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Bougainville. The war goes on.

Pius Wingti is coming to Australia in February. He is to be greeted by demonstrations. Wingti is a desperate man. His government was elected on the basis of achieving a quicker and "just" (from the point of view of PNG) solution on Bougainville. As recorded in statements in the PNG Post-Courier, Wingti has been promising an end to the conflict - by the end of last year. This he has failed to achieve. An attempt to recapture the mine, just before Christmas failed. There is talk of another offensive. However, the longer the war drags on, the more Wingti is discredited. Wingti needs reassurance from his Australian Government and big business backers. After all the PNG Government is having trouble paying their soldiers' wages. A massive loss of morale in the forces could lose them the war.

Losing the war not only means losing a very profitable copper mine. A defeat could encourage other tribal groupings to take on the miners. It could encourage other nationalities to fight for self-determination. It could spark militant unemployed defiance of state repression. It could promote class struggle and revolution. What is at stake is the possible break up of that unstable facade maintained by state repression known as Papua-New Guinea.

Of course Australia also has an interest in the maintenance of Papua New Guinea. Billions of dollars of imperialist investment is at stake. As well any revolutionary victories there might have international repercussions. A friendly, subordinate PNG is part of the Australian Government's defense plans. They fear that any new state may develop friendly links with Cuba, Nth Korea or Libya. Or perhaps stimulate a revolutionary movement somewhere in the Pacific such as Fiji or Vanuatu. It is very likely that Pius Wingti will get a very warm response from his backers. They know very well what they have to lose if Bougainville is allowed to win.

As RED has analysed (especially in RED 23) this war is a war made in Australia. When Australia administered New Guinea after World War I Australia refused to recognise the national rights of the Bougainville people. They were happy to incorporate Bougainville as part of their "territory" (colony) New Guinea. They saw no need to reconsider a border imposed by the agreement of German and British imperialists.

The imperialists did little about Bougainville until copper was discovered. In 1969 the Australian-backed PNG Administration assisted British multinational Con Zinc Rio Tinto to expropriate land for the Panguna mine from the Bougainville people by force. This expropriation was actively resisted by the local people.

Whilst Australia was then committed to granting formal independence to PNG, it was also committed to promoting a comprador elite committed to maintaining PNG safe for imperialism. Bougainville actually declared itself independent just before PNG independence in September 1975. But it caved in under pressure and joined PNG rather than face a conflict with the new nation. Australia and this loyal elite was absolutely opposed to granting nationalities the right to secede. They opposed Bougainville self-determination, firstly for copper mine but also because it might set a precedent which would break up their stable loyal "independent" PNG.

CRA has exploited billions of dollars in profit. But the amount of compensation received by the local tribal people was minimal. Meanwhile their farming and fishing was bung destroyed - their whole livelihood.

The local people have tried every means possible to rid themselves of the mine. Forming the Bougainville Revolutionary Army was the last resort. The PNG Administration responded to their declaration of independence by troops and an economic blockade.

The Hawke and Keating Labor Governments have fully backed the PNG war effort. They have supplied military advisers, helicopters and mortars made in St.Marys, Sydney. The ruling class in this country is aware of their interests and fully committed to maintaining Bougainville under PNG and imperialist control.

We the working class must be aware of our interests too. We must stand for the unconditional defeat of imperialist interests in Bougainville (or for that matter in PNG) and for the right of self-determination of the Bougainville people. Australia is taking part in an imperialist war. It is urgent that class conscious proletarians act.

When the Panguna mine was expropriated there was an immediate working class action coming from Australian unionists. Unionists in the nineties have been slower to respond. Partly this is due to the degeneration linked to the Accord. Partly this linked to the degeneration of the communist Party which then played a militant role in the union movement. Partly this is because the full facts of the war have been hidden. Bougainville appears not as an issue of imperialist intervention but a local (within PNG) law and order issue. Partly it is because the left have not seen mobilising workers on the issue as a priority. The Bougainville Freedom Movement's priority has been protests involving peace and green activists and lobbying respectable politicians like Vicky Bourne of the Democrats.

However, to her credit, activist Rosemary Gillespie has made a significant breakthrough in successfully lobbying

the South Coast (Wollongong) Trades and Labour Council for black bans. Their Executive and Disputes Committee "decided that in view of the blockade on Bougainville by the PNG Defense Force and the war which is being fought against the people of Bougainville, it is imperative that everything be done to end the fighting. The prevention of the supply of medicines and other humanitarian aid to all parts of Bougainville is an atrocity for which the Australian Government must be held responsible due to the considerable aid which it gives Papua New Guinea. Accordingly it is resolved that BANS BE PLACED ON MATERIALS AND PRODUCT TO PNG AND THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT HALT TRADE TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA until;

1) PNG lifts its genocidal blockade and allows medicines and humanitarian aid into ALL PARTS of Bougainville. Allows the International Commission of Jurists and other fact finding Missions into ALL PARTS of Bougainville.

