Rhodesia election settles nothing  
Black masses confront Mugabe

27 March - "No more bazu, no more madam - Zimbabwe is free", said one woman's sign in Salisbury. The results of the February election in Rhodesia had just been announced, and the unexpected victor was guerrilla leader Robert Mugabe, who took 57 of the 80 parliamentary seats allotted to blacks. To the black masses of Rhodesia, it seemed that at last they had won a decisive victory in the years-long, bloody struggle against the white supremacist settler regime. After the thousands killed and maimed, the tens of thousands more made homeless by butcher general Peter Walls' racist shocktroopers, the millions crammed into the tribal trustlands to face starvation - they did not vote for the "Marxist" Mugabe in order to shore up the white capitalist exploiters' system.

Mugabe did not waste any time giving black working people the first bitter taste of disillusionment. When thousands of black workers from Bulawayo to Salisbury walked out on strike in late March - for higher wages, over fears about their pension funds, and in one case to get rid of a white racist who had spat on a black worker - the black neocolonialists clamped down quick. Citing the legislation of the previous white racist regime, one official announced that all strikes were illegal. White bosses who had sacked some 750 black strikers were, he added, all "within their rights" whereas the strikers were liable to arrest and prosecution.

"Any action at this stage can only serve to damage the goodwill which has been built up between Government, the employees and their employers...", announced new Minister for Labour Kumbirai Kangai (Australasian, 20 March).

And to get the strikers back to work, Kangai promised to "examine" their grievances after 18 April, the day chinless wonder Prince Charles is due in Salisbury to officially declare the new Zimbabwe "independent". But after 18 April, all the black masses can expect is further open and intensified strikebreaking. Just as Angolan MPLA leader Agostinho Neto broke the Luanda dock workers' strike of 1976, so now will Mugabe break the strikes of the miners and railway workers of Rhodesia.

Continued on page 10

Dockers join steel workers  
For a British general strike!

LONDON, 27 March - The British steel strike has become a bitterly fought war of attrition. For thirteen weeks now the 150,000 striking British Steel Corporation (BSC) workers have held out despite mass intimidation and arrests of pickets, press vilification and extreme financial hardship. Their strike committee rooms in Birmingham have been broken into and ransacked by the police; in Rotherham, the local strike headquarters was firebombed on the evening of 23 February by a professional thug who intended to kill the 20 strikers who would normally have been in the offices at that hour.

But still the workers have not been deterred and are now dug in hard as their strike begins to have an impact on the economy. And in a potentially explosive development, 5000 dockers and shoreside workers voted on 21 March to strike indefinitely to protest a management layoff of 100 workers who had refused to handle scab steel. The dockers have also called for an all-out national docks strike - bring them out now!

Their official leaders, on the other hand, have been desperately trying to end the strike through a rotten "compromise" offer to BSC management. So far the Thatcher government and BSC bosses have spurned the bureaucrats' sellout proposals in the hope of inflicting a major defeat on the steel workers union, the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation (ISTC). But on 21 March, management accepted a union proposal that the Tory government establish a three-man committee of inquiry to "deal with the pay dispute". So confident are the employers that this body will back them up, they have committed themselves in advance to accepting its findings. But whether ISTC general secretary Bill Sirs can get the strikers back to work by Easter as he plans remains very doubtful.

What has most encouraged the Tories to hardline is the criminal backstabbing and treachery of the union leaders, from...
Protests and statements of solidarity continued to come in responding to the murderous knife attack on German Spartacist leader Fred Ziereben from Afghan reactionaries and various foreign Maoists at Frankfurt University on 21 February. (See: SPARTACIST 1980, no. 615.)

This comes from the vernacular weekly of the DTI (Japanese section of the IEE). It is especially disturbing to read about the GIM's "warnings" in the pages of their fraternal group's press for the same reason. Firstly the attack took place against the "ultra-sectarians" because they were the ones with enough guts to defend the Soviet presence in Afghanistan -- a position with which the IEE and DTI is sympathetic. Secondly the GIM's refusal to defend the TDL's later forum proves that their stance is entirely empty.

When the day comes to avenge this murderous deed, I wonder if the GIM will also be warning about these dangers. Sincerely, Stevens

LCCh statement

To the Workers and Students of the University of Frankfurt

All Political Organisations

Claiming to Struggle for Democracy, Proletarian Revolution and Socialism

In response to the assaults and attacks suffered by members of the German Trotskyist organisation, the International Spartacist Tendency on 25 January of this year as they were publicly expressing their viewpoint of the situation in Afghanistan, the Liga Comunista de Chile considers it its duty and responsibility to state the following:

We reject and repudiate the attack perpetrated by elements belonging to GAUFs, "Fight Back" and ATOF against members of the German Trotskyist Tendency and characterise this on the one hand as an attack on the principles and fight for the liberation of the oppressed peoples of the world and against the democratic rights won by the workers and student movement. The Liga Comunista de Chile considers that these acts are an extension of the situation in Afghanistan that was arranged by the University of Frankfurt the 25th of January. The responsible for the attacks are said to be members of the General Unions and Students Federation of Austria (GUAFs), "Fight Back" and the ATOF.

In this way we would like to solidarise with the TDL in a protest against this horrifying attack on the democratic right of the TDL to put forward their opinions. Even if our party has deep political differences with the TDL on the one hand and the "International Spartacist Tendency" on the other, we condemn the attempts to silence those who refuse to work with the imperialist-led witchhunt against the Afghan revolution and the USSR.

Stop the right-wing repression!

For the Political Bureau of the Communist Workers League Soviet section of the Fourth International

Hakan Blomqvist

Fairfax—One out, all out!

In January printers at the Sydney plant of John Fairfax & Son Ltd were on strike in protest against a Printing and Kindred Industries Union (PKIU) chapel representative victimised by management. Their strike was supported by active picketing involving at times over 100 workers. And joining the printers on their picket lines were members of various metal trade workers, engineers, plumbers, sections of the Transport and General Workers Union and one clerical worker, Linda Menzle, who refused on principle to scab on another union’s picket line.

Last month, some 90 metal workers in the AMWSU, iron workers (FIA) and members of the Australian Society of Engineers were on strike for 5 March. But in marked contrast even to the limited struggle in January, no picket lines were up, and for the most part PKIU members are going about their normal work. The result: Fairfax papers are getting into the shops and newsagents without the slightest difficulty.

For any trade unionist though, the response to the metal workers’ strike should have been immediate: an injury to one is an injury to all. One out— all out! Unless the printers shut down production, their actions will be futile.

Protests against knifing of German Trotskyist

Fairfax One out, all out!

Protests and statements of solidarity continue to come in responding to the murderous knife attack on German Spartacist leader Fred Ziereben from Afghan reactionaries and various foreign Maoists at Frankfurt University on 25 January. (See: SPARTACIST 1980, no. 615.) Comrade Ziereben has since been released from hospital and is now recovering from the near-fatal wounds he received. Statements have been received and/or articles printed from several sections and sympathising groups of the United Secretariat (USec), including the Swedish KAF, Chilean LCCh, German GIM, Dutch and Japanese sections. The Australian Federal Workers Party, also carried a news item in the 19 March issue of Direct Action. We reprint below a selection of these statements, including a press release from the Frankfurt Turkish People's House.

Letter from Japan

Tokyo

21 February 1980

Dear Editor,

I thought readers would be interested to know that news of the murder attempt against our comrade did reach Japan, and did reach the pages of the USec press. The following comes from a letter in the English-language Kakumet, 18 February 1980, no. 615. The article is signed Kazuko Fujimoto.

