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Smash "Pax Americana" From El Salvador to Beirut!

Imperialist/Israeli Troops Out of Lebanon!

They are the world's most notorious imperialist butchers. They have the blood of millions of toilers on their hands, from Indochina to North Africa. The very words are synonymous with the bloody suppression of colonial revolt: the US Marines, the French Foreign Legion. Last week, joined by the elite Italian Bersaglieri Regiment, they landed in west Beirut. This multi-imperialist "peace-keeping" force came to finish what the savage Israeli invasion of Lebanon had started: disarming and dispersing the armed forces of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The 600,000 Palestinians in Lebanon now stand defenseless before the genocidal onslaught of the Zionist state and its Lebanese Maronite Christian allies in the fascist Phalange of Bashir Gemayel.

To call this situation a "victory" for the Palestinians, as do the Third Worldist nationalist cheerleaders on the left, is cynical treachery to the cause of Palestinian national liberation. As Begin smirked: "We wish Arafat such a 'victory' every day."

In past protests over El Salvador, the reformist American left, hungry to make its politics acceptable to the "progressive" Kennedy wing of the Democratic Party, has marched for a "political solution". They even call the cops to seal off the revolutionists who stand for military victory to the leftist insurgents. It's fitting that this same crew has called for a demonstration September 11 over Lebanon. For now they have their "political solution": in Beirut, as the US marines land and the Palestinian guerrillas are stripped of their weapons and dispersed to isolated desert compounds. Chanting "Victory!" along with the PLO, the September 11 march organizers stand hardest against the road of class struggle against the Zionist and Arab rulers — For a socialist federation of the Near East!

Defend the Palestinians Against Phalange Terror!

It was not humanitarian scruples that prevented Menachem Begin from ordering the Zionist army into west Beirut to crush the PLO. Ariel Sharon's



US imperialism's killer elite march into West Beirut to police Palestinian withdrawal and spearhead anti-Soviet war drive in Near East.

armed forces halted at the city gates because of the tenacious resistance of the courageous, if poorly armed, PLO fighters. To take these out would have required house-to-house fighting and lots more Israeli soldiers being shipped back to the Zionist "homeland" in body bags. This might well have exploded a society whose polarization over the Lebanon invasion was such as to cause unprecedented mass peace demonstrations in Tel Aviv in the midst of war.

So the Israelis were forced to turn to the imperialist powers, centrally Reagan's America, to win on the negotiating table what even mad bomber Begin feared to fight for in the streets of west Beirut. They were aided by the PLO itself, which asked the US marines and French legionnaires to accept their surrender and serve as their guardians as they boarded ships, trucks and buses for their new exile.

The petty-bourgeois nationalist PLO

always looked to the Arab regimes, both the bonapartist colonels and the reactionary sheiks, as their champions. The refusal of any of these regimes to so much as lift a finger for the beleaguered Palestinian commandos shows that the now terminated president of Egypt, Anwar Sadat, spoke for all of them at Camp David. The 1,100 PLO commandos given a "hero's welcome" on arriving in Tunisia were promptly stripped of their weapons and sent to a barbed wire enclosed camp guarded by police and soldiers, a camp virtually indistinguishable from the detention camps Israel maintains for Palestinian prisoners. A similar fate awaits PLO militants deported to Hussein's Jordan and Assad's Syria.

And what is in store for the Palestinians left behind in Lebanon? Two days after the first French legionnaires landed in Beirut, the country's most notorious terrorist, Phalange head Bashir Gemayel, became its new president. It was an election Reagan's advisers in El Salvador would have appreciated. The Phalange militia (Kateab) rounded up Moslem members of parliament and marched them to an army barracks in Christian east Beirut. There, surrounded by Israeli tanks and threatened by Kateab gunmen, these aged clan leaders,

Christian and Moslem, voted Gemayel the new master of Lebanon.

The Israeli-backed Phalange originated in the 1930s as a fascist organization deliberately modeled on the Hitler Youth and Spanish Falange. It is an opprobrious irony of history in the epoch of imperialist decay that survivors of the Nazi Holocaust have built a racist state whose only ally in the Arab East is a movement modeled on European fascism. And that the only terms which accurately describe Begin/Sharon's invasion of Lebanon and occupation of the West Bank are terms used to describe the Nazis: Blitzkrieg, Lebensraum, genocide.

Gemayel's Phalange represents the application of fascist ideology and organization to the warlord politics of traditional Lebanese society where each patriarchal family rules a religious/ethnic community with its own party and militia. This species of feudal gangland warfare was institutionalized by the French colonialists as the Maronite-dominated "confessional" system, preserved by imperialism. Thus a plebeian Moslem rebellion against Maronite domination in 1958 was suppressed with the help of 10,000 US marines dispatched by Eisenhower.

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NCC tours Polish
Solidarity

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SL Campus Rally Draws the Class Line: Defend the Palestinians! Imperialists/Israelis Get Out!

Throughout July the campus Zionists at Melbourne University had been trumpeting Israeli genocide with almost daily forums, tables and posters proclaiming, "We are not out to harm innocent civilians" as thousands of Palestinian and Lebanese-Moslem corpses were buried in massive pits. This most elitist of bourgeois universities had earlier been the site of an intense anti-communist witchhunt against the Spartacist Club conducted by the NCC/Liberals in cahoots with campus "Socialists" and ALPers. This is the campus where only the Spartacist Club demonstrated against open recruitment by the bosses' secret police, ASIO. Likewise, a 28 July Spartacist rally in defence of the Palestinians stood out as the only protest on campus against Begin/Sharon's "final solution".

"This rally we have organised takes a hard class line", said Spartacist speaker Christine Stephens, pointing to the "call for no imperialist intervention forces" as "a key demand". She also noted that US imperialist forces, the "peacekeeping" Sinai force which includes an Australian contingent, were already in the region. Now US marines in Lebanon, invited in by Arafat as well as Begin to accept the surrender of the PLO, confront Soviet-armed Syria but a few hundred miles from the Soviet border, and could well become a nuclear tripwire for World War III.

The aims of Reagan and Begin — men who would certainly blow up this planet to preserve their class rule — are truly in harmony over Lebanon. The US imperialists saw the Israeli Blitzkrieg, carried out with lightning success and the willing compliance of the Arab regimes, as dramatically and fundamentally altering the balance of power in the region and moved in to exploit this triumph of arms to the hilt. With the ignominious surrender and dispersal of the PLO, the humiliation and intended expulsion of Syria, and the cowering of the Lebanese Moslem left, Reagan/Begin intend to use Lebanon as an anti-Soviet base ruled by a puppet regime headed by the boss of the Maronite Christian Phalange, Gemayel, who has called for the expulsion of all Palestinians from Lebanon. It could hardly be clearer that defence of the Palestinians is inextricably bound to

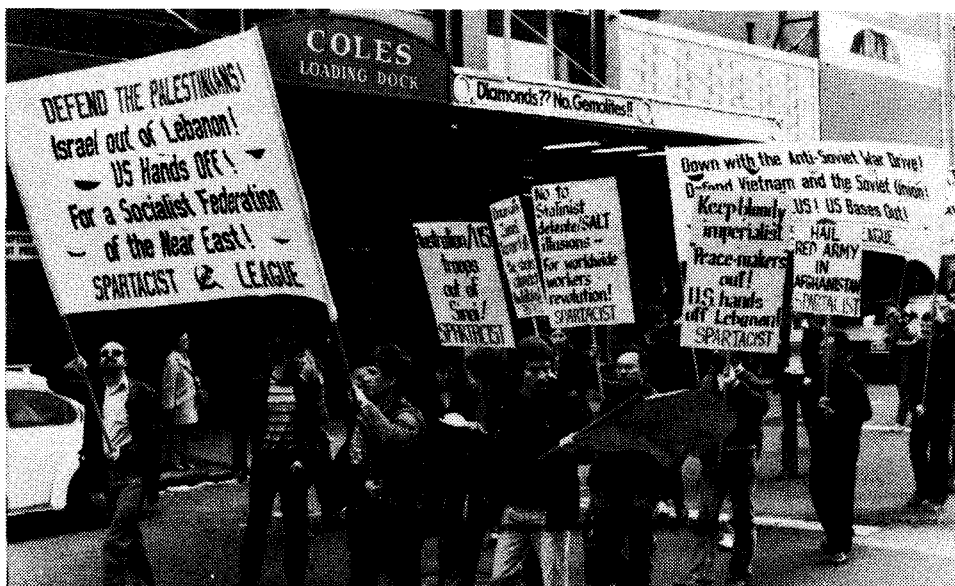
class struggle to defeat the imperialist drive to war against the Soviet Union.

Anyone wanting to defend the Palestinians had better be opposed to imperialist troops in Lebanon. The Zionist holocaust has been paid for and made in the USA. American marines joined by French legionnaires and elite Italian troops have "spared" the PLO from Reagan's Zionist shock troops only to hand them over to his ruthless Arab policemen — the butchers of Black September and Tel Zaatar and the traitors of Camp David — while the half million Palestinians who remain in Lebanon, betrayed by the PLO, are now defenceless against Gemayel's fascistic militias and the butcher Begin.

The sole beneficiaries of this deal are

diplomatic, political and economic strength to force Israel out of Lebanon" to the sinister Healyites whose Libyan mentor Colonel Qaddafi told the PLO to "commit suicide", the "anti-Zionist" unity of the "official" speakers mirrors the "anti-Zionism" of the bourgeois Arab regimes which under this very banner have sabotaged the Palestinian struggle in a thousand ways.

