



Soviet Workers Challenge Perestroika

The powerful strike by Soviet miners has not only shaken up the bureaucrats in Moscow. In an extraordinary front-page "news analysis," the New York Times (26 July) had some advice for the Kremlin leaders. "Worry for Gorbachev," it headlined: "Workers, Resentful of His Changes, Could Topple the Crippled Economy." Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev has been trying to portray the miners' burgeoning strike movement as support for his program of pro-market economic reforms that goes by the name of "perestroika" (restructuring). But, warned the Times, the workers' "notion of perestroika is not necessarily the one held by Mr Gorbachev's economic brain trust."

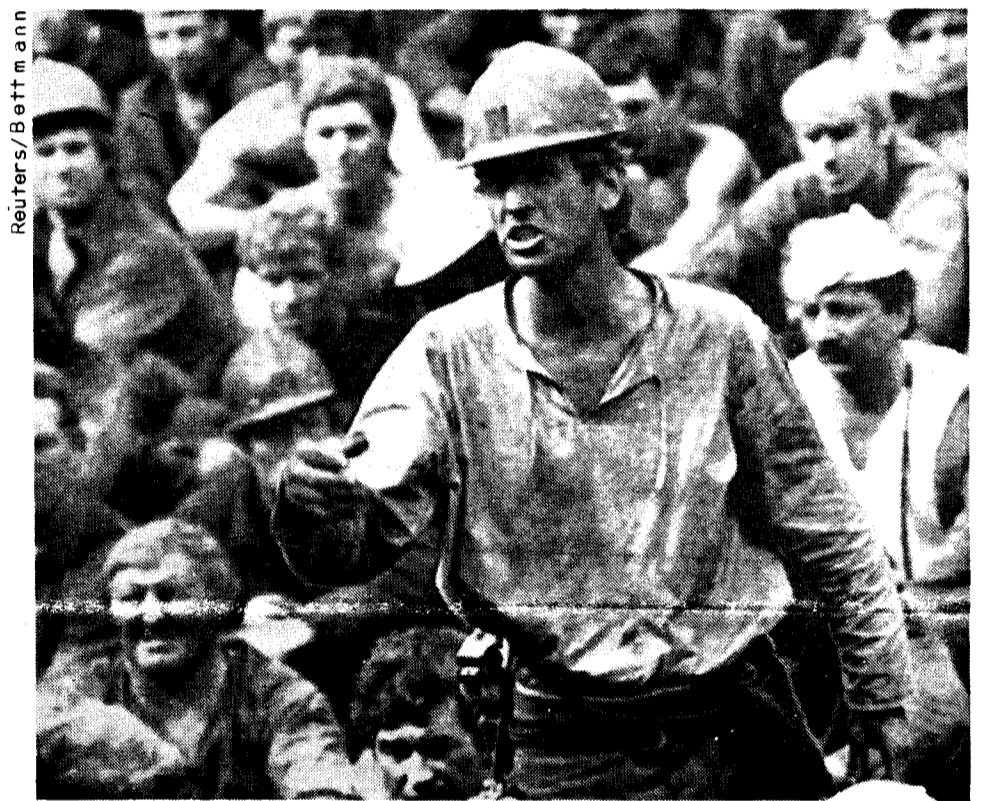
The article noted the mood of the triumphant miners, who raised one "largely overlooked" demand which must have caused Gorbachev a "shiver of disquiet":

"Along with soap rations and winter shoes, night bonuses and greater political power, many of the miners called for abolishing or sharply curtailing the freewheeling private entrepreneurs who have amassed wealth and huge resentment under the new economic order that Mr Gorbachev is trying to build."

Soviet workers have no love lost for price-gouging speculators and exploitation by nascent capitalists; they are hostile to Gorbachev's attacks on "wage-leveling." And, the Times article noted, "it is not hard to imagine the newly mobilised workers someday using their power to resist the dislocations that are expected to come with perestroika." For example:

"Mr Gorbachev cannot count on blue-collar support for closing bankrupt industries,

Continued on page eight



Prokopyevsk, July 15: Siberian miners strike for soap, meat and justice.

Bougainville: Bloody Australian Imperialism

Australia, PNG Military/Cops Get Out!

The low-level guerrilla war on the island of Bougainville in the North Solomons province of Papua New Guinea is a major crisis for Australian imperialism in its major neo-colony. The breakdown of the ramshackle stability and the disintegration of the PNG state would pose the danger of direct Australian military intervention. Last December, a ragtag band of perhaps 100 guerrillas called the Bougainville Revolutionary Army, led by Francis Ona, began attacks on the huge copper mine at Panguna operated by Bougainville Copper Limited, a subsidiary of the Melbourne-based mining giant Conzinc Riotinto of Australia (CRA) in support of demands for increased compensation for local landowners. Armed with anything from crossbows to stolen guns and explosives, Ona's band succeeded in forcing the closure of the mine on 15 May, throwing the PNG government of Prime Minister Rabbie Namaliu into

severe crisis. Since independence in 1975, the mine has been the mainstay of the country's economy, last year accounting for 45 per cent of its exports and 17 per cent of the government's revenue. Not only does this mean drastic austerity measures and

perhaps even calling in the IMF, it also threatens a series of fabulously rich mining projects about to come on stream which hinge on similar agreements with the landowners. Porgera, Misima, Lihir — for the big Australian mining houses these names meant an El

Dorado from PNG's vast mineral wealth, and their front men in Port Moresby dreamt PNG was going to take off after years of stagnation.

Exasperated by the arrogant refusal of CRA to consider their demands, the rebels are now demanding the indefinite closure of the mine, withdrawal of PNG forces and the secession of the island from PNG. They have tied down a large part of the PNG army and police and forced Namaliu to declare a "state of emergency" in the province. About 25 people have been killed so far as the security forces have gone on the rampage against the local people, who view them as a hated army of occupation. Their tactics are those used in Vietnam — burning villages suspected of supporting the "militants" and forcibly relocating thousands of villagers, recalling the notorious "strategic hamlets." A Catholic group

Continued on page two



Post-Courier

Bougainville reign of terror. PNG troops round up suspected "rebels."

Bougainville . . .

Continued from page one

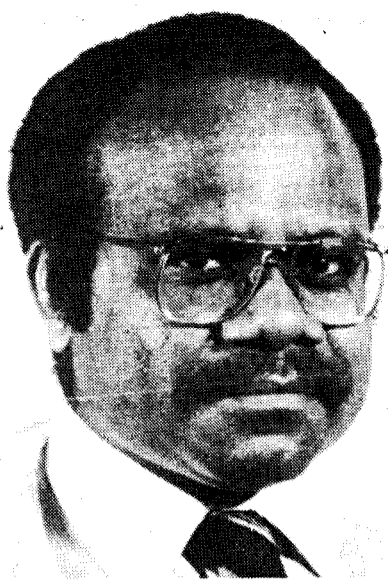
accused them of torturing and murdering prisoners and of "terrorising the population of the North Solomons through random acts of brutalising innocent victims" (Post-Courier, 19 April).

BEAZLEY FINDS A "SMALL WAR"

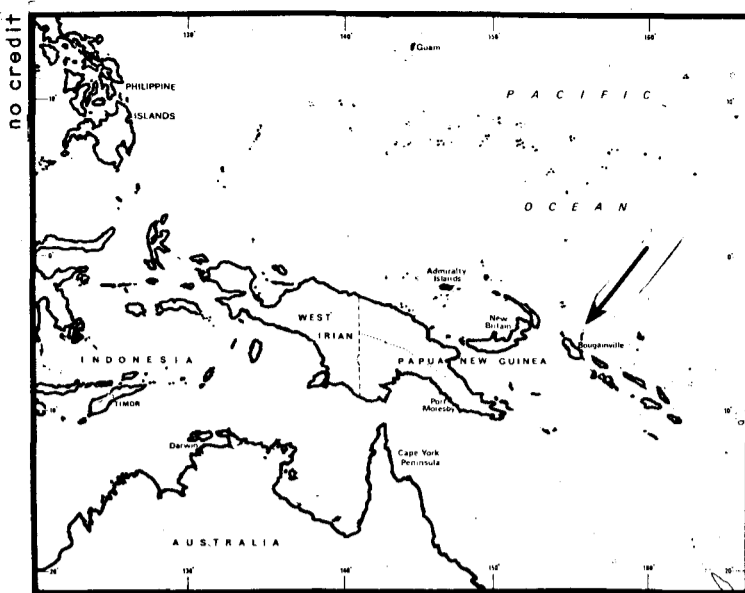
The ruling class of imperialist White Australia regards PNG not only as its exclusive economic preserve but also as its strategic rampart against Asia. The Hawke government has been increasing its funding, training and aid to the PNG military, and has embarked on a massive military build up in order to be regional policeman of imperialist Cold War. While the main regional target of imperialist anti-communism is Vietnam, the Australian Labor government has been looking for a little Pacific island somewhere where it can get away with racist bullying of black people. In particular, its Doctor Strangelove, Defence Minister Kim Beazley, of whom even Hawke jokes on TV that he would love to find a "small war" somewhere. When Namaliu said that Australian troops might be needed in PNG in March, Hawke replied he would be "sympathetic" to such a "request."

While Canberra would prefer that the Bougainville crisis was handled by its PNG clients for the time being, it is running a small-scale CIA-type "covert" operation

Pacific Islands Monthly



PNG Prime Minister Rabbie Namaliu — front man for Australian imperialism.



in support. In July, Hawke announced the delivery of four Iroquois helicopters to the PNG army, now in action as gunships. The Guardian (5 July), paper of the Stalinist Socialist Party of Australia, reported that Australian SAS personnel are on Bougainville "training" and "assisting" the PNG forces and its 2 August issue said "private" firms, probably fronts for ASIO or ASIS, had sent 18 Australian mercenaries including pilots for the choppers. Another 100 Australian soldiers including engineers are stationed elsewhere in PNG. Bloody Australian imperialism is already up to its neck in this dirty little war and the workers movement must urgently take action in solidarity with the oppressed peoples of PNG, against the racist warmongers in Canberra and the greedy multinationals in Collins Street. Black banning all military

aid to PNG and solidarity strikes against CRA's iron mines would be a start. Australian troops and mercenaries, get out of PNG! All PNG troops and police out of Bougainville!

Preparations for war against the Soviet Union and Vietnam and intensified trade rivalries between the US and Japan in particular have fuelled increasing tension and political instability in the South Pacific in recent years — the 1987 Fiji coups, the expulsion of New Zealand from ANZUS, New Caledonia. The Hawke government has aggressively sought to be US imperialism's local deputy sheriff. In Vanuatu in 1980, Australian aircraft flew in the PNG troops to oversee "independence" and Hawke offered to repeat the performance last year. And there is a concerted effort to suppress the Free Papua Movement guerrillas fighting against Indonesian occupation of

West Papua (Irian Jaya) to prevent the border inflaming conflict between Australia and Indonesia, both regional US allies. A small US Special Forces unit is based with PNG troops on the border, who are conducting joint patrols with Indonesian troops against the guerrillas.