"This news just arrived from abroad in West Germany. Yesterday a shocking thing occurred. At a Frankfurt University teach-in on the Afghan problem, the German Trotskyist faction self-styled Trotskyists) was attacked by a Maqaz group, as an Islamic group, the German Nationalist Organisation of Afghan Students who used iron pipes and knives. One Turkish student was critically injured while several others received minor wounds. A local left-wing group, which has become commonplace in this country since the的学生kteki，several weeks earlier a Turkish leftist, leafleting for a University forum in Berlin, was stablised to Frankfurt. A Turkish forum of protest demo for that was held only a few days earlier, the students and the left, Maqaz and right groups combinations, and the left, a climate exclusive to Italy and Spain but has spread to Germany as well. The GIM (German section of the FI) has warned about this danger and posed the question of a resolute challenge to this."
New Sandinista jailing of leftists

On 11 February Nicaragua's Sandinista-led "Government of National Reconstruction" announced four leaders of the left-wing People's Action Movement (MAP) and its trade-union arm, Workers Front (FO), to two years of "public works" (forced labor). The convictions of Melvin Wallace, Juan Alberto Enríquez, Carlos Domingo Cuadra and Isaido Tellex followed the forced closing of the MAP/FO-linked Workers Union (El Pueblo) on 23 January. Charges were later brought against seven MAP/FO leaders, including Enríquez and Tellex, for illegal possession of arms and violations of the Public Order and Security Law carrying possible penalties of up to ten years in prison. The legal proceedings were accompanied by mass rallies organised by the Sandinista Front (FSNL) where, according to the New York Guardian (27 February), thousands shouted slogans such as "Death to ultra-fascism!" and "Death to Trotskyism!"

The arrests of the MAP/FO leaders are not isolated incidents but part of a pattern of harassment, imprisonment and slander by the FSLN against its left-wing critics. El Pueblo was first closed and its editor, Melvin Wallace, arrested within days after the FSLN columns rolled into Managua last summer. In August the "Trotskyist" Simon Bolivar Brigade, an international contingent which had joined the FSLN in the final days of the Somoza dictatorship, was forcibly expelled from the country. In October, FSLN commandantes launched a wave of jailings against the MAP/FO and the ostensibly Trotskyist LMR, charging them with responsibility for armed attacks on FSLN troops and other "counterrevolutionary" actions. The recent jailings, however, were justified by no more than government declarations that articles in El Pueblo constituted "destructive criticism" and sought "to disrupt the popular interests".

But the real "crime" committed by the MAP/FO, a pro-Albania Stalinist group, was to support and lead strikes against nationalized and private businesses and to criticise the FSLN's pro-business policies. In the interests of bankrupt Nicaraguan capitalists, the Sandinista regime has opposed all strikes, eliminated the traditional "13th month" Christmas bonus and reneged on its earlier promise to pay wages due from the period of the civil war. A series of strikes and factory occupations, led by the FO and the pro-Moscow Communist Party, was answered by charges that the CIA, working through "union pseudo-leaders" was trying to "destabilize the economy and make impossible economic reactivation".

'...despite the anti-Trotskyist tirades of FSLN leaders, the US Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has consistently supported the anti-left and anti-working-class repression in Sandinista Nicaragua. While the FSLN breaks strikes in order to demonstrate its commitment to working out a modus vivendi with Nicaragua's capitalists and non-imperialism, according to the SWP Nicaragua today is "a country in which the workers and peasants have political power".'

FSLN minister Jamie Wheelock

in US tour.

(Perspectiva Mundial, 10 March). '...The FSLN', they claim, 'has made it clear that it upholds the right to criticism [except 'destructive criticism']...it is defending the independence of the trade unions and mass organizations from the state [except that it forces them into the government-controlled union federation]. It has opposed any acts of coercion against strikes and demonstrations by workers and peasants [except that it arrests the leaders]..." (Intercontinental Press, 18 February).

Ever-so-slightly squeamish about tossing leftists in jail for writing "sec- tarian" editorials, the SWP heaved a sigh of relief when the government backed up the charges against the MAP/FO with the discovery of what FSLN leader Tomas Borge described as "more than three thousand arms to be employed in the counterrevolution". If they didn't have such "secret arsenals", the MAP/FO might be the only people in Nicaragua without guns. But the SWP openly supports these jailings, alleging, 'The Nicaraguan government has the responsibility and the right to take energetic measures of self-defense against this type of violation of the security of the revolution' (Perspectiva Mundial, 10 March).

By championing the anti-left repression unleashed by the FSLN and its capitalist partners, the pacifist-leftist SWP cheerleaders for sandinismo prove that they are not Marxists—who stand for the right of self-defense for the working masses, not bonapartist governments—not even "consistent" (bourgeois) democrats (what about the "right to bear arms"?). All genuine revolutionaries, as well as all defenders of trade-union and democratic rights, must denounce the closing of El Pueblo and the jailing of the MAP/FO leaders.

Free all left-wing prisoners in the FSLN jails!

Reprinted from Workers Vanguard no 521, 21 March 1980

Subscribe --11 issues--$3

Don't delay - get yours now!

In its six years of monthly publication Australasian Spartacist has been internationalist and proletarian to the core, addressing world events with the clarity, honesty and program unique to a fighting Marxist propaganda weapon.

You alone declared: '...Down with the Shah! Down with the mullahs! For workers revolution in Iran!!' And while others wilted and waffled over the Soviet incursion into Afghanistan we boldly raised the banner: 'Hail Red Army! Extend the gains of October to Afghanistan!'

We have sought to bring the same Trotskyist leadership and revolutionary program to the Australian workers movement. Our interventionist, hard-hitting coverage of the LaTrobe Valley power workers strike in 1977, the Redfern postal workers fight against the union-bashing Mail Network Plan, the battle against the true-breaking and craftist divisions at Fairfax are just a few examples.

The paper that holds that picket lines mean don't cross, Australasian Spartacist is also known as a steadfast defender of historic rights and fighter for the oppressed, which doesn't give an inch to feminism, the ALP and other shibboleths of the fake left. And nowhere else can you get the unvarnished truth from the workers side of the divisions—like it's the British steel strike, Nicaragua, or the shattering of Ernest Mandel's "United" Secretariat.

Australasian Spartacist sub drive quotes

Sydney: 180
Melbourne: 100

Subscribe now to Australasian Spartacist — now 12 pages, improved in format and still only $3 for 11 issues. And with each sub we are giving away free a copy of Spartacist no 27-28, the theoretical journal of the international Spartacist tendency.

Contents:
• report and document from first delegated conference of the IST, with polemic against RWP of Ceylon
• presentations on the struggle against popular-frontism
• "Tibet: Mao's Afghanistan"

Australasian Spartacist 11 issues (1 year) — $3

overseas rates:
$ surface mail — $3 for 11 issues
Airmail — $5 for 11 issues (except Europe/North America)
$10 for 11 issues (Europe/North America)
$5 Donation


NAME ___________________________
ADDRESS ___________________________
CITY STATE POSTCODE PHONE ___________________________

April 1980 3
At a specially convened national conference on 12 January the right-centrist Workers Socialist League (WSL) carried out a bureaucratic purge of a left-wing opposition, the Leninist Faction (LF). This is the most important split from the WSL since early 1978, when the Trotskyist Fraction (TF) left to fuse with the Trotskyist Fraction Group and for the Trotskyist League/Britain (SL/B). Two years ago most of these lately expelled cadres were active fighters against the Trotskyists around the Trotskyist program. The LF has its origins in the left wing of the British ostensibly Trotskyist millies — which includes more than a half dozen stagnating small groups without significant international ties, and whose largest organisation, the International Marxist Group (IMG), is obviously experiencing internal turmoil over its anti-Soviet line on Afghanistan. Indeed the hardest advocate of "Russian Troops Out!", Tariq Ali, is also campaigning for liquidating the IMG back stock and barrel into the state capitalist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of Tony Cliff. At its 16-19 February national conference, the IMG was badly divided on what attitude to take to the Trotskyist Group and for the delegates supported the Tariq Ali-led Tendency 1 in voting for immediate fusion with the Cliffites. The rest of the vote was divided between Tendency 2, which argued for a "battle to fuse with the SWP" — but not in the next few years; Tendency 3, which wanted a "temporary agreement" — while maintaining "fraz­ternal relations with the SWP"; and a "fourth grouping", known as Current 4, which idealises the American Socialist Workers Party (see Spartacist Britain no. 27-28, Winter 1979-80). At a London forum held by the LF on 8 February, Mark Hyde told an audience of 60 that a "real and not just a nominal" philistine of the British left, the Faction both the LF, "who seek the Trotskyist Road to proletarian revolution. The LF's struggle also has lessons for would-be revolutionists internationally. The final LF document solidarised with the basic thrust of Trotskyist regroupment (see "Document of the First Delegated Conference of the Is", in Spartacist no. 27-28, Winter 1979-80). The LF has also outlined a number of positions for their programmatic current. Currently, according to the LF, the organisation recruits on an increas­ingly apolitical basis with the percentage of inactive paper "members" on the clarifications which will be theLF's nine points for inevitably unstable and frenzied (both Alan Clinto and Alan Thornett have dropped out of all disciplined political activity for several months at a time in the past year and a half). Anti-Trotskyist paranoia is rampant, as the leadership strives desperately to seal off the organisation from influential Trotskyist program. Thus Thornett and company's only attempt to "reply" to the LF's political arguments is a shoddy few pages circulated at the circulation conference, full of slander and even disgraceful cob­ pretty unanswerable. The IS now acts as provocateurs in the Trotskyist movement in order to justify its existence. It plays this role as usefully as any state agency would by trying to break up any organised resistance to the reformists and Stalinists..."

