

# Australasian SPARTACIST



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## Fight Unemployment!

**For an immediate 35-hour week!  
Nationalise the car industry!**

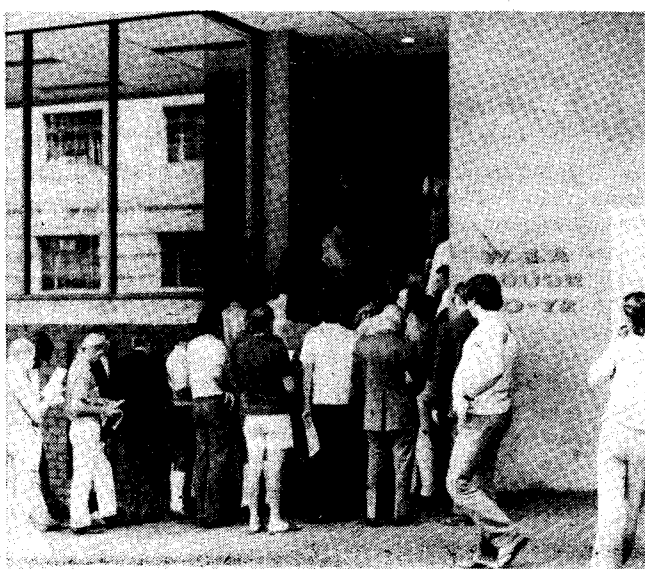
Almost exactly a year ago, capitalists in Australia complained of a terrible shortage of labour holding back production. Leyland Australia made news with its call for 1000 Filipino migrant skilled tradesmen. Now, the Leylands Zetland plant is completely shut down, and in December, GM-H announced its intention to sack 15 to 20 percent of its workforce of 26,000. A deal has now been arranged by Deputy Prime Minister Cairns postponing the sackings; but the threat to many jobs remains and not just at GM-H but also at Chrysler and Ford, who are threatening layoffs within a month. All the car manufacturers now have too many cars stockpiled, and for capitalists, as Ford Australia's general manager Brian Inglis put it, "You can't make cars if you can't sell them" (quoted in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 January 1975). Instead of campaigning to recruit overseas workers, we now have Federal Minister for Labour and Immigration Cameron carrying out a hysterical campaign against "illegal migrants".

The car industry only exemplifies what is happening throughout the economy. — Capitalism is an irrational system. Private ownership of the means of production -- production for profit rather than social needs -- leads to the incredible phenomenon of overproduction: industry is strangled by an *overabundance* of goods which can

no longer be sold at a sufficient profit. The capitalist class will be willing to plunge the world into recession, depression and ultimately war rather than give up its enormous wealth and privileges. On a smaller scale, the car monopolies, faced with a worldwide recession in the industry, prefer to throw thousands of workers onto the dole rather than give up control of industry. At the same time inflation, at a rate of close to 20 percent a year, drives prices continually higher. Unlike the formative period of capitalism, today big monopolies control the markets and a surplus of goods does *not* generally lead to a fall in prices, the law of supply and demand vaunted by bourgeois economics notwithstanding. Just two days after announcing the intended sackings due to oversupply, GM-H obtained a new price rise from the "Prices Justification" Tribunal.

Since last June, when ACTU leader Bob Hawke said unemployment was "not on", the number of unemployed has risen by nearly 200,000 to a total at the New Year of 266,998 officially registered unemployed. It won't be long before this figure reaches 300,000 or five percent of the workforce; it could reach half a million by the end of the year; and everyone knows that the official

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Top: Bob Hawke and Jim Cairns.  
Bottom: dole queue grows outside the Commonwealth Employment Service office in Sydney.

## Power strike betrayed Labor Council vs workers

On Thursday 29 January NSW electrical power workers met at Gosford to decide whether to continue the bans and limitations initiated in October as part of a campaign for better wages and conditions. It was clear at the meeting that rank-and-file militancy had not been dissipated; and only after lengthy persuasion by their own leaders and "left" union bureaucrats like the AMWU's Frank Bollins did the meeting vote by a 60 percent majority to accept the recommendation of the Electricity Commission Combined Union Delegates Organisation (ECCUDO) to stop the job action in return for an Industrial Court hearing on 4 February.

The campaign has met strong resistance from the ruling class. On 9 January the Lewis government, claiming the power workers' bans were responsible, instituted blackouts and power restrictions and from 20-24 January a system of power zoning which led to over 500,000 workers being stood down. At the same time plans were announced to use scab labour at the power stations protected by cops and to introduce new penal powers outlawing strikes in the essential services. All this was accompanied by a barrage of propaganda from the bourgeois press, employers' organisations, the NSW State government and the NSW Labor Council blaming a "handful" of "irresponsible" men who in the words of the NSW Minister for Mines and Energy Freudenstein "must

and will be rooted out and dealt with so that they may never again put the lives and livelihood of people at risk" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 January 1975). *The fact is that as much power was generated in the week of stand downs as in the following week when there were no power cuts.* It is clear that the stand downs and blackouts were *not necessary*; it is the utterly cynical and ruthless Lewis government who risked "lives and livelihood" solely to raise a public outcry against the power workers.

The present dispute began in October when ECCUDO opened a campaign for a number of outstanding claims, including a \$25 a week pay rise, free electricity, travel allowances, improved annual leave loading, and recognition of the rights of site delegates. Since April 1974 when the power workers, under pressure from a labour bureaucracy fearful of jeopardising the ALP's chances in the federal elections, were persuaded to go back to work after being granted an interim pay rise of \$17, they faced a series of negotiations and hearings from which they won essentially nothing. In November the State Electricity Commission (SEC) attempted to introduce scab labour at Liddell station but were thwarted by the militant tactics of the power workers, including a sit-in. A \$7 interim rise was granted in December, but a hardline policy by the SEC which issued suspensions to a number of workers



Frank Bollins, "reluctant hero" of the bourgeoisie for role in ending power bans.

and still refused to recognise ECCUDO set the stage for the confrontation of mid-January. And this time the results look like being virtually the same as in the 1973 and 1974 campaigns: the power workers, betrayed by the Labor Council and lacking adequate political leadership, have had their claims diverted into another round of hearings in the bosses' arbitration courts.

In each of the previous campaigns the considerable militancy of the power workers has been effectively controlled by the labour bureaucracy. The 1973 35-hour campaign, for example, had solid rank-and-file support and effective organisation and tactics. At Munmorah power station the SEC's attempt to employ scab labour was thwarted by the use of the sit-in tactic and the support of the salaried workers, operators who refused to use equipment maintained and repaired by the scab labour and clerks who refused to make out pay cheques. The power workers were effectively in control of the State's power output (though not

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and Arab nationalism . . . page 4**

# editorial notes

## International Women's Year — bourgeois sham and token charity



IWY NAC convenor  
Liz Reid

Launched with a flourish of publicity, the "official" United Nations International Women's Year is now under way. The UN, an impotent public relations service for international capitalism, periodically "grants" the odd year to various "worthy causes". 1975 International Women's Year (IWY) will be no more meaningful than 1971 "International Year to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination" which produced lots of rhetoric but no change.

In Australia the ALP, perceiving that feminism does not fundamentally challenge capitalism, has energetically sought to turn the women's liberation movement into a lobby for parliamentary reforms. The energies of the movement are now being successfully channelled into competition for the token reforms and financial grants held out by the Labor government as its contribution to IWY.

In spite of the general success of this co-optation, women in the movement are exasperated by the government's distribution of its \$2 million IWY budget to "safe" projects, and many were outraged when at a public meeting in Sydney on January 4 Shirley Castley, a member of the National Advisory Committee on IWY (NAC), admitted that the first lot of grants were respectable in order to "satisfy the Opposition". But what else can be expected from the parliamentary reformists of the ALP?

The CPA (*Tribune*, 21 January 1975) calls on women to take the IWY out of the hands of the ALP and the UN. But the majority of NAC members are women who are committed reformists. IWY is a conduit for their reformist politics. Any IWY committee would have to stick to "acceptable" small-scale charity projects in order to get the money from the capitalist government.

To the extent that most women's liberation activists have any strategy at all to achieve liberation, it is one of running isolated local welfare services for women, such as Elsie in Sydney and Halfway House in Melbourne (both refuges for women with problems), Rape Crisis Centre, the Leichhardt Women's Community Health Centre, etc. They are demanding that the government IWY money be spent on these projects, no less reformist than those of the NAC. The government has no objection at all to them. The lack of grants for them is explained rather by the Labor Party's general neglect of reforms for women, most glaring in the total sellout of even its paltry election promises on child care.

The services which these centres seek to provide are needed to alleviate some of the worst aspects of women's oppression, services denied under capitalism particularly to working-class women. But the women's movement can hardly hope to provide these services to millions of women, with or without IWY grants. This strategy renders the women's movement merely an ineffective pressure group on parliament.

Only a political struggle for these reforms, mobilising the social power of the working class and demanding state-provided services freely available to all women, can hope to win them for the masses of women. But as the recession demonstrates, capitalism can no longer maintain even minimal reforms for very long. A strategy of fighting *only* for reforms within capitalism will end in defeat. It is necessary to make the reform struggle part of the struggle of the working class to overthrow capitalism. The fight against women's oppression must also become part of that struggle, rather than being diverted into bourgeois frauds like IWY and parliamentary lobbying. ■

## CL plays games with the class line . . . and its own

Recent issues of *Australasian Spartacist* have given several examples of the Communist League's unserious and unprincipled behaviour (over the defence of Chilean militants, for example; see *ASp* 15). Lest anyone think these examples are but uncharacteristic aberrations, the example of the CL's flipflop over a crucial aspect of the dispute in the NSW Builders' Labourers' Federation (BLF), where the CL purports to be providing a class struggle alternative, should satisfy any serious militant. At the time of the Equity Court decision of 21 October 1974 granting the NSW BLF an injunction restraining Gallagher from setting up a new branch until the bourgeois courts had ruled on the "legality" of Gallagher's actions, the *Militant* gives its position on the NSW BLF's use of the courts:

"Gallagher has been completely stopped from setting up his scab union for the present. An injunction filed by the NSW Branch against the FMC's [Federal Management Committee] actions has been granted on the basis that all moves to register the NSW Branch as a new

union federally are also halted. The hearing will not be held for a month and the decision is not likely to be handed down for almost another month.

"This two month breathing space will allow the NSW Branch to increase and consolidate its membership. It also verifies the present Branch as the only legal branch of the BLF in NSW. Hopefully this will avert any physical confrontation between the labourers and certainly puts those employers who jumped to recognise only Gallagher's scab ticket in an awkward position." (*Militant*, 21 October 1974)

In the December issue of *ASp* we said of the use of the bourgeois courts:

"Revolutionaries can have no objection in principle to using the courts, a part of the capitalist state apparatus, against the employers.... But even in these cases it is essential to warn that it is fatal to trust the courts to discipline members of the class they serve.... 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...." (*ASp*, December 1974)

In defending against our arguments their support for the NSW BLF's use of the courts CL members sometimes tried to argue that there was nothing wrong with this, because the NSW BLF did not intend to have the injunction enforced. So the CL's position was that it is okay to use and perpetuate the myth of the class neutrality of the state and the implied threat of the use of its force as long as you don't actually use its force. This is merely specious sophistry.

However, reality and the desire to keep close to those militants dissatisfied with the way Owens/Pringle were fighting Gallagher subsequently intruded, and the CL changed its position, correctly observing that

"the only way that the courts could enforce their decisions was through the use of police and penal powers, in other words by state intervention in a workers struggle ... opposition to such state intervention must become a main point in any program of struggle by the working class today ..." (*Militant*, January 1975)

## Anarchy plagues Anarchist conference

During the week of January 5 anarchists from four states gathered in a disused Sydney church to confer on a variety of pre-advertised topics including syndicalism, psychiatric liberation, feminism, organisation, education, violence, alternative lifestyles -- and even the possible formation of a national Anarchist federation. It was fitting comment on this paradoxical enterprise that no clear decision was ever reached on it.

As it turned out there was very little indeed that the assorted anarchists, libertarians and promoters of self-management cure-alls could agree on. For some the conference was a barely political variant of petty-bourgeois counter-culture, an opportunity to eat bananas and to discuss communicating with trees. Others saw it as an exercise in personal soul-searching. But even on more serious issues there was little harmony, with constant squabbles about structure and decision-making in which the boggy of "authoritarianism" was invariably seen in even the simplest procedure. Differences appeared over the organisations of the working class. Some, like the Brisbane Self-Management Group (SMG), advocated blanket rejection of trade unions while others took syndicalist positions like that of the Rank and File Committee of the Victorian BLF.

The Brisbane SMG, upholding the "libertarian communism" of the British Solidarity group, was probably the most serious and certainly the best organised current; both qualities upset quite a number of their brethren. The SMG (which advocates a system of "Workers Council Democracy" as against both capitalism and the "state capitalism" of countries like the Soviet Union) claims not to be spontaneist like many other anarchists, but rejects the Marxist theory of revolutionary consciousness and its concomitant Leninist theory of organisation, preferring "humanist democratic principles" supposed to do away with the need for leaders. Of course, in contradiction to its own theory, the SMG in fact has an experienced and disciplined leadership.

The one thing uniting this motley collection was a common opposition to bolshevism, leading to general hysteria upon the arrival of several Spartacists who were not allowed to participate in their democratic, participatory conference. Nevertheless an SL workshop on "Marxism vs Anarchism" attended by a number of anarchists was held outside, at which the idealism and bourgeois liberalism behind anarchist ideology were exposed, engendering lively discussion.

The conference did perform a valuable service in graphically illustrating the contradictions and impotence of anarchism. Those anarchists seriously interested in revolution will want to heed the warning contained in this inauspicious fiasco. For in a revolutionary situation, anarchist opposition both to the dictatorship of the proletariat and to capitalism will have to be resolved in favour of one or the other, for or against the proletarian seizure of state power only possible if led by a Leninist vanguard party. ■

And what about the opportunities for a "breathing space"? The CL now admits:

"It took almost a month for the decision to be reached, during which time Gallagher continued to operate unhindered ... unemployment continued to eat into the NSW branch's strength while all the union's resources had to be directed towards the fight with Gallagher." (ibid)

The CL is to be congratulated for finding the class line, even if it was a little late and only for tactical rather than principled reasons.