Although anti-communist butcher Suharto is supposed to be a Cold War ally, the Australian ruling class is obsessed with the supposed Indonesian "threat." No prizes for guessing the identity of the mythical "Kamaria" that was the target of the recent massive Kangaroo '89 military exercises in northern Australia. In March army chief General Laurie O'Donnell again raised the bogey of "defending" PNG against possible Indonesian invasion, to which an Indonesian general retorted that Australia's military build up was a threat to the region. While

Continued on page ten

Letter

An Ambiguous Headline

16 August 1989

Dear Comrades,

A couple of points on the last issue of Australasian Spartacist (no 132, June/July 1989).

First, the front-page headline "Deng Regime Provokes Political Revolution" is ambiguous and misleading. It sits atop an intensely programmatic article detailing the key task of proletarian political revolution in China. The headline belies even the overlines which were used — "For the Unity of China Under the Leadership of the Workers!" and "Workers and Soldiers Soviets Must Rule!" A better headline, truly reflecting the line of the article, would have been "For Proletarian Political Revolution in China!"

A couple of more minor points. The last sentence in the powerful article centred around the cold-blooded, racist cop killing of Aboriginal David Gundy, entitled "Jail the Killer Cops!" included a reference to lumpen crime in a socialist society. This is sloppy

and wrong, confusing tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat with the socialist order, which Marxists understand as a phase of social and economic development premised on the abolition of class society. The back-page article "Spread the Cockatoo Strike to Win!" in the context of advancing a class struggle program for victory, quite powerfully attacked racism and national chauvinism. But it contained the sentence "Racism and nationalist protectionism are a diversion." Presumably this is intended to mean that the Laborite bureaucracy employ racism and nationalism to divert the class struggle, which is true. But as it stands the formulation is too truncated and reads wrong. Protectionism and the intense racialism that underpins it are poison — they mean racist terror against Asians and blacks, defeat for the struggles of the working class, and leading the working class to slaughter in imperialist war.

Comradely Greetings,
Andrew Giannakis



LENIN

Soviet Workers and Political Revolution



TROTSKY

From East Europe to the USSR to China, the crisis of Stalinism has reached the point of explosion. The fundamental causes of that crisis were laid out more than 50 years ago by Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky in The Revolution Betrayed (1936). The perspective of proletarian political revolution advanced by Trotsky was a keystone in his struggle to forge the Fourth International and return the Soviet Union to the internationalist road of the October Revolution.

Will the bureaucrat devour the workers state, or will the working class clean up the bureaucrat? Thus stands the question upon whose decision hangs the fate of the Soviet Union

The revolution which the bureaucracy is preparing against itself will not be social, like the October revolution of 1917. It is not a question this time of changing the economic foundations of society, of replacing certain forms of property with other forms. History has known elsewhere not only social revolutions which substituted the bourgeois for the feudal regime, but also political revolutions which, without destroying the economic foundations of society, swept out an old ruling upper crust (1830 and 1848 in France, February 1917 in Russia, etc). The overthrow of the Bonapartist caste will, of course, have deep social consequences, but in itself it will be confined within the limits of political revolution

It is not a question of substituting one ruling clique for another, but of changing the very methods of administering the economy and guiding the culture of the country. Bureaucratic autocracy must give place to Soviet democracy

If a bourgeoisie cannot peacefully grow into a socialist democracy, it is likewise true that a socialist state cannot peacefully merge with a world capitalist system. On the historic order of the day stands not the peaceful socialist development of "one country," but a long series of world disturbances: wars and revolutions. Disturbances are inevitable also in the domestic life of the Soviet Union. If the bureaucracy was compelled in its struggle for a planned economy to dekulakize the kulak, the working class will be compelled in its struggle for socialism to debureaucratize the bureaucracy. On the tomb of the latter will be inscribed the epitaph: "Here lies the theory of socialism in one country."

— Leon Trotsky, The Revolution Betrayed (1936)

Australasian

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Hawke's War Plans Mean War on Unions

Union Tops Shaft Cockatoo Strike

On 11 August the trade union bureaucracy finally succeeded in killing off the 14-week strike and occupation at Cockatoo Island dockyard in Sydney. One week earlier the strikers had voted down the latest Defence Department bribe to return to work, which included increased redundancy pay and bonuses if the refits of the Oberon-class submarines were finished on time and the dockyard closed on schedule. But the government and the ACTU/NSW Labor Council tops, who had ensured that the occupation dragged on in isolation, now cracked the whip to wind it up in a hurry. The Arbitration Commission threatened to impose fines, the ACTU called a special meeting to hammer out a sellout, and the cops laid into the small 9 August strike support rally, arresting six workers including shop committee president John Panuccio. Drop the charges against Cockatoo protesters! Worn down by months of isolation, betrayed by union bureaucrats "left" and right, and with their leadership pursuing a no-win strategy, the strike collapsed, with the meeting accepting Beazley's deal by a large majority.

Though a defeat, this was one of the more important strikes of recent years and one of a very few real fights for jobs in a long time. Workers have been taking it in the teeth from the Hawke-Keating gang for years without any real fightback because the unions have been bound and gagged by the ACTU-ALP Accords. The BLF was smashed, the powerful miners had thousands of jobs and union conditions sold down the drain and the government has started doing the same job on the strategic maritime unions. The NSW state Liberal-National government is slashing government jobs across the board, while the union leaders can only huff and puff and stage impotent protests like the 25 July "day of outrage," at which they prevented Cockatoo workers from speaking and spread the message: don't fight, vote Labor. NSW premier Greiner's onslaught had the union tops reeling — all they could do to "oppose" his closure of the Government Printing Office was a farcical "occupation" in which the workers weren't even called out on strike. A Spartacist supporter in the Storemen and Packers fought to turn this into real class struggle — a militant sit-down strike defended by mass picket lines to hold the plant; extension of the strike to the public sector and linking up with Cockatoo. Instead the union leaders pushed through a redundancy sellout in time to see the gates closed on the day of the rally.

At Cockatoo for years the union officials and shop committee pushed the defeatist line that you can't fight for jobs, but when the struggle broke out in May it rapidly hardened around a fight to save the jobs beyond the

1992 closure date. Not only were 1600 jobs and an historic reservoir of militant trade unionism, where hundreds of apprentices were trained a year, at stake. But spreading to the waterfront and beyond, this struggle could have been the spark for some hard class struggle to roll back Hawke-Keating's hard times. Though the union tops limited solidarity to collecting money, workers everywhere saw this as their fight. It is all the more necessary, therefore, to hammer home the lessons of this defeat.

JINGOISM AND CLASS COLLABORATION

The strike/occupation at Cockatoo ran straight up against the Hawke government's military build-up. Posturing as regional deputy sheriff for US imperialism against the USSR and Vietnam and to protect Australian imperial interests in the South Pacific (Fiji, Vanuatu, Papua New Gui-

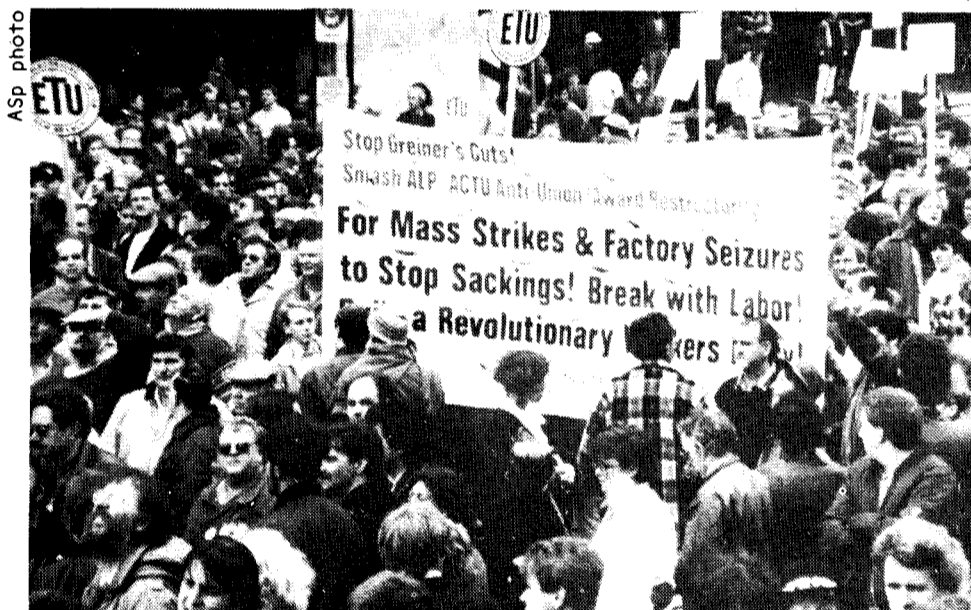
in line with the jingoistic nationalism of the Labor Council, which ran full-page ads in the Australian: "The NSW unions latest weapon" proclaiming full support for Beazley's ANZAC frigate program. In alliance with premier Greiner and the state ALP, the union bureaucrats campaigned to secure the lucrative contract to build the ANZAC frigates at Newcastle, against the claim of a rival consortium backed by the Victorian Labor government and Trades Hall Council leader John Halfpenny. The Victorians' trump card was the successful union-busting at Williamstown; the NSW bidders stressed the boost to Labor's electoral fortunes in the Newcastle area. It was a disgusting orgy of reactionary jingoism and crawling class collaboration on all sides. And as the contract decision approached, the Cockatoo strike became more of a thorn in the side for the Laborites.

with the takeover battle for ANI while a few dozen militants were left to stick it out in the cold on the island. Too little, too late, after eleven weeks, with their backs to the wall, the shop committee tried to gain publicity and step up the pressure by setting up picket lines to keep out management and called on maritime and building workers for solidarity action. Even then a few top managers were allowed onto the island. Most crucial to breaking the isolation of the strike was solidarity strike action on the waterfront but there the "left" union leadership, dominated by the Stalinist Association for Communist Unity and Socialist Party, held the lid on tight. Any strike that takes on the government must be prepared to defy Arbitration courts and anti-union laws. This may mean some union leaders will go to jail but the working class has always had to pay a price for victory.

The Cockatoo strikers demonstrated their willingness to fight it out and they deserved a class-struggle leadership that would break with the rotten nationalism of the ALP and wage hard class struggle to win. Two years ago, ANI sacked Spartacist League supporter Neil Florrimell from his job at Cockatoo in an anti-communist victimisation that many militants recognised paved the way for closing the whole island. He was singled out for his record of defending union conditions, his fight for a militant strike and occupation to save jobs against the inaction of the union tops and the shop committee, and his outspoken advocacy of an internationalist, revolutionary program against Laborism. In particular, he opposed Hawke's war plans, for example, agitating for holding up the Jervis Bay when Hawke wanted to rush it to Fiji during the Rabuka coup in 1987. The two-week ironworkers strike to defend his job could and should have broken out into an island-wide struggle for everyone's job then. Instead it was sold out by the union tops. But many militants that Spartacist League members talked with around this struggle remembered and respected Florrimell's principled fight against the stream.

