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SPARTACIST



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War to the Death Against CIA's Mullah Cutthroats!

Battle for Afghanistan

The Red Army withdrawal from Afghanistan is a cold-blooded betrayal of the Afghan and Soviet peoples. The CIA's Islamic warriors, armed for over a decade with billions of dollars of ultramodern military equipment, are poised to carry out the wholesale slaughter of Afghan women, teachers and other intellectuals, leftist activists and peasants. And George Bush has now announced the US will continue to supply the mujahedin with arms as long as the left-nationalist Kabul regime is in power.

If this army of mullahs and tribalist cutthroats topples the Najibullah government, Afghanistan will become an imperialist dagger pointed at Soviet Central Asia. In his drive to appease Washington by abandoning Afghanistan, Moscow leader Mikhail Gorbachev is giving US imperialism and its allies a launching pad for counterrevolution in the homeland of the socialist October Revolution. With their backs to the wall, the forces of social progress are facing a war to the death. Smash Washington's "holy warriors"!

The mujahedin call it badal, the code of revenge of the dominant Pushtun tribes. It means not just death but often torture, dismemberment and mutilation. Over the past several months, as Soviet troops abandoned one outpost after another, the CIA's "freedom fighters" meted out a taste of their barbarism. In November about 70 Afghan soldiers surrendered to the mujahedin at Torkham, on the Afghan side of the Khyber Pass. When government forces retook the outpost several days later, they found their comrades' bodies — mutilated and chopped into pieces — in wooden crates.

The US and its NATO allies are doing everything they can to set up a bloodbath. Richard Murphy, a top State Department official under Reagan, predicts the fall of Kabul within a few



Reuters/Bettman

Kabul, February 5: Members of Afghan women's militia face life-and-death struggle.

months, and goes on, "there are very deep passions" that "will be turned against those who have been central to the regime." Last month the State Department sent a formal note to its embassies around the world instructing them to deny visas to anyone associated with the Afghan regime. Anticipating the mujahedin terrorists' laying waste to Kabul, and in order to sow panic, Washington and its European allies have closed their embassies.

The Wall Street Journal (12 January) gloats that "what the Afghans don't know about revenge isn't worth knowing." The victims of the mujahedin's bloodlust will by no means be limited to supporters of the left-nationalist

People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). Even peasants whose only "crime" was not emigrating to Pakistan after 1979 are infidels in the eyes of these Islamic "holy warriors." The fall of Kabul and other Afghan cities would be followed by a massacre of the entire educated population, especially tens of thousands of women who escaped from purdah (seclusion) and cast off the chadori (the head-to-foot veil).

Even Western bourgeois journalists, particularly if they're women, are anxious about the hideous fate now threatening liberated Afghan women. Mary Williams Walsh reports in the Wall Street Journal (19 January):

"The plight of Kabul's women

is a poignant reminder that the West's vicarious victory over communist expansion here isn't without its ambiguities. In a backward country where the female peasantry still toils like medieval serfs, Kabul's women have managed to hold on to many 20th-century freedoms.... Instead of staying at home behind purdah walls, they emerge each day and work in offices, hospitals and schools."

Walsh contrasts this to the horrible condition of Afghan women in the refugee camps in Pakistan, reporting that "foreign doctors working among the refugee women tell gruesome tales of husbands leaving them to die, rather than permitting diagnosis by a male obstetrician"!

But the battle for Kabul does not look like it is going to be a walkover. The Afghan army is well supplied with Soviet MIG fighter-bombers and medium-range missiles. The government has distributed arms to the population, including young women, creating a 30,000-strong civilian militia. The PDPA regime, in the past given to murderous factional and cliquish infighting, appears committed to a united stand. "We must all fight now," declared Najibullah. Throughout the world every class-conscious worker, socialist and believer in human decency and the rights of man must materially aid the Afghan government against the CIA's Islamic cutthroats.

At stake in the battle for Afghanistan is far more than the fate of this hideously backward land. The armed Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 provided America's pretext for Cold War II. We proclaimed at the time "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" while most self-styled leftists around the world joined the imperialist campaign for Soviet troops out. Well, now the Soviet troops have been

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Gorbachev's Pullout Is a Betrayal

Afghanistan...

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pulled out to appease US imperialism. If the mujahedin succeed in butchering every leftist, teacher and unveiled woman in Afghanistan, their blood will be on the hands not only of the Bushes, Thatchers, Kohls and their junior partners like Hawke, but also on their "left" camp followers.

ORIGINS AND NATURE OF THE AFGHAN WAR

For decades Afghanistan's small number of modernizing intellectuals have generally been pro-Soviet. When they looked across their northern border into Soviet Central Asia, they saw children who could read, women liberated from the veil, and a level of social and economic well-being centuries in advance of Afghanistan. As a result of Soviet central planning, living standards in Tashkent are as high as in Moscow.

In 1965 Afghan leftist circles formed the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. The PDPA was a unique phenomenon in Afghanistan: a secular party not based on any tribal or ethnic group. It claimed adherence to Marxism-Leninism, and its structure was modelled after Stalin's bureaucratized Communist Party. However, its program was limited to moderate reforms to be carried out by a government of "workers, farmers, enlightened and progressive intellectuals, craftsmen, the petit bourgeoisie and national capitalists" (cited in Raja Anwar, The Tragedy of Afghanistan [1988]).

Labelled "Communist" by their opponents, the PDPA cadre were in fact modernizing petty-bourgeois nationalists more akin to Kemal Ataturk's Young Turks than to Lenin's Bolsheviks. The PDPA established three bases of support: the country's small urban intelligentsia (eg school-teachers), students and military officers (many of whom were trained in the Soviet Union). Almost immediately the party split into two factions, the Khalq (Masses) and Parcham (Banner). When Daud Khan ousted the king in 1973, Parcham leaders served

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Richard S Fraser - Veteran American Trotskyist

Comrade Richard S Fraser, a veteran American Trotskyist, died on 27 November 1988. For close to 30 years Comrade Fraser was a leading member of the US Socialist Workers Party which he had joined in 1934, and his later activity included helping found the Seattle-based Freedom Socialist Party. Over the years he developed his relations with the Spartacist League/US, leading to a close and invaluable collaboration in its work to establish labour/black defence organisations. The author of "For a Materialist Conception of the Negro Struggle," Richard Fraser was a theoretical mentor, cherished friend and in the end, a comrade of the Spartacist League.

Dedicating himself to the study of the black question in America, Fraser enriched the program of Marxism with the understanding that the emancipation of blacks in the US will only come

through integrated revolutionary struggle for proletarian socialist rule. Based on the recognition that US blacks are an oppressed race-colour caste and not a separate nation, this program of revolutionary integration was adopted by the Spartacist League/US from its inception. It has found verification in life in the victorious labour/black mobilisations that stopped Ku Klux Klan provocations, for example recently in Philadelphia and Atlanta.

Fraser's historic theoretical contribution deserves serious attention from thoughtful anti-racist militants, especially blacks, in this country. Though his analysis of concrete US reality is not applicable here, nevertheless the struggle against the hard racial exclusionism of White Australia must also be a struggle for revolutionary integration. The international Spartacist tendency are

as his advisers, while Khalq suggested "a government composed of a 'United Front' including the PDPA."

In April 1978 the Daud regime, prodded by the Western powers and the shah of Iran, moved to



Der Spiegel
CIA's Afghan cutthroats pose over downed Soviet pilot.

suppress the PDPA, arresting its principal leaders on charges of treason. But the party's supporters in the military effectively fought back and toppled Daud. The so-called "Saur Revolution" was in fact a left-wing military coup with considerable support among the urbanized population.

The PDPA found itself ruling a population of 15 million people, overwhelmingly rural and scattered in isolated river valleys. On the local level tribal chiefs shared power and land with some 300,000 Islamic mullahs, who made up a privileged landowning caste. Taking the country as a whole, there was about one industrial worker for every eight mullahs! The peasants were totally in thrall to the khans, who controlled the

sources of credit, seed, fertilizer and, in this arid land, even water. Forget proletarian revolution — Afghanistan could not even sustain the kind of widespread peasant revolt experienced in medieval France, Russia and China.

Thus when the PDPA government attempted to institute a program of minimal democratic measures — land reform, elimination of the bride price for women, universal education for both sexes — it instantly outpaced the social forces to sustain them. The khans and mullahs, driven into a frenzy by such measures as teaching young girls to read, launched a reactionary jihad and began slaughtering teachers and PDPA activists.

The growing revolt received immediate support from the Pakistani regime of military dictator Zia ul-Haq, acting as quartermaster for the United States. Zia was continuing the policy of his predecessor, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who had started arming the ultra-fundamentalist Islamic Party of Gulbaddin Hekmatyar in the early 1970s. The aim of the Pakistani ruling class (led now by Bhutto's daughter, after Zia's death last August) is the creation of a weak Islamic client state to its north.

At the same time, the PDPA regime was ripping itself apart through murderous factionalism and cliquism. Khalq leader Noor Mohammed Taraki was killed by his former protege Hafizullah Amin. Amin, in turn, was assassinated in the course of the Soviet intervention in December 1979 which installed Babrak Karmal, leader of the Parcham faction. Only five of the party leaders in April 1978 escaped being killed, imprisoned or exiled by their "comrades" over the next few years. An ever smaller group of modernizing intellectuals was being pitted against a mass reactionary revolt.

It was only the Soviet military intervention of December 1979 which opened the road to the liberation of the Afghan toiling



heirs to an unbroken revolutionary tradition going back to Lenin and Trotsky's Communist International, and Richard Fraser was an important part of that continuity. We honour his life, most of all by carrying forward his fight. ■

masses. Although conducted half-heartedly, sending troops into Afghanistan was the one unambiguously decent and progressive act of the corrupt and conservative Brezhnev regime, since it went against the grain of the reactionary Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country." We wrote at the time:

"There can be no question that for revolutionaries our side in this conflict is with the Red Army. In fact, although uncalled for militarily, a natural response on the part of the world's young leftists would be an enthusiastic desire to join an international brigade to fight the reactionary CIA-connected rebels."

— "Hail Red Army!" Spartacist no 27-28, Winter 1979-80

We further raised the demand to extend the social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples.