The class hatred of the Arab regimes for the just national struggle of the Palestinian people is paralleled only by their implacable hostility to the democratic and socialist aspirations of their own people. Thus US marines which helped suppress the 1958 Lebanese revolt were saved the task of crushing their real target, the Iraqi Revolution, by Iraqi nationalist strongman Kassem, who



ASp photo

SL contingent in 7 August Sydney march. Defence of Palestinians is inseparable from class struggle to defeat imperialist war drive against USSR.

the sworn enemies of the dispossessed Palestinians and all workers and oppressed of the region. In exchange for a direct military role in Lebanon the US has enabled Israel to avoid possibly thousands of Israeli casualties in an attempt to take Beirut which may have ripped apart the already deeply split Zionist camp. Had the Zionists taken the city, it could have triggered an explosion not only in Israel, but within the surrounding Arab countries, thus further threatening the US-sponsored Near East anti-Soviet "strategic consensus" now being forged with Palestinian blood.

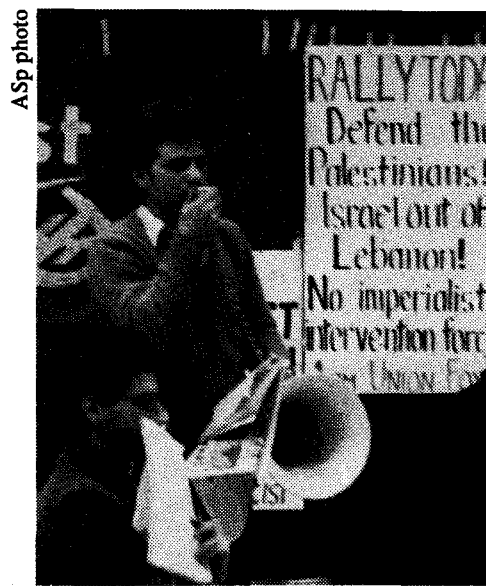
Faith in the "democratic" imperialist quartermasters of Israeli genocide as a "lesser evil" is not limited to the quisling Arafat. The reformist left in Australia has either been conspicuously silent about imperialist troops or, echoing Arafat, accepted US marines as a "buffer" for the Palestinians against the Israeli military and the murderous Phalange. Like for example the anti-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP): "While the multinational force is no ally of the Palestinian or Lebanese people, the Lebanese left-wing and Muslim organisations have voiced the fear that Begin's time limit [for withdrawal of the imperialist "peace-keeping" force] is intended to remove even the slightest diplomatic obstacle to their being left to the mercy of the ultra-rightist Phalangist party" (*Direct Action*, 24 August).

Indeed the distinguishing feature of demonstrations in Australia — the real basis of "unity" — has been to appeal to US imperialism to restrain its Zionist monster-child. Only Spartacist contingents demanded: "Keep the Imperialist 'Peacekeepers' Out — Bloody US Hands Off Lebanon!" From ALP parliamentary "left" leader Tom Uren who, addressing demonstrators in Sydney on 14 August, called for "the US government to bring

with the aid of the Stalinist traitors beheaded the powerful Iraqi proletariat. If the recent catastrophic events in Lebanon demonstrate afresh the bonds that tie the venal Arab bourgeoisies to their US patron and godfather of their Zionist adversary, then so too has the petty-bourgeois nationalist PLO's strategy of finding an accommodation with imperialism been shown to be utterly bankrupt.

Obscenely, the PLO's Australian fans, echoing the cynically conscious line of much of the capitalist press, have heralded their dispersal as a "moral and political victory" with fatuous accounts of how PLO commandos were "welcomed as heroes" (*Direct Action*, 31 August) by the Syrian government — that erstwhile darling of the "Arab Revolution" which with Soviet weapons in hand set the example for genocide of Palestinians in Lebanon during the 1975-76 civil war. Such treachery reflects thoroughgoing defeatism in face of genocide. It is precisely our recognition of the courage of the PLO fighters in West Beirut that compels us to denounce those who supported Arafat's surrender.

The Laborite-nationalist "left" in this white imperialist outpost in Asia exhibit not only cynicism when they attempt, from a safe distance of course, to mask the PLO's betrayal and the deadly role of US marines in Lebanon. For nationalist accommodation to imperialism via Laborism underpins their entire world view. In their quest for a bloc with their "own" bourgeoisie, groups like the SWP and the Stalinist Socialist Party of Australia must necessarily accept as their framework Australia's junior partnership to US imperialism, expressed domestically in backhanded support for or "neutrality" towards the ANZUS alliance and US bases which closely integrate Australia militarily into US imperialism's war plans



Spartacist speaker at 28 July rally.

against the Soviet Union. "Neutrality" towards US troops in Lebanon is simply an extension of this policy onto the terrain of popular-frontist "foreign policy".

Begin's bloody adventure in Lebanon exposed the deep-seated contradictions of Israeli society, fueling the emergence of a large-scale Zionist "dove" movement, an unprecedented development during wartime. Increasing numbers of Israeli Jews are beginning to understand that the logic of Zionist expansionism will ultimately lead to their self-destruction in a surrounding sea of hundreds of millions of Arabs. Our insistence during the Israeli Blitzkrieg that every Israeli soldier who returns from Lebanon in a body bag gives that much more of a chance that the Palestinians will escape the Zionists' holocaust flowed from our understanding that the Zionist state can and must be shattered from within through proletarian class struggle.

This perspective is inimical to all stripes of nationalists and reformists. The PLO's nationalism has repeatedly prevented the mobilisation of the Palestinian proletariat in Jordan, the occupied territories and within Israel itself. And the ironic logic of portraying the Zionist state as simply a puppet of US imperialism without internal class contradiction has led the reformist left to turn abjectly to the US puppet-master himself for salvation. As Comrade Stephens pointed out at the Melbourne University rally, because the reformists reject "the point of view of the working class, the only way they can see out for the Palestinians is for UN intervention or US intervention".

Uniting Hebrew workers with Arab toilers in the desperately necessary struggle for a socialist federation of the Near East requires the forging of an internationalist proletarian vanguard. The working people of Israel, especially the intensely chauvinist but downtrodden Sephardic Jews from the Arab East, must be broken from Zionism. The Palestinian workers must be broken from their would-be exploiters. For Arab and Israeli workers, as for all workers and oppressed in the capitalist world, the main enemy is at home! ■

Spartacist League

Melbourne ... (03) 662-3740
GPO Box 2339, Melbourne
VIC, 3001

Sydney ... (02) 264-8195
GPO Box 3473, Sydney
NSW, 2001

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Reagan Incites Solidarność Counterrevolution in Poland

"The struggle continues in Poland", declared Ronald Reagan a few months ago as he called upon the British parliament to join him in a new "crusade" against Communism. And indeed Poland is the weak link among the bureaucratically ruled workers states which make up the Soviet bloc. The Polish Stalinists' gross economic mismanagement and flagrant corruption, their suppression of democratic rights amid continual promises of "socialist renewal" have caused a substantial section of the Polish people, including major sectors of the working class, to look toward Reagan's Pentagon and pope Wojtyla's Vatican. US imperialism saw in the counterrevolutionary eruption in and around Solidarność (Solidarity) the best opportunity yet to "roll back" the Soviet sphere, leading for example to the reunification of Germany on a capitalist basis. No wonder Reagan howled in frustration when the Polish army spiked Solidarność's bid for power last December! Hence his clumsy and desperate attempts to stop the Siberian gas pipeline deal between the USSR and West Europe, which have provoked European capitalists into some howling of their own against Washington.

While US imperialism lost an important battle for Poland last December, Reagan has by no means given up the war. Taking the cue from their godfather in Washington, the underground Solidarność leadership has called for stepped-up protests to culminate in a mass demonstration on August 31. Since the communications network of the Solidarność underground leaves something to be desired, this call to action has been rebroadcast repeatedly by Radio Free Europe! So much for those self-styled "leftists" who indignantly denounced as a Stalinist slander our description of Solidarność as a Polish company union for the CIA and bankers.

December 13: Counterrevolution Checked

In early December 1981 Poland stood at the very edge of civil war. Solidarność



Polish workers kneeling before pope Wojtyla, Gdansk 1980.

Polish Trotskyism, restoring Poland's deep and rich Marxist tradition embodied in Rosa Luxemburg and the early Polish Communist Party, will break Polish workers from counter-revolutionary clerical-nationalism.

chieftain Lech Walesa reportedly told the minister of labor with whom he had carried on lengthy negotiations, "Well, Mr Ciosek, this is the end. Then we will have to take over power." The following evening at a secret meeting in Radom the Solidarność high command laid plans to overthrow the government. A decision was made to set up militias and a general strike was announced for the second week in December. Under the gun the Stalinist bureaucracy, at the last possible moment to act from a position of state power, launched a virtual counter coup.

Had Walesa made good his boastful threat, Poland would have been transformed into a fanatical ally in Reagan's war drive, bringing NATO's nuclear arsenal right up to the borders of the Soviet Union. If anyone doubts this, just look at those Solidarność activists now active in the West. Solidarność-in-exile

has put itself forward as Reagan's ideological shock troops against East-West detente, the West European anti-missile protests and the left in general. The most prominent Solidarność spokesman in North America, Zygmunt Przetakiewicz, exclaimed to a Toronto meeting in March:

"I don't understand, for example, why so many German people — there was 300,000 Germans — demonstrate against America, against American arms in Western Europe. Without American umbrella Western Europe won't exist for a day."