Spartacist Bulletin, no series no 4, 1st January 1980

Such filthy slander will not save Thornett's parochial-workerist WSL from further internal crisis and strife, however. As the LF explicitly recognised in its final document: "Should the threats of expulsion that have been made by leading members be carried out the WSL will not wait long before it faces some other struggle (perhaps the Sverdlov Faction?), and another. The reason for this prognosis is straightforward — unstable and degenerating central must find itself repeatedly assaulted by the Bolshevik politics which it finds itself enabled to politically answer."..." — "State of the Trotskyist Programme", 1st January 1980

The road taken by the Trotskyist Fraction, and now being pursued by the LF, is the only one for members of the WSL who seek the road to proletarian revolution. The LF's struggle also has lessons for would-be revolutionists internationally. The final LF document solidarised with the basic thrust of Trotskyist regroupment (see "Document of the First Delegated Conference of the IS", in "Spartacist no. 27-28, Winter 1979-80). The LF has also outlined a number of positions for their programmatic current. Currently, according to the LF, the organisation recruits on an increas­ingly apolitical basis with the percentage of inactive paper "members" on the clarifications which will be theLF's nine points for inevitably unstable and frenzied (both Alan Clinton and Alan Thornett have dropped out of all disciplined political activity for several months at a time in the past year and a half). Anti-Trotskyist paranoia is rampant, as the leadership strives desperately to seal off the organisation from influential Trotskyist program. Thus Thornett and company's only attempt to "reply" to the LF's political arguments is a shoddy few pages circulated at the circulation conference, full of slander and even disgraceful cob­ pretty unanswerable. The IS now acts as provocateurs in the Trotskyist movement in order to justify its existence. It plays this role as usefully as any state agency would by trying to break up any organised resistance to the reformists and Stalinists..."

Spartacist Bulletin, no series no 4, 1st January 1980

Such filthy slander will not save Thornett's parochial-workerist WSL from further internal crisis and strife, however. As the LF explicitly recognised in its final document: "Should the threats of expulsion that have been made by leading members be carried out the WSL will not wait long before it faces some other struggle (perhaps the Sverdlov Faction?), and another. The reason for this prognosis is straightforward — unstable and degenerating central must find itself repeatedly assaulted by the Bolshevik politics which it finds itself enabled to politically answer."..." — "State of the Trotskyist Programme", 1st January 1980

The road taken by the Trotskyist Fraction, and now being pursued by the LF, is the only one for members of the WSL who seek the road to proletarian revolution. The LF's struggle also has lessons for would-be revolutionists internationally. The final LF document solidarised with the basic thrust of Trotskyist regroupment (see "Document of the First Delegated Conference of the IS", in "Spartacist no. 27-28, Winter 1979-80). The LF has also outlined a number of positions for their programmatic current. Currently, according to the LF, the organisation recruits on an increas­ingly apolitical basis with the percentage of inactive paper "members" on the clarifications which will be theLF's nine points for inevitably unstable and frenzied (both Alan Clinton and Alan Thornett have dropped out of all disciplined political activity for several months at a time in the past year and a half). Anti-Trotskyist paranoia is rampant, as the leadership strives desperately to seal off the organisation from influential Trotskyist program. Thus Thornett and company's only attempt to "reply" to the LF's political arguments is a shoddy few pages circulated at the circulation conference, full of slander and even disgraceful cob­ pretty unanswerable. The IS now acts as provocateurs in the Trotskyist movement in order to justify its existence. It plays this role as usefully as any state agency would by trying to break up any organised resistance to the reformists and Stalinists..."
Gladioli and anti-communism

Feminists trivialise IWD, women's oppression

Spartacist League contingent on International Women's Day, Melbourne.

One week before IWD, about 250 women marched through Sydney chanting the now familiar banal slogan of the Revolutionary Women's Movement internationally: ""“Carry a glad!” urged a placard. Reclaim the Night marches from Barry Humphries and Dame Edna Everage and carry it to show you're glad to be a woman. Thus the official theme of International Women's Day, 1980, feminist-style, in Sydney.

The fine weather contributed to the fairground atmosphere as the crowd of nearly 2000, including many feminists making their once-a-year cameo appearance in the struggle for women's liberation, assembled. There was no shortage of strange sights: two women whizzed along chanting "Women on roller skates will never be defeated!"; a knight of olden marched alongside a three-headed symbol of something or other; and at the end of a meandering march up one street and down another, the City Councillor drove up the Hyde Park to the strains of an off-key rock band which had decided to leave out its male personnel and go for the girls. That it might have been "politically inappropriate" for him to have shown up!

But where is this latter trivia was the question of women's oppression or the fight for women's liberation? The relatively small Melbourne IWD march was in comparison a dull affair, but it too was a parody of the struggle for women's emancipation. Who would have believed that International Women's Day was founded, under the aegis of the Second International, as a socialist holiday, a day of struggle of women and men workers? Before the demonstration started in Melbourne, a banner was passed by the crowd assembled at the Bourke Street Mall excluding men from "intervening in the day's activities. Then just to ensure that the women who marched were politically of the right persuasion too, the IWU Executive circulated a leaflet limiting participants on the march to the aims of the United Nations "Decade for Women"!

The pre-march rally in Sydney's Town Hall Square, march organiser Pat O'Shane spoke to objections to "gay pride" rallies carried by men which had "no relation to women's rights", and added that "IWD is a day when women assert their demands for women's rights". Though O'Shane didn't have a lot of encouragement to state openly the organisation she was attacking, it was clear her attack was aimed at the SL contingent.

But the banners and placards we had carried had every relation to women's rights. The women's demands from free abortion on demand and free 24-hour child care facilities to our women's liberation through socialist revolution, our contingent focused in particular on the horrific oppression of women in Afghanistan and Iran. To parochialists like O'Shane whose vision was limited to the shores of this South Pacific island, Afghanistan may not seem to have anything, but in truth the current crisis is there is probably the first instance of a shooting war in modern history which was killed specifically by the question of women's liberation. And in this conflict reminiscent of the Red Army, because a victory for the mullahed rebels would mean a victory for the bride price, for the veil, for pandeh (segregation within the home) and the customs of levirate, whereby a woman whose husband dies becomes the property of her husband's brother. In short, victory for the Islamic bandits means the continued enslavement of women.

A glance at Khomeini's Iran next door shows the decisive centrality of the woman question there as well. Here the holy ayatollahs of Qom says that it is a great honour for a girl to get her first menstrual period in her husband's home. And it is still vital to have blood-stained sheets to show the morning after a wudding, too.

Yet there are no demonstrations by feminists or the fake-left in defence of Afghan or Iranian women. Both the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the International Socialists (IS) uncritically hailed Khomeini's rise to power. The SWP still considers the Iranian revolution to be a step forward and calls the "Women's liberation". As for the mullahs in Afghanistan, no wonder then that both groups on IWD said nothing about women's oppression in these countries but only carried minimal slogans calling for abortion rights and the amendment of the Qur'an.

In Sydney a score or so of radical men tried to provoke the SL contingent, saying that "Afghanistan had nothing to do with women". Letting out a series of whoops and chanting "That's the Spurs, not the state, women must decide their fate", these unsavoury anti-communists systematically — but unsuccessfully — tried to force us out of the march. Likewise in Melbourne, when an SL speaker addressed the rally at the end of the demonstration on the subject of women's oppression in Islamic societies, a lot of lesbian-feminists using a bullhorn started chanting "Boring! Boring!" in a futile effort to drown us out. What cynical, self-contented, parochial contempt for the lives of women in Iran and Afghanistan! What price "sisterhood" now? When it comes down to it, these women care only for themselves.