The Western press hoped and speculated that the Soviet troops, especially those from the traditionally Islamic regions of Central Asia, would become infected with the "liberating" message of the mujahedin. But Soviet soldiers sent into battle were told they were fulfilling their duty toward their Afghan brothers, and their experiences in the country convinced them of it. Most were appalled at the backwardness, poverty and hideous oppression they witnessed in a country so close to home. One Soviet Tadjik soldier told a Western reporter in the early days of the war that "most of them were glad to go to help — it's a very backward country and we are neighbors, after all" (New York Times, 11 April 1980).

While Soviet soldiers in Afghanistan were generally proud to do their internationalist duty, the Kremlin bureaucracy did not send them there out of internationalist commitment. As we wrote a few months later:

"Of course, the conservative bureaucrats in the Kremlin did not send 100,000 troops into

Continued on page six

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

CSR Workers Knifed for the Accord

On 9 February at the ACTU's Special Unions Conference, Crean and Kelty rammed through their proposal for a new Accord Mark V with Hawke's union-busting ALP government. Openly flaunted as a design to head off a "wages explosion," this new deal is part of the ACTU's corporatist "Australia Reconstructed" scheme of carrying out the bosses "rationalisation" of the economy by exacting increased profits out of the

increases in the CPI. The name of the game is layoffs and real wage cuts, carried out by the union leaderships. Crean and Kelty are indeed company unionists.

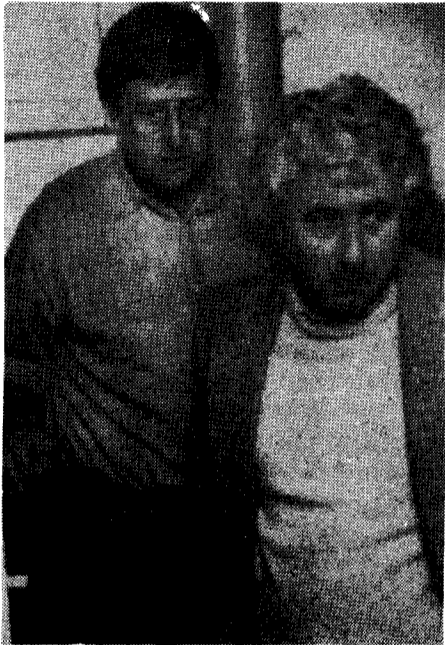
Last year a six-week strike by just over 200 workers at CSR's (Colonial Sugar Refining) Yarraville sugar refinery in Melbourne challenged the Accord strait-jacket. Their strike was shafted by the ACTU tops, in particular by its "left" agent, Victorian Trades Hall Secretary, John Halfpenny. Sent back to work with nothing, two weeks later the workers were told half the workforce would be sacked. This is the bitter meaning of "Australia Reconstructed." The strike's militancy and duration testify to the seething bitterness in the working class at Hawke/Keating's grinding austerity, and to the increasing brittleness of the Accord. Though defeated, there are important lessons to be drawn.

YOU CAN'T PLAY BY THE BOSSES' RULES AND WIN!

The CSR workers mounted a fight against starvation-level wages — a meagre \$220-240 per week — and dangerous working conditions. The day the strike began, CSR haughtily announced a record half-year profit of \$147 million! The shop committee issued a log of claims including a \$40 wage rise and increased annual leave, allowances and overtime rates. On 23 November the workers, covered by seven unions including the AMWU, FIA, BWIU and AWU, struck and put up a 24-hour picket line. The picket didn't stop staff scabs and apprentices crossing,

Nevertheless production came to a halt and transport workers in the main respected the picket, preventing deliveries. And the strike began to bite. The confectionery and soft drink industries suffered acute shortages. There

Commission the Federal Court threatened use of the infamous "penal powers" — a virtual dead letter since the near general strike that freed Victorian Tramways leader Clarrie O'Shea in 1969. The court imposed injunc-



Halfpenny and Kelty — sellout division of labour.

hides of working people and the poor. Pay rises henceforth will be linked to "award restructuring" — speed-up, job-slashing, elimination of hard-won union conditions of decades-long standing. With the announcement that inflation has taken off again (now eight percent per annum) came the ACTU's abandonment of general wage rises linked (however tenuously) to



CSR pickets: union bureaucrats told them to play by bosses' rules, ensuring isolation and defeat.

were stand-downs at Rowntree-Hoadleys and mass layoffs were imminent.

In chorus the bosses, government, courts and union bureaucrats denounced the strike for being "outside wage guidelines." Hawke moved to break the strike by bringing forward the intended scrapping of the 70 year-long embargo on sugar imports. And the bosses' courts moved instantly to set the rules of the struggle. At the behest of the Arbitration

tions (the same used to break the Dollar Sweets strike four years ago) banning court-named unionists from participating in the picket and preventing union representation of its membership. Accepting such "rules" is to play in a rigged game, yet that is exactly what union officials advised.

Halfpenny mouthed off to the press about the court orders

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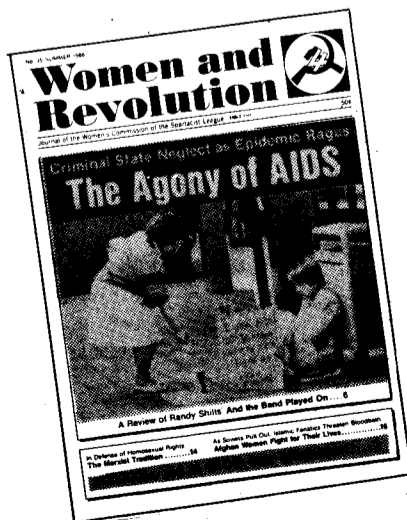
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Re-open the Yugoslav Consulate!

Hawke/Evans Front for Ustasha

The shooting of a Croatian youth during the attack by Croatian fascist Ustasha rabble on the Yugoslav consulate in Sydney on 27 November last year was the excuse for the Hawke government and the capitalist media to launch a campaign of hysterical anti-communist warmongering. It culminated in the expulsion of the entire consulate a week later when the Yugoslavs refused Hawke and foreign minister Evans' arrogant demands to hand over the alleged "gunman." No matter that the territorial integrity of the consulate was violated when 30 Ustasha youth invaded the grounds, assaulted Consul-General Stanojlo Glisic and tried to rip down the Yugoslav flag. No matter that the youth could well have been hit by a projectile fired by the Ustasha mob — an ABC TV News report showing holes in the consulate's first-floor windows was quickly buried. No matter that the Yugoslav diplomats, whom foreign minister Budimir Loncar said "defended with honour, courage and dignity the country's sovereignty," had plenty to fear from the Ustasha who have a long history of terrorism and murder in both Australia and Yugoslavia. No, for Hawke/Evans, the reactionary Murdoch and Fairfax press and the Cold Warriors running the NSW Labor Council who imposed bans on the consulate, all that mattered was the "freedom" of these Hitler Youth to terrorise the Yugoslav consulate with impunity. Some of them were pictured in the Sydney Morning Herald (30 November 1988) beneath a portrait of their beloved Ante Pavelic, the Croatian Hitler.

A special Australasian Spartacist supplement (8 December) titled "Defend Yugoslavia! Stop the Ustasha Fascists!" stated: "The Hawke regime is shamelessly trampling over the Vienna convention [on Diplo-

Sydney, 3 December. Spartacist placards at Yugoslav protest against consulate expulsion.



matic Relations]. Diplomatic immunity and territorial sovereignty of embassies — a necessity for international relations in a world of nation states — are seldom violated even by nations at war. Why were only five police assigned to defend the consulate? Why are there no charges or investigations into the Ustasha assault? This whole affair smacks of a deadly anti-communist provocation, carried out by the Ustasha and with Hawke reaping the counterrevolutionary fruits."

Historically the Ustasha groups have supported the Liberal Party. Thus organiser of the "protest," Fabian Lovokovic, editor of Spremnost (Readiness) and "Senator" of Pavelic's HOP, is a long-time leading Liberal. NSW police minister Pickering was several years ago photographed on the platform of a Ustasha 10 April celebration. But as Malcolm Booker noted "The Hawke Government has in effect taken over from Menzies in upholding

the cause of the Ustahis" (Canberra Times, 6 December).

From the outset Hawke's Cold War Labor government has supported and participated as loyal junior partner in every US anti-Soviet provocation from KAL 007 to the bombing of Libya. No doubt hoping the war hysteria would boost Labor's plunging popularity, Hawke/Evans seized on the Yugoslav consulate incident to engage in some anti-communist provocation of their own, working with US imperialism to exploit the current nationalist turmoil in Yugoslavia for counterrevolution. Was the arrest of the Yugoslav vice-consul in Chicago on "money-laundering" charges the same week just pure coincidence, or part of a concerted operation to turn up the heat on Belgrade?

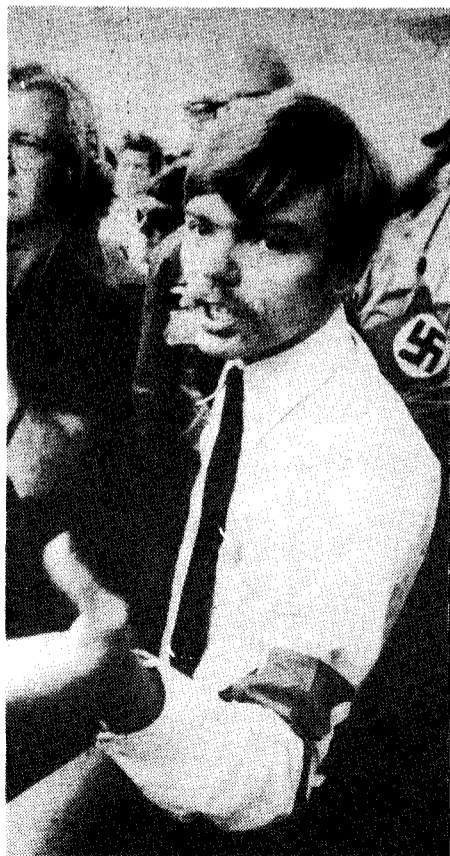
YUGOSLAVS, SPARTACISTS PROTEST EXPULSION

The government and media were talking and acting as though it was July 1914 and the Archduke had just been shot in Sarajevo. But their anti-communist war-

mongering met with scepticism in wide sections of the labour movement, among which the Ustasha is known and reviled. Two demonstrations protesting the expulsion called by Yugoslav community groups, each of about 500 people, took place at the consulate on 3 December and in Canberra a week later. They comprised all the nationalities of Yugoslavia — Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, etc — and in the main were militant, pro-socialist defenders of the Yugoslav Revolution taking part in the first ever such demonstrations to brave Ustashi intimidation in Australia. The only Australian left-wing organisation to join in was the Spartacist League. In Sydney, an SL contingent was applauded as we marched in flying the red flag of the Fourth International and carrying placards including: "Stop Closure of Yugoslav Consulate! Down with Hawke/Evans Anti-Communist Hysteria!" and "Anti-Soviet War Drive Means Social Reaction at Home! Defend the Soviet Union and Vietnam!" Many demonstrators eagerly snapped up our communist press and, in Canberra, our special supplement.