The head of the Dutch Interchurch Peace Council, Jan Faber, described his unhappy encounters with Solidarność exiles: "They tell us: 'you should be embracing Reagan's policy and cheering. It is the only way to deal seriously with the Soviets'" (New York Times, 3 June).

Since some of Reagan's missiles will surely hit Warsaw, Gdansk and Cracow this amounts to a call for the extermination of the Polish people in the name of anti-Communist Polish nationalism.

Before December 13 the one thing everyone seemed to agree on was that a crackdown against Solidarność would require Soviet military intervention — and that would mean a bloodbath. Yet, as it turned out, the job was done by the Polish army and with only a dozen or so deaths. There was little bloodshed because, fortunately, there was so little resistance. One Solidarność supporter exclaimed bitterly:

"We always believed that Polish soldiers would never shoot Polish workers — and it's still true, they haven't really. But the diabolical thing is they don't have to."

— New York Times, 1 January

While millions of Poles rallied to Solidarność as an oppositional movement against the despised Stalinist bureaucracy, many pulled back from Walesa's coup. Apparently they had insufficient confidence that Walesa & Co offered a way out of the endless crises wracking Polish society.

Shortly after martial law was imposed we wrote:

"A tremendous political/psychological shakeup has taken place in Poland. Suddenly Polish society has been arrested, just plain stopped. But the repression has not gone so deep as to prevent the emergence of an underground opposition... Now is the time to start building educational and propagandistic cells of a Trotskyist vanguard to defend and extend the historic gains of socialized property, inherited from the October Revolution, by ousting the usurpers who undermine them and crushing those who would destroy them."

— "What Next for Poland?", WV no 298, 5 February

Contrary to the horror stories manufactured by imperialist propaganda, the repression in Poland has been pretty mild. Almost all the Solidarność internees have been released. In fact, Jaruzelski's

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CIA's NCC Friends Tour Solidarność

Last February in an article headed 'Solidarity is Poland's DLP/Groupers', we wrote: "the underlying common denominator of both Solidarity and the DLP/Groupers/NCC [National Civic Council] axis is organised Catholic reaction in the working class, aimed against the gains of the workers". Who, then, could be more fitting hosts to two representatives of Poland's company union for the CIA and the bankers than Australia's two most notorious company unions, the NCC-led Federated Clerks Union (FCU) and Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association (SDA), whose leaderships for decades have worked closely with the CIA against "atheistic communism"?

Solidarity reps Jerzy Milewski ("a senior activist") and Magda Wojcik (once "personal secretary to Walesa" and "Deputy Director of Solidarity's Foreign Affairs Bureau at the time of the suppression") began their Australian tour in late August as the official guests of the SDA/FCU, speaking at press conferences, downtown indoor rallies and to state Trades and Labour Councils as well as attending a special wreath-laying at the 8-hour day monument in Melbourne. Solidarity's "socialist" followers nervously squirmed, but with truly saint-like humiliation greeted their Polish comrades-in-arms. Jim Percy's Socialist



Platform of Counterrevolution, Sydney, 25 August (from left): NCCer Maher, Milewski, NCCer Maynes (chair), Wojcik, Catholic priest (at rear), ALP right-wingers Unsworth and Klugman.

Workers Party (SWP), which last December fancifully declared itself "the most closely aligned to Solidarity in Australia" (Sydney Morning Herald, 13 January) is typical:

"Both speakers said their call was 'simply' for trade union and human rights — rights to which they felt every nation was entitled. However, the clearly

progressive message of these fighters against bureaucratic privilege and Stalinist repression in Poland contrasted markedly with the aims of the organisers of these rallies" (Direct Action, 31 August 1982).

The simple truth, of course, is that their message is the same. And everyone knows it — all wings of the labour

bureaucracy and its hangers-on in the petty-bourgeois left, the bourgeoisie and the workers, whether class conscious or consciously reactionary. Huge wall posters at the Dallas Brookes Hall meeting in Melbourne spelled it out: "Soviets and Freedom — Poles Apart" and "From Russia with Love — Barbed Wire". The speakers' platform was flanked by Australian and Polish nationalist flags along with a stack of roneoed song-sheets with the words of "Advance Australia Fair". As the meeting opened, "Exodus" (!) played in the background before the 2000-strong mainly East European crowd rose to sing the Australian national anthem and then (more loudly) the Polish. "We have found since our arrival in Australia the freedom our people in Poland are fighting for", Wojcik told reporters at a 22 August Sydney press conference.

NCC boss Santamaria's sinister and secretive Catholic "Movement" spear-headed 1950s Cold War reaction in this country, taking over the ALP Industrial Groups in the unions that aimed to witchhunt and drive out the Communist Party, championing Menzies' anti-red referendum before being driven out of the ALP in the 1955-57 split that formed the Democratic Labor Party (DLP). Certainly, the ranks of those unions that

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Benn's Little England "Socialism" vs the CIA Connection

British Labour's Cold War

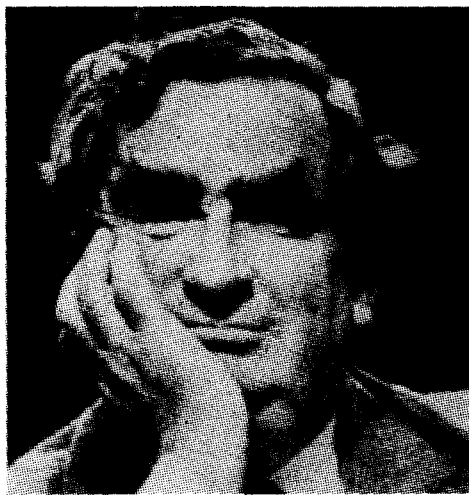
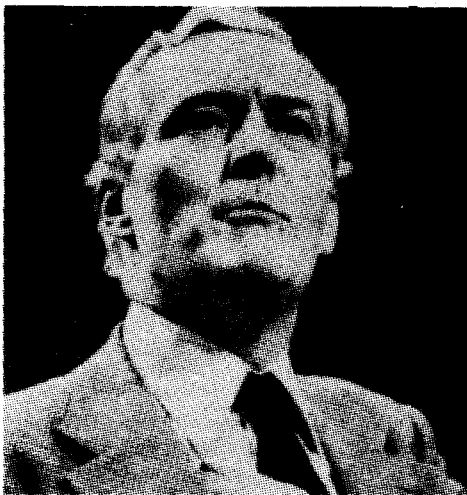
For the past year and a half, the Labour Party has been undergoing its most significant internal differentiation and split in half a century, catalysing a major realignment throughout British parliamentary politics. Significant elements of the right-wing leadership have decamped from the labour movement to form the bourgeois Social Democratic Party. Championed by the bourgeois media and buttressed by the adherence of middle-class elements seeking a haven from the class struggle, the SDP in alliance with the Liberals threatens to unlock the Tory/Labour two-party domination of postwar parliamentary politics.

Within the Labour Party, the deep-going left/right divide manifested in the SDP split and subsequently reflected in the bitter deputy leadership contest continues to tear the party apart. Ex-left party leader Michael Foot, elevated to power at the behest of the trade union bureaucracy as a caretaker bonaparte, strives ineffectually to shore up the discredited and despised Denis Healey-led right wing against the left around Tony Benn. Behind him another round of civil war is brewing.

The deep schism in today's Labour Party is *not simply* another, typical, case of the party in opposition striving to refurbish its "socialist" credentials among working people alienated by years of betrayal from the Westminster benches. Thus it will not lightly be healed; thus the palpable sense on all sides that the Labour Party cannot go on in the same old way. There is normally a symbiotic relationship between left and right in the party. Together they make a fine team for attacking the working class: while one lulls the workers with airy talk of socialism the other does (or both do) the bosses' dirty work. This was certainly true in the last Labour government, when Benn played a major role in giving a left cover to anti-working-class betrayal. Today, however, this symbiosis has lapsed.

A distorted and uneven class line is being cleaved in the Labour Party under the impact of renewed anti-Soviet Cold War, between Little England reformists and NATO/CIA-loving "internationalists", lacking in sharp programmatic counterposition but necessarily reflected in and inseparable from domestic class questions.

The international economic crisis which fuels this anti-Soviet war drive intersects in Britain a deep, long-term structural decline. To retain their standing as any sort of imperialist power, the dominant sections of the British bourgeoisie see *no* course other than an emasculation of the trade unions at home coupled with slavish allegiance to the Atlantic alliance. In this context the contradictions of the Labour Party as a bourgeois workers party have been brought sharply to the fore. In its role as a defender of British capitalist interests, the central core of the postwar



Left Labour demagogue Tony Benn (above left) exploits workers' hostility to discredited right wing represented by Denis Healey (above right), who imposed hated "Social Contract"

Labour bureaucracy has been a staunch advocate of the "American connection", while policing the unions when in office with a combination of reformist carrot and repressive stick.

The politics of the Bennite left — primarily a repudiation of the dismal record of the last Labour government and a utopian unilateralist attempt to pull Britain out of the Cold War vortex — are a reformist dead end from the point of view of the immediate and historic interests of the working class. But they threaten to make Labour an *aberrant* party in today's conditions, a party unfit, in the eyes of the bourgeoisie, for "responsible" government. Unable to control the rise of Bennism, much of the historical right wing leadership of the party is actively rethinking its need for the trade union movement as a political base of operations, and has undertaken or is considering an open break with the labour movement.

A correct understanding of and tactical stance towards the political realignments in and around the Labour Party, including a reassessment of our attitude to the Benn/Healey deputy leadership contest [that culminated in September 1981], is crucial for Marxists striving to break the stranglehold of Labourite reformism over

the working class and forge a revolutionary vanguard to lead the proletariat to power.