During the strike there were sporadic 24-hour solidarity strikes by maritime unions, Garden Island dockyard workers and Maritime Services Board employees. Ferry drivers respected the short-lived picket line. Thousands of dollars were collected from worksites around the country. Spartacist supporters found a keen following for the strike at university campuses and public meetings in Melbourne and Sydney, where we collected nearly \$700 for the strike fund. Objectively there was a large reservoir of working class solidarity that could have been mobilised to bring power to bear in support of Cockatoo. Lacking

Continued on page eleven



Spartacist League banner at 25 July "Day of Outrage" in Sydney. Bureaucrats channelled workers anger into ALP election rally.

nea), Hawke and Beazley have embarked on Australia's largest peacetime naval shipbuilding program, including attack submarines and the ANZAC frigate project. They have an overall plan to "rationalise" the war industry including the shipyards, to clean out militant unionism, the influence of so-called communists and to establish a compliant workforce. These plans included privatisation of the Newcastle and Williamstown dockyards and reopening the latter, after smashing the unions, with a fraction of the workforce and union conditions gutted. In this plan, Cockatoo Island is to be scrapped.

Yet the union bureaucrats and the shop committee saddled this struggle with the suicidal program of supporting stronger Australian "defence" and issuing patriotic pleas to Beazley to incorporate a future for Cockatoo in his "rationalisation." Waving the Eureka flag, AMWU official Pat Johnston backed by the shop committee appealed for unity with the bosses, the government and the navy under the slogan "Save Australian industry." Along with this they injected a fair dose of outright racism. This was right

Workers occupying shipyards isn't great publicity when you're bidding to build warships. So the bureaucrats shafted this strike and 1600 jobs to build warships for bloody Australian imperialism and keep Hawke in power.

FOR A REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP!

Doubtless the betrayers will use the defeat to say that strikes can't win but the real lesson is that you can't win under their leadership and with their chauvinist program of unity with the bosses. The politics of national chauvinism lay behind the shop committee's strategy of playing by the bosses' rules and pressuring the government, which sank the strike. Instead of mobilising maximum working class power to hit the bosses as hard as possible from day one, it became an endurance test for the workers. Occupation is potentially a tremendously powerful tactic, challenging the bosses' property rights, but this one was robbed of all its punch because of the cosy relationship with management. Though three naval vessels were held, the bosses were never really hurting, and were more occupied

Why Should Anyone Believe David North?

The Workers League and Mark Curtis

We print below a statement by the Political Bureau of the Spartacist League/US (published in *Workers Vanguard* no 480, 23 June 1989) on the case of Mark Curtis, a member of the reformist Socialist Workers Party in the US, who was sentenced to 25 years in prison on phony rape charges. David North, leader of the US Workers League, has thrown the resources of his fake "international" into a campaign to aid the American capitalist state in railroading Curtis.

North's Australian followers in Nick Beams' Socialist Labour League have devoted immense efforts to vilifying and undermining the defence of Curtis in Australia and New Zealand. Their paper, *Workers News* ran an 11-part series reprinted from the Workers League's *Bulletin* entitled "The Mark Curtis Hoax," and they mass distributed a leaflet which read like the case for the prosecution. Kate Kaku, Curtis' wife, toured Australia and New Zealand in May seeking left and trade union support for Curtis' defence. The SLL harassed those she approached, including mounting an hysterical all-day "lobby" at Newcastle Trades Hall Council when she was invited to speak there.

Workers News (28 July) reprinted an article from North's *Bulletin*, "A Reply to Spartacist Slanders" which is notable because it answers nothing. Here then, in the interests of political



Mark Curtis with supporters: Edna Griffin, Des Moines civil rights activist; Kate Kaku, Curtis' wife; and Susan Mnumzana, of African National Congress mission to UN.

sanitation, is the article the Northites can't answer.

Mark Curtis, a 29-year-old member of the Socialist Workers Party and union activist at the Swift meatpacking plant in Des Moines, is doing 25 years in an Iowa state prison on charges of burglary and sexual abuse. David North's Workers League, mean-

while, has been relentlessly working to undermine defense efforts for Curtis in the workers movement, here and internationally. Claiming that the "government-controlled" SWP is covering up for a "depraved rapist", the WL is vilifying leftists and trade-union leaders who sign statements or speak out on his behalf. Currently, the WL's *Bulletin* is running a weekly series on "The Mark Curtis Hoax," already in its eleventh installment. This campaign is now the Workers League's major activity. What is going on?

Mark Curtis was convicted on 14 September 1988 in a Des Moines court of third degree sexual abuse and first degree burglary, based on the state's charge that six months earlier Curtis forced his way onto the porch of the residence of a black family and attempted to rape 15-year-old Demetria Morris. But according to no account, not even that of the police or the young woman, did a rape ever take place, nor was anything stolen, nor was there a weapon, and there is no physical evidence of contact between Curtis and the alleged victim. Yet a young socialist militant faces 25 years of his life behind bars — for what? And why is David North's Workers League running point for the prosecution? Isn't there something weird here?

Let's look at their targets. The Workers League has attacked the Socialist Workers Party as "a police-infested organization which works among politically diseased and disoriented layers of the middle class typified by the rapist Curtis" (*Bulletin*, 25 May). They have labeled our organization, the Spartacist League, a "politically deranged petty-bourgeois group," claiming: "The defense of this

depraved rapist has become the rallying point for a political provocation against the Workers League, the most frantic exponent of which is, as always, the Spartacist League" (*Bulletin*, 6 January). What set off this tirade was our noting that "the Northites have suddenly and cynically discovered the use of black oppression in order to get a white SWPer in Iowa sent to prison for 25 years on a dubious rape charge" (WV no 467, 16 December 1988).

The Socialist Workers Party is a reformist political organization of the left. It was one of 16 groups singled out for special scrutiny by the FBI's so-called "administrative index" (ADEX), a "subversives" list set up under Nixon to consolidate the earlier "Subversives Index" and "Communist Index." In 1973, at the height of liberal reaction against the government's Watergate "dirty tricks," the SWP filed a legal suit against FBI spying and disruption, particularly under the infamous COINTELPRO program. Testimony and documents uncovered during the "Watersuit" revealed that between 1960 and 1976, the FBI committed 206 burglaries at SWP offices or homes, stole 12,600 documents and tapped telephones for at least 20,000 days. In August 1986, US District Judge Thomas Griesa ruled in favor of the SWP, ordering the FBI to pay them the not very munificent sum of \$264,000 in damages for its 38-year-long campaign of harassment.

The Spartacist League was also listed on the ADEX file, targeted by the government for "special" attention. The ADEX code included a group designated "SPL," along with the Communist Party, SWP, Black Panthers, Progressive Labor, SDS and others (see illustration). The FBI's definition of "SPL" claimed the Spartacist League "does not openly advocate the violent overthrow of the US Government at this time," implying that we were some kind of secret terrorist conspirators. The SL, too, sued the government, in a 1983 suit over the Attorney General's "Guidelines for Domestic Security/Terrorism Investigations." And in 1984 we won the case by forcing the government to delete its slanderous and deadly "definition" of the SL, thus conceding that Marxist advocacy cannot be equated with violence or criminal terrorism.

What about David North's Workers League? Unlike the SWP and the SL, they don't appear on the ADEX file. And while the SWP was in court fighting, in its fashion, against government surveillance and provocation, what was the WL doing? North and his godfather Gerry Healy's International Committee were mounting their own smear campaign, "Security and the Fourth International," cop-baiting SWP leaders

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

In 1971, Attorney General John Mitchell, in an attempt to stave off further criticism of the FBI's practice of keeping huge lists of dissidents—alleged subversives—for who knows what nefarious reasons, announced that all of the lists had been abolished, and were replaced by one short "Administrative Index," or "ADEX," of less than 10,000 names. Since that list was also unrelated to proven, or even suspected criminal activity, in 1974 Acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray announced that the ADEX had been abolished. However, in 1976, a politically active attorney from New York, requesting his FBI file under the Freedom of Information Act, discovered, buried in his dossier, a copy of his ADEX entry Memorandum and Report. ADEX, it appears, was not abolished, simply moved around. No explanation of the four categories was given. The New York office recommended that the lawyer be put in the lowest category, IV, "because of subject's apparent influence with New Left leaders." However, the home office stated: "In addition to the foregoing, a review of subject's activities clearly depicts him as a revolutionary attorney and sympathizer who, during a time of national emergency, would be likely to commit acts inimical to the national defense. In view of the above, subject is being included in Category III of ADEX." What fate is in store, we wonder, for people put in Category III of ADEX? The names and addresses have been changed; otherwise the document below is an exact replica of an ADEX Memorandum.

FBI's Hit List ADEX: The Index of 7500 Americans

Memorandum
DATE: MAY 15 1972
TO: SAC, NEW YORK
SUBJECT: Samuel Abraham Strauss, aka

NY summary report dated 5/15/72

Re: Samuel Abraham Strauss

Administrative Index (ADEX) Category III

<input type="checkbox"/> AWC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNIST	<input type="checkbox"/> NL	<input type="checkbox"/> PLP	<input type="checkbox"/> PRN	<input type="checkbox"/> SNC	<input type="checkbox"/> SWP
<input type="checkbox"/> BNT	<input type="checkbox"/> JFG	<input type="checkbox"/> NOI	<input type="checkbox"/> PPA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDS	<input type="checkbox"/> SPL	<input type="checkbox"/> WWP
<input type="checkbox"/> BPP	<input type="checkbox"/> MIN	<input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous (Specify)				

Note the importance given to "Union Affiliation."
Some of the political groups are obvious: BPP—Black Panther Party; PLP—Progressive Labor Party; SDS—Students for a Democratic Society; SNC—Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee; SWP—Socialist Workers Party; WWP—Workers World Party. For some, we can make educated guesses: MIN—Minutemen; NOI—Nation of Islam; PRN—Puerto Rican Nationalists. Some are less clear: NL may mean National Lawyers Guild; AWC may be American White Citizens Council; SPL could mean Spartacist League; no one at CounterSpy can guess what JFG contemplated.
Note that fluctuations in Category are obviously contemplated.
Note the date of "Rev." If the ADEX was only established in 1971, what was being revised?

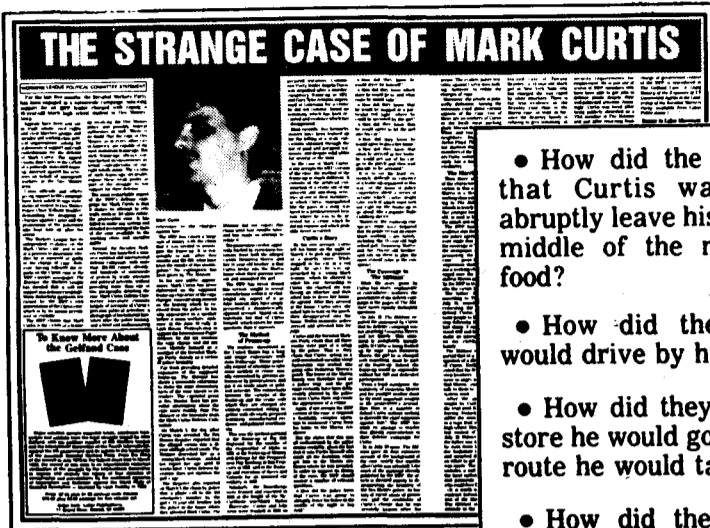
CounterSpy 7

Sample page from FBI's "ADEX" hit list, as it appeared in *CounterSpy* magazine, 6 December 1976. Sixteen groups were singled out, including the Spartacists ("SPL") and SWP — where was the Workers League?