But a woman who had lived in Central Asia and who spoke after the SL confirmed the Spartacist position on the degree of oppression suffered by women in these countries. She described how she had been with her family for nearly 20 years old sold in exchange for cattle and the tremendous gains which the women of the Soviet East had made in comparison. Shame-faced, one feminist even tried to explain that they had attempted to shunt women SL: "because of our opposition to an "independent women's movement" and feminism.

But in reply another SL comrade pointed out that for all the feminists' talk of "autonomy", this demonstrating they were politically tied to that imperialist den of thieves, the United Nations. Moreover, in the audience there was no room for so-called "independence". The Spartacist League, she said, was proud to be partisan in that struggle — for the Red Army and against Islamic reaction.

Women's oppression is a class question. In Iran and Afghanistan, the struggle for liberation is not a question of who does the dishes but a life or death issue. Only a victorious proletarian revolution in those countries can establish women's democratic right even to be considered a human being. But in doing so it will also open the road to the eradication of all oppression facing women.

An SL supporter, Linda Menzie, who refused to cross Fairfax printers' picket lines during their recent strikes, also addressed the question of women's oppression and the class struggle at the IWD Sydney Town Hall rally:

"Feminism doesn't take a class line ... It leads to walking through picket lines like Anne Roberts, prominent feminist and CPA supporter who went through the [Fairfax] lines every day, as did Anne Summers during the 1976 strike. Presumably because they didn't see either strike as an issue for women."

Her scrapping exposed, Roberts later approached Menzie and talked with others like asked for advice on what she should have done during the strike! But Roberts knew full well what she was doing and during the strike was explicitly told in Menzie's presence that crossing the picket line was a class separatist.

Women's liberation can only come through the smashing of the capitalist system so that the nuclear family, which chains many women to a daily grind of domestic labour and is the material basis of women's oppression, can be replaced with the socialisation of household work. The only force capable of accomplishing this task though is the working class, led by its revolutionary party: the only program adequate to the task is that of socialist revolution. Feminists of every hue have rejected that program, but in rejecting it they also reject the only road to women's complete emancipation.
The bourgeois media have virtually blotted out the national strike of 150,000 British steel workers, but they have plenty to say about Afghanistan. Occasionally a piece of truth slips out, as in the headline of a report in Newsweek (24 March): "Rebels on the Run!" But most of it consists of the endless romantic descriptions of blatant "freedom fighters" holding out against overwhelming odds; the fanciful horror stories of Russian atrocities and inflated figures of Russian deaths, which all turn out to emanate from "rebel sources"; the patriotic numbskull of the notorious Murdoch yellow press on the Olympic boycott ("no medals for Kerala," etc.).

The imperialist war propaganda machine has not lurched into gear because it is overly concerned about the prospect of losing its lucrative propaganda program or the reduction of the bride price of Russian arms. Yet even the "news" that it aspires to emulate the "debate" that "exists among the class-conscious" is a reversion to the days of bourgeois democracy's "debate" that "exists among the class-conscious". The news of the Red Army intervention is to bury the Russian revolution forever.

In the 1980s, it was the hegemonic force in the international capitalist camp; today it has slipped to the rank of a "lesser" power, no different in manna from the capitalist wars of 1812. The prospect of land reform, literacy programmes or the reduction of the bride price of Russian arms is no more likely to happen than a revolution in Afghanistan.

But with varying degrees of apology, the bulk of the Australian left and workers movement has come out for the "anti-American" war. The Australian left, despite the absence of much patriotic, anti-Soviet pressure in the country. That the social democratic ALP could do so is no surprise: ever since Lenin and the International Socialists (IS) didn't mention is that the battle against the Afghan war drive is a bloc with those elements of the ruling class who differ with the degree of heat Carter is currently putting into the cold war, a war which has persisted at varying temperatures ever since October 1917. Under the guise of "fighting Fraser's war drive" or advocating "peace" and "detente", they prepare the way for future patriotic mobilisations of the workers behind a bosses' war.

The SWP's "Afghan Revolution"

The Communist Party (CPA) echoes Carter/Fraser's call for "Soviet troops out" because it aspires to emulate the "success" of the Italian Communist Party's "historic compromise" with the Vatican and NATO — or failing that, at least to ingratiate itself with Hayden's ALP. The Socialist Workers Party (SWP), on the other hand, defends the Red Army intervention — in the name of its "realistic" Afghan revolution. SWP leader Jim McIlroy even denounces the NCC as "bourgeois" and its "pro-imperialist" "third camp".

Aside from the open allies of Fraser, however, the overwhelming drive of the reformist left — both those ostensibly for "Soviet arms: Trotskyists defend the USSR and say no to disarmament fraud."
United fronts and rotten blocs

At a Spartacist League (SL) forum on Australian Capitalism, Sydney on 22 February, Burstall defended the AIC as a "united front" against imperialism, quoting Trotsky on the need for united front action against Hitler by the mass German workers organisations in the early 1930s. But the communist tactic of the united front requires that the class line is drawn, not indistinctly. The Trotskyists are an Avant-garde Alliance, a Spartacist League, formed by the AIC and dominated by Paul White, a key figure in the Trotskyist Party in Melbourne. The SL proposed that a united anti-Fraser bloc be formed against imperialism and the class line. As Trotsky wrote in "The Unity of the International Workers' Movement" (Workers Vanguard, 17 January 1920), "in unity, in the struggle against imperialism, against capitalism, against the bourgeoisie, against the exploiters. This is the unity of the proletariat, which is none other than the unity of the communist party, the unity of the inner party, the unity of the party and the Federation, the unity of the party and the united front in the government, the unity of the party and the trade unions, the unity of the party and the workers, the unity of the party and the soldiers, the unity of the party and the people.

But just what is that war drive directed against? It is absurd to pretend to be fighting Carter/Fraser. The purpose of the meeting was to mark the 10th anniversary of the AIC's first anti-Fraser protest and to rally the AIC's key activists who claimed to stand against imperialism, quoting Trotsky in "The Unity of the International Workers' Movement" (Workers Vanguard, 17 January 1920), "in unity, in the struggle against imperialism, against capitalism, against the bourgeoisie, against the exploiters. This is the unity of the proletariat, which is none other than the unity of the communist party, the unity of the inner party, the unity of the party and the Federation, the unity of the party and the trade unions, the unity of the party and the workers, the unity of the party and the soldiers, the unity of the party and the people.

For those pro-Moscow Stalinists who take seriously their political allegiance to the Moscow-line, the phrase "anti-Fraser" is not to be understood in the same meaning as that of the Trotskyists. For the Trotskyists, the class line is drawn clearly, not indistinctly. The class line is a pale imitation of the CPA, an obstacle to the building of a united front.

United fronts require that the class line is drawn, not indistinctly. The Trotskyists are an Avant-garde Alliance, a Spartacist League, formed by the AIC and dominated by Paul White, a key figure in the Trotskyist Party in Melbourne. The SL proposed that a united anti-Fraser bloc be formed against imperialism and the class line. As Trotsky wrote in "The Unity of the International Workers' Movement" (Workers Vanguard, 17 January 1920), "in unity, in the struggle against imperialism, against capitalism, against the bourgeoisie, against the exploiters. This is the unity of the proletariat, which is none other than the unity of the communist party, the unity of the inner party, the unity of the party and the Federation, the unity of the party and the trade unions, the unity of the party and the workers, the unity of the party and the soldiers, the unity of the party and the people.

But just what is that war drive directed against? It is absurd to pretend to be fighting Carter/Fraser. The purpose of the meeting was to mark the 10th anniversary of the AIC's first anti-Fraser protest and to rally the AIC's key activists who claimed to stand against imperialism, quoting Trotsky in "The Unity of the International Workers' Movement" (Workers Vanguard, 17 January 1920), "in unity, in the struggle against imperialism, against capitalism, against the bourgeoisie, against the exploiters. This is the unity of the proletariat, which is none other than the unity of the communist party, the unity of the inner party, the unity of the party and the Federation, the unity of the party and the trade unions, the unity of the party and the workers, the unity of the party and the soldiers, the unity of the party and the people.

