



# Time Runs Out in Poland

# Stop Solidarity's

# Counterrevolution!

The massive strike in the Baltic ports last August brought Polish workers before a historic choice: with the bankruptcy of Stalinist rule dramatically demonstrated, it would be either the path of bloody counterrevolution in league with imperialism, or the path of proletarian political revolution. The Gdansk accords and the emergence of Solidarity (Solidarność), the mass workers organization which issued out of last year's general strike, produced a situation of cold dual power. This precarious condition could not last long, we wrote. And now time has run out.

With its first national congress in early September, decisive elements of Solidarity are now pushing a program of open counterrevolution. The appeal for "free trade unions" within the Soviet bloc, long a fighting slogan for Cold War anti-Communism, was a deliberate provocation of Moscow. Behind the call for "free elections" to the Sejm (parliament) stands the program of "Western-style democracy", that is, *capitalist restoration under the guise of parliamentary government*. And now leading Polish "dissident" Jacek Kuron, an influential adviser of Solidarity, and a member of the Second International, has issued a call for a counterrevolutionary regime to take power.

To underscore their ties to the "free world", Solidarity's leaders have invited Lane Kirkland, the hard-line Cold Warrior who heads up the American AFL-CIO, to attend the second session of the congress scheduled for late September. This top labor lieutenant of US imperialism, a man deeply involved in Washington's anti-Soviet war drive, has announced he will be there to wave the "free world" banner in Poland. Accompanying Kirkland is Irving Brown, the sinister AFL-CIO "European representative" whose "labor" cover is an invaluable part of his years-long role as top CIA provocateur against the European labor movement. In turn Solidarity is opening a US office in the premises of teachers' union leader Albert Shanker, a notorious right-wing social democrat whose party newspaper, *New America*, denounced George McGovern as little short of a "Commie dupe" and even condemned Nixon as soft on Russia!

Over and above the formal actions of the congress, the whole activity and spirit of Solidarity is that of an organization making a bid for power. A few weeks before the the congress the top leader,

Lech Walesa, told printers who were striking government newspapers:

"I believe that confrontation is unavoidable. The next confrontation will be a total confrontation . . . .

"We see more clearly that without political solutions nothing can be achieved. The whole war will be won by us."

— *Los Angeles Times*, 21 August

When asked what would happen if the Sejm refused to act on Solidarity's program for self-managed enterprises, Bogdan Lis, regarded as the organization's number two, replied smartly, "Maybe we'll dissolve it" (*New York Times*, 13 September). When the 900 delegates left the congress, they understood that the organization was moving to

Stalinists as well, understand that Solidarity has now crossed the Rubicon. Top American officials have been quoted in European papers saying that Poland today is the most exciting and important opportunity for the West since 1945. And this is from an administration that begins to salivate as soon as it hears the word "rollback". Moscow has issued its strongest warning to date, demanding that the beleaguered Warsaw regime "immediately take the determined and radical steps in order to cut short the malicious anti-Soviet propaganda and actions hostile toward the Soviet Union". In response the Polish government has announced it is preparing drastic actions. Everyone thinks this means declaring a



First Solidarity congress crosses the Rubicon to open advocacy of counterrevolution.

take over the basic economic and political aspects of Polish life. Now, writing in Solidarity's newsletter, *Niezależność*, Poland's most prominent social democrat, Jacek Kuron, has called for a new government based on a "council of national salvation" consisting of Solidarity, the Catholic church and "moderate" Communist officials. "The moment the council is formed, it would suspend operation of all authorities, including the government", Kuron added (UPI dispatch, 16 September 1981).

The sophisticated representatives of Western imperialism, such as the *New York Times*, and apparently the Kremlin

state of emergency and preventing the second part of Solidarity's congress.

Solidarity's counterrevolutionary course has also produced a powerful response from the anti-Moscow center, the Vatican. A week after the congress Pope Karol Wojtyla of Krakow issued his long-awaited encyclical on "the social question". This reaffirmed the church's traditional *defense of capitalist private property against socialism* and war against Marxism, while favoring unions as long as they are a "constructive factor of social order and solidarity". The Polish Conference of Bishops got the message and has thrown its support behind



Walesa and Wojtyla: apostles of anti-communism.

Solidarity's long-standing demand for greater access to the mass media. Does anyone doubt that "the new Poland" Solidarity's leaders say they are building conforms to the guidelines set down by the Catholic church to which they all profess deep allegiance? The pope's encyclical (written in Polish) could well become the manifesto of a counterrevolutionary mobilization in Poland.

It is the most damning indictment of Stalinism that after three decades of so-called "socialism" a majority of the Polish working class is so fed up with it as to embrace the slogans of the Cold War. It is the Stalinists with their crushing censorship and endless falsifications, their corruption and gross economic mismanagement, their suppression of democratic rights always accompanied by cynical promises of "democratization" who have driven the historically socialist Polish proletariat into the arms of the Vatican and "AFL-CIA".

It is also important to point out that a reported 15 to 20 percent of the Polish workers have *not* participated in Solidarity's mobilization, despite the enor-

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# Solidarity...

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ous social pressure on them to do so. Most of these workers probably retain some loyalty to the communist cause and are hostile to the clerical-nationalism of Walesa & Co. But today such workers are clearly a minority and on the defensive as the Solidarity leadership has the support of the active majority of the Polish proletariat. Thus, the threat of a counter-revolutionary thrust for power is now posed in Poland. That threat must be crushed at all costs and by any means necessary.

## Solidarity Under the Eagle and Cross

It is sheer cynicism that Solidarity's leaders still claim to adhere to the 31 August 1980 Gdansk Agreement, which stated that the new union movement would recognize the "leading role" of the Communist party (Polish United Workers Party, PUWP), would respect Poland's international alliances (ie, the Warsaw Pact) and would not engage in political activity. Of course, Walesa and his colleagues were strongly opposed to all these conditions but regarded them as tactical concessions for the moment. The notion that the new union movement would not be political was an absurdity. As we stated when the Gdansk Agreement was signed, either the new union movement would become a vehicle for clerical-nationalist reaction or it would have to oppose it in the name of socialist principle. There was and is no "third way", much less a purely trade-unionist third way.

It was clear from the beginning that Walesa & Co saw themselves leading the entire Polish nation under the banner of eagle and cross in a crusade against "Russian-imposed Communism". Solidarity is no longer a trade union, but has come to include large sections of the intelligentsia, petty bureaucrats, priests, etc. Last winter/spring much of Solidarity's efforts were directed toward forcing the government to legally recognize the organization of peasant smallholders, Rural Solidarity, a potent social force for capitalist restoration. In late March Solidarity even threatened a nationwide general strike primarily on behalf of the rural petty capitalists, despite the fact that they were driving up food prices for urban consumers.

Local Solidarity organizations have kept up a barrage of anti-Soviet propaganda of the most vile right-wing sort. For example, the Solidarity newspaper at the Katowice steel mill, the largest in the country, reprinted chapters from Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* and ran cartoons that could have come straight out of the Western yellow press. At the same time, Solidarity's leaders have nothing but good things to say about the imperialist West.

Small wonder Ronald Reagan could declare that the Polish crisis signals the beginning of the end of Communism, the desperate dream of world imperialism ever since October 1917:

"... I think the things we're seeing not only in Poland but the reports that are beginning to come out of Russia itself ... are an indication that communism is an aberration — it's not a normal way of living for human beings, and I think we're

seeing the first beginning cracks, the beginning of the end."

— *New York Times*, 17, June.

These were no mere philosophical musings. US imperialism is deeply involved in fomenting anti-Communist reaction in Poland, especially through the AFL-CIO bureaucracy which has contributed \$300,000 and their first printing press to Solidarity.

While engaged in subverting Poland from within, the Reagan administration is also trying to provoke the Soviet Union into military intervention, in part through inflammatory statements like the above. Reagan/Haig want to see Polish workers hurling Molotov cocktails at Russian tanks in order to fuel their anti-Soviet war drive to white heat.

While the motion in the year-long



Counterrevolution is no joke. Polish university students wear "EA" ("anti-socialist element") T-shirts.

Polish crisis has been toward pro-imperialist counterrevolution, the condition of cold dual power also created an opening for the crystallization of an authentically revolutionary workers party which could reverse this process from within. As Trotskyists, therefore, we oriented toward the potential for development of a left opposition from among those Solidarity and Communist party militants who wanted a genuine "socialist renewal" by seeking to recover the internationalist traditions of Lenin and Luxemburg, perverted in the service of the Stalinist bureaucrats. A revolutionary vanguard in Poland would seek to split Solidarity, winning the mass of the workers away from the anti-Soviet nationalist leadership around Walesa. It would put forward a program centering on strict separation of church and state, unconditional military defense of the Soviet bloc against capitalism-imperialism, and a political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy and establishment of a democratically elected workers government based on soviets to carry out socialist economic planning (including the collectivization of agriculture). Yet we fully recognize that this program goes very much against the stream in Poland today and that the dominant tendency was for Solidarity to consolidate around a counterrevolutionary course in the name of nation, church and "the free world".

