

## SELF DETERMINATION FOR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS

This is Australia's Bicentenary. On Australia Day, when an estimated two million wallowed in champagne with Bob Hawke and royal goons, Charles and Di, a counter demonstration of 50,000 led by Blacks showed that there was some Opposition. To this carnival of reaction. Unfortunately, the organisers of the demo, the Black Protest Committee, stressed that this was non-violent protest. This means acceptance of the Bicentenary. The Bicentenary is a carnival of reaction and must be smashed. However, Blacks alone are not enough to do it. What must be shown is that the Bicentenary is part of a campaign to make the working class accept the burden of the economic crisis. It does this by trying to persuade us that we have more in common as Australians than as working class people fighting for our interests. At the demo only the Communist Tendency raised the question of opposition to the Bicentenary as a class question. This means showing that the interests of workers are antagonistic to the bicentenary and uniting with the Blacks as they become under attack from the capitalist state.

Gary Foley at the demo argued that the strength of their (Black peoples) case would lead to a people's movement for national reconciliation. Over the past ten years the Blacks' cause has lost ground, despite the strength of their case. This is because public opinion is controlled by the interests of capital. These interests have required an expansion of mining (on Black land) and cutbacks on government spending (including money spent on Blacks). Capitalist media and political parties (including the Labor party) have put the interests of big business before the moral cause of Blacks. The only way we can get national reconciliation is if we overthrow capital and only the working class have a consistent interest in doing that.

Another challenge to the Bicentenary which could be more significant has come from 15,000 Torres Strait Islanders. A mass meeting on Thursday Island (the administrative center) voted unanimously for Independence from Australia. They also gave their leaders a mandate to negotiate with Papua New Guinea, the South Pacific Forum, the United Nations and the U.N. Special Committee on Decolonisation. They have the support of the organisation representing Islanders on the Mainland Magani Malu Hess, As its representative put it, for too long the islands have been receiving crumbs. We don't even receive half a loaf of bread. Now we're looking at a full loaf of bread and the factory. According to the census, the population of the Torres Strait region is six thousand, of whom four thousand are ethnic Islanders. There are fifteen thousand ethnic Islanders living on the Australian mainland, many of whom live in the North Queensland cities of Cairns and Townsville. Many are on the mainland because of lack of employment and have indicated that on Independence they will move back.

The Islands were annexed by Queensland in 1872. They are internal colonies of Australia. The imperialists have reaped the benefits of super profits out of the resources and labour of the area. The Torres Strait Islanders have been given crumbs. Their demands for self-determination and against imperialist exploitation are fully supportable. They must be backed up by working class action. Strikes and Blackans in support of Torres Strait Islanders Now! By approachi ng 'The United Nations :i Islanders are o' TTng to TBA wrong' Tdl. "The United Nations s a thieves tcrdc dedicateo tc maintaining Imperialist conro], It is r to us, the working class to show the Islanders who their real allies are.

The Hawke government, of course, will not grant them independence. The Australian constitution prohibits alteration of State boundaries without both consents of the state government and a

referendum within the State concerned. There is no way that the National Party Ahern government of Queensland will give its consent. No doubt the Hawke government, which is loyal to the Constitution, will cry tears of sympathy and throw out a few crumbs in order to placate the slanders, But Hawke supporting any real change is not on the agenda. The Liberal Party is indeed aware of the strategic issues at stake. Their spokesman for defence warned that Libya or the Soviet Union might set up a military base. The islands are indeed of importance for maintaining imperialist control of both Papua New Guinea and of Indonesia, which controls West Papua. The Torres Strait is of strategic importance for shipping and with islands so close to the border of both Papua New Guinea and Papua controlled by Indonesia, it is all the more convenient for sending in the troops, should Australia's interests be threatened. There is a war in West Papua. The OPM is fighting the Indonesian State for independence. Papua New Guinea and Australia have agreed to seal off the border against West Papuans crossing. An independent Torres Strait could weaken this reactionary alliance.