But this warm welcome was in striking contrast to the determination of the protest organisers to make a loyal appeal to the Cold War Labor government. In Sydney, they forced us to remove anti-Ustasha, anti-Hawke and Soviet-defencist placards, over the protests of many present, and in Canberra tried to stop us distributing literature outside Parliament House. The organisers even stopped Yugoslavs from chanting anti-Ustasha slogans, claiming "we're not here to stop the Ustasha" and "we're not here to defend Yugoslavia." Well, that was a surprise to most present. The ethnic pressure group politics of "multiculturalism" subordinates these militant immigrant workers

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NA fuhrer Saleam, 1975.

Crush the NA Fascists!

Racist attacks have become commonplace in Hawke's Australia. Years of Cold War anti-Sovietism, union busting and cheap jingoism by the ALP government have created a right-wing climate in which every type of reactionary feels the wind in their sails. Last year Asians were targeted in the bosses' racist "immigration debate" over how to defend White Australia. The Laborite bureaucracy fuels racism by seeking to redirect working class anger at Hawke/Keating's austerity against Asian workers. Several protectionist union demonstrations in Geelong have resulted in physical attacks on Asian tourists and Japanese seamen. In Melbourne on 4 February, a Vietnamese youth was beaten to death by white racist youths on the steps of Flinders Street Station.

On 27 January, Eddie Funde, African National Congress representative in Sydney, survived an assassination attempt when shotgun blasts into his Sydney home narrowly missed him, his wife and sleeping baby. We need workers defence guards against racist terror! Enough is enough!

The National Action fascists have been rampaging with impunity. These violent white racist thugs terrorise not just Asians, Africans, gays, Jews, leftists, but any who speak out against racism. Leftists have been physically attacked in Melbourne and Sydney; for years offices of left organisations including the SL have been NA targets. For the past two years Reverend Dorothy McMahon and her Pitt Street Uniting Church in Sydney have been constantly harassed. Last November,

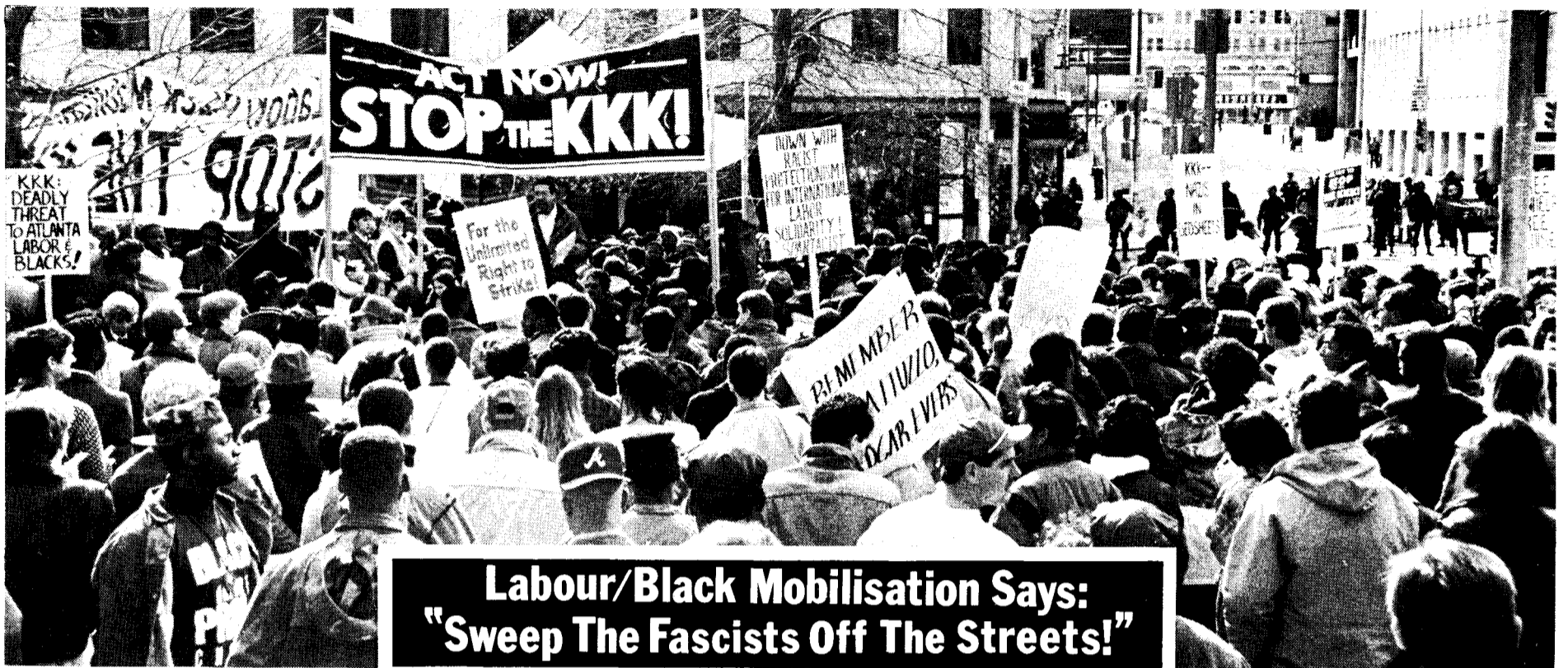
balaclava-hooded thugs calling themselves AWB (a fascist South African outfit) "necklaced" an effigy of McMahon outside her Sydney home. NA have made death threats to Sydney Jewish community leaders, and desecrated the Jewish section of Rookwood cemetery. Attacks on homes of families with adopted Asian children in Sydney's Manly-Warringah area and increased physical assaults of Asians in Sydney's western suburbs have been reported. A 23 November submission to NSW police minister Pickering by Dorothy McMahon, anti-racist activist Betty Hounslow, journalist Adele Horin and representatives of Community Aid Abroad, the Jewish Board of Deputies and the NSW Ethnic Communities Council decried the

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AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

As Army of Cops, Troops Shields 7 Klansmen

Atlanta: 3,500 Turn Out Against KKK



**Labour/Black Mobilisation Says:
"Sweep The Fascists Off The Streets!"**

Workers Vanguard

Atlanta, USA — On the first day of the Bush administration, the Ku Klux Klan and skinhead thugs planned a racist "celebration" of the murder of Martin Luther King with a January 21 march through the Southern city of Atlanta, Georgia. Their provocation was intended to fuel racist terror across America. The Georgia state house and the black Democratic city administration mobilised a virtual army to ensure that organised protest would not prevent the race-haters from invading the black city. But thousands filled Central City Park in downtown Atlanta in a labour/black mobilisation of defiance. This integrated demonstration, bringing out over 3000 unionists, students, gays and socialists, was a sight not seen in the open-shop, Klan-infested Deep South for decades.

Last July, a Klan and skinheads attempt to march outside a Democratic Party convention in Atlanta was frustrated by several hundred demonstrators. So the

powers that be served notice that this would not be allowed to happen again. The relationship of forces on the side of the state on January 21 was so overwhelming that when the seven Klansmen marched past the 3000 anti-Klan demonstrators in Central City Park, only the fascists' disgusting "No King Over Us" banner was visible amid the 2000 cops and troops arrayed in riot gear and battle fatigues. Elsewhere along the line of march, skirmishes broke out as protesters tried to get at the Klansmen. The cops escorted the fascists through town and launched a police rampage against black Atlanta — over 40 protesters were arrested, dozens clubbed.

FATALISM IN THE FACE OF A DEADLY THREAT CAN BE FATAL

In initiating this labour-centred show of strength against the fascist provocation, the Partisan Defense Committee, the class-struggle legal defence or-

ganisation associated with the Spartacist League/US, initiated a united-front call: "Act Now! Stop the KKK!" Pursuing the same strategy which spiked a Klan/skinhead threat in Philadelphia November 5, on the eve of Bush's election, the PDC call warned "Fatalism in the Face of a Deadly Threat Can Be Fatal":

"The country has lurched to the right, but we can stop these genocide-lovers in the city of Atlanta. Arch-capitalist Bush has a hard row to hoe — maybe if we act strongly here we can start reversing this willful, deliberate increase in the misery of people, especially poor blacks but in fact practically everybody."

Atlanta's heavily black and beleaguered unions saw the need to act. Key Atlanta unions including machinists, city and transit workers joined the mobilisation, as did tenants councils and student organisations. Spartacus Youth Club militants led a march of some 150 students from Atlanta University to join the demonstration. By 1 pm the crowd was over 3000 strong, with unions and black fraternities providing marshals to ensure the crowd's safety. When the cops and troops neared the rally, thousands of voices erupted in chants of "Down with the hoods, down with the sheets — Sweep the Klan off the streets!" and "Hitler lovers, you can't hide, KKK must not ride!"

Also demonstrating that day was the All-Peoples Congress, which brought out 500 anti-Klan demonstrators. Prone to inciting young people into pointless confrontations with the police, the APC plays a dangerous game. They undercut their ostensible — and our real — purpose in these anti-fascist demonstrations. The APC spurns mass mobilisations based on the social power of the unions.

The united front provided a platform for a wide divergence of views around the common determination to stop the Klan night-

riders. One black nationalist was loudly booed when he started white-baiting and gay-baiting other protesters; an SL speaker was cheered for sharply criticising those remarks. A number of speakers, including a member of the Georgia Rainbow Coalition, expressed illusions in Martin Luther King-style pacifism and black Democrats like Jesse Jackson.