One More Coincidence?

On August 5, the Workers League asks:

...A month later, the prosecutor's summation:



- How did the police know that Curtis was going to abruptly leave his house in the middle of the night to buy food?
- How did they know he would drive by himself?
- How did they know which store he would go to, and what route he would take?
- How did they know that he would be stopped at a particular red light, where he could be accosted by the girl?
- How did they know that he would agree to let the girl into his car?
- How did they know he would agree to drive her home?
- How did they know that when he arrived at her home, he would get out of his car, go to the porch and then wait placidly to be arrested?

Bulletin
5 August 1988

- "How did the police, or how did Demetria and Jason or their family, know that the defendant was going to abruptly leave his home, sometime between 8:30 and 9:00, to buy food? How did they know?"
- "How did they know that the defendant would get into a car and drive by himself?"
- "How did they know that the defendant would go to the HyVee store to do his grocery shopping? How did they know what route he would take?"
- "How did they know that he would be stopped at a particular red light, where a girl could approach him? How did they know the light would be red?"
- "How did they know that the defendant would agree to give this girl a ride to help her out?"
- "How did they know that he would agree to drive her to her home, or a home, in what the defense has brought out to be a bad or unsafe neighborhood?"
- "How did they know that when he arrived at the home, he would get out of the car, agree to go to the porch, and then wait calmly to be arrested?"

Bulletin
16 September 1988



Prosecutor Catherine Thune.

as simultaneously agents of the FBI and the Russian secret police! When a WL agent, Alan Gelfand, was expelled from the SWP in 1977, North & Co dragged the SWP into court, demanding that the capitalist state carry out a fishing expedition, prying into the party's minutes, finances and membership lists. It takes effrontery to haul groups into court who are the object of vicious governmental repression.

One has to ask, who benefits — cui bono?

And one has to ask, who's doing the talking?

The rather shadowy David North is the latest in a long line of now infamous and sinister characters who have been prominent in the Gerry Healy tendency in Britain and their organization in the US, the Workers League. Let us see how North now describes his illustrious predecessors. Tim Wohlforth, who was axed in 1974 as *lider maximo* of the WL amid allegations of CIA connections, is reviled as a "petty bourgeois American philistine." Following the 1985 blowout in the Healyite organization, North dismissed Michael Banda, Healy's top hatchet man, as one of many "politically diseased petty-bourgeois renegades." Cliff Slaughter, another of the Healyites' ex-leading lights, is described as "a consummate cynic and hypocrite" who epitomizes in his political and personal life all that is corrupt and perverse" in the British intelligentsia, "gathering into his net the most degenerate human specimens produced by this decadent social milieu" (*Bulletin*, 9 December 1988).

These were David North's mentors who showed him the ropes. Alex Mitchell, a fellow hack in the Healyite slander mills who together with North penned most of the "Security" smear job against the SWP, resurfaced with a column in an Australian bourgeois paper, the *Sydney Sun Herald*. Peter Fryer, who got out of the Healyites before the really dirty business got started, is described as "a degenerate middle-class journalist." Freddy Mazelis, who did a brief stand-in performance as WL honcho after Wohlforth was axed, has so far escaped being satanized, but only so long as he serves as North's toady. As for Gerry Healy, the evil sorcerer whose apprentices have run amok, in the 1985

implosion of the Healyites it was proven that he determined the party line in accordance with money from Arab colonels and sheiks. Now Healy is called a "political agent of the Kremlin" who is welcomed in Moscow "because he has placed his knowledge of the inner workings of the Fourth International at the disposal of the KGB" (*Bulletin*, 20 November 1987). Vanessa Redgrave is thrown in as "the Kremlin's New Leading Lady."

This is quite a record in treachery. As we have noted, "Stalin never claimed that all the Bolshevik Central Committee at the time of the October Revolution were counterrevolutionary spies and traitors. Exempted were Lenin, a few who died early and a couple who lucked out and died a natural death at old age" ("David North: Joseph Hansen's Natural Son," *WV* no 456, 1 July 1988). But David North claims that every one of his predecessors is degenerate, if not an outright agent — Wohlforth, Banda, Slaughter, Mitchell, Redgrave, Healy, and don't forget the arch-"renegades"

Pierre Lambert and Michel Varga. If, as North writes, Banda "can no longer be counted among the living," when it comes to "Marxism and the struggle for socialism," this must make North himself a zombie. He is the only True Believer, descendant of a long and complete line of traitors.

With this "authority" the WL proclaims Mark Curtis a "sociopath," a "vicious rapist," a "sadistic rapist," a "white middle-class rapist," and above all a "convicted rapist" and a "proven rapist" — convicted and "proven" by the bourgeois courts. The SWP is labeled "a sociopathic organization, a watering hole for all sorts of degenerate elements, social criminals, filled with hatred of the working class," of which "Curtis himself — a drug user and rapist — is a perfect representative" (*Bulletin*, 28 April). In the pages of the *Bulletin*, they endlessly regurgitate the words of the prosecution. Stranger yet, in her summation at Curtis' trial Iowa state prosecutor Catherine Thune regurgitates virtually the exact words of the *Bulletin* (see illus-

tration). They seem to be working from a common script.

Mark Curtis was a subject of FBI surveillance as an activist in CISPES in Birmingham, Alabama. At Swift, where Curtis worked in Des Moines, federal agents had been working with management for three months reviewing personnel files before staging a raid which seized 17 foreign-born workers at the meatpacking plant on March 1. After work on March 4, Curtis had participated in a meeting of workers at the plant protesting the roundup. A couple hours later he was arrested and charged with rape. Curtis says the cops grabbed him, pulled down his pants, beat him brutally at the jail, then lied in court. Mark Curtis maintains his innocence, declaring, "I am not a rapist, but a fighter for women's rights. And I am not guilty of the crimes I have been charged and convicted of."

So why should anybody believe David North? Who is the Workers League to say that Curtis is guilty, and why? How does the WL come to possess such influence with the prosecution? What kind of purported socialists retail the cops' story as if it were "The Truth"? We and many of our readers have some relevant experience on the nature of these paid thugs of the racist capitalist state. Under the circumstances we must believe Mark Curtis is innocent.

Political Bureau, Spartacist League/US, 12 June 1989

The Partisan Defense Committee has defended Curtis from the beginning and contributed to his case. Those wishing to write to Curtis should address letters to: Mark S Curtis, No 805338A, Box B, Anamosa, IA 52205, USA.

Workers Press

Accomplices of the Big Lie, authors of "Security and the Fourth International" smear job against SWP and the historical Trotskyist movement: (from left) Alex Mitchell, David North and Gerry Healy.



A Reporter's Notebook

Front Line Afghanistan

Franklin/Magnum



Soviet-supplied Afghan army tank on the way to aid Jalalabad. Afghan volunteers ready to fight against CIA's "holy warriors." TASS

JALALABAD, July 7 — Thousands of people thronged through the streets of this revitalized city today to celebrate an important military victory over the CIA's mujahedin (holy warriors). Two days ago, the armed forces of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) government, spearheaded by an armored Special Guard unit and heavily backed by the Air Force, forced the counterrevolutionaries to pull back to positions they occupied before the March offensive against Jalalabad.

Not only has the months-long bitter siege been broken, but Jalalabad and the surrounding parts of Nangarhar Province of which it is the capital are once again secure from the threat of rocket attacks. The rout of the mujahedin was so sweeping that the initial impulse of advance elements of the armored unit was to roll all the way up to Torkham, on the border with Pakistan. But the order came from the High Command to consolidate their positions before advancing further.

This reporter was with the first group of journalists to visit Jalalabad since May, and only the second visit since the mujahedin siege began in March. It was particularly moving to be here on behalf of the international campaign of humanitarian assistance conducted by the Partisan Defense Committee and fraternal legal and social defense organizations in other countries which raised over [US]\$42,000 to aid the civilian victims of the siege. The English-language Kabul Times (3 July) and the Dari-language Payam (2 July) had both carried articles reporting on a message of acknowledgement from the Nangarhar Province Defence Council to the PDC. Part of the message quoted by the Kabul Times read:

"The Defence Council of Nangarhar Province representing all the PDPA members, social organizations and the peace-loving people of Nangarhar, cordially thank you and express gratitude for the as-

Crush CIA's Mujahedin!

sistance extended by you, assuring you honourable friends that it is a must that we would triumph, for we are struggling for a just right."

A CITY OF DETERMINATION

At the head of the line of march of today's victory celebration was an armored car atop which rode our team of journalists. Following the military and civilian leaders of the city came dozens of multicolored banners and Afghan national flags and some five to ten thousand residents of Jalalabad. People were everywhere in the streets. There was not a sign of fear, but rather an evident determination which exploded in loud chants of "Afghanistan Zindabad!" (Long Live Afghanistan) and "Marg ya Watan!" (Death or Country) that punctuated the march throughout. Young and old, women and men — many carrying their weapons — Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus joined together in this march from Jamhuriat Garden to Pashtoonistan Square.

From the helicopter and from

the road, it was clear that Jalalabad, once renowned as a tourist resort for its beauty and greenery, is a wounded city, whose scars will take a long time to heal. The ravages of the brutal war against the population can be seen in torn walls, damaged houses, smashed window-panes and roads full of ditches and debris. Between March and July, 973 houses were damaged along with 150 government buildings, shops and markets, mosques and temples. Many of the houses are made of mud bricks — making them relatively easy to rebuild — and the people have been working hard at repairing them.

The airport, some five kilometers to the east of the city, shows all the signs of the fierce battle that went on around and for it in March and April: hangars blown apart, the airstrip damaged, remains of jeeps and helicopters lying around, the control tower heavily damaged. It's clear that there has been no time to care for the niceties of appearance: the airport is functional again and that's enough.

The civilian population has

suffered terribly: 1,993 injured and 1,002 killed, half of them children. On the single day of March 8, the mujahedin cut-throats, bankrolled by the Pakistani ISI [Inter-Service Intelligence] and the CIA, bombarded Jalalabad with 5,000 rockets. But they did not succeed in overwhelming its heroic defenders.

AN INTERNATIONALIST STRUGGLE

Toward the end of our eight-hour stay in Jalalabad we met the governor. After the deputy governor, who was accompanying the team of journalists, learned that this reporter was a representative of the PDC campaign, he made it known to the governor. When we entered the room for the press conference, Lt Gen Mangal [governor and chairman of the Defence Council of Nangarhar Province], shook hands with every reporter, but embraced me enthusiastically, saying "Ah, Partisan."

