



Gallagher attacks union as industry collapse looms

BLF faces defeat

Growing unemployment and pressure from the employers and from the employers' state are forcing open rifts in the bureaucratic hierarchy of the Australian trade union movement. While the overwhelming majority of union officialdom backs the central policies of Hawke -- wage restraint and accepting unemployment -- sectional interests and inter-bureaucratic rivalries produce serious divisions as officials, caught in a bind between capitalists demanding concessions and union members whose living standards are constantly under attack, must police the rank and file of the unions for the bourgeoisie.

One of the most criminal results is the war being waged by Norm Gallagher, General Secretary of the Federal Builders' Labourers' Federation (BLF), against the union's NSW Branch. The split in the BLF is a serious threat to the survival of that union and could completely destroy the possibility of working-class resistance to the imminent massive layoffs and further bankruptcies in the building industry, particularly in NSW. Directly responsible for this disastrous split, Gallagher -- and the Maoist Communist Party of Australia Marxist-Leninist of which he is vice-chairman -- stand revealed as abject servants of the bosses.

Gallagher has tried to subjugate the NSW Branch before. In February of this year, he wrote to the NSW MBA declaring that entry rights for NSW Branch officials to job sites were withdrawn, openly inviting anti-union action by the bosses. Later, he tried to take the NSW Branch to the bosses' courts, but failed. His new takeover bid began with announcements on the ABC radio program *PM* on September 9 that the BLF Federal Management Committee (FMC) had decided to take over the NSW Branch; that he would take legal action to seize the property, funds and assets of the NSW Branch; and that he was meeting the same day with representatives of the NSW MBA to discuss setting up a new branch, with the aim of extracting a promise from employers to hire only card-carrying members of this bogus branch (*The Australian*, 10 September 1974). These announcements were received with smug satisfaction by the bosses such as RL Rocher, executive director of the NSW MBA, who declared that Gallagher "would be far more likely to be reasonable" with the bosses than the NSW BLF (quoted in *The Australian*, 10 September 1974).

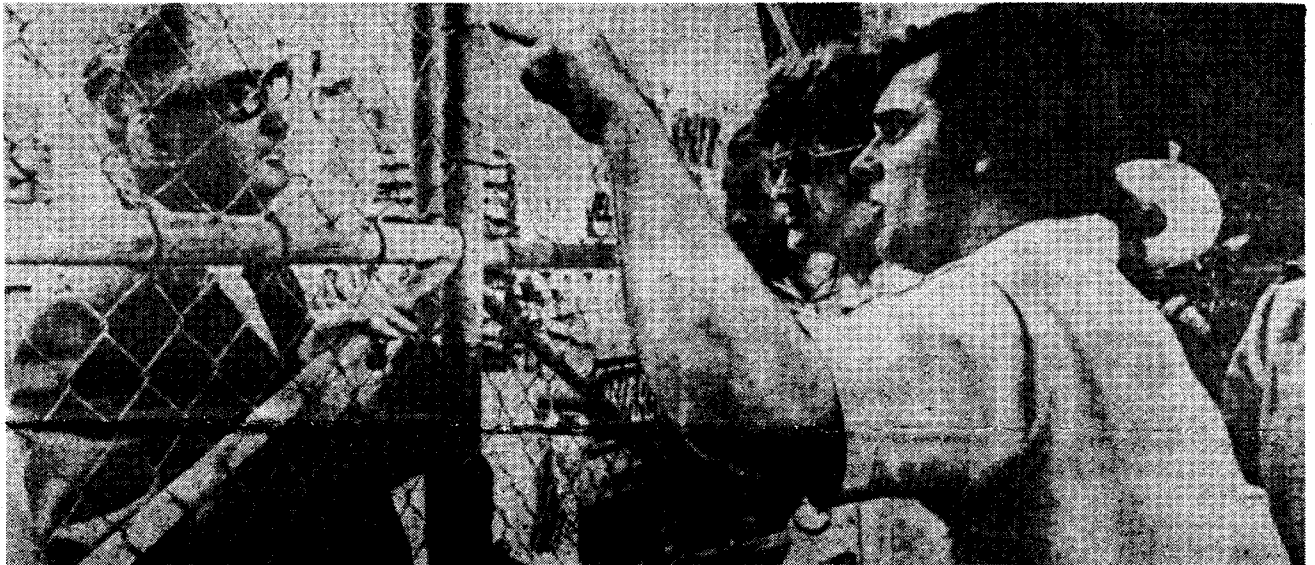
Gallagher gave the MBA good evidence that he would be more "reasonable", citing as reasons for the FMC intervention the NSW Branch's "irresponsible" militancy, that the NSW Branch had "gone too far on green bans", and accusing it of "creating the grounds for deregistration" with "hare-brained" tactics (BLF Victorian Branch *Newsletter*, 7 November 1974) -- precisely what the MBA has been saying for years. However, in the face of such obvious collusion with the MBA Gallagher has constantly shifted his ground in trying to justify his takeover bid. Many of Gallagher's charges against the NSW BLF or its officials have been concocted *only after* he announced the takeover on 9 September. The most persistent concern alleged financial chicanery by NSW branch officials; but not a shred of real evidence of corruption has yet been produced.

But *even if* Gallagher's charges were true, his wrecking operation in NSW would be just as criminal. The fact is that the current Owens-Pringle-Munday NSW BLF leadership, whatever its flaws, was elected by an overwhelming majority in October 1973 -- and there is no evidence of any irregularity in that election. Gallagher, of course, did not bother to consult the rank and file in NSW *at all* before moving in. His complete contempt for the NSW BLF membership came out when he refused to debate his differences

with the NSW Branch leadership before union members on the job sites, saying "we are here to take over the NSW branch, not to indulge in silly debate before supporters of Mr Owens" (quoted in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 October 1974)!

Whatever Gallagher may say, the employers have shown consistent support for his takeover, and have pursued a highly conscious, organised campaign closely coordinated with Gallagher's efforts. On 21 October the NSW MBA held a special meeting, and only hours after Gallagher had proclaimed that the takeover effort would continue announced that the MBA would "actively encourage" the smashing of NSW BLF green bans by recruiting scab labour. Said Rocher ominously, "judging by the unemployment we have seen we will have no

fer). The 17 who refused to join the (Federal) union then refused to work with the others, and were promptly sacked by the company. However, most returned to the site the following week demanding reinstatement, only to be escorted off the site by cops -- while Federal BLF officials stood by. Crane operators (members of the Federated Engine Drivers' and Firemen's Association (FEDFA)) who had walked off on 18 October to protest the Federal BLF supporters' working on the job now went out again for the same reason, but also in support of reinstating the sacked NSW BLF members. Gallagher responded by sending Victorian BLF crane drivers to Sydney to work the cranes. A ruling in the State Industrial Commission on 31 October required the com-



22 October -- Police inspector Reid (left) talking to officials of the NSW BLF after they were removed by cops from the NSW Institute of Technology site on Broadway.

trouble getting the men" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 October 1974). At the same meeting the MBA decided to generally favour the Federal branch by recommending to MBA members that Federal union officials be given unlimited access to job sites, while giving access to the officials of the legitimate NSW union only during smokees and lunch hours (MBA "All Member Circular No 81/1974", cited in *Digger*, 5 November 1974). This only confirms the truth of reports from the NSW Branch of pervasive employer pressure on workers to join the Federal union.

So far Gallagher has had little success. It is probable that he has signed up between 300 and 500 builders' labourers for the Federal branch, and this figure is likely to increase slowly in the immediate future. Aside from threatening workers who don't join the Federal branch with the loss of their job, Gallagher has appealed to conservative workers who resent time and money lost due to strikes. It appears that on this basis, one whole job in Parramatta (about 150) joined Gallagher's union.

Characteristic of both Gallagher's behaviour and the response of the NSW Branch leadership have been the events at the EA Watts company NSW Institute of Technology (NSWIT) site on Broadway. Here Gallagher intersected a dispute in progress over the obstruction by Watts of a transfer of a builders' labourer from another site to the Broadway job. Workers on the NSWIT site resisted strike action for fear of lost wages. At the same time pressure from the boss to join the fake Federal union was so great that even Mr Justice Sheehy of the State Industrial Commission commented on it (quoted in *Tribune*, 5 November 1974). As a result, on October 18 builders' labourers on the site voted 19 to 17 to support the Federal union, which promised peace (by abandoning the defence of the worker seeking a trans-

pany to rehire the sacked workers, but Watts refused to comply and on 6 November, five NSW BLF members and two FEDFA crane drivers occupied two cranes at the NSWIT site demanding, according to Owens, that the men be rehired (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 November 1974). During its second week, the occupation was abandoned when a goon squad of Gallagher's men threatened to burn down the crane, and police immediately arrested the occupiers (*Tribune*, 19 November 1974).

The struggle was only confused by the initial walk-off of the 17 NSW BLF supporters. It reflected the policy pushed by the NSW BLF leadership and the Communist League (CL) (which has supporters in the union) of striking all jobs where Federal BLF members are employed. (In one case, at Dillinghams in Sydney, this included backing demands that the company fire Vince Ashton, one of Gallagher's appointed organisers -- *The NSW Builder's Labourer*, undated.) The FEDFA has likewise decided not to work with Federal BLF members.

Even though Gallagher's Federal branch in NSW is completely bogus, the Federal BLF is not. Gallagher is completely to blame for splitting the Federation. However, this must be made crystal clear not only to those builders' labourers in NSW who have been cajoled, duped or threatened into joining the fake Federal branch, but also to those throughout Australia who have been fed Gallagher's poisonous lies. The Owens/Pringle policy allows Gallagher to confuse the issue. In order to isolate Gallagher it is necessary, instead of labelling all Federal branch recruits "scabs", to demonstrate that it is the NSW BLF which consistently upholds *unity against the boss*, taking action against Federal branch members only when they refuse solidarity against employer attacks on the NSW Branch -- for example, when the employer harasses NSW Branch members or victimises them in order to force acceptance of Gallagher's splinter branch. But the blanket ban on these workers by CPAers Owens and Munday shows their narrow, parochial concerns for protecting their own base at the expense of a serious fight against Gallagher throughout the Federation.