## Solidarity Calls for "Bourgeois-Democratic" Counterrevolution

For a year the Solidarity leadership stopped short of openly calling for the overthrow of the official "Communist" system (a bureaucratically ruled workers state) and its replacement by (bourgeois) "democracy" like in the West. Walesa in particular liked to posture as a simple trade unionist, as if Solidarity was the same as the AFL-CIO in the United States or the DGB in West Germany. But as the economy descended into chaos, everyone recognized that simple trade unionism was impossible. Industrial and agricultural production has collapsed, the stores are empty, people wait hours to buy food and other necessities. The head of Solidarity's Warsaw chapter likened the organization to a union of seamen aboard a sinking ship. The obvious help-

lessness of the Polish Stalinists and evident reluctance of the Kremlin to intervene militarily further emboldened Solidarity's so-called "militant" wing.

The organization made its first bid for power on the economic front. Last April Solidarity came out with a program for the abolition of centralized economic planning, the election of enterprise managers by the workers and enterprise autonomy on the basis of market composition. In the anarchic conditions of Poland such self-managed enterprises would quickly free themselves from all but nominal state control. If carried out, Solidarity's economic program would lead to immediate mass unemployment, facilitate imperialist economic penetration and greatly strengthen the forces pushing toward capitalist restoration.

(For a fuller discussion of this, see "Market Socialism" Is Anti-Socialist", *WV* no 287, 14 August.) If the government does not agree to this program, Solidarity is threatening to conduct its own national referendum as the first step to taking over effective control of the economy.

But the actions of Solidarity's first congress go much further even than this. Its open appeal for "free trade unions" in the Soviet bloc is both an arrogant provocation of Moscow and a declaration of ideological solidarity with Western imperialism. While the demand for trade unions independent of bureaucratic control is integral to the Trotskyist program for proletarian political revolution in the Stalinist-ruled Soviet bloc, the slogan of "free trade unions" has long since been associated with NATO imperialism. At the start of the Cold War the fanatically anti-Communist Meanyite bureaucracy set up the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in closest collaboration with the Central Intelligence Agency. It is therefore quite fitting that accompanying Lane Kirkland to the Solidarity congress will be none other than Irving Brown, "Mr AFL-CIA", whose disruption of the labour movement on behalf of US imperialism spans three and a half decades. The Solidarity leadership is well aware of the anti-Communist meaning of the slogan, "free trade unions", as they have been dealing with the AFL-CIO tops for months.

Even more important than "free trade unions" in the ideological arsenal of imperialist anti-Sovietism is "democracy" — not workers democracy based on soviets as in the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 but bourgeois parliamentary "democracy". Here also the Solidarity congress fully adhered to the "bourgeois-democratic" counterrevolution. The important Warsaw chapter put forward a motion calling for "free elections" to the Sejm, further stating that "the road to the nation's sovereignty is through democratic elections to representative bodies" (*New York Times*, 10 September). In the world of Solidarity everything, including democracy, is subordinate to Polish national sovereignty. (For a theoretical discussion of "bourgeois-democratic" counterrevolution in bureaucratically ruled workers states, see Shane

Mage, "Pure Democracy" or Political Revolution in East Europe", *Spartacist* no 30, Autumn 1980.)

Assuming the Warsaw regime was powerless to prevent it (as is probably the case) and that the Soviet army didn't intervene, what kind of government would emerge from free elections to a sovereign parliament in Poland today? A quarter to a third of the voters would be peasant smallholders, who will do what their local priest tells them to do. Their social attitude was summed up by British journalist Tim Garton Ash: "It is the conservative Catholic peasants of South-Eastern Poland who would overthrow communism at the drop of a Cardinal's hat" (*Spectator*, 14 February). Historically, Marxian socialism has been a powerful and at times dominant current within the Polish industrial proletariat. But 35 years of Stalinist bureaucratism has made much of the Polish working class sympathetic at this time to clerical-nationalism and pro-Western social democracy, while demoralizing the rest. The likely result of parliamentary democracy would be the victory of anti-Communist, nationalist forces seeking an alliance with NATO imperialism against the Soviet Union.

Such a government would mean the counterrevolution in power. In 1935 Trotsky observed that "the restoration to power of a Menshevik and Social Revolutionary bloc would suffice to obliterate the socialist construction" ("The Workers State, Thermidor and Bonapartism", *Writings* [1934-35]). And the parties that would win "free elections" in the Poland of Wojtyla and Walesa are far to the right of the Russian Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries. They would be closer to Pilsudskiite nationalism, hankering after the great Poland of the fascist dictator of the interwar years.

And what would happen to any left opposition to such "bourgeois-democratic" counterrevolution? In his report to the Solidarity congress the organization's secretary, Andrzej Celinski, declared that his Communist opponents "do not hesitate to enter the road of national treason" (UPI dispatch, 6 September). Given the mood of the delegates, the accusation of "national treason" is the most inflammatory political denunciation imaginable. As Solidarity moves to reassert national sovereignty, loyal members and supporters of the PUWP will become the victims of a white terror.

Fake-Trotskyists like Ernest Mandel of the European-centered United Secretariat and Jack Barnes of the American Socialist Workers Party, tailing anti-Soviet social democracy, argue that Solidarity's leaders have not explicitly called for the restoration of capitalism. But they clearly have called for the overthrow of the existing state and its replacement by a clerical-nationalist regime with close ties to NATO imperialism. And this would not be a peaceful process but a bloody counterrevolution. Trotsky debunked the notion of a peaceful, gradual transformation from proletarian to bourgeois state power as running the film of reformism in reverse.

As for the resulting economic transformation, Trotsky also pointed out that "Should a bourgeois counterrevolution succeed in the USSR, the new government for a lengthy period would have to base itself upon the nationalized economy" ("Not a Workers' and Not a

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Australasian  
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# Lawyers for Labor Austerity

The Wran ALP government's walkover victory at the 19 September NSW state elections was in no way any gain for the working class. Wran's five years have been an object lesson in the *real* program of social democracy: "responsible" management of the capitalist state and defence of the bosses' profits against the working class. The bourgeoisie decided to stick with a proven winner, leaving the hapless Liberal/Country Party opposition led by the small-time, right-wing hustler type McDonald to be trounced. McDonald lost his own seat and the rump opposition was left in disarray.

The Spartacist League called for no vote to Labor in these elections, as our leaflet reprinted below explains. The ALP is the chief obstacle within the working class to proletarian revolution and we struggle to politically destroy it through splitting away its working-class base. At times critical support in elections furthers this struggle. Placing it in office facilitates our political exposure of its leadership and program before advanced sections of the working class, creating favorable political conditions for winning them over to the revolutionary party. But militant workers now know what Wran stands for: they still vote ALP only because they see no alternative, not out of any confidence that Wran will defend their class interests.

For Leninists critical support is only a *tactic*. But the way it is carried out and its purpose can indicate fundamental political differences. In withdrawing critical support at this time we seek to confront social-democratic "lesser evilism" head on and break militants disillusioned with Labor's strikebreaking and austerity from social democracy to communism. But for the fake-left groups voting Labor is a strategic duty. The "criticism" of these loyal foot-soldiers for Labor is designed not to destroy Labor's authority but to pressure it leftward. Between their "tactic" and ours lies the gulf between parliamentary reformism and a revolutionary class-struggle program.

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP), whose Labor-loyalism is most thought out, didn't run but pitched in for Wran.

Their election manifesto echoed the line Wran and every ALP and trade-union bureaucrat uses to whip left critics into place — "a Liberal state government would be a big setback for working people" — you're stuck with us, the Libs will be worse. Whichever way you cut it this is nothing but apologetics for Labor austerity. Epitomising this, one Larry Douglas, in a letter to the SWP's *Direct Action* (23 September), attacks our call for trade-union candidates to oppose the ALP. His punch line is that the Parramatta hospital staff's candidate, standing against the hospital's closure, gave his election preferences to the Liberals. Hundreds of jobs are on the line and workers' hospital services threatened, but these parliamentary cretins are horrified that the ungrateful hospital workers dare endanger some Laborite seat-warmer's "struggle" to retain his fat salary.

The fake-left present their loyalty to Labor reformism as an elementary act of

class solidarity against the bosses; voting ALP is just like joining a union. The SWP and *Socialist Fight* reverently anoint the ALP "The Mass Party of The Working Class", "The Party of The Trade Unions" etc as though it is simply a broad, amorphous united-front formation akin to a soviet or trade union. This is false. The ALP has long been a hardened social-democratic party with a tested pro-capitalist leadership, its value to the bourgeoisie lying in its organic links with the trade-union bureaucracy and their combined ability to discipline workers for capitalist austerity. And it is here, in the unions, in the building of alternative class-struggle leadership to the bureaucracy that the political hold of Labor reformism will centrally be broken.

All of the ALP's left satellites share the belief that the ALP running the capitalist state can be pressured to the left. The SWP says "it will be easier to win concessions from a Labor government". Paul White's *Socialist Fight* (Sept/Oct)

even declares that "only an ALP government offers the *possibility* of defending workers living standards". For Marxists it is axiomatic that the state is not class-neutral or transformable as the reformists imply. It is the ruling class' machine for oppressing the working class. The SWP manifesto with its "State government support for all those fighting against capitalist exploitation and oppression!" and their call for a "Labor government with socialist policies" explicitly deny this.