For those pro-Moscow Stalinists who take seriously their political allegiance to the Moscow-line, the phrase "anti-Fraser" is not to be understood in the same meaning as that of the Trotskyists. For the Trotskyists, the class line is drawn clearly, not indistinctly. The class line is a pale imitation of the CPA, an obstacle to the building of a united front.
Britain...

Continued from page 1

The Trades Union Congress (TUC) throughout the strike, the Yorkshire miners leader Arthur Scargill and Communist Party (CP) officials in the West Midlands. The TUC found that the Sheffield steel workers had done nothing to combat the strike, but they had been determined to hold

...their line and the TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

Tariq Ali shouts his mouth off.

No debate with the Labour leadership. There was one of the leaders of the Sheffield steel workers as they were thrown out of the steel strike by the TUC, and the Sheffield pickets were told to return to work. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

Tariq Ali shouts his mouth off.

No debate with the Labour leadership. There was one of the leaders of the Sheffield steel workers as they were thrown out of the steel strike by the TUC, and the Sheffield pickets were told to return to work. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. 

The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

4 March: "What do we want? Twenty percent! How do we get it? General Strike!" chant 2000 steel workers as they marched through the streets of Sheffield, Yorkshire after a strike rally. Storming and occupying the local British Steel Corporation (BSC) headquarters in South Yorkshire, they called for a general strike. But in Sheffield the same day 400 engineering stewards voted to instruct their members not to cross picket lines. Soon 8000 engineering workers in 16 plants are out, with many joining the picketing. Finally the strike is spreading!

12 March: The South Yorkshire strike committee has thrown up a challenge to the Sheffield steel workers as they were thrown out of the steel strike by the TUC, and the Sheffield pickets were told to return to work. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

4 March: "What do we want? Twenty percent! How do we get it? General Strike!" chant 2000 steel workers as they marched through the streets of Sheffield, Yorkshire after a strike rally. Storming and occupying the local British Steel Corporation (BSC) headquarters in South Yorkshire, they called for a general strike. But in Sheffield the same day 400 engineering stewards voted to instruct their members not to cross picket lines. Soon 8000 engineering workers in 16 plants are out, with many joining the picketing. Finally the strike is spreading!

12 March: The South Yorkshire strike committee has thrown up a challenge to the Sheffield steel workers as they were thrown out of the steel strike by the TUC, and the Sheffield pickets were told to return to work. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

Tariq Ali shouts his mouth off.

No debate with the Labour leadership. There was one of the leaders of the Sheffield steel workers as they were thrown out of the steel strike by the TUC, and the Sheffield pickets were told to return to work. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

Tariq Ali shouts his mouth off.

No debate with the Labour leadership. There was one of the leaders of the Sheffield steel workers as they were thrown out of the steel strike by the TUC, and the Sheffield pickets were told to return to work. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

Tariq Ali shouts his mouth off.

No debate with the Labour leadership. There was one of the leaders of the Sheffield steel workers as they were thrown out of the steel strike by the TUC, and the Sheffield pickets were told to return to work. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

Tariq Ali shouts his mouth off.

No debate with the Labour leadership. There was one of the leaders of the Sheffield steel workers as they were thrown out of the steel strike by the TUC, and the Sheffield pickets were told to return to work. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

Tariq Ali shouts his mouth off.

No debate with the Labour leadership. There was one of the leaders of the Sheffield steel workers as they were thrown out of the steel strike by the TUC, and the Sheffield pickets were told to return to work. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

Tariq Ali shouts his mouth off.

No debate with the Labour leadership. There was one of the leaders of the Sheffield steel workers as they were thrown out of the steel strike by the TUC, and the Sheffield pickets were told to return to work. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.

Tariq Ali shouts his mouth off.

No debate with the Labour leadership. There was one of the leaders of the Sheffield steel workers as they were thrown out of the steel strike by the TUC, and the Sheffield pickets were told to return to work. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet. The TUC’s report clearly showed that the union leaders are far from ready to give in yet.
Postal militant breaks with dead-end rank and filism

Jenny Murray
20 March 1980

Redfern...

"campaign" which centred on a log of claims for the IMSOs! For these two, support to Hawkins' sellouts is par for the course.

At the same time, elections to the Mail Branch executive were taking place, contested by several tickets differing sharply on which workers, PSA or AP, should line up with. Boland and Carey’s “United Postal Action Team” of Hawkins/Battese leanhats, which deserved no support from postal militants, won on a program of minimal shop floor reforms well within the framework of the MNP. They celebrated their “victory” with a party... after the bourgeois IMSOs and FME “meetings” accepted the surrender.

The “Rank and File Group” also issued no call to smash the MNP, either at the meetings or in the elections. Some members stood on a ticket for shop floor delegate positions. Their election policy had called for “support for a system which stops work and road to rule campaigns: tactics which maximise the effect of our support, minimise the sacrifice of members” to defend conditions. In fact, such tactics have virtually no effect on the bosses, merely do by the board in the longest run only way permanent gains will be made by workers will be by building a workers movement across the board, not to the advantage of capitalism.

A bitter brief statement of the positions I now hold and if in the future I run for a position in this union it will be on this basis that I ask for support.

Jenny Murray
20 March 1980

from the ISTC is nothing but an admission of defeat”.

27 March: Sensing a sellout in the strike, workers are angry and frustrated. The capitalists show no sign of halting their offensive, however. Michael Heseltine, the executive of British Leyland, announces that he is imposing a closure at Kidderminster, with complete with strings — on the work force. This is too much even for the miners, the rest of the dockers, the postal militants, the TWU, and for anything worthwhile for the trade union movement.

Edwardes’ response? To declare that anything workers vote April will be deemed to have accepted the 5 percent, whereas those who don’t will be considered to have broken their contracts with the firm. In addition he is offering 200 pounds (200) to anyone who shows up for work.

These massive assaults on the working class of Britain can be beaten back. But only through all-out militant strike action. The future of the union movement in the country could well depend on the outcome of the steel battle — either defeat and an open door for ever deeper attacks, or victory which could open up a perspective for a struggle for proletarian power from the steel workers to the miners, the rest of the dockers and the car workers. Demand that the TUC issue a strike call and hold a national strike of all TUC unions and other union strivers! Forge a revolutionary leadership, a communist, Lenzin-Trotskist vanguard party, to lead the working class to power!

Redfern...

"campaign" which centred on a log of claims for the IMSOs! For these two, support to Hawkins’ sellouts is par for the course.

At the same time, elections to the Mail Branch executive were taking place, contested by several tickets differing sharply on which workers, PSA or AP, should line up with. Boland and Carey’s “United Postal Action Team” of Hawkins/Battese leanhats, which deserved no support from postal militants, won on a program of minimal shop floor reforms well within the framework of the MNP. They celebrated their “victory” with a party... after the bourgeois IMSOs and FME “meetings” accepted the surrender.

The “Rank and File Group” also issued no call to smash the MNP, either at the meetings or in the elections. Some members stood on a ticket for shop floor delegate positions. Their election policy had called for “support for a system which stops work and road to rule campaigns: tactics which maximise the effect of our support, minimise the sacrifice of members” to defend conditions. In fact, such tactics have virtually no effect on the bosses, merely do by the board in the longest run only way permanent gains will be made by workers will be by building a workers movement across the board, not to the advantage of capitalism.

A bitter brief statement of the positions I now hold and if in the future I run for a position in this union it will be on this basis that I ask for support.

Jenny Murray
20 March 1980

Redfern...

"campaign" which centred on a log of claims for the IMSOs! For these two, support to Hawkins’ sellouts is par for the course.

At the same time, elections to the Mail Branch executive were taking place, contested by several tickets differing sharply on which workers, PSA or AP, should line up with. Boland and Carey’s “United Postal Action Team” of Hawkins/Battese leanhats, which deserved no support from postal militants, won on a program of minimal shop floor reforms well within the framework of the MNP. They celebrated their “victory” with a party... after the bourgeois IMSOs and FME “meetings” accepted the surrender.

The “Rank and File Group” also issued no call to smash the MNP, either at the meetings or in the elections. Some members stood on a ticket for shop floor delegate positions. Their election policy had called for “support for a system which stops work and road to rule campaigns: tactics which maximise the effect of our support, minimise the sacrifice of members” to defend conditions. In fact, such tactics have virtually no effect on the bosses, merely do by the board in the longest run only way permanent gains will be made by workers will be by building a workers movement across the board, not to the advantage of capitalism.