Interview with Edmund Samarakkody ... page 3
Popular fronts and revolutionary strategy
in Chile ... page 4

Continued on page six

Union leaders refuse to fight layoffs

Unemployment in Australia is now worse than at any time since 1948, at an official rate of 3.2 percent. The Labor government, "pledged to full employment", has been able to do nothing to halt an economic decline international in scope and rooted in the basic contradictions of the capitalist system. But totally committed to salvaging that system, Gough Whitlam has also refused to come to the aid of workers who suffer the effects of the slump. Instead the whole labour bureaucracy has called for saving bosses' profits by cutting real wages. Whitlam's government serves capitalism; a real workers government is needed to take society out of the hands of the bourgeoisie and their state apparatus, defending the interests of the working class. Only a leadership committed to the revolutionary expropriation of the capitalist class, rather than only patchwork reforms, is capable of doing so.

The industries hardest hit by unemployment have been those such as textiles, electronics and others that are affected by the competition of goods imported from Japan and other Asian countries. Union officials have joined together with capitalists to demand quotas and higher import tariffs to stop "cheap foreign goods" competing with Australian products, putting the blame for job losses not on the capitalist system but on overseas workers. The cheaper prices of imports often stem from the outrageously low wages of workers in countries such as Taiwan or South Korea. Yet the union bureaucracy in Australia refuses to work for international working-class organisation to help the struggle of these workers. Inevitably protectionist schemes end up by pitting Australian workers against one another, sacrificing the jobs or wages of women workers in favour of men, those of native Australians at the expense of migrants, or those of one union at the expense of another. Moreover by promoting national chauvinism these protectionist policies bind the working class to the Australian capitalists, and divide the working class, making impossible a united struggle to defeat sackings and the effects of inflation.

Especially pernicious has been the role of the "lefts" in the trade-union bureaucracy, such as the Communist Party of Australia (CPA). They often call for militant action, but are totally committed to the perspective of merely reforming capitalism. But economic crises like the current one show the absurdity of expecting any substantial reforms from the capitalist system. Thus the CPA in practice behaves no differently than the right wing of the bureaucracy, and consciously retards the struggle of the workers; thus its complete support for protectionism.

Typical of what has been happening are the recent retrenchments at the Meadowbank factory of Plessey Pacific Ltd, a subsidiary of the British multinational. The plant, which employs about 1000 and makes telecommunications equipment primarily for the PMG, has not previously been affected by retrenchments because of its semi-monopoly position. Plessey workers interviewed by *ASP* described what happened after shop stewards were informed by the company on Friday November 15 that 35 workers would be sacked.

There was considerable sentiment for some action but at a series of stopwork meetings over the following week the leadership of the combined unions at the plant consciously worked to dissipate the struggle. At the first meeting on Monday November 18, Electrical Trades Union shop steward John Percer "explained" that there was

just no work because 'the PMG had deferred part of its order. AMWU State Organiser for Division 20, Jack Pearson, then proceeded to explain how workers threatened with the sack *might* be able to get aid through government retraining and "employment assistance" programs! He did not bother to mention that it is official AMWU policy that sackings should not be accepted, and that the AMWU also officially favours a 35 hour week for 40 hours' pay. When militants pointed this out, Pearson tried to blame the apathy of AMWU members for his refusal to provide leadership. These measures would have at least provided the *possibility* of successfully resisting the sackings, but Pearson refused to recommend, explain or even mention them.

Thus the union leadership took a completely defeatist position. This included shop stewards whose attitudes are representative of the CPA's approach, Roy Pollock (chief shop steward at Plesseys) and Jim Campbell.

A reduction in working hours *without loss in pay* was needed to defend the threatened jobs, an application of the sliding scale of hours. If this principle had been won, it would not only have saved the 35 jobs, but prevented further sackings without sacrificing wages. A tradesman at the first stopwork meeting moved a resolution for a 32 hour week in the affected sections -- for 32 hours pay, an idea that was widely accepted and eventually adopted. Support for this futile scheme to share the poverty was the direct result of the defeatism of the union officials, who all went along with it, including Pollock and Campbell! When the company flatly rejected even this proposal, the shop stewards meekly acquiesced.

On Wednesday a second meeting was called to consider what to do after the company rejection, at which rank-and-file militants called for a united strike of the whole plant against the sackings, and for a thirty hour week with no loss in weekly pay. (The same militants also raised the demand that the company's books be opened to inspection of workers after continued refusal of the company to make any concessions.) However at that point, 30 for 40 was regarded as unrealistic

by most workers, particularly since the union leadership had been unable to obtain even 32 for 32. The tradesmen met separately on Wednesday, and voted to strike until the next morning. At the process workers' meeting, the motion for a strike in solidarity with the tradesmen was defeated in a close vote. This motion was supported by Pollock -- the only occasion when any of the shop stewards supported any real action.

The definitive sellout came on the following day, when at a third stopwork the shop stewards offered only a plan put forward by Campbell and Pollock to ask the bosses for a week's delay to allow the union to lobby the Labor government for the restoration of the deferred orders. Confused and demoralised by the leadership vacuum, most workers by the end of the day opposed a proposal for a strike. Everyone went back to work and the layoffs were implemented as the company wished, without even the extra week.

Throughout, the reformist outlook of the union officials exacerbated divisions among the workers, particularly those between tradesmen (mostly male native Australian) and process workers (mostly women and migrants), and between male and female workers generally. The tradesmen, though often more militant, were also infected with a degree of craft consciousness, seeing themselves as separate from the process workers. While some migrant women supported striking, the core of the opposition came from native Australian women process workers. Because women workers are victims of the general oppression of women in capitalist society, and are ignored by the unions, it is not surprising that they often have anti-union or anti-strike attitudes, and are a conservatising influence. These divisions were encouraged by reformists such as Pollock, who informed the women who opposed going on strike with the tradesmen not to expect the union to help them if they ever got into trouble!

More retrenchments are apparently due at Plesseys; under the current union leadership there, opposition will be equally ineffective in the future. What is needed is a leadership committed to the methods of class struggle, not cringing class collaboration, and to a full program of political struggle against capitalism. ■

US militants oppose Carmichael ban

In *ASP* 13, we reported on efforts by supporters of the Spartacist League to mobilise opposition to the exclusion of Laurie Carmichael (Amalgamated Metal Workers Union Assistant Federal Secretary) from the United States because of his membership in the Communist Party of Australia (CPA). The law under which the US authorities barred Carmichael helps seal off the American working class from overseas leftist political views. Those kept out include United Secretariat leader Ernest Mandel (also barred from Australia until recently) and lately Edmund Samarakkody, an outstanding leader of Trotskyism in Ceylon for over 30 years.

The Spartacist League of the United States, recognising that international working-class solidarity is necessary to fight this attack on Australian and American workers, published in *Workers Vanguard* a letter from a member of the AMWU. Although the bureaucrats who lead the United Auto Workers Union invited Carmichael to the US, they have not made any real effort to oppose the ban. But militants in the union have attempted to mobilise against it. The 13 Sep-

tember issue of *Militant-Auto Worker* (published by the Militant-Solidarity Caucus of UAW Local 906) calls for international industrial action to fight the ban. The ban has also been opposed by militants in other branches of the UAW around the country.

Although Carmichael at first indicated there would possibly be some industrial action against US-owned car factories in Australia, nothing was done. The AMWU leadership of which Carmichael is a central part has refused to mobilise to force the US government to rescind the ban. In coordination with the UAW this could have had a powerful impact. A motion passed by the Sydney Central Branch of the AMWU calling for militant international action (see *ASP* no 13) was effectively shelved by the State Council.

The CPA, of which Carmichael is a leading member, restricted itself to a protest in *Tribune* and ignored proposals by the SL for protest action. It is the democratic rights of workers, and especially AMWU members, which are at issue and the CPA's refusal to defend them is a condemnation of its cowardly reformism. ■

Crumbling US Healyites dump leader

The United States Workers League was the oldest and largest Healyite colony. Led from the outset by Tim Wohlforth, parading in his *Struggle for Marxism in the US* as the first real American Marxist, the WL has of late been showing all the signs of advanced decomposition.

Its work in the unions, never very great, has dwindled to nearly zero. It has long abandoned any perspective of struggling against other left-wing organisations either in the trade unions or elsewhere, and rather than Marxist analysis of developments in the workers movement the pages of its paper, the *Bulletin*, are confined to endless hackneyed tracts (eg on the 19th-century American utopians), "sensational" exposes of the "crimes of Chappaquiddick" and the like.

Indicative of the acute malaise has been the departure of the bulk of the WL leadership, including Lucy St John, Dennis O'Casey, Dan Fried and Juan Farinas. The exodus has taken place on an apolitical individual basis rather than resulting from overt political differences. The WL depended heavily on this tiny pool, but their flight shows how even the most cynical of operators can take just so many failed get-rich-quick schemes and is a crushing refutation of the liquidationist and anti-bolshevik methodology of subordinating program and political principles to

the pursuit of transient organisational opportunities.

Now the rot has reached Wohlforth himself. At a recent "celebration" of "Ten Years of the *Bulletin*" an audience in New York was introduced to the new WL National Secretary, Fred Mazelis. Wohlforth's demise, which was engineered with the direct connivance of his former mentor, Gerry Healy, is apparently a last-ditch attempt to stem the flow of desertions. But the WL's cynicism continues in the sacking of its founding leader without a single word of denunciation, self-criticism or comment.