2) The Australian Government places a TOTAL embargo on the sale of all military aid to PNG

3) An Australian Parliamentary and Trade Union Delegation be given access to all parts of Bougainville

4) A meeting be convened with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and a Delegation from the Provisional Government of Bougainville as a matter of urgency"

(Cited from Bougainville Freedom Movement newsletter, All emphasis as in original)

We think that the bans should last until Bougainvilleans are given the option of self determination. However despite weaknesses, the passing of such a resolution in Wollongong is an important step forward. Especially as it has encouraged unions from the ACT, Newcastle and elsewhere to impose bans. This points the way forward.

What is needed is a class perspective. However, for the bans to be maintained, a programme of education must be launched at the rank and file level.

Key conclusions must be drawn about the politics which dominate the labour movement. A break from Laborism is required. The 5th Coast TLC resolution correctly points the finger at the Keating Labor Government. But the South Coast TLC has been loyal to that Government at the expense of the working class people of the South Coast. Consistent solidarity against Australian imperialism requires a break from Laborism.

As we have said, the record of the Australian left has been pathetic. The supporters of the US Socialist Party, the Communist League has taken the issue seriously in their minimalist class collaborationist manner. They have held a public meeting, and printed articles in their US published newspaper the Militant. This tendency has no qualms uniting with bourgeois forces. The CL does not believe in class principle. It will happily sell out class struggle to build the broadest movement possible.

The International Socialist Organisation finally wrote a half page article in their paper. They offer no programme apart from attending the rallies of the BFM. This they don't consistently do. At the December 23 demo only four leading members turned up. It's not as if they are abstaining due to principled criticisms of the BFM. They haven't raised any. In reality Bougainville is not high profile enough for their liking. It does not have the same appeal in the student movement. Effectively they are accepting the agenda of the bourgeois media.

The Spartacist League, the Socialist Labour League and Militant have also failed to raise any serious analysis of the war in Bougainville or any programme for workers terms of international solidarity. The "far left" organisations are being exposed - by the South Coast TLC! Australian imperialism is at war and the far left can't even write articles - let alone do something about it! Bougainville must become an issue for class struggle international solidarity - now!

The resolution of the South Coast Labour Council shows Australian workers can respond to arguments why they should take direct action against imperialist war. It is the responsibility of the left to supply these arguments so bans and direct action can be consistently carried out. The orientation of the Bougainville Freedom Movement towards moral persuasion of church people, Democrats, Greens, peace activists, is not merely useless but counterproductive. We need to appeal to working class interest no middle class morality.

Build a workers' movement to smash Australian Imperialism!

Black bans against all war materials,
goods and services connected to the war!

For the right of self-determination for the Bougainville people!

Democratic elections in South Africa

ALL SOUTH AFRICA is having an election which involves, for the first time, the whole of the population. Apartheid has been destroyed on the electoral level. This has been achieved not by the good grace of De Klerk but by the threat of war and revolution. De Klerk knows that if he doesn't concede having elections, the ANC's respectable leadership will no longer be able to contain the Black masses. Nelson Mandela is under pressure to show that his "responsible" approach of the Freedom Charter will produce gains for the Black masses. De Klerk does not want to make concessions, but he has been forced to. He realises that with responsible leaders such as Mandela the bosses, albeit a bit inconvenienced, will maintain their right to plunder.

The ANC is expected to win. Currently their support is estimated at about 65% of the electorate. Nelson Mandela is likely to become President of South Africa. He is promising a programme of housing and social welfare. This is certainly much needed. However he is not promising anything that will seriously interfere with the workings of capital, either the local or foreign variety. With ANC in office, exploitation will remain. This will be useful in the political education of the exploited masses of South Africa, most of whom are Black. They will learn their bosses will remain the same and the cops will remain the same, will be backed up by their leaders, who once spoke the rhetoric of liberation. The ANC's election will provide a valuable opportunity to

break illusions in the ANC - provided a revolutionary alternative is counterposed. According to Australian ISO member Mick Armstrong, there were many spontaneous rejections of the moderation of Freedom Charter expressed from rank and file Black workers. It is the task of the revolutionary left to give these a consistent political expression - for permanent revolution! Of course the comrades of the ISO in South Africa are as politically bankrupt as in Australia.