During the nineteen seventies there was a border dispute between Australia and Papua New Guinea. When in 1974 Australia's ALP P.M., Gough Whitlam said that you could almost walk between Australia and Papua, he was slightly exaggerating. In reality a good swimmer could swim the distance. There is only a distance of three kilometres between Papua and the nearest island Davan. Gough Whitlam wanted to take the question to the U.N. High Court. He assumed that a fair boundary would be approximately halfway between the coasts. His motives were partly one of fairness toward the newly independent Papua New Guinea, but also to stop illegal immigrants from crossing into Australia. This is a chauvinist perspective.

He was strongly opposed by Joh Bjelke Petersen, who pledged to fight tooth and nail against this betrayal of Australia. Of course, he pointed out that any boundary change was unconstitutional. But he also enlisted the support of the Torres Strait Islanders. The Islanders were angry at the thought of being political pawns and having their islands divided in two for the sake of political expedience. The Islanders felt no affinity towards Papua New Guinea. Whilst they are also Melanesian, the only part of Papua which speaks the same language is the island of Daru. The Islanders formed the Border Not Change movement, which had overwhelming political support within the islands.

In 1978 a Treaty was finally signed between Australia and Papua New Guinea. It was a treaty highly in favour of Australia in terms of strategic control of the Torres Strait, control of Fishing (75% Australia, 25% PNG) and resources such as oil and minerals. It was agreed that no oil drilling would begin for another ten years. Papua New Guinea does get some consultative powers, but that's all: It is no wonder that Bjelke Petersen found the Treaty to be satisfactory. The Fishing Agreement meant that local off-shore fishermen had the right to fish for their own tribal consumption. Australia controlled commercial fishing. After the Treaty was signed those who had recently migrated from Papua were rounded up and shipped home. This included those on otherwise uninhabited islands. The Torres Strait Islanders realised that Bjelke Petersen was only using them as pawns to keep control of mining interests and to preserve Australia's security. They formed the Torres Uniting party, which demanded Independence.

The History of Torres Strait is one of imperialist conquest and exploitation. In 1965 after it was discovered that pearling luggers were utilising the islands, the Queensland government sent a police constable to maintain law and order. Queensland annexed the islands in 1872. It was aware of the unconventional nature of the borderline. It rationalised this in terms of defence against German

imperialism which was getting a foot-hold in New Guinea. As the pearling, Trochus shell and beche-de-mer (a sea slug which is a delicacy in Japan) industries, the islanders were utilised for their labour. They were super exploited. Pearl diving is an extremely hazardous operation. Often it leads to premature death. In 1936 islanders were technically paid 3/6/- a month (\$6.60). However, most of it went to the government. In reality, island labourers received \$2 from private owners and no cash for those working for the government as their employer. These workers only received credit at the government store. This led to a six month general strike against the government throughout the Islands. The workers wanted cash.

The Torres Strait Islanders fought for Australia during the Second World War. They were paid 4/4 (43 cents) a day as opposed to 6/6 (65 cents) paid to ordinary Australian soldiers. After the war, as a reward for patriotic loyalty, the Islanders received 50% of Australia's basic wage. They were also allowed to leave the Islands and live on the mainland. Also, with some financial assistance, a few of them bought their own luggers and took the place of Japanese who were involved in the industry before the war. Since the Second World War the pearl shell industry has collapsed. Pearl shell, previously used in buttons, has been replaced by plastic. During the sixties an oil tanker crashed and there was much oil spillage. The result was not just physical destruction of the pearl oyster but also promotion of a disease which devastated the rest of them. The result has been mass unemployment, which has forced Islanders out of Torres Strait. The population of the Torres Strait is now predominantly female. The Torres Strait Islands remain as they were last century - an Australian colony. And the Islanders fodder for capitalist exploitation, only to be tossed on the scrap heap when not needed for profit. The Islanders still live in poverty and are still subject to the racist Queensland Torres Strait Islanders Act.