Its members should now concern themselves with why *Militant* attempts to hide the fact that it has changed its line, now claiming simply that sometime in late October the NSW BLF leadership made a "turn to bourgeois legalism". In fact they went to court *the month before* and the CL did not oppose this, opposing only the court ruling *being enforced*. However as *Militant* notes, the NSW BLF only "carried the logic of their perspective to its conclusion" (*Militant*, January 1975). It is the CL that has made a turn, in a centrist fashion drawing back from the class-collaborationist conclusions of the position they shared with the Owens/Pringle leadership.

Perhaps most preposterous is the claim of CL leader and BLF member Mike Keenan that the CL has always held its new position! ■

### AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

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## Set-back in Denis Walker case

# Defend Black rights!

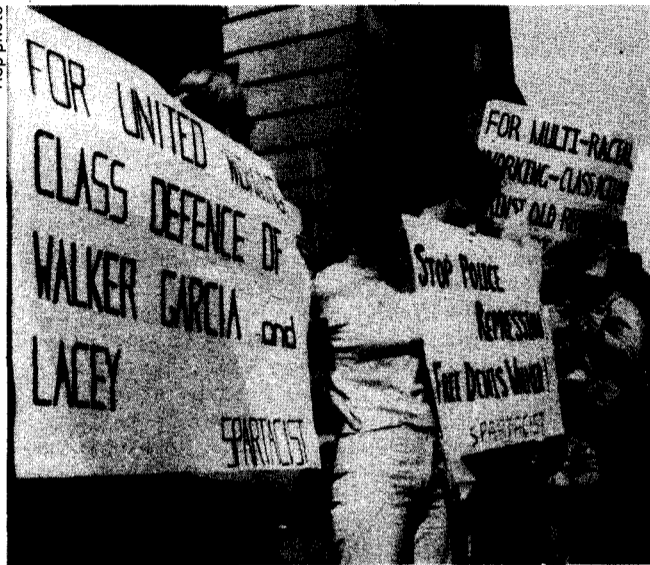
The black militant Denis Walker has been facing extradition proceedings in Sydney. Walker was initially charged in Queensland with "attempting to obtain money with menace" after the police secretly taped a meeting between University of Queensland student union president Jim Varghese and a black delegation. Walker allegedly threatened Varghese over Varghese's reluctance to aid in raising \$10,000 to improve the badly inadequate medical services available to blacks on Palm Island. John Garcia and Lionel Lacey were charged with conspiracy in the incident. If convicted, Walker faces several years in prison.

A hearing of the Queensland government's application for extradition was adjourned from Redfern Court on December 18 to the Central Court of Petty Sessions on January 6, 7 and 8. There, the presiding magistrate upheld the request for extradition, observing that in his opinion racism was as bad in NSW as in Queensland and that in this respect Walker was as likely to get a fair trial in Queensland as in NSW! Currently Walker is appealing against the decision.

Some of the liberal opponents of Walker's extradition see the main issue as the more open, explicit racism of the Queensland government and its laws than those of NSW, or the likelihood that Bjelke-Petersen will observe fewer niceties of bourgeois democracy and justice. But revolutionaries do not recognise the right of the capitalist class and its state institutions, even the most "democratic", to dispense "justice" to those who oppose it on behalf of the oppressed. What is important is firstly that the case is a blatant political frame up: the police were obviously looking for a pretence to have him jailed, and the charges are part of a wider campaign of repression against blacks and leftists in Queensland. Secondly, Walker will obviously not get a fair trial under these witchhunt conditions. Third, the laws being used to charge him and the others are quite undemocratic and lend themselves to frameups. Under them any idle, facetious or rhetorical threat can be grounds for years of imprisonment. Even if Walker were guilty in terms of bourgeois legal-

ity, it would be the duty of the workers movement to defend him.

In a curious but significant concurrence of opinion both "libertarian anarchists" (such as on occasion Peter McGregor) and members of the Stalinist Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) have objected to defending Walker on the grounds that he might be guilty of the charges, and because of his reputation as an opportunist among sections of the Australian left. On the SPA's part this sectarian and cowardly pursuit of bourgeois respectability will come as no surprise. But anarchists' belief in the spontaneity of the oppressed masses, and their proclaimed opposition to any kind of state, sometimes hides the fact



SL supporters on QACC picket to defend Walker at Redfern Court on 18 December.

that these gentlemen carry all the prejudices of liberal petty-bourgeois democrats.

Undoubtedly Walker is an opportunist. Walker was one of the leaders of the now defunct Black Panther Party, an attempt to emulate the black nationalist organisation of the same name in the United States. In an interview in *Direct Action* (7 February 1972), Walker heaped lavish praise on

the American Black Panther Party, seeing the Australian situation as "an extension of the states". Walker's more recent attempts at liberal charity fund raising for the grossly maltreated Palm Islanders parallels the US Panthers' descent into paltry reformism and social welfare projects under cover of nationalist rhetoric. During the present defence campaign Walker has not offered any clear program for black liberation (although on at least one occasion he has spoken, albeit in a vague and confused way, against the ideas of self-determination and separatism).

On the initiative of the Spartacist League the Sydney Queensland Act Confrontation Committee (QACC) sought trade union support for the committee and for the defence of Walker. A circular to unions published by the QACC pointed out that "These Acts are used to divide black and white worker and perpetuate racial divisions in the working class. These Acts, which can be likened to Apartheid, isolate blacks from the mainstream of the working-class movement and weaken the struggle for their emancipation. Blacks on reserves throughout Queensland receive less than one third the going union rate. The combined trade union movement has the power through industrial action to defeat the Acts. Unionists must begin a fight for democratic rights for blacks, against racist sentiment and for union organisation of all black workers and equal democratic participation for black workers in the unions. "...Working-class organisations failing to defend Walker leave themselves open to further repressive measures which Bjelke-Petersen has already begun to unleash."

A number of unions and union officials gave their endorsement, including the NSW branch of the Builders' Labourers' Federation; the Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union; Jim Baird, Commonwealth Organiser of the Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union (AMWU); Steve Cooper and Gerry Phelan, Research Officers for the AMWU; Dick Scott, Joint Commonwealth Secretary of the AMWU; Jack Cambourn of the Federated Engine Drivers' and Firemen's Association; and AWR Saint of the Amalgamated Postal Workers' Union. Officials of the Building Workers' Industrial Union (BWIU), NSW branch of the AMWU and Printing and Kindred Industries Union refused to defend Walker, though all claimed that it was their union's policy to oppose the Acts. Stan Sharkey, an SPA member and official of the BWIU, and MJ Malcolm, the right wing State Secretary of the AMWU, both refused to endorse the campaign on the grounds that QACC had too narrow a base of support, thereby indicating their intention to try and keep it that way.

A number of demonstrations held in Sydney gained significant response indicating the potential for a successful campaign. On December 5, a picket at the Queensland Tourist Bureau followed by a march to Martin Plaza was attended by over 150 people. At Martin Plaza the rally was addressed by Denis Walker, John Garcia, Pastor Don Brady and speakers from the NSW Builders' Labourers' Federation (BLF), CL, SWL, university anti-racist societies and the Spartacist League. A picket of about 50 people was held outside the Redfern Court on December 18. Members of the Spartacist League, SWL, CL, Glebe-Balmain branch of the CPA, Association for International Cooperation and Disarmament (AICD) as well as a number of other militants attended. Speakers from the NSW BLF, SWL, CL and Spartacist League addressed the rally. Further pickets were held on January 6 and 8 outside the court where Walker's case was being heard.

The Socialist Labour League (SLL) consistently  
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## Letters

Victorian Labor College  
For Independent Working  
Class Education,  
Trades Hall,  
[Melbourne]

17 December 1974

Mr Bill Logan,  
Chairman,  
Editorial Board,  
Australasian Spartacist,  
SYDNEY.

Dear Mr Logan,

Attention has been drawn to me of an article published in your December 1974 issue of *Australasian Spartacist* of an article headed, "Melbourne CL/SWL Sabotage Chile Defence."

The part of this article I take particular exception to is the reference made to the College: "SL members called as requested at the Melbourne Labor College (which is used by the CL as a headquarters) ..." The statement enclosed in brackets is absolutely false and I call upon you to make the necessary retraction in your next issue.

Had you been acquainted with the facts I feel that you would have realised this to be false as well as the danger lurking behind such an irresponsible statement. The College owes its existence in the Melbourne Trades Hall for the purpose of conducting independent working class education in the social sciences along Marxist theory, because the THC is an affiliated body to the College. What possibility would we have for this valuable support if we betrayed such trust, by allowing our quarters in the Trades Hall to be used in the manner indicated by your bracket statement?

In the conducting of our classes we do have many students affiliated to various parties, particularly those claiming to be revolutionary. As a consequence it is natural that many arguments arise many of which are very beneficial. But just like any educational body we are not responsible for their views even though we welcome them as students. At all times we are prepared to

take publications from these parties for sale or return at our bookstall. I noticed after the incident that the Spartacists left copies of their literature for us to handle on our bookstall and have issued instructions for them to receive the same treatment as any other literature.

In all sincerity I ask you to make this retraction to the satisfaction and interest of all concerned.

Yours fraternally,

E. Tripp  
Secretary.

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

26 December 1974

E Tripp,  
Secretary,  
Victorian Labor College.

Dear Comrade,

We have received your letter of 17 December.

In noting in the December issue of *Spartacist* the use being made of the Labor College by the Communist League it was not our intention to embarrass the responsible officers of the College, who were no doubt unconscious of the situation.

We have no objection to the Communist League and all other tendencies in the workers movement having full access to the facilities of the College. We are quite sure that the responsible officers of the College make every effort to ensure that no tendency is given special consideration in this matter.

We will publish your letter and this reply in the next issue of *Australasian Spartacist*, in order to correct any misunderstandings which may exist.

Comradely,  
Bill Logan  
for the Spartacist League

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# Permanent revolution and self determination in the Near East

The Near East is moving once more towards war. The stalemate which ended the October 1973 "Yom Kippur" war solved nothing, despite all the "wiz-ardry" of Dr Kissinger. Preparations for a new war are in full swing, with both sides busily refurbishing armaments, increasing xenophobic propaganda and mobilising troops. But simultaneously renewed class struggle is revealing the potential for revolutionary opposition to the war and threatens to break the bonds of chauvinism tying the working class to its "own" exploiters on each side.

In Israel, the Rabin government has sought to shore up its shaky economy by imposing severe austerity measures, provoking large demonstrations by Israeli workers and several days of rioting by Tel Aviv slum dwellers. Demonstrations in the Israeli-occupied West Bank in support of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) have been suppressed by armed force, and a Palestinian student killed. In Egypt, workers demonstrated in January against worsening economic conditions. The external threat is a convenient diversion for the Zionist rulers, and for Sadat a new war is a means of deflecting growing discontent.

Another new factor is the new-found acceptance of the PLO by capitalist world opinion, symbolised by Yasser Arafat's appearance at the General Assembly of the United Nations. The price of this: increasing moderation by the PLO, including a clampdown on airline hijackings, support for a Palestinian "mini-state", and a reconciliation with Hussein, the butcher of Amman -- that is, the consolidation of the reactionary Arab regimes' domination over the Palestinian struggle, and the strengthening of their hold over the Arab masses.

Besides the new respectability of the PLO, in Australia other factors are shifting the interests of the traditionally pro-Israeli ruling class: Australian oil producers bloc with the Arab states over prices; Australian capital is hungry for "petro-dollars"; the number of Arab migrants is growing. It is scarcely surprising that the aspirant reformist administrators of the capitalist state are deeply divided on the Arab-Israeli question representing a whole spectrum of bourgeois foreign policies -- from Bob Hawke's rabid pro-Zionism through Whitlam's "even-handed" neutrality to "left-wing" reformist Bill Hartley's pro-PLO line.

Tailing behind the bourgeoisie, the ALP reformists have traditionally supported Israel, a tradition reinforced by ties to the fake "Labour Party" of Golda Meir. In line with this tradition, Hawke's demagogic defence of Zionism is based on an appeal to a "moral duty" to side with beleaguered, valiant little Israel against the evil Arabs, as the standard Zionist myth has it. This stand has nothing to do with the real interests of the working class in either Australia or Israel; it is nothing but a hypocritical defence of the brutal repression of the Palestinians by the Zionist ruling class, of the super-exploitation of Arab workers inside Israel and the systematic denial of their democratic rights, and of the mass murder of helpless civilians in Israeli "reprisal raids" against Palestinian refugee camps -- calculated terror so massive the isolated terrorist atrocities of Palestinian commandos pale by comparison. It is also a defence of the oppression and exploitation of Hebrew workers by their capitalist masters, and periodic repression against political opposition from the Israeli left. At the end of 1974 an attempt was made to frame up a member of the Workers Alliance (Avantgarde), a centrist, pseudo-Trotskyist organisation, in a murder scandal. The bourgeois press in Israel filled with horror stories of fantastic plots by left-wing groups to "kill soldiers", singling out the Workers Alliance and the Trotskyist Spartacist League of Israel (SLI). The SLI pointed out in a statement (1 January 1975) attacking the witch-hunt:

"It is not an accident that the same papers which are demanding that the workers' struggles be smashed are the same ones spreading stories against the left....

"[The ruling class] need[s] to make hysterical propaganda to prepare mass consciousness for the next dirty war."

It is also no accident that Hawke, despite occasional "left" rhetoric, lines up with the Zionist union-bashers against the Israeli working class, both Hebrew and Arab.

Hartley's "alternative" to Hawke is only an

alternative diplomacy for Australian capitalism, under the guise of support for Palestinian national liberation. In a speech to a forum in Sydney on 3 November 1974 organised by Friends of Palestine, Hartley was full of praise for King Faisal, the reactionary feudal monarch, and King Hussein, responsible for the 1970 massacre of up to 10,000 Palestinians on the East Bank, for their "recognition" of the PLO -- which proved only that the interests of these reactionaries will be served by "freedom fighter" Arafat. The logic of Hartley's position is support for the Arab bourgeoisie against Arab worker, for-example in Egypt, where trade unions are illegal; and support for indiscriminate terrorism victimising chiefly Israeli working people rather than their Zionist rulers. The practical result in the Near East of both Hartley and Hawke is one and the same: more senseless war between the competing Zionist and Arab bourgeoisies; the continued oppression of the Palestinians; the continued hold of reactionary nationalism over the masses.