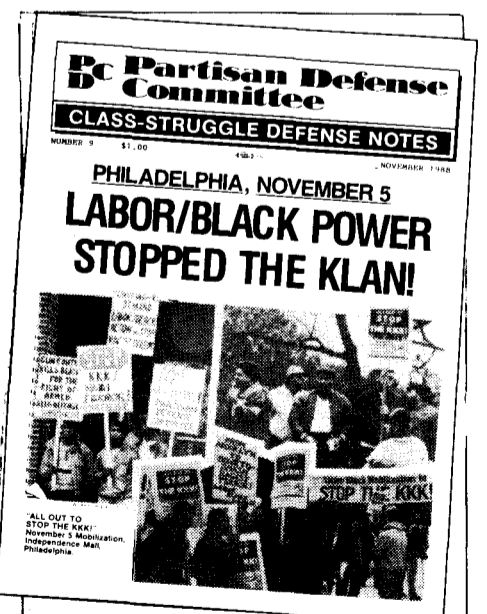
For most participants, the event was their first exposure to the socialist program of the Spartacist League. Chants at the demonstration included: "1,2,3,4 — Time to finish the Civil War! 5,6,7,8 — Forward to a workers state!" As Spartacist League speaker Brian Manning said, "This system feeds on racial oppression, misery, poverty and war. Let's build a party that can take this government out of the hands of the racists and warmongers and run it for ourselves. Let's fight for a workers government!"

— Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 470, 3 February 1989



Phalanx of cops and troops escort 7 Klansmen.

Workers Vanguard



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Left: Teenage militiawomen with AK-47 assault rifles at massive rally in Kabul recently. Above: Under PDPA regime, women learn to read.

Afghanistan...

Continued from page two

Afghanistan to effect a social revolution, but simply to make secure an unstable, strategically placed client state.... It is possible the Kremlin could do a deal with the imperialists to withdraw, for example, in return for NATO's reversing its decision to deploy hundreds of new nuclear missiles in West Europe. That would be a real counterrevolutionary crime against the Afghan peoples."

— "Afghanistan and the Left: The Russian Question Point Blank," *Spartacist* No 29, Summer 1980

IMPERIALIST HUE AND CRY OVER AFGHAN "SELF-DETERMINATION"

For almost a decade the demand for Soviet troops out of Afghanistan has united the far right, liberals, social democrats and most self-styled radicals. Support for the Afghan "freedom fighters" has united liberal Democrats with Reaganites and most of the American and West European left — social democrats, Eurocommunists, ex-New Left Maoists, "Third Campists" — with their imperialist rulers. Afghanistan and Polish Solidarnosc, the only "union" Ronald Reagan loved, have been two central issues defining which side you're on in Cold War II. Thus the hard pro-Moscow factions in the Eurocommunist parties were variously dubbed *afganos* (Spain), *kabulisti* (Italy) and "tankies" (Britain). In Australia much of the reformist "far left" joined with the ALP in attacking Malcolm Fraser's Liberals from the right over Afghanistan with the slogan "Malcolm's wool keeps the Russians warm." Almost in its entirety the anti-American nationalist lefts leapt squarely into the camp of US imperialism over Poland.

An Iranian woman leftist, Val Moghadam, drawing on the bitter experience of Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution," expresses consternation that:

"Left-wing support for the Mujahedeen has been especially strong in Europe, where activists from London to Stockholm have defended the putative national liberation struggle. One of the surprising features of this support has been the total neglect of the meaning of national liberation under an Islamic rubric

for Afghan women. Since the Saur revolution (April 1978), and to some degree even prior to it, women have made incremental but important gains in education, employment and political participation. Indeed, it was precisely the reform programs launched by the PDPA government that provoked reaction....

"By all accounts and indications a Mujahedeen-ruled Afghanistan would be more intolerant and repressive than the Islamic Republic of Iran and would work fervently to undo the measures taken towards women's equality."

— *Against the Current*, November/December 1988

and the elevation of national independence as the highest political principle. Since 1917 when the Russian Revolution toppled capitalism in one-sixth of the globe, the imperialists' central aim has been to reverse the gains of October and restore capitalist exploitation in this bastion of workers power. That is why the entire apparatus of political indoctrination in the US, West Europe and Australia is geared to producing hatred and fear of the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state.

The standard line of Western imperialism and its left camp followers is that "Russia violated Afghan national self-determination." This charge

the country were a homogeneous nation, communists would support the Soviet Union's armed intervention. All talk of Afghan "national sovereignty" is but a cover to defend the class and caste privileges of the khans, mullahs, landlords and moneylenders. For Marxists, the furthering of social revolution, including the defence of the USSR against capitalist imperialism, stands higher than the bourgeois-democratic right of national self-determination.

RUSSIA'S VIETNAM?

Ever since the 1979 Soviet intervention, the Western media has labelled Afghanistan "Russia's Vietnam," an insidious lie now taken up for its own reasons by the Gorbachev regime. In Vietnam the US fought a genocidal war to stop a social revolution, and was defeated on the battlefield. The Soviet army fought to stop counterrevolution which would turn the clock back by centuries, but never fought to win. From the outset the Kremlin tops kept open the option of withdrawal as a bargaining chip in dealing with Western imperialism. The US sent 500,000 troops halfway round the world to Vietnam. The Soviet leaders sent just 100,000 across the border into Afghanistan.

Nonetheless, by 1984 the Soviet and PDPA forces had practically won the war. The CIA's "holy warriors" were shattered and demoralised. And the government's modest social reforms, although scaled back from even the moderate program first offered by the PDPA, were winning support in the countryside. One rebel leader stated: "The war has been deadlocked up until now, but we are beginning to lose the population.... If this continues, we may eventually lose the war" (*Chicago Tribune*, 16 November 1984).

Seeking to turn the tide, in early 1986 the US began supplying the *mujahedin* with state-of-the-art Stinger missiles. Soon these shoulder-fired rockets were bringing down scores of Soviet and Afghan aircraft, including civilian airplanes. Soviet military aircraft were so crucial to the Afghan war only because the Kremlin was willing to commit but a small fraction of its five-million-strong armed forces. Even so, the Russians could have easily deployed available technology to defeat the "Stinger war," but they did not. And no serious effort was made to interdict the flow of US-supplied weapons from Pakistan.

When Gorbachev came to

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST



Bush and Reagan meet with Gorbachev last December. Kremlin leader pulls Soviet troops out of Afghanistan to appease imperialism.



Moghadam asks how it is possible for leftists, including self-styled radical feminists, to support such a reactionary and barbaric movement. Her answer: "It can only be a misguided Third Worldism and fascination with any and all guerrilla warfare that prevents leftists from discerning reactionary movements." This explanation is wide of the mark. Practically no Western leftists support the guerrillas of the Nicaraguan contras or Jonas Savimbi's UNITA in Angola. Moreover, some leftists (eg Tariq Ali) who joined the imperialist chorus for Soviet troops out initially supported the PDPA against the *mujahedin* revolt before the Soviet intervention.

Western leftist support for Washington's Afghan cutthroats (and also for Polish Solidarnosc) expresses anti-Soviet prejudices

doesn't even hold up on its own terms. Afghanistan is not a nation but a feudal-derived state composed of a mosaic of nationalities, ethnic and tribal groupings. Most of the rural population has never lived under the effective control of any central state power, but identifies exclusively with particular ethnic, tribal or linguistic groupings. In Afghanistan the term "Afghan" refers only to the Pushtuns, not to the Hazaras, Tadjiks and other peoples.

Should the *mujahedin* topple the Kabul nationalist government, the two-sided civil war could well become a war of all against all. Already, Shi'ite groups are refusing to accept Sunni domination, and the rival *mujahedin* groups are threatening to kill one another. We can only hope they do so quickly and massively. Yet even if

power in 1985, he faced economic stagnation aggravated by the intensified military pressure from Reagan's America. His domestic program of market-oriented reforms (perestroika) was linked to a foreign policy of global appeasement. Gorbachev's most dramatic foreign policy initiative was to cut and run from Afghanistan.

To help set this up, the Kremlin strong-armed the PDPA regime into calling for "national reconciliation," ie, a coalition government with sections of the mujahedin. In 1986 Afghan leader Karmal was dumped, apparently because he resisted the new turn. He was replaced by Najibullah, who at the beginning of 1987 declared a unilateral cease-fire while further scaling back progressive social reforms so as not to affront Islamic tradition. Calling for a coalition of the PDPA and mujahedin is somewhat like calling in the 1930s for a coalition of Nazis and Jewish leftists. The mujahedin want not only to kill every leftist in Afghanistan but to exterminate the entire educated urban population, whom they regard as infidels.

The Gorbachev regime appears willing to accept such a bloodbath if it is necessary to appease the Western powers. A historic parallel is Stalin's pulling the Red Army out of northern Iran in 1946, abandoning the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan under the Cold War pressure of US imperialism. There followed a massacre of pro-Soviet Iranian leftists at the hands of the shah.

To prepare the Soviet people for the abandonment of Afghanistan, Kremlin officials and the Soviet media are parroting the imperialist lie that the Afghan intervention was wrong, that the lives of the 15,000 Soviet soldiers killed there were simply wasted, that Afghanistan is Russia's Vietnam. In a flippant "we wash our

PDC: For Internationalist Military Support to Afghan Government!

We reprint below a letter from the Partisan Defense Committee to the government of Afghanistan, offering concrete support in the struggle against the murderous reactionary mujahedin. The letter proposes organization of an international brigade to assist in defending the Afghan peoples against the CIA's feudalistic terrorists. When we spoke with representatives of the Afghan government about the letter, they thanked us for this initiative while indicating that they believe such a measure is not necessary to defend the country at this time.

7 February 1989

To: Ambassador of the Republic of Afghanistan

Dear Mr Ambassador:

With the withdrawal of the Soviet Army now completed, we join with you in fearing that elementary social progress is in grave danger in Afghanistan. The right of women to read,

freedom from the veil, freedom from the tyranny of the mullahs and the landlords, the introduction of medical care and the right of all to an education — we are compelled to offer our aid before all this is drowned in blood. The Partisan Defense Committee hereby makes the urgent offer to organize an international brigade to fight to the death in defense of these rights in Afghanistan. Volunteers would of course operate under your control and direction.