The Torres Strait Islanders' claim for self-determination has now received quite a bit of publicity. But what support has come from the Australian Left? — virtually none! Tribune had an article in its magazine section on page eight. This contained some useful information, but no indication that either Tribune or the Communist Party are prepared to do anything about it. 'But for vested and powerful interests the Islands are of strategic importance', Tribune tells us. The point is to challenge these and this the CPA dare not. All Tribune has to offer is for the Islanders to await the good grace of the High Court, in order to carry out 'steps towards' independence. Australasian Spartacist has said nothing about the Torres Strait Islands. According to one of their leaders, N. Florimell, the S.L. their self-determination. Perhaps the S.L. find the Torres Strait Islands a bit too small to qualify for their criteria of what a nation should be. The Torres Strait Islands could have a strong independent economy. There are also states with a smaller population. An independent Torres Strait indeed a feasible possibility. But also it would be a major blow to Australia's imperialist control of both Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. The Spartacist League are giving Australian imperialism covert support. The Australian Left is fond of proclaiming anti-imperialist solidarity with struggles thousands of kilometres away on other continents. Even with these struggles their solidarity is flawed. The Left, especially the SWP, believe in public opinion rather than fighting for a class conscious working class. But when it comes to supporting an independence struggle, which challenges the Australian Constitution, the Left offers little better than silence. There have been no demos and no working class action. The trendy sham radicals who pose as revolutionaries are a disgrace to the tradition of Communism. Unfortunately, these fakers use rhetoric which sound Communist in order to confuse militants. A real Communist stands up against imperialist exploitation. Their failure to stand up for the Torres Strait Islanders has exposed the fake left in this country.

SELF DETERMINATION FOR THE TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS!

DIRECT WORKERS ACTION IN SOLIDARITY NOW!

## Review

### Vietnam and World Review by Martin McLaughlin

This book is an acid test for the tendency known as the International Committee for the Fourth International whose Australian section is the Socialist Labour League. The writer, Martin McLaughlin, is a leading member of the Workers' League which is in political solidarity with the ICFI. It is prohibited from affiliation by a reactionary act of US Congress. However, the ICFI clearly identifies with this book. The acid test of whether a tendency is Trotskyist is whether it has a Marxist analysis of Stalinism. As we will show, McLaughlin's analysis is, to say the least, inadequate. In fact, this book is a serious adaptation to Vietnamese Stalinism.

Yes, there is plenty of reference; to "the counter-revolutionary treachery of Moscow and Peking" and there is even a chapter entitled that. But what of Vietnamese Stalinism? ;CCRCiflp to McLaughlin 'The a ietnasv s eacerehin er: veiled and led a successful revolutionary conflict for revolutionaries? What about Soviet power. However, the agreement cold out the Kampuchean revolution for the sake of Vietnam. The agreement forbid the Vietnamese Stalinists supplying arms to the FUK(thn oopuar front which ncludsd the :italinists). The Agreement also ocrmitted US bombing in Kampuchea. As a result 200,000 Kamoucheans were killed or wounded. In no way and under no circumstances can such an agreement be considered an acceptable compromise. For revolutionaries, while this was going onthe Vietnamese Stalinists were urging the FUNK to compromise with Lan Nol (the ore— imperialist dictator) which to hia credit Pol Pot rpirctod.

The way Martin McLaughlin deals with the National Liberation Front is thoroughly un—Marxist. McLaughlin claims that Ho Chi Minh made an empirical break from Stalinism because he rejected the dictates of Peking and Moscow. He gives Ho a bit too much credit. However, a Trotskyist analysis of Stalinism than this. What was the class character of the N.L.F. and what was its program? McLaughlin avoids these fundamental questions. McLaughlin avoids these fundmentL' questions. Stalinism in the East involved more than just obeying the orders of Moscow. It involved liquidation of the interests of the working class behind those of the peasantry and the national bourgeoisie. Malcolm Salmon was a writer for Tribune who spent many years in Vietnam, both in the North and with the Viet Cong in the South. He wrote extensively for Tribune and spelt out their position as follows "Years of propaganda have conditioned many people and I think not a few in the Australian left to believe that the PRG is a Communist Government" He then points out that the South is going through a 'national democratic revolution' and that the PRG is revolutionary" in that it wants to change Vietnam into a democratic power I (Tribune, May 21—27, 1974). Malcolm Salmon also pointed out that it was only in discrete private moments that an NLF cadre would admit whether he or sh was a communist and that in the Front communists and non communists acted as one. Such was the liquidation of the VWP.