The fundamental reality of the recurrent wars in 1948, 1967 and 1973 (1956 was basically a war of imperialist powers against the Egyptian people) has been the *subordination* of the Palestinian liberation struggle to conflicts between the ruling classes of Israel and the other Arab nations conducted on both sides solely in the interests of predatory expansion. Revolutionary Marxists must not take sides between the competing exploiters in such wars but rather say openly to the labouring classes in both Arab nations and

## No ban on the PLO!

In a disgusting display of hypocrisy the Labor government on 29 January announced its refusal to grant visas to the official PLO delegation invited to Australia by ALP Executive member Bill Hartley. The ban follows the strong public opposition to the delegation's visit by rabid pro-Zionist Bob Hawke, SA Labor Premier Don Dunstan, other ALP parliamentarians and the capitalist Opposition parties. They have raised the bogey of "terrorism"; but diplomatic stooges of the murderous Israeli Zionist state, the blood-stained Chilean Junta and South African apartheid live in Canberra with all official sanction. The only violence likely to result from the visit will be that of the right wing against the PLO and Arab migrants. The ban on the PLO delegation is an attack on the democratic rights of the Australian labour movement. Rescind the ban on the PLO!

Israel that the main enemy is at home, calling for the masses to turn the guns the other way -- a policy of revolutionary defeatism on both sides. The response to the Near East wars of those who claim to be revolutionary is a revealing test of such claims.

Most organisations in Australia to the left of the ALP have unequivocally supported the victory of the Arab bourgeoisies over Israel. An important exception is the CPA, which in its own version of Whitlam's "even-handedness" has attempted to keep a foot in both camps by avoiding the inconvenience of a clear-cut policy. But however obscure its policy, the CPA in contrast to other revisionists has given special emphasis to the reality of two nations with a claim to existence in the Palestine area. In doing so it has used for its own reformist purposes an appeal to the Marxist analysis of the national question developed by Lenin, creating a deceptive appearance of formal Leninist orthodoxy.

The CPA, operating entirely within the framework of bourgeois pacifism and reformism, pins its hopes on the UN (whose earlier equivalent, the League of Nations, Lenin denounced as a thieves' kitchen) and on moderate, reformist nationalism in the Arab countries and Israel. In the Yom Kippur war, the CPA stood on a liberal-bourgeois concept of "equity".

"Given the fact that Israeli ruling circles have shown not the slightest inclination to conform to United Nations resolutions and withdraw from the land they occupied in 1967, ... the Arab nations cannot be denied the right to regain by military means what they lost by Israeli military invasion." (Editorial in *Tribune*, 9-15 October 1973)

But the areas lost to Israel in 1967 were in

large part those stolen from the Palestinian Arabs in the 1947-49 war by the Arab states! What about the "rights" of the masses, who are used as cannon fodder in these wars which serve only capitalist interests? Marxists decide what stand to take in a war on a *class* basis, not the "rights" of the exploiters.

There is a Hebrew-speaking nation in the Near East, and the question of the application of self-determination to this nation cannot be dismissed out-of-hand as Zionist propaganda. The CPA's view on this question is summarised in a pamphlet published in November 1971 by the Victorian State Committee of the CPA ("The Middle East Conflict"). It labels the PLO's professed aim of a "democratic, secular Palestine" as

"incorrect, unreal and harmful. Whatever were the wrongs in the past, Israel and the two and a half million Jews who live in this State have become irreversible historical facts. These Jews have become an Israeli nation, with a common language, culture, economy and territory. As a nation the Israelis are entitled to a State of their own."

As to the meaning of this "self-determination" in practice, the pamphlet goes on to say "full acceptance by both sides of the UNO resolution on the Middle East of November 1967 would provide the only basis for a solution." The CPA identifies the Hebrew-speaking nation with the *existing* Zionist state, which is clericalist, racist and capitalist, extending far beyond the territorial limits of the Hebrew nation: even a return to the May 1967 boundaries would leave within it 300,000 Palestinian Arabs and leave Zionism with its 1947-49 conquests from Arab Palestine. Refusing to call for the overthrow of the *present* Zionist state, the CPA by endorsing the UN resolution supports not just the *right* to a separate state but *continued separation*, which is totally unsatisfactory in small and economically integrated Palestine, and desirable only from the point of view of reactionary Zionist nationalism. The CPA's policy is a defence not of the national rights of the Hebrew-speaking people of the Near East, but of the existence of the Zionist state of Meir, Rabin and Begin. Revolutionaries support not the *reactionary* smashing of the Zionist state by Arab reaction, but its *revolutionary* destruction by the united Arab and Hebrew working masses and the formation of a binational Palestinian workers state.

The rest of the left (outside of the Stalinist Socialist Party of Australia, which simply parrots the Moscow line) has declared its unambiguous support for Arab nationalism and for Arab war against Israel -- supposedly in the name of Palestinian liberation from the yoke of Zionism. This includes in addition to the Maoists both the Pabloists of the Socialist Workers League (SWL), Communist League (CL) and the Revolutionary Marxist Tendency and the "anti-Pabloists" of the Socialist Labour League (SLL), all following the lead of their common mentor, Michel Pablo himself. In addition to the war question, all share a rejection of the right of self-determination for Hebrews in Israel. The rationales vary, but the central arguments are: (1) The interests of Hebrew-speaking workers and Zionists are identical, and likewise there is a basic unity of interest among all Arabs regardless of class -- that is, that it is inevitable and desirable that national divisions take priority over class divisions. (2) The real struggle is that of the Arab peoples against imperialism; there is no Hebrew-speaking nation but only a "white, European colonialist foothold in the Arab world" (Denis Freney in *Tribune*, 16-22 October 1973) which has stolen Palestine from the Palestinians, or alternatively that Israel is simply an "outpost of US imperialism" in the Near East. (3) Those with a slightly more sophisticated "Marxist" cover will admit to the existence of a Hebrew-speaking nation distinct from Arab Palestine but declare that it is a tool of imperialism, or that because Israel was founded by forcing the Palestinians out of their homeland, the Hebrew-speaking nation by its very existence oppresses the Palestinians. These tendencies argue that because Israel is an oppressor nation, there is no question of national rights for it. (4) Those wishing to maintain a veneer of specifically Trotskyist orthodoxy add that the nationalist "Arab Revolution" is part of the objective dynamic of the "Permanent Revolution", arguing that because of the revolutionary "dynamic" of the struggle for national liberation and against imperialism in backward countries, the nationalism of the Arab bourgeoisies is progressive. On

examination, all of these rationales will be shown to be contrary to historical fact, Marxism-Leninism or both.

(1) Not only is the reality of class struggle particularly in Israel and Egypt clear to everyone after the recent events in those countries, but it is pure idealist nationalism, serving only the capitalist class, to put solidarity with one's "own" exploiters ahead of working-class interests. *The proletariat is an international class*; Arab and Hebrew workers are class brothers whose *objective interests* are the same -- the overthrow of capitalism throughout the Near East. Nationalist ideology and chauvinism divide the international working class and are counter to its interests. It is no accident that the identification of Hebrew workers with Zionism and of Arab workers with the likes of Sadat is an assumption shared by Zionists and Arab nationalists.

(2) The idea that Israel is merely a European settler-colony is nonsense. In the first place, about 65 percent of the population is Oriental Jews (according to SWLer John Percy in *Direct Action*, September 1971). Secondly Jews in Israel of European descent are not the extension of any European nation (as were the French colons in Algeria, who considered Algeria to be part of France). Thirdly Israel was set up not to exploit the resources and cheap labour of Palestine -- the whole motivation for capitalist imperialist colonialism -- but to *exclude* the indigenous Arab populace of Palestine to make room for an exclusively Jewish state, according to the Zionist slogan for the "conquest of labour" in Palestine. Nor is the Zionist ruling class a mere extension of US imperialism; rather the division of the Hebrew-speaking population into classes testifies to the existence of a distinct nation. The Israeli bourgeoisie has its *own* interests. Sadat's call for US intervention to police Israel during the 1973 war shows that at least the Arab bourgeoisie, if not their "revolutionary" backers, are aware that Israel is not simply a territorial enclave of US imperialism.

The existence of a Hebrew-speaking nation in Israel scarcely depends on how it came into existence. National consolidation, a development historically linked to the rise of capitalism and the need for a homogeneous culture and language in order to maintain and develop the capitalist market, has come about in the case of almost all nations by suppressing, expelling or exterminating cultural and national minorities. The foundations of nations, each with a distinct national capitalist class, are thus a population with a common language, culture and political economy, extending over a definite common territory. In Marxist terms a Hebrew-speaking nation came into being in the Near East with the consolidation of a political economy based on the Jewish Palestinian population distinct from the Palestinian Arab nation in the post-WWII period, culminating in the 1947 partition and the ensuing war. (For a Marxist analysis of this process, see *Workers Vanguard* no 45, 24 May 1974, "The Birth of the Zionist State, part two".) To deny the existence of this nation is simply to deny reality.

(3) If Israel is a nation, it is all the same clearly and emphatically an oppressor nation, one which has systematically and brutally deprived Arab Palestinians of their national rights, and whose chauvinism is backed strongly by US imperialism. It is also true that appeals to Israeli "self-determination" are used to disguise this chauvinist oppression by its Zionist perpetrators. But the question does not end there, and the excuses given by supporters of Arab nationalism for opposing the right of the Hebrew-speaking nation to its own national state (which is *not* their "right" to oppress the Palestinians) are moralistic, demagogic and false. Israel is a client state of the US, but the relationship between the US and Israeli bourgeoisies is complex and breakable, as proven by Israel's alliance with British and French imperialism in the 1956 war, *against* the wishes of US imperialism. Neither is Israel the US's only client state in the area: outright US military grants to Israel in the 1949-68 period totalled US\$369 million, while outright grants to Jordan totalled US\$556 million. The US has acted as Israel's military ally, while curbing the inflated ambitions of the Zionist regime. This was the essence of the 1970 US-proposed (and Soviet-backed) Rogers Plan, calling on Israel to return to the pre-1967 borders. US imperialist strategy is *not* total commitment to Israel but one of *Balkanisation*: the artificial creation and manipulation of national divisions and conflicts to perpetuate reactionary regimes, notably in Israel and Jordan. The Arab ruling classes are *in essence* as much dominated by and tools of imperialism as Israel, as the Nixon-Kissinger tours through the Near East have graphically proven.

It is absolutely wrong to identify the Hebrew-speaking nation with the existing predatory Zionist state, and recognising self-determination for the Hebrew nation has *nothing to do* with recognising that state. Any *democratic* self-determination for the Hebrew nation could only be based on the actual population concentrations,

and on the return of or full compensation for the lands stolen from the Palestinians. Thus the territory of a Hebrew state which (unlike the present one) *legitimately* expressed its self-determination would be far smaller than the present one. The assumed identity of the Hebrew-speaking nation and the existing robber state of Israel is another myth common to both Zionism and Arab nationalism.

Some revisionists, including the Stalinists, the SWL and elements in the CPA, pretend that it is Leninist to "support the nationalism of oppressed peoples only" (Sydney University Communist Club Statement, *Red Letter*, 19 March 1974), or in other variations, oppressor nations do not "deserve" the right of self-determination. This muddles up national rights and national liberation with nationalist *ideology*. All nationalism is reactionary, and expresses the genocidal and expansionist appetites of all national bourgeoisies. The apologists for Arab nationalism could well note that the oppression of Kurds in Iraq and blacks in South Sudan are also a *consistent* expression of Arab nationalism. But there is, of course, a difference between the chauvinism of the masses in an oppressor nation such as Israel, which amounts to approval of and support for the crimes of its rulers against the Palestinians, and the nationalism of the Palestinian masses which is a distorted expression of their struggle against their immediate oppressors (who are not the suppressed Palestinian bourgeoisie but the Israeli and Arab ruling classes), a necessary part of the class struggle. But for that reason to encourage the nationalist *distortion* of class consciousness is to help *hold back* their struggle.

#### PABLOISTS BACK "ARAB REVOLUTION" -- LED BY SADAT

The SWL claims that to acknowledge the right to self-determination for the Hebrew-speaking people will reinforce the fears "fostered by the imperialists and the Zionists that the Israeli Jewish masses do have something to fear from the victorious Arab revolution" (*Direct Action*, 23 March 1974). It is not the Arab revolution but Sadat, Hussein, Faisal and company who would win if there were an Arab victory over Israel in a war such as that of 1973. In calling for the victory of these gentlemen in that war, the SWL endorsed them as the leaders of the "Arab revolution"; but the cruel oppression of Arab Palestinians and other minorities in Arab countries by Arab bourgeois states is ample evidence that the Jewish masses in Israel have quite a lot to fear from them, as do workers and peasants throughout the region. Rather than liberating Palestine in the event of a decisive defeat of Israel, Sadat et al would attempt to turn Palestinian nationalism to pogroms against the Hebrew-speaking people; and pogrom is the *implicit* program of the indiscriminate mass terrorism of the Palestinian nationalist guerrillas. The oppressor Israel *can become* the oppressed nation with a shift in the military relation of forces sufficient for a decisive Arab victory in a repeat of the 1973 war.

However there is no immediate threat to Hebrew self-determination, and the survival of that nation was not in question either in 1948, 1956, 1967 or 1973. The Palestinians are the ones who remain oppressed by the present state of Israel, which goes to war in order to maintain that oppression. Leninists support the right of nations to self-determination in order to cut across the national divisions between workers, as a means of breaking down nationalism and achieving international class unity. It is first of all up to the Israeli working class to reject Zionism and to support the struggle of the Palestinian masses against their oppression by Israel; the Arab masses are their only real allies against both Arab and Israeli capitalism. The Hebrew worker must demonstrate to his oppressed Arab class brothers that he will fight his government politically over its expansionism, racism and clericalism, and support the right of return of the Palestinian Arabs. Revolutionaries must give military support to an independent national liberation struggle of the Palestinian Arabs. But when that struggle is subordinated to and militarily integrated into predatory wars between Israeli and Arab rulers, as in 1948, 1967 and 1973, it cannot lead to Palestinian liberation; revolutionary defeatism on both sides becomes the only policy in the interests of the working class. And although the national rights of Hebrew-speaking population are not immediately at issue, they must be recognised in order to *counter* the propaganda of the Zionists which engenders fear of the Arab masses, by saying that if Palestinians are no longer denied their rights, the Hebrew-speaking people will not be denied the right to say no to a merger of the peoples.