No doubt the Australian SLL leadership will claim that Wohlforth was incompetent and just did not understand "dialectics", and will uphold Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party as the "real thing". But the collapse of the WL represents the failure of its frenzied opportunism and resultant cynicism, its hysterical crisis-mongering, its almost complete liquidation into its fake "mass paper", its apolitical dances passed off as "youth work". And *it is a fact* that these policies are imposed on both the WL and the SLL by Healy himself. The demise of the WL is due to the bankruptcy of Healyism. In Australia the SLL is already displaying similar symptoms of decay. ■

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

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

EDITORIAL BOARD: Bill Logan (chairman)
David Reynolds (managing)
David Scott (labour)
John Sheridan (production)
Joel Salinger (circulation)
Adaiah Hannah

GPO Box 3473, Sydney, NSW, 2001.

(02) 660-7647

GPO Box 2339, Melbourne, Victoria, 3001.

(03) 429-1597

SUBSCRIPTIONS: One dollar for the next twelve issues (one year).

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST is registered at the GPO, Sydney for posting as a newspaper -- Category C.

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST will not appear in January; the next issue will appear in February 1975

An interview with Edmund Samarakkody

reprinted from Workers Vanguard no 55, 25 October 1974

We print below an interview with Edmund Samarakkody, spokesman of the Revolutionary Workers Party of Ceylon. The interview took place on October 13 in Toronto, where he spoke on "The Revolutionary Struggle in Ceylon". Comrade Samarakkody was prohibited by US authorities from entering the country.

WV: On the basis of reactionary anti-communist legislation the government of the United States has barred you from entering the country. The SL and other left organizations have protested this undemocratic exclusion. Could you tell us more about this? How did the official representatives of the "free world" explain their action?

Samarakkody: Myself and Comrade Andrade of our party, the Revolutionary Workers Party, made applications for our visas to enter the US on an invitation sent to us by our friends there. In regard to my application, which was considered first at the American Embassy, I was told that in view of my political background a person like me could not enter the United States.

At the Embassy they, of course, referred me to the existing law in the US. Because of this law the official indicated that I was not qualified to get my visa. He told me, "we ourselves do not like this law but what could we do? This is our law. We are very sorry."

He went on to give a further explanation in this regard. He said, "of course you know there have been exceptions to this rule. I am referring", he said, "to the case of Mr Bala Tampoe of the LSSP-R [Lanka Sama Samaja Party-Revolutionary] who went to the United States some time ago". He further told me that, in his own words, "you know in this case, Mr Tampoe's invitation was sponsored by the government of the United States."

Well, after he said this I had no comment to make. I was not at all surprised because the details of Bala Tampoe's visit were very well known to us. I was also aware that not only did the government of the United States sponsor this visit, but no less a man than Mr McNamara was there to receive Bala Tampoe when he entered the United States.

WV: In recent months there has been reportedly a sharp rightist offensive in Ceylon. Would you describe this for us? What is Mrs Bandaranaike doing in this context?

Samarakkody: With the worsening of conditions in Ceylon, that is to say, with the increased blows struck at the masses by the coalition government, there was serious mass dissatisfaction, especially over increased prices of consumer articles including food. These price increases were directly made by the coalition government [headed by Mrs Bandaranaike and her Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP)].

At the end of last year, 1973, the United National Party (UNP) -- the older bourgeois party -- sought to utilize mass discontent in order to further its own aims. While raising questions like increased prices and highlighting the problems of the people, the United National Party pointed its finger at the son-in-law of Mrs Bandaranaike, [Kumar] Rupasinghe and her daughter [Sunethra], who were running a newspaper called *Janavegaya* or "People's Power".

The UNP made allegations that a group of people around Mrs Bandaranaike's son-in-law and daughter was seeking to organize a coup against the government. This matter was raised by the United National Party in parliament also. At the same time, the UNP sought to link up this group with the left of the government, especially the LSSP [Lanka Sama Samaja Party]. This debate got considerable publicity in the papers.

The SLFP reacted to these allegations of the UNP by seeking to discipline the group of people around Mrs Bandaranaike's son-in-law. This group led by Rupasinghe was posing as the left of the SLFP, sometimes using left language, but without any clear differences with the SLFP politics. In their paper they used to criticize some of the older leaders of the SLFP. The SLFP leadership took the opportunity to discipline this group led by Rupasinghe. Thereafter -- very soon thereafter -- the paper of this group reflected the change, and all criticisms of the government were stopped.

Meanwhile, the UNP directed its attention more and more at the left of the coalition government. UNP papers indicated that all the trouble was due to the LSSP. With these sentiments being expressed in its paper, certain moves were going on behind the scenes. There were rumors that the UNP -- persons in the UNP -- were meeting with people in the SLFP and both parties were coming closer to each other in the perspective of some offensive against the left in the government and the left in the country.

It was in this context that the United National Party developed its propaganda and opportunistically sought to raise the question of rising prices and the problems of the people. But the UNP never blamed the government. They sought to plead and pray to the gods publicly to save the people. In other words, it would appear that this was careful propaganda -- linking themselves up with the SLFP to direct attacks on the left.

When this situation was developing and when the UNP organized a sort of extra-parliamentary action in what is called a civil disobedience movement -- sitting down on the roads and public parks -- the government decided to take action against it. The police were sent against them and the meetings were dispersed. When the United National Party was preparing for the public meetings, the government in fact banned all meetings of the UNP. And furthermore the government banned a newspaper -- a well-known newspaper belonging to the rightists.

Thereafter a new development took place. The government parties thought it was a good opportunity to get the people closer to them by indicating the danger from the UNP -- that "the reactionaries are seeking to overthrow the government". And, in fact, very soon they were saying, "the fascists are coming". The LSSP, CP, SLFP, Mrs Bandaranaike's son-in-law and his group



Edmund Samarakkody in Toronto in September.

all were shouting, "Fascists are coming, we have to fight the fascists". In this context the LSSP was shouting slogans saying that capitalism must be exterminated.

It is important to note that in the course of these developments each party of the coalition sought to gain as much publicity and support as possible. The LSSP organized a very big meeting of the LSSP youth with a demonstration. This caused considerable concern to the rightist forces, including the SLFP. All this while there was talk that there were secret talks going on between the UNP and SLFP, but there was nothing definite.

However, about a week or so thereafter a public meeting was held in a rural constituency, and it appeared as if this was according to some plan. This meeting, which would ordinarily have been attended by all three coalition parties, was attended only by the SLFP led by Mrs Bandaranaike.

There were slogans shouted out by people who participated in the demonstration and there were a few red flags only being carried in a certain section of the meeting. And among the slogans that were shouted out were calls upon the prime minister to go forward like Lenin, to go forward like Trotsky, to go forward like Castro and to go forward like NM Perera [leader of the LSSP]. When the prime minister heard these slogans, when her time for speaking came, the prime minister immediately took up this matter and angrily denounced the slogan shouters. She said it was a disgrace to hear slogans like that, that she had waited patiently but now she must speak out. She said that the SLFP had its own philosophy, its own policies, and they were Bandaranaike's policies and nobody else's policies.

Now this was the gist of her talk. The speech of Mrs Bandaranaike was sent out on the radio several times for the next two or three days. This was known among the coalition ranks, but the LSSP and CP sought to ignore it. Nevertheless, Mrs Bandaranaike herself had apparently intervened and seen to it that the speech got more publicity. The government newspapers -- both English and Sinhalese -- carried it in full several days thereafter.

Thus it would appear that this was something

that Mrs Bandaranaike wanted, and this speech was a virtual declaration against Marxism and the left. This is precisely what was the reality. The speech was the talk everywhere, but this was not the end of it: it was only the beginning. Very soon after there were several other such meetings at which Mrs Bandaranaike kept on repeating that she is not going to be led by Castro, Lenin, Trotsky or NM Perera. Similar speeches were made thereafter by members of the SLFP, directing their attacks on LSSP ministers. A minister of the SLFP government attacked LS Goonewardene, the Minister of Communications, and this was repeated by other SLFP members.

Now this is the situation in Ceylon. It is very clear that the SLFP and the UNP, in the process of their coming together, have taken the first step to strike at the left. This was the anti-Marxist anti-left declaration of Mrs Bandaranaike. It is difficult to say how fast this development will grow, but it is inevitable. This can't end. The perspective of the right is not just to pressure the LSSP and the CP too. This is linked with the perspective of smashing the entire left and the trade-union movement.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that we are not too far away from a Chilean situation in Ceylon. In this situation the LSSP and the CP -- far from taking steps in their own defense against the gathering forces of the right -- have adopted a policy at first of saying nothing, being silent. The Communist Party started blaming the LSSP for getting irresponsible people to raise irresponsible and adventuristic slogans.

As for the LSSP, it failed to report any of these speeches or meetings. In their private gatherings their advice to the working class and their supporters is to say nothing, that whatever the government was doing was in accordance with the policies of the LSSP also, and it does not matter what Mrs Bandaranaike says. Thus it would appear that the LSSP -- not only that they have betrayed the masses, not only that they have disarmed the masses -- but they are continuing to disarm the masses in the face of a growing threat against them from the right.

The question is what the working class should do in this situation. This brings us to the other left groups. The other left groups -- small groups -- and the movement of the independent trade unions are completely silent. So is the isolated trade union of Bala Tampoe [the Ceylon Mercantile Union]. Neither the CMU nor Bala Tampoe has said anything. He is completely silent about it. The so-called LSSP-R [led by Tampoe], Ceylon section of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International", is also completely silent. As for the Healy group, a very small group, it has been for a long time calling upon the LSSP and CP to take power. Now in the present situation it has called upon the LSSP and the CP to get out of the government.