One of the dangerous aspects of the book s hOW the arogram of the NLF is given Trotskyist credentials. We are told that the" political line of the Vietnamese leadership consisted at combining the strength of national independence movement and Marxism"" McLaughlin quotes Le Duan, a

Stalinist leader, with authority! In fact it can be interpreted from the book (although unclear whether McLaughlin intends it) that the Vietnamese Stalinists were more progressive than the Trotskyists. Mac Laughlin points out that the Manifesto of Indo-Chinese oppositionists ignored the agrarian question and the national question. The Stalinists, he points out didn't. The WSL of Alan Thornett claimed the Vietnamese Trotskyists played an exemplary role. We are not so sure. A full and proper balance sheet has yet to be drawn. However Trotskyists with serious weaknesses are still a hundred times better than Stalinists. What Le Duan meant by combining the strength of the struggle for national independence and socialism was surrendering the interests of the working class. What Trotsky meant was showing that both the national question and the agrarian question only be resolved by the dictatorship of the proletariat. McLaughlin by giving Le Duan authority is giving a gross disservice to Trotskyism. The Vietnamese Trotskyists with whatever weaknesses were fighting for proletarian power. Le Duan sold this struggle out.

This book is largely about the US anti war movement. Yes it does have some orthodox criticisms which we can indeed concur with. Yes the antiwar movement was a popular front. Yes the role of the Stalinists was treacherous. Yes the popular front strategy was linked to peaceful coexistence held by both Moscow and Peking. Yes the SWP, led by former pupils of the exclusive Carlton college pupils played a treacherous role with their right-wing line which tied the movement to the US Democrats and threw young militants into the hands of the Maoists.

This book does not analyse the Australian anti-war movement. Had McLaughlin cared to do so he would have found that stream of this equally popular front movement was led by the Communist Party of Australia which acted under the direct authority of the Vietnamese Stalinists.

McLaughlin seems so enraptured by the long military struggle of the Vietnamese that it doesn't seem to have occurred to him that had it not been for political sellout the struggle would have been over quicker. Moody McLaughlin considers it a weakness of the Kampuchean Stalinists that they didn't undergo such a long struggle (page 141). What would he have them do undergo such a long struggle? Negotiate to divide the country in half? Call for elections and then lose thousands more fighting to win back the conceded territory? Pol Pot was indeed a treacherous Stalinist under the pernicious influence of Maoism. Whilst his ultranationalism was an invalid response, the Vietnamese Stalinists' consistent sellout of the Kampuchean revolution accentuated this nationalism. The border between Kampuchea and Vietnam was imposed by France. Neither before nor after their military victory did the Vietnamese attempt to rectify this situation. As well, they claimed all of the continental shelf surrounding Kampuchea apart from a few kilometers off the shore and that claimed by Thailand. They too were nationalist. Of course, Pol Pot's treachery cannot be condoned but the point is neither can that of the Vietnamese. Since the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea, they have stated that they would welcome any government in Kampuchea that did not contain Pol Pot. This means that they would welcome capitalism. Meanwhile, Pol Pot is in alliance with bourgeois forces Son Sam and Sihanouk. A probable outcome of the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea is a capitalist Kampuchea irrespective of who wins.