A bitter brief statement of the positions I now hold and if in the future I run for a position in this union it will be on this basis that I ask for support.

Jenny Murray
20 March 1980

Redfern...

"campaign" which centred on a log of claims for the IMSOs! For these two, support to Hawkins’ sellouts is par for the course.

At the same time, elections to the Mail Branch executive were taking place, contested by several tickets differing sharply on which workers, PSA or AP, should line up with. Boland and Carey’s “United Postal Action Team” of Hawkins/Battese leanhats, which deserved no support from postal militants, won on a program of minimal shop floor reforms well within the framework of the MNP. They celebrated their “victory” with a party... after the bourgeois IMSOs and FME “meetings” accepted the surrender.

The “Rank and File Group” also issued no call to smash the MNP, either at the meetings or in the elections. Some members stood on a ticket for shop floor delegate positions. Their election policy had called for “support for a system which stops work and road to rule campaigns: tactics which maximise the effect of our support, minimise the sacrifice of members” to defend conditions. In fact, such tactics have virtually no effect on the bosses, merely do by the board in the longest run only way permanent gains will be made by workers will be by building a workers movement across the board, not to the advantage of capitalism.

A bitter brief statement of the positions I now hold and if in the future I run for a position in this union it will be on this basis that I ask for support.

Jenny Murray
20 March 1980

Redfern...

"campaign" which centred on a log of claims for the IMSOs! For these two, support to Hawkins’ sellouts is par for the course.

At the same time, elections to the Mail Branch executive were taking place, contested by several tickets differing sharply on which workers, PSA or AP, should line up with. Boland and Carey’s “United Postal Action Team” of Hawkins/Battese leanhats, which deserved no support from postal militants, won on a program of minimal shop floor reforms well within the framework of the MNP. They celebrated their “victory” with a party... after the bourgeois IMSOs and FME “meetings” accepted the surrender.

The “Rank and File Group” also issued no call to smash the MNP, either at the meetings or in the elections. Some members stood on a ticket for shop floor delegate positions. Their election policy had called for “support for a system which stops work and road to rule campaigns: tactics which maximise the effect of our support, minimise the sacrifice of members” to defend conditions. In fact, such tactics have virtually no effect on the bosses, merely do by the board in the longest run only way permanent gains will be made by workers will be by building a workers movement across the board, not to the advantage of capitalism.

A bitter brief statement of the positions I now hold and if in the future I run for a position in this union it will be on this basis that I ask for support.

Jenny Murray
20 March 1980

Redfern...

"campaign" which centred on a log of claims for the IMSOs! For these two, support to Hawkins’ sellouts is par for the course.

At the same time, elections to the Mail Branch executive were taking place, contested by several tickets differing sharply on which workers, PSA or AP, should line up with. Boland and Carey’s “United Postal Action Team” of Hawkins/Battese leanhats, which deserved no support from postal militants, won on a program of minimal shop floor reforms well within the framework of the MNP. They celebrated their “victory” with a party... after the bourgeois IMSOs and FME “meetings” accepted the surrender.

The “Rank and File Group” also issued no call to smash the MNP, either at the meetings or in the elections. Some members stood on a ticket for shop floor delegate positions. Their election policy had called for “support for a system which stops work and road to rule campaigns: tactics which maximise the effect of our support, minimise the sacrifice of members” to defend conditions. In fact, such tactics have virtually no effect on the bosses, merely do by the board in the longest run only way permanent gains will be made by workers will be by building a workers movement across the board, not to the advantage of capitalism.

A bitter brief statement of the positions I now hold and if in the future I run for a position in this union it will be on this basis that I ask for support.

Jenny Murray
20 March 1980

Redfern...

"campaign" which centred on a log of claims for the IMSOs! For these two, support to Hawkins’ sellouts is par for the course.

At the same time, elections to the Mail Branch executive were taking place, contested by several tickets differing sharply on which workers, PSA or AP, should line up with. Boland and Carey’s “United Postal Action Team” of Hawkins/Battese leanhats, which deserved no support from postal militants, won on a program of minimal shop floor reforms well within the framework of the MNP. They celebrated their “victory” with a party... after the bourgeois IMSOs and FME “meetings” accepted the surrender.

The “Rank and File Group” also issued no call to smash the MNP, either at the meetings or in the elections. Some members stood on a ticket for shop floor delegate positions. Their election policy had called for “support for a system which stops work and road to rule campaigns: tactics which maximise the effect of our support, minimise the sacrifice of members” to defend conditions. In fact, such tactics have virtually no effect on the bosses, merely do by the board in the longest run only way permanent gains will be made by workers will be by building a workers movement across the board, not to the advantage of capitalism.

A bitter brief statement of the positions I now hold and if in the future I run for a position in this union it will be on this basis that I ask for support.

Jenny Murray
20 March 1980
Rhodesia...

Continued from page 1

Nothing could illustrate more graphically our pre-election consideration of Mugabe and Nkomo as "aspiring black bourgeois bonapartists who, in power, would quickly reveal themselves as vicious enemies of the working masses" (Australian Spartacist no. 71, February/March 1980). With the "Marxist" mask now ripped away, the true face of Mugabe's neo-colonialism is revealed. The capitalistic property and stability is plain for all to see.

On every question the ZANU boss has gone out of his way to reassure world imperialism and the Rhodesian white settlers that he has no "socialist" designs up his sleeve. "Those people who talk about nationalising or seizing property have not read us correctly. We will proceed to bring changes but in a realistic manner," he proclaimed in the hour of his victory (Sydney Morning Herald, 5 March). The character of his "Marxism" is revealed by the fact that on the key question of land reform, Mugabe has appointed as Minister of Agriculture none other than Nkomo as "Marxist", retaining the white minority he has no socialist designs up his sleeve.

In the immediate post-World War II period, the black workers paralysed Rhodesian industry — once in the 1945 railway strike and again in the 1948 general strike. Now earning the wages of whites, these workers are not going to be fobbed off with a handful of empty promises. What Mugabe fears most of all is a repetition of the 1945-46 events — hence the speed with which he moved to curb the recent strike wave.

On the other hand, the 230,000 armed white settlers who stuck out the war are not going to suddenly, and without a struggle, relinquish their land, their servants and their lifestyle just for the sake of imperial realpolitik. The widespread fears of a white-led coup following the elections could easily materialise, although for the time being whites still have a "wait-and-see" attitude. Within the black guerrilla camp, there remains as well the tribal enmity between Nkomo's Matabeleland and the Mashona followers of Mugabe who could lead to the sort of civil war that erupted into tribal war in Angola in 1975. And with the British imperial forces still directly involved in Rhodesia, Mugabe's blessing — in their attempt to restabilise a stable neo-colonial state — is needed to keep the fascistic army in check.

In the face of a white-led coup attempt, Mugabe would stand for the military victory of the black nationalist forces. We want to see the blood-drenched racialists crushed, but not one iota of political support to the proven traitors Mugabe and Nkomo. Unlike these petty-bourgeois malcontents we say, get off the bandwagon,-called the July 1976 Soweto uprising and the Pretoria government fears acutely a repetition of that event. In the wake of the 1976 Soweto uprising and the protests which followed the torture-killing of black nationalist leader Steve Biko in autumn 1977, the Pretoria government feared a repeat of the Durban events on a larger, better organised and more politically conscious level. And with white nationalism buoyed by sustained support for the Reagan government in Rhodesia, the apartheid rulers are desperately trying to create a black labour aristocracy, of 500,000 black labour bureaucrats, and thus control black militancy. The various "liberalisation" proposals advanced by the government-estabished Wiesehahn and Co-reform committees have as their purpose the creation of an economically and politically privileged caste among urban blacks analogous to the bantustan bureaucracy (see Workers Vanguard no 248, 25 January 1980).