As for the RWP, Revolutionary Workers Party, we have from 1970 onwards indicated to the working class that the urgent need of the working class is to break from bourgeois coalition politics and take the road of independent organization of the working class. In the present situation we have once again indicated to the working class that we were not just shouting, that this was the coming reality, that the left and the working-class forces are in real danger, that a Chilean situation is not too far. And we have called upon the working class once again to speedily break from coalition politics.

As to what further action we could take in this situation, it depends upon the days ahead. There is no question that it will be vital for the working-class organizations and parties to get ready, unitedly, to face the offensive from the right. In what way and what form this will have to take place is difficult to say because there has not been yet any response on the part

Continued on page six

order from —
Spartacist League,
GPO Box 3473,
Sydney, NSW, 2001.

price
Thirty-five cents.

USec centrists make shambles of Trotskyism

Popular fronts and revolution

The downfall over a year ago of the coalition government in Chile headed by Salvador Allende was not merely a bloody and tragic confirmation of the bankruptcy of reformism. The betrayals of the *Unidad Popular* (UP), which in the absence of a revolutionary party was able to lead the Chilean workers and peasants to a massacre in the September 11 1973 military coup, gave a dramatic negative proof of the validity of the bolshevik program of intransigent opposition to the UP, a coalition of reformist workers' organisations with representatives of the ruling class. When the Chilean proletariat succeeds in throwing off the depraved butchers of General Pinochet's military Junta, it will open a revolutionary period which will end either in the dictatorship of the proletariat or a new defeat so severe that it is likely to destroy the possibility of revolution in Chile for a generation, as did the victory of Hitler in Germany or Franco in Spain. But the revolution can be victorious only if a bolshevik party is forged in Chile which has assimilated the lessons of the UP and can prevent a repetition of its betrayals.

At a time when it is vital to clarify and understand these lessons the pseudo-Trotskyist "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" has perpetrated enormous confusion in its attempt to justify precisely an opportunist adaptation to the popular front. The USec is divided into two hostile camps, the centrist International Majority Tendency (IMT) headed by Ernest Mandel and the reformist-legalist "Leninist-Trotskyist Faction" inspired by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of the US (co-thinkers of the Australian Socialist Workers League), which have exactly opposite analyses of the character of the UP. The SWP has attempted to maintain the "orthodox" Trotskyist view that governments such as the UP are analogous to the Stalinist-inspired Popular Fronts of the 1930s, most notably in Spain and France. Were the SWP's orthodoxy genuine (which it is not) it would be led to condemn as class treachery the USec majority position. But that would be quite awkward: included in the LTF is the Argentinian *Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores* (PST) which has committed itself to respect the "institutional process" of bourgeois democracy and has scandalously pondered to the semi-Bonapartist, reactionary Peronist regime (see *Workers Vanguard* no 49, 19 July 1974 and no 57, 22 November 1974). The SWP itself was chiefly responsible for directing the anti-Vietnam War movement in the US into a popular-frontist bloc with the liberal wing of US imperialism.

The IMT, represented in Australia by the Communist League (CL), has recently consolidated and extended its new "analysis" that the UP was not a popular front at all, and ridicules as "sectarian", "unrealistic" or "dogmatic" those who say otherwise. But those in the IMT were not always so sure of their "realities"; until after the military coup, the USec held the self-same "unrealistic" and "dogmatic" view. In December 1971 the USec *unanimously* adopted a resolution which, while it contains errors and ambiguities, not only characterises the UP as a "popular front" but specifically refutes some of its own later arguments:

"The question arises as to whether the Allende government is a popular front government in the traditional sense of the term. It has been argued that the bourgeoisie as such, represented by the Christian Democrats and to a lesser degree by the National Party, is not directly represented in the government. But, even leaving aside the fact that at least one of the coalition was traditionally a bourgeois party, the bourgeoisie exercises its influence through the petty-bourgeois parties that were

included in both the Popular Unity and in the government. In addition, Allende is continually obliged to negotiate with the majority bloc in a parliament dominated by the Christian Democratic party, which permitted him to be elected and which can paralyse anything he undertakes whenever it chooses. Finally -- and this is decisive -- the class collaborationist nature of the coalition was determined by its acceptance of the capitalist system and bourgeois state apparatus." (*Intercontinental Press*, 21 February 1972)

After the coup, however, something seems to have changed. The UP was now a "workers government", albeit reformist (*Militant* (newspaper of the CL) special supplement on Chile, October 1973), and the IMT declared:

"Of course, the Allende regime possesses several features [!] of a Popular Front government, of collaboration with bourgeois parties. But, from the start, it differed from the classical Popular Front regime by the fact that it openly proclaimed its resolve to enter on the road to socialism, and that it openly based itself on the organized workers movement....

"What was revealed in Chile is, therefore, more [!] a new demonstration of the *bankruptcy of reformism*, i.e. of the 'peaceful' road, within the framework of the institutions of parliamentary bourgeois democracy, without the destruction of the bourgeois state apparatus, than an experience of coalition government with the bourgeoisie." (Draft Political Resolution of the International Executive Committee Majority Tendency, published in *SWP International Internal Discussion Bulletin* vol X no 20, October 1973) (emphasis in original)

How strange that in 1971 the USec hadn't noticed the UP's "open resolve to enter on the road to socialism", or that it "openly based itself on the organised workers movement". However, this mystery turns out to have a simple solution: *neither statement is true!* The UP resolved to enter on the road to socialism -- but for the UP the "road to socialism" meant bourgeois democracy for the indefinite future; and the UP openly based itself on an *alliance* of the workers movement with left bourgeois parties and the reactionary military officer corps.

Why this abrupt reversal? The IMT-USec has not been forthcoming with an explanation, but there is a good reason: early in 1973 the then French Section of the USec (and part of the IMT), the *Ligue Communiste*, had supported the Union of the Left -- a popular-front coalition of the Socialist Party, the Communist Party and the small, bourgeois Left Radicals -- in the French elections. In order to justify their open capitulation to class collaboration in France it was necessary to revise the entire Trotskyist analysis of the popular front and thus to reject their own previous policy toward the UP. But inconsistency is the unavoidable political overhead of opportunism.

The "theories" generated by the IMT-USec-CL develop four sometimes contradictory kinds of arguments: that there were no bourgeois parties in the UP; that the presence of bourgeois elements is irrelevant because the workers' parties "had hegemony"; that the historical lessons of especially the Spanish popular front in the 1930s do not apply because of different objective or subjective conditions; and that the UP had a socialist program while in the past popular fronts have not (or at least that the UP used more -- and more explicit -- socialist rhetoric than its historical antecedents).

The first of these, put forward by some IMTers

including the CL's John McCarthy, is simply a desperate denial of the facts. At the time of the 4 September 1970 elections which brought it to power the UP included the Socialist Party, Communist Party, Radical Party, Social-Democratic Party, MAPU (United People's Action movement) and API (Independent People's Action). The API was a small bourgeois formation in the right wing of the UP which had its origins in the movement of ex-dictator Carlos Ibanez del Campo in the 1950s. The Radical Party is a classical liberal bourgeois party, in the words of IMT expert on Chile JP Beauvais "the third influential component of the coalition, representing the liberal sections of the small and middle bourgeoisie" (*Intercontinental Press*, 10 May 1971).

After its electoral support was cut in half in the elections of April 1971, Radical Party cabinet ministers offered to resign but significantly, Allende rejected the offer. The evaporation of its base of support due to the polarisation of the bourgeoisie against the UP in response to growing mobilisation of the working class led to the exit of an important group of parliamentarians in late 1971 and the adoption of increasingly "socialist" rhetoric. McCarthy and Mandel also claim that the Radicals joined the Second International. But this could only be a purely



Fidel Castro reviewing elite troops of Chilean army: "There was never any contradiction between the conceptions of the Cuban Revolution and the paths being followed by the left movement and workers' parties in Chile." (photo: *Punto Final*)

formal affiliation, to something which moreover has no real existence. Chiang Kai Shek, shortly before he crushed the Shanghai general strike in 1927, was an honorary member of the Comintern and even participated in the 1926 Plenum of its Executive Committee but that scarcely made the Kuomintang a workers' party. As for the avowals of socialism, by this criterion one would have to include in the workers movement the military junta in Peru, Peron in Argentina, or "socialist" Prince Sihanouk.

The MAPU originated as a petty-bourgeois splinter from the Christian Democrats and has since undergone a number of splits. One of the products (the Garretton-Aquevedo wing) has moved far to the left, and has called for the dictatorship of the proletariat. However the other wing, MAPU Obrero-Campesino led by Gazmuri, was in the right wing of the UP and notably sees as its major difference with the Christian Democrats the latter's rejection of alliance with the reformist workers' parties (*Intercontinental Press*, 21 October 1974). But most importantly, a section of the MAPU's top leadership led by Minister of Agriculture Jacques Chonchol left the MAPU and joined up with a group of left-wing Christian Democrats to form the Izquierda Cristiana (Christian Left), a bourgeois party of the left. *Chonchol remained a minister in the UP government.* Radicals and/or IC members remained in the cabinet throughout, not to mention the generals who occupied three cabinet posts from November 1972 to March 1973 and were brought in again briefly after the first attempted military coup in July 1973. Or did the "hegemony" of the working-class reformists miraculously transform the class character of the chief of staff of the Chilean armed forces?

Revisionists, who like to think their theories are novel discoveries, usually end up repeating the renegades of the past. The IMT-USec has unintentionally reinvented almost word for word the same excuses for capitulating to the popular front as those invoked by the centrist POUM (Workers Party of Marxist Unification) to explain its participation in the bourgeois republican popular

subscribe

Five dollars -- one year subscription to publications of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand and the Spartacist League of the United States. Includes:

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST, REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST BULLETIN series, and other publications of the SLANZ.

WORKERS VANGUARD (SLUS fortnightly).

YOUNG SPARTACUS (6 issues).