I asked the governor if the defenders and people of Jalalabad are aware that in many countries of the world, working people are following their struggle with extreme concern. "Certainly," he replied, adding that the struggle of the Afghan people is an "internationalist struggle." Mangal mentioned specifically Pakistan's plan to dismember Afghanistan and to impose a government that would join with Pakistan and Turkey in a "new CENTO" anti-Soviet and anti-Indian US-dominated alliance. He again thanked the PDC for our efforts in support of the people of Jalalabad. The international aid campaign clearly boosted morale in Jalalabad. The message from the Defence Council said, "Your great and humane move is so noteworthy that no devilish eyes can dare see it."

* * *

KABUL, July 13 — The poverty and backwardness of the country is an undeniable fact which finds its statistical expression in an av-



Spartacist contingent marches on May Day, Melbourne.

erage life expectancy of 42 and in the world's highest rate of mortality for children under the age of five. The civil war that has ravaged Afghanistan for eleven years has obviously contributed to rendering the situation worse, notwithstanding the government's measures to bring the country into the 20th century.

A significant proportion of beggars are women covered from head to foot in the horrible chador. Their age can only be guessed from a look at the hand that asks for a coin — they are the hands of old women, which means they are perhaps 40 or 45.

In Kabul a majority of women wear Western clothes, a few daring ones put on trousers and T-shirts, but most content themselves with midi-length skirts. At a couple of marriage parties that were held in the Kabul Hotel it was noticeable how women and men tend to stick together in groups of the same sex. On the campus of Kabul University, students and teachers are all dressed in Western clothes, but again you don't see mixed groups of students.

For women the situation since 1978 has improved dramatically in terms of their rights. The civil war was started by reactionaries who opposed the very idea that women had equal rights and that little girls should be taught to read and write. But in recent years the reforms have been slowed or curtailed — for example, education for girls is no longer compulsory. In the name of "national reconciliation" with sectors of the mujahedin, the

country's name was changed from Democratic Republic to Republic of Afghanistan. Today is a big religious holiday and the TV showed President Najibullah in a mosque kneeling and praying.

It seems that these days there are complaints even against Soviet TV for going "against traditional Afghan values." But in seeing life in Kabul, one cannot help but recall the leap Afghanistan has made in the past ten years, and the even more enormous leap — spanning not decades, but centuries — it could make if it underwent the sort of deep-going social transformation Soviet Central Asia did under the impact of the Russian workers revolution.

July 19 — The traditional hospitality of the Afghan people stands out even among the horrors of war, and it is doubled and tripled when they find out that this Western journalist is on their side against their counterrevolutionary enemies. Today, while I was walking by a guarded building in downtown Kabul, a soldier waved me over to drink tea with him, curious why a Westerner was not driving past in a car. Luckily, his comrades, standing guard with bayonets fixed, spoke Russian (one had studied in Stavropol, the other in Leningrad). They came over to translate when they learned I was opposed to the mujahedin. One of the soldiers invited me inside their billet to share their lunch, a tasty mix of some cereals with roasted potatoes, milk and cucumbers.

They all had lots of questions — this is very typical here, I get

interviewed more than I can interview others. A young officer wanted to know about the status of women in the West. From the little that we could say to each other it was nevertheless clear that the other side of women's oppression is how miserable life is for the young men of Afghanistan. People on the dance floor never touch, women enter the buses from the front and men from the back, swimming pools are for boys and men only. We talked about Jalalabad and what this victory represents for working people the world over, how our campaign got an audience especially among women from every part of the globe. I talked about how the civil war had erupted over issues like equal rights for men and women and how every step toward social progress is always met with reactionary resistance.

When I was about to leave, the young captain told me how much he liked our conversation and offered a handshake and embrace and exchange of "tasakor" (thank you).

July 25 — I was privileged to be present at a meeting of the Association of Families of Martyrs and Invalids, held at a hall of the Women's Council to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the country's independence. The association provides housing and other assistance for its 25,000 members. The president of the women's organization, a woman in her 60s, gave a very fighting speech. Other women spoke about how they came to lose their rela-



International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) at French Lutte Ouvriere fete raises Jalalabad aid campaign banner.

tives. None of them wore the chador, although many had a scarf over their heads. One described how her family was attacked by mujahedin bandits on the road from Konar to Jalalabad. Her husband was killed and a little son died under a tank. Two of her daughters threw themselves into a river to die rather than be captured. She and the women with her waited for the enemy to return. Some of the women took small bombs and, knowing they

Continued on page eleven

Jalalabad Defenders Message to Partisan Defense Committee

On 8 April, the Partisan Defense Committee, in conjunction with fraternal legal and social defence organisations in Britain, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, the US and West Germany, launched an international campaign to support the victims of the CIA's reactionary cutthroats in the Afghan front line city of Jalalabad. Over the next three months the campaign raised more than \$56,000 for the Jalalabad Civilian Victims Aid Fund. All monies collected are securely forwarded to an account established by the embassy of Afghanistan in Paris.

In addition to the tens of thousands of people who contributed to the Jalalabad fund drive, this campaign enabled us to bring to the working people of the world the crucial importance of the battle to defend elementary social progress in Afghanistan, not least the freedom of women from the veil. The campaign also brought to the fighters in beleaguered Jalalabad the knowledge that they did not stand alone. The siege has now been broken and the counterrevolutionary attackers are in disarray.

We print below a dispatch from the official Afghan Bakhtar News Agency reporting on a message to the PDC from the Defence Council of Nangarhar Province,

of which Jalalabad is the capital.

KABUL, July 1 (Bakhtar) — The armed forces of the Republic of Afghanistan stationed in Nangarhar, following the Geneva accords, resulted in the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan, completely foiled the aggressive designs and plots of opposition, Pakistani militarists and Saudi Wahabis, says the message of gratitude of the Defence Council of the Nangarhar Province,

addressed on June 30, to the Solidarity Committee of the French Partisans.

With the direct cooperation of the residents of Nangarhar, the message goes on, the Afghan armed forces independently defend independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the country.

It was on March 6, 1989, the message adds, that the armed extremists, commandoes of the 11th Pakistani Corps and Saudi Wahabis attacked the city to capture it in 72 hours and declare the Rawal-

pindi made extremist government there.

As a result of the criminal and barbaric actions of the enemies, residential houses and civil establishments were shelled, hundreds of innocent civilians here killed, schools, factories, mosques and Hindu worshipping places (Daran-saals) razed to the ground, the message stated.

We Afghans say that a best friend is that who helps his friend in difficult time. You as real friends of the Afghan people, supporters of peace and love with human-being, set an outstanding example of humanity by sending such assistance in a difficult moment faced the Nangarhar inhabitants with. Your help with the people of Nangarhar will be written in golden letters in the Afghan history, the message says.


The Defence Council of Nangarhar Province on behalf of all members of the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan, social organisations and peaceful residents of Nangarhar, cordially expresses its gratitude for your humanistic assistance rendered to them.

We assure you that we will triumph, because our cause is a righteous one, we struggle for peace, justice and security, the message concludes. ■

The Embassy of the Republic of Afghanistan greets the French Partisan Defense Committee and, while reiterating its thanks to the PDC, is obliged to note that a translation error crept into the message that the Defence Council of Nangarhar Province recently sent it, and that instead of "Solidarity Committee" it should have read "French Partisan Defense Committee."

The Embassy of the Republic of Afghanistan takes this occasion to reiterate to the Partisan Defense Committee the assurances of its high esteem.

Paris, 10 July 1989




*Republique de la République
Démocratique d'Afghanistan*

117/68/89

L'Ambassade de la République d'Afghanistan présente ses compliments au Partisan Defense Committee français et, tout en lui renouvelant ses remerciements, se doit de lui signaler qu'une erreur de traduction s'est glissée dans le message que le Conseil de Défense de la province de Nangarhar lui a adressé récemment et qu'il fallait lire "French Partisan Defense Committee" et non pas "Solidarity Committee".

L'Ambassade de la République d'Afghanistan saisit cette occasion pour renouveler au Partisan Defense Committee les assurances de sa haute considération.

Paris, le 10 Juillet 1989



French Partisan Defense Committee
PARIS

Soviet Workers...

Continued from page one

deregulating prices on consumer goods, laying off surplus workers — all measures that leading economists say are inevitable if the Soviet economy is to be revived."

We Trotskyists have insisted for several years now that the powerful Soviet proletariat is no fan of market-oriented reforms which would dismantle piecemeal the historic achievement of a planned economy. The prospect of inflation, speedup, layoffs and vast income differences is social dynamite in the USSR with its deep collectivist heritage. When the workers enter the scene, we wrote, they will take aim at the parasitic bureaucracy which from Stalin on has usurped political power and whose policies ultimately threaten the very foundations of the Soviet workers state. Now imperialist spokesmen, blinded by the Solidarnosc experience into thinking that Soviet-bloc workers are a fertile field for anti-Communism, are beginning to wake up. But from an opposite class standpoint.

The Times' "analysis" suggested that Moscow think twice about the "price of buying peace in the coalfields" by concessions to workers interested in "instant gratification." This view from the most authoritative organ of the American bourgeoisie is of a piece with the line taken by the White House toward the recent crack-down in Beijing. While vote-conscious legislators called for sanctions, President Bush uttered a tut-tut while making sure the US' trade ties, investments, military connections and intelligence listening posts along the Soviet border were secure. Likewise, Australia's Labor prime minister, Bob Hawke, shed crocodile tears on the electronic media over the Tiananmen Square massacre, whilst his Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade bureaucrats were working overtime to ensure the lucrative trade and diplomatic links with Beijing remained secure. The Sydney Morning Herald (26 July) ran an editorial on the Soviet miners strike under the headline "Why Gorbachev must use force." It worried that "Workers in other important industries — the railways for example — will soon be queuing for a share of Mr Gorbachev's generosity," and concluded that "Mr Gorbachev may end up having to use force against the frustrated workers who are his constituency."

The imperialists' immediate concern is to pump billions in surplus value out of the deformed workers states; ultimately their aim is counterrevolution. Workers political revolution, toppling the Stalinist bureaucrats and returning the Soviet Union to the road of Lenin and Trotsky, is the mortal enemy of their plans.

RIDING THE SIBERIAN TIGER

The miners strikes which spread like wildfire across the USSR last month marked the gravest crisis in the four years of Gorbachev's regime. From the Kuzbass coal fields in Siberia to the Donbass in the Ukraine to Vorkuta in the far north, half a million miners walked off the job.

In an irony of history, Donetsk workers shut down the Stakhanov mine, named for the Stalinist superworker who jacked up piece-rate norms for all Soviet workers by overfulfilling his daily quota. Thousands of strikers in hard hats jammed the city squares from Prokopyevsk to Donetsk in round-the-clock protests. A worried Gorbachev went on nationwide television three times with personal appeals to the miners, saying they had "good reasons" for "taking matters into their own hands" but urgently asking them to return to work. As the London Financial Times (24 July) put it, Gorbachev is "trying to ride the Siberian tiger." A threatened national rail strike brought immediate negotiations with the government, which promised to do "all it can" to meet the railworkers' demands (Sydney Morning Herald, 5 August).