To give some pretence of a Marxist cover to this parliamentarist drivel the SWP dresses up its "Labor government with socialist policies" as a "workers and farmers government" culling from Trotsky's *Transitional Program*. But on this slogan Trotsky leaves no room for doubt, "it represented nothing more than the popular designation for the already established dictatorship of the proletariat". That is, a government based on the workers organisations like soviets and the armed working class, not a left-ALP ministry in Her Majesty's parliament. The peaceful-legal SWP believes however that its "Labor government with socialist policies" will peacefully expropriate the bourgeoisie and transform its repressive state by Acts of Parliament.

"It would abolish the capitalist police — particularly the political police agencies like ASIO and the special branches — and put the maintenance of order into the hands of neighbourhood and factory committees ... measures such as election of officers would ensure that the army defended working people not capitalists." (*Direct Action*, 23 September)

Lenin's *State and Revolution* is unambiguous that the working class must smash the bourgeois state through socialist revolution and replace it with its own state, the proletarian dictatorship. So the following week *Direct Action* tried to clean up their too-explicit reformism but even here their reformist two-stage schema is out in the open. First, vote in Labor "with socialist policies", and then "destroy both the capitalists' state and their economic power", a "process" the length of which depends on "concrete

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## Reprint of Spartacist League leaflet, 14 September 1981.

After 6 years in power the NSW State Labor Party of Neville Wran is up for reelection on 19 September. A snap election, it's a virtual no-contest. Why? Because Wran, the Queens Counsel turned politician, has proved himself a very effective bosses man. The ruling class knows it, and so does the ALP. The current opinion polls give Labor 60% and the Liberal/National Country Party coalition, in massive disarray, are now scrambling under 30%. But amongst Labor's base in the organised working class there are very few illusions. A vote this Saturday for "their" government will be less a vote of confidence than a vote for "the devil you know".

Wran has been running the capitalist state in NSW, its cops and its prisons, for 6 years now. "It's got to be Wran" is a promise of 3 more years of the same. The message is that Labor can do it better — if you want the workers to "eat" austerity then it will have to be Labor. And Wran stands proudly on his record, a proven effective implementer of capitalist austerity and defender of capitalist property and law and order. As the tough former Liberal Premier, Bob "ride over the bastards" Askin, noted before he died, he'd do it like Wran (*National Times*, 14 September). For the working class there is no basis in this election for a vote to Labor any more than the openly bourgeois Liberals. The Spartacist League says: fight the capitalist austerity drive; down with government strike-breaking and arbitration, build a revolutionary, class-struggle leadership in the labour movement. No vote to the Labor traitors!

Since coming to power in 1976 Wran has shown the working class the business of Labor reformism in power: to run the bosses state and all that it entails. In the tradition of the Chifley Federal Labor

government, which in 1949 called in the troops to smash the miners strike, Wran began his term by calling in the cops against striking pickets at the Fairfax press empire in 1976 (repeated in 1980). To cap off his first term in office he called the last State elections on scab ballots, over the cop-smashed picket lines of striking printers at the Government Printing Office. In 1978 as then-Minister for Police he presided over mass arrests of gay rights demonstrators and two years later his warder thugs at Parramatta jail shot down like animals prisoners who called a sit-in to protest Wran's announcement that thirty warders accused of sadistic brutality during the Nagle commission would never face charges.

Wran's government has been, as much as Fraser's, one of capitalist austerity. For all the Labor reformists' hot air against the Razor Gang cuts into hospitals and health care it is Wran's government that is carrying them out. Capital spending for health and public transport

funding has been slashed by over 20 percent and cuts in education spending have been more than matched with increases in funding for private schools. Wran's "success story", cutting costs in public transport, has been achieved by job cuts in rail and bus. The fare rises will come after the elections. And workers, who now join long queues and then crawl to and from work on peak hour buses, will testify to how "efficient" elimination of bus conductors has been. This was a major defeat for busworkers, rammed down their throats by Wran's lieutenants in the trade-union bureaucracy without the semblance of a fight.

Capitalist austerity, strikebreaking, attacks on democratic rights — this is the face of Labor reformism in power. Wran's promise of a better future rests on making NSW palatable to international mining and development capital. There is not even the pretence of reformist tinkering with the system. In this election Labor offers no alternative to the Liberals. What militants should

demand is that union candidates, standing on a full class-struggle program, be run *against* Labor. The projected closure of the Parramatta hospital has prompted staff there to stand a candidate against the ALP. But any such candidate must show that they have supported the struggles of the working class *in action*, not just with words, before even being considered for critical support.

## Critical Support — "Like a Rope Supports a Hanging Man"

For Leninists the extension of critical support in elections to the mass reformist workers parties can, at times, be a useful tactic in the struggle to break workers from illusions in parliamentary reformism to a revolutionary perspective. This is particularly true when these parties have been out of power and there are widespread illusions in their left-talking rhetoric and promises of reform. Thus the Spartacist League gave critical electoral support to Wran in 1976 and to Labor federally in 1972, 1977 and 1980. In these situations critical support can both draw a class line between the mass workers party and the direct political representatives of the bourgeoisie and, by putting them in power, expose their true program and allegiances.

Even when Labor has been in power the tactic *may* retain its validity, as in the case of the December 1975 Federal elections after the Whitlam sacking. Then the ruling-class conspiracy to throw Labor out and make it a scapegoat for the economic recession (following only months after the first real austerity budget of the 1974-75 recession, handed down by Labor's Bill Hayden) served to obscure Labor's treachery and, with the aid of the reformist left, in fact massively reinforced illusions in Labor.

However, for Marxists, at no time is this tactic based on a preference for "the

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When the Red Army intervened in Afghanistan in December 1979 on the side of the left nationalist PDPA against a band of feudal mullahs and landlords backed by imperialism the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) said "Hail Red Army!". Our unambiguous Trotskyist support to the Soviet intervention in the face of imperialist hysteria was greeted in horror by Moscow-line Stalinists and left social democrats alike for it cut sharply against their shattering hopes of detente and peaceful co-existence with imperialism and put pointblank the question of defence of the Soviet Union.

As for the "United Secretariat" (USec), the largest of the international pretenders to Trotsky's Fourth International, it split three ways. Surprisingly the reformist wing led by the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP), supported by the similarly reformist SWP in Australia, came out in support of the Soviet action (based on the premise that the Red Army was aiding a fictitious "workers and peasants revolution" in Afghanistan). The centrist European-based followers of Ernest Mandel condemned the intervention and a wing of their supporters in the British International Marxist Group (IMG) openly joined with the imperialists' counter-revolutionary call for Soviet troops out of "poor little Afghanistan". A little over a year later and running scared, Reaganite reaction ensconced in the White House, this fake-Trotskyist cabal was "united" (in itself an unusual event) around this call for counterrevolution. The title of their May 1981 International Executive Committee appeal could have been confused with a communique from NATO foreign ministers or the US State Department, reading "For an End to the Soviet Occupation of Afghanistan! For the National Rights of the Afghan Peoples!"

Everyone in the world knows that the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan would be a big step toward the triumph of bloody counterrevolution in its most barbaric form — the enslavement of women to the veil, pre-capitalist exploitation of the peasantry, physical extermination of the country's small modernising intelligentsia. Everyone knows this would mean a fanatically anti-Soviet government on the southern border of the USSR. Western imperialism has therefore made the demand for Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan a major focus of its current Cold War offensive. That is why the French Communist Party (PCF) had to reverse its previous support for the Soviet presence in Afghanistan to obtain a few minor ministries in a NATO-allied government. *And that is also why Ernest Mandel's USec, too, changed its line.*

Unlike Marchais' PCF, the USec has not actually reversed its position, since it never supported the Soviet intervention against the Islamic reactionaries to begin with. The Mandelite centre had previously hedged the question. While strongly condemning the Soviet intervention, it stopped short of the outright *counterrevolutionary demand* for withdrawal. A USec majority resolution in late January 1980 stated correctly:

"In the conflict between the reactionary coalition and imperialism on the one side and the Soviet troops and the [left-nationalist] PDPA government on the other, the demand for Afghan national sovereignty in the name of the right of peoples to self-determination would be nothing but a democratic guise for the aims of reaction and imperialism. The withdrawal of the Soviet troops would in no way assure any freedom for the Afghan nationalities to decide their own course. It would only open the way for the installation of a reactionary regime oppressing the workers and peasants, a regime beholden to Washington, which would consolidate Washington's position in the region."

— *Intercontinental Press*,  
3 March 1980

What has changed since these words were written? Certainly not the war in Afghanistan. The issues there have remained substantially the same since the massive Soviet intervention in late December 1979. What has changed is the USec. The rightward motion of the European-based Mandelite current is so rapid that it now calls for what little



# Now more than ever

## Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!

over a year ago it characterised as "a democratic guise for the aims of reaction and imperialism"! Throwing overboard the remnants of New Leftism, the European USec sections are talking about liquidating into the pro-NATO social-democratic parties of Francois Mitterrand, Tony Benn and Helmut Schmidt. Its pro-imperialist line shift on Afghanistan gives the lie to any claim that such an entry would be designed to win working-class militants to Trotskyism, a decisive element of which is the defence of the Soviet Union against imperialism.