(4) The incredible logic of the SWL in the passage quoted above, which dissolves the Palestinian national liberation struggle into the Arab revolution and the "Arab Revolution" into Sadat, Hussein and the Syrian Ba'athist regime, epitomises the liquidationist method of Pabloism. Indeed, Pablo is the original source for this theory. In 1959 Pablo wrote:

"The current Arab revolution forms part of the colonial revolution that has been *irresistibly* developing since the last world war. This revolution, furthermore, is only one aspect of the accelerating and *irremediable* breakup of the capitalist regime, and *consequently* forms part of the proletarian revolution...." (Pablo, *The Arab Revolution*, 1959) (emphasis added)

The idea is that the national bourgeoisie in colonial and backward countries in rebellion against imperialist control will, in spite of themselves, carry out or help to carry out the proletarian revolution. The permanent revolution holds that in the epoch of imperialist world capitalism, the tasks historically those of the bourgeois revolutions -- including national liberation and consolidation -- can only be carried to completion through socialist revolution and not within the framework of capitalism. But to conclude from this that the national bourgeois revolution is propelled by an inexorable revolutionary dynamic which will *automatically* carry it over of its own momentum into socialism -- and therefore that bourgeois nationalism can substitute for proletarian internationalism, and petty-bourgeois nationalists for proletarian insurrection supported by the peasantry -- is to *reject* the permanent revolution, which is valid precisely because the national bourgeoisie is *incapable* of carrying out to the end even its own revolution, and because the proletariat in emerging nations is the only class capable of organising society on a new basis. In practice this Pabloism reduces to a Menshevik theory of revolution in stages, as witness the support of Pabloists such as the SWL for the bourgeois "democratic secular Palestine" as a solution to the Palestine problem more practical than socialism (Franz Timmerman in *National U*, 11 March 1974) and Pablo's own entry into the bourgeois government of Ben Bella in Algeria.

The truth of the permanent revolution is nowhere so clearly apparent than in the case of intermingled peoples, where two nations congeal on overlapping territories, as did the Hebrew-speaking and the Palestinian Arab nations in Palestine. Here the genocidal thrust of bourgeois nationalism is given full play as the two competing national bourgeoisies collide. Bourgeois nationalism in Palestine, whether Zionist or Arab, far from propelling forward the socialist revolution can only deepen the national hatreds and throw Arab and Hebrew workers against one another. Only by uniting against capitalism can the proletariat of both nations open a way out of the morass; and only if workers of both nations respect and defend the national rights of the other nation can this revolutionary unity be achieved. ■



Israeli workers demonstrate against austerity policy approved on November 12. The policy cut living standards in half.



# From "people's war"

## Palestinian nationalism

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During more than a quarter century of Israel-Arab conflicts in the Near East, ostensibly Marxist tendencies have repeatedly failed to provide a program for unity between the Hebrew and Arab working masses. Instead, various "socialists" tailed after one or another currently popular bourgeois nationalist force.

Thus in the "six-day war" of June 1967 much of the left supported the "progressive" sheiks and colonels against Israel, in the name of a classless "Arab Revolution". Yet only three years later that well-known Arab "revolutionary", King Hussein of Jordan, unleashed a bloody attack on the refugee camps (the infamous "Black September" massacre) leaving thousands of Palestinian dead.

Following the ignominious defeat of the Arab regimes in the June war, the attention of petty-bourgeois radicals shifted to the nationalist guerrillas of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Being out of power -- and with no prospect of soon getting in -- the several commando groups of the PLO could afford more flamboyant rhetoric than their mentors in Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad and Kuwait. But, as demonstrated by its recent drive to acquire bourgeois respectability (acceptance of proposals for a West Bank "mini-state" and clamping down on commando actions), "pick up the gun" rhetoric has not enabled the PLO to give revolutionary leadership to the exploited masses of the Near East.

The Palestine Liberation Organization was set up in 1964, financed out of the coffers of the British-initiated Arab League, precisely to head off the development of an independent national movement in the refugee camps. Its founder, Ahmad Shuquairi, had been assistant secretary-general of the League and later a member of the Syrian and then Saudi Arabian delegations to the United Nations -- hardly the credentials of a revolutionary. King Hussein, who at the time held the West Bank and has consistently opposed moves for Palestinian independence, sponsored the meeting at which the PLO was formed.

It was the Arab defeat in the 1967 war that spurred the development of Palestinian commando groups, by discrediting the existing nationalist regimes and providing opportunities for guerrilla actions in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. By 1968 Shuquairi had been forced out of the leadership of the PLO. The largest and most moderate of the resistance groups, Yasir Arafat's Fatah, declared that the main strategy was "armed struggle", defined as "guerrilla warfare progressing toward comprehensive popular war of liberation" ("Program for Political Action", *Free Palestine*, April 1971).

According to Fatah, "exemplary" commando operations were supposed to "detonate" armed mass mobilizations on the scale of Algeria or Vietnam. But except for the single battle of Karameh on 21 March 1968, when Palestinian guerrillas fought Israeli troops to a standstill, "armed struggle" never progressed beyond isolated terrorist attacks.

Another indication of the PLO's "militancy" was its rejection of proposals for a "mini-state" which would accept the pre-1967 boundaries of Israel and abandon the 900,000 Palestinians living in Jordan, the 200,000 in Syria, the 300,000 in Lebanon and an equal number in Israel. The 1971 Palestinian National Congress declared its:

"Firm opposition to the establishment of a Palestinian state on any part of the Palestinian Homeland on the basis that any attempt to establish such a state falls within the plans to liquidate the Palestinian question." (*Free Palestine*, April 1971)

That is precisely what the "mini-state" meant -- both in 1971 and today: an attempt by the Arab regimes to rid themselves of hundreds of thousands of unwanted refugees, thereby eliminating a source of domestic political turmoil and a principal object for Israeli attack, by cramming them into the Judean hills. It will not solve the Palestinian question any more than the 1921 partition solved the Irish question.

However, faced with the continued military impotence of the commandos (both against the Israelis and the butcher Hussein) and in the wake of the 1973 October war, which greatly strengthened Arab "moderates" around Faisal and Sadat,

the PLO has dropped its opposition to the mini-state and is now talking of forming a government-in-exile. At the Palestine National Council meeting in Cairo this June, a "Transitional Program" of the PLO was adopted which supports a West Bank state as "a link in the chain of the strategy ... to establish the Democratic Palestine state".

In addition, at the recent "Arab summit" meeting in Rabat, one of the secret resolutions was reportedly a pledge by the PLO to end public opposition to Hussein. In return the Liberation Organization was recognized as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people on any liberated Palestinian territory".

Since the granting of "observer" status at the United Nations to the PLO and Arafat's dramatic visit to New York last month, the resistance movement has sought to bolster its new-found respectability by clamping down on airline hijackings. That this is not a belated recognition that indiscriminate terrorism is actually directed against the working people was indicated by the remark of one PLO official, explaining the "detention" of 26 people (presumably Palestinian commandos) in connection with a recent hijacking: "At the time we are gaining international recognition," he said, "we cannot allow mercenaries in our ranks to undermine our new stature" (*New York Times*, 28 November).

On the imperialists' side, this is exactly what is hoped for by those who support "Operation Mini-State". As French foreign minister Jean Sauvagnargues observed in justification for his visit with Arafat in late October, "The best way to distract people from violence and despair is to induce them to shoulder the responsibility on the international level, that is, to make them



Nixon with President Assad of Syria in Damascus, June 1974.

act in conformity with international realities" (*New York Times*, 13 November).

Hussein's 1970 massacre of three to five thousand Palestinian refugees and commandos was a watershed for the guerrilla movement. Fatah blamed "Black September" on the adventurist antics of George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), especially his hijackings of airliners which were landed in Jordan. Arafat also condemned Habash and Nayef Hawatmeh's Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP), a left split from the PFLP, for provoking the repression by calling for the overthrow of Hussein. The correct policy, said Fatah, was "non-interference in the affairs of the Arab regimes".

The DPFLP, at the time the most left-wing expression of the resistance, drew many correct conclusions from the September tragedy, albeit never transcending an eclectic Stalinist "armed struggle" concept of two-stage revolution. Hawatmeh saw the weakness of the Palestinian resistance in its acceptance of the reactionary Hashemite monarchy and the failure to raise "a democratic program for the rural areas (dealing with the land question, the struggle against feudalism, the big land owners and rural capitalism ...)" (*September Counter-Revolution in Jordan*, November 1970).

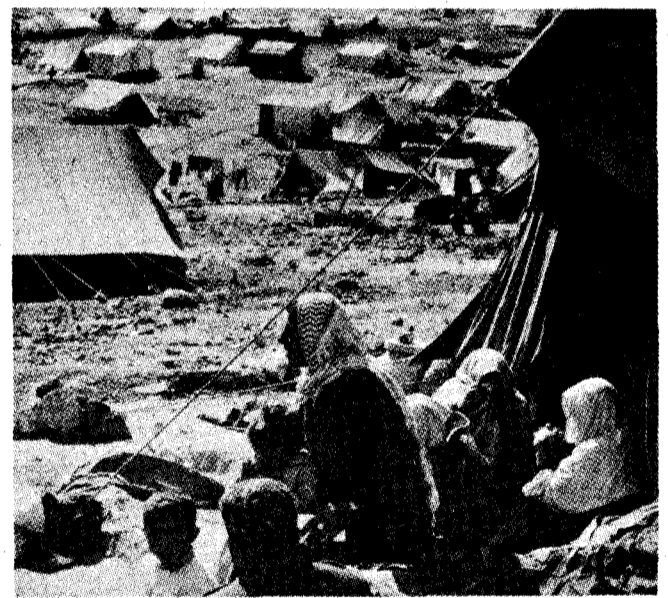
The DPFLP denounced the policy of "non-inter-

ference" as rank opportunism in order to "benefit from the money and weapons of the regimes". Fatah's collaborationist perspective "resulted in the absence of a revolutionary programmatic alternative to the program which caused the defeats of 1967 and 1948", leading it to "give deeds of absolution to the reactionary regimes for their handful of subsidies" and to "cover up for the programs of the nationalist regimes, which have been unable to attain the objectives of national democratic liberation".

The "mini-state" scheme, too, was denounced by Hawatmeh as placing "the Palestinians in a position surrounded by the anvil of Israel and the hammer of the reactionary monarchy and imperialism" (*ibid*).

But the DPFLP proved unable to assimilate the most important lesson of 1948, 1967 and "Black September" -- namely that "the main enemy is at home". This is true both for the Arab masses under the reactionary Hashemites or the nationalist colonels and for the Hebrew-speaking working people of Israel. The DPFLP never explained why the nationalist regimes were "unable to attain the objectives of national democratic liberation" -- a correct empirical observation which could have been the beginning of Marxist wisdom, ie, an understanding of the permanent revolution. Instead, it continued to envision some sort of "national united front" which would perhaps include some of the Arab nationalist regimes, and certainly the "progressive" Palestinian bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, while excluding the bulk of the Hebrew workers except for a few "progressive intellectuals".

For the DPFLP, as for the rest of the commando groups, Zionism could never be destroyed by united class struggle together with the Israeli workers, but only from without, through a combination of commando terror, renewed Near East wars and diplomatic maneuvering. The DPFLP was unable to break with the myth, shared alike by Arab nationalism and Zionism, that the Hebrew worker is wedded to the Zionist state. Yet this myth is being shattered today by strikes on the docks of



Palestinian refugee camp.

Ashdod and riots in the slums of Tel Aviv.

Most importantly, Hawatmeh and his followers failed to break with the "two-stage revolution" theory and find their way to the Marxist concept of permanent revolution (though they occasionally mentioned the words). For Trotsky it was the victorious working class that would bring national liberation of the colonial and semi-colonial countries: "the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving democracy and national emancipation is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all its peasant masses" (*The Permanent Revolution*).

Because the DPFLP could not find the road to a revolutionary proletarian perspective, it rapidly degenerated into the left-wing apologist and cover for Fatah. Since last year's October war, Hawatmeh has followed Arafat and Al Saiqa, a commando organization founded by Syria mainly to police refugee camps after the June 1967 war, into the fold of the Arab League and adopted the once-despised position of the "mini-state".

As a consequence, "armed struggle" has degenerated into isolated and indiscriminate acts of terrorism, often directed against civilian targets, in order to garnish international publicity. Thus a splinter group from Fatah, led by its former treasurer Abou Mahmoud, attacked a Pan American jet in Rome last December, killing

# to the "mini-state"

more than 30 persons. And on April 11 three members of the PFLP-General Command entered an apartment in the small Israeli town of Qiryat Shemona and killed 18 persons.

Fatah has in the past itself condemned such indiscriminate terrorism. However, immediately after the Palestine National Council adopted the "mini-state" resolution (and its concomitant: national liberation through the UN and Geneva negotiations), Fatah took credit for its first operation of this sort. On the evening of June 24 three Fatah commandos entered an apartment in the Israeli seaport Nahriya and murdered a woman and two children. The purpose of this otherwise senseless act was to provide a "militant" cover for Fatah's rapid rightward motion.

Likewise, the DPFLP (prior to Ma'alot) had been critical of isolated acts of terrorism. This was one of the differences that led to the split between Hawatmeh and Habash. After the split the DPFLP wrote:

"Historically we find that reliance on individual action and terrorism was the solution of those who had lost faith in the potential revolutionary capabilities of the masses." (*Al Hurriyah*, 2 March 1970)

Quite true! And there is no doubt that Ma'alot was the desperate act of an organization that has lost faith in the revolutionary capacity of the masses.