Social democracy has been a bulwark of anti-Communism ever since the Russian Revolution of 1917 and a faithful handmaiden of its "own" bourgeoisie since the start of World War I. However the present turmoil in the Labour Party and the roots of the SDP split can only be understood by looking at the particular, unashamedly pro-imperialist role played by the Labour leadership — especially Denis Healey and the current leaders in the post-World War II period. Healey, [Roy] Jenkins, [William] Rodgers & Co are the lineal descendants of the Clement Attlee/Ernest Bevin/Hugh Gaitskell Cold War Labour bureaucracy, stamped into shape by the fight against Communism from Berlin to Rome, from Czechoslovakia to Korea.

Outside Westminster, Denis Healey was one of the key agents of this "CIA socialism". An ex-Communist, Healey moved rapidly to the right and was soon ensconced as head of the party's International Department where, under American tutelage, he helped rebuild the Second (Socialist) International along strict Cold War lines. He played an active part in fomenting a right-wing split from the Italian Socialists in 1948 when the Nenni leadership refused to campaign against the Communists. He was a key operator working with the most right-wing, pro-imperialist Social Democrats in Czechoslovakia and other East European countries in the late 1940s, trying to shore up these oppositions and then arranging the flight of many social-democratic leaders to the West after the Communist consolidation of power.

Throughout the [1945-51] Labour government and the years of opposition after 1951, the Cold Warriors and witch-hunters continued to "rely on Mr Healey". A plethora of publications and organisations — *Socialist Commentary*, *Encounter*, the *American New Leader* (for which Healey was London correspondent), the *Congress for Cultural Freedom*, *European Movement*, *Institute for Strategic Studies*, *Bilderberg*

group — carried forward the fight for the Atlantic alliance. A great part of these were launched or sustained with covert CIA conduit funds.

The flagrantly anti-working-class international policies of the party leadership did not, of course, go unopposed. Indeed the major opposition of the 1950s, led by Aneurin Bevan (with support of, among others, a young Harold Wilson and Michael Foot) was in broad political outline similar to today's Bennite movement. Against the policies of the right-wing leadership they expressed alarm at the effect of Cold War military expenditure on domestic social services, and counterposed a desire for Britain to play an "independent" role in international affairs or, if necessary, to opt out.

With each successive Labour government more flauntingly hostile to the interests of its working class base than the last, the pressures kept building up. By the late 1960s, the bourgeoisie was increasingly desperate to shackle the unions. [Conservative prime minister Edward] Heath tried to take on the miners and lost heavily. And with the Tories' direct attack on the unions a dismal failure, Labour came back in 1974, buoyed by renewed illusions among its working class base. Throughout the subsequent years of Social Contract, strikebreaking and Lib/Lab coalitionism these eroded more and more. Finally came the trade union explosion of the 1978-79 winter of discontent, shattering the Callaghan [Labour] government's credibility in office, particularly in its role of containing the unions.

Faced with a Labour government which had forfeited any meaningful control over its working class base, the bourgeoisie went back to its traditional preference for a Tory government. Thatcher offered impeccable credentials as an aggressive union-basher and Cold War crusader. And after the Tory victory the settling of accounts in the Labour Party began. The Callaghan/Healey regime was despised not only by the base of the party, the union membership, but by the lower and even top union bureaucrats who found the unyielding, autocratic imposition of Social Contract austerity without quid pro quo was making their lives a misery. Denis Healey, who had been the Cabinet's hard man Chancellor of the Exchequer, the man most directly responsible for grinding workers' faces in the dirt, was not a viable replacement.

Benn comes from the same reformist-nationalist political mould as Nye Bevan — but the times are different. Unable to control the inchoate challenge to the twin pillars of coalitionism and the Cold War connection, the right decided it was time to start abandoning ship. David Owen flew back from a New York meeting of the Trilateral Commission, the so-called "secret world government" founded by David Rockefeller and including such imperialist luminaries as Zbigniew Brzezinski and George Ball (not to mention Healey, Callaghan and Heath), to officially launch the Social Democrats.

It was in this context that the deputy leadership contest began a few months later, pitting Benn against Healey in the absence of an effective leader. The Spartacist League took a position of no support to either Benn or Healey. While noting that "the internal life of the Labour Party is far more lively and politically riven than it has been at any time since the Gaitskell/Bevan days", welcoming the discrediting of the right-wing Callaghan/Healey leadership, and denouncing the drivell from our fake-Trotskyist opponents about the need to "defend Labour unity", we wrote:

"Benn exploits the rank-and-file backlash against the architects of the Social Contract in the process, and presents a

continued on page seven



Social Democrats' "gang of four" lead Cold War split from Labour.

British Rail Drivers Sold Out

Beat Back Thatcher's Union-Busting Offensive!

LONDON — Its victory over the even more degenerate Argentine junta has set Britain's rulers dreaming of returning to their days of imperial glory. And they know that in any attempt to restore British capitalism to a place in the sun, the main enemy is their own working class with its deeply entrenched trade unions. Even three years of depression-level unemployment have not broken the power of the unions, especially in the public sector. Just as defeat in the squalid Falklands/Malvinas war would have further isolated the Tory government and spurred class struggle, so Thatcher's victory — helped along by the social-chauvinist Labour Party and trade-union misleaders — has made this most unpopular prime minister in memory into a veritable national heroine. And the Tories set out to milk the engineered mood of "national unity" and patriotic euphoria in their war on British workers. Now they have won their first major battle, against the railroad workers, who were simply stabbed in the back by the Labourite union bureaucracy.

When the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) threatened an all-out strike on June 28 over a pay claim, the gutter press screamed: "Now for the Battle of Britain." With London already in chaos as a result of an Underground strike, with a series of regular one-day hospital strikes galvanising support among broad sectors of the trade-union movement in every region, with the miners too threatening to strike, and talk of a "summer of discontent" and even a general strike, the Tories started rolling out "the Falklands factor". The Tory party chairman railed: "Little more than a week after the liberation of the Falklands, there are trade-union leaders intent on bringing Britain to a halt. It is as if they had something to fear from the belief in themselves that the British people have rediscovered." Within 36 hours right-wing NUR leader Sid Weighell had called off the strike on the basis of a worthless promise of an arbitrated settlement.

Less than a week later it was the turn of the 24,000 members of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF). The strike began on a bad note since the drivers had refused to join the NUR strike, thus continuing a long history of mutual backstabbing between the two unions. There needs to

be one industrial union in British Rail (BR). ASLEF's militant but self-isolating craftwork tradition made it a perfect target for the Tories, intent on streamlining the heavily subsidised BR system through mass redundancies.

The immediate issue of the strike was opposition to "flexible rostering", a direct attack on the union's hard-won guaranteed eight-hour day and its control over working conditions. But in every quarter it was clear that much more was at stake in this train drivers' strike: would the unions stand up to the renewed Tory onslaught? The London *Economist* (24 July), mouthpiece of the British bourgeoisie, summed it up:

"If Britain's train drivers had won their national strike, then the Thatcher government could have been blown away this winter in a whirlwind of born-again union militancy. Thankfully, the drivers lost."

And why did the drivers lose? The *Economist* answers:

"The best end to the strike would have been a revolt of the rank-and-file against the executive of Aslef, the train drivers' union. Instead, the train drivers stayed pretty solid, even under threat of the sack. It was left to the 'inner cabinet' of the Trades Union Congress to bring Aslef to heel."

Why the Train Drivers Lost

The Labour Party's support for Thatcher's nasty war in the South Atlantic made it easy for the British rulers to play "the Falklands factor" for all it was worth. Papers featured a front-page photo of troops returning on the Canberra bearing a banner reading, "Call Off the Rail Strike, or We'll Call In an Air Strike!" Yet despite the chauvinist hysteria against the strike it was solid and enjoyed considerable support. NUR members honoured the drivers' picket lines. Left Labour leader Tony Benn ostentatiously joined the ASLEF pickets. His trade-union counterpart, miners' leader Arthur Scargill, offered his union's "full support", which however, as usual, amounted to very little in practise.

Fifty or even thirty years ago a national railway strike would have brought the British economy to a halt within days. In the '26 general strike the Tory government used scabs to make sure the trains kept running. But times have changed. Less than 10 percent of the country's commuters normally use BR. And Britain is small enough so that most goods are transported by lorry.

Nonetheless BR, which was losing the equivalent of \$13.5 million a day, could not afford to wait out the striking drivers. So in a deliberate imitation of Reagan's union-busting tactics in the American air controllers' strike last fall, the Tories and BR threatened to fire the entire ASLEF membership unless they returned to work on the terms dictated. This brazen provocation only stiffened the drivers' resolve and in many areas what scabbing there



TUC sellout angers ranks: Striking nurses of the National Health Service.

had been come to a complete halt. With the drivers remaining solid, Thatcher then threatened to shut down BR entirely, locking out hundreds of thousands of non-striking workers. It was at this point that the Trades Union Congress (TUC) tops ordered the drivers to go back in defeat. Justifying his capitulation to the TUC diktat, ASLEF general secretary Roy Buckton exclaimed bitterly: "This is a battle which could not be won without the support and assistance of the whole trade-union movement, support which was not forthcoming."

This sellout caused an uproar among the striking drivers. A mass meeting of railwaymen in Sheffield expressed their anger with a resolution to disaffiliate from the TUC. The same sense of bitterness was felt by broad sections of the country's trade unionists. Workers in a National Health Service (NHS) strike carried the placard: "The TUC betrayed the ASLEF. Will they betray the NHS?"