In fact the USec's new line on Afghanistan is even more counterrevolutionary than the stated position of Mitterrand or Tony Benn. Mandel & Co are not just calling for withdrawal but for actual support to some of the anti-Soviet guerrillas: "Instead, the progressive forces which grow out of the national struggle against the occupation must be supported," says the paraphrase by *Internationalen* (paper of the Swedish KAF). "Progressive forces"?! The landlords, moneylenders, tribal chiefs and mullahs fighting the Soviet army and its left-nationalist allies would be judged reactionary by the standards of Genghis Khan! Hoping to gull the innocent, the USec invents a "third camp" in Afghanistan: "These progressive forces are forced to struggle against both the occupation power and the right-wing rebels and imperialism", the resolution states. But all talk about "progressive" anti-Soviet forces fighting in Afghanistan cannot hide the USec's support to imperialist-backed feudal counter-revolution.

The American SWP of Jack Barnes anticipated by a few months the Mandelites rightward shift, but this time their Australian followers stayed put leaving

themselves alone with the Swedish KAF as the only sections in the USec opposing the criminal call for withdrawal. As we noted at the time,

"Beneath the difference is simple reformist nationalism: the Jack Barnes leadership of the US SWP brought its Afghanistan line into closer harmony with the rest of its politics because of the intensely anti-Soviet political climate in the US. In a country where even sections of the Victorian Socialist Left defend the Soviet intervention, where Fraser's anti-Soviet Olympic boycott campaign was massively unpopular, the [Australian SWP] Percy leadership feels a pressure to *maintain* its position — if only to distinguish it from mainstream social democracy." ("SWP revisionists fall out over Afghanistan", *ASp* no 81, February 1981)

### The "Afghan revolution" or "Spartacist logic"?

But not a word of the real situation in their "international" will you find in the pages of the SWP's *Direct Action*. At the time of the Soviet intervention *DA* characterised the position of groups such as the "state capitalist" International Socialists who called for the defeat of the Red Army as "a call for a military victory to world imperialism", and said those, like the Eurocommunist CPA, who called for Soviet withdrawal were "essentially saying the same thing: that the USSR should be defeated and that the Afghan masses should be placed at the mercy of bloodthirsty rightist gangs, backed by the CIA" (*Direct Action*, 24 January 1980). And indeed this is precisely Barnes' position. No doubt encouraged by the thought of life under Reagan the Barnesites discovered in their switch-around that "rather than being liberators, the Soviet troops are the foreign occupiers" which has "put the vanguard

of the toiling masses of Afghanistan in a worse, not a better, position to mobilise mass opposition to their exploiters" (*Intercontinental Press*, 22 December 1980; emphasis in original).

In a 101-page opus written at the beginning of the year entitled "Afghanistan — Where the New Line of the American Socialist Workers Party Goes Wrong", Percy & Co spell out Barnes' third-campist methodology (without ever drawing out the conclusions). They argue against Barnes:

"They [the American SWP] tell us that the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was not a bureaucratic response to the pressures of the international class struggle as it was being fought in Afghanistan, but a 'consequence and continuation' of policies which the Kremlin pursues independently of the international class struggle. They assert that the bureaucracy is always driven to suppress social revolutions on its borders as a result of its domestic needs.

"If the US comrades are right about this, the distinction between a caste and a class would be a distinction without a difference....

"If the comrades are right, then the bureaucracy is inherently expansionist just as much as is an imperialist ruling class, even though the reasons for the expansion might be different."

For anyone with the slightest familiarity with Trotsky's polemics against pro-imperialist "third-camp" ideologues there should be no doubt. In asserting that the Soviet bureaucracy is *consistently* counterrevolutionary Barnes equates the bureaucratic caste in the Kremlin with an imperialist ruling class.

So what conclusions have the Percyites drawn? For genuine Trotskyists the development of such a pro-imperialist position would necessitate internal factional struggle. But the Australian



# SWP/CPA on Poland—in the Camp of Counterrevolution

The crisis of Stalinist rule in Poland, now the centre-stage for US imperialist provocations against the Soviet bloc, is exerting massive pressure on the reformist and centrist left. Its unifying centre? Solidarity (Solidarnosc), the clerical-nationalist "union", now preparing its move for power in Poland. Its program? Capitalist counterrevolution in Poland and accommodation to imperialism as Reagan threatens nuclear holocaust with his anti-Soviet war drive.

These were the issues at a public meeting in Newcastle 23 September. The discussion was sharply polarised between the Eurocommunist Communist Party (CPA) and the fake-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), united on uncritical fulsome praise for Solidarity, and supporters of the Trotskyist Spartacist League (SL). CPA spokesman and ex-Pabloite Denis Freney, who represented the CPA at the recent Polish PUPW Congress, was, like fellow presenter, SWPer and *Direct Action* editor Nita Keig, mindlessly ecstatic:

"I think it's been many years since I've been through such an inspiring experience, many years since I've experienced that sort of élan, that sort of feeling, that exists in Poland today".

For these social-democrats, ever eager to present their "anti-Stalinist" credentials as a ticket to respectability before their own bourgeoisie, the crimes, excesses and incompetence of the Stalinist bureaucrats in Poland are used to alibi the growing threat of counterrevolution. And predictably, while there was much breastbeating about "bureaucracy", US imperialism's war drive and counterrevolutionary plotting were wised out of existence until a Spartacist speaker intervened from the floor.

"Our perspective for Poland is linked with our perspective of getting rid of capitalism throughout the world. There's been very little talk about NATO, about US imperialism's drive against the Soviet Union. All we've been hearing is that there is a privileged bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and in Poland. Maybe some of them are getting a little bit too fat, right? Well, the main enemy of the workers of the world is imperialism, and primarily their own imperialism. And there is no imperialism in the Soviet bloc ... The essential thing is defence of the

Soviet Union, of the Soviet bloc. With the Warsaw Pact! Against NATO and US imperialism! That is something these social-democrats of the CPA and SWP refuse to do. They have taken a side, but there are no neutrals in a war drive against the Soviet Union. You're either with it or against it. (Interjection: There's no problem in Poland?) Yes, there's a problem in Poland. The church is too strong, the kulaks are organising as a kulak force and the working class is being misled into the hands of imperialism. Yes, there's something wrong in Poland and that's the fault of the bureaucracy. It's got to be got rid of. But who's going to get rid of the bureaucracy? Someone that doesn't defend the Soviet bloc? Then it's a counterrevolution!"

There was no reply. While Solidarity itself openly woos imperialist support, its leftist lawyers prefer to ignore this. When SL speakers raised key elements of a Trotskyist program for Poland such as promoting collectivisation of agriculture, the cancellation of the imperialist debt and social revolution in West Europe the reaction from the mainly CPA/SWP audience was derision and hostility. Both are *against* collectivisation in Poland and *defend* private enterprise in the countryside. Freney denounced central planning in favour of the "free market" of "self-management" economics, arguing that "if you're not able to compete or sell, to somebody else who's also doing that, then you've got to go". Ever the idiot optimist, Freney saw in the openly aggressive posture of the church against abortion an advantage — it had produced "an independent women's movement"! Keig just trotted out the SWP's alibi for supporting Khomeini's Islamic reaction in Iran. "People saw [the church] as a cover", she said, "one outlet through which they're able to express a certain degree of political opposition". Presumably that's why the priests held masses before each day's session at the Solidarity Congress.

The counterrevolutionary content of Solidarity is out in the open and the SWP welcomes it with both hands, proudly reprinting in *Direct Action* (23 September) this anti-Soviet Polish chauvinist "folk song" Solidarity delegates sang at the beginning and end of each session:

"Poland is not yet lost as long as we live; what the unjust foreign power has taken from us,

we'll win back with our swords."

The following week *Direct Action* (30 September) reprinted "greetings" to the Solidarity Congress from the tiny pro-imperialist "Free Trade Union Organising Committee in the Soviet Union" that ended with the call "May God help you in your historic efforts"! Newcastle CPAer Harry Anderson even rebuked Freney for trying to clean up Solidarity's act on anti-Sovietism. "Anti-Sovietism is part and parcel of Polish culture! Goes back hundreds of years", he proclaimed. But most grotesque was the prostration of these reformists to open anti-communism, in the form of a Polish "comrade" at the meeting who denounced the Soviet Army that liberated Poland from Nazi fascism as "imperialist", stated bluntly that he was an anti-Russian patriot and openly called for the overthrow of the "system" in Poland. Freney willingly went to bat for this anti-communist:

"I don't agree with your conclusions but I agree with a lot of what you said ... That's how a lot of Poles see it ... There is a lot of anti-communism in Poland because people identify communism with the system that they have known for the past 36 years. That's the reality. That's explicable, it's understandable, and if that's communism they've experienced for the last 36 years they're right to be anti-communists, in that sense. But really the question is that it's not communism."

Freney of course is quite happy to support Stalinist bureaucratic rule in Yugoslavia, the model for the CPA's "self-managed socialism". There the introduction of "market socialism" has led to rampant inflation of over 50%, an unemployment rate of 14% and massive inequality (see "Market Socialism" is Anti-Socialist", in *Asp* no 87, September 1981). Polish nationalism, like "self-management", "pluralism" and "free elections" are together unmistakable signposts of the move toward capitalist counterrevolution. As an SL speaker at the meeting pointed out:

"It's no accident that Worker Solidarity aligns itself with Rural Solidarity. The views of Rural Solidarity that excludes specifically agricultural workers from their organisation are very similar to the

views of that man ... they're anti-Soviet. They hate Russians, they hate Jews, they represent all that is backward about Polish society. And these are the views that you are taking up when you say things in Poland are forever moving forward. Well, things can move backward. We are for proletarian political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy. We're not for replacing it with capitalism ... and fundamental to that is solidarity with the workers of the Soviet Union."