Mugabe's ZANU was able to achieve its current position in part because the white settler caste in Rhodesia, massively outnumbered 20 to 1 by blacks, was too weak and brittle to hold on to political power. Always precariously placed at the very top of Rhodesian society, the imperialists knew that this stratum could be removed from a position of political dominance without fundamentally altering the capitalist character of the economy. On the other hand, the black nationalist revolutionaries blacks governmental power while preserving intact capitalist property relations is not open to the imperialists of South Africa. For here the system of apartheid rule is inextricably bound up with an economic infrastructure of super-exploitation and totally militarised mass society, with 200,000 black military whites (a population of 23 million) will not be toppled by bastuistan revolts and guerrilla attacks across the veld. It is the black proletariat and their more far-sighted leaders who will have to come to power.

This is the moment for the black students to move. The youth of Africa are demanding their liberation. The people must be taught that revolution can lead the oppressed masses to liberation.

Letter from APTU militant

Steve Biko in autumn 1977, the Pretoria government feared a repeat of the Durban events on a larger, better organised and more politically conscious level. And with white nationalism buoyed by sustained support for the Reagan government in Rhodesia, the apartheid rulers are desperately trying to create a black labour aristocracy, of 500,000 black labour bureaucrats, and thus control black militancy. The various "liberalisation" proposals advanced by the government-estabished Wiesehahn and Co-reform committees have as their purpose the creation of an economically and politically privileged caste among urban blacks analogous to the bantustan bureaucracy (see Workers Vanguard no 248, 25 January 1980).

Mugabe's ZANU was able to achieve its current position in part because the white settler caste in Rhodesia, massively outnumbered 20 to 1 by blacks, was too weak and brittle to hold on to political power. Always precariously placed at the very top of Rhodesian society, the imperialists knew that this stratum could be removed from a position of political dominance without fundamentally altering the capitalist character of the economy. On the other hand, the black nationalist revolutionaries blacks governmental power while preserving intact capitalist property relations is not open to the imperialists of South Africa. For here the system of apartheid rule is inextricably bound up with an economic infrastructure of super-exploitation and totally militarised mass society, with 200,000 black military whites (a population of 23 million) will not be toppled by bastuistan revolts and guerrilla attacks across the veld. It is the black proletariat and their more far-sighted leaders who will have to come to power.

This is the moment for the black students to move. The youth of Africa are demanding their liberation. The people must be taught that revolution can lead the oppressed masses to liberation.

Sydney Spartacist

have you moved?

If you want to keep receiving Australasian Spartacist please let us know about your moves before you move. Send your new and old address to:

Spartacist Publications,
GPO Box 3473,
Agents of the US Secret Service, Jimmy Carter's personal palace guard, invaded the floor of a national union convention last July and dragged off screaming an elected woman delegate, Jane Margolis. She was taken to a back room where she was handcuffed, interrogated, threatened with arrest and held incom­municated while the convention proceeded. This outrage was more than an unprecedented attack on the democratic rights of all delegates and members of the million strong Communication Workers of America (CWA), the union of US telephone workers. It was an attack on the entire labour movement. Geopolitical-like attempt to silence this well-known militant and union leader's criticism of the anti-union “Human Rights” president when he appeared at the convention that day.

Carter's Secret Service thugs thought they could get away with it, making intimidation and suppression of political dissent and criticism easier next time. But they underestimated Jane Margolis and misjudged the temper of the labour movement. Margolis has a long history as a militant labour leader. Currently a steward and Executive Board member of CWA Local 9415, the San Francisco branch union, she has also served on the Executive Board of CWA Local 9410 in Oakland, California. She has been a leader of the Militant Action Caucus (MAC), a class-struggle opposition grouping in the CWA, for seven years, and was the second CWA national convention where she served as an elected delegate. Immediately after she was seized by Secret Service agents, over seven hundred phone workers signed telegrams threatening with arrest and held incom­municated while the assault on Margolis was no isolated incident. This outrage was more than an unprecedented attack on the democratic rights of all delegates and members of the union movement. Margolis has a long history as a militant labour leader. Currently a steward and Executive Board member of CWA Local 9415, the San Francisco branch union, she has also served on the Executive Board of CWA Local 9410 in Oakland, California. She has been a leader of the Militant Action Caucus (MAC), a class-struggle opposition grouping in the CWA, for seven years, and was the second CWA national convention where she served as an elected delegate. Immediately after she was seized by Secret Service agents, over seven hundred phone workers signed telegrams threatening with arrest and held incom­municated while the assault on Margolis was no isolated incident. This outrage was more than an unprecedented attack on the democratic rights of all delegates and members of the union movement. Margolis has a long history as a militant labour leader. Currently a steward and Executive Board member of CWA Local 9415, the San Francisco branch union, she has also served on the Executive Board of CWA Local 9410 in Oakland, California. She has been a leader of the Militant Action Caucus (MAC), a class-struggle opposition grouping in the CWA, for seven years, and was the second CWA national convention where she served as an elected delegate. Immediately after she was seized by Secret Service agents, over seven hundred phone workers signed telegrams threatening with arrest and held incom­municated while the assault on Margolis was no isolated incident. This outrage was more than an unprecedented attack on the democratic rights of all delegates and members of the union movement. Margolis has a long history as a militant labour leader. Currently a steward and Executive Board member of CWA Local 9415, the San Francisco branch union, she has also served on the Executive Board of CWA Local 9410 in Oakland, California. She has been a leader of the Militant Action Caucus (MAC), a class-struggle opposition grouping in the CWA, for seven years, and was the second CWA national convention where she served as an elected delegate. Immediately after she was seized by Secret Service agents, over seven hundred phone workers signed telegrams threatening with arrest and held incom­municated while the assault on Margolis was no isolated incident. This outrage was more than an unprecedented attack on the democratic rights of all delegates and members of the union movement.

But they underestimated Jane Margolis and misjudged the temper of the labour movement. Margolis has a long history as a militant labour leader. Currently a steward and Executive Board member of CWA Local 9415, the San Francisco branch union, she has also served on the Executive Board of CWA Local 9410 in Oakland, California. She has been a leader of the Militant Action Caucus (MAC), a class-struggle opposition grouping in the CWA, for seven years, and was the second CWA national convention where she served as an elected delegate. Immediately after she was seized by Secret Service agents, over seven hundred phone workers signed telegrams threatening with arrest and held incom­municated while the assault on Margolis was no isolated incident. This outrage was more than an unprecedented attack on the democratic rights of all delegates and members of the union movement.

Aside from its unequalled brazenness, the assault on Margolis was no isolated incident. Only a few weeks after the CWA convention the Secret Service mobilised to forcibly prevent members of the Inter­national Association of Machinists (a US metal workers union) from confronting Carter over his energy policies. And state intervention into organised labour to force workers' militancy has a long and bitter history, reaching back in the US to the 19th century frame-up executions of the "Molly Maguires", Pennsylvania coal mining militants, by the same notorious strikebreaking Pinkerton agency that also founded the Secret Service. Australian workers are all too familiar with such attacks by the bosses' state, from Billy Hughes' deportation of union leaders in the 1920s right through to the jailing of Clarrie O'Brien and Fraser's anti-union legal arsenal.

After Watergate, the voices of liberal­ists cried for "reform" in capitalist social­ist service — to keep never to get rid of, of course. The resulting cosmetic "restraints" on the CIA and FBI, the better-known cousins of the Secret Service, have already proved a disastrous deception. Under the impact of the Afghanistan and Iran crises Carter has introduced legislation not only freeing the spy agencies from previous minimal restraints, but for the first time legally shielding the scum who staff these agencies from exposure (just as Fraser has done for ASIO).

UCASSH needs cash

The Margolis case takes on added importance in the context of these calls to return to the days of the McCarthy era. And it forms a sharp contrast to the rose­coloured reformism of the US Social­ist Workers Party (SWP), whose "Social­ist Watersuit" against political police harassment is grounded in liberal wishful­fulness toward the institutions of bourgeois authority. Only months after their own exposure of massive Secret Service spying (eg tapping and photo­graphing an entire convention of the SWP's youth group! — Militant, 4 June 1976), the SWP's 1976 candidate in the presidential elections, Peter Camejo, was demanding Secret Service protection. Outraged members of CWA Locals 9410 and 9415 have formed the Union Committee Against Secret Service Harassment (UCASSH) to support the

UCASSH has already generated significant support and numerous en­dorsements from CWA locals and other unions throughout the country and from many prominent individuals committed to the defence of democratic rights. One official of the United Electrical Workers union, in endorsing the UCASSH campaign, said that the Secret Service's ham-fisted repression brought to mind the 1950s McCarthyite anti­labour witchhunts. Executive Board members of Teamsters Local 9 in the San Francisco/Oakland area told UCASSH supporters they were not surprised; their own local union is currently suing the FBI for illegal breaking and entry!

