make sure that they

would have tendency rights inside the fused organization. Denouncing the SWP as an undemocratic organization, the PFT demanded an accounting for the bureaucratic expulsion of the pro-IMT Internationalist Tendency (IT) in 1974. This challenge drew a large round of applause from the convention -- with the exception of the LSA/LSO, of course.

But there will be no accounting, for the SWP has no retrospective qualms about the IT affair. Shortly after the expulsions were carried out, the SWP put them to good use -- citing them in a bourgeois courtroom as evidence that it harbored no violent, terroristic or revolutionary aims. The ITers were eventually allowed to crawl back into the SWP on their bellies -- political cripples destroyed by the USec's revisionist *modus vivendi*. Would-be left oppositionists in the RWL can expect no better treatment than that meted out to the IT....

In a leaflet distributed at the RMG's second national convention in 1975, the Spartacist tendency noted that the group's future prospects were not bright: it was "genuinely an organization without a future". The comrades of the Bolshevik-Leninist Tendency showed the way out of the revisionist swamp to Trotskyism -- others, repelled by the USec's maneuvers and unprincipled politics, will follow. Unable to come to the revolutionary program, the RMG and GMR have surrendered themselves to reformism. We shed no tears for their passing.■

Germany . . .

Continued from page eight

The West German left has fallen into the twin traps of either turning their backs on them or solidarising with them politically. While we cannot embrace the RAF as comrades, we and our comrades of the Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands refuse to run from our obligation to defend them against the capitalist state.

It is revolting to observe virtually the entire left abandon any vestige of defence of the RAF over the kidnapping of Schleyer (who wrote in 1938, "I am a long-time National Socialist and SS leader"). This is not a case of blind terror against innocent civilians, as in the "Black September" taking of hostages at the Munich Olympics in 1972 or the latest aeroplane hijacking by the "Japanese Red Army". The Schleyer abduction -- no matter how foolish, politically wrong and counterproductive -- was not an act of indiscriminate terrorism against innocent individuals which must be condemned by the entire left and which would call into question the class character of the RAF.

Fake lefts proclaim "respectability"

Although the methods of the RAF are similar to those of classical anarchism, its ideology is fossilised New Leftism -- a conglomeration of Bakuninist populist and Maoist conceptions based on lack of faith in the revolutionary capacity of the working class. The RAF sees itself as an auxiliary force to one or another sort of Stalinist/nationalist group fighting imperialism in the "Third World" -- as "urban guerrillas" and a "partisan unit behind enemy lines" (from an interview with Andreas Baader, Ulrike Meinhof, Gudrun Ensslin and Jan-Carl Raspe in *Der Spiegel*, no 4 in 1975). The RAF sees the working class of the imperialist countries as a bought-off labour aristocracy irremediably sunk in "consumer society"; consequently its own actions are nothing but moralistic gestures (burning of a department store, attack on a US Army officers club, kidnappings/assassinations of notorious bourgeois leaders).

Over the last five years the West German left on numerous occasions demonstrated in solidarity with the RAF against the brutal repression by the state apparatus. Many groups even gave *political* support to the New Left terrorists. As recently as last year thousands marched at a Berlin demonstration on the occasion of Ulrike Meinhof's burial; "liberals" like theologian Helmut Gollwitzer and "socialists" like former New Left honcho Rudi Dutschke gave eulogies. But now that the RAF's last drop of popularity, of "understanding for their motives" by "liberal public opinion", has vanished, nearly the entire left, to quote the conservative *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (18-19 September), lets "the terrorists drop like a hot potato, claiming they do not have nor ever had anything to do with these people". Those who glorify actions like those of the RAF so long as they take place somewhere else -- Spain, Argentina, Palestine -- when suddenly confronted by their own bourgeoisie loudly proclaim their "respectability".