We agree that "the lessons of the Vietnamese Revolution must be grasped by every revolutionary fighter seeking to take part in the world wide struggle against imperialism that their victory has inspired struggle in Central America, the Middle East and South Africa. It is for precisely this reason that this book is dangerous. For many aspiring revolutionaries, the

counter revolutionary nature of Moscow and Peking is transparent. The fact that both Castro and Ho Chi Minh led successful struggles that broke Cuba and Vietnam from capitalism has however restored the confidence of these aspiring revolutionaries in what otherwise would be a thoroughly bankrupt tradition. It is the job of revolutionaries to thoroughly expose this apparent revolutionary form of Stalinist virus. McLaughlin tries to do this by trying to pretend that the Vietnamese made an empirical break from Stalinism which is defined as the counter—revolutionary role of Moscow and Peking. The Stalinist VWP liquidated the banner of the working class into the popular front NLF, in other words behind the banner of the bourgeoisie. The military victory of non—proletarian forces can mean a break from capitalism sometimes, but not always. Nicaragua, for example, is a capitalist country. However, under no circumstances can non—proletarian forces establish a proletarian dictatorship. This book is an obstacle to those Trotskyists in countries such as the Philippines who are fighting for the proletarian dictatorship as the only way to defeat imperialism. So preoccupied with his polemic against the US antiwar movement and so enthralled is he with the military struggle of the NLF that the writer sells out the struggle for proletarian politics in Vietnam and covers for Stalinist treachery.

### **Drawing class lines The Communist Tendency**

In 1969 the main speaker at the May Day March, both in Newcastle and Sydney, was Bob Hawke. The theme of his address was 'Remember. The debt of unity to the past'. Whatever we enjoy today is the result of the united efforts of our forbears. They were not people of one creed or ideology but when they saw injustice.

He then went on to say (according to Tribune) that "pursuing unity at any cost on the basis of lowest common denominator is irreconcilable to the forbears whom we honoured". He then said that he believed in the first plank of the ACTU for the means of production, distribution and exchange should be publicly owned and there should be a program of education with this in the forefront. This speech was made amid a massive upsurge of working class struggle against the penal powers. This upsurge released Clarrie O'Shea, Maoist Militant of the Victorian Tramways Union from prison. Today if our forbears could hear what Bob Hawke is saying they would turn in their grave.

In 1970, in the radical student paper Old Mole, Denis Freney informed us that Bob Gould's support for factory occupations was a lot of hot air and that it was the Communist Party who was really carrying these out in the building industry. Yes, the New South Wales branch of the BLE, which was CPA led, did some credible things. There were, however, many of their actions of which we are critical. Most importantly they argued that we could 'tame the concrete jungle' without overthrowing capitalism. It has been a long time since the CPA has mentioned factory occupations, or even workers control, in its rhetoric.

Since 1969 the Working Class movement and the Left have gone a long way - backwards. Today it is not just isolated unionists who are being jailed, but wholesale unions which are being smashed. Both Bob Hawke and the CPA have been party to this union smashing. In 1969 an unemployed figure, which today seems relatively small, was met with widespread anger. No unemployment should be acceptable. Today the leaders of the Trade Union movement and the Labor Party consider that six percent unemployed to be the lowest figure. On every level there is a ruling class offensive. The bosses are calling for restructuring of the economy, which means sacking thousands of workers. They are calling for deregulation of the labour market, which means smashing unions. They want

massive cutbacks in public spending, especially on welfare. They want to increase spending on state repression, i.e. on policing. The new gun laws are part of this policy. This as well as a housing crisis with rents going through the roof. Meanwhile the vicious attacks on the Black people continue, including poverty and state repression.

The Left has responded to this by huddling together into various forms of unprincipled blocks. These include the Charter Group, the Left Coalition, the Fightback Committee., the entourage around Bob Gould which includes fake Trotskyist groups. The constituents of these amalgams vary as do the conditions for their unity. However, they all have in common the liquidation of principle for sake of organisational expediency. Whilst there has been some minor exceptions there has on the whole been a wholesale collapse under the impact of the economic crisis.