The Partisan Defense Committee is a class-struggle defense organization supported by militant Marxists worldwide, many associated with the international Spartacist tendency.

In making this offer, we pledge to handle all aspects of agitation, propaganda and recruitment necessary to amass forces and publicize the effort. These forces would be recruited internationally from among disaffected progressive youth, leftist militants, liber-

ation fighters, and decent people who wish to prevent the destruction of any vestige of human progress achieved through struggle. We further pledge to provide transport to an appropriate transit point. International fighters would be expected to acquire equipment when in place.

From the Afghan government we would need air fare from a transit point to Kabul and, in the field, food and military direction.

Capitalist governments which hypocritically condemned the presence of the Red Army in Afghanistan are fleeing Kabul, aghast at the prospect of a full-scale civil war reaching that city. They abandon their embassies now in the hopes of returning after the victory of the feudalist mujahedin. This must not happen!

We hope most fervently that you will accept this offer of assistance proffered with a keen sense of internationalist duty. Please respond as soon as possible.

Southeast Asia into a moonscape. One veteran activist told the West German magazine Der Spiegel (7 March 1988): "Our sacrifices were not for nothing. We have after all brought there the achievements of the civilised world." Honour Soviet veterans of the war in Afghanistan!

DEFEAT IMPERIALISM THROUGH COMMUNIST INTERNATIONALISM!

During the 19th century Afghanistan was a chessboard on which the "Great Game" between

bombers could land after attacking Soviet targets in Siberia or Central Asia" (Henry Bradsher, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union [1983]).

US imperialism wants to turn Afghanistan into not only a military forward point but also a conduit for anti-Communist agitation among the Turkic peoples of Soviet Central Asia. A few years ago the most rabid of the mujahedin leaders, Gulbaddin Hekmatyar, declared: "If the Mujahideen continue to fight persistently, the day is not far when the occupied areas of Soviet Central Asia will also be liberated." It is ludicrous to think that the Central Asian population freed from religious obscurantism and grinding oppression, and enjoying modern medical care, universal education and an incomparably higher standard of living — would want to link up with a reactionary Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Nonetheless, Gorbachev's perestroika has fueled reactionary nationalist currents in the Caucasus and Baltic republics. And Central Asia is certainly not immune. Moscow's increasing reliance on market forces will tend to favour the more developed regions of European Russia, the Ukraine and Baltic republics. Under these conditions pan-Turkic

nationalism in Islamic coloration could make headway in the Central Asian republics.

The Soviet Union is confronting a deepening political and economic crisis. The bureaucratic centralism of the Brezhnev era led to stagnation. Gorbachev's perestroika will generate unemployment, increasing inequalities and intensifying national animosities. Internationally, his policy of appeasement will only embolden the imperialist drive to roll back Soviet power and influence.

Afghanistan's modernizing intellectuals have viewed Soviet Central Asia, despite the enormous deformations of Stalinism, as representing social progress. Under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, Bolshevik Russia was viewed as beacon of the socialist future by workers and radical intellectuals around the world, including in the imperialist centres of North America and Europe. The Soviet Union can and must be restored to its rightful place as a bastion of international communism through proletarian political revolution against the treacherous Kremlin bureaucracy.

— Adapted from Workers Vanguard no 471. 17 February 1989



Melbourne, 1980. Spartacist demo says "Afghanistan: Hail Red Army! Defend Women Against Islamic Reaction!"

hands of the whole business" tone, the Communist Youth paper Komsomolskaya Pravda reported what will happen when the Soviet commander, Lt Gen Boris Gromov, leaves Afghanistan:

"He will cross without looking back. Then he will stop and make a speech, but only to himself. It will last one minute and seven seconds. It will not be written down or listened to."

Soviet veterans of the Afghan war are being treated like pariahs instead of heroes. In their fight for official recognition, these veterans (the afghantsy) deeply resent the comparison of their internationalist combat duty to Washington's drive to transform

tsarist Russia and Great Britain was played out. But in 1917 the Bolshevik Revolution changed the rules of this "game." Imperialist machinations in the region now had as their ultimate goal the destruction of the Soviet workers state and the opening up of its vast territory for capitalist plunder.

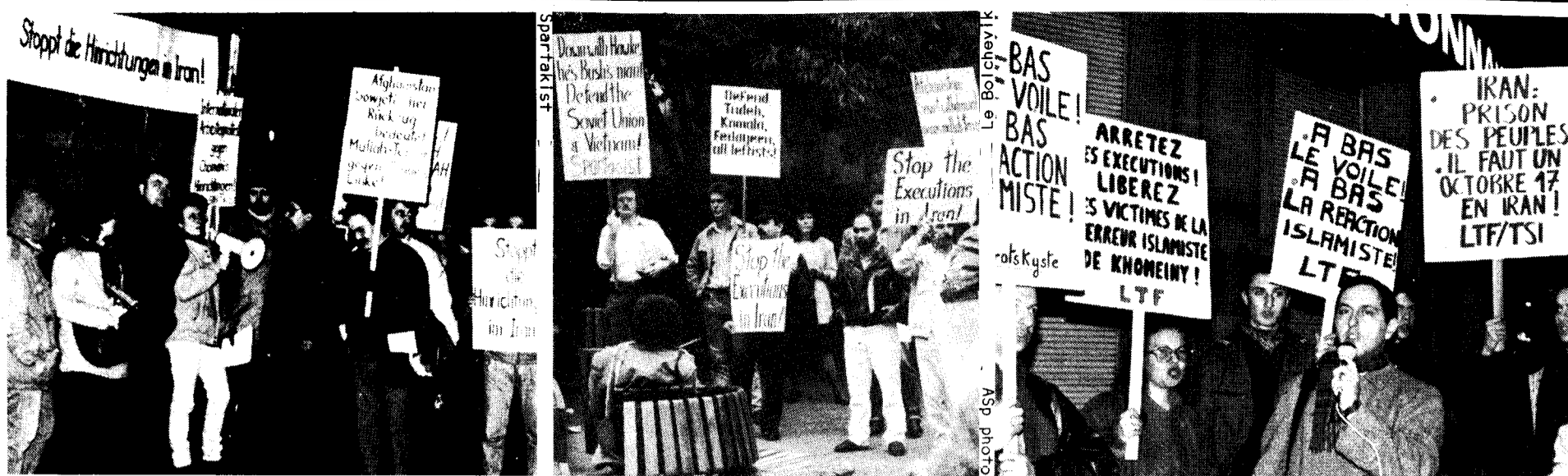
After World War II Pakistan became the US' main client in the region, but Washington never lost sight of Afghanistan's potential military value in a counterrevolutionary assault on the USSR. In the early 1960s the US offered to build an airport at Kandahar for the Afghan king Zahir Shah. The Pentagon secretly planned to use it as a "recovery base" where

International Women's Day Forums

**War to the Death Against CIA's Mullah Cutthroats!
Gorbachev's Pullout a Betrayal!**

Battle for Afghanistan

SYDNEY	MELBOURNE	MELBOURNE
Sydney University Brennan Room Holme Building Wed 8 March 1pm	Melbourne Uni Blue Room Union Building Thur 9 March 1pm	YWCA, Room 10 489 Elizabeth St Sat 11 March 6.30pm



Spartacist-initiated protests demand: "Stop the Executions in Iran!" Left to Right: Hamburg; Melbourne; Paris; New York; Sydney.

Stop the Executions in Iran!

Continued from page twelve

action protesting the bloodbath unleashed by the ayatollah's regime.

HAMBURG, WEST GERMANY

Some 100 people, including scores of Iranian exiles, turned out in Hamburg January 11 outside the General Consulate of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Joining with the Trotzistische Liga Deutschlands (TLD) were the Communist Party of Iran (CPI)/Komala, Rahe Kargar, the Fedayeen Central Committee of Minority Cells, and sympathisers of the former Peykar organisation. Demands at the rally included: "Stop Interior Minister Zimmermann's Deportation Program!" "Political Asylum for Refugees from Reactionary Terror" and "Deportation Is Murder!" A CPI/Komala speaker linked the wave of executions to the Islamic regime's pursuit of better relations with the Western imperialist powers and specifically to West German foreign minister Genscher's visit to Iran in late November: "Herr Genscher travels to Teheran to boost the hangmen."

The TLD speaker stressed the urgent need for united-front defence to stop the executioner's axe, pointing out that today Khomeini "is attacking everybody, including those who ten years ago had open illusions in the mullahs and also served Khomeini. It is easy today to be against Islamic reaction. But in 1978 and '79, it wasn't so easy. Then the international Spartacist tendency stood alone. We told the truth: 'Down with the Shah! Down with the Mullahs! For Workers Revolution in Iran!'" The demonstration ended with the singing of the Internationale in German, Farsi and Serbo-Croatian.

PARIS AND LYON, FRANCE

Also on January 11, 140 demonstrators gathered outside the offices of Iran Air on the Champs Elysees in Paris. The Ligue Trotskyiste de France (LTF), initiators of the protest, had distributed 10,000 leaflets at various universities in three days, and numerous Iranian groups responded to the call. Speakers at the protest included a representative of the Committee Against Political Executions in Iran, and sympathisers of the CPI/Komala and the Fedayeen Minority. Also participating in the protest were Rahe

Kargar, the Fedayeen Majority, supporters of the Iranian journal Recommencement, and the Muslim group, Ershad. Three supporters of Tudeh also joined the demonstration.

The next day, January 12, some 45 people demonstrated in Lyon, including a number of Iranian women and members of the Kurdish and Azeri national minorities. The Iranian women enthusiastically joined in LTF chants of "Down with the veil! Down with Islamic reaction!"

WASHINGTON DC, USA

On January 13, some 20 protesters demonstrated outside the Iranian Interests Section located in the Algerian embassy on the



Abbas/Gamma-Liaison

Islamic Revolution means women in veils, bloody repression of working class and national minorities.

outskirts of Washington. In addition to denouncing the executions in Iran, they chanted "US hands off Libya! Down with US war moves!" A speaker for the Spartacist League/US declared: "As American revolutionaries, it's incumbent upon us to fight our own bourgeoisie. And we say: US out of the Persian Gulf! Remember Iran Air Flight 655 — the 290 people who were killed, victims of US war moves."