In an interview with Paul Jacobs, published in the Israeli Zionist newspaper *Yediot Ahronot* (22 March 1974) Hawatmeh was quite explicit: he called for a "united, democratic state where Palestinians and Israelis will live together with the same rights and responsibilities" but added "we know that instituting the united democratic state is impossible in this period" (quoted in *New Outlook*, May 1974). As Jacobs pointed out in a later article,

"Since the DPF had not mounted any guerrilla actions for a long time it has been vulnerable to the accusation that it lacked militancy and courage. Hawatmeh's statement increased the pressure upon him; Ma'alot eased the pressure...." (*New Outlook*, August-September 1974)

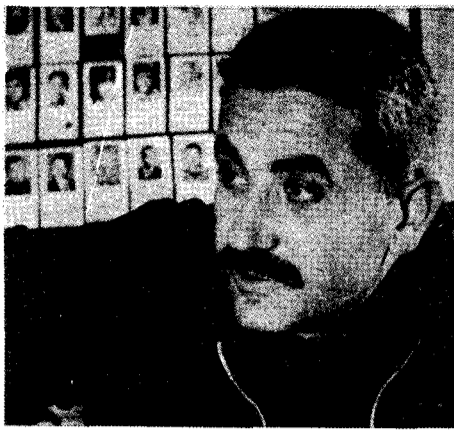
The "mini-state" perspective and maneuvering to get delegate status at a renewed Geneva peace conference have been rejected by the PFLP, PFLP-General Command, the Arab Liberation Front and Popular Struggle Front. The groups have formed a "rejection front" which proclaims its fidelity to the old slogan of "revolution until final victory". In an interview (reprinted as a pamphlet by the Organisation of Arab Students under the title "Liberation Not Negotiation") with the Italian leftist paper *Il Manifesto* (29-30 January 1974), PFLP leader Habash stated:

"The danger of the Geneva conference ... is that it weakened the Arab people's animosity toward U.S. imperialism and depicts the latter as a neutral arbitrator....

"Hence the struggle of the Palestinian and Arab masses would be transformed from an anti-imperialist national liberation movement, into a limited nationalist fight for the regaining of some of the lost lands."

While the PFLP seeks to give the "rejection front" the image of a militantly independent Palestinian force, this is far from accurate. The PFLP-General Command is headed by former Syrian army officer (and graduate of Britain's Sandhurst) Ahmad Jibril. When in September 1968 the Syrian government arrested three PFLP leaders in Damascus, including Habash, Jibril refused to condemn the arrest and split from the PFLP. The Arab Liberation Front is simply a creation of the Iraqi Ba'athist Party. And all three -- PFLP, PFLP-GC and ALF -- are uncritically pro-Iraq.

Habash, who is more widely known for his hijackings and the Lod airport massacre (carried out by the Japanese Red Army in solidarity with the PFLP) than for his contribution to Marxist theory, has of late been making correct criticisms of the current Fatah-DPFLP strategy (just as Hawatmeh earlier made correct criticisms of the Fatah-PFLP strategy). But while Habash



Workers Press



Above: Yasser Arafat of the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

Above left: George Habash of the Liberation of Palestine.

Left: Nayef Hawatmeh of the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

claims to be a "Marxist-Leninist internationalist", his fundamental nationalism was revealed by a reply to a reporter of the German magazine *Stern*, who asked in 1970 whether PFLP hijackings might spark another world war:

"Oh yes. But let me assure you this does not worry us.

"The whole world would stand to lose something in such a war except for us. If that should be the only way to destroy Israel, Zionist and Arab reaction, we would in fact welcome the third world war." (*Workers Press*, 18 September 1970)

In view of the potentially genocidal consequences of such a nuclear holocaust, which could threaten the very existence of humanity, it seems almost too mild to quote Lenin on the question of Polish independence on the eve of World War I:

"To be in favor of an all-European war merely for the sake of restoring Poland is to be a nationalist of the worst sort and to place the interests of a small number of Poles above those of the hundreds of millions of people who suffer from the war." ("The Discussion of Self-Determination Summed-Up")

Indeed, preparations for the fifth Near East war are in full swing. Israel and Syria have put their troops on alert; Arafat, in his interview with *Time* (11 November), predicted war in at most six months. At the Rabat conference a joint military command was proposed comprising Syria, Jordan, Egypt and the PLO. Meanwhile, the US continues to rush arms to Israel and Russia continues to dump its most advanced military hardware into Syria and Iraq.

We have warned that yet another Israel-Arab war will not bring national emancipation for Palestinian Arabs, nor will United Nations/Geneva peace conference negotiations or a West Bank "mini-state".

The proposed West Bank state is, in fact, even less than the Palestinians were promised by the UN partition plan of 1947 and, if rumors of a secret Brezhnev-Ford deal at Vladivostok are true, would involve recognizing the Zionist state as presently constituted (*New York Times*, 29 November). Masquerading as recognition of the right to self-determination for the Jewish population, this actually means abandoning the 300,000 Palestinian Arabs living within pre-1967 Israeli boundaries to continued second-class citizenship and acceding to the results of Zionist conquest in 1947-49.

As to the results of another Arab-Israel war, we have shown elsewhere that in 1948, despite pious claims that they were fighting for the national rights of the Palestinians, the Arab League proceeded to gobble up whatever the Zionists failed to occupy. Syria carried off the El Hamma district in the Golan Heights, Egypt took the Gaza strip, and Transjordan transformed itself into the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan by absorbing the West Bank. In the latter case there was active collusion by King Abdullah with the Zionists to prevent the emergence of an independent Palestinian state (see "Birth of the Zionist State: A Marxist Analysis; Part 2/The 1948 War", *Workers Vanguard* No 45, 24 May 1974). Neither in 1948, 1967 nor 1973 have the Saudis,

Hashemites, Nasserites and Ba'athists fought for the liberation of the Palestinians.

In addition to becoming a "bantustan" for the dumping of unwanted Palestinian refugees and serving to legitimize the undemocratic partition of Palestine following World War II, a West Bank "mini-state" would necessarily become the client state of the reactionary Arab regimes. How much can be expected in the way of "aid" from the oil-rich sheiks in such an arrangement was indicated by the results of the Rabat summit: \$1 billion a year for Egypt and Syria, \$300 million a year to Hussein ... and \$50 million annually to the Palestinians (*New York Times*, 30 October).

At the same time that we advise against any "mini-state" scheme, we nevertheless defend the right of the Palestinians to set up their own government in Gaza and the West Bank as a partial and deformed application of their right to self-determination. We also demand unconditional and immediate withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories.

Revolutionary socialists would give military support to an independent Palestinian force fighting for Palestinian self-determination, so long as it is not simply an arm of one or more of the Arab states. But we oppose another confrontation between the Arab regimes and Israel -- just as we have taken a position of revolutionary defeatism on both sides in the 1948, 1967 and 1973 conflicts -- which might very well spill over to a third world war, even if after the holocaust the PLO flag flew over Nablus.

Another Arab-Israel war would once again reinforce the nationalists on both sides and undermine the revolutionary potential in the mounting social crisis in Israel and the occupied territories. What is needed is a multi-national Bolshevik (Trotskyist) party which could link the strikes in Tel Aviv, Ashdod and Haifa with demonstrations by West Bank Arabs against the Israeli occupation.

Recognizing the right of self-determination for both Palestinian Arabs and Hebrews, we point out that this can only be accomplished on both sides of the Jordan, including all of what now constitutes Israel and Jordan. These national claims, however, are directly counterposed, the product of historical interpenetration of two peoples on the same territory. Under capitalism another partition of Palestine, with its massive forced population transfers, can only bring untold misery to the working masses -- as the Turkish army's partition of Cyprus graphically demonstrated in July.

Although the Hebrew nation is today an oppressor nation in relation to the Palestinians, a genuinely democratic solution would not simply reverse the terms of oppression. The "democratic secular Palestine" of the commando groups denies the existence of the Hebrew-speaking people as a nation -- claiming they are simply a religion -- and their right to self-determination. This is no different from the right-wing Zionist viewpoint which denies the existence of a Palestinian nation and its right to self-determination.

An equitable and genuinely democratic solution to the competing national claims of the Palestinian Arabs and Hebrews can only come about through the formation of a bi-national Arab/Hebrew workers state, part of a socialist federation of the Near East, born of the common class struggle of Arab and Jewish workers against their ruling classes. ■

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## ... Teachers Federation

self-perception as a professional body and the need for strong industrial union organisation. Widespread scabbing remains a problem and there is a sentiment within the federation that scabs should not be disciplined in any significant way. At its last Annual Conference in December, the NSWTF passed a resolution to support members who refuse to work with either non-members or those who scab. This is not enough; scabs should be expelled from the federation and deprived of the benefits gained for teachers by the federation. However, such a measure can be made fully effective only with a successful campaign to force the Education Department to hire exclusively members of the NSWTF -- ie, for real compulsory unionism -- putting teeth into the threat of expulsion. The "professionalism" of both past and present federation officials has led to capitulation to and on occasion active encouragement of "conscience" strikes -- either allowing "conscientious objectors" to scab, or making strikes a matter of "conscience" (in which only the most militant go on strike and therefore remain isolated). Instead of launching a fight for compulsory unionism, the leadership waits for isolated, unco-ordinated, and therefore inevitably ineffective, rank-and-file actions against scabs.

There is pressure within the federation for compulsory unionism, expressed in a partial way by the NSWTF project to create a "professional register". According to the report submitted by a NSWTF committee on the question to the 1974 conference, "The register will aim to place the teaching profession on the same level as any other profession," and to raise and regulate the formal qualifications of teachers. The goal of equal "status" with other professionals is useless and reflects a desire for separation from the proletariat; but it is infinitely better to have teachers' qualifications under the control of the union than, as at present, regulated by the government. Moreover the proposed register, if fully implemented, would be a form of compulsory unionism permitting only registered federation members to teach, and would establish the principle of union hire for teachers. It is essential that these measures which would considerably strengthen the union are seriously fought for, but the illusion of "professional status" only obscures the main issue and weakens that fight.

The most persistent scabs come from the ranks of administrative officials -- principals and deputy principals -- almost all of whom are in the federation, and who make up about eight percent of the federation's membership. These people, who are directly responsible to the Education Department of the bourgeois state, do not belong in an organisation of teachers -- any more than foremen or supervisors belong in any workers' organisation. Because of the conflict of interest, their presence in the organisation only weakens the federation, but the existing leadership encourages their retention.

While the membership of principals in the union is a serious detriment to it, the inclusion in the federation of trainee teachers, economically at the bottom of the profession, strengthens it. Although not immediately affected by the struggles of teachers, trainees have an obvious interest in them and it is extremely important to encourage a strong identification with the federation among trainees, who will become the youngest and most active teachers. This solidarity can be developed only if trainees are accepted as equals and their needs fully supported by the federation. Trainee teachers have in the past year been one of the most militant sections of the NSWTF; after a prolonged campaign of industrial action including strikes, lecture boycotts and demonstrations, trainee teachers were finally granted an 8 percent increase in allowances -- from \$1647 to \$1850 per year for first year trainees living away from home. After the increase first year students receive the grossly inadequate equivalent of \$36 per week! The eight percent was of course nowhere near keeping up

with inflation. The increase was also substantially smaller than that finally granted to teachers (the federation was demanding 20 percent plus \$500 for teachers!), a discrepancy which reflects the second-class status of trainee teachers, both within the education system and within the NSWTF where they are denied the right to vote in elections for federation officials and are grossly under-represented on the federation Council, with only one voting representative per 1000 trainees compared with roughly one per 300 for teachers. These flagrantly undemocratic practices are perpetuated by the present "militant" leadership. Trainee teachers must have full membership rights within the union and the federation must fight for full teachers' pay for trainees.

The desire of teachers to hold themselves apart from the proletariat, their illusions about a superior professional status, are not simply false consciousness but have a material foundation in the ridiculously large salary differentials between rungs in the educational hierarchy: after the recent wage rise, first-step, two-year-trained teachers in NSW get \$6608 per year while headmasters get up to \$17,851! It is a desire to rise above the working class materially, to gain privileged economic security, which spurs teachers' obsessive concerns with promotions -- a desire which in fact will only be satisfied for a small minority. It works against collective action, fostering competition among teachers which the Education Department uses to encourage scabbing and to weaken the federation. By condoning and even actively encouraging these divisive concerns, the federation leadership aids the ruling class and its Education Department in a fundamental way.

### TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND SCHOOL BOARDS

Capitalist society, with its reliance on the nuclear family, oppresses youth, a form of oppression useful to the bourgeoisie in dividing the working class along generational lines but one that affects the youth of all classes. The almost total lack of normal democratic rights for students in schools is a glaring manifestation of their second-class citizenship, a status which is both necessary to the maintenance of the bourgeois family (in which children are the "property" of their parents) and is an essential part of the schools' armory for the indoctrination of students in bourgeois ideology. The expression within schools of political ideas hostile to capitalism is systematically suppressed. Students are discouraged from questioning their "streaming" into future occupations, designed to maintain rigid class barriers and the domestic servitude of women in the family.

The proponents of "progressive education" who lead the NSWTF give lip service to student rights but their proposals for student participation amount to the sham of some form of "student government" bodies with no power in any important question. Thus the NSWTF insists that no one but teachers should be permitted to decide educational matters -- though "due regard" will be given to students' opinions, of course ("Democracy in the Schools", resolution adopted at the 1973 NSWTF Annual Conference, *Education*, 30 January 1974). There is no reason why secondary school students should not have the right to direct the school's functions on an equal footing with teachers together with non-teaching school staff -- for worker-student-teacher control of the schools. Much more immediate is the need to outlaw all corporal punishment in the schools. This barbaric and degrading practice has nothing to do with education. Teachers must reject any responsibility for maintaining bourgeois discipline in the schools and students should have the same legal rights as adults. For a reduction of the legal age of adulthood to 16.

Much attention has been given by the NSWTF to the schemes of the Education Department under the Liberal-Country state government to restructure the education administration, ostensibly in the interests of "decentralisation" and greater "community involvement". The scheme was outlined in detail in "The Community and its Schools" report of a panel led by J Buggie, the Director-General of the Department. Although a number of the Buggie Report's proposals have come under fire, the NSWTF officials have reserved their most vehement denunciations for the proposed introduction of local school boards.