For the Communist Tendency the problem of why the fight back against such massive attacks remains inconsistent and marginal lies with the politics which dominate the working class. The last twenty years has seen some extremely militant and sometimes explosive action by the working class in this country. The struggle against the penal powers, the struggle in defence of Whitlam against the Kerr group and the struggle for a shorter working week in 1981 as examples. The Left cheered these on, chipping in with its own advice on how to conduct the Trade Union struggle better. In 1972, at the founding conference of the Socialist Labour League, Jim Muigrew assured us that the successful struggle against the penal powers was the turning point in class struggle in this country. However, what the Left has refused to challenge is the politics which underlie these struggles. The militant struggles of the seventies, even at their most advanced, at no stage broke from the political framework of capitalism. This framework can only be broken from when it is politically challenged - by revolutionary communists. Of course it's not enough merely to have the program. You must be able to politically relate the program to the experience and political development of the working class. Sectarianism IS the inability to relate a program tactically and not as the Far Left think the very act of fighting for revolutionary politics itself,

The Communist tendency is in continuity with the political record of the Communist Left. The Communist Left was formed by Owen Gager in 1976 in continuity with the program of the New Zealand Spartacist League. Its formation was triggered by the failure of the Left to make a marxist analysis nor a revolutionary intervention into the upsurge in defence of Whitlam following the Kerr coup. The Left either tailed behind the Labor Party by merely demanding Stop Fraser (the CPA) or it made irrelevant revolutionary sounding demands such as the Spartacist League For an ALP/ ACTLI government pledged to expropriate the ruling class. This high sounding demand had no practical consequence as the Spartacist League called for a general strike around defensive demands (translated this means minimal) whilst the working class was under the leadership of quizzlings. So the quizzies can form a revolutionary government, but not lead a revolutionary strike, the Committee for Labor Unity to Defend Democracy, the predecessor of the Communist Left, linked the democratic demands raised in the crisis. The republic showed that it could only be achieved through direct working class strike action which could only be successful through a revolutionary program which included expropriation and a workers and small farmers government.

The Communist Left made a principled intervention in many arenas and around many political questions. It was a proudly internationalist tendency which stood for a Fifth Communist International. It fought for Trotskyist principles on international questions such as the Soviet invasion

of Afghanistan, the overthrow of the Shah in Iran, Timor, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Ireland and most importantly the third Indo China War. In 1975 we witnessed the heroic victories of the National Liberation Front in Vietnam and the FUNK in Kampuchea. Their victories broke these states from capitalism, in 1979 we witnessed the bloody spectacle of a wholesale invasion by Vietnam of Kampuchea and border incursions into Vietnam by China. The Stalinist movement, to be expected, cheered while their bureaucrats led workers and peasants to the slaughter. Tragically the Trotskyist movement cheered too. In fact, both the Spartacist League and Socialist Labor League warned of the danger of pacifism in demanding the bureaucrats fight even harder. Tragically only the Communist Left passed the acid test by providing a marxist analysis and fighting for proletarian internationalism irreconcilable hostility to all bureaucrats, whether Vietnamese, Chinese or Kampuchean.

The Communist Left fought in many arenas - in the Labor Party, in the APTU (Postal Workers Union), in the Glass Workers Union, in the Queensland Solidarity, housing (including both tenancy and squatting) and unemployed work. Through the Inner City Tenants Service members of the Communist Left organised rent strikes involving hundreds of tenants. The Communist Left was also involved in the mass squat of the Glebe Estate, when in October 1984 hundreds of squatters occupied empty homes in Glebe. This was a significant revolutionary act by the unemployed against the housing crisis. It was also the acid test for Owen Gager. Owen Gager was expelled when he tried to bureaucratically impose his tactics on the Glebe Squatters, contrary to the democratic decision made by mass meetings of the squatters. He treated the Squatters Union, the Communist Left and the Glebe Squatters meetings with contempt. He was expelled from the Communist Left when he repudiated its discipline. He has since tried to muddy the issue, through a scurrilous slander attack including big lies such as 'scab' and 'thug' made at U.U.S.T. members and lesser ones such as our alleged betrayal of the legal struggle (based on inaccurate information)

No matter how formally correct propagands (etc.) put out by Owen Gager's Communist Left (Leninist) may be, a tendency founded on putting bureaucratic social worker privilege before proletarian discipline cannot lead a revolution.