The Peking-loyal KPD (Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands) today competes with the pro-Moscow DKP for the role of the most despicable ideological mudslinger for the bourgeoisie within the workers movement. Comparing the attack in Koln with the actions of Al Capone, the KPD's *Rote Fahne* (7 September) refers to it as "A Gangster

War in the Ranks of the Bourgeoisie". The faithful mouthpiece of the Peking bureaucracy, which rivals CSU revanchist Franz Josef Strauss as a "fatherland defender" against "Soviet imperialism", now adds its voice to the reactionary "anti-terrorist" witchhunt.

German USec capitulates to hysteria

It is not surprising to see the aspiring social-democratic bureaucrats and Maoist fatherland defenders solidarising with bourgeois state repression against the "terrorist threat". But, although even for these shameless reformists their grovelling over the Schleyer affair represents a new low, the most revolting capitulation of all comes from the supposed Trotskyists of the Gruppe Internationale Marxisten (GIM -- German section of Ernest Mandel's "United Secretariat" [USec]). These opportunists, who once beat the drums for a "guerrilla strategy" in Latin America, venerated Che Guevara and supported "without reservation" the "unstoppable ascension" of Spanish premier Carrero Blanco (as a result of a Basque nationalist bomb attack), now crawl under their beds when the same terrorist tactics are used at home and the bourgeoisie puts the heat on.

Beginning with the repulsive banner headline "Individual Terror Only Aids the Right!" the 15 September issue of the GIM's *Was Trun* (no 175) is filled from cover to cover with legalistic doubletalk, veiled slanders against victims of reactionary repression and grovelling apologies to the bourgeois state. To top off this nauseating collection of social-democratic evasions, the GIM presents its *own* anti-terrorist program! "Our 'program against terror' is a program of mass actions against unemployment and atomic pollution, for the common defense of democratic rights."

What an abomination of Marxism! Not only does the GIM refuse to defend the RAF against the witchhunt of the West German state; not only do these phony Trotskyists fall into line with the government's "anti-terrorist" hysteria; not only do they fail to make the elementary *class* distinction between the terror of the capitalist state and that of the RAF; but these panicky opportunists in full flight to the right claim (just as Schmidt says to Strauss) that they have a better program to fight *left-wing* terror. For shame! Has the GIM "forgotten" the principle of class solidarity against bourgeois repression? Has it "forgotten" about the class character of the state?

Apparently they have, for the infamous *Was Trun* no 175 states:


"The Schleyer kidnapers, who provide the excuse [for state repression against the left], thereby prove their unpolitical attitude: they are simply following the 'military' logic of a private war which is completely lacking in justification. Their demands for freeing prisoners are only aimed at [increasing] their own capacity for action. Their methods include the death of Schleyer's escorts."

After this "indictment" of the RAF, which could have appeared in any SPD newspaper, the GIM concludes:

"In the case of contemporary groups which follow a policy of individual terror, whether they belong to the workers movement is extremely questionable.... We are presently discussing within our organization the more far-reaching political conclusions to be drawn from the recent upsurge of individual terrorism."

It is a telling indictment of the Pabloists, who change their positions with every shift in the winds of petty-bourgeois opinion, that the people who at the height of the Guevarist rage called for a strategy of "protracted guerrilla war" in Latin America now want to read any group which uses terrorist methods out of the left.

In fact, not so long ago the centrist USec majority excused incidents of indiscriminate terror by nationalist groups whose victims were not representatives of the bourgeoisie but random individuals. The criminal slaughter of Puerto

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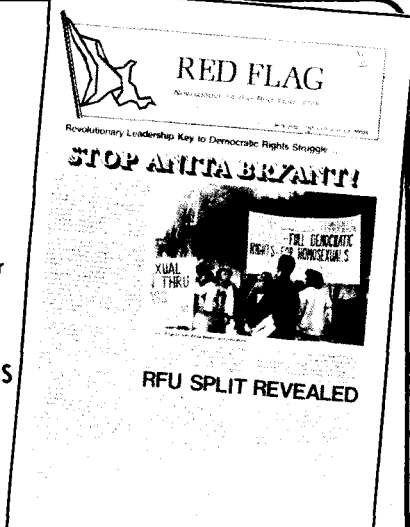
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Rican Baptist tourists at Lod Airport in Israel by the "Japanese Red Army" in league with the Palestinian PFLP was called merely a "great mistake" in *Was Tun* no 6. And don't forget the Munich massacre. When Israeli athletes were killed as a result of their senseless kidnapping by the Palestinian nationalist Black September group, the political bureau of the USec's French section wrote that "the action of Black September must be unconditionally supported" (*Rouge*, 30 September 1972). But let some home-grown terrorists -- not exotic "Third World" heroes who can be romanticised and vicariously cheered on -- kidnap a top industrialist and former Nazi, and the fickle GIM suddenly questions whether the RAF is part of the left.