That the TUC tops betrayed the train drivers is not in doubt. But what did the Buckton leadership of ASLEF do to gain the support of other unions, support he later moaned was necessary to win the strike? Nothing! He did not set up pickets to shut down the road haulers industry, which was undermining the effectiveness of the strike. Nor did he try to bring out the miners, whose industrial muscle still inspires fear in the bourgeoisie.

Significantly, Roy Buckton is not your typical Labourite union official. He is associated with the left wing of Britain's small and now deeply polarised Communist Party. He is on the editorial board of the pro-Moscow monthly *Straight Left*, which, for example, supported the Soviet Union's progressive intervention against the feudal insurgency in Afghanistan. Yet "friend of the Soviet Union" Buckton approaches the class struggle at home the same way he approaches the Cold War internationally — with the politics of peaceful coexistence.

Break with Labourite Reformism

The outcome of the train drivers strike was not just another episodic defeat. It was an important step in the British ruling class' drive to break the power of the unions, a drive fueled not only by its momentary intoxication over besting the Argentine junta but by deep-felt capitalist needs. While the ASLEF strike was an important battle, it was not yet the decisive one. The heart of union power in

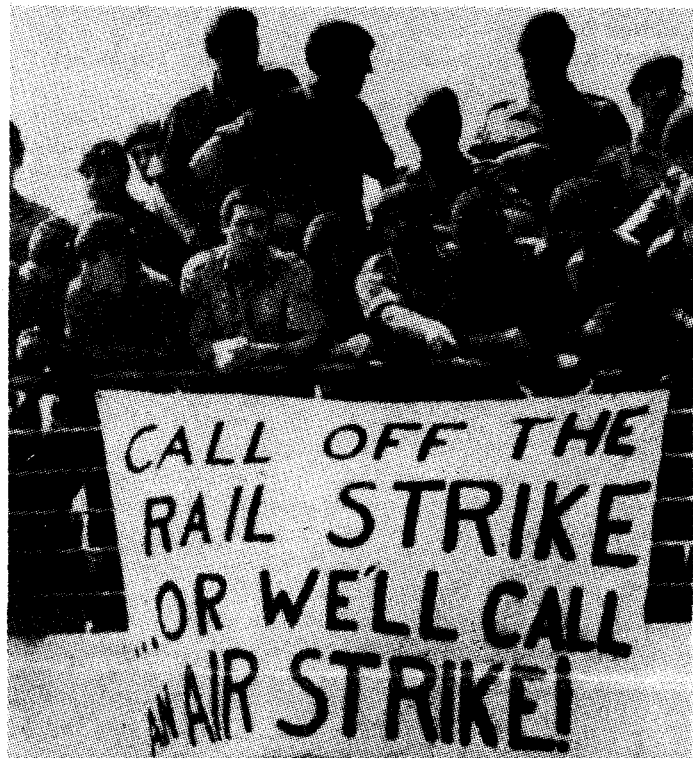
this country lies in the coal miners, who, unlike the railwaymen, have their hands on the windpipe of industrial Britain. Thatcher is keenly aware that it was the miners who brought down the last Tory government with their strikes in the early 1970s.

Yet ever since Thatcher entered Downing Street three years ago, the labour movement misleaders have backed away from industrial struggle and advised a strategy of waiting to elect a new Labour government. But now with Thatcher expecting to win the next election on "the Falklands factor", this waiting-for-Labour strategy — always a recipe for defeat — is exposed as fraudulent even on its own terms. The Benns, Scargills and Bucktons will not act on what they claim to stand for — industrial action against the Tories and opposition to the CIA-loving, NATO-loyal right wing of the Labour Party — because they are wedded to parliamentarism, which subordinates the class struggle to placing a united Labour Party in office.

The answer to traditional Labourite parliamentary reformism is not traditional Labourite union militancy. The typical British shop steward certainly believes in fighting the class struggle, but not in winning it once and for all. And now the decades-long decay of British capitalism has condemned large sections of the population to permanent impoverishment. Last summer desperate, jobless youth, white and black, burned down the slum neighborhoods of the bleak and dilapidated cities. And now the same conflagration is breaking out again in Liverpool.

The Labourite bureaucracy provides no way out from the progressive rot of British capitalist society, no future for working-class youth. The working class acutely needs a new leadership to defend its past gains and to take its struggles forward to socialist revolution which would be followed by some ambitious five-year plans to make Britain a decent place to live.

— reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 311, 6 August 1982



"The Falklands factor": British troops returning on the Canberra.

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Poland . . .

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Poland is still more tolerant, even conciliatory toward right-wing forces than any other Stalinist-ruled state. The so-called "underground" is remarkably above ground. The West German *Der Spiegel* not only interviewed the organizer of Solidarnosc' clandestine radio station, but published his photo to boot! The *New York Times*' man in Warsaw, John Darnton, who is strongly pro-Solidarnosc, reports:

"One man I know who is in hiding comes up from time to time for a meal at his favorite restaurant. Another public figure in hiding, the former head of the journalists' association, is said to have received heart medication, through an intermediary, from an official in the Ministry of the Interior."

— "Poland Still Defiant,"
New York Times Magazine,
22 August

This kind of openness perpetuates the counterrevolutionary danger. But at the same time it makes possible the creation of a network of Trotskyist cells. Many Polish workers and intellectuals are surely seeking new answers to the prolonged social crisis, and some will be open to the authentic program of revolutionary Marxism which alone can undercut the disastrous polarization of Polish society which pits workers, along with petty-bourgeois and outright reactionary elements, against "socialism" as espoused by the privileged, discredited Stalinist bureaucracy.

Polish Stalinists Cannot Clean Up the Economic Mess

The Jaruzelski regime has undertaken a series of sweeping economic measures more or less as dictated by Poland's Western bankers. For more than a decade the Polish Stalinists tried to appease the workers by freezing consumer goods prices while periodically granting sizable money wage increases. The predictable result was one of the most extreme cases of suppressed inflation in modern economic history. Then in February 1982 the inflation was unsuppressed as consumer prices were on average doubled, in some cases quadrupled. Even so there is still a lot of excess money demand playing havoc with the economy. And while hitting urban consumers with massive price hikes, the regime increased the prices paid to peasant proprietors for their products.

At the same time, the government told enterprises they would have to become financially self-sufficient — no more subsidies from the state budget to cover losses. As a result tens of thousands are being laid off. There are now an estimated 300,000 unemployed in the country, and one Communist party paper, *Rzeczpospolita*, projects this figure will rise to half a million by 1985.

The Solidarnosc leaders, however, can hardly criticize these economic "reforms". They themselves demanded that Poland join the International Monetary Fund, the world bankers' cartel, which recently told poor countries they would have to meet their debt payments even at the cost of mass starvation. Solidarnosc also demanded the complete abolition of centralized planning in favor of enterprises operating on the basis of market profitability. Especially under present Polish conditions this is a recipe for instant mass unemployment. And Solidarnosc fully backed the organization of peasant smallholders (Rural Solidarity) in its campaign for higher procurement prices.

For all the Jaruzelski regime's austerity measures, Poland still is *not living within its means*. Without substantial Soviet aid the Polish economy would collapse completely. The exact amount of this aid is not known since the Soviet government refuses to publicize the figures for fear of upsetting its own hardworking people who deeply and legitimately resent feeding anti-Soviet Poles. Despite martial law, living conditions in Poland are still appreciably better than in Russia, as even the *New*

York Times (21 February) admits:

"Yet for all the recent economic devastation, Polish shops are still better stocked than Moscow's. Prices rose sharply Feb. 1, but markets display a variety and quality of food unknown in Russian cities — endives, brussels sprouts, pears, cheeses, appetizing jars of fruits and vegetables. Meat is rationed, but the Polish allowance is higher and the quality is better."

The Struggle for Poland Continues

The Poles still live better than the Russians, but they compare themselves to the West Germans (although they certainly don't work like the West Germans!). So the worsening economic conditions provide a fertile soil for anti-Communist agitators. And in early May these once again raised their heads.

Answering the call of the clandestine Solidarnosc radio station, on May Day 30,000 marched through Warsaw chanting "Down with the junta!" and "Free Lech Walesa!" Smaller demonstrations occurred in other cities. Two days later many of the same youths rampaged through the streets of Warsaw, Gdansk and elsewhere ripping down, trampling underfoot and burning the red flags which had been placed on public buildings for May Day. The red flag, it should be pointed out, has been the symbol of social revolution ever since the French Revolution of 1789.

At the time the Solidarnosc underground directorate (and the Catholic episcopate) disowned this kind of street violence in favor of a different, wily tactic. In June the provisional coordinating committee of Solidarnosc proposed a brief moratorium on protests in order to encourage the government to allow pope Wojtyla to attend the 600th anniversary of the rite of the Black Madonna of Czestochowa in late August. Solidarnosc underground chief Zbigniew Bujak and his fellow conspirators knew, as did everyone else in Poland, that a state visit by the arch-reactionary Polish pope would provide a "legitimate" occasion for a mass anti-Communist mobilization as was the case in 1979. While the Polish Stalinists very much want to conciliate the church hierarchy, a papal visit at this time was just too dangerous to risk. So on July 21 Jaruzelski announced that Wojtyla's visit would be postponed indefinitely.

In response Bujak & Co (presumably after consultation with their CIA controls) decided to go for broke. They announced that in the last two weeks of August "the presence of our union will be exceptionally visible" and called for mass anti-government demonstrations culminating on August 31, the second anniversary of the Gdansk agreement which legally recognized Solidarnosc.