Poland once again poses the Russian Question point blank for the left. If the collapse began with "poor little Afghanistan", the left crumbling before the imperialist hysteria, Poland has brought it all home. As Reagan lays the tripwires for WWII the fake-left are setting out the ideological trappings for accommodation to the imperialist war drive, at the same time setting up guard on left flank for the Labor bureaucracy. Accusing the SL of an "utterly reactionary and racist attitude" to Poland, of being "objectively ... in the bosses' camp" and a "psychiatric problem" Keig laid it out plainly. Solidarity, she said, is "a democratic movement" and "the existence of Solidarity, the existence of that movement in Poland, is a plus for us ... that in fact socialism doesn't have to be identified with the sort of totalitarianism and bureaucratic rule that we see in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China today".

"Democracy" versus "totalitarianism", these are historic codewords for anti-communist social-democrats. Under that counterposition Kautsky opposed the Russian Revolution and the Allied imperialists and their labour lieutenants used the workers as cannon fodder for the carnage and plunder of WWII. This time the target is Moscow with the aim of rolling back the historic gains for the world proletariat represented by the collectivised and planned economies. And as the reformists prepare their peace offerings to the Frasers/Haydens against "totalitarianism" so too they prepare the ground for reaction against the revolutionists. But the Trotskyists will not flinch. No to the "democracy" of the Vatican and imperialist reaction! Defend the gains of October! Smash the counter-revolutionary threat! ■

SWP polemic ends in mealy-mouthed fashion hoping that "at least the ensuing discussion should help Marxists on both sides of the question to deepen their understanding of the issues in dispute". Meanwhile *Direct Action* has run a seemingly obscure 6-part series (22 April-3 June 1981), "Imperialism and the Afghan revolution" which, without ever saying so, is a polemic against the Barnesites.

The very title of the series shows that despite the SWP's orthodox posturing the US and Australian SWPs in fact share a common framework on Afghanistan, centred on the mythical "Afghan revolution" and the old liberal refrain of "self-determination". Barnes, with a little help from the American bourgeoisie, now no longer thinks the Red Army is "aiding" the "Afghan revolution's self-determination". The Australian SWP's counter to this, using the Cuban bureaucracy as their guide (who both SWPs label "revolutionary" and ludicrously counterpose to the "Stalinist" Russians, ignoring the fact that their positions on Afghanistan, like most questions, are virtually identical) operates on the same methodology.

"The Soviet intervention, far from violating that self-determination, prevented it from being crushed by imperialism."

— *Direct Action*, 27 May, 1981

In practice both these reformist groups

consistently liquidate the need for a revolutionary proletarian party, calling on the "dynamic" or "the world relationship of class forces" to tail whatever they see as the "main chance". So today they continue to support Khomeini's "mass movement" of Islamic religious reaction despite the fact that the necks of their own supporters in Iran are on the line. In Afghanistan the Percy SWP's support to the Soviet intervention is *not* rooted in the Trotskyist stand for the unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union. In 1977, tailing the anti-uranium freaks, they declared that "military defence" was "meaningless" in the nuclear age and embraced pro-imperialist "disarmament" propaganda against the USSR (see "SWP 'defends' USSR with disarmament call", *Asp* no 47, October 1977). Rather they saw the Soviet bureaucracy responding "to the pressures of the international class struggle as it was being fought in Afghanistan" and noted that "if the revolution is not to be defeated, the Afghan masses will have to either force the PDPA to go further than it intends or replace it with a leadership of its own".

The Australian SWP, petty bourgeois democrats at heart, are deeply Stalinophobic and, having sided with the Soviets, predictably have an escape clause already written. In their internal polemic with Barnes they state that they would call for the withdrawal of the Red

Army "... at the point when the counterrevolution is destroyed or at least weakened sufficiently that the Afghan workers and peasants are able themselves to deal with it ...". With Castro himself declaring the "consolidation" of the Kabul regime (wooing Pakistan and Iran as part of his "non-aligned movement") this is already an open-ended proposition for the SWP. Since the *only* force which stands between the left-nationalist PDPA and its thin layer of social support and slaughter at the hands of the imperialist-backed rabble is the Red Army, this amounts to a position *against* bringing the Afghan masses out of the feudal backwardness and oppression in which they live. Moreover, it also presumes that an indigenous proletarian socialist revolution is actually possible in Afghanistan.

And it is here that Barnes (having vanished the "workers and peasants revolution" with the line change) holds up to the Percytes the horrible spectre of "Spartacist logic" to frighten them off. In response to Barnes, and to guard their own left flank, the Percyte SWP have to deride our demand "Extend social gains of the October Revolution to Afghan Peoples", the incorporation of Afghanistan into the USSR's collectivised economy, as "absurd". For at one swoop it cuts through the myth of the "Afghan revolution". The indigenous proletariat of Afghanistan is some 35,000, about one-

eighth the number of mullahs in this godforsaken pre-feudal country! As Percy knows, we recognise full well that the Red Army in Afghanistan is Brezhnev's. Continued on page seven

For full details see US/SWP's about-face on Afghanistan

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# Solidarity...

Continued from page two

Bourgeois State?" *Writings [1937-38]*). State industry would be starved for new investment or even repairs, since this would divert resources from the rapidly growing private sector. At the same time, foreign capitalist investment would be invited in on a massive scale. Walesa openly calls for joint enterprises with Western capitalists as the salvation of the Polish economy. Wages would be kept low to compete on the world market. Hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of workers would be laid off as a "necessary" rationalization measure. Certainly the mass of deluded workers in Solidarity do not want this. But the restoration of capitalism in all its ruthlessness would follow, as the night follows the day, from Solidarity's program of "Western-style democracy".

## Tell Me Who Your Friends Are...

While proclaiming the need for "free trade unions" in the Soviet bloc, Solidarity has conspicuously *not* solidarized with workers' struggles in *capitalist* countries. When Ronald Reagan fired 12,000 striking air controllers, the entire national union membership, practically every trade-union federation in the Western world protested. But not the Polish Solidarity! Solidarity spokesman Zygmunt Przetakiewicz attended the New York City Labor Day demonstration in the company of Albert Shanker. At a time when even the most right-wing AFL-CIO bureaucrats were denouncing Reagan's massive union busting and savage cuts in social welfare programs, the Solidarity spokesman maintained a careful neutrality in the conflict between the American working class and the most reactionary government in half a century. When asked what he thought of Reagan's policies, Przetakiewicz replied, "I would not like to be involved in this kind of thing" (*New York Times*, 8 September).

At the Labor Day demonstration Przetakiewicz announced Solidarity was opening its first foreign office in the New York headquarters of Shanker's United Federation of Teachers (UFT). The UFT is hardly a typical American business union. It is the main organizational base for the Social Democrats, USA, otherwise known as "State Department socialists". Shanker's Socialist Party (which in 1972 changed its name to avoid the stigma of socialism!) were hawks in the Vietnam War till the bitter end, even after Nixon/Kissinger had given it up as a lost cause.

The Social Democrats are despised by mainstream liberals as crazed, anti-communist warmongers. In the film *Sleeper* by left-liberal humorist Woody Allen, the typical New York hero (or anti-hero) reawakens a few centuries in the future and learns that his civilization was wiped out in a nuclear war. He asks, how did this war begin? He's told: we really don't know, but we think a man by the name of Albert Shanker acquired the atomic bomb.

In the past decade the Social Demo-

crats have developed the closest ties to the Meanyite machine which runs the national AFL-CIO. Kirkland/Shanker have done more than anyone else in the American labor movement to prepare the way for Reagan's massive arms buildup and anti-Soviet war drive. These two criminals are actively working for a nuclear first strike against the Soviet Union. Kirkland is a member of the Committee on the Present Danger, a right-wing militarist pressure group which attacked Carter for "selling out" to the Russians in the SALT negotiations. The *first point* in a recent resolution on global politics by the Social Democrats, USA, states:

"The major priorities for the [Reagan] administration in the area of foreign policy should be:

"1) *Rebuilding American nuclear and conventional strength*: The correction of the imbalance, along the lines suggested by such responsible defense analysts as those associated with the Committee on the Present Danger, must be undertaken as rapidly as possible." [italics in original]

—"The Global Vision of Social Democracy," *New America*, January/February

There's a saying: tell me who your friends are and I'll tell you who you are. Well, these are Solidarity's American friends.

## Soviet Russia and the Counterrevolutionary Danger in Poland

Faced with the counterrevolutionary danger in Poland, the Kremlin Stalinists have gone beyond denunciations in *Pravda* to mobilizing the Soviet workers against Solidarity. Mass meetings in the giant Zil auto and truck factory in Moscow and similar plants in Leningrad and elsewhere were held to approve a public answer to Solidarity's appeal to Soviet workers:

"They ask us to renounce ourselves, the results of our work, of our struggle; to betray millions of people who fell in battles against imperialism, to betray our Communist future."