WOMEN AND REVOLUTION (about 3 issues).

SPARTACIST (occasional international journal).

Three dollars -- one year subscription to WORKERS VANGUARD (24 issues).

One dollar -- one year subscription to AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST (12 issues).

I enclose:

- \$5.00 (all publications).
 \$3.00 (WORKERS VANGUARD).
 \$1.00 (AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST).

Overseas (ASp only -- Australian currency)

- \$3.50 (air mail).
 \$1.50 (surface mail).

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

POSTCODE _____

mail to: Spartacist League,
GPO Box 3473,
Sydney, NSW, 2001.

Revolutionary strategy in Chile

front government during the Spanish Civil War:

"... the [Catalonian] left republican movement [the *Esquerra*, Catalan liberal bourgeois party headed by Companys] is of a profoundly popular nature ... and the peasant masses and workers' sections on which it is based are moving definitely toward the revolution, influenced by the proletarian parties and organizations. The important thing is the programme, and the hegemony of the proletariat, which must be guaranteed.... As for proletarian hegemony, the absolute majority of workers' representatives [in the coalition government] will make it fully certain." (18 September 1936 statement of the POUM Central Committee, quoted in Felix Morrow, *Revolution and Counter-revolution in Spain*, p 54)

The USec is travelling down the same road as the POUM, and that road ends in class-collaborationist betrayal.

The USec "theory" of "working-class hegemony" in the UP is based on crass empiricism and explains nothing. If indeed the presence of the bourgeois elements in the coalition was irrelevant, why were they included in the first place? And why did Allende continually strive to retain them in the government? The answer was made clear by the reformists and the Stalinists themselves right from the beginning: to serve as a pledge to the bourgeoisie that the reformists would not challenge capitalism. One of the best-known spokesmen for the CP, Pablo Neruda, said following the 1970 elections:

"There is no reason at all to be uneasy. We have never claimed that we would form a socialist government on November 4. Allende himself has said: Popular Unity is composed of six different groups including the Radicals who have largely dominated Chilean political life for the last thirty years." (quoted in *Le Monde*, 23 October 1970)

Other examples of such statements could easily be found. The socialist rhetoric of the SP and CP were used to tie the workers to this bloc which repudiated socialism. Allende openly proclaimed the programmatic subordination of the workers' parties to the explicitly non-socialist program of the UP:

"The program of the Popular Unity is not a Communist program, nor is it a Socialist program, nor a Radical program, nor the program of the MAPU, nor the API. It is the convergence of opinion." (quoted in *The New York Times*, 4 October 1970)

The programs of the CP and SP and that of the Radicals "converged" on the pledge to preserve capitalism, and in particular, bourgeois democracy and the integrity of the bourgeois armed forces.

The necessity of this coalition resulted from the upsurge of the class struggle under the preceding Christian Democratic regime of Eduardo Frei, whose failure to carry out his promised reforms destroyed the illusions of the masses in the liberal bourgeoisie. With the threat that this movement would succeed in discrediting bourgeois democracy in the eyes of the working class, the bourgeoisie was willing to allow the entry into the government of the reformist parties in which the working class still had faith. But not trusting the ability of the reformists to keep the masses in check, the ruling class insisted on guarantees -- the workers' parties had to be subordinated to a "common program". The reformists were eager to oblige both to prove their fidelity to capitalism and because it gave them an essential tool with which to resist the incessant pressure from below: if the CP-SP were to form a government in their own name, it would be difficult in the extreme to explain to workers who regarded them as their parties why they held back. Thus even when they had lost much of their electoral support the bourgeois parties in the UP remained essential to its political existence.

The decline and fragmentation of the bourgeois parties of the popular front did not give the workers' parties "hegemony" but signalled the withdrawal of support from the UP by the key sectors of the bourgeoisie. Although this sealed the fate of the coalition it did not change its character. It had outlived its usefulness to the ruling class especially due to its failure to prevent land seizures and factory occupations, leading to the inclusion of the military in the cabinet in an attempt to provide an additional guarantee. Trotsky's analysis of the Spanish popular front after Franco rebelled with full backing from the Spanish ruling class graphically describes the UP in its later stages:

"The bourgeoisie's place was occupied by its shadow. Through the medium of the Stalinists, Socialists, and Anarchists, the Spanish bourgeoisie subordinated the proletariat to itself

without even bothering to participate in the Popular Front. The overwhelming majority of the exploiters of all political shades openly went over to the camp of Franco. Without any theory of 'permanent revolution,' the Spanish bourgeoisie understood from the outset that the revolutionary mass movement, no matter how it starts, is directed against private ownership of land and the means of production, and that it is utterly impossible to cope with this movement by democratic measures.

"That is why only insignificant debris from the possessing classes remained in the republican camp: Messrs Azana, Companys, and the like -- political attorneys of the bourgeoisie but not the bourgeoisie itself. Having staked everything on a military dictatorship, the possessing classes were able, at the same time, to make use of their political representatives of *yesterday* in order to paralyse, disorganise, and afterward strangle the socialist movement of the masses in 'republican' territory.

"Without in the slightest degree representing the Spanish bourgeoisie, the left republicans still less represented the workers and peasants. They represented no one but themselves. Thanks, however, to their allies -- the Socialists, Stalinists, and Anarchists -- these political phantoms played the decisive role in the revolution. How? Very simply.

By incarnating the principles of the democratic revolution, that is, the inviolability of private property." (Trotsky, *The Spanish Revolution*, pp 309-310)(emphasis added)

Not only are the lessons of history lost on



General Pinochet Salvador Allende
the USec revisionists; they must obscure and distort those lessons in order to protect their presence of Trotskyism. According to the IMT-USec, the UP was "different" from the popular front in Spain; its talk of "entering the road to socialism" supposedly "proves" it was not a popular front, because this rhetoric

"corresponded to a greater depth of the mobilisation and the revolutionary consciousness of the masses [in Chile], especially under the influence of the victory of the Cuban revolution, and of a stronger far-left vanguard. The traditional workers parties could not channelize and apply brakes to the ardor of the masses unless they asserted their willingness to enter on the road to socialism.... The working class was more and more radicalised. It began to create organs of dual power, to arm itself...."

Most of this is flatly wrong: the 1930s French
Continued on page seven

Melbourne CL/SWL sabotage Chile defence

The military junta in Chile has systematically persecuted thousands of working-class militants. In response to massive recent round-ups, the Spartacist League initiated a call for demonstrations in defence of Chilean political prisoners. In Melbourne an organising meeting was attended by only the SL and the Communist League (CL). The Socialist Workers League (SWL) claimed the approach to them was too "sectarian", because the initial planning meeting was held at the SL's Melbourne headquarters (they ignored an SL offer to hold the meeting elsewhere)! Later they revised their excuse for not participating by claiming that because the SL had withdrawn from the September 11 Chile Defence Committee (CDC) they would boycott this demonstration. The SL did take part in the CDC until on September 5 the CDC voted for a speakers' platform closed to all but pro-Allende politics. Thus the basis of the united front -- unity of action, freedom of criticism -- was destroyed. The SL nevertheless participated in the demonstration. The two situations are hardly similar: it is the SWL that, by abstaining from the ad hoc committee for the "immediate and unconditional freedom of all political prisoners in Chile" while in complete political agreement with its aims, stands exposed as sectarian.


At the planning meeting the CL agreed to duplicate a jointly-drafted leaflet to advertise the proposed rally and to contact certain organisations. Neither task was done by the agreed date. A division in the CL over whether or not to duplicate the leaflet became clear on the afternoon of Monday 18 November, when a third deadline was agreed to. SL members called as requested at the Melbourne Labor College (which is used by the CL as a headquarters) that evening but the CLers present tried to pretend they were not there. When the CL had to admit one of its members an SLer attempted to inquire about the progress of the leaflet but had the door slammed in her face. The caretaker reopened the door and when the SL members insisted upon receiving an answer before they left they were forcibly expelled with the CL making it clear that they were not going to participate in the ad hoc committee that they had helped establish. They refused to give any political reason. After refusing to build the demonstration they had agreed to, the CL completed its failure to aid the defence of Chilean political prisoners by totally boycotting the rally, reflecting the CL's unserious attitude toward politics.

Despite the CL's retreat into the innermost sanctums of the Victorian Labor College, a demonstration was held on 22 November which attracted about 25 people. The largest contingent was made up of members and supporters of the Spartacist League, but members of the Socialist Workers Action Group (SWAG) and the Socialist Party of Australia and a number of individual militants

including Chileans participated. The SWL was able to overcome its fear of Spartacist sectarianism sufficiently to send a *Direct Action* sales team, though they declined to speak at the rally (preferring, they said, to "wait and see"). The rally was addressed by George Crawford of the Plumbers Union, and representatives of SWAG and the SL.

A similar demonstration was held in Sydney on 28 November. In contrast to their comrades in Melbourne the CL and SWL, though they did not seek to mobilise all their membership or periphery, did take part in organising the rally. On the picket line outside the LAN-Chile office the SL carried placards and initiated chants that linked the defence of political prisoners with the perspective of proletarian revolution. When the SL established a speaking platform the SWL packed up its CAC placards, no doubt alarmed by the possibility of political struggle and of offending liberal sensibilities, and scurried off. Steve Cooper, Research Officer for the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union, and representatives of the CL, SL and the Red Federation of New Zealand spoke to the rally.

The CL has recently pontificated about the "sectarians of the Spartacist League" who are "more interested in verbally attacking Stalinism than (sic) demonstrating solidarity with the Chilean masses" (*Militant*, 7 October 1974) and accused the SL of "inventing some pretext to withdraw from the CAC" (a reference to our refusal to go along with the CAC's capitulation to the popular frontist Committee for Solidarity with the Chilean People (See "Closed platforms push reformist illusions", *ASP* 13)). But the circumstances of the recent demonstrations show clearly who are the sectarians and that for all their fine proclamations both the CL and SWL will abandon the elementary tasks of international proletarian solidarity for the most petty and stupid organisational sectarianism. ■



order from
Spartacist League,
GPO Box 3473,
Sydney, NSW, 2001.

price
Fifty cents.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

BLF . . .