Despite the best efforts of Radio Free Europe, it does not look as if there will be an effective, large-scale counterrevolutionary mobilization in Poland at this time. To date the pro-Solidarnosc actions have been sporadic, uncoordinated and contained by the authorities. *Time* magazine (24 May) described the events in May as "more like a gesture of frustration than a show of force by the union". This is still the case. The people running through the streets chanting "Down with the junta!" are not in the main the same mature workers who formed the backbone of Solidarnosc before December. They are rather student/lumpen youth, many of them unemployed, deeply alienated from the system and now drawn to the banner of clerical-nationalism or even clerical-fascism. The Solidarnosc agitators can call out these frenzied youth, but have not been able to direct the mass of the working class as before. The *New York Times* (8 August) observed: "A major disappointment among internees freed from detention centers is the contrast between the gung-ho militance they sustained behind bars and the apathy they are encountering outside."

But apathy of the masses in the wake of Jaruzelski's effective counter-coup cannot last forever. All of the basic factors which drove Poland to the edge of counter-revolution nine months ago continue to operate — an economy ruined by mass-

ive debt to Western imperialism and saddled with a backward smallholding peasant agriculture, a powerful Catholic church pushing its tentacles into all aspects of social and political life, enormous popular illusions about Western, especially American, capitalism. Now added to this is the dangerous element of military bonapartism to which the Polish Stalinists have resorted under General Jaruzelski.

December 13 bought some time — nothing more — for a revolutionary socialist solution to the Polish crisis. This requires above all a Trotskyist vanguard party which could restore Poland's deep and rich Marxist tradition embodied in Rosa Luxemburg and the early Polish Communist Party. We are convinced that the mass of Polish working people can be broken from their current infatuation with Reagan's America, Wojtyla's Vatican and the memory of the reactionary dictator Pilsudski, and be won to an authentically communist program of defending and extending the anti-capitalist gains still embodied in the Polish deformed workers state, through workers political revolution.

● Down with clericalism! For strict separation of church and state!

● For the collectivization of agriculture!

● For trade unions independent of bureaucratic control and based on defense of socialized property!

● Cancel the imperialist debt! For international socialist economic planning!

● For soviet democracy, not bourgeois parliamentarism! For proletarian political revolution!

● Defend the USSR against imperialism! For the revolutionary unity of the Polish and Soviet workers!

— reprinted from *Workers Vanguard*
no 312, 3 September 1982

Lebanon . . .

continued from page one

In 1975 a Phalangist massacre of Palestinian commandos ignited a communal-based civil war which over the next two years took 100,000 Lebanese and Palestinian lives. An incipient social revolution based on the Moslem/Palestinian toilers was *diverted* by the PLO's nationalism ("non-interference" in the internal affairs of other Arab states) and by the Moslem clan chiefs into a sectarian/communal conflict in which both sides engaged in indiscriminate killing. Uniquely on the left, the Spartacist tendency opposed both sides in the communal bloodbath and defended the right of every community, Lebanese and Palestinian, Christian and Moslem, to self-defense against sectarian terror.

When the balance of forces appeared to be shifting to the Moslem/Palestinian side, Ba'athist Syria intervened on behalf of the Maronites. The turning point was the Phalangist siege of the sprawling Palestinian refugee camp, Tel Zaatar, a siege aided by the Syrian army. After weeks of watching the wounded die for lack of medicine and children die from dehydration, the PLO fighters defending the camp surrendered. After they were disarmed, the inhabitants were slaughtered by Gemayel's Kateab by the thousands.

Today the butcher of Tel Zaatar, the self-declared fascist who has called for the expulsion of all Palestinians from the country, is master of Lebanon. Behind him stand 30,000 Israeli troops and now 2000 imperialist troops as well.

The elementary demands of every opponent of the imperialist subjugation of the Near East and the Zionist subjugation of the Palestinians must be: Defend the Palestinians and Lebanese Moslems Against Phalange Terror! Imperialist/Israeli Troops Out of Lebanon!

But the organizers of an announced September 11 march on Washington at first ducked the demand "No US Troops to Lebanon" (and still ignore the other imperialist forces there). The omission of this demand when the demonstration was first called in late July was no accident.

The organizers behind this march and its sponsor, the "November 29 Co-

alition", are Sam Marcy's Workers World Party/People's Anti-War Mobilization (WWP/PAM) and the pro-Moscow Communist Party/US Peace Council. When Begin came to deliver his war-mongering harangue to a UN disarmament (!) conference in mid-June, these same groups organized a protest which called for "effective US action to achieve Israeli withdrawal". What did this mean concretely? As Begin himself declared repeatedly, Israel would withdraw its armed forces when and only when "a multinational peace-keeping force", including US troops, took over the job of suppressing the Palestinians. So the Marcyites and CP, like Begin, were calling for sending in the marines! Well, these "Pax Americana" reformists finally found a demand they could "win" — "effective US action" rolled into Beirut last week.

Lenin's term for those who believed their own imperialist governments could be pressured into playing a progressive role in the world was "social-imperialists". But the groveling Marcyites would make even Lenin's most opportunist opponents want to throw up. Take the front-page article of *Workers World* (25 June) on the Reagan-Begin meeting:

"He [Reagan] could have refused to meet with Begin, and would have, if he were really a representative of the people. He could have issued an executive order stopping all U.S. aid to Israel. Or he could have demanded that Begin comply with a UN resolution calling for a complete Israeli pullout of Lebanon." Sure — and if he had some reindeer, he could be Santa Claus.

On July 25 the Marcyites and Kremlin-line Stalinists got together again for a "teach-in on Lebanon in New York City. On one panel *Workers World* editor Deirdre Griswold and Mark Solomon of the US Peace Council gave presentations which did not mention, much less oppose, the plans to send the marines to Lebanon. When challenged by a Spartacist League spokesman on the June demonstration for "effective US action", Griswold simply lost her voice. Finally the event's coordinator, Iskander Zalami, rushed to her defense: "Should anyone attempt to make a statement that is unfriendly, I am going to ask the security people to make sure that it's stopped."

At the meeting the "Coalition" announced the September 11 demonstration in Washington based on two demands: immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon and an end to US arms shipments to Israel. The following weekend at a similar teach-in in the Bay Area, a Spartacist spokesman asked: "I would like to know why the demand against US troops wasn't raise in this call." Coalition speaker Nubar Hovsepian replied: "I'm not particularly interested in convincing the Spartacist League as much as I am in convincing the churches, people in the mainstream of this country. . . ." In truth, Hovsepian and his colleagues are interested in convincing the *rulers* of this country.

Anti-Soviet Popular Front

The "November 29 Coalition" is simply another instance of Stalinist popular frontism, the political subordination of the interests of the workers and oppressed. But in the United States where the reformists do not have a mass working-class base to sell out for ministerial portfolios, the popular front often takes the form of extra-parliamentary "coalition" with the Democratic Party along with electoral support to it.

On El Salvador the Marcyites in particular thought they had a real shot at a popular front with the liberal Democrats who favour a "negotiated settlement" with the bloody junta.

While a division exists in US ruling circles over how best to prevent the leftist Salvadoran guerrillas winning a military victory, no such division occurred over Israel's invasion of Lebanon. Everybody shed crocodile tears over the "loss of civilian lives" but applauded the destruction of the PLO as a military force. In Lebanon there now is a "negotiated solution" for which Philip Habib will

Australasian Spartacist

probably get a Nobel "Peace" Prize, joining a pantheon that includes Kissinger, Begin and Sadat.

Since no Democratic politician advocates breaking the military alliance with Zionist Israel, the Marcyites are hard put to find "mainstream" speakers for September 11. So with nothing to lose they've decided (even contradicting the PLO for a change!) to come out against US troops to Lebanon — after they've been sent of course.

Even the PLO deserves better cheerleaders than the craven and cynical Marcyites. But the PLO's nationalism has prevented the Palestinian proletariat from taking the road of class struggle. The solution to Palestinian national rights lies in joint class struggle by the working people of the region against the sheiks, colonels and Zionists. As Trotsky wrote in 1930: "The complete and genuine solution of ... achieving democracy and national emancipation is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses." This is the road of permanent revolution, the proletarian perspective which unites the workers of the oppressed nations with those in the imperialist centers who do not flinch from opposing their "own" bourgeoisie.

— adapted from *Workers Vanguard*
no 312, 3 September 1982

British Labour...

continued from page four

carefully tailored leftist *image*. But in all fundamental programmatic respects, Benn stands completely within the framework of British social democracy — pro-NATO anti-Sovietism, social chauvinism in Ireland, autarkic reflation coupled with wage control, class collaborationist "participation", parliamentarism. He has never repudiated his career as the longest serving Labour cabinet minister. We do not give support of any kind to Benn's campaign for deputy leadership. (Spartacist League "Tasks and Perspectives", reprinted in *Spartacist Britain* no 36, October 1981, emphasis in original)

As a broad political characterisation of Benn's Little England reformism, this was and remains correct. However we underestimated the depth of the crisis within the Labour Party and thus failed to draw the appropriate tactical conclusion given our understanding that the Cold War was central to the party's internal divide. In the context of the Cold War, the difference between what Healey stood for and what Benn stood for was one of policy and not simply posture or rhetoric. The election became a major showdown on the key issues tearing the Labour Party apart: for or against the CIA-loyal exponents of Cold War; for or against the architects of coalition and austerity. Who would doubt that mass defections by the right wing would have ensued had Benn won, leaving behind an unstable, left-dominated party? The situation dictated that a Trotskyist propaganda group which seeks to split Labour's working-class base from its pro-capitalist misleaders to a *revolutionary* programme should have extended critical support to Tony Benn — in order to exacerbate and follow through the split begun with the formation of the SDP, *drive out the blatantly pro-imperialist CIA-connected right wing* and place Benn in a position where his left-reformist politics could be more effectively exposed and combatted.