The miners finally heeded Gorbachev's appeal. In the deal worked out with strike committee delegates who travelled to the Kremlin, the government granted



Mammoth miners strike rally in Mezhdurechensk, July 13. The Soviet workers have awakened.

sweeping concessions including bonuses for hardship and night work, higher pensions, longer vacations and promises of an extensive list of goods, from meat to soap, detergent, milk, coffee, tea, cloth, shoes, cars, refrigerators, bathtubs and toilets. The desperate shortage of consumer goods, the worst in recent Soviet memory, is one of the bitter fruits of perestroika as neither plan nor market function. To satisfy the mine strike settlement, Moscow had to dispatch a government delegation on a shopping trip to the West. Deputy prime minister Aleksandra Biryukova purchased \$US58 million in pharmaceuticals and \$US108 million in consumer goods, including 30 million pairs of pantyhose. The total price tag for the concessions is estimated at \$US8 billion. But this is only the tip of the iceberg: what of the needs of millions of other Soviet workers?

Conservative columnist William Safire wrote that "It would be ironic if Mr Gorbachev ... should slip on a cake of soap" (New York Times, 20 July). But, as a member of the Supreme Soviet from the Donbass, Aleksei Boika, said, "The people have been

driven to the streets not by a shortage of soap, but by a shortage of justice." He added, "The miners of Donetsk trust nobody and nothing. This is what we have come to ... there is no protection, not from the work councils, not from the unions, not from the party committees." Thus from the beginning, the miners movement threw up elected strike committees, recallable at any time, whose work was overseen by mass workers assemblies. These are the embryos of soviets. The strike committees will be maintained as workers commissions to monitor the fulfilling of the concessions, and as a reminder that the workers' muscle can be flexed again.

The government conceded the miners' demand for the right of individual mines to sell excess coal abroad after their plan delivery quota is met. This is a dangerous demand, ultimately threatening the state monopoly of foreign trade, which Lenin established as a cornerstone of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Moreover, the

"Democratic Union" tried to raise its head in the Kuzbass, its spokesman was hooted off the platform. The only place where the name Solidarity has been proposed is in the formerly Polish western Ukraine. When a strike committee member in Novokuznetsk (the former Stalinsk) said "we are the new Solidarity," the chairman begged to differ. "Workers in Gdansk had many political demands. We are putting forward only economic ones." In fact, the Soviet coal strikers have formulated political demands from the outset, but of a markedly different kind. The Kuzbass miners called for abolition of all special privileges for the bureaucracy and for a new Soviet constitution, to be prepared and publicly discussed by 7 November 1990, the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution.

In Vorkuta, strikers called for power to the elected soviets and for abrogating Article 6 of the Stalin-Bukharin constitution consecrating the political monopoly of the Communist Party. The Stalinist CP is not a workers party but the political vehicle of the bureaucracy. On the other hand, Gorbachev's refurbished "soviets" are hardly the revolutionary workers councils of 1905 and 1917 but pseudo-parliamentary talk shops. Indeed, the Kuzbass strikes grew out of frustration with the recent meeting of the new Soviet congress in June. One miner in the Kuzbass told the Financial Times that the workers had been waiting for results ever since 1985, when Gorbachev came to power.

"Then, the Congress of Deputies began. The workers expected something concrete to be decided. We were all waiting for something important. Every day people watched. They saw how people talked and talked, and took no decisions. The people had just had enough."

All "glasnost," no action. What's needed is a fight for real soviets! Not debating societies, but organs of workers' struggle, led by a genuine communist vanguard, to become the basis of a revolutionary regime of soviet democracy.

BALTIC NATIONALISM AND THE DANGER OF CAPITALIST RESTORATION

Meanwhile, raging nationalist turmoil is threatening to tear the Soviet Union apart. In the Black Sea region of Abkhazia, 20 people including three policemen have been killed in the last month in ethnic clashes between Abkhazians and Georgians. Strikes in the regional capital of Sukhumi have stopped most rail traffic to the Caucasus. More than 1,500 weapons were reportedly seized in raids on police stations by Abkhazian nationalists who are demanding secession from Soviet Georgia. In the Georgian capital of Tbilisi on July 24, there was a general strike and march through the capital of some 20,000 Georgian nationalists waving flags and shouting "Long live free Georgia, Down with the Russian Empire" and "Invaders go home." Interior ministry troops have been stationed in the area to prevent ethnic pogroms, as with the dispute between Armenians and Azerbaijanis to the south.

For decades, from the beginning of Stalin's rule, the Kremlin



Films Art et Science

Return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky! Leon Trotsky, co-leader of 1917 Russian Revolution, addresses May Day rally in Red Square, Moscow. Banner salutes workers struggling against the "old world" of capitalist exploitation.

has pursued a nationalist course which reflects itself at home in Great Russian chauvinism toward the other peoples of the multinational Soviet state. The bankrupt policies of the Stalinist regime have generated powerful tendencies for the restoration of capitalism, which are going under the cover of national self-determination. While in the Caucasus and Central Asia ethnic pogroms have been set off as various nationalities squabble over their share of the pie in the framework of "market socialism," in the Baltic republics the nationalist movements are blatantly heading toward counter-revolution, with the support of local CP leaders. And in late July the USSR Supreme Soviet gave preliminary approval, with the support of the Gorbachev leadership, to a law for the economic autonomy of Estonia and Lithuania that represents the first step on the road to independence.

Simultaneously there was a four-day general strike in Estonia, called by the "International Movement," against a new proposed law, later passed on 9 August, which would effectively bar Russian workers from local and republic elections. Estonian nationalists cooked up this chauvinist legislation, which requires voters to have two years residency, and candidates to have lived in the republic for ten years! Already, a law making Estonian the sole "official language" was passed in January. This is a law to disenfranchise and deprive of their rights nearly half of the population of Estonia, which includes several hundred thousand Russian-speaking residents as well as 200,000 Soviet troops stationed in the area. Most industrial workers in the republic are Russian, and the walkout included thousands of workers at the Tallinn shipyards. The continuing strikes were suspended on 18 August following a directive from Moscow to Estonian authorities to amend the election law by 1 October on the grounds that it is unconstitutional. Similar national-chauvinist proposals have been raised by the "People's Front" in Latvia and the Sajudis of Lithuania, including calls for a ban on immigration by Russians.

The "economic reform" plan for Estonia and Lithuania debated in the Supreme Soviet is a frontal attack on central planning. Under the law, which is supposed to be a pilot plan for perestroika, the Baltic republics would raise their own taxes, set prices, control financial markets and foreign trade, and eventually issue their own cur-

rency. Hoping to build a "market economy" based on agriculture and light industry, advocates of this plan seek to build a system "resembling Finland or Sweden more than the traditional Soviet model," the New York Times (28 July) reports. Yet their own tiny markets are far too narrow to support an industrial economy, and even the nationalists don't think they can produce quality goods up to international capitalist standards. Their main market is to be the Soviet Union and, says the Times, "success of the plan, Baltic economists admit, depends heavily on the ability to lure foreign investment to modernize and develop new industries."

This means the Baltic republics would become neocolonies of Western imperialism, just like they were in the period between 1920 and 1940. Today reactionary "captive nations" nationalists and social democrats mourn the demise of these nasty statelets, dominated by German and British capital, where fascistic nationalists dominated the universities while Jews were restricted under the numerus clausus, and "independence" came under the protection of British naval guns while Communists were slaughtered. In World War II, Baltic nationalists welcomed the Nazi invaders, and retreated with the SS when they were driven out by the heroic resistance of the Red Army and the Soviet peoples. Now they are trying to attract Swedish, West German and American capital in the name of "democracy." In the heyday of Solidarnosc it was said that the Poles wanted to live like West Germans and work like Russians. Well, the Baltic nationalists want to live like Swedes and exploit the Russians!

FOR PROLETARIAN POLITICAL REVOLUTION!

In his annual July 26 speech, Fidel Castro raised a cry of alarm about crisis in the Soviet bloc. Developments in Poland and Hungary, he said, "lead one to think of a peaceful passage from socialism to capitalism." Cuba can no longer rely on "the supplies which have been arriving like clockwork from the socialist camp for 30 years," he said. The Bush administration has "shown a triumphalist attitude like no other US government, not even Reagan's." And as for the Soviet Union, Castro remarked: "If one day we wake up to the news that the Soviet Union has disintegrated, something we hope will never occur, Cuba and the Cuban

Revolution will continue to fight and resist." As Trotskyists we don't view things from the same vantage point as Castro, who stands at the head of a bureaucracy that claims to be building socialism in one island and has dug in to weather some strong winds coming from the north. But neither are we worlds apart, and we share some common concerns.

And with his connections, maybe Castro knows something we don't. The very next day the Supreme Soviet in Moscow approved the Baltic economic "autonomy" law. And now an ultra-perestroika "Inter-Regional Group" has formed in the Supreme Soviet, led by Communist Party "maverick" Boris Yeltsin and pro-imperialist "dissident" Andrei Sakharov. Although the group is described as "left-radical" in the official Soviet media, its politics point instead to Western social democracy. Historian Yuri Afanasyev, one of the Inter-Regional Group spokesmen, called in a press conference for rethinking socialism, "from Jesus Christ, through Lenin's death agony, to contemporary social democracy" (Financial Times, 31 July). During the recent coal strikes, Yeltsin went on national TV appealing to the miners to go back to work. And as Moscow party chief, in 1987 the "populist" Yeltsin met with the sinister Russian nationalists of Pamyat, thus giving credence to this dangerous fascistic outfit.

The "triumphalism" of imperialism is palpable. Bush just returned from a trip to Poland, where he spoke before a crowd at Gdansk in which members of "Fighting Solidarity" carried signs

proclaiming "A Good Communist Is a Dead Communist," and to Hungary, where the American president chortled that Marx's Capital is no longer required reading at Karl Marx University. Gorbachev's response to this flaunting of American imperial arrogance was a belly-crawling letter to the Western economic summit in Paris, in which the Soviet leader called for the USSR's "full and entire participation in the world economy." With his plans for making the ruble convertible, and appeals to the imperialists that they "can only gain from the opening up of a market as big as the Soviet Union," Gorbachev is offering an open door to capitalist exploitation.

Unlike Castro, Trotskyists understand full well that counter-revolution would be anything but peaceful. And it's anything but inevitable. What's posed for the Soviet proletariat is fighting a civil war from Jalalabad to Riga to defend and extend the gains of the October Revolution. While Gorbachev ignominiously withdrew Soviet forces from Afghanistan in order to appease imperialism, there are recent reports from Moscow that "Soviet veterans of the Afghanistan war have asked the Central Committee of the CP to be allowed to return there with a voluntary division" to fight the counterrevolutionaries (Suddeutsche Zeitung, 27 July). We Trotskyists wholeheartedly supported Soviet intervention in the face of imperialist reaction and were outspoken in denouncing the pullout as a betrayal of internationalism.