Both Gallagher and the NSW officials have continually sought court injunctions against each other. On 21 October the NSW BLF officials "succeeded" in obtaining a temporary injunction from the Equity Court restraining Gallagher from setting up a new branch until a full hearing on the (bourgeois) "legality" of the takeover, attempting to get the bourgeois state on side against Gallagher's scabbing. Gallagher has of course ignored the injunction, and lately the NSW Branch officials have been backing off from the immediate implications of their legal moves by refraining from demanding enforcement of the court order so as not to make Gallagher a "martyr" (*The NSW Builder's Labourer*, 25 October 1974).

Revolutionaries can have no objection in principle to using the courts, a part of the capitalist state apparatus, against the employers, as

was done with the State Industrial Commission decision requiring Watts to reinstate the sacked NSWIT workers. Even in these cases it is essential to warn that it is fatal to trust in the courts to discipline members of the class they serve -- and indeed, Watts simply ignored the court decision. But to invite the bosses' courts to act against anyone -- no matter how vile -- *within the labour movement* is as much a betrayal as Gallagher's bloc with the MBA. Not only does it accept and encourage the "right" of the capitalist state to regulate the internal affairs of the workers movement, but it makes it impossible to appeal for a united front of workers against the class enemy.

The obscene pandering to the bourgeois state practised by both sides clearly demonstrates that both Gallagher and the NSW Branch leadership operate from the same class-collaborationist principles in what amounts to a dispute between two wings of the reformist bureaucracy. The source of Gallagher's frenzy against the NSW Branch is not the ideology of Maoism versus the

CPA's brand of reformism; not the intrinsic merit (or lack thereof) of the green bans; and certainly not the charges and countercharges of corruption, mismanagement and so on thrown back and forth. It stems from the growing conservatism of the entrenched Federal BLF officialdom who, in order to maintain their position in a period of increasing pressure from the bosses, are compelled to smash all opposition, no matter how mild, to their control of the union. It is only a more extreme expression of reformist aspirations also shared by Owens/Pringle. The NSW BLF bureaucracy has had to develop its own, distinct brand of class collaboration (mixed with militant trade-unionism) epitomised by the Munday utopian-reformist "green ban" philosophy and, isolated from the rest of the union bureaucracy by its history and circumstances, has been compelled to act more militantly on behalf of the membership to maintain its position. The green ban philosophy, far from being the main target of the MBA or the capitalist class generally, is now accepted even by right-wing capitalists such as Keith Campbell of Hooker Corporation Ltd and Sir William Pentingell (*Financial Review*, 20 November 1974). What the bosses oppose in the green bans is their character as *political strikes*, a weapon they want to take away from the working class.

The NSW BLF has received some support in unions in addition to the FEDFA, including Postal Workers and Plumbers in Sydney. At a meeting of the AMWU Sydney Central Branch on November 21, a supporter of the Spartacist League raised the following motion:

"The Sydney Central Branch of the AMWU stands opposed to the union-bashing assault by the Federal Management Committee of the Builders' Labourers' Federation and the MBA upon the NSW BLF branch, the legitimate builders' labourers' union in NSW. The AMWU must demand that the trade-union movement, and in particular the NSW Labor Council and the ACTU, actively defend the NSW Branch through industrial action against attacks on the union by the MBA, such as the sackings at the Broadway Institute of Technology site.... The

CONTINUED FROM PAGE EIGHT

Racist terror. . .

campaign. Peter Camejo of the SWP countered with... a teach-in!

Out of the student meeting came an Ad-Hoc Committee to Defend Human Rights. At a meeting of this Ad-Hoc Committee later the same day, the SL pointed out that most people in Boston knew exactly what was going on and that what was needed was independent mass action. To this Camejo replied that a teach-in and mass mobilization are not counterposed (his favorite argument lately, as we shall see). The YSA chairman of the meeting soon announced there was "mass sentiment" for a teach-in. But when an SL member objected and proposed instead a letter calling for a mass demonstration, to be drafted by a committee, this proposal was accepted. SWP/YSAers were on the letter committee.

The next week a leaflet mysteriously appeared, obviously produced by the SWP/YSA but bearing the name of the Ad-Hoc Committee and calling for a meeting on October 16 to plan a teach-in. No such teach-in had been decided upon at the earlier meeting! Moreover, the leaflet was "signed" by Ujima and the Puerto Rican Student Union, neither of which knew anything about the teach-in and protested the use of their names.

At the October 16 meeting, an SL spokesman presented a motion that all groups participating in the Ad-Hoc Committee be given equal speaking rights, with an open mike for independents, at any teach-in. Tony Thomas of the SWP opposed this on the grounds that "the people" wanted to hear from the "leaders of the black community", not the radicals.

The SL pointed out that these so-called leaders were calling for federal troops. Since the viewpoint of the SWP was being represented by the NAACP and the Black Caucus of the Democratic Party, we supported the SWP's right not to speak. But different points of view should be permitted since everyone did not agree with the troops slogan. The SL motion again passed.

Later in the meeting the SL moved that the committee-drafted letter be accepted. Tony Thomas presented an amendment "in the spirit of the letter", adding the phrase "and support the demands of the Black community". SLers pointed out that this was a veiled call for federal troops and sabotage of building a mobilization to defend the black school children.

At this point Peter Camejo demagogically announced that "Spartacist doesn't support the Black community. Everybody that supports the Black community raise your hands." Using such unprincipled sleight-of-hand, the SWP "amendment" was passed.

WHAT IS A "MEANINGFUL SOLUTION"?

The 1 November issue of the *Militant* reprints excerpts from a speech by Camejo in which he "justifies" the slogan of federal troops to Boston. In the first place this "reply" to criticism is ostensibly aimed at the Workers League, although the WL has not taken its opposition to federal troops any farther than the pages of the *Bulletin*. The only group in Boston which in mass leaflets, public meetings, demonstrations, etc, has consistently put forward the perspective of labor/black defense and opposed relying on the capitalist armed forces is the Spartacist League. The heart of Camejo's "argument" is that:

"The call for trade-union defense guards isn't realistic right now. There are no trade unions that even have defense guards, much less any that have offered them to defend the Black students....

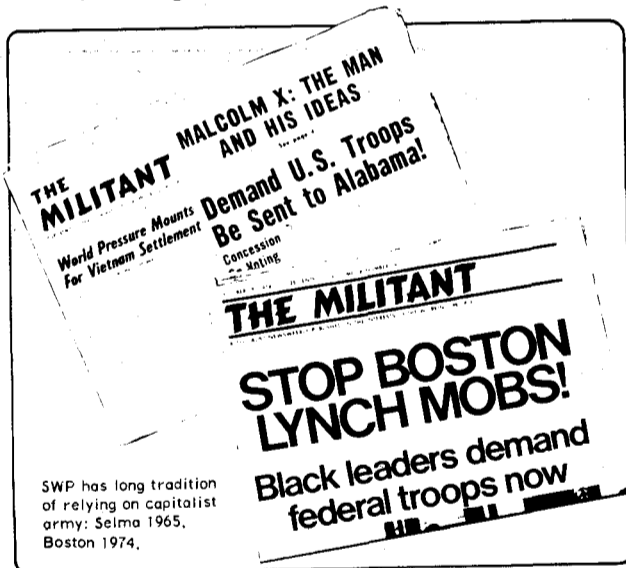
"You sectarians live in a make-believe world of sloganeering. In your world, trade-union defense guards are counterposed to federal troops. But in the real world, they're not

counterposed, because the trade-union defense guards do not exist. The Black community lives in the real world, and it demands real, meaningful solutions, not unrealistic slogans."

It is true that there are no trade-union defense guards today. There is also no mass mobilization to defend the black school children, only a half-hearted demonstration on October 13. But part of the reason for this is that at every point the SWP has fought *against* any perspective of independent black and labor mobilization.

The demand for a labor/black defense is a world of make-believe? Nonsense! There are integrated unions in Boston, many of whose members are directly affected by the racist anti-busing mobilizations. Members of the Meatcutters and Butcher Workmen have had their cars damaged by the reactionary mobs. The Columbia Point residents have already had their fill of the bourgeoisie's cops and troops. *What is needed is revolutionary leadership*, to put the heat on the leaders of the mass organizations of workers and the oppressed racial minorities, to organize independently on a program which represents the interests of the working masses.

And if Camejo thinks workers' defense guards and federal troops are not counterposed, then let him try to organize a labor/black defense when



SWP has a long tradition of relying on capitalist army: Selma 1965, Boston 1974.

the 82nd Airborne Division is occupying Roxbury!

The SWP believes that the US government is unwilling to send troops to Boston to enforce desegregation, so demanding that they come will presumably "expose" the real nature of the government. It is quite true that they will not enforce racial integration, as we have pointed out. But the bourgeoisie may very well send in troops -- to prevent any organized defense by blacks! By calling for troops, the SWP does not expose the class character of the government and its hired guns, but helps conceal the fact that these are the enemies of the exploited and oppressed.

Members of the SWP, you may feel that the call for labor/black defense of the bused school children and Columbia Point is not a "realistic" demand. But we warn you that your call for federal troops is a very "meaningful solution", to use Peter Camejo's words. What it can mean is the imposition of martial law, massive arrests and shootings of black youth and working-class militants. Even you admit that the troops will not enforce desegregation!