The worst possible error for the revolutionary left is to tail behind the ANC. It was a real surprise when the extent to which the ANC was backed by the Communist Party of South Africa was exposed. After all, the role of the ANC has been to prevent communism. It has contained the struggle within a minimalist framework. Behind the banner of the ANC are not just the Stalinists, there's also the revisionists such as (in Australia) Green Left Weekly and the Communist League. Today the ANC are not fighting a heroic struggle. They are preparing to administer South African capitalism.

South Africa is still fundamentally a racist state. Despite political barriers breaking down, white people are still at the top. They control the means of production. They receive higher wages. The discrimination once maintained by racist legislation is maintained by economics. It is the socialist revolution in South Africa which will liberate the oppressed. This the ANC vehemently opposes. It is now openly on the side of the white exploiting class in South Africa.

Defend David Kang

AUSTRALIA DAY SHAME went the headlines in gutter rag bosses' press. This was their response to David Kang breaking through security and threatening Prince Charles with a starter pistol. It all made dramatic television viewing and is predictably used by the media to promote the monarchy. We are not ashamed of David Kang. On the contrary; we salute his heroism. We are glad that Kang showed disrespect for royalty. We are glad that Kang exposed Keating's refugee prison camps. And we are glad that the Australian state is embarrassed. Kang did not try to kill Prince Charles. His gun was merely a starter's pistol. However we would still defend him if he did.

Prince Charles is the symbolic head of the British imperialist 'terror machine which is committed to exploiting, and brutally repressing the labour of workers and peasants, and the raw materials of colonial and semi colonial countries throughout the world. Prince Charles's mother Queen Elizabeth is the richest woman and one of the richest people in the world. Her personal fortune runs into billions. Prince Charles also has millions of pounds to his name. However even more important is their role in facilitating the super exploitation by British multinationals, such as Conzinc Riotinto in Bougainville. The Queen through her agent, the Governor-General is head of the armed forces of Australia. This leadership is more than symbolic. Make no mistake if imperialists were really threatened the Queen may act - to direct the Australian armed forces to depose an elected government. It is for this reason that a republic is an important issue in Australia.

David Kang's disrespect for the monarchy is to be applauded. His disrespect is limited to the fact that Charles did not respond to his letters on the plight of Kampuchean refugees in Australian prison camps. We reject any respect for the Queen, the royal Family or the Governor-General - totally. We urge more disrespect.

David Kang's aim was to make a protest against the detention of Kampuchean refugees. Many of the refugees seriously fear that returning to Kampuchea will cost them their lives. They live in prison camp conditions. There has been virtually a total media blackout about this. Without Kang taking action there would be no public attention relating to the plight of these people. The press response to this incident exposes the media's racist bias. They care far more about a Royal parasite than the lives of Kampuchean refugees who are victims of war and repression.

To their credit the International Socialist Organisation organised the picket outside Central Court Sydney where Kang was appearing. This demo was predictably based on the student left with some support from migrant groups. The ISO, as usual, only offer high profile student activism. We must go beyond the student movement to explain to all working people why they should defend David Kang and oppose the Monarchy. We must also explain why the Kampuchean refugees should be released and be allowed to stay in Australia. It is meaningful strike action that will be effective and not student protest politics.

The rise of Fascism in Russia

TO RATIONALISE HIS CRACKDOWN Mr. Yeltsin needed an election. Yeltsin's aim is to restore capitalism in Russia. However to appease the imperialists he must do this with the appearance of democracy. This democracy" is strictly limited. It really means rights and privileges to the new ruling and middle classes. Yeltsin is a man who really believes in power, not the ballot. There is no better time to defeat the Stalinists than when they have been shown to be powerless. So Mr. Yeltsin thought an election was a goer. He hoped to continue his campaign of repression with the appearance of a popular mandate. However, he was in for a bit of a shock. The real winner's were not his "reforming" (counter-revolutionary) allies such as "Russia's Choice" but the fascist "Liberal Democratic" Party led by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. These fascists won 24% of the vote. Make no mistake fascism could be well and truly on the agenda - if the left are exposed as bankrupt and allow it. The left must act decisively against this very real threat - now!