Today Benn tells the workers to wait until 1984 in the face of Tory attacks; tomorrow his utopian Little England panaceas can only serve to lull the workers to sleep in a period when the bosses may turn to fascist squads to solve their problems, as Trotsky put it, "over the bones of the workers". His "socialist" mystique makes him all the more pernicious an obstacle to the revolutionary mobilisation of the proletariat and makes the struggle against his brand of reformist betrayal all the more important a task for a revolutionary vanguard nucleus. Stop the witchhunt against the left! Never again the

betrayals of Callaghan/Healey! Drive the NATO/CIA-lovers out of the Labour Party! Not Bennite Little England reformism but a revolutionary-internationalist leadership of the labour movement! Forward to a Trotskyist party and socialist revolution, the only hope for mankind!

— abridged from *Spartacist Britain*
no 41, April 1982

CIA's NCC...

Continued from page three

remain NCC strongholds know from first hand experience whose "freedom" their "leaders" are fighting for. Federated Ironworkers (FIA) head Laurie Short — a Grouper who stayed in the ALP — along with FIA bureaucrats of "pink" coloration, haven't lifted a finger against BHP's plans to dump thousands of steel workers onto the scrapheap. And earlier this year in Wollongong, hundreds of mainly female shop assistants at Coles, Woolworths and other major supermarket chains were sacked when they tried to leave the SDA to join the Storemen and Packers Union. After a bitter strike the bosses' arbitration court ordered the workers back into the supermarket barons' "free trade union".

Particularly in Santamaria's Victorian home base, where the SDA and FCU have been excluded from the ALP since the late 50s, the Solidarity tour marked an important victory in an aggressive NCC campaign to reforge its Cold War alliance with the mainstream labour bureaucracy around Hawke/Dolan's ALP "Centre Unity". ACTU tops Cliff Dolan and Peter Nolan were keynote speakers at the Melbourne city rally where telegrams of "solidarity" from Hayden, Hawke and Fraser were read out. And at the Sydney Town Hall meeting, chaired by FCU national president, NCC vice-president and national industrial organiser John Maynes, the speakers platform included SDA national president and NCC leader Jim Maher, leader of the NSW ALP and Labor Council anti-communist right-wing Barrie Unsworth, and Labor MP Dr Dick Klugman, that champion of Soviet "dissidents" and the ANZUS alliance, who made a well-publicised visit to US nuclear warship USS Goldsborough during recent anti-nuke protests.

With Cold War II the NCC and its creatures in the labour bureaucracy are on the comeback, and the reformist left is caught with its pants down. What is a reformist to do when his congenial thirst for a popular front "to fight reaction" lands him in a pop-front with the most powerful and dangerous forces of imperialist-clericalist reaction, from the CIA and the Vatican to Santamaria/Unsworth and the fascistic "Captive Nations"? Under a special directive from their national committee, no less, the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) distributed a special leaflet to the NCC-faithful, East European emigres and die-hard anti-communists assembled at the city rallies. Titled "Fraser, Thatcher & Reagan support free trade unions!" the CPA moaned that "it would be sad indeed if Solidarity representatives Magda Wojcik and Jerzy Milewski allowed themselves to be used in a campaign to revive the Cold War or to blunt union militancy in Australia" (a description that captures, if generously, the role of the CPA itself).

The social-democratic left is in a frenzy to "expose" Reagan/Fraser/Maynes "hypocrisy" in order to better mask their all too obvious *political* solidarity with pro-imperialist clerical counter-revolution in Poland and Cold War anti-Sovietism at home. Timid protests against the NCC aside, all of the various social-democratic groupings were careful to whitewash the crucial CIA link that ties Solidarnosc to its Australian cousins. Thus the CPA's Denis Freney writes in *Tribune* that "the NCC undoubtedly scored a coup in sponsoring the Solidarity visit", but fails to mention the CIA connection documented, amongst other places, in a CPA pamphlet he authored in 1977. CIA exposes that alibi Laborite treachery are one thing; to oppose the cause of CIA "democracy" in Poland is

quite another.

Take Maynes for example. As documented in Freney's CPA pamphlet, "The CIA's Australian Connection", Maynes, chief of the FCU's "international" work, over the years has engineered the affiliation of the Clerks Union to three "labour" International Secretariats set up by the CIA's friends in the American AFL-CIO — the International Transport Federation (ITF), the International Federation of Commercial Technical and Clerical Employees (known as FIET) and the now defunct International Federation of Petroleum and Chemical Workers (IFPCW) — through which he collaborates with known CIA operatives in defence of imperialist-capitalist "freedom", particularly in the Asian/Pacific region. A 1974 circular put out by Maynes in response to internal union critics, "Where I Went and Why", reports meetings with the likes of the Indonesian military's "union leader" Agus Sudono (then vice-president of the ICFPW) and a visit to Washington where he met the AFL-CIO "free trade union" boys like Jay Lovestone and Harry Goldberg and personally visited the US Department of Labor and US State Department.

The CPA and SWP may be wincing, but Wojcik and Milewski certainly feel in their element in the company of "freedom fighters" like Maynes and Unsworth. When a Plumbers delegate to the Victorian THC asked Wojcik if she was "embarrassed" at being toured by Australia's "most right-wing unions", she replied, "Not at all". And why should she be? With its Pilsudski posters and Virgin Mary pins, its call for "free trade unions" throughout the Soviet bloc — long the slogan of Radio Free Europe — and its program to turn Poland over to the world bankers cartel, the International Monetary Fund, Solidarity has hardly been coy about its fanatical anti-Communism.

At the Sydney press conference (chaired by SDA National Secretary Joe de Bruyn, formerly an NCC "student activist") *Australasian Spartacist* reporters sharply questioned Wojcik and Milewski. When asked about Solidarity's invitation of Irving Brown, "a very well known and senior CIA operative, who was involved in disrupting the labour movement in Europe for several decades ... in the post-war period", to its Congress in September 1981, Wojcik simply stated: "As for the person of Mr Brown, we know him as head of the [AFL-CIO's] international department now." Most certainly she does. Brown's "labour" cover is invaluable to his work on behalf of "the Agency", as Wojcik is aware. After all Wojcik, who along with Milewski was "abroad" when the Polish military spiked Solidarity's counterrevolutionary power bid, was earlier busy in the US, working closely with the Meanyite Cold Warriors who control the AFL-CIO in arranging a projected visit by Walesa.

Within Poland, and internationally over Poland, domestic and international reaction join hands, and here the bourgeoisie's "labour lieutenants" play an invaluable role. In a sense the openly pro-CIA political representatives of Australian capitalism — both inside and outside the labour movement — are far more "internationalist" in outlook than is the "democratic-socialist" left. No wonder these anti-American "little Australian" nationalists, anti-Soviet in their guts and thoroughly committed to their own peculiar brand of social-imperialist popular-frontism, have to cover for notorious CIA collaborators in the Australian labour movement.

The social democrats' eagerness to embrace "democratic" counterrevolution in Poland is matched only by their hatred of the Trotskyist Spartacist League. While playing attorney for Polish Solidarity, the "democratic socialists" hope to cement their alliance with reaction by setting up the Spartacists as crazed and violent "Russian imperialists". Two months ago Freney fingered a lone Spartacist supporter to a group of National Action fascists (see *Australasian Spartacist* no 95, June/July 1982). He followed that up with an 18 August *Tribune* "expose" of the fascistic

Moonies cult, charging that "The Spartacists ... use the Moonies' methods". Who is doing whose dirty work isn't hard to figure out.

Stalinists Try for "Anti-Right Bloc"

The Stalinists of the pro-Moscow Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) met the Solidarity tour in their usual way, which was of course to lie low. In the factionally split SPA both the Symon-McPhillips leadership and the Clancy-led opposition want to bury Poland in the hope of maintaining "unity" with the anti-Soviet Laborites. Only in Melbourne where the ALP Socialist Left is relatively strong and the SPA without any real stake in the union bureaucracy was there a response at all, and then in the peculiar form of a leaflet handed out by SPAers, but signed by a "rank and file Socialist Coalition". Curiously the leaflet fails to mention "peace" at all, even threatening that imperialist anti-Soviet "war will give rise to revolution".

Cribbing our DLP analogy (the leaflet is headed "Solidarity is Poland's DLP") it goes on to use it in the service of Laborite unity-mongering ("Remember how the DLP kept the Liberal Party in power...?") and popular-frontism ("... and attempted to destroy democracy in Australia?"). Naturally this ill-starred effort at "anti-right unity" didn't even hint at the rest of the trade union bureaucracy's "solidarity with Solidarity", eg, the WWF ban on Polish shipping. In the 50s the Stalinists used these same policies to prettify Labor leaders like Evatt and Calwell who used troops to smash the CPA-led 1949 coal strike while threatening to put the Stalinists themselves in concentration camps. Evatt/Calwell's 1955-7 split with the Groupers partially let the Stalinists off the hook, but it was no thanks to fawning popular frontism. Evatt, Calwell and the AWU broke from the Groupers only when they feared loss of their own power base in the Labor Party machine.