The shamelessness of the Pabloists does not even stop here. The GIM's first reaction to the Koln attack was one of sympathy for the dead cops! "We feel no joy over the kidnapping of Schleyer. Not only because of the death of four policemen, who are of course not uninvolved, but at least are not personally guilty..." (*Was Tun*, 8 September). Are the police not the professional gunmen, the mailed fist of the bourgeois state? Yet this infamy should not be surprising coming from supporters of an "International" whose Spanish section calls on the Francoist state to dissolve fascist bands, whose American "fraternal" supporters call on the US imperialist army to protect black people in Boston, and whose French section supports unionisation of the cops. Perhaps, in the tradition of the American SWP, which sent a telegram of condolences to the widow Kennedy in 1963, the GIM will soon issue public statements of its sympathy for the next of kin of the Bubacks, Pontos, Schleyers and their "escorts".

The courageous but misguided attempts of the RAF to struggle against imperialism and oppression in an individualistic petty-bourgeois fashion have failed miserably. The West German bourgeoisie is firmly in the saddle and making ready use of every action of the decomposed New Leftist RAF to strengthen its repressive apparatus which is aimed, in the final analysis, at the proletariat. Only by rejecting the road of petty-bourgeois despair, and by turning to and organising the proletariat under the leadership of a Trotskyist vanguard party, can the imperialist order be toppled and replaced with the soviet dictatorship of the working class.

Down with the "anti-terrorist" witchhunt! For proletarian unity of action against the threatened ban against "communist organisations"! Freedom for all left prisoners!

Down with all emergency laws! Down with the "contact ban" law! For the dissolution of the *Bundesgrenzschutz* and the mobile intervention commandos!

Smash the *Berufsverbot* -- No blacklisting in the trade unions!

For the proletarian class justice of a workers government! ■
(adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 178, 21 October 1977)

Strike support . . .

Continued from page three

other hand, considered their student-parochialist campaigns for a 12 October AUS delegate election to be far more important than supporting the power workers' struggle (though neither would of course denigrate the importance of uranium) -- an admission made explicitly both by CGer Steve Bolt and SYAer Jon West. *In the midst of the most serious class confrontation in years, the SYA did not so much as mention the strike in its election campaign.* Instead West ran on the Labor Club ticket (!) on a two-point program calling for more AUS involvement in the anti-uranium movement and support for its anti-cutbacks campaign.

For our comrades there was no dilemma in choosing between the AUS elections and strike support, because there was no dichotomy. *Our strike support campaign was our election campaign!* What better platform for student communists to stand on than concrete, active support for the struggles of the working class? The SYA's campaign was so obtrusively reformist that it was opposed even by its prospective "fusion" partner -- the CL member on campus voted for the Spartacist Club ticket and relegated the SYA to the lower preferences!

Though the SYA joined the IS and CL in endorsing the campus united front, it made no effort to build it. Asked for SYA assistance in building the support rally, West nonchalantly replied that his comrades were busy *watching television!* The strike support campaign was, after all, a "sectarian stunt". And the CG, having refused to lift a finger on behalf of the strikers, also had the audacity to pontificate that, "The relevance of this sect to either genuine revolutionary politics or to AUS is, to say the least, problematic" (*Red Letter*, 12

October). What was really "problematic" for these apprentices of Halfpenny was how to distract the attention of pro-working-class students from the strike which their comrades were trying might and main to betray.