If, because of the betrayals of the union leaders, black Democrats and fake socialists, federal troops are called in to patrol the ghettos and housing projects, conscious black and labor militants in Boston will hold those traitors responsible for the consequences of their misleadership. By calling for troops the SWP shows itself to be a nest of anti-Marxist renegades! ■

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

. . . Samarakkody

of the trade unions and these other groups. That is roughly the situation in Ceylon today.

WV: How do you see the struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International?

Samarakkody: It is a fact that for quite some time, as far as the RWP was concerned, we have been convinced that there is no Fourth International today. This organization that was begun by Trotsky in 1938 and had for several years developed in the perspective of a revolutionary international, is no longer a reality. Over the years this organization has degenerated. Starting in the 1950s under the leadership of Michel Pablo the organization moved along the opportunist road, and it inevitably has come to a situation when it is possible to say that there is no such organization called the Fourth International.

The recent split in the United Secretariat is a manifestation of this reality. The United Secretariat in point of fact does not exist. It has been split into various groups after what is called the Tenth World Congress. By agreement, they have decided to remain together without raising any of the issues. Opportunistically, the United Secretariat is posing as the Fourth International. But this lie has to be exposed.

The task of all those who claim to be Trotskyists is not merely to expose the fraud of the United Secretariat and all other groups who seek to pose as the Fourth International, especially the International Committee led by Gerry Healy. It is the task of all those who claim to be Trotskyists to begin right now the task of assisting in the rebirth of the Fourth International. The RWP has for some time been basing its activities on this perspective. While we are building our party in Ceylon, we have sought to work toward the development of an international revolutionary tendency.

In this regard and for some time now we have developed fraternal relations with the Spartacist League of the United States, and it is our hope that in the coming period it will be possible for our organizations to work toward this perspective. No doubt there are many problems in this regard, but these problems will have to be faced. Also, it is necessary for those who are really interested in the rebirth of the Fourth International to understand that with the objective conditions the world over, especially in the context of the worsening crisis of world capitalism and the possibilities that are opening up for the development of revolutionary struggles, the forging of the revolutionary leadership is more urgent than ever before. It is with this perspective that the Revolutionary Workers Party of Ceylon is functioning today. ■

trade-union movement must use its own strength to put a stop to such direct collaboration with the employers by the Federal BLF officials. This branch also opposes taking disputes within the labour movement into the bosses' courts -- such action only encourages the courts to interfere in union affairs in order to undermine the unions...."

After heated opposition from right-wing elements, the motion failed by a single vote.

The real threat to building workers stems not directly from Gallagher's splitting tactics but from the economic downturn which has hit the building industry, always an industry highly reliant on credit and therefore always dramatically affected by the capitalist business cycle. In what is called "the worst slump in the industry in 14 years" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 October 1974), the number of houses built or under construction dropped by 50 percent in the first half of the year; by July-August layoffs had mounted into the thousands; by October, one third of NSW surveying staff had been stood down. Two large building corporations have collapsed into bankruptcy, Mainline Corporation (based in Sydney) and Perth-based Landall Holdings Ltd. Further widespread retrenchments are expected at the end of the year.

Although Gallagher has severely weakened the union's ability to act, the key obstacle is the misleadership of all elements of the bureaucracy. The NSW leadership is pushing the campaign for permanency -- the hiring of building workers on a permanent rather than a casual basis -- as an answer to unemployment. Permanency would by a substantial gain for labourers who are victimised by casual employment conditions, guaranteeing an annual wage. It is however no substitute for a sliding scale of hours to retain full employment with no loss in pay, and it will scarcely prevent other building firms from going bankrupt in the recession. In order to solve for good the problems of building workers it is necessary to expropriate the dominant building firms under the control of building workers, as well as to expropriate the banks and financial institutions who continue to thrive even during the decline.

Owens and company also seek to pass off permanency as a form of union hire. In fact, the scheme they propose has nothing to do with union hire at all, but calls instead for Employment Centres jointly run by the union, the government, and the employers. (The scheme is outlined in the NSW BLF *Newsletter*, September 1974, in the same form as sketched in *On Site*, the broadsheet of the Rank and File Committee in the Melbourne BLF.) Regardless of how many "conditions" are written into the scheme, under such an arrangement the union would essentially have no control at all over hiring and firing. Building workers need a real union hiring hall run without interference from the class enemy -- the only way to put a stop to the bosses' discriminatory employment practices which victimise migrants, women, union militants and other "undesirables".

The absolute worthlessness of the CPA's pallid reformism was proven when Munday/Owens did not bother to lift a finger over the Mainline failure. So much for Munday's rhetoric about workers' control which he uses to hide his role in the union -- as expressed in his real program, the one he puts into practice, of keeping the class struggle within limits tolerable to capitalism -- as an agent of the capitalist class within the workers movement.

One of the most painfully obvious lessons of Gallagher's adventure is the need for one industrial union in the building industry. The CPA officials of the NSW BLF have never made any concrete moves toward amalgamation. The BWIU, the largest union in the industry covering primarily carpenters and bricklayers and headed by pro-Moscow Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) president Pat Clancy (a close associate of right-winger John Ducker on the NSW Labor Council), is key to any move towards an industry-wide union. Clancy has talked for years about amalgamation, but in reality he favours only mergers in which he can maintain and extend the control of BWIU officials. Thus Clancy circles like a vulture around the current BLF dispute, proclaiming "neutrality" -- under the circumstances, backhanded support to Gallagher's wrecking tactics -- and proposing amalgamation to the NSW BLF -- on Clancy's terms. His apparent plan to induce the NSW BLF to rush into his protective arms to avoid destruction at the hands of Gallagher and the MBA amounts to blackmail. Any sincere move for amalgamation must begin with a resolute defence of the NSW BLF.

The CL, eager to pose as the left pole in the union, now makes a major point of the need for an industrial building union. But the CL stands opposed to the amalgamation which produced the AMWU (*Militant*, 15 April 1974), and counterposes to Clancy's bureaucratic amalgamation "one union in the industry -- at a rank and file level" (*Militant*, 1 July 1974). The 15 November 1974 *Militant* for the first time criticises the CPA's "idle chatter" about one union in the industry and now proposes amalgamation under the super-

vision of (non-existent) job-site committees, only after all officials in all unions in the industry have resigned. Implicit in the CL's schema is the demand that workers in the BWIU reject their current leadership as a precondition for unification. Amalgamation "from below" is just as bankrupt a tactic as the united front from below. Clancy and MacDonald of the BWIU must be exposed by demonstrating in practice that it is they who are the obstacle to unification. To do so it is necessary to support amalgamation even under the existing rotten reformist leadership of both the BWIU and the NSW BLF -- provided only there is no tampering with



Jack Munday in church (left), Norm Gallagher.

the democratic rights prevalent in any one of the unions and no sacrifice in the conditions or wages of any section of building workers.

The CL has pursued a thoroughly opportunist policy in the BLF. Recently it has apparently discovered the need for nationalisation of the building industry without compensation under workers' control. But prior to the 22 July 1974 *Militant*, the CL published -- twice -- a program for the building trades which raised nothing beyond a sliding scale of hours and which did not mention amalgamation (*Militant*, 15 April and 3 June 1974). Moreover any claim of the CL to be a revolutionary alternative is exposed as a fraud by its failure to criticise the existing BLF permanency scheme and its complete, uncritical endorsement of the Equity Court suits against Gallagher -- a particularly gross betrayal excused by the CL on the grounds that it will win a "two month breathing space" for the NSW BLF (totally false, as Gallagher has, predictably, ig-

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FIVE

Popular front . . .

popular front also attacked the "200 families"; in both France and Spain "the traditional workers parties" were compelled to advocate socialism, and that has always been true of the parties of Stalinism and Social Democracy everywhere; the influence of the Cuban revolution was turned against the revolution in Chile by Castro's complete support of the UP, just as the authority of the October Revolution was used by the Stalinists in France and Spain to bolster capitalism; and so on. What is however most blatantly absurd is the contention that the "mass mobilisation" was deeper in Chile than in the Spanish Revolution where the working class was armed, controlled key sectors of industry, had become largely disillusioned with the popular front, and twice within the space of a year (July 1936 and May 1937) initiated armed insurrections in republican Catalonia!

The "socialist" rhetoric of the UP is a complete red herring. Not even the USec believes that the UP had a socialist program (see for example the *Militant*, 27 October 1973) and Allende himself repeatedly denied it. Of course Spain 1936 was different from Chile 1973. The truth is that the key differences between Spain and Chile resulted only in a different expression of the popular front. Instead of an "anti-fascist" program to defend bourgeois democracy, the key programmatic element of the UP was defence of bourgeois democracy by upholding the "neutrality" of the army -- buttressed by the extra guarantees extracted by the Christian Democrats when they acted as the "silent partner" in the UP at the time it took office in November 1970 -- a program meant specifically to prevent the workers from becoming armed. In Spain the workers were already armed, and the participation of the "shadow of the bourgeoisie" in the coalition was practically from the outset needed almost solely to prevent a revolutionary insurrection.

What is amazing about the IMT-USec's theory, however, is that while a supposedly "deeper mass mobilisation" compared with Spain in the 1930s is used to explain away the popular front in Chile, the exact opposite is used to explain it away in France 1973. According to the IMG-USec analogies between the Spanish popular front and the French Union of the Left are "totally off the mark", because ... in Spain there was dual power, the workers were armed and had seized the factories and large agricultural estates, whereas in France there were "scarcely any organs of dual power" and "the workers do not have to be led back to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie; they still

nored the decision) and because the injunction obtained "verifies the present Branch as the only legal branch of the BLF in NSW. Hopefully this will avert any physical confrontation between the labourers..." (*Militant*, 21 October 1974) That is, if the cops are permitted to defend bourgeois law and order in the workers movement!