The Communist Left had a principled record. But it also had fleas, especially organisational. Owen Gager's organisational methods were to say the least erratic. Whilst CL meetings were often regular this often lapsed. CL entered housing with an overall general perspective, which, of course, was linked to a marxist analysis of both the housing question and the movement of capital with regards to property in Darlinghurst and Inner Sydney. However, no practical perspective for recruitment was worked out. Our work finally bore fruit in 1983. In 1983 a group crystallised around the general perspectives of the CL in unemployment and housing. The CL organised study groups to educate an expanding periphery in order to recruit into C.L. It was precisely when CL was recruiting that Owen Gager kicked the group in the teeth. This was no coincidence. Gager saw his personal power challenged. Owen Gager saw Communist Left as his personal property. He had accused the majority of C.L. of stealing the organisation. i.e. In his article in Workers Revolution No. 3.)

After the expulsion of Owen Gager, Communist Left faced immense pressure and responsibility. Owen Gager drew his fake blood line as a cop out, to rationalise a cowardly desertion from both the Glebe Squats and the Inner City Tenant Service. He could then sit on the sidelines denouncing betrayals whilst claiming that 'thuggery forced him out. Owen Gager has also used thuggery to get Communist Left removed physically from the working class movement. His efforts have failed. Of

course, Communist Left did not have the option of running away and the work was on our backs. Our major responsibility was the development of the Communist Left. CL was a raw group with little experience, both theoretically and organisationally. However, CL did develop. The Communist came out regularly. Its standard of analysis improved considerably. There was also real political development within the group. However, the group never confronted in practical terms the relationship between the level of mass work. Hence C.L. was continually bombarded with too much mass work and political development suffered.

Unfortunately, in 1987 saw a series of resignations, which weakened the organisation. Those who resigned gave various reasons. The most significant being the failure of CL to develop a strategy for cadre development. The criticisms had varying degrees of merit. However, at no stage was a class line established. Therefore, the resignations were unprincipled. This does not deny that real weaknesses were pointed out. These must be confronted.

Unfortunately, these resignations paved the way for Communist Left to be taken over by a clique led by Paul Goulet. Paul Goulet joined CL at the beginning of 1987. Throughout 1987 persistent complaints were made against him for his overt sexism. Goulet put a defence that his acts were a justifiable proletarian response to a 'feminist' attack on CL and pointing to his party loyalty as opposed to the lack of loyalty of those who resigned. Normally he would not have been able to get away with this, however he had the back up of former Mendeliste David Armstrong, former Political Committee member of the old former United Secretariat supporting group called Communist League, which is in no way connected to the existing group of the same name. David Armstrong indeed criticised Paul Goulet, but at the same time assured him that virtually, irrespective of what he did, his membership would not be at stake.

Communist Tendency is formed by Bill Cross, founding member of the Communist Left), because the Communist Left has crossed class lines. On October 26, 1987 11 members, Paul Houle and Clare Rooney called the cops against members of

the Unemployed Squatters and Tenants (including former members of the group) culminated in a dispute over property. This dispute was somewhat aggravated by an assault that occurred that week, of a transsexual named Lexi Ann was knocked unconscious by Paul. It was also aggravated by the method Paul recovered the property, which he claimed to own, by forcefully shoving Lani aside. As a result, Lani, who is recovering from cancer, was in pain all day. The real ownership of the property remains unclear. As a result of Paul's actions the security of the U.U.S.T. was seriously in jeopardy. Paul Goulet deserves no place in any decent working class or left wing organisation and neither does Clare Rooney, who assisted him. David Armstrong has chosen to defend these acts of treachery, This makes Communist Left (which is now called Revolutionary Communist Party) a thug organisation, which calls cops against the Left it is noteworthy that Owen Cager has written to 'Revolutionary Communists', proposing joint discussions. Perhaps he doesn't know the facts. However, it is a reflection on him that he is so intoxicated with hatred for his old factional opponents, that he is prepared to embrace anyone who hates us, even those who turn out to be copper lackies.

Communist Tendency is formed in continuity with both the political program and record of the Communist Left. Whilst the Communist Left has remained small, it has a principled political record. Communist Tendency is convinced that not only can they continue this tradition, but build a revolutionary party which can lead the working class to victory.