The "rank and file" leaflet talks abstractly of "the return to full working class economic and political power in Poland". Translation: the restabilisation of the deeply despised and utterly corrupt Stalinist bureaucracy and its PUWP vehicle whose decades-long bureaucratic mismanagement and abuse drove the mass of the historically socialist Polish working class into the arms of the Vatican and NATO imperialism. Both in Poland and at home the Stalinists response to reaction is conciliation, even as it seeks their own heads. Jaruzelski's successful counter-coup only postponed the showdown. A *socialist* resolution of the Polish crisis demands the crystallisation of a genuinely internationalist proletarian vanguard that will sweep away the deeply despised bureaucracy through workers *political* revolution. Under a Trotskyist leadership the rich communist traditions of the Polish proletariat will be renewed — Polish Stalinism never! ■

Steel...

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market cannot support the highly productive, high capacity new technology which would make it competitive. This old and obsolete industry can only survive with ever-higher tariff walls and by ruthlessly driving down wages. The crisis of BHP throws into sharp relief the anti-social character of capitalist production for profit instead of social need. It poses the urgent need for a workers government to rip this vital industry out of the hands of this rapacious monopoly and expropriate the capitalist class as the first step to establishing a socialist planned economy — part of an international socialist division of labour. The only road to such a genuine workers government is through building a new leadership in the unions committed to *winning* the class struggle, linked to a Trotskyist internationalist party totally counterposed to all varieties of Laborite treachery. ■



Not ALP/FIA Protectionist Ploys But Class Struggle!



Fight Steel Layoffs! Seize the Plants!

In the wake of its steel division's first loss in 50 years Australia's monopoly steel producer BHP has announced plans to dump over a quarter of its workforce, wiping out more than 10,000 jobs. Already 3000 jobs have disappeared in the 1981-2 financial year, with another 2500 projected to go by December. On top of this thousands of jobs are threatened at BHP subsidiaries like John Lysaght, its iron and coal mines and other steel products manufacturers. With these massive firings the steel districts of Newcastle and Wollongong in NSW and Whyalla in South Australia, already hard hit by closures and high unemployment, face social devastation.

BHP is using the threat of mass sackings to hold the entire economy to ransom for its profits. It is demanding that its ailing steel operation be restored to profitability with huge government subsidies. Already handed about \$55 million in tax breaks in the recent budget, it is demanding increased protection through a guaranteed minimum eighty-five percent of the domestic market and a reduction in (mainly Japanese) steel imports.

The union tops in the Federated Ironworkers (FIA), the biggest union in steel covering eighty percent of unionised steelworkers, have not lifted a finger against these job-slashing attacks, instead lining up with BHP for higher import quotas to protect company profits. FIA national secretary Laurie Short, long the bosses' open advocate of "responsible" unionism, told the *Sydney Morning Herald* (28 August), "Striking is not the answer when there are serious problems in an industry". But on the spot are the Laborite "lefts" around Nando Lelli's "rank and file" group which runs the powerful Port Kembla branch, one of the hardest hit. Despite a mandate from combined steel union delegates on the NSW South Coast to strike in the event of sackings, Lelli has refused even to call mass meetings while the company forces hundreds out the gate with at most a few thousand dollars in the hand through "voluntary redundancy".

Thousands of jobs have already gone but the continuing standover threats of sackings can and must be stopped. One thing's for sure, if these sackings go through BHP will next be demanding from the remaining workforce major "givebacks" in wages and conditions. Steelworkers can only rely on their own organised strength, not the BHP bosses' friends in Canberra. Immediately they should seize and occupy those plants where jobs are threatened, backing it

up with strike action throughout the rest of the industry. No sackings! 30 hours work for 40 hours pay! Only hard class struggle against the arrogant steel bosses can protect steelworkers jobs and the livelihoods of thousands more in Wollongong and Newcastle. These areas comprise the biggest concentrations of industrial workers and the biggest plants in the country. A militant class-struggle strategy, beginning with plant seizures that challenge the bosses' "sacred" property rights, can provide the spark to ignite a struggle against unemployment through the entire working class.

Chauvinist Protectionism Means Imperialist War

The difficulties of BHP's steel division stem both from the current international recession and its longer-term decline in competitiveness which that has exposed. The world steel slump and the intensified trade war between major steel-making nations has wiped out BHP's exports and increased the competition from cheaper, and better quality Japanese, but also South Korean and Taiwanese, steel for a share of the shrinking domestic market. The result was a \$12.6 million loss in 1981-2 (down from the previous year's \$105 million profit) for BHP's steel operation. Japanese steel can sell at \$80 per tonne more in Australia than in its other markets and still compete. While the "Big Australian" screams about high labour costs, the 38-hour week etc, its failures lie in years of mismanagement and neglect as profits were diverted into developing its even more lucrative oil and minerals ventures, which accounted for BHP's overall 1981-2 profit of \$364 million. Its steel plant is old, technologically obsolete and inefficient, with productivity around 190 tonnes per employee per year, compared with the Japanese figure of 350.

BHP has attempted to blackmail the government by threatening to ditch an "integrated" Australian steel industry. But most of the rest of the bourgeoisie lined up against it with metal manufacturing and the car industry (including GM-H) pointing out that increased protection will inevitably mean higher steel prices — and trouble for their profits. Moreover the powerful mining and rural lobbies fear retaliation against exports by the Japanese who point out that nearly half their steel is produced from Australian iron and coal. Pointing to BHP's failure to follow other countries' example in "reorganising" their steel industry to cut back labour,

Fraser refused — for now — to cut imports, leaving the Labor Party and its "left" camp followers as the champions of higher protection for "our" BHP.

Protectionism means protecting the steel bosses' profits against foreign competition, pitting Australian workers against workers in Asia. And as BHP made clear to ALP leader Hayden, jobs will go regardless. Any job loss "saved" will merely be transferred overseas or further down the line, probably to workers laid off or never hired in manufacturing industry using higher priced steel. At every step job-trusting racist protectionism cuts across class struggle, laying the basis for imperialist war as it ties workers to their "own" exploiters and the capitalist state through the poison of national chauvinism.

Apologists for Labor Push Nationalisation Fraud

The left social-democrats' calls for "nationalisation" of BHP is nothing but a left cover for the ALP and union bureaucrats' protectionist bail-out schemes. The ALP wants nothing to do with talk of nationalisation and in general has eschewed nationalisation as a potential red bogey ever since a furious bourgeois outcry torpedoed the Chifley Labor government's 1947 bank nationalisation scheme. But government participation or even takeover of BHP's faltering steel division is hardly out of the question for even the Liberals. The Australian ruling class wants and needs to maintain its own steel productive capacity which it will do through state intervention if necessary. Such a move just broadens and makes more direct the nationalist protectionist policies already embodied in the various subsidies, import quotas and tariff schemes.

The Communist Party of Australia (CPA) which has a dominant influence in both the Newcastle and South Coast Labour Councils, backs the Lelli "rank and file" sellouts. Keeping close to Hayden, the CPA only timidly proposes that a future Labor government legislate "provision for public equity" (*Tribune*, 21 July), not even daring to raise nationalisation. Just as much the parliamentary cretins are the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), as their "socialist steelworker" Andrew Jamieson makes clear:

"If a future Labor government is to bail out BHP/AL&S, then it ought to take the steel industry over completely and hand the management to steelworkers to run. Nationalising the steel industry is the only guarantee that steelworkers interests will be put before the huge profits BHP is

making at their expense."

— *Direct Action*, 7 July

A Labor government nationalisation the "only guarantee" for steelworkers? The SWP should try selling this one to the 500 shipbuilders facing the sack from Wran at the Newcastle State Dockyards, not to mention railworkers or NSW Government printers who know the ALP's strikebreaking "guarantees" firsthand. Any action by steelworkers is seen by Jamieson as strictly tied to giving "a powerful boost ... to the electoral chances of the ALP in the forthcoming elections". And not wanting to upset the FIA "lefts" around Lelli the only "action" the SWP calls for is — a mass meeting, presumably to discuss the SWP's "second line of defence", a "fighting retrenchment agreement" to "hinder (!) BHP from carrying out wholesale sackings" (*Direct Action*, 30 June). These electoral cretins accept defeat before the fight against sackings has even begun. Nothing could demonstrate more the real politics of the SWP's "industrial turn" — a bid to become the left advisors, waterboys and apologists for the sellout bureaucracy.

The Stalinist Socialist Party of Australia (SPA), pushes its own pathetic and absurd nationalisation ploy in its *Maritime Bulletin* (1 September) — Wran and Cain should do it state by state. But it could have been speaking for the whole "peaceful, legal" crowd when it condemned the Spartacist League/US's 1979 call for seizing the bankrupt Chrysler plants while the company and the reformists pushed for a government bailout for the bondholders.

"In the newspaper *Workers Vanguard* [the SL says] ... The workers should 'seize Chrysler'. 'Whatever Chrysler's worth give it to the workers!' They said action on this slogan could have 'sparked a class struggle'. For Trotskyists class struggle consists only of these bold adventurist exploits by a section of the working class... Inevitably their extremist tactics would lead to the defeat of workers actions and strengthening of the boss's position."

— *Youth Voice*, May 1982

Such "extremist tactics" as sit-down strikes, yes, "seizing" the plants, built the American United Auto Workers industrial union in the convulsive class struggles of the 1930s. But then real class struggle is anathema to these pressure groups on the ALP would-be guardians of the capitalist state.

BHP exhibits in a concentrated form the ailments besetting Australian capitalism as a whole. The small domestic

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