It is axiomatic that those who would consciously lead a strike to defeat are incapable of mobilising effective support for it. The converse is true as well. Outside support will make little difference if a strike is doomed by the class-collaborationist policies of its leadership. The best strike support is a class-struggle policy!

Our support for the workers of the LaTrobe Valley was carried out in the militant spirit of class solidarity. We criticised the strike leadership when it was necessary, we advanced our program openly and we fought at every front within our reach to extend and broaden and win support for this struggle. Unlike the fake lefts, who castigate as "sectarian" a commitment to the interests of the working class, we do not vie for momentary popularity. We struggle to win the working class to the only guarantee for securing those interests -- the revolutionary program. ■

China . . .

Continued from page four

four" the representative of capitalist restoration. Neither clique represents genuine Marxism-Leninism. From the standpoint of the proletariat, the pragmatism of Teng/Hua -- even if it leads to a quantitative increase in workers' wages and a more realistic approach to economic planning -- is no better than the idealist, bureaucratic voluntarism of the Chiang clique. Both sides represent different wings of a parasitic bureaucracy which subordinates the class interests of the proletariat to the defence of its own privileges. Mao as bonapartist arbiter balanced between the competing factions of the bureaucracy to maintain his own position. The new alignment today represents no fundamental change -- one faction has merely assumed dominance over the other.

Maoists who break from China through applying Maoist conceptions to China and who continue to cling to the ideological paraphernalia of Stalinism will find themselves inextricably mired in political crisis. The American "critical Maoist" *Guardian's* shamefaced "yes but" trailing after Peking is no real alternative. The CPA cut its ties to the USSR only in order to better embrace social democracy. But "critical Maoists" who want to renounce Peking while clinging to orthodox "Marxism-Leninism-Mao-Tse-tung-Thought" will face an acute contradiction. The fact is that as an ideology abstracted from the material interests of a nationalist, counterrevolutionary bureaucracy in control of a workers state, Stalinism (including the Mao version) has no internal consistency whatever. It is merely the rationalisation for eclectic and contradictory opportunist zigzags and betrayals -- corresponding to the bureaucracy's shifting, short-term interests -- consistent only in its hostility to world proletarian revolution. Groups like the American Progressive Labor Party -- which with greater consistency and genuine left motion broke from Mao as well as Peking years ago -- have floundered around helplessly, unable to find in Stalinist/Maoist orthodoxy or traditions any coherent way forward. Stalinism without a "socialist fatherland" is simply doomed.

In this situation a last, desperate hope for homeless Maoists has appeared in the shape of a tiny country on the Adriatic with some 2.5 million people: Enver Hoxha's Albania. The increasing rift between the two one-time allies came to a head with the publication of an unsigned article entitled "The Theory and Practice of Revolution" in the July issue of *Zeri i Popullit*, the official organ of the Albanian Party of Labour. Without mentioning Mao or China, the article is a frontal attack on the Maoist doctrine of "three worlds". The Albanian polemic denounces Peking's line as "opportunistic", "antirevolutionary" and "anti-Leninist":

"In essence, according to the theory of the 'three worlds,' the peoples of those countries must not fight, for instance, against the bloody fascist dictatorships of Geisel in Brazil and Pinochet in Chile, Suharto in Indonesia, the Shah of Iran or the King of Jordan, etc, because they allegedly are part of the 'revolutionary motive force' which is 'driving the wheel of history forward.' On the contrary, according to this theory, the peoples and revolutionaries ought to unite with the reactionary forces and regimes of the 'third world' and support them..." (reproduced in the *US Guardian*, 27 July)

The doctrine of the "three worlds" is unimpeachably orthodox Maoism -- and so is the policy of promoting the reactionary butchers of "third world" countries for short-term diplomatic ends.

Moreover, the elevation of the Soviet Union to the status of "main enemy" occurred in the last years of Mao's reign. The Albanian polemic cannot be construed simply as an attack on the new Chinese leadership, but involves a doctrinal break from the Helmsman's own precepts.