—*New York Times*, 12 September

These words and these meetings are not simply bureaucratic displays from above without support at the base. Doubtless the Kremlin Stalinists try to whip up Great Russian anti-Polish chauvinism. Furthermore, Soviet workers and collective farmers resent the fact that for years Moscow has subsidized the Polish economy, although the standard of living in Warsaw and Gdansk is far higher than in Moscow or Kiev. Even Western bourgeois journalists report that the Russian man-in-the-street has no sympathy for Solidarity and what it stands for. Why? It is not primarily chauvinism or economic resentment.

The fundamental reason is that the Soviet working masses want to defend the collectivized social system born in the October Revolution, despite its subsequent Stalinist degeneration, against world imperialism. Unlike in Poland, where a deformed workers state was imposed from above by the Red Army, the Russian working class in 1917 took history into its own hands and will not lightly relinquish the social conquests of October. Moreover, Soviet working people keenly remember the 20 million lost fighting Hitler's Germany. 600,000 of these fell liberating Poland from the horror of the Nazi occupation. The Soviet working people know that the terrible nuclear arsenal of American imperialism, with the anti-Communist fanatics Reagan/Haig on the trigger finger, is aimed at them.

They fear the transformation of East Europe into imperialist-allied states extending NATO to their own border. The Kremlin bureaucrats cynically exploit this consciousness to rally support for their crushing of popular unrest and democratic aspirations in East Europe, as in Czechoslovakia in 1968. But the Poland of Wojtyla and Walesa is not the Czechoslovakia of Dubcek's "socialism with a human face". Now the counterrevolutionary danger is all too real. Any day Poland could explode into a 1921 Kronstadt-

style counterrevolutionary rebellion on a massive scale.

But if Poland could become a giant Kronstadt, the bureaucratic regime of Brezhnev is separated by a political counterrevolution from the communist government of Lenin and Trotsky. As proletarian revolutionaries, it is not our task to advise the Kremlin Stalinists on how to deal with the counterrevolutionary situation in Poland for which they bear ultimate responsibility. They are not our saviours. We have no confidence the Russian Stalinists can or will defend the social gains of the October Revolution bureaucratically extended to Poland. In principle the Kremlin Stalinists are perfectly capable of selling Poland to the German bankers if they think they can preserve their own domestic power base. Remember the Stalin-Hitler pact. Ever since the Red Army drove out Hitler's forces at the end of World War II, the Western imperialist bourgeoisies have dreamed of "rolling back" the Soviets to the borders of the USSR (and beyond).



Red Army, here marching through Central Europe, lost 600,000 soldiers liberating Poland from German Nazi imperialism.

However, given the implacable, insane hostility of the Reagan administration and the relative weight of American as against German imperialism, giving up Poland is not a very viable option for the Soviet bureaucracy today. This is especially the case as Poland lies across the main supply and communications routes between the Soviet Union and East Germany, the main state confronting Western imperialism.

Every class-conscious worker in the world, especially in the Soviet Union, Poland and the other East European countries, must understand that Solidarity is pursuing a straight-line policy threatening the gains of the October Revolution, the greatest victory for the working class in history. Solidarity's counterrevolutionary course must be stopped! *If the Kremlin Stalinists, in their necessarily brutal, stupid way, intervene militarily to stop it, we will support this.* And we take responsibility in advance for this; whatever the idiocies and atrocities they will commit, we do not flinch from defending the crushing of Solidarity's counterrevolution.

What do revolutionaries do when the Marxist program stands counterposed to the overwhelming bulk of the working class, a situation we of course urgently seek to avoid? There can be no doubt. The task of communists must be to defend at all costs the program and gains of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Today Trotskyists find themselves in such a position over Poland, and it is necessary to swim against a powerful current of counterrevolution.

But Soviet military intervention against Solidarity will have an entirely different character than its intervention against the Islamic reactionaries in Afghanistan, which opened the possibility of liberating the Afghan peoples from the wretched conditions of feudal and pre-feudal backwardness. There we said, "Hail Red Army!" In Poland it is the Stalinists themselves, through decades of capitulation to capitalist forces, who have produced the counterrevolutionary crisis.

If a Trotskyist leadership had to intervene against counterrevolution in Poland today the conflict might be no less violent. But it would seek to mobilize those sections of the Polish working class which stand on the historic social gains of liberation of Poland from Nazi enslavement and capitalist exploitation, who hate the bureaucracy for undermining those gains, and who would fight together with the Soviet Army to defend the material foundations of a socialist future. The crimes of Stalinism, not the least the present counterrevolutionary situation in Poland, mandate proletarian political revolution in the Soviet bloc, and these workers could well be its conscious vanguard in Poland, tempered in part through a revolutionary mobilization to crush the reactionary forces of Solidarity.

The European bourgeoisies, no less than Reagan and Haig, are trying to convince the working masses to focus their fears on a supposed menace of "red imperialism". But this is starkly con-

trary to the facts. In Afghanistan the CIA is arming feudal tribesmen in an attempt to strike a blow at the southern border of the USSR, while Soviet troops act as social liberators. Vietnam is under constant menace of renewed attack from China, now overtly militarily allied with US imperialism. And the racist apartheid South African regime is increasingly becoming a central part of the "free world", acting as an American surrogate in attacking Angola with Israeli supplied weapons. Or that other showplace of the "free world", El Salvador, where American war material and Green Berets are supplying and maintaining a kill-crazed junta busy exterminating large sections of its own population.

Fake-Trotskyists and fatuous opportunists like Jack Barnes and Ernest Mandel (who hailed Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution" as progressive even as the mullahs were slaughtering their followers) now claim a proletarian political revolution is going on in Poland and Solidarity is its instrument! On the contrary, Solidarity is the translucent Trojan Horse for Reagan/Haig's fanatical anti-Soviet war drive and what is going on in Poland is a pro-imperialist counterrevolutionary polarization. It is no accident that Solidarity has flourished under the gun of mounting anti-Soviet imperialist militarism of first Carter/Brzezinski and now Reagan/Haig, with their virulently anti-communist Polish pope in the Vatican. It is also no accident that in this period when defense of the Soviet Union is urgent, fake-Trotskyists led by Barnes/

## FORUMS:

### Stop Solidarity's Counterrevolution in Poland!

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY  
7.30 pm, Thursday 8 October  
Graduate Lounge, Union Building,  
Speaker: Andrew Glannakis  
(SL Central Committee)

LATROBE UNIVERSITY  
1.00 pm, Wednesday 14 October  
Committee Room, Union Building  
Speakers:

Paul Connor  
(SL Central Committee)  
Tony Caruso (ex-president  
LaTrobe Uni Socialist Left,  
LaTrobe Uni Spartacist Club)

## Spartacist League

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



Mandel abandon all pretense of defense of the Soviet Union and embrace Solidarity.

The choices facing revolutionaries over Poland in the absence of a mass Trotskyist vanguard are not attractive even if they are clear. Abstentionism is not a choice; it is backhanded support to counterrevolution. No less a danger is abandoning the perspective of struggle for the conscious factor in history, for the *international proletarian vanguard*, which leads either to a social-democratic accommodation with the bourgeoisie or accommodation with the Stalinist bureaucracy (a la Marcy who defended Stalinist intervention against a nascent workers political revolution in Hungary). Of course the present Polish situation could only have come to fruition in a political vacuum reflecting the destruction of the important tradition of international communism in Poland through savage persecution, both capitalist and Stalinist. That tradition will only be reforged in a reborn Fourth International by revolutionaries who defended the gains of October when the danger was near, the situation complex and the need for programmatic clarity and backbone urgent.

We warn the Polish workers and the world proletariat that under the banner of nation, church and "the free world", the Solidarity leadership is organizing a bloody capitalist counterrevolution. The creation of a "democratic" Poland subservient to Reagan/Haig on the Western border of the USSR would bring much closer the dreadful prospect of anti-Soviet nuclear holocaust. Solidarity's counterrevolution must be stopped before it is too late!

— reprinted from *Workers Vanguard*  
no 289, 25 September 1981

## Labor lawyers...

Continued from page three

circumstances". As Lenin said of Kautsky this eclectic mishmash merely "leaves out" the revolution.

The simple truth is that the reformist fake-left, faced by the seemingly unshakeable dominance of the ALP over the workers movement can conceive no other perspective than pressuring it to the left, to take up their "socialist policies". They deride the Leninist objective of destroying this political obstacle as sectarian futility and turn the correct insight that the ALP cannot be gotten around, under or over, into pathetic Labor loyalism. In this they reflect their, and all reformists', despair in the revolutionary potential of the working class. Politically most of the fake-left is already within the bounds of ALP reformism (some with already existing entrust outfits). With the anti-Soviet war drive heating up, their rightward movement is leading them toward

organisational liquidation — just as the British fake-Trotskyists are collapsing into the Bennite movement. But inside or outside the ALP, the SWP and the other fake lefts play the same role, loyal guardians of its left flank and lawyers for its betrayals. ■

## NSW elections...

Continued from page three

lesser evil" or "keeping the Liberals out". Our task is to win the working class to the revolutionary program and party. For the tactic of critical electoral support to serve that end it must, as Lenin said, "support [the labour traitors] like a rope supports a hanging man". Today, on the contrary, a vote for the ALP could only endorse Wran's record and reinforce illusions in social democracy.