It is clear that behind the Buggie Report is a conscious attempt on the part of the Education Department and the Liberal government to undercut the effectiveness of the NSWTF. Teachers correctly see that the local boards would certainly not in practice be democratic, and would merely put some control over school affairs in the hands of aspiring petty-bourgeois politicians. The Buggie Report school boards should be opposed, because in the first place their facade of "community participation" is a total fraud. On the other hand, control now rests in the hands of politicians at the State level, representing the "vested interests" of the collective bourgeoisie, and is equally unacceptable. A more important objection is that by decentralising school administration, they diffuse teachers' struggles: if

disputes can be isolated as the school staff versus the local board rather than the whole federation versus the Department, it will be more difficult to mobilise teachers. Although this reflects a weakness in the industrial organisation of teachers on a school level, it is a stronger reason for opposing the Buggie Report proposals.

However, the federation leadership is itself in favour of decentralisation. Its alternative to the Buggie Report school boards is control of the schools solely by the school teaching staff, alleging that "ignorant" non-professionals should have no control over educational matters because teachers as "professional educators" know better. The federation leaders' main argument -- that the school boards *per se*, even with the limited powers they are allotted in the Buggie Report, would infringe on teachers' right to control educational policy is complete nonsense for two reasons: teachers have no decision-making powers in this area as it is; and it is impossible not to have "outside interference" in determining educational policy. Under either the *status quo* or the Buggie plan, the bourgeoisie provides the "interference"; but the alternative to the bourgeoisie is not the arrogant, anti-working-class petty-bourgeois elitism pushed by the NSWTF leadership but control of education by the working class.

The 1974 NSWTF Conference decided in favour of industrial action "in the event of any aspect of the Buggie Report being proceeded with which, in the opinion of Council or Executive, endangers the employment conditions and/or professional rights" of federation members. The resolution adopted calls for strong action, including the expulsion of any federation member "who co-operates, aids or abets" Department moves to implement the Buggie Report, and "prolonged state-wide stoppages". The Buggie school board proposals would not fundamentally change the position of teachers, and tasks such as achieving an immediate reduction in class sizes and full employment are much more urgent; yet the federation's leadership has never proposed even to expel teachers who scab on strikes over salaries! The greatly exaggerated importance attached to the Buggie Report is a calculated act of misleadership designed to keep teacher militancy confined to issues of "professional rights" which only help to maintain distance between teachers and the working class. Supposed "militants" like Pearson/Rennie/Davy need this to divert attention from their own distinct lack of militancy on important questions.

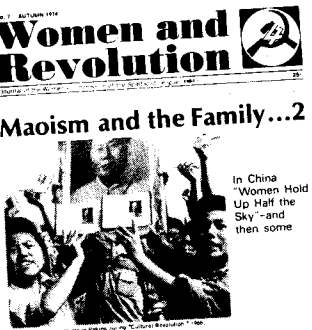
If it does not matter fundamentally what form the bourgeois apparatus for administering education takes, it is essential that teachers are not subordinated to the capitalist system by becoming part of that apparatus. Yet such subordination is exactly what is behind the federation leadership's constant calls for the establishment of an Education Commission in NSW, a body to be composed of two federation representatives, two government representatives, and a "neutral" person "agreeable to both sides", and intended to replace the Education Department and Public Service Board as the arm of the state for the general direction and administration of the bourgeois educational system. While the education commission is presented as an alternative to the Buggie report school boards, these are in fact only two different ways of integrating teachers into the bourgeois state.

The problems facing teachers and the kind of leadership needed in the NSWTF are in general the same as those facing the workers movement as a whole. These problems cannot be solved within the framework of the capitalist system which engenders them, a system which has long since exhausted its historical potential and can only drag society backwards. The only adequate leadership is one which can show in practice that in order to put an end to the ravages of inflation and unemployment, and to prevent further defeats culminating in violent repression and imperialist war, the ongoing struggles of the working class for partial gains must be carried out consistently challenge capitalist rule of society; and that in order to make good on that challenge, the working class must organise for the decisive defeat of violent bourgeois counter-revolution. Only a program clearly spelling out these tasks, linking economic struggles with the need for a workers government to expropriate the bourgeoisie, can offer a real alternative to reformist betrayal.

Many who claim to be revolutionaries, mainly members and supporters of the CPA, backed the Pearson-Rennie-Davy slate elected a year ago. A broad Left Caucus -- an amalgam of militants with no principled basis of agreement or common strategy which for this reason ended up under the wing of the CPA -- endorsed the "progressives" against the right-wing slate headed by Barry Manefield and a third "centre" slate, backed by the Stalinist Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) and including SPA member and school principal, Joyce Clarke. The Pearson-Rennie-Davy "team" campaigned on calls for greater industrial militancy cloaked in open appeals to professionalism. Thus one campaign

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## ... Unemployment

figures understate the real total.

The working class has the power to resist being thrown out of work, but of course instead of leading workers in a fight against unemployment, the Labor lieutenants of capital administering the bourgeois state have responded to the recession by desperately trying to encourage their masters to re-invest and increase production. One way of doing so is to increase businesses' short term profits through concessions such as making money available at cheaper interest (ie, relaxing the "credit squeeze"), cuts in corporate taxes, protection from foreign competition through import restrictions (a way of maintaining the high prices resulting from the lower productivity of labour of Australian industry) and similar measures. Recently even some of the small reforms promised by the ALP when it took office have been abandoned. On 29 January Whitlam announced the repeal of Labor plans for a capital gains tax, which had been a token gesture toward "redistribution of income". So intent are the reformists on regaining at least partial backing from the bosses that Cairns (who in his Vietnam Moratorium days would even talk about revolution at times) has rewritten the ALP platform to make even more explicit its guarantees to serve capitalism (the so-called "mixed economy"), and promises to maintain profits and a "healthy private sector". Precisely when the capitalist system demonstrates most clearly its reactionary character, the reformists, who pretend to be for the workers, rush to its rescue.

No amount of tinkering with the economy by the Australian government can bring an end to the re-

cession, which is international in scope. The policy of "reflation" -- artificially stimulating the economy -- has been chosen because Whitlam, Cairns and Hawke know that they must appear to do something about unemployment or the ALP will be dumped from office, discredited among sections of the working class and with its reformist illusions undermined. However because the monopoly power of the big bourgeoisie remains unchallenged, *reflation* means more *inflation* and will solve nothing unless profits can be increased *at the expense of the working class* by driving down real wages. The main job given Whitlam/Cairns by the bourgeoisie is to use their authority and that of the trade-union bureaucracy to police the rank and file of the labour movement and to contain wage struggles from within rather than by open repression (a path which most of the time has too many dangers for the ruling class to follow). Last July it was Cameron and ALP/ACTU bureaucrat Jack Egerton who led an anti-strike campaign; now Whitlam has taken it up. His most recent vicious attack on workers came in a speech to the Young Labor Convention in Adelaide on 25 January where he parroted the bourgeois lies that

"The cause of unemployment is, frankly, excessive wage demands ... Wage claims in the past twelve months have so greatly reduced the profitability of employers that they have ceased to employ. As long as wage demands continue to cut profits, then there is going to be unemployment in Australia. Every excessive increase in income for one man takes the job of another man." (quoted in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 January 1975)

But far from being "excessive", wage rises this past year have barely kept pace with inflation, as every worker knows. Thus Cameron, Whitlam and Hawke hope to give the "bitter pill" of wage cuts a sugar coating with minor tax cuts and wage in-



GM-H workers faced with sackings.

dexation in return for wage restraint. Such deals must be rejected.

The grants to the bosses sponsored by Whitlam Cairns are dressed up as a benefit to workers, but they are nothing of the kind. The virtual gift of \$25 million to Leylands did not save a single Leyland worker's job. The new deal with GM-H is equally worthless. These stop-gaps are only a delaying tactic to confuse workers and to prevent any organised class-struggle response. The reformists realise that the anger of workers facing the sack is potentially explosive, as shown by the militant response of GM-H workers at the Fishermen's Bend plant in Melbourne the day after the plans for retrenchments were announced. Walking off the job in the afternoon, the workers gathered to hold a stopwork meeting attacked a company security officers' car, and chanted "we want work".

In a highly significant incident during the same Fishermen's Bend demonstration a passing Japanese-made car was attacked by the workers. The result of the protectionist policies of the government and the labour bureaucracy is to divert working-class militancy into reactionary national chauvinism and racism, which are openly promoted by the "big three" car monopolies (all of which are American!) who fear competition from Japanese imports. Instead of protectionism, an organised campaign to prevent the sackings now planned for the next two or three months and for the *immediate* nationalisation of the entire car industry under workers' control are essential.

The workers movement, which must engage in a constant battle even to maintain its present standard of living against rising prices, is fundamentally challenged by growing unemployment, making it difficult to win adequate wage rises in the rounds of award negotiations to open shortly by the Metal Industry award talks. No award campaign can ignore the threat of unemployment; few workers will be willing to strike long for higher wages when their very jobs are at stake. If there is no strong response to the constant layoffs, there is great danger that the working class will become demoralised, and the bureaucracy of the trade-union movement will be able to impose wage restraint on a confused and fearful rank and file. The left wing of this bureaucracy, whether the likes of George Crawford and George Slater of the dormant "Socialist Left" of the ALP in Victoria or those of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), will play an important part in maintaining the authority of the bureaucracy when the more open treachery of the right wing begins to expose their true role. The militant talk of the left-wing officials will once again end up in apologetics for sellouts.

To prevent defeats, an organised offensive to protect jobs must be launched including preparation now for factory occupations where mass layoffs threaten (such as in the car industry); a national industrial campaign for the immediate general introduction of a 35-hour week with no loss in pay; the inclusion in all awards of a sliding scale of hours -- shortening the work

Continued on page ten

## ... Teachers Federation

leaflet listed as an industrial objective: "all campaigns related to EDUCATIONAL imperatives and presented as such to the media and the public" (emphasis in original) and another declared that "we must take action to redirect the course of the Federation. We must affirm to the community at large that we, the teachers, are in the best position to know what is best for education. We need to ... 're-professionalise' the Federation ...." Their militancy consisted in promising to fight harder on class sizes and salaries. Militants who were taken in by this rhetoric now have ample evidence from the sellout of the 1974 class size and salaries campaigns, in addition to the general class-collaborationist "professionalism" of Pearson-Rennie-Davy, that



NSWTF stopwork meeting votes on salaries strike in November 1973.

these out-bureaucrats once in power act no differently from the old ones. This should however surprise no one; there was no *qualitative* difference between the programs of "left" and right. The "progressive" slate did not deserve even critical support against its opponents.

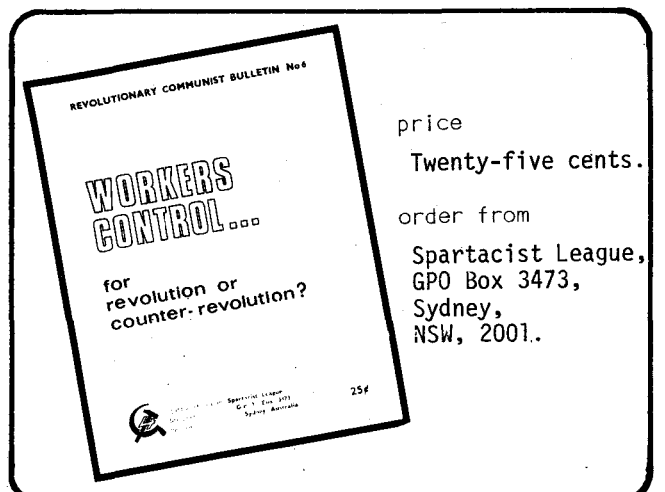
The CPA has not only offered its support to the current leadership; it is part of the bureaucracy. CPAer and a federation Organiser, Richard Walsham, is prone to criticise the "reformists" in the abstract (*Schools for What?*, CPA teachers' publication, September 1974), even calling for conducting the reform struggle in a "revolutionary" way. To him this means after the fashion of "left" reformists of the Cairns variety. (A letter by Walsham appears in *Education*, 10 July 1974, praising Cairns for his "soak the rich" rhetoric, proposing tax reforms, and has not a word of criticism for Cairns, who is only trying to dupe the working class into paying for the capitalist recession). And Walsham, writing in *Tribune* (21 January 1975), completely endorses Pearson-Rennie-Davy: "Left forces can be well

satisfied with the [1974 annual] conference results, due largely to persistent rank-and-file action in the past year and by [sic] a more militant leadership."

So far is the CPA from advocating even a minimal class line that at the 1974 NSWTF Conference, where the relationship of the federation to political parties was debated, no CPAer felt moved to advocate that the federation affiliate to the Labor Party. Communist teachers would point out that the ALP leadership betrays the working class, but that the ALP is the mass political party of the working class based on its organisations and would have fought for affiliation to the ALP, for solidarity with the working class in opposition to the open parties of capital, to make it possible to fight to replace the ALP reformists with a revolutionary working-class leadership.

An alternative leadership to these reformist misleaders in the NSWTF must fight on the basis of a program such as the following:

- \* Free and equal education -- open admissions to all educational institutes -- with a state stipend.
- \* Full freedom of speech for all teachers and students -- in and out of the classrooms.
- \* End streaming in schools by nationality, class or sex. No discrimination against women and migrants -- equal access to all types of academic and vocational training.
- \* Full legal rights for students -- lower the legal age of adulthood to sixteen.
- \* Principals and scabs out of the union -- for compulsory unionism.
- \* Abolish the inspection system.
- \* Abolish the bond -- full pay for trainee teachers; equal rights for trainees in the NSWTF.
- \* No unemployed teachers! For an immediate reduction in class sizes and period loads to maintain full employment for all available teachers -- for a shorter work week with no loss of pay to end unemployment.
- \* For a full automatic monthly cost-of-living adjustment -- reject Cameron's fake "wage indexation" and no-strike pledges.
- \* Not the class-collaborationist Education Commission or Buggie report's local school boards but worker-student-teacher control of the schools and a workers government!
- \* Federation affiliation to the ALP -- oust Whitlam and the Labor bureaucrats -- for a revolutionary leadership of the labour movement.
- \* Expropriate the capitalist class -- nationalise all basic industry under workers' control and without compensation. ■



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## ... Unemployment

week with no loss in pay sufficiently to maintain full employment -- and an automatic cost-of-living adjustment adequate to maintain real wages; and demands for the nationalisation without compensation of all companies threatening mass sackings or closure.