But Hoxha's denunciation of China is not part of any struggle for Stalinist ideological purity. Hoxha's regime disagrees with China's present line on the "superpowers" because for Albania the most important "superpower" is Yugoslavia. About one million Albanians (roughly a third of the Albanian people) inhabit the Kosovo region of Yugoslavia. Albania is (and has been in the past) a natural target for expansionist appetites of the Yugoslav bureaucrats. China's present rapprochement with Yugoslavia -- which included a recent state visit by Tito to Peking -- is a direct threat to Tirana's "socialism in one country".

There is presently a growing trickle of disenchanted Maoists rushing to visit Tirana and embrace First Secretary Hoxha. But loyalty to Albania is the Stalinist infatuation with national-bureaucratic state power in its most petty, venal, even ludicrous form. What advanced worker anywhere could possibly take seriously an organisation whose "socialist paradise" was tiny, primitive Albania and whose policies were tailored to Albanian foreign policy?

There is another road. Those oppositionists who seriously want to become proletarian revolutionaries must now critically examine the Stalinist premises which have led to their present political impasse. They must confront Trotskyism. The political destruction of Mao's widow and the restoration to power of his main enemy as soon as he died is readily comprehensible from the standpoint of Trotskyism.

Our starting point is the international proletarian revolution. Only this perspective -- counterposed to the betrayals of Mao as well as his successors -- truly corresponds to the needs of the Chinese and Russian workers states. Only the creation of genuine workers democracy -- requiring the overthrow of the arrogant Peking bureaucrats -- can open the road to genuine socialist construction in China. Only Trotskyism combines the defence of the Chinese and Soviet workers states against imperialism with the call for political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies. The Leninism of this epoch is the Trotskyism of the Spartacist League and our struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution. ■

Maoists assault Spartacist

One week after attacking a fund-raising table of the LaTrobe University Spartacist Club-initiated power strike support committee, in a futile attempt to wreck the successful united-front campaign, supporters of the Maoist Students for Australian Independence (SAI) launched a brutal, premeditated attack on Spartacist Club member Neil Florrimell. On the afternoon of 20 October, after verbally harassing and shoving Florrimell on campus, three SAIers tailed him to a bus stop where they sought their "revenge" on the campaign's success by kicking and punching him for several minutes, knocking him to the ground once. Only when witnessed by several passers-by did these cowardly scum stop bashing our comrade.

To appease outrage against the assault, the SAI issued a hypocritical leaflet ("S.A.I. & Violence") renouncing "individual acts of violence against other individuals" and promising that defaulters will be "encouraged to reform". But no amount of "reform" will cleanse the Stalinist movement of the treacherous politics underlying its gangsterism within the workers movement. Such acts must be vehemently repudiated by all workers and radical students.

Fraser deports Salemi

On 19 October Italian migrant organiser and supporter of the pro-Moscow Stalinist Italian Communist Party, Ignazio Salemi, was arrested by Commonwealth Police and immediately whisked aboard an overseas flight. For seven weeks Salemi had been in hiding to evade the anti-communist deportation order issued by the Fraser government after a year of legal battles. From the start the Spartacist League called for immediate industrial action to reverse the order (see *ASp* no 35, September 1976). Instead Hawke blustered about a transport strike if the government attempted to fly Salemi out -- but did nothing. Now Salemi is gone.

But the Maoist Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) is even more despicable in its response to this attack on the rights of all workers and migrants, levelling an attack on the "pro-Soviet" Whitlam because, "he pleaded in parliament for the lifting of the deportation order issued against a well-known Soviet agent(!) who works among the Italian community in Australia" (*Vanguard*, 1 September 1977). Thus, in their frenzy to carry out the Peking bureaucracy's anti-Soviet policies these traitor "communists" repudiate the most elementary principles of working-class solidarity.



Terror in the air, blood in the jails

Anti-red hysteria in West Germany

In the past weeks the mass media have been dominated by sensational developments surrounding the West German "Red Army Faction" (RAF) terrorists. On 18 October a raid by West German "federal border police" commandos in Mogadishu, Somalia to reclaim a Lufthansa airliner hijacked five days earlier by four terrorists claiming sympathy with the imprisoned RAF leaders brought a spectacular ending to the ordeal of the aircraft's 86 passengers. Hard on the heels of the commando raid, the West German authorities announced the death under incredibly suspicious circumstances of three of the RAF prisoners and the injury of a fourth in the super-maximum-security Stammheim prison in what is described as a "suicide pact".