With the miners strikes of July 1989, the Soviet workers dramatically returned to the political scene with a display of proletarian power that shook the Kremlin bureaucrats of all factions and cliques as well as the imperialist bourgeoisies. Under revolutionary leadership, this is the decisive force which will determine the fate of the Soviet Union, together with the struggles of their class brothers and sisters throughout the world. Their urgent need is to reclaim the banner of Bolshevism, the program of world socialist revolution, which we Fourth Internationalists of the International Communist League also take as our own.

— Adapted from Workers Vanguard no 483, 4 August 1989

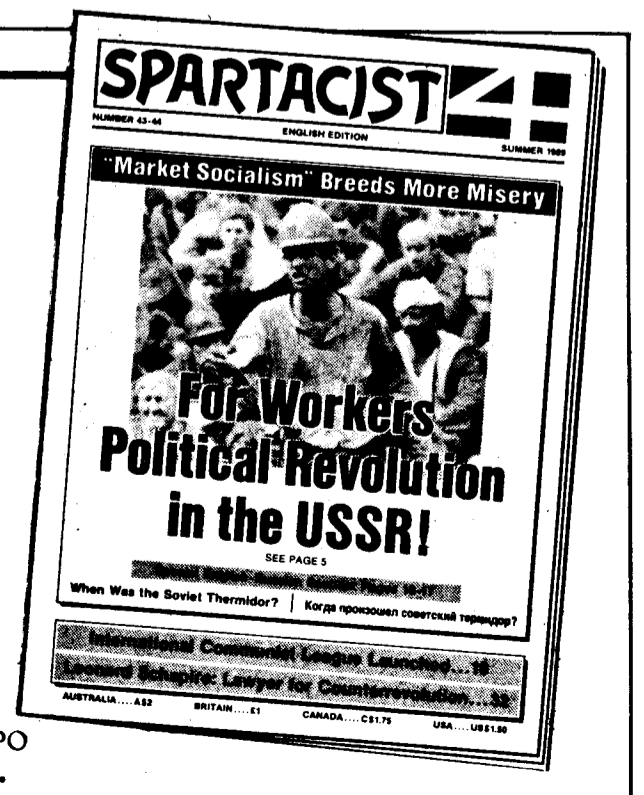
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Bougainville...

Continued from page two

an Indonesian invasion of PNG is hardly likely at present, the disintegration of the Australian-dominated PNG state would be another story.

Australian imperialism's wars have always been on the basis of craven support for its imperialist big brother and vicious xenophobic racism towards Asia. For Australian imperialism, PNG was the main theatre of the Pacific war against Japan. Crude racism fed the bloody savagery of the jungle warfare, including Australian war crimes such as the recently publicised slaughter of hundreds of defenceless Japanese adrift in lifeboats off the New Guinea coast in March 1943.

The main enemy of both the PNG peoples and Australian workers is Australian imperialism. The key to the Australian working class forging internationalist unity with the working people of Indonesia, Singapore, Japan and throughout Asia and fighting for the oppressed of PNG is a struggle to smash racist White Australian imperialism through workers revolution. Today the spectre that haunts the Australian imperialists is the revival of revolutionary struggle in Indonesia after Suharto. Conversely, Marxists look to the victory of the Indonesian socialist revolution which would reverberate throughout the region and sound the death knell of imperialist domination of PNG.

NEGLECT AND PLUNDER

If the maxim of British imperialism was "divide and conquer" then that of its Australian progeny could be said to be "neglect and plunder." With capital scarce enough for the exploitation of the Australian continent and the PNG terrain difficult, the Australian miners and planters, under the rule of the all-powerful *kiaps* (patrol officers), simply ripped out the most accessible wealth while entirely neglecting development of the economic infrastructure, even that necessary for more systematic exploitation. Before World War II there were no government schools and today there is still not a mile of railway and only 1200 kilometres of paved roads. When copper was discovered on Bougainville, an administration official flew in in 1964 and told the landowners that "you get nothing" and in the original deal signed by CRA, that's just what they got.

They got a trickle more, but not much, when the mine agreement was renegotiated in 1974, after a wave of secessionist agitation had swept Bougainville. Although the Somare government sent in riot police to put down a short lived "Independent Republic of the North Solomons" just before PNG independence in September 1975, secessionist leaders like Father John Moinis and Leo Hannett were soon bought off with ministries and the establishment of provincial governments. This contrasted with the savage repression of a short strike by Panguna mineworkers in May 1975, a pledge by Somare that militant unionism would not be permitted to hinder imperialist super profits. CRA hired some apologist anthropologists to smarten up its PR image and busi-



Hawke government up to its neck in dirty little war. Three of the Iroquois gunships now in action.

ness boomed. The revenue from the mine has been divided up as follows: 58 per cent went to the PNG government, 36 per cent to private shareholders, five per cent to the provincial government and a princely one per cent to the landowners.

While Australian journalists denounce their compensation claim as "greed," the younger landowners in particular are only too aware how their elders were robbed blind by greedy capitalists, and the distant Port Moresby government, which has maintained its army, inflated civil service (including thousands of fat Aussie expatriates) and legions of free-spending politicians on its cut of the mine's enormous wealth. In return, they have been left with an enormous hole in the ground and a polluted sewer of a river. A university graduate who worked as a surveyor for CRA for 12 years, Francis Ona combines the resentment of the traditional landowners with the frustration of the indigenous educated elite at the lack of jobs: "A system of apartheid similar to South Africa is already practised in our midst... They use skin to classify workers, whether they have graduated, went to university or just to school, they are not promoted in their jobs. They make us tea-boys and the white man the boss" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 July).

However Ona's demand for closure of the mine and his group's murderous attacks on non-Bougainvillean workers is a reactionary dead-end, which glorifies the miserable subsistence gardening existence and fuels ethnic antagonisms between the black skinned local people and labourers from other parts of PNG whom they call "redskins." The demand for secession is more a pressure tactic for a better deal from CRA and its Port Moresby lackeys than a serious alternative. Within the framework of imperialism, the island would become either one more impoverished, economically unviable Pacific micro-state, or part of an existing one, the Solomon Islands. Marxists oppose the attempt to force Bougainville to stay within the artificial boundaries of PNG, created by colonialism and serving only the interests of Australian domination. Given the smallness of the population (160,000) and, aside from the one huge mine, the primitiveness of the economy, the North Solomons hardly constitute a fully fledged nation, and it is absurd to project an isolated "liberation struggle." A decent future for the peoples of PNG can be envisaged only through the expro-

priation of its wealth by the socially conscious working people, as part of smashing imperialism throughout the region.

PNG IN CRISIS

It is a scathing indictment of Australian colonialism that the prospects for PNG appear so dismal. The *Australian* (22-23 April) baldly said, "The fact is that PNG is not independent of Australia." With explosive social tensions mounting and the fake Westminster-style parliamentary regime degenerating into a game of musical chairs among politicians who are to a man servile lackeys of Canberra, the sense of approaching crisis is palpable. The government has responded to the chronic crime among the growing unemployed population of the shanty towns (the "raskol" gangs),



Pacific Islands Monthly

May 1975: Somare government's riot squads smash Bougainville mineworkers' strike.

as well as endemic tribal fighting, with increasing repression — curfews, calling out the army, moves to reintroduce the death penalty. A military coup is increasingly mooted, with the Minister in charge of Bougainville, former army commander Ted Diro, a conspicuous candidate for strongman. With over 700 different languages, in this land the army is ultimately what holds PNG together but a bonapartist military regime on the model of Fiji could also hasten its disintegration.

The working class is small, with about 200,000 wage earners in the modern sector, not much of a peasantry and 80 per cent of the population of 3.5 million largely outside the "cash economy." Despite this, there has been a wave of strikes in the last year, the most militant being at the BHP copper mine at Ok Tedi, against the apartheid living conditions there, and against the trading firm Burns Philp. Though

the public service and waterfront have a history of unionism, the embryonic working class reflects the stunting of the economy outside the mining "enclaves." It is doubtful whether the social forces exist for an indigenous struggle for working class power on a national scale. But in alliance with the proletariat of the region, especially of Australia, Indonesia and Japan, these small concentrations of the organised industrial proletariat in PNG could be crucial nodal points for the triumph of the socialist revolution and progressive justice for the peoples of the South Pacific.

The reformist Australian "left" are among the strongest advocates of Australian mini-imperialism's regional interests. They demand that it resist Indonesian expansionism in East Timor and Irian Jaya, drive the French out of New Caledonia, restore "democracy" in Fiji, and of course "defend" PNG against Indonesia. Over Bougainville, this social imperialism has been expressed indirectly in demanding that instead of sending helicopters, the Hawke government side with the landowners and Ona's rebel army, whose program they glorify, against CRA and Rabbie Namaliu. Beneath a photograph of a Sydney rally with slogans of "Oppose Beazley's War Drive" and "Keep Australian Military Out of PNG," the SPA's *Guardian* (5 July) says: "the Australian government should be pressuring CRA and the other huge Australian interests in PNG to fully compensate the people for exploiting their labour and re-

sources. If the Government continues to follow the dictates of capital instead of the people in PNG Australia could soon find itself dragged into its own 'Vietnam'." Well, Australia is a lackey of the US, but the dirty Vietnam war was very much Australian imperialism's "own." The heroic workers and peasants of Vietnam won a tremendous victory over US and Australian imperialism, but these social patriots worry that the capitalist rulers might lose another one. The racist Australian state these reformists are pleading with is the one that means vicious apartheid and racist murder for Aboriginals, and whose immigration laws excluded Papua New Guineans alongside Asians and trapped the growing population of the Pacific islands to a life of hopeless poverty in these island slums.

Behind some resounding phrases about unity with PNG workers against Australian imperialism, the Socialist Labour

League has its Laborite recipe to transform it into the ally of the oppressed. They demand that the ALP "lefts" and union leaders expel the Hawke-Keating right wing and fight for a workers government on a socialist program "as part of the struggle to overthrow imperialism throughout the region" (Workers News, 21 July). These Laborite illusion-mongers may entertain the fantasy that ALP "lefts" like Gerry Hand, currently Minister for Aboriginal Oppression, can or ought to be Minister for Anti-Imperialism but this is certainly not shared by the masses of PNG or the islands, or by Marxists. The simple fact is that Liberals and Laborites, "left" and right, have always been united in defence of Australian domination of the South Pacific and PNG.

Defence of the PNG masses against Australian imperialism is an acid test for the working class. It is necessary to forge revolutionary unity with the workers and peasants of Indonesia, of the Vietnamese workers state, the proletariat of Asia's powerhouse, Japan, and the Chinese working class, which rose in June and whose task remains the wresting of political power from the corrupt Stalinist clique that endangers the gains of the Chinese workers state. To do this the working class must be broken from the ALP, defender of racist imperialism, to build a revolutionary internationalist workers party. Throughout the region, sections of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) are necessary, to lead the struggles of the workers and peasants to power. Smash Australian imperialism — For a Workers Republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia! ■

Cockatoo...