Yeltsin has been quick to dismiss Zhirinovskiy as a ratbag, crackpot, who knows nothing about political reality. Zhirinovskiy certainly appears way out. But this eccentricity is part of his appeal. Russia is a society retreating into mysticism. In Russia today millions watch and believe in faith healers who daily appear on television. Religion is rampant. Scientific politics have been thrown out the window. What does Yeltsin offer for his painful medicine? - capitalism in the very distant future. Zhirinovskiy offers the same pain too plus a reward to all loyal Russians-the lure of an empire. He is, with a reasonable degree of success, playing on their chauvinist prejudices against foreigners such as Japanese and Arabs. He has even boasted that under his leadership Russia would border Germany!

This Yeltsin cannot offer. For a start Yeltsin must reassure the imperialists, his backers, that the new Russia poses no military threat. Any reversal of this would be met with anger from the USA and Britain. Yeltsin is relying on the imperialists to assist the new Russia with capital. Yeltsin must also be sensitive to the needs of the new bourgeoisie of outlying republics, such as Georgia and Azerbaijan. He can't offend them with blatant anti-Arab chauvinism. The Yeltsin counter-revolution was partly based on movements for local autonomy. Although he does come down ruthlessly on movements within Greater Russia he is limited in his ability to promote Russia at the expense of the outer republics. Mr. Zhirinovskiy has no intention of a political relationship with the outlying republics. His aim is to repress their rights with the jack boot.

Zhirinovskiy takes Yeltsin's repression to its logical conclusion. He aims to compete with Yeltsin as the most successful agent of state repression. However Stalinism also bears a responsibility for his success. The Stalinists have promoted Russian domination within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Of Gorbachev's ministers only Shevardnadze, a Georgian, came from outside Russia. Instead of promoting the right of nations to self-determination, they have promoted more Russian domination to counter the new nationalist movements. The Stalinists have been shown to be impotent, unable to provide a way forward. They offer nothing but nostalgia for yesterday's USSR. They have also compromised themselves by blocking with Zhirinovskiy. Yeltsin can truthfully point the finger at a "Communist, fascist alliance". This he uses to boost his democratic credentials. He can now rationalise his repression on the bases of "fighting fascism" In reality he comes down much harder on the Stalinists.

Blocking with the fascists is a death trap - irrespective of their formal opposition to Yeltsin's agenda. In fact blocking with any bourgeois force on their terms, selling out the working class's independence, is treachery. It is far worse when the bourgeois force concerned is fascism. The agenda for the restoration of capitalism in Russia requires the total repression of the organised working class. It is the working class which is Yeltsin's target not merely the wiping out of his old Stalinist rivals, and what remains of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Yeltsin and Zhirinovskiy are in competition to establish who can crush the working class most efficiently. The bankruptcy of his political opponents has meant plain sailing for Zhirinovskiy so far. However his success is not predetermined. It needs bourgeois sponsorship. It is possible that the new bourgeoisie might believe that fascist style state repression is required to consolidate their dictatorship. They might prefer the Yeltsin agenda. The imperialists certainly do. Hopefully though serious opposition might come from the working class. A workers united front is a matter of urgency - now! It is possible that the new bourgeoisie might use the fascists to contain or smash the working class. This is a very real option. Zhirinovskiy could well hire himself to Yeltsin, to do his dirty work. Zhirinovskiy's success will depend on how successful Yeltsin appears to be in fulfilling the requirements to re-establish a proper running capitalist Russia. Or alternatively, the success of the class conscious working class in smashing them.

Whilst we must not consider that Zhirinovskiy winning inevitable, he remains a serious threat to working people in Russia. He must not be ignored because of the stupidity of much of his rhetoric. Remember Joh Bjelke-Petersen used to sound pretty stupid too! Well Zhirinovskiy is far more dangerous than Joh ever was. Zhirinovskiy and his forces must be crushed - now! Or the working class in Russia faces being crushed.

The success of Zhirinovskiy exposes the thorough and utter reactionary nature of Yeltsin's counter-revolution. gratuitously complements Hardy for supporting land rights. Yet during the fifties and sixties Henderson's mates, right wingers like Santamaria and the NCC fought Hardy, against land rights, tooth and nail.

Despite political flaws, there is no denying his lifelong commitment to the oppressed. Political lessons can be learned from his lifelong struggle. We hope that these lessons are learnt so the oppression, exploitation and misery that Frank so genuinely hated, can be banished from the world for good.

Fascists show their ugly faces in Victoria

LAST YEAR THERE WERE two small confrontations between leftists and fascists in the suburbs of Melbourne. The main organisers of antifascist demos were the International Socialist Organisation. In Brunswick due to this intervention, fascists were prohibited from wearing their uniforms in a pub. In Northcote, there was a physical confrontation between leftists and fascists where the left (according to the Spartacist League) "acquainted them with the pavement".