The CL's idea of an alternative to the present bureaucrats it denounces as reformist is really just a more militant reformism. The CL backs the opposition Rank and File Committee (RFC) in the Victorian BLF and has in fact explicitly endorsed the RFC as a whole in the *Militant*, which has never had a single word of criticism for the RFC. But although the CL now proclaims the absolute necessity of demanding expropriation of industry employers, this has never been part of the RFC program, which consists exclusively of trade-union reforms not even including a sliding scale of hours but stopping short at a call for a 35 hour week -- only in the form endorsed by the ACTU! CL members in the Victorian BLF have completely liquidated into the RFC, and do not bother to raise even the CL's limited program at RFC meetings.

The motley collection of opportunists banded together in the RFC, dominated by the reformist syndicalism of Danny Purcell, is simply a rotten bloc for the advancement of a new group of more militant-sounding bureaucrats. It now encompasses anarcho-sindicalist elements, the CPA, the CL and the CL's friends in the so-called "United Secretariat of the Fourth International", the Socialist Workers League (SWL). Virtually the only trade-union work carried out by the SWL, it is a clear indication of what the SWL's reformism looks like transplanted from its favourite petty-bourgeois habitat into the unions. SWL supporters in the BLF, Dave Kerin and Alan Dalton, produced a leaflet at the end of June on the BLF's deregistration with the following "program": "We must show the bosses that their threats and bluster will not make us back down from our previous policies. We want more of the same policies..." -- that's all! Not a single further political point was made! Understandably, the coverage of Gallagher's intervention in NSW in *Direct Action*, the SWL's paper, has been completely uncritical of the NSW BLF leadership; with a program like that the SWL puts Owens and Pringle to their left. ■

believe in it in large part" (USec Majority Resolution on the Electoral Tactics of the FCR, *SWP Internal Information Bulletin* no 8 in 1974, August 1974).

What was necessary in Spain, France and Chile was to stand opposed to the popular fronts, pointing out to the working class that they imprisoned the workers' organisations in an alien, bourgeois coalition. A revolutionary party would have been confronted with the task of setting the base of the workers parties against their reformist misleaders, exposing their refusal to carry through the struggle against the bourgeoisie. To do so meant exposing before the masses that by joining -- or building -- the bourgeois coalition the reformists had given up the independence of the working class, demanding that the workers' parties break from the bourgeois parties and take power in their own name. In Chile, a revolutionary party would have demanded of the SP and CP that they form a government of workers' organisations, breaking with the Radicals *et al* and abrogating the agreements and guarantees to respect the constitution and the armed forces officer corps, and that the CP and SP arm the workers and peasants against the threat from the right.

The policy of critical support to the UP by the *Partido Socialista Revolucionario* (PSR) (Chilean section of the USec prior to the coup) and the much more significant centrist MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left) which the PSR tailed was a criminal betrayal, because it was and could only have been totally counterposed to arming the working class. Critical support can be used to expose the reformist workers' parties only when they are capable of embodying organisationally the independence of the proletariat as a class with its own political interests. For example, even a reformist party such as the ALP with a program in many respects to the right of that of the UP but which represents to the workers in Australia the counterposition of their class interests to the parties of the class enemy should be given critical electoral support against the bosses' parties, using the contradiction between this class character of the ALP and its bourgeois program in order to tear the workers away from the treacherous leadership. But critical support does the exact opposite when the reformists have submerged the workers parties in a popular front which suppresses that contradiction. There is no difference in principle between critical support of popular fronts and entering them -- as the evolution of the POUM in Spain demonstrates. The fate of the POUM and the Spanish Revolution stands as a warning to class-conscious workers and a condemnation of the IMT-USec. ■



Pabloist renegades call in bosses' troops

Racist terror in Boston

We reprint below an article from Workers Vanguard no 56, 8 November 1974, exposing the betrayals of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), US supporters of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec), in calling on blacks in Boston to rely on the US Army against mob racist attacks on the busing of black children (ordered by the courts with the intention of integrating schools in that city). Both wings of the USec in Australia, the Socialist Workers League (SWL) and the Communist League (CL), have publicly backed the SWP's stand. The SWL has published in their newspaper, Direct Action, an attack on the opponents of reliance on the bourgeois state and advocates of a working-class defence, drawing on the polemics of the SWP effectively refuted in Workers Vanguard. We would like to note only that were the SWL and CL consistent, they would be calling on the Australian army to defend Queensland blacks against racist white supporters of Bjelke-Petersen; and the CL, which makes an adventurist fetish of "vanguard actions" against small right-wing groups, would have demanded for example that the bourgeois army smash the fascist New Guard in the 1930s instead of organising "non-existent", "unrealistic", "sectarian" workers' militias to defend the trade unions. The SWP's blindness to the class line is nothing new; in 1968 they supported scabbing on a New York City teachers' strike, and in September of this year an SWP member was caught scabbing on a strike of workers at the University of Chicago (see Young Spartacus, monthly newspaper of the Spartacus Youth League, November 1974).

The past six weeks have witnessed a reactionary mobilization against racial integration of Boston schools the likes of which has not been seen in the North since the Detroit riots of 1943. The city has teetered on the brink of race war for days. Only the fact that, remarkably, there have been no deaths so far has kept the tense situation from blowing sky-high.

The crying need in Boston is for revolutionary working-class leadership. Black students and their parents, supporters of racial integration, trade unionists who have experienced the reactionary mob violence, even those whose only concern is to prevent attacks on the children -- all these could be rallied by a militant campaign of independent labor/black mobilization against the racists.

But to date leaders of black organizations and the unions have not made a single serious attempt to organize mass opposition to the anti-busing offensive. Rely on the federal government -- this is their program. IT IS A STRATEGY FOR DEFEAT!

It is only to be expected that these fakers would depend on the class enemy -- this is the essence of their treacherous role, to tie the hands of the masses and deliver them like sheep for the slaughter. Equally significant have been the despicable actions of ostensibly socialist organizations including in particular the alleged Trotskyists of the Socialist Workers Party, which systematically tailed after the "leaders of the black community" in an effort to

win cheap popularity. They, too, bear responsibility for the fact that today the black masses and labor militants stand unarmed before the racist onslaught.

... The Socialist Workers Party has developed its opportunism to a fine art. The SWP contends that "The question of how to achieve quality education for Black children is one that must be decided on by the Black community..." Some "Trotskyists" these are! Community control, busing, federal troops -- first they must take an opinion poll to find out what the "leaders of the black community" support, then they advocate the same to

Demonstration in Boston to defend school integration busing plan, protesting racist mob violence. SLUS fought for a labour-black defence, opposed strategy of calling in the bosses' army. (photo: Young Spartacus)

working people. Of course, the "leaders of the black community" turn out to be the black Democrats and Republicans.

In contrast the Spartacist League has a consistent record of supporting racial integration and independent working-class action. The SL has opposed community control of the schools, pointing out that this nationalist trap would only lead to demands for white control of white schools and lynch mobs. We were right.

The Spartacist League has opposed community control of the police, explaining that the working masses must destroy the armed forces of the capitalist state -- not seek to take them over. The SWP, in contrast, supports community control of the police, preferential hiring of black cops and even runs candidates for sheriff when possible.

The SWP's latest betrayal has been a call for federal troops to Boston. This is done in its typical weaselly fashion: "We completely support the demands made by leaders of the Black community that federal troops be sent to Boston..." declared SWP candidates for Massachusetts state offices on October 9. Actually, the SWP has for

years called on the armed forces of the capitalist state to come to the aid of embattled blacks.

For the SWP there are the "bad" cops and National Guard vs. the "good" US Army. That is why during the mid-1960s it called for bringing the troops home from Vietnam to send them to Selma! Somehow the armed forces of imperialism are an instrument of oppression in Asia but not in Alabama?

In contrast to the class-collaborationist illusions spewed out by these professional tailists the Spartacist League warned:

"Federal marshals and troops do not serve the



interests of oppressed minorities or the working class any more than the TPF (Tactical Police Force), state troopers or National Guard! They are the armed fist of the bourgeois class. At best the presence of federal troops in Boston might mean the maintenance of 'social peace' based on continued segregation of the black minority in inferior ghetto schools. As everyone from the liberal White to the conservative Ford has made clear, they will not enforce school integration. "But, in fact, given the rightward-moving political climate in recent months, particularly with regard to the rights of black people, it is likely that any large deployment of troops or police would be concentrated in the black areas and could result in small-scale genocide."

We pointed out what the consequences of relying on the bosses' state were recently at Columbia Point housing project near South Boston: when the residents demanded police protection against night riders, racists in uniform occupied the project, arresting and brutalizing blacks and vandalizing the community center. We also noted the interesting fact that not until black youths began to react to the racist mob violence, weeks after the anti-busing offensive began, was there serious talk of bringing in federal troops!

The alternative proposed by the SL was for a massive labor and black mobilization of all those opposed to racist attacks on the black school children. On September 27, the Spartacist League sent a letter to Boston labor, socialist and black organizations proposing such a mass demonstration. The SWP, which had not yet discovered what "the leaders of the black community" supported, did not respond and boycotted the planning meeting. Tom Atkins, head of the NAACP, said that a representative would be sent to a planning meeting, but none ever arrived. Later it turned out that the NAACP "strategy" was to take Mayor White to court.

During the weeks that followed the SWP reformists consistently sabotaged the struggle for independent labor/black defense. At an October 11 meeting called by the YSA and black, Latin and Asian student groups at the University of Massachusetts (Boston) to discuss the busing issue a speaker from the SL proposed building a demonstration against the reactionary anti-busing

Continued on page six

Smash the racist Qld Acts!

Defend Denis Walker!

Demonstrate:

5 December — 4.30 pm
Qld Govt Tourist Bureau
149 King Street, Sydney

18 December — 10.00 am
Redfern Court
Redfern Street, Redfern



Denis Walker

Demonstrations called by Queensland Act Confrontation Committee