This is no ordinary lawsuit: the inde­pendence of labour from coercive state control is at issue. But where does a phone worker get the money to sue the government? The federal government can mobilise enormous resources, in­cluding legions of Justice Department lawyers paid for at taxpayers' expense. They can render any legal action — no matter how just the cause or clear-cut the issues — a long and costly battle. Whether or not the Secret Service gets away with its outrageous against labour depends on the Margolis suit receiving broad financial support from the labour movement. We call upon all those com­mitted to the defence of the fundamental democratic rights at stake in this case, and all those committed to the defence of the independence of the labour move­ment, to endorse UCASSH and send a contribution.

Support the Margolis case

Enclosed is my contribution of $__________

Name: _____________________________
Address: ___________________________
Phone: _____________________________
Organisation: _______________________
Affiliation: _________________________

Make cheques/money orders payable to: Union Committee Against Secret Service Harassment or UCASSH

UCASSH, PO Box 12324, San Francisco, CA 94112 USA

Send endorsements and contributions direct to UCASSH, PO Box 12324, San Francisco, CA 94112 USA.
Worldwide, they're "perhaps the greatest single threat to economic health and the economic and political freedoms of individual citizens", ranted from Fraser. This time his candidate for enemy of the "free world" was the unions, not the Red Army troops defending women's rights in Afghanistan. He was speaking at Monash University, where he was the target of eggs, tomatoes and bread rolls as 500 students held back by 450 cops demonstrated against his government's savage education cuts. And he was in a rage because in a recent spate of strikes his labour-hating government had come off looking bumbling and indecisive, instead of generating the union-bashing headlines he hoped for.

When the Arbitration Commission Full Bench slashed a $12.50-$15.90 wage rise granted to grossly underpaid ($166 per week) wool industry storemen by the "maverick" Justice Staples to a flint $8, they went on strike and stayed out for 9 weeks. But the greedy bosses held out, looking to the point of selling the employers that they could count on him to back them up. This was the spurious prophesy of world, and the woolbrokers threatened to break the strike themselves. Graziar Ian Morison, who organised the scab army of farmers which smashed picket lines during the live meat export dispute two years ago, was preparing to try it again to "move the wool" out to strait overseas buyers. Only then did Fraser take over the dispute, and talked them out of "direct action"; in the upshot about half the Arbitration pay cut was restored.

In the midst of the "wool crisis", Sydney petrol tanker drivers struck, shutting off all petrol deliveries in the urban areas of NSW. Here the strike was provoked by a court action against the union under the notorious Section 45D of Fraser's anti-union Trade Practices Act prohibiting "secondary boycotts" — i.e., all sympathy strikes and black bans. Last July small-time boss Leon Laidley, who runs a contract trucking business, had tried to take over some petrol deliveries traditionally carried out by company drivers employed directly by Amoco. The Transport Workers Union (TWU) retaliated by black banning all deliveries from Amoco to Laidley, who went to court (with the bosses' Petroleum Agents and Distributors Association footing the bill) and got an injunction.

Amoco drivers walked out in protest. While Labor trade unions promptly banned all petrol sales in order to keep the power station running, the TWU may take their lead and try to sell Laidley the petrol — a deal worked out under the auspices of Sir John Moore, head of the Arbitration Commission. Next Fraser tried to force Moore to renege on the deal and reopen the hearings — and was turned down flat.

These were only the two most significant nationally of a series of struggles constituting something of a strike wave. In Victoria one and two day stoppages organised by the Trades Hall Council against Hamer's attempt to cut workers compensation awards successfully cut power supplies, paralysed transport, and spread into some sections of white collar workers who had never been on strike before. At the end of March a short-lived strike by Queensland power workers over their future location under the MNP, threatened to shut blacked out, and threatened to shut

Independent truckers' anti-union picket at Amoco to defend Laidley.

APTU tops on their knees

Mail Network Plan surrender

Nine months after selling out last July's struggle by postal workers at Sydney's Redfern Mail Exchange (RME) against the Mail Network Plan (MNP), the NSW state executive of the Australian Postal and Telecommunications Union (APTU) have come out and openly accepted this union-busting scheme. The way is now open for Australia Post (AP) to break up and disperse the most militant and powerful concentration of postal workers in the country, eliminating many of their rights and conditions and cutting their take-home pay. Dropping all pretence of opposition to the MNP, the APTU tops did what AP could not do alone, forcing its acceptance through a series of stop-work meetings held at RME in mid-March.

The capitulation was precipitated by APTU's failure to begin transferring out 800 to 1000 mail officers by March this year. The bosses asked every RME mail officer to complete a form stating their choice of future location under the MNP, threaten­ing that all would have to apply for transfer by 1983 when RME would close. Until the construction of its Permanent Mail Centres, AP has set up "Interim Mail Centres", who are selling workers will be forced to "work as directed", a speed-up to replace the present roster system. Basic amenities will be lacking as well and pay will be cut by the removal of Sunday over­time and the reduction of annual rec­reation leave. More workers will have to work the unpopular late afternoon shifts, and the IMSO network will also permit the immediate downgrading of the RME to little more than another IMSO itself.

Should RME workers mount a struggle against its attack on the militant centre of their union, AP is much better prepared to bypass it than it was last July. To beat this scab bypass system the APTU would need to call an all-out nationwide postal strike drawing in every driver, postman, and mail officer to smash the MNP lock­stock-and-barrel and defend and recoup conditions.

But nothing strikes fear into the hearts ofcowardly pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucrats more than the prospect of real struggle. The union leadership's lack of action had made a joke of their previous verbal opposition to the MNP. What could they say to demoralised mail officers who applied for out-transfers? So on March 4 Assistant state secretary Paul Watson issued a circular announcing that "the APTU will not oppose the introduc­tion of permanent mail centres if pre­viously stated by AP in various areas of the Sydney Metropolitan Area". In return they weekly asked AP not to proceed with the introduction of IMSOs, the bosses were not interested and gave them nothing to sell to the ranks except a couple of minor crumbs and a worthless promise of further discussions.

When it came to informing those who had to pay directly for this sellout — the Redfern workers themselves — the bureaucrats announced that they were adhering to the AP policy that the meetings would be paid ones only if they were purely "informational", with no discussions or motions allowed. Both the Hawkins/Battese "lefts" and the rival Hawke/Watson clique on the state executive believed "we are fighting a losing battle" and predictably had no proposals to put to the ranks other than surrender. Neither had their various "leftist" camp followers who, with just a couple of exceptions, were unable even to get up and oppose the fact that accept­ance was being grossly undemocratically forced through, without a vote being taken.

After the sellout last July we warned: "the APTU ranks must recognise that every brand of labour reformist, no matter how 'socialist' or 'militant' in name, is fundamentally committed to a program of class collaboration". (Australasian Spartacist, no 66, August 1979)

Only those militants armed with this understanding and rejecting support to any faction of the bureaucracy were able to provide a coherent opposition from the floor, moving that the meetings be opened up for motions and discussion with pay. Said one, "Our leadership talks a lot about unity, but they want unity to do nothing. Last year when Newcastle workers wanted unity the state executive sat on their pies. I want unity in strike action state­wide to smash the MNP and win and extend our conditions.

Despite gaining significant support, these motions were lost. The feuding cliques always claimed lack of "unity" between the various sections of the union prevented any action against the MNP, or to defend the Newcastle workers, whose abandonment this paper exposed (Australasian Spartacist supplement, 7 February). But at least they have found "unity" among themselves on one point — betrayal. Slater, Hawkins, Kahan etc. — all the betrayers must go!

The night before the RME meetings, Hawkins, at a joint council meeting of drivers, postmen, country centres and mail officers, opposed continuation of the moribund ban on the IMSOs in favour of an Arbitration hearing. Socialist Workers Party supporter Lynda Boland and Communist Party supporter Brian Casey also accepted the MNP but instead of the Arbitration hearing proposed a

Continued on page 9

April 1980