Such demands are so obviously necessary that even the CPA's *Tribune* raises them from time to time. The CPA's orientation is nevertheless based on implicit support for the ALP reformists. For example, *Tribune* (13 August 1974) calls for "active campaigning for the Labor government to reject the traditional Treasury solution of large-scale unemployment" -- as if the recession could be stopped by rejecting Treasury advice! But the CPA, which is proud of its trade-union officials' "positions of mass influence", has done nothing about the more militant demands it pays lip service to. When in August CPA National President Jack Munday announced with fanfare his call for an "autumn offensive" in 1975, we said:

"Maybe Munday thinks the CPA can turn the class struggle off and on like a spigot. An offensive is needed right now, in the midst of an unprecedented strike wave and burgeoning unemployment. In the unlikely event the CPA's bureaucrats get around to actually launching such an offensive, it should be supported by revolutionaries, at the same time pointing out the limitations of the CPA's demands and clearly warning that the reformist CPA will betray the movement the moment it begins to threaten capitalism." (*ASp*, no 12, September 1974)

And we went on to quote CPA propaganda supporting the "solutions" of none other than Jim Cairns. But even the autumn offensive seems to have faded into oblivion. Metal workers have seen no campaign for such an offensive by CPAers on the shop floors. Instead, CPA AMWU bureaucrat John Halfpenny called recently for protectionist union bans on the Gemini, a Japanese-designed car GM-H wants to assemble in Australia (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 December 1974).

Not only Halfpenny but also AMWU Assistant Commonwealth Secretary Laurie Carmichael, a leading CPAer fond of talking about internationalism and links with the Japanese trade-union movement, backs protectionist import quotas (although "critically"). What is Carmichael going to tell the unemployed Japanese workers, who now number more than one million (*The Australian*, 20 January 1975) -- that they should try to save *their* jobs at the expense of Australian workers? Protectionism only ties the working class to the exploiters in its own nation.

It is an urgent immediate task to organise the unemployed to fight for jobs and better conditions, in order to prevent the further weakening of the organised workers movement by a growing reserve army of unemployed labour. Necessary to effective organisation are the trade unions, as the unemployed by themselves, atomised and lacking any resources, are in the worst possible position to fight. Immediately necessary are demands for a 35-hour week; for retention of full union membership by sacked workers; for the dole to be raised to at least the minimum wage, with present allowances for dependents to be doubled; full rights for migrants; full unemployed benefits for married women.

Attempts to move toward mass organisation of the unemployed include the formation of an unemployed workers' union in Melbourne, which attracted about 100 people to a public meeting in December, and a group on unemployment in Sydney which has distributed leaflets on dole queues, holds regular meetings, and has established a centre at Trades Hall.

The task of organising the unemployed requires a united front which must attempt to actively involve the trade unions, the mass organisations of the working class, challenging their reformist leaders to act to aid workers whose jobs they failed to defend. Small-scale united fronts supported mainly by small left-wing groups, such

as the Sydney group on unemployment (supported by the Spartacist League, the Communist League, elements of the CPA and individual anarchists) can contribute to mobilising the unemployed provided they are based on common agreement for the organisation of concrete joint action -- such as demonstrations of the unemployed demanding jobs and a 35-hour week, and a contingent of unemployed to march on International Women's Day. There is a danger that such a tactical alliance to mobilise action of the unemployed will be transformed into an on-going political bloc, with propaganda around a program claiming to provide an overall political strategy for the working class as its main function. If this were to happen, the broadening of the organisation to include in action the widest possible layers of the working class would be prevented by the support to a particular general political strategy as effectively a condition of participation. It would become completely useless as a means of exposing the inaction of the trade-union bureaucracy. Moreover, an alliance for common propaganda between different political tendencies is thoroughly unprincipled for revolutionaries, leading to the confusion of the programmatic banner of the revolutionary party with the qualitatively deficient programs of centrist and reformist organ-

isations -- unless the organisations involved are moving towards a fusion based on clear revolutionary programmatic agreement. The working class needs a Leninist vanguard party based on the struggle for a full revolutionary program; to water down that program, to obscure fundamental differences for the sake of temporary impact, can only hinder the development of a revolutionary party, which requires the sharpest definition of those differences and the open political conflict which alone can enable the workers movement to achieve clarity on the road forward.

A strategy to guide the class struggle can be found in the transitional program, which is based on the objective need of the working class for socialist revolution and which links the day-to-day struggles of the working class to this task. A transitional program to fight unemployment must include:

NO LAYOFFS AND NO FACTORY CLOSURES!

AN IMMEDIATE 35 HOUR WEEK WITH NO LOSS OF PAY! FOR A SLIDING SCALE OF HOURS!

BUILD FACTORY COMMITTEES TO FIGHT LAYOFFS AND PLANT CLOSURES! OPEN THE COMPANY BOOKS! FOR WORKERS' CONTROL OF INDUSTRY AT ALL LEVELS! OC-

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

## ... Black rights!

refused to take part in this activity. Then, in its report on the December 5 demonstration, the SLL declared with the usual hypocritical bombast:

"But all the speakers from the various revisionist and centrist groupings who attended the demonstration fought to cover over the essential meaning of the charges.

"Not one speaker even mentioned the fact the frameup against Walker is a preparation for much wider attacks against the whole working class." (*Workers News*, 12 December 1974)

Not only is this statement an outright lie (both SL and CL speakers made the point), but the complete refusal of the SLL to defend Walker is a truly gross betrayal if in their own words the Walker case "is a preparation for much wider attacks against the whole of the working class"!

Demonstrations have been held in Melbourne and Brisbane as well as in Sydney. The behaviour of the CL and SWL in Melbourne provides a graphic illustration of the Menshevism of both these avowedly Leninist groups. A rally of 40-50 people was held outside the Queensland Tourist Bureau on December 5. The SWL/SYA mobilised a large number of its supporters for this demonstration, but never went beyond the simple demands for freeing Walker and opposing the Acts. SWL members even objected to the Spartacist slogan "for multi-racial working-class action against the Queensland repression", on the grounds that it was unrealistic! Apparently they disagree with their Sydney comrades who had endorsed just such a proposal in the QACC trade-union circular. Then, when a Spartacist representative was handed the megaphone to speak, Steve Painter, exhibiting a blend of childish pique and the undemocratic bureaucratism of the labour bureaucrat he apparently aspires to be, rushed forward and grabbed it, bleating that Spartacists could not use *the SWL's* megaphone!

The SWL carried this cowardly behaviour even further at a Denis Walker defence rally on 31 January, attended by about two hundred people including members of the SWL, CL, CPA, Black Freedom Organisation (BFO) and Spartacist League, Maoists and a large number of delegates from the Australian Union of Students conference. The SL was barred from addressing the rally, according to SYA member Peter Boyle because it was "not a public forum" (!), and according to BFO member Destiny Deacon because the SL does not support black community control. Deacon offered to let the SL have a speaker -- provided he did not put forward Spartacist politics; and then said the SL might be able to speak after the rally had marched to the Queensland Tourist Bureau. But once there, Deacon invited speakers "except the Spartacists". When a Spartacist speaker began to address the rally protesting against this political suppression and criticising the liberalism of the other speakers, the SWL and the Maoists, led off by Boyle, began chanting to drown him out! Painter took the megaphone and announced the end of the rally. When a CPA member later demanded from Deacon an explanation of this bureaucratic exclusion, he was told that the SWL "did not like the Spartacists". This *calculated*, typically *Stalinist* suppression of democracy instigated by the SWL, an act of cynical renegades, only undermines the campaign against the Act. We demand that the SWL put a stop to it!

And what about the CL, those most active proponents of "solidarity" actions, whose own comrades face harassment in Queensland? Neither at the December 5 Melbourne demonstration nor at the rally of about 30 people which was held at Mel-

bourne City Square on December 18 was the CL present. (Four CLers finally did turn up to the demonstration on January 31, although they did nothing but stand about.) The obverse of this indefensible and sectarian abstention is the CL's behaviour in Brisbane where it is active in the Act Confrontation Committee (ACC). This body is either simply an extension of the CL (masquerading as a simple committee against the Act) or, if other groups or individuals with distinct politics are involved, the different political strategies of the participants have been hidden in an unprincipled bloc for joint propaganda. The *Militant* has proudly reported that

"The Act Confrontation Committee in Queensland recently passed a motion stating that one of its aims was to create a socialist revolution in Australia." (*Militant*, 15 November 1974)

The ACC's program is inadequate for that task; but if the CL thinks its program is sufficient, then they should be proposing that it seek affiliation to the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International". Slogans of the ACC include: "Smash All Racist and Anti-Trade Union Legislation", "Smash Racism, the Bosses' Tool", "Nationalise All Major Industries Under Workers' Control", "For a Sliding Scale of Hours To Provide Full Employment For Black Workers on Full Pay, Unionisation of All Black Workers" -- truly it is a better program for a political party than the CL's! At least, as far as we know, the ACC unlike the CL has never advocated "workers' control" and "enlightened" administration for the bourgeois state's police arm: "Workers' control of the police and special compulsory educational programme for police covering the social, economic and political situations of all oppressed sections of the community -- in particular of blacks" (*Militant*, 3 June 1974).

However, even if the ACC has a better program for a political party than the CL has, its program as a committee to fight the Queensland Acts is completely inappropriate. While all revolutionaries must fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat, to make this the political basis of an organisation to smash the Queensland Acts is to render it simply an exercise in sterile and sectarian phrasemongering taken from the Stalinist "third-period" tactic of the united front from below, similar to red unionism. Defending Walker, Lacey and Garcia and smashing the Queensland Acts require the unity of all elements of the workers movement which can be mobilised to that end, whatever their politics. A united front such as the Sydney QACC is necessary in which it is possible to fight for revolutionary politics (or for any other program within the workers movement). QACC is based on the demands "Free Denis Walker, Lionel Lacey and John Garcia", "Drop the Charges", "No extradition", "Repeal the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Act" and "Stop the Repression in Queensland".

Significantly the only group in Sydney QACC to consistently present any program for revolutionary struggle against black oppression has been the Spartacist League. Both the CL and the SWL, though explicitly attacked on a number of occasions for their capitulation to black nationalism, including support for the unviable demand of self-determination, have avoided open political struggle. A revolutionary party must combine active participation in the class struggle with uncompromising defence of the Marxist program and criticism of those who mislead the working class. In different ways, the fake Trotskyists of the SLL, CL and SWL have in the past proven in action incapable of doing so, and their response to the pressing issues of state repression and racial oppression gives one more confirmation of that fact. ■

# Fight Unemployment!

Contact the group on unemployment

Room 75, Trades Hall, Sydney.

Telephone: 26 1671

Ext 22



COPY ALL FACTORIES CLOSING DOWN! PRODUCTION PLANNED TO MEET SOCIAL NEEDS!

The greatest unity is needed to successfully defeat layoffs. Elected committees representing all workers in the plant must be formed. Rather than accept the bosses' pleas of poverty used to justify retrenchments, workers should demand to see the company's books themselves. If the capitalists are unwilling or unable to run the factories, workers must take the factories into their own hands.

NATIONALISE THE CAR-BUILDING INDUSTRY WITHOUT COMPENSATION! NATIONALISE ALL FACTORIES THREATENED WITH CLOSURE!

NOT "PROTECTION" AGAINST IMPORTS BUT INTERNATIONAL WORKING-CLASS ORGANISATION!

DEFEND THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANT WORKERS!

Working-class unity can only be achieved by opposing discrimination against migrant workers and fighting for their rights and needs. Full citizenship rights for all migrants, legal or "illegal"!

DEFEND THE JOBS OF WOMEN WORKERS!

Women workers are usually the first to go. End discrimination against women workers. Union officials neglect the needs of women workers when the unions should be organising them to fight the sack. Employment of women is *not* a threat to the jobs of men; on the contrary, if women workers' jobs are not defended, it will greatly weaken the defence of *all* jobs.

TRADE-UNION ORGANISATION OF THE UNEMPLOYED!

OUST THE WHITLAM/CAIRNS/HAWKE BUREAUCRACY! FOR A REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP OF THE WORKERS MOVEMENT PLEDGED TO EXPROPRIATE THE CAPITALIST CLASS!

The official leaders of the labour movement have criminally abdicated their responsibility to defend the working class against the effects of the recession. The Labor government in Canberra is not a real workers government but a collection of pro-capitalist labour traitors running the capitalists' parliamentary system. An alternative leadership is needed to politically expose their misleadership, and to fight for a program which can guide the working class to power. The Spartacist League is pledged to the fight for such a leadership. ■

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

## ... Power workers

its distribution), and when the Askin government attempted to institute stand downs in industry, the AMWU called on workers to demand work and metal workers in several Sydney factories occupied their plants and worked in, calling Askin's bluff. Despite all this, the campaign was ended in return for a promise by the then-State Labor leader Pat Hills to grant the 35-hour week if elected, and an ACTU offer to apply for a 35-hour week for the power unions under Commonwealth Awards (which the NSW power workers would eventually get as flow-on). Labor lost the NSW elections anyway and the 35-hour campaign, despite occasional declarations from the ACTU and unions like the AMWU, has been effectively shelved ever since.

This time the Labor Council has gone a step further, openly blocking with the Liberal/Country coalition against the workers. In statements that verge on a call for strike-breaking, the Labor Council's appointed industrial officer John McBean told the bourgeois press that

"Trade unions believe it is indefensible to victimise the rest of the workforce in a campaign for claims like those which are well in advance of community standards." (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 January 1975)

And at the Labor Council meeting on 23 January (which overwhelmingly endorsed earlier Labor Council decisions refusing any support to the power workers) McBean added that "No responsible union member should support this campaign" (*The Australian*, 24 January 1975)!

The Labor Council's cringing servility was acknowledged by Freudenstein:

"If we use the blood and guts tactics we'll win within a short time, but we'll still have this nucleus of stirrers with their reputations untarnished. If we do it the quiet way with Labor Council's support, we'll discredit them for all time." (quoted in *The Australian*, 25 January 1975)

The Labor Council's hostility to the power workers' struggle does not arise simply from opposition to their economic demands. In McBean's words:

"It is not about wages and conditions. It is about trying to take the right away from the trade unions to negotiate ..." (*The Australian*, 24 January 1975)

The existence of ECCUDO represents a challenge to the control of the bureaucracy over the rank-and-file. The official procedures for handling

disputes is cumbersome, undemocratic and unresponsive, involving the non-recognition of any powers of the site delegates. Where a dispute involves more than one union the matter must be handled by the Broad Committee of Unions, on which each of the 23 unions with members in the industry have equal representation regardless of how many power workers they represent. (According to ECCUDO 90 percent of workers in the industry belong to five unions.) The SEC naturally prefers this set-up, and the bureaucrats, almost totally lacking authority among the power workers, rely on it to maintain their hold.