Continued from page three

was a leadership with a program to turn sympathy into action where it counts. We advocated a strategy to win, distributing thousands of leaflets with the call:

"A revolutionary leadership would seek to turn this struggle into an offensive for jobs. The massive bulk of the strikers have been left idle and unorganised on shore. They need to be mobilised and put into action. For a start, the island needs reinforcement, with pickets at all the wharves in case of a government attempt to take it back. The company men must be escorted from the island so that the strikers have unchallenged control. A mass meeting of the strikers needs to elect a strike committee to run the strike. Elected representatives of the other maritime unions must be invited onto it. For the urgent need of this strike is to extend, to harness the enormous industrial muscle lying dormant and become a general, city-wide, maritime strike. There need to be mass meetings of all maritime unions. And if the union tops won't call them, then onshore flying pickets can be used to bring out the wharfies, seamen, firemen and deckhands, Garden Island Naval Dockyard workers. Extending the strike is the only way to defend it against possible intervention by the state forces. And if they want to use the navy as scabs, remember the sailors are workers and sons of workers in uniform. Shut down the Sydney waterfront! Nothing must move on Sydney Harbour or Botany Bay except the sea pickets and Cockatoo supply vessels!"

— Australasian Spartacist
no 132, June/July 1989

This class-struggle strategy, flowing from our revolutionary internationalist program, could have been broken through the isolation and turned the Cockatoo strike into a springboard for a working class offensive against Hawke's "award restructuring."

SLL: POISONING THE WATERS

Throughout the strike the sinister Socialist Labour League (SLL) put itself forward as a left opposition to the shop committee. Yet all these messianic, born-again Healyites do is give socialism a bad name. Week after week a dozen or so gathered at the mass meetings to harangue strikers, while inside the meetings an uproar of howling and jeers would erupt as their supporter, Phil Xenos, religiously parroted their line of "expel the Hawke/Keating ALP right wing." Never putting forward a concrete program for victory, the SLL's message was to turn the strike into a vehicle for reforming the ALP. Laborite to the core, they share the same essential framework as the Labor Council sellouts, especially their virulent anti-Sovietism, which makes it impossible for them to fight Hawke's anti-Soviet "defence" build-up. As a left cover they raised the call for an indefinite general strike, giving it a thoroughly Laborite content — it was to be implemented by, you guessed it, the Labor Council and ACTU, for the purpose of, that's right, special ACTU/ALP conferences. Well, they got a special ACTU meeting, the day before the strike ended, convened to shaft the strike.

These poisonous charlatans provided the perfect foil for the shop committee and union tops to

head off any left opposition, which at times they did using the particularly vile backwardness that goes with Laborism. Workers News reported that Panuccio used sexist slurs and gay-baited their supporters. But the SLL can't fight that crap — they're mired in it themselves. And they are easy prey for anti-communists. The SLL took blood money from various Arab capitalist regimes, crossed BLF picket lines in 1986, and their other major campaign at the moment is a slander job on a jailed American trade unionist (see article page four). This dubious outfit has as much connection with the principles of socialism as the CIA-trained flunkies in the Labor Council.

The ALP's stranglehold on the working class is the major obstacle to the victory of workers struggles and the struggle for workers power. A revolutionary leadership must be built in struggle to split the ALP's working class base from the pro-capitalist tops. The first duty of such a leadership is to tell the truth to the working class, especially who are its friends and who are its enemies. The Spartacist League has consistently told this truth: that the main enemy is Australian capitalism, and that the workers so-called leaders and "their" party, the ALP, whether the Hawke-Keating right wing or the "lefts," are on the other side, in the camp of the bourgeoisie. Instead of defeats like Cockatoo, the working class can start to win some for a change when it breaks from the treacherous ALP and fights independently of the capitalist state under the leadership of a revolutionary workers party that is fighting for a workers government. ■

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Afghanistan...

Continued from page seven

would die at the same time, threw themselves at the murderers.

Not surprisingly, most of the women in the regular army battalions and in the new voluntary women's militia come from the association — they want revenge. Commander Shafiq, a Russian-trained woman who runs the training center, told me very proudly when I met her that this is the first time in the history of Afghanistan that women have been allowed to set up military units. They currently have a battalion of 600, one of whose detachments was in Jalalabad. The battalion is also responsible for guarding schools and institutions where women study or work.

* * *

The Soviet intervention in 1979 was mandated by defense of the gains of the 1917 October Revolution and opened up the prospect of extending these gains to Afghanistan; that is why the international Spartacist tendency, now the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) proclaimed "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" After the Soviet withdrawal, Washington and Islamabad thought the instant the Soviet troops pulled out, the Afghan government would crumble. They have been proved wrong by the fighting valor of the Afghan people.

Meanwhile, the PDPA's policy

of "national reconciliation" aims at luring the reactionaries into a coalition. Kabul papers regularly report agreements with regional mujahedin commanders, effectively leaving them in control of their fiefdoms. The day after Payam reported on the internationalist aid campaign by the PDC, it carried a speech by the foreign minister headlined, "Except a Political Settlement — No Other Way Exists for Putting and End to War in Afghanistan."

But to put an end to the imperialist-backed war against social progress requires rooting out — not conciliating — entrenched feudal and capitalist reaction through workers revolution. In the extremely backward conditions of Afghanistan, the tiny industrial proletariat does not have the weight to effect a fundamental

transformation of society. But next door in Bhutto's Pakistan, the home base for the CIA's mujahedin, conditions for social revolution are brewing, with national minorities in turmoil and the regime divided. In Iran, the Islamic theocracy is now headless and the population sick of a decade of bloody war and domestic terror.

Jalalabad besieged was the focal point of imperialism's jihad (holy war) against social progress and the Soviet Union. Jalalabad victorious can inspire revolutionary struggle throughout the region, from India to Turkey. That requires above all the program of Leninist internationalism, the banner of the International Communist League.

Excerpted from Workers Vanguard nos 482, 21 July; 483, 4 August.

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Unions: Defend Abortion Rights!

The woman-hating "Right to Life" bigots are on the offensive. Emboldened by a recent US Supreme Court ruling to restore a reactionary Missouri law forbidding use of public funding or facilities for abortions, the local bigots plan to step up their campaign of terror against abortion clinics. According to the Sydney Morning Herald (1 June), one Sydney inner-city clinic has been fire-bombed twice in the last eight months.

Alongside terrorising clinics, the reactionaries want to overturn abortion rights in parliaments and the courts. Last year in the NSW state parliament Rev Fred Nile's Call to Australia Party introduced a bill to implement draconian three-year jail terms for women who have abortions. In Queensland this July, the Family Court rejected a man's outrageous application to prevent his ex-wife's abortion. But the "Right to Life" filth are claiming as a victory the court's decision to hear the application, a precedent for further court cases, one of which they expect eventually to win.

Last year, bigots pressured manufacturers to withdraw an application to conduct trials in Australia of the French abortion-inducing drug RU 486 which would make abortion a genuinely private act, requiring only a prescription from a doctor. In August in federal parliament, Senator Brian Harradine, chairman of a newly-formed "pro-life" group of federal MPs, will put a Private Members Bill to ban Medicare payments for abortion. This blatant anti-working class, anti-woman legislation would take safe abortion out of reach for poorer women, forcing them to bear unwanted children with no means to care for them. Or, more likely, to face potential death, mutilation or sterility at the hands of backyard



Spartacist contingent at Sydney abortion rights march, August 1988.

butchers. An horrific one-third of the half million maternal deaths worldwide each year directly result from unsafe abortions.

Harradine's group includes ALP parliamentarians who, like the Liberals, are allowed a "conscience vote." A cross-party opposition to vote against the legislation has been formed by Immigration Minister Robert Ray (responsible for policing the racist immigration laws and detention camps). About the only strategy reformist groups like the Women's Abortion Action Campaign (WAAC) put forward to defend abortion is ... write to your local MP. Reliance on the male chauvinist ALP is a loser: in WA last month, the state Labor Party conference voted to enact a 20-year-old policy to totally decriminalise abortion, which Labor premier Dowding refused to endorse.

The wide variation between states reflects the tenuous and reversible status of abortion rights. Excluding South Australia

and the Northern Territory where abortion in hospitals is legal, abortion is technically illegal, and available only because of liberal interpretations of the law. And, as history demonstrates, laws are only a reflection of the relation of class forces. What rights exist now for women were gained through struggle and the efforts of courageous fighters like the late Bertram Wainer.

FOR WOMENS LIBERATION THROUGH SOCIALIST REVOLUTION!

"Independent" Senator Harradine is a National Civic Council supporter expelled from the ALP in the seventies. The NCC are anti-communist witchhunters, sworn enemies of militant trade unionism as well as women, which is all the more reason why trade unions must mobilise against them. Their ilk call themselves "pro-life" — yet they conspire to make misery of women's lives, and stand for every kind of reaction from campaigning for the reintroduction of the death penalty to hailing AIDS as "God's scourge" on homosexuals. The NCC, Catholic reactionaries who operate within the labour movement, are the local version of anti-communist Polish Solidarnosc, whose leader Lech Walesa supports the Polish Catholic church demand for three-year jail terms for women having abortions. Yet the reformist, anti-Soviet left backed Solidarnosc, and at home rely on an ALP riddled with reactionaries to defend women. The fight for abortion rights cannot be isolated from the struggle for decent living conditions and democratic rights for all. A powerful mobilisation of organised labour, women and immigrants in defence of abortion clinics would give the reactionary bigots pause and bring

out many others in support of women's rights.

The rightists are on an ideological crusade to bolster the nuclear family, a basic institution of bourgeois rule, by pushing women out of jobs and back into domestic drudgery and poverty. This viciously male chauvinist country is already hell for women. Last year, a federal government survey (Australian, 9 March 1988) found one in five Australians condone "domestic violence" — wife-beating.

The Hawke government finances its anti-Soviet war budget by ravaging social security, health care, education, all social services. Thousands are cut off benefits while social security offices are closed, child care fees skyrocket as funding plummets, and the hospital system is on the verge of collapse. Conditions for working women in what is the most sex-segregated workforce of the OECD countries have worsened under the ALP/ACTU Accords. Earning only 79 per cent of male wages, women slave in textile sweatshops, understaffed hospitals, in low-paid child care, retail and clerical jobs. With wage "rises" for productivity trade-offs, women workers get nothing. Trade union leaders refuse to even organise large sections of women workers such as piece workers, let alone fight for better conditions. Basic gains for women — free abortion on demand, free 24-hour child care and free, quality health care — will only be won by the working class in its struggle to smash capitalism.

Speaking from the floor at a Sydney WAAC meeting against Harradine's bill on July 24, a Spartacist supporter outlined the way forward:

"It's desperately necessary to have some hard class struggle to beat back this attack, but at every turn the trade union bureaucracy is an obstacle to that fight. It's time to break with the ALP and with the treacherous trade union leadership and forge a class-struggle, working class party that is going to fight in its own interest and in doing that fight for all the oppressed. It's the example of the Russian Revolution in 1917 that we look to. In 1917 the Bolshevik Revolution carried forward forthright support for women's rights in gaining full legal equality, free abortion, and laying the foundations for the socialisation of housework and child care. Women's liberation is not separable from the struggle of the working class for power. It's a class question and the trade unions must defend women's rights." ■



Spartacist League/US at 300,000-strong rally, Washington DC, April.