LONDON, ENGLAND

On January 14, over 60 demonstrators joined with the Spartacist League of Britain (SL/B) in picketing outside the Iranian embassy in London. Speakers included an Iranian activist and a London-Islington branch official of the National Union of Public Employees, as well as spokesmen for the British "Leninist" organisation, Iranian Political Prisoners Action Committee (IPPAC) and the SL/B. Also participating were

supporters of the CPI/Komala, Fedayeen Majority, Fedayeen Minority, Committee for the Defence of the Iranian People's Rights, and Committee Against Political Executions in Iran.

The police prevented a number of Iranian militants from joining the protest by threatening to arrest them if they refused to remove headwear covering their faces and thus expose themselves to the agents of Khomeini's murderous regime. A Spartacist representative denounced this provocation as "an outrageous example of collaboration between the British state and the Iranian state."

The spokesman from the IPPAC quoted a letter he had received from Iran: "Everyone you know, anyone whose name you know, has been executed." The SL/B speaker drew attention to the bloodbath which looms follow-

However, a Tudeh representative did speak, as did Janet Yip, a member of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. Afterwards, the demonstrators marched to a nearby Tudeh hunger-strike protest where a TLC spokesman addressed the protesters.

MELBOURNE AND SYDNEY

Around 60 protesters rallied at Melbourne's Town Hall Plaza on 17 January. Joining the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand, which initiated the demonstration, were representatives of the Revolutionary Workers Organisation of Iran (Rahe Kargar) and the Freedom Socialist Party — both of whom addressed the demonstration — the Iranian Refugee Association, the Union of Australian Turkish Workers, the Community Centre for People of Turkey in Victoria, Devrimci Yol and the Chilean Socialist Party. A statement of solidarity was read from ALP MHR Lewis Kent condemning the executions and nailing the threatened deportations of Iranian refugees by the Hawke government as "execution by proxy of the deportees."

In Sydney two days later on 19 January 80 people gathered at Town Hall Square to protest. Nearly half the demonstration comprised Iranian, Turkish and Kurdish militants. The plight of Iranian refugees being held in Sydney's Villawood detention centres as illegal immigrants and facing deportation to Iran was a real concern of the demonstrators who chanted "Stop Hawke's Deportations to Death!"

The demonstration was endorsed by the Committee in Solidarity with Political Prisoners in Iran (CISPP) and the Sydney Turkish Workers Association. Representatives from these organisations addressed the protesters, along with the Spartacist League and the Communist Tendency. Also in attendance were representatives of the Turkish Labour League and two cadre of the Socialist Party of Australia, which had belatedly and reluctantly decided it should participate. The Committee in Solidarity with Political Prisoners in Iran, which includes members of major Iranian left groups, spoke of a long list of leftists, held in memory name by name, who have already fallen under the firing squad of the Islamic terror regime.

Unfortunately the bitter sectarianism of the Iranian left came into sharp public focus over these demonstrations. In Melbourne a leaflet was distributed entitled

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST



"Whom will the Spartacists Unite with Next?" jointly signed by Australian Supporters, OIPFG (Organisation of Iranian People's Fedayeen Guerillas) and Workers Revolution (Australia), a tiny anti-Soviet outfit which is the current political garb of Paul White. The leaflet condemned our demonstration because of the participation of Tudeh and Fedayeen Majority, going on to describe the SL as having "similar reactionary politics." This idiotic charge is meant to be sustained by one even more idiotic, namely that the SL engages in "thuggery" because we defended our own meeting in October 1987 against a provocation by none other than Paul White (see Australasian Spartacist no 123, Summer 1987/88).

The authors admit that "Their international Spartacist tendency has never backed the Tehran regime. And, unlike Tudeh, the Spartacists during 1979-81 did oppose the imposition of Islamic dress on women and all the other attacks upon workers and toilers." Unlike in fact all the left, including Paul White and those now grouped in the OIPFG. It is ironic testimony to the bankruptcy of sectarianism that OIPFG's Australian supporters, who describe the OIPFG as being "Iran's largest left wing organisation," by their

refusal to defend Tudeh against Khomeini's terror, end up tailing along after the unsavoury and insignificant Paul White, who stands with Khomeini's reactionary brethren in Afghanistan against the Red Army.

MILAN, ITALY

On January 20 a spirited demonstration of 15 people called by the Lega Trotskista d'Italia protested the Iran executions outside the Iranian Consulate in Milan. Speakers condemned the complicity of the Italian government which had just hosted Iranian prime minister Musavi, the highest-ranking Iranian official to visit a Western country since the mullahs' 1979 seizure of power. While the Italian left boycotted the demonstration, 30 Iranian men showed up with pictures of Khomeini (likely provocateurs from the consulate) to disrupt the protest. However, they were easily drowned out by chants of "Down with the veil! Down with Islamic reaction!" and "Iran, Iraq: Down with the mullahs! Down with the colonels! Workers to power!"

NEW YORK, USA

In New York City on January 19 some 85 demonstrators rallied outside the Iranian mission to the United Nations chanting "Stop ex-

ecutions in Iran! Freedom for leftist prisoners!" The protest was joined by supporters of several Iranian leftist groups including the Communist Party of Iran (Komala), the Left Platform group, Tudeh Party of Iran, Democratic Organisation of Iranian Women, and the Association of Iranian Left in New York. A statement was read from the Iranian Student Association in the US, supporters of the Fedayeen (Minority). Supporters of the Revolutionary Communist Party joined the picket line and a speaker from the Freedom Socialist Party addressed the protesters.

Condemning the Reagan/Bush regime's murderous intervention in the Middle East, the demonstrators chanted "US out of the Persian Gulf! Hands off Libya!" And as the withdrawal of Soviet troops threatens to open the door to the imminent extension of the Islamic bloodbath to Afghan leftists and women, Spartacist supporters called out: "Smash CIA's Afghan mullahs! Soviet pullout means bloodbath!"

These protests were a statement of proletarian internationalism. In response to the hideous massacre in Iran, the international Spartacist tendency has simply carried out the duty of communists to champion the oppressed as

part of the struggle for world socialist revolution. As the TLD speaker in Hamburg concluded: "Iran is very similar to the Russian empire under the tsar — a huge prison house of peoples. Equality for women, liberation for the Kurds, Baluchis, for the other peoples, an end to the oppression of the religious minorities like the Bahais — the bourgeoisie can bring none of this. But in Russia there was one thing that does not exist in Iran and which did not exist ten years ago, when the question of revolution was posed. This was a revolutionary party of the working class."

"Comrades, proletarian revolution is what is necessary to open the doors of the prisons, for freedom for the Kurdish people, for the other peoples, for the peoples living in Afghanistan. This generation of Iranian leftists must be saved. What is necessary is a powerful outcry from the whole left, from the workers organisations, above all from the trade unions, and from all organisations who defend democratic rights. We must stand together to demand an end to the executions in Iran. Stop the executions in Iran!"

— Adapted from Workers Vanguard no 469, 20 January 1989 and Workers Vanguard no 470, 3 February 1989

Khomeini's Jails...

Continued from page twelve

interviewing Iranian exile Bizhan Ekrami, who told of "an actual genocide" that was killing "the best sons of Iran." Ekrami had a typed list of 147 names of activists, members of the intelligentsia and cultural figures, only a small fraction of those killed. "Iran is in mourning," he said. There have also been protests in

On January 27, the London Independent reported, in an article by Middle East editor Harvey Morris, that Khomeini has "in effect called a halt" to the executions. However, Iranian opposition groups had predicted that the regime would first wipe out its opponents and then declare an amnesty on the anniversary of the mullahs' seizure of power. Khomeini's "offer" stipulates that political prisoners will still have to recant and have their cases heard before a special commission. A spokesman for the People's Mujahedin described the announcement as "a sham to counter Iran's bad image," adding, "otherwise why haven't they allowed anyone to visit the prisons?"

Iran in the midst of this reign of terror. Die Wahrheit (30 December 1988), the organ of the Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin, reports that, according to information from the Mujahedin, "a large number of relatives of executed oppositionists held a sit-down strike in front of the Ministry of Justice in Teheran on Tuesday to protest mass executions in Iran."

And in New York, the "Committee in Solidarity with the People of Iran" (CISPI) published gruesome pictures of bodies thrown into the "Graveyard of the Damned" in Teheran. "There are also reports that all political prisoners in the city of Hamadan have been executed by firing squads....

The true dimensions of the crimes that are being committed behind the prison walls of the Islamic Republic are still unknown.... These reports indicate that as many as 10,000 political prisoners have been executed within this past month alone." In mid-December, representatives of the Spartacist League and the Partisan Defense Committee joined protests at the United Nations and in Washington against the Iranian slaughter. It is urgent that worldwide protest be mounted now!

WAR AND REVOLUTION

In sheer number of victims, the bloodbath in Iran ranks on a par with the mass murder following the counterrevolutionary 1973

Pinochet coup in Chile. In Iran today we are witnessing a calculated program of extermination to head off a social explosion in the wake of a protracted, reactionary war. According to the London Independent, Rahe Kargar has information that "the executions were part of a concerted policy to annihilate the left so that it would not be able in future to exploit the popular dissent.... It said there was a two-stage plan to review the cases of all political prisoners by the tenth anniversary of the revolution next February. In the first phase, 1,000 prisoners who had yet to be sentenced were summarily tried and sentenced to death. In the second phase political prisoners sentenced to jail terms were retried and executed if they failed to recant."

From the beginning of the mullahs' theocratic rule, torture and execution have been standard fare. Soon after Evin prison disgorged thousands of political prisoners from the torture chambers of the shah's secret police, the SAVAK, it began filling again with the victims of the Islamic dictatorship. Kurds and Baluchis fighting for self-determination, followers of the Bahai religion,

Photo smuggled out of Iran shows murdered Iranian political prisoner, whose shallow grave was dug up by wild animals.



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CSR Workers...

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having to be "dealt with," but his local field officers in the shape of AMWU, FIA et al union officials (many themselves under injunction) were issuing instructions for the strikers to "tactically retreat." The taste of defeat was palpable when the shop committee strike leaders agreed and militants were forced to stand across the road from their own picket line. What transpired was a bureaucrat-inspired rout which left a few picketers isolated and vulnerable to provocations by company stooges who were reveling in the "legal" and "passive" picket line.