Power union bureaucrats, job delegates and Labor Council officials meet on 22 January. Labor Council industrial officer John MacBean, right foreground.



The ECCUDO is in part a response to this situation. It consists of elected site delegates, and clearly represents the organised strength of the power workers. With a high degree of democratic rank-and-file participation, it has been able to overcome the inter-union divisions in the industry. Far from being anti- or dual-unionist, as the labour bureaucrats charge, ECCUDO supports union *amalgamation*, calling for the recognition of only the five main unions in the industry in the short term and as a long term goal the establishment of one union for the power, fuel and mining industries. ECCUDO and other such rank-and-file organisations must be defended against the attempts of the bureaucracy to destroy them.

Precisely because ECCUDO exemplifies many of the best features of rank-and-file organisation and militancy, the present dispute sharply reveals the *weaknesses* of simple economist rank-and-file militancy, which is not sufficient by itself to overcome the obstruction and sabotage of the Labor Council or to lead the working class to final victory over capitalism. While the power workers obviously distrust the Labor Council traitors (who wisely kept away from Gosford) these officials were able to *isolate* them within the working class as a whole. The bureaucrats could do so because power workers' leaders provided no political alternative, either acting as if they did not exist or taking part in the machinations of the slicker "left" bureaucrats, such as those of the AMWU and FEDFA. The Communist Party of Australia (CPA), both in its press and through its members in the power industry, in particular the two most prominent ECCUDO leaders Ron Ross and Jock Syme, promote this deadend strategy. Only a clear class-struggle political challenge to the bureaucrats could have undercut their ability to betray.

The CPA offers nothing but syndicalist enthusiasm for "the creative development of organisation and tactics *by the workers themselves*" (*Tribune*, 28 January 1975). With no clear political struggle against reformism, this tailism is no more than a mask for the complicity of the CPA's own representatives in the reformist trade-union bureaucracy.

But, says CPA leader Laurie Aarons, it is important to win official positions in the unions, even if only as "a means to help that transformation of the unions, the use of official pos-

itions to build job organisation and union democracy, to stimulate militant action and workers' control" (quoted in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 January 1975). Nice sentiments, except as the CPA Power Branch complains:

"the old problem persists of the unavailability of key party trade-union officials to participate in decision making at crucial periods." (*Praxis*, March 1974)

The CPA's union officials act as free agents dependent on opportunist alliances with other union bureaucrats. be they "progressives" like Pringle

in the BLF and Pearson of the NSWTF or right-wingers like Charlie Brown of the AMWU. That is why CPA militants like those in the Power Branch find them so often "unavailable", and why the CPA never built any real support for the power workers led by their own militants.

The power workers' struggle could have been successful even with a minimum of broader working-class support. ECCUDO could have countered the predictable bourgeois slanders by raising the call for a 35-hour week to fight unemployment and appealing for working-class support on that basis, and at the same time undertaking an active campaign to win support from other workers (a leaflet entitled "Power Workers' Message to Fellow Unionists" was produced belatedly but does not appear to have been distributed widely). Responsibility for the absence of any plan to broaden the struggle must lie with the CPA, whose members hold key positions in ECCUDO, AMWU, FEDFA, BLF, Waterside Workers' Federation and other unions in NSW. These officials could have organised job meetings, rallies, support committees, and work-ins in support of the power workers. Instead all they came up with was a resolution from the NSW Branch of the AMWU, and a question at the 30 January Labor Council meeting from NSW Teachers' Federation official Richard Walsham.

But even on 29 January a *retreat* was not necessary, even given the despicable role of the Labor Council and the threat of stand downs. A successful strike could have given a lead to the working class as a whole against unemployment. The CPA's often-repeated calls for a "workers' offensive" have become in practice the line of "tactical retreat" put forward by CPA members Ross, Syme and AMWU State Organiser/President Frank Bollins (who told the bosses' press, which congratulated him on his role, "It has never been my desire or intention to make a hero out of myself" (*Sun*, 30 January 1975)!).

The CPA is capable only of deluding militants with its vague left talk. What is required in the power industry is a political leadership basing itself on a full class-struggle program, willing to struggle against the entrenched bureaucracy, both the McBeans and the Bollinses, and able to couple the undoubted militancy of the power workers to the political struggle to overthrow capitalism. ■

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*The way forward for the NSW Teachers Federation*

## Class struggle not militant professionalism

Australia has in recent years experienced increasing militancy and trade-union organisation among all white collar workers, a group which has traditionally seen itself as different from and superior to the proletariat. But the greater the number of workers involved in an increasingly complex and rationalised distribution, circulation and state apparatus of capitalism, the more they have merged with the working class, no longer enjoying the generally higher wages received by clerical staff in the nineteenth century or closely associated with the employer in day-to-day routine, no longer secure against absorption into the proletariat or the reserve army of unemployed. Among those generally referred to as "white collar" are layers with different social functions, somewhere between the industrial working class and the small proprietors and professions which make up the backbone of the petty-bourgeoisie.

Since the late 1960s there has been an increase in industrial militancy by teachers; the Victorian Secondary Teachers' Association (VSTA) has become particularly militant, and the NSW Teachers' Federation (NSWTF) carried out an important strike in 1968 over wage demands which inaugurated a period of conflict with the NSW Public Service Board resulting in an unsuccessful move by the Board to deregister the NSWTF in 1972 and 1973. The current leadership of the NSWTF, embodied in its President Eric Pearson, Deputy President Col Rennie and Senior Vice-President Van Davy, was elected in 1973 on the basis of vague commitment to more militant policies than the outgoing leadership.

The roots of industrial militancy among teachers lie in the great expansion of basic education in the twentieth century among the advanced capitalist countries (evidenced by an increase in the number of years of education received by the vast majority of the population). The consequent increase in the number of teachers makes them less of an elite, while the bourgeois state tries to keep its expanding education budget to a minimum by keeping wages down. Furthermore the rationalisation and centralisation of education together with the growth of urban concentrations provides a basis for organisation and collective action by teachers.

A common myth about the expansion in the bourgeois educational system is expressed in a NSWTF pamphlet, *The Case for an Education Commission* which attributes it to

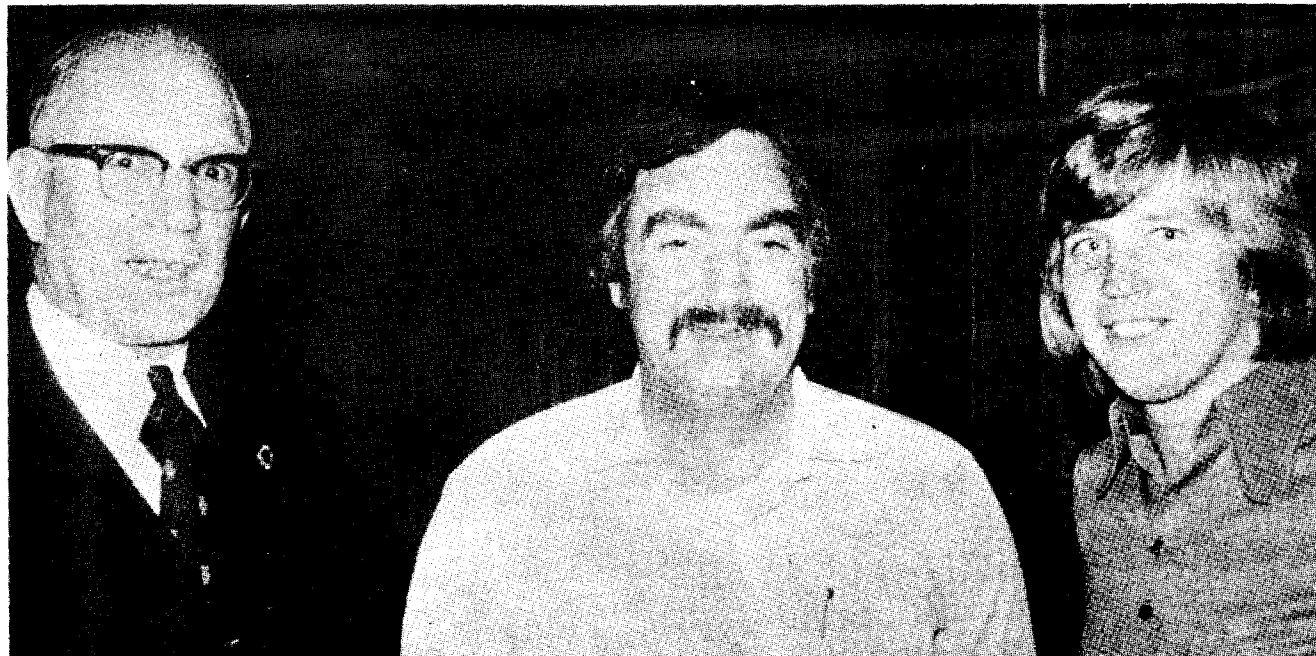
"the change that has taken place in the whole conception of education. No longer is it considered sufficient to equip the child with certain minimum skills limited to reading, writing and arithmetic.... Education today ... is concerned with the physical, mental, social and moral development of the child through the provision of an educational environment in keeping with his needs and abilities. It is a preparation for life in a modern democratic community ..."

The "modern democratic community" is bourgeois democracy, and education for life within it has nothing to do with individual "needs and abilities" but is guided by the interests of the ruling capitalist class, which uses the sham of parliamentary democracy to maintain its rule. It remains today in the interests of this class to keep the education of those it oppresses to the absolute minimum necessary. The changes in education have resulted from the changing needs of capitalism. The development of industry and technology, the great historical accomplishment of the capitalist class, required a more and more educated, cultured and disciplined proletariat capable of operating the increasingly mechanised, sophisticated means of production. The educational level of the proletariat must be judged relative to the potential which the advance of the productive forces has brought about, and in these terms the working class remains grossly deprived. And the capitalist system, now historically bankrupt, is incapable of qualitatively ad-

vancing further either the productive forces of society or education for the masses.

The role of teachers in capitalist society is determined by the uses to which the ruling class puts its educational system. In contrast to the bottom layers of clerical workers, teachers today, not only by training and outlook but also by social function, form a layer of the professional petty bourgeoisie and are not fully proletarianised. In addition to performing a necessary social service by providing minimal skills to the working class, teachers are trained and expected to act as ideological agents of the ruling class by instilling bourgeois discipline and ideology in the new generation of workers. Perfectly acceptable from a bourgeois point of view, this duality often represents for teachers a felt contradiction to the extent that ideology and discipline thwart education, and to the (considerable) extent that reality conflicts with the self-serving ideology of the exploiting class.

While the bourgeoisie needs educated workers, educated workers are more dangerous than those kept in ignorance. Ideological indoctrination is highly important to offset this danger, and the schools are made to complement the nuclear family as a ground for conditioning workers to accept their oppression, and to accept ideas contrary to their class interests. Thus the Rules laid down for teachers in NSW in the Education Department's Teachers' Handbook instruct:



Leading "progressive" NSWTF bureaucrats. Left to right: Eric Pearson, Col Rennie, Van Davy.

"Teachers are to instil in the minds of pupils the necessity for good behaviour and for obedience.... They are to impress upon them the principles of morality, truth, justice and patriotism. Pupils should be trained to exhibit respect for public and private property ... to avoid idleness, falsehood and bad language." [ad infinitum]

Connected with idealist illusions about the nature of education in contemporary capitalist society is a widespread attitude among teachers that they are a professional elite with scientific expertise in their field, analogous to doctors or engineers. Because of the role of education in shaping mass consciousness, the bourgeoisie can no more tolerate a scientific understanding of how to realise the full potential of children than it can a scientific understanding of the need for proletarian revolution. Only in *classless*, socialist society, will it be possible to transform education into the systematic full development of individual human potential. Because the functioning of the educational system is determined by class interests, educational issues are questions of *class* policy. Teachers can use their skills in the service either of the capitalist class or of the working class; but the working class can only gain con-

trol of education by taking state power. The alternative to the present educational system is *not* the dictation of educational policy by teachers as self-appointed experts, but one run by a workers state.

The illusion of professionalism directly conflicts with the actual material interests of the vast majority of teaching staff who, like all other workers for the state providing essential social services, are in constant struggle to maintain working conditions and wages against the limitations of the state budget. While the capitalists' government apparatus is not engaged in maximising profit for itself, it is bound to maximise profit for the bourgeoisie collectively by minimising the cost of these services, which are part of the necessary collective social overhead of the capitalist system and must, directly or indirectly through taxes, be paid for out of the surplus value the capitalists extract from the working class. The majority of teachers do not earn much more than the average wage, are as much affected by inflation as other wage earners and are subject to efficiency ratings and forms of speed up such as increased class sizes. Teachers can maintain living standards only by forcing concessions through the disruption of these services brought about by industrial action. But "professional educators" are supposed to refrain from strikes because of their "duty" to the children and the public. These petty-

bourgeois professionalist illusions lead to a high degree of scabbing. The September 18 strike, which lasted only 24 hours, was in historical terms extremely effective, with 80 percent support among federation members and 60 percent of teachers as a whole; 40 percent is closer to the historic norm.

The current economic recession has brought pressure to bear on the state to cut expenditure on education, which would mean worse conditions of work, fewer teachers, larger classes, and increasing resistance to wage claims. Already the recession has had deep effects. Alternative employment prospects for teachers have dried up, reducing teacher resignations, and on 22 January, the NSW government announced a surplus of 1800 teachers in the state, even though on 28 December it was still trying to recruit 1100 teachers overseas to fill an expected shortage. At a minimum the federation should demand an immediate reduction in class sizes and period loading sufficient to maintain full employment of all available teachers.

In the NSWTF, increasing militancy has confronted federation activists with a number of problems reflecting the conflict between their

Continued on page eight