The 13 October hijacking, apparently carried out by four persons in some unclear connection with the RAF kidnapping of West German industrialist and former Nazi, Hanns Martin Schleyer, was an indefensible act of criminal terrorism against a random group of people who had committed no crime. These people became the helpless pawns of a crazed gang which seized the aircraft in



Bonn government building guarded after Schleyer kidnapping.

Mallorca and, after various stops and an attempt to land in Dhofar (!), landed in Somalia where they tossed out the body of the plane's pilot whom they had killed. Threatening repeatedly to blow up the aircraft, they almost turned the passenger compartment into an inferno after dousing it with petrol.

The hijacking was, moreover, an act of consummate stupidity in which a handful of terrorists chose to go up against a maximally determined bourgeoisie possessing enormous physical and military resources. It enabled the cynical West German government to mobilise the overwhelming bulk of public opinion against the terrorists -- not only the adventurist and criminal terrorists, whose pointless hijacking was doomed to failure, but also against the helpless leftists imprisoned in West Germany.

The hijacking was a godsend for the West German ruling class. Instead of the unsavoury Schleyer, the former SS man and right-wing capitalist, attention could now be focused on the plight of innocent men, women and children. Even Pope Paul VI managed to get into the act, pompously pontificating, "If it were useful we would offer even our person for the liberation of those hostages" (*New York Times*, 18 October).

The antics of the Lufthansa hijackers stand counterposed to both the aims and the tactics of the proletarian vanguard, which seeks to assert its revolutionary mission when the bourgeoisie is divided, capitalist society is in manifest disarray and the vast majority of the working population has been won to support of the revolutionary cause. The blood-drenched bourgeoisie can now congratulate itself for being the "liber-

ators" of innocent people from the "leftist" forces of chaos.

The alleged suicide of the RAF prisoners is even a more spectacular story. The version given out by the West German authorities would seem incredible on the face of it: that four RAF prisoners -- who have been held in special isolation from each other in a special prison-fortress built for them, under conditions of imprisonment which have given a new meaning to the phrase "maximum security", not permitted visits even from their lawyers -- managed to acquire deadly weapons (including 7.65mm and 9mm military pistols) and seek to kill themselves (by shooting, stabbing and hanging) in their cells. According to the minister of justice of Baden-Wurttemberg, Traugott Bender, the cells of the RAF prisoners were searched daily.

The tale is hideously reminiscent of the alleged suicide in May 1976 of Ulrike Meinhof, co-leader of the RAF with Andreas Baader (one of the new "suicides"). Some elements of the Bonn government expressed "shock" at the news of the supposed suicides, while nevertheless insisting that there appeared to be no lengths to which the "Baader-Meinhof Gang" would not go in their terroristic assault on the West German state -- including "self-destruction"!

The hijacking, followed by the discovery of Schleyer's death and the outbreak of scattered anti-German terror-bombings throughout Europe in the wake of the RAF "suicides", have only intensified the civil-war atmosphere which the government has fostered in its "anti-terrorist" witchhunt. The government is prepared in effect to declare its own laws null and void (as Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt euphemistically put it, "going to the limits of what is permitted and dictated by legal norms") when it is a question of suppressing left-wing opposition. The governing Social Democratic/Free Democrat (SPD/FDP) coalition is attempting to bolster its popularity ratings by appearing just a hair's breadth more "respectable" than the most extreme suggestions of the Christian Democratic (CDU/CSU) opposition, which are themselves daily becoming more outrageous. Recently the CDU fraction in the Bundestag (lower house of parliament) introduced a proposal to outlaw the leading Maoist organisations in West Germany.