Time after time the strikers were ordered back to work by the Arbitration Commission. Time after time they refused. Despite their will to fight, the strikers lacked a leadership with a program to win. From the outset the union tops kept the strike isolated and this was its most keenly felt weakness. It was necessary to shut the plant down tight. There needed to be a massive mobilisation of unionists from the ranks of the unions involved, which are among the city's most powerful and strategic, in defiance of the injunctions, to build a mass picket

line that no one dared cross! The strike needed to be extended, by forming flying pickets to bring out workers from other plants, like the CSR gypsum plant right next door, as well as workers at CSR's Pyrmont refinery in Sydney who struck briefly early on. These workers had everything to gain from bringing CSR to its knees and stopping the flow of sugar to Melbourne. And across the city, across the country, workers itching to smash the hated "penal powers" and break the stranglehold of the Accord could have provided much-needed support in the form of black bans on scab sugar and sympathy strikes.

WORKERS NEED A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY!

Frustrated at the bureaucrats' obstructionism and sabotage, nevertheless the militants in the shop committee, including International Socialists (IS) supporter, Daryl Croke, did not break from the defeatist framework of the sellout union tops. After the strike the IS's Socialist (January 1989) headlined "How We Shook the Wages System" and wailed that the outcome would have been different "if the union officials and Trades Hall Council had been willing to translate their fiery rhetoric into action." Sure, and pigs might fly if they had wings. Halfpenny was one of the foremost architects of the Accord. He

and "lefts" of his ilk have a division of labour with the open bosses' men like Crean and Kelty — it took over an hour of Halfpenny's "fiery rhetoric" to get the CSR strikers to agree to go back to work.

Because of their rabid anti-Sovietism the IS has the dubious distinction of coming out with the same line as the Foreign Affairs Department on most questions of world politics. It's not surprising then that they tail the Laborite bureaucracy. But this they have in common with all the reformist left. For instance, the Defend the Unions Committee was formed in Melbourne ostensibly to fight the Accord and Hawke's union-busting, mainly the smashing of the BLF. But it's an amalgam of Labor-loyal "far lefts" and out-bureaucrats, typical of the Melbourne workerist milieu, and it defends Laborite betrayal, from the Gallagher BLF leadership's refusal to mount industry-wide action to defend the union, to recently doing the donkey-work for diversionary consumer boycotts of Hoyts when the cinema workers strike urgently needed class struggle support. Consistent Laborism means defeat and betrayal, as the political bandits of the Socialist Labour League proved in 1986 when their supporter crossed a BLF picket line in Footscray.

The ALP government is bent

on policing the unions, grinding working people down into misery and poverty and propelling the country into imperialist war against the Soviet Union and Vietnam. The ALP union leaders hobnob with the bosses and are only interested in organising reactionary actions, like protectionist demonstrations of Geelong cement workers, and anti-communist bans such as those placed on the Soviet Union over KAL 007 and on the Yugoslav Consulate in Sydney last year. There is an urgent need to turn the unions into weapons of struggle. The starting point is fighting for the complete independence of the trade unions from the capitalist state, centrally Arbitration. That means breaking from Labor!

Class struggle oppositions need to be built in the unions to oust the Labor traitors and forge a revolutionary leadership. To fight the increasing immiseration it is suffering at the hands of the capitalists the working class needs a revolutionary party to lead it. The only solution to the descent of the capitalist system into depression and war is socialist revolution. A workers government will rip the productive wealth of the country out of the hands of the bosses and put it at the service of the toiling masses of the region, and the world. ■

Khomeini's Jails...

Continued from page nine

women who refused to wear the veil, homosexuals, leftists, were stoned to death, hanged or shot by firing squads. A report on the condition of political prisoners in Iran by CISPI stated: "As the execution of virgin women is not allowed by Islam, young girls are systematically raped in prison before their execution...."

It is doubly tragic that many of those who are today being executed had joined the mullah-led upsurge against the bloody shah in 1978-79. The Tudeh, the historic leadership of Iran's working class, delivered its base into Khomeini's service. It betrayed promising proletarian actions, including strikes by the predominantly Arab (non-Farsi-speaking) oil workers of the south, leading them into the arms of Islamic reaction. At the time the international Spartacist tendency stood alone in proclaiming, "Down with the Shah, Down with the Mullahs! For Workers Revolution in Iran!" A year later the bulk of the Iranian left, having hailed Khomeini as an "anti-imperialist" liberator, supported their "own" ruling class in the Iran-Iraq war. Even as the ayatollah's thugs threw leftists back into the same prisons where they had languished under the shah, as the regime persecuted women, homosexuals, ethnic minorities and workers, Tudeh and the Fedayeen Majority (along with the pseudo-Trotskyist HKE and HKS) rallied to the cry of defense of the fatherland.

The squalid slaughter of the reactionary Iran-Iraq war — in which the working masses of neither country had any stake in the victory of their "own" rulers — dragged on for eight years and took over one million lives. It recalled the horrible imperialist

carnage of World War I. From the very outset of the war, the international Spartacist tendency took the Leninist position of revolutionary defeatism on both sides, demanding, "Down with the colonels! Down with the ayatollahs! Turn the guns the other way!"

"But war is also the mother of revolution. And the Iraqi-Iranian conflict lays bare their real 'border problem': the oppressed nationalities that are divided by the artificial border separating Iran and Iraq, especially the Kurds and the ethnic Arabs who compose a majority of Khuzistan.... This war and the position of revolutionary defeatism will be an acid test for a revolutionary regroupment."

— "Iran/Iraq Blood Feud,"
Workers Vanguard no 265,
3 October 1980

We recognized that a defeat for either side would open revolutionary possibilities for the proletariat. War-weariness was growing, and at one point, the American Communist Party's People's Daily World (27 June 1987) reported that a group of factory workers in Iran was circulating an appeal "to expose the 'war-mongering and anti-worker nature' of the Khomeini regime, and to struggle against the war by preventing recruitment, financial and material aid to the fronts, and refusing to work in arms factories." Indeed, having vowed a "holy war" for Allah — and having failed to win it — Khomeini has now unleashed a pre-emptive reign of terror against the peoples of Iran.

But in keeping with their subordination to Khomeini at the crucial time when the hated shah's rule was decomposing, none of the major left tendencies in Iran adopted a perspective of struggling to transform the reac-

tionary nationalist war into civil war against the Ba'athist colonels and the Persian Shi'ite ruling caste. At best, as the war dragged on some took a "pro-peace" neutralist posture. Now as the guns fall silent on the Basra-Abadan front, in Teheran they are belching fire against "infidels," creating a "peace" of the graveyards. In postwar Iran, with the



Peter Jordan

Iran-Iraq war: eight years of carnage, one million dead.

questions of Khomeini's successor and the financial reconstruction of the war-ravaged country posed, the executioner's ax is falling on leftists, Kurds and even dissident mullahs.

The imperialist powers for the most part took a low profile in the Iran-Iraq war, playing off both

sides against each other. In the interest of anti-Soviet war-mongering, Reagan alternately armed the Iranians with US missiles, then (after that blew up in the Iran/Contragate scandal) engaged in repeated bloody confrontations, including the wanton massacre of 290 passengers aboard an Iranian Airbus last July. Certainly, the presence of a trigger-happy US war fleet in the Persian Gulf constituted a threat to interdict Iran's export of oil, without which the war could not have been fought. Iran's rulers have made repeated initiatives to normalize relations with Washington, the former "great Satan." Now these fanatical anti-Communists believe they can murder every leftist in the country and gain favor with the White House. And they're right. The New York Times (2 January) reported: "American officials and Western diplomats said the executions would not hinder a move toward better relations."

With the Iranian working masses bled and exhausted by the war, outbreaks of popular protest are a genuine threat to the blood-soaked rulers. But in the absence of an authentic Leninist party, this opportunity to organize the masses has so far been squandered. A horrible price in human life is instead being exacted against the left in Khomeini's prison hellholes. Only when the toiling masses of Iran and Iraq have communist vanguard parties forged in irreconcilable hostility to their "own" reactionary rulers can the massacres and repression be ended. It will take workers revolution to open the prison doors, to free the victims of Islamic reaction, liberate oppressed nationalities and stop the vicious cycle of bloodletting once and for all.

— Abridged from Workers Vanguard, no 468, 6 January 1989

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

Ustasha...

Continued from page four

to the bourgeoisie, via the ALP. In Canberra speakers pledged their loyalty to Australian nationalism, and former ALP senator Mulvihill urged — don't give up on the ALP. But there was nothing to be gained from banning communists and grovelling to Hawke.

REFORMISTS TAKE A DIVE

The class question involved was absolutely clear — defence of the consulate of a workers state against imperialist anti-communism. As for the reformist "left" — just look at how they ran. The Communist Party has long exchanged its enthusiasm for Yugoslav "workers self-management" for the fascinations of Hawke's anti-union Accord and Tribune moaned that, whatever had happened, "the situation still did not warrant the firing of guns" (30 November). The Guardian of the Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) denounced the Ustasha fascists and criticised the government, but words are cheap. They are still proceeding with plans for unity with Jim Percy's Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which for six years has been allied to a Ustasha grouping.

SWP: STILL DOING HDP'S DIRTY WORK

The SWP's attempts to smuggle so-called "left-wing" Croatian Ustashi into the labour movement has been a stinking scandal on the left for years. Claiming that the HDP, which glorifies wartime Ustasha mass murderers in its press and calls for dismembering Yugoslavia, was "moving left," the SWP devoted an entire issue of its theoretical journal Socialist Worker in 1983 to defending reactionary Croatian nationalism. Pavelic's blood-stained Ustasha, the SWP explained, were not really fascists, just right-wing nationalists and where they went wrong was in

subordinating themselves to German and Italian imperialism. (The Germans had to disarm the infamous Ustasha Black Legion, because its atrocities were provoking so much resistance!) They even defended the assassination of Rolovic, Yugoslav ambassador to Sweden, in 1971 as "an act of struggle against national oppression."