The Eurocommunist Communist Party of Australia (CPA) and the pro-Moscow Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) are also running candidates. Their campaign though is nothing but the tamest of left pressure on Wran and warrants no support. These reformist groups have no perspective outside of pressuring the ALP; for them to even consider withdrawing electoral support would be like an act against nature. For Marxists it is ABC that, as Marx said, "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes". Reformists, whatever their variety, reject this basic Marxist truth out of hand. And the role of such "left" ALP satellites is to alibi labour traitors like Wran. Crassest of all is the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) who tell us, echoing Wran, that it's all Fraser's fault, and all that's needed is a "labor government with socialist policies".

"... the NSW Labor government doesn't have to cut services. It could keep hospitals open .... It could pay for more teachers by taxing the rich.... But it chooses not to." (election manifesto, emphasis in original).

No. This is the con game of every left-talking reformist and parliamentary cretin. All they want is a Tony Benn. The only result of this sleight-of-hand is a treacherous rebuilding of illusions in the ALP.

This election is but a small test for the left against Laborism. All fail miserably, organically wedded to the ALP's parochial and parliamentary reformism. But we have seen nothing yet. For as Reagan, and his slavish junior Australian partners gird up for their holy war against the Soviets, the Labor Party, the bourgeoisie's favoured party for war and economic depression, will come into its own as a tool of nationalist reaction and anti-communist treachery.

The Spartacist League's Leninist strategy and tactics are sharply counterposed to our fake-left opponents. They are aimed at *splitting* sections of Labor's mass working-class base from its nationalist, class-collaborationist leadership to build a mass revolutionary workers party. Our aim: not a Labor parliamentary government but a genuine workers government, based on workers own organisations, to seize industry, transport, land and finance from the employers and establish a planned socialist economy. No vote to the Labor traitors in the NSW elections, any more than to the bosses' parties. For a revolutionary leadership of the labour movement! ■

## Afghanistan...

Continued from page five

not Trotsky's, for our call is counterposed to the betrayal of a possible Red Army withdrawal under the pretext of some deal with imperialism (for the full background see "SWP's About-face on Afghanistan" in *Spartacist* no 31-32, advertised in this issue).

Whatever the Australian SWP's internal motivations (and the operative principle in the jungle of internal "struggle" in the Pabloite USec is to

believe that no-one means what they say) there is clearly no qualitative political break involved. The pretensions to formal orthodoxy the local SWP is throwing up against Barnes will soon have their test. For the fundamental political lines for the next period will be drawn around the vortex of the developing counterrevolution in Poland. And the US and Australian SWP are Solidarity's leading apologists in their respective social-democratic milieus.

For would-be Trotskyists the USec's recent pro-imperialist line shift on Afghanistan makes clearer than ever that only the international Spartacist tendency upholds the Trotskyist program of unconditional military defence of the degenerated and deformed workers states, through socialist revolution in the capitalist countries and political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracies. Now more than ever, "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" ■

## South Africa...

Continued from page eight

gathering of a has-been empire. But at bottom this "unity" against South Africa by black bourgeois nationalists and the likes of Fraser/Muldoon from White Australasia only comes down to tactical differences with Reagan in how to most effectively pursue the anti-Soviet war drive. Open support to South Africa, says Fraser, will only drive African nationalists into the arms of the Soviets — "the only people who will sell them a rifle". He wants a "negotiated independence" settlement in Namibia under UN supervision to better draw black African regimes into the pro-Western anti-Soviet camp and force out the Soviets and Cubans.

But there are no fundamental differences here. The white rulers of South Africa want to keep Namibia no matter what and view the MPLA regime in Angola as a mortal enemy which must be destroyed. For US imperialism, even under a right-wing fanatic like Reagan, the options are broader. Washington knows that "Third World" petty-bourgeois nationalist groups like SWAPO in Namibia and the MPLA in Angola can be bought off and that many a Soviet client of yesterday is today Washington's (Sadat's Egypt!).

The US regards South Africa's direct

colonial presence in Namibia as an obstacle to winning black African states to the anti-Soviet cause. So even the Reagan administration is willing to entertain the prospect of a SWAPO government in Namibia provided it is purged of all Soviet allegiances. On Angola, Washington's stated position is to force the withdrawal of Cuban/Soviet forces and a coalition government of the MPLA and UNITA.

## For Workers Revolutions in Southern Africa

While Cuba, the Soviet Union and East Germany have poured troops, advisers and equipment into Angola, their aim has *not* been to spread or defend proletarian revolution. Rather they seek to curry favor with and support the anti-working-class nationalist regime in Luanda. For example Cuban troops guard the Gulf oil fields in Cabinda. Small wonder Gulf espouses the "liberal" line on Angola. Military defense against South Africa cannot be trusted to the MPLA leadership, which could easily discard its Soviet ties for a quick deal with US imperialism just as Sadat's Egypt did in 1973. (Soviet arms supplied to Egypt are now being used to kill Russian soldiers in Afghanistan!) The Angolan working class needs a revolutionary (Trotskyist) party, one with the closest ties to the South African proletariat.

The main force for the liberation of the working masses of Angola and Namibia lies in the several-million-strong black proletariat of South Africa, the industrial powerhouse of the continent. In recent months there has been a great upsurge in working-class struggle in South Africa leading to the emergence of mass unregistered black unions and a sharp rise in strikes — at least one a day. Strikes have even occurred in the economically critical gold mines where 450,000 blacks labor in practically prison-like conditions. The South African military adventure in Angola coincides with stepped-up internal repression — forced eviction of thousands of "squatters" from the Capetown area, police attempts to break up the black unions. Yet, despite the desperate measures of the white racist regime, the curve of black class struggle in South Africa is on the upswing, needing above all a communist leadership to direct the struggle toward proletarian power throughout the continent.

— adapted from *Workers Vanguard*  
no 289, 25 September 1981

## Protest CHOGM Police Raids on Leftists!

MELBOURNE — 3 October: Early yesterday morning police squads raided the homes of several Turkish, Tamil and Irish leftists, including Barry Hughes of the H-Block/Armagh committee. In the worst case they smashed down the door of the flat of Turkish Workers Association supporter Derfun Erdogan. Refusing to produce a warrant or identify themselves, the cops handcuffed Erdogan and his brother and held them at gunpoint for over two hours, ransacking their home ostensibly in search of a gun Erdogan swears he never possessed. The racist cops repeatedly called them "bloody wogs" and threatened to deport them for their participation in the picket line at the Ford Broadmeadows plant, where thousands of car workers have been on strike for two weeks over a wage claim.

The raids are a part of Fraser's multi-million dollar "anti-terrorist" massive security operation ostensibly for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) currently taking place. But the newly-trained "riot squads" and the revamped police force and Special Branch will remain when CHOGM is forgotten. This ostentatious show of capitalist state force is a practice run for stepped-up repression against the left and labour movement. Five hundred supporters of the Irish H-Block and Armagh prisoners demonstrating at a

gala function for the Queen at the Melbourne Art Gallery last night were surrounded by over 300 cops plus plainclothesmen and sundry provocateurs. Spartacist supporters raised slogans such as "Butcher Thatcher has blood on her hands", "Free all H-Block prisoners" and "Not orange against green but class against class — for a workers republic in Ireland". They also chanted "Smash Reagan/Fraser anti-Soviet war drive! Defend the Soviet Union!" and "Fraser is Reagan's running dog — the main enemy is at home!" aimed at the assembled anti-Soviet imperialist thieves and bourgeois dictators.

The CHOGM extravaganza itself is an empty diplomatic charade, which Fraser is using to grandstand as "great international statesman". Big-time imperialist butchers like Maggie Thatcher rub shoulders with African tinpot tyrants and even the foreign minister of the "revolutionary" regime of tiny Grenada ("Her Majesty's Workers and Farmers Government", comrades of the SWP?).

But the beefed-up repressive apparatus is no joke. A defence committee is being formed to demand compensation and a public apology for the victims. The labour movement must immediately block these moves toward a "strong state" with massive protest action. Protest CHOGM police raids on leftists! ■

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## US/South Africa Cold War Racist Axis

# Drive South Africa out of Angola!

South African racism found its natural ally in Reagan's anti-Soviet war drive when Pretoria unleashed its invasion of Angola on August 24. "WE KILLED RUSSIANS IN ANGOLA," boasted South African war minister Magnus Malan in a screaming *New York Post* (1 September) headline. The *New York Times* (3 September) observed that the South Africans are "all but displaying the mounted heads of Soviet military advisers killed in last weeks' invasion". These brave Russians were among a handful of military advisers fighting in the invasion area as two South African columns with 32 tanks and air support swept over southern Angola destroying defenseless villages as well as killing Angolan soldiers. While Washington keeps claiming that its South African ally is withdrawing, reports indicate that Pretoria intends to hold onto territory in southern Angola as it has apparently reinforced the original invasion force with a third armored column.