The "insistence of the citizenry on bodily safety" (as CDU leader Helmut Kohl pontificated in the Bundestag on 6 September) is being met by a massive expansion of the government's spy network; by beefing up the weaponry of the police and the omnipresent "Federal Border Guard" (*Bundesgrenzschutz*), which logically ought to be rebaptised "Federal Police", since otherwise all of West Germany has become a "border region"; by the legalisation of shooting to kill; by hundreds of *Berufsverbote* (blacklistings of "radicals" from civil service jobs); and by sharp limitation on the rights of the defence lawyers; and by stiffening gun control laws.

The kidnapping of Schleyer, like the assassinations of Buback and Ponto, cannot be condoned by revolutionary Marxists and class-struggle militants in the trade unions. Such acts of individual terror against individual representatives of the bourgeoisie do not contribute to the overthrow of the capitalist system. On the contrary, they serve as a pretext for the capitalist state to launch attacks on the left, and instead of spurring the proletariat on to



Former RAF leaders Ulrike Meinhof (left), Andreas Baader.

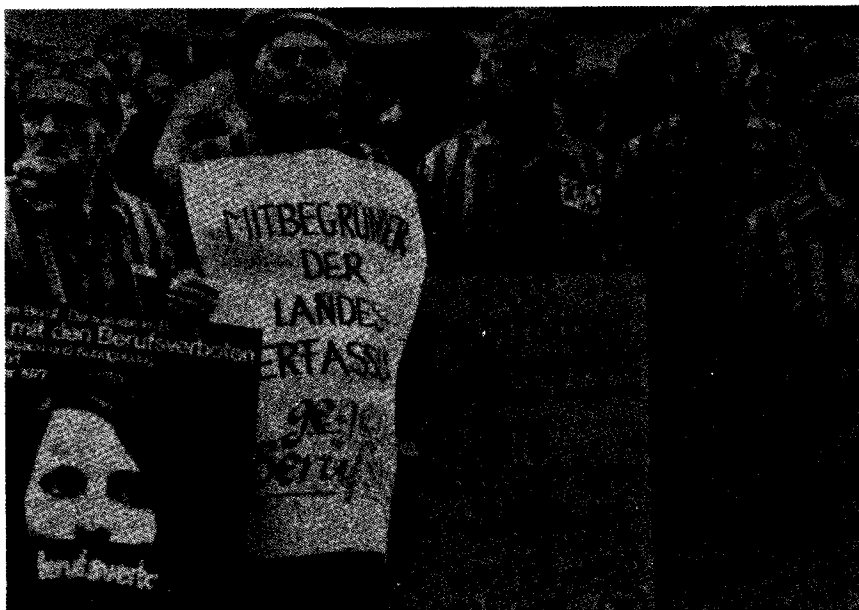
militant struggle in defence of its class interests, the policy of individual terror relegates the masses at best to passive observation from the sidelines.

We state plainly that the RAF does not represent the historic interests of the proletariat; yet we do not deny our feeling of solidarity with their hatred of imperialism which causes them to strike out blindly. Insofar as they believe in lifting the social oppression engendered by capitalism, our aspirations are similar. But the actions of the RAF are not on the road to socialism and stand counterposed to the proletarian socialist road.

In fact, there is more than a little that is sinister in the RAF. While it is a product of the decomposition of the New Left, it is not just a carbon copy of the American Weathermen, whose political ties were to the Cubans and North Vietnamese. The Cuban and North Vietnamese Stalinists do not condone aeroplane hijackings, for example. But the reported ties of the RAF are to the petty-bourgeois nationalist PFLP and the "Japanese Red Army", whose gruesome methods of settling internal differences (shooting and torturing oppositionists to death) are notorious. If this current were in power we can be sure that they would leave a bloody trail rivalling Idi Amin. And in a healthy, revolutionary proletarian state they would certainly have to be restrained for their criminal indiscriminate terrorism against innocent working people.

Because of the monstrous character of the bourgeois state which is persecuting the RAF, including the hideous treatment of alleged RAF members in jail, we demand their immediate freedom. But under conditions of extreme state terrorism and intimidation of the population, much of

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Protest over anti-red Berufsverbot, before recent hysteria.