And they're still at it. Direct Action waited until its 13 December issue before it ventured to comment. Behind a smokescreen of criticism of Hawke's "reac-



WWII atrocities: Ustashi holding head of Serbian Orthodox priest.

tionary hysteria" and "hypocrisy," the writer, Peter Anear, proceeded to defend the Ustasha demonstration, saying "the demonstrators outside the Yugoslav embassy were not just supporters of the right-wing Croatian Ustasha." Lifting his line straight from the HDP's Hrvatski Tjednik Anear echoes the slander of an "ongoing campaign of violence by the Yugoslav secret police against Croats" and quotes Hrvatski Tjednik's "defence" that the attack on the consulate was to "respond to this terrorism."

Scandalously the SWP accuses opponents of Ustasha terror of fuelling "a wave of anti-migrant

comment," falsely charging "some in the ALP" with arguing "all Croats are fascists." They mean Joan Coxedge who was a lone voice amongst the ALP lefts in denouncing the Ustasha attack. This slimy red herring of "racism," which Coxedge herself adequately refuted, is a cover for the real racists the SWP defends — the Ustasha fascists who butchered Serbs, Jews, Gypsies, Croats in their hundreds of thousands; and the Hawke government, whose expulsion of the consulate was an attack on the predominantly working class immigrant Yugoslav community.

True to anti-communist form, the International Socialists ran the same dirty alibi for the fascists: "Consulate shooting — a racist backlash" (Socialist, December 1988). Whenever some emigre fascists see fit to run amok in the streets, it seems, there you'll find the IS — slandering those who draw the class line against them as "racist." Their "third camp" proves once again to be the camp of the imperialists — and their fascist bloodhounds. It is the intersection of the real racism of White Australia with Cold War anti-Sovietism that is what made this country such a haven for the likes of the Ustashi who today dominate the so-called "Croatian community" groups.

The Socialist Labour League incredibly blamed "the persistence of Croatian demonstrations in Australia and the fact that the fascist Ustasha have any strength within the Croatian community" on "the betrayals carried out by Stalinism" (Workers News, 2 December)! Not Hawke, not ASIO, not imperialism, of course. Their extreme Stalinophobia put them so far out in right field that Workers News modified its tune the next week: "Condemn anti-communist witchhunt" (9 December). But the line really hadn't changed. Formally recognising the Yugoslav diplomats' right to defend themselves, nevertheless they repeat that "the Yugoslav

Stalinist bureaucracy represents the greatest threat to the defence of Yugoslavia's nationalised property relations and planned economy." They even had the gall to denounce the "total inability of the Yugoslav officials to mobilise any Australian workers" — when Workers News was nowhere to be seen at the overwhelmingly working class Yugoslav rallies in Sydney and Canberra.

Noteworthy in comparison was the Communist League, now affiliated to the International Workers League founded by the late Argentine pseudo-Trotskyist adventurer, Nahuel Moreno. Its paper Socialist Press denounced the Hawke government's expulsion of the consulate and the Labor Council's bans. What the CL cannot say is the obvious — that the class issue involved was defence of a workers state against imperialism. For whenever this question has been posed concretely, for example, in Poland and Afghanistan, the Morenoites have been on the other side.

Today, after three decades of "market socialism," Yugoslavia is in crisis, a powder keg of national antagonisms threatening to explode in bloody conflict which could open the road to capitalist counterrevolution. But as Admiral Petar Simic, head of the Communist Party's organisation in the military, recently warned: "If someone has declared a battle for Yugoslavia, it will not be fought without the Yugoslav Liberation Army and millions of working people" (Sydney Morning Herald, 1 February). The urgent need is for a Trotskyist party to fight for proletarian political revolution. And, as our special supplement concluded:

"In this nasty country, where the Labor government takes its side with Ustasha fascists, it is urgently necessary to split the ALP along class lines and build a revolutionary internationalist workers party to fight for a workers government."■

NA Fascists...

Continued from page four

lack of police action against NA attacks and demanded police protection. The report details NA terror against journalists, academics, community activists and trade union leaders who have been subject to bricks thrown through home windows, graffiti painted on walls, car tyres slashed, wind-screens smashed and regular phone harassment.

In early December a dozen black-shirted NA terrorists broke up a Liberal Party function addressed by Helen Sham Ho, MLC in Sydney. Brazenly throwing racist leaflets, they shouted obscenities including "death to Sham Ho!" Faced with a threat to one of their own, the Greiner government proposed a "Racial Vilification" amendment to the Anti-Discrimination legislation to enable prosecution of those who offend by racist insult. But the language of NA fascists is the jackboot and the brick. Anyone who thinks the racist capitalist state can outlaw racism is labouring under a dangerous illusion. This is the same state which let the cop killers of young Aboriginal

John Pat go free in 1983 and whose whitewash Muirhead report covers up for the racists in blue. In racist white Australia night-riders who take aim at Eddie Funde roam the streets free, while Hawke's cops frame up Pan Africanist Congress representatives in Canberra. The fascists are a deadly menace to every racial minority, to everything associated with civilised society. They must be stamped out and swept away, but that will be achieved through the mobilisation of the independent power of the proletariat and its allies — not by the capitalist state which holds these storm-troopers in reserve as a last resort against a revolutionary working class.

NA is emboldened by the reformist passivity of their targets. In January, in a rare and unannounced public venture, a small gang of fascists invaded the offices of the Anti-Discrimination Board in Sydney then held a rally outside. NA's fuhrer James Saleam (pictured page four in Nazi regalia) uses a compliant bourgeois media as a platform for recruiting to an action program. The "ideology" of NA means barbed wire and death camps.

It's time these scum, a puny group, were taught a lesson.

Workers defence guards, mobilised from within the unions and leftist immigrant groups are necessary. NA publishes a "hit list" making their targets known. For example, a squad of building workers, wharfies and seamen stationed outside Dorothy McMahon's church for a few weeks would have stopped the harassment and given an opportunity to acquaint some fascist heads with the footpath — the only "education" they understand. The international Spartacist tendency has a proud record in the fight against racist/fascist terror. The mass mobilisations of labour and blacks in the

US in Philadelphia in November and Atlanta in January to stop the KKK/Nazis/skinheads were demonstrations of the SL's Trotskyist program in action. Mobilising mass demonstrations of labour/immigrants will mean some political battles against the white racism which is part and parcel of Laborism. Such a class-struggle strategy is urgently needed here today to crush the fascists in the egg. This human refuse can and will be swept away by the power of the proletariat on the road to the revolutionary overthrow of the rotting system that spawns this racist filth.■

Spartacist League Class Series

Sydney

Vietnam was a Victory! Defend the Vietnamese Revolution!

4 March

For a Workers Republic of Australia, Part of a Socialist Asia!

18 March

The Party, the Party and Once Again the Party

1 April

Reading available from the Spartacist League.
Classes will be held at 2pm, at the Metropolitan Hotel,
1st floor, Corner Bridge and George Streets, Sydney.
For more information phone 281-2181.



Massacres in Khomeini's Jails

JANUARY 1989: Reports coming out of Iran point to a mammoth new wave of executions of leftist political prisoners now taking place in Khomeini's jails. Already, an estimated 1000 to 5000 have been hanged or lined up before the firing squads of the Islamic dictatorship and dumped in mass graves. In some provincial cities, the entire prison population has reportedly been massacred. Virtually every imprisoned leader of Iran's pro-Moscow Tudeh Party has been executed, and supporters of the People's Mujahedin, the Revolutionary Workers Organization of Iran (Rahe Kargar), Iranian People's Fedayeen (Majority) and the Fedayeen Minority are said to have been killed in the thousands. It is now feared that the wholesale physical annihilation of political prisoners is planned by next month's tenth anniversary of the mullahs' February 1979 seizure of power.

Following the cease-fire in the Iran-Iraq war last August, the ayatollahs' regime in Teheran has turned the jails into killing fields for all those it sees as political opponents. Meanwhile, the ruling generals in Iraq launched a "scorched earth" drive against

Iraqi Kurdistan, razing three-quarters of the Kurdish villages and sending tens of thousands of Kurds fleeing over the border into Turkey, where the army has been waging a brutal war against Kurdish guerrillas. In Iran, Khomeini inaugurated his Islamic "revolution" by killing more than 10,000 Kurds, and in August unleashed a massacre of thousands of Iraq-allied Mujahedin troops inside Iranian Kurdistan. As we wrote in October:

"The so-called 'cease-fire' negotiated by the United Nations may not have ended the savage and senseless war between Iraq and Iran. But it has given these two self-proclaimed 'revolutionary' regimes the respite to concentrate their forces on what they do best: massacring their own peoples."

— *Workers Vanguard* no 462,
7 October 1988

The international workers movement must raise an urgent cry of outrage against these unspeakable crimes being committed against opponents of the mullahs' dictatorship! The bloodbath in Iran is part and parcel of Teheran's efforts to "mend bridges" with Western imperial-



Condemned to die: Teheran regime has executed thousands.

ists, who are perfectly willing to see Iranian leftists slaughtered. Thousands of militants have already been killed and thousands more are marked for execution. They are already being held incommunicado; all family visits have been cut off. The left, labor movement and all supporters of democratic rights must mobilize internationally to bring worldwide attention to the mass slaughter

now going on, demanding an immediate halt to the executions and freedom for the victims of Khomeini's terror in Iran!

FIRING SQUADS MOW DOWN LEFTISTS

From Moscow, *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (21 December 1988) reported on the "Massacre in Iran,"

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International Protests Demand:



London, 14 January — Iranian leftist groups joined with Spartacist League/Britain in united front demonstration outside Iranian embassy.

Stop the Executions in Iran!

In mid-January demonstrations were held on three continents demanding, "Stop the Executions in Iran!" The protests were part of an emergency campaign by the international Spartacist tendency and the Partisan Defense Committee against the massacre being carried out by the bloody Khom-

eini dictatorship. Sections of the iSt in seven countries issued an appeal, published in English, French, German, Italian and Farsi (the dominant language of Iran). Protests were held in Hamburg, Paris and Lyon, London, Washington DC, Toronto, Melbourne and Sydney, New York and Milan, and

drew the participation of a range of Iranian left organisations. In calling for an international campaign against the mass slaughter underway in Iran, the iSt and PDC sought a united protest by diverse groups. In such a united front, each group can present its own political views while making

common cause around the central demand of "Stop the Executions in Iran!" And in the event, various exile organisations of the Iranian left, bitterly rent by fratricidal sectarianism, found in the Spartacist-initiated protests their first opportunity to cooperate in a joint

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