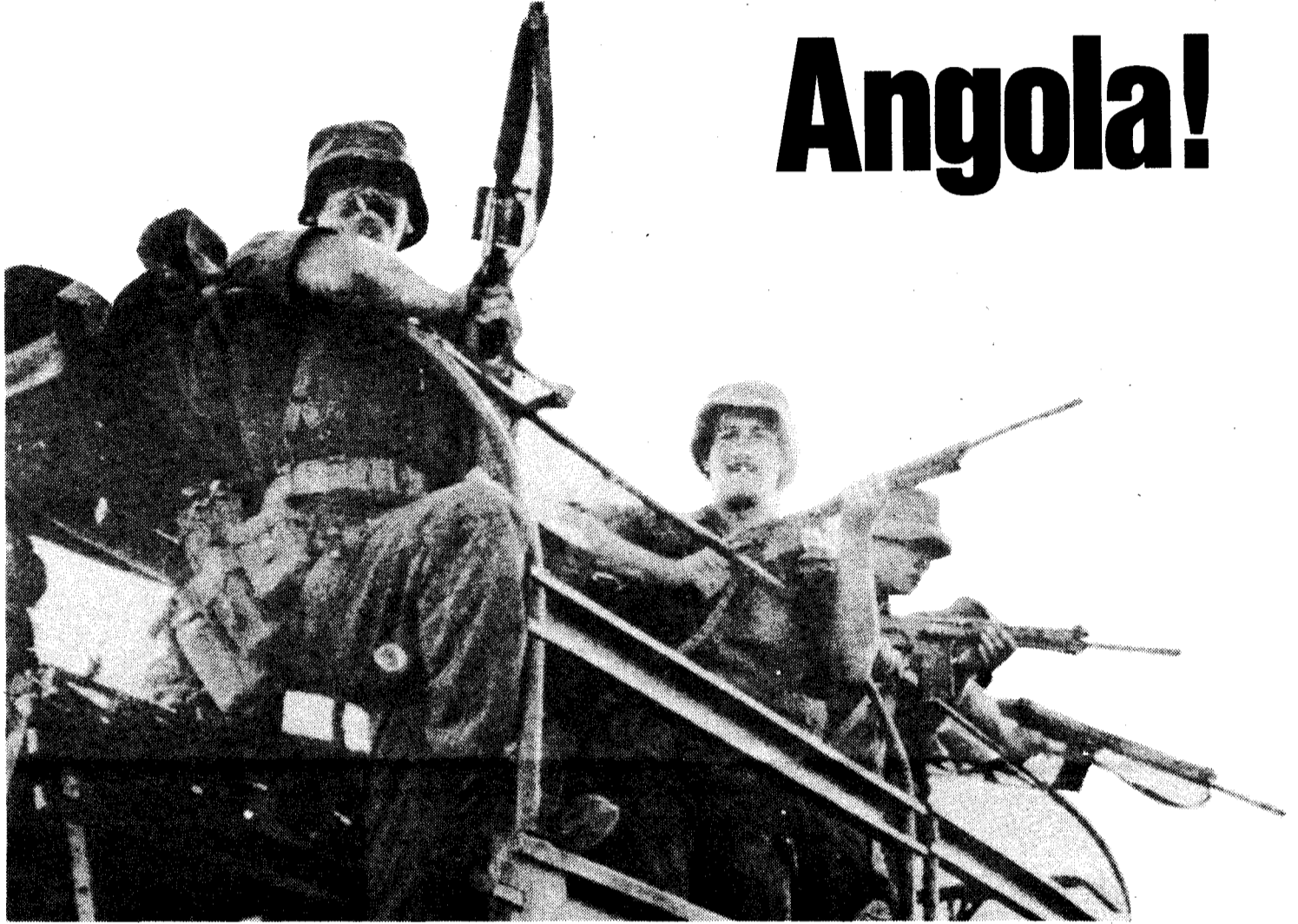
Pretoria claimed that the purpose of the attack was to destroy the bases of SWAPO guerrillas fighting for the independence of South Africa's Namibian colony. In reality the invasion has a far broader aim, one strongly encouraged by Reagan's anti-Soviet war drive — to "destabilize" (as the CIA would put it) and ultimately overthrow the Soviet-allied nationalist government in Angola.

In fact a state of war has existed between South Africa and the nationalist MPLA (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola) regime supported by the Soviet bloc ever since the Portuguese colonialists pulled out in 1975. A US-backed South African army then moved into the power vacuum trying to reconquer Angola for Western imperialism. This imperialist power play was turned back by the timely arrival of 20,000 Cuban troops armed with modern Soviet weaponry. Since then the Angolan nationalist regime has depended on Cuban troops and Soviet military aid for its very survival as South Africa has continually subjected the country to air and ground attacks. And as we wrote last spring: "Given Reagan's bellicosity, an attempt to reverse the imperialists' 1976 defeat in Angola by another Washington-backed South African invasion is possible" ("Racist US/South Africa Axis", *WV* no 281, 22 May).

### Reagan Reforges US/South Africa Axis

As proletarian revolutionaries we say: Drive the South African army out of Angola! Military victory to SWAPO in Namibia! At stake in these conflicts is far more than the fate of the black peoples of southern Africa. Angola/Namibia could well become a flashpoint for World War III as the MPLA calls for more Soviet-bloc military aid while Reagan points to the Soviet/Cuban presence as justification for supporting South African militarism. Even more so today than in the 1975-76 war, defense of black nationalist Angola against white racist South Africa is bound up with the defense of the bureaucratically ruled Soviet state against capitalism-imperialism.

Less than a month after the invasion



US-backed South African racists invade Angola: another flashpoint for Reagan's anti-Soviet drive toward WWII.

the Springboks, the South African "national" rugby team, toured the US for the first time ever. This racist provocation, coupled with Reagan grinding American blacks into the ground, met outrage and mass protest. Even such racist reactionaries as New York's mayor Ed Koch tried to ban their games which were either called off or played "in secret". The Springboks went to the US straight from New Zealand where their presence also provoked mass violent protests. The Springboks' periodic tours to NZ and Australia are an attempt by South Africa to assert its membership in the club of rich white men's countries and are used as diplomatic tools by the apartheid regime. We are for stopping these tours of apartheid ambassadors in rugby shorts. But to the self-serving hypocrisy of the liberal moralist apartheid protesters whose appeal (inevitably to their own capitalist government) is to keep "clean" xenophobically white racist countries like NZ and Australia, and "isolate" South Africa, we counterpose the centrality of the black proletariat in South Africa as the motor for social revolution to smash apartheid and international class-struggle solidarity actions such as labour boycotts to enforce recognition of black trade unions.

The content of the Springboks' US tour was however far more sinister in purpose, hoping to gain public acceptance for Washington's alliance with the hated apartheid regime as part and parcel of the global war drive against the Soviet Union and its allies. As soon as Reagan came into office top-level meetings took place between Washington and Pretoria. For instance on March 15 a group of South African officials, headed by the chief of

military intelligence, met with members of the US National Security Council, Defense Intelligence Agency and Reagan's UN ambassador, Jeane Kirkpatrick.

Since then Kirkpatrick & Co have openly flouted UN resolutions for the independence of Namibia. South Africa took over the German colony of South West Africa (Namibia) during World War I and was duly given a League of Nations mandate in 1920. In 1966 the "Third World" majority at the United Nations revoked the South African mandate and subsequently resolved that the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) was the "sole" representative of the country. Needless to say, the South Africans are still there in force. Now the Reagan administration declares that independence for Namibia must be linked to the withdrawal of Soviet/Cuban forces from Angola, thus rendering the black African nationalists defenseless against South African militarism.

While stiffening South Africa's resolve to hold on to Namibia, the Reagan administration has also openly encouraged attacks on Angola. It pushed for Congress to repeal the 1975 Clark Amendment, which prohibits overt or covert aid to any Angolan group. This amendment was passed in response to revelations of CIA involvement in the South African invasion and expressed American ruling class anxiety at the time of being drawn into "another Vietnam". Reagan clearly wants to resume military support to Jonas Savimbi's UNITA, a joint US/South African puppet engaging in terrorism in southern Angola. Repeal of the Clark Amendment was intended as a declaration of political solidarity with

South Africa and a virtual declaration of war on Angola.

So Pretoria knew it had the green light for its present invasion. If there was any doubt of Washington's support to South African militarism before the invasion, there certainly is none now. A week after the invasion began US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker gave what is probably the most pro-South African speech ever given by a high US official. While hypocritically claiming the US was "neutral" in any and all conflicts between the white-supremacist regime and its black victims, internal and external, he then told it like it is: "The Reagan administration has no intention of destabilizing South Africa in order to curry favor elsewhere" (*New York Times*, 30 August).

And Crocker was as good as his word. The next day the US accepted complete diplomatic isolation by vetoing a UN resolution condemning the South African invasion. Here Reagan not only went against the "Third World"/Soviet bloc majority but his own imperialist allies. France, Japan and Spain all condemned the South African invasion. So too the Fraser government in Australia, normally one of Washington's most servile junior partners, has been noisy in its opposition even adding a series of "human rights violations" to its protest to Pretoria. Fraser's protests no doubt had in mind the upcoming Melbourne-sited Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) with its heavy attendance by Black African states. Fraser's international statesman's pretensions are as pathetic and impotent as CHOGM itself, which is little more than a sentimental

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