The growth of fascism in Victoria is indeed of concern. Fascism anywhere must be considered dangerous. By making a stand in Victoria, the fascists are taking on the working class in what has been the strongest left-wing state. Fascists have been strong in Queensland. There they have a social base of

small farmers and provide a racist service “dealing with” the Black people through terror and murder. But, in Queensland the system has been effective in containing and smashing the union movement. There is no need for extra-parliamentary action. The prospects for fascist organisations actually taking power are limited.

In Victoria the situation exists where the main political representative of the working class, the Labor Party, has proved itself to be bankrupt. As we have shown in RED (the Lessons of Cain, RED 21) Labor intervened with a perspective of monetary intervention that fundamentally didn't work. It was Kerner that began the attacks that Kennett continued. The Left is fighting these attacks militantly. But it is doing so with no political direction. The direction of bureaucrats such as Halfpenny is to demobilise struggle. He aims to get left-wing activists and workers to fall in behind Labor. Understandably, many will resist this. But a militant left devoid of political direction will go nowhere. The militant left is still an embarrassment to Kennett. And as the events at Richmond High School show, he will use legal means, the power of the state, to repress the left.

The fascists are waiting. They are preparing to show that their methods can attack the working class and the left more efficiently than the state. The fascists are seeking to provide a counter-revolutionary service to the ruling class. They could succeed if Kennett does not act decisively enough for the bosses' liking.

The growth of fascism in Victoria must be regarded as serious. Many leftists, Black people, migrants, Gays and working class people will be physically attacked. However even more serious is fascism's historic role of smashing the working class.

The growth of fascism in Victoria must be regarded as serious. Many leftists, Black people, migrants, Gays and working class people will be physically attacked. The ISO due to their high profile student militancy and lack of working class base are just the sort of organisation the fascists would pick on to boost their credentials. However even more serious is fascism's historic role of smashing the working class.

To fight fascism in Victoria serious conclusions must be drawn about the failings of Cain Labor. It must be remembered that Kennett is only continuing what Cain's successor Joan Kirner began — massive cutback, and privatisation of the public sector. As a consequence many thousands of State employees were thrown on the scrap heap. A working class tied to their perspective of the Laborites will only assist the fascists expose to desperate sections of the middle class, the weakness of the working class. Fascism must be fought physically. To do this a united front must be organised aimed at mobilising the working class for action. The aim of this united front must be to acquaint the fascists with the pavement. The British Anti Nazi League which ISO promote is not such a united front. It is a class collaborationist popular front. We don't need unity with liberals (large or small l) or clergy. On the contrary such unity will compromise any attempt to seriously fight them.

Frank Hardy

FRANK HARDY DIED in January. He had an active and interesting life. He was famous as an author and popular humourist. He was especially famous for the novel *Power without Glory* and his victorious court case in its defence. However we think his major achievements to be; standing up for communism during the cold war, standing up for the poor and oppressed, and standing up against the crimes of Stalin.

Communist Tendency honours his lifelong commitment; even though we consider his record flawed. Frank Hardy stood up against stalinism when crimes such as the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia were exposed. But he never made a consistent Marxist analysis of stalinism. As a result, his criticisms either played into the hands of the right liberals whose logic was counter revolution, or it was interpreted that stalinism could be reformed. In one of his more recent campaigns, Frank as virtually a one man

band aimed to "save the Communist Party" Of course he was against CPA leadership of liberalised liquidation into middle class movements and their support for the Accord. But what he counterposed was nostalgia for the CPA of the

forties or fifties, without blind allegiance to Moscow. Frank could not see the eighties liquidation was logic of the CP stalinist strategy of the past that he was nostalgic for. He acted therefore as a left wing of stalinism.

There was an obituary for Frank in the Sydney Morning Herald by that sickening cold war scribbler Gerard Henderson. Henderson is a man who knows how to use trendy phraseology to curry favour with the ex radical middle class. His aim is to seduce them to the extreme Labor right. He argues that despite Frank's support for Black land rights, Frank was "on the side of the oppressor" He is referring to his support for the Soviet Union. This is sickening hypocrisy. Firstly, it was not clear in the fifties, the real facts concerning Stalin's repression of nationalities. Frank understandably did not believe Henderson's mate fascist lover Bob Santamaria. He was, like many, sucked in to stalinist propaganda. It is easy to condemn in retrospect. When Hardy did find out, he condemned. However the main source of exploitation and oppression throughout the world was and is the United States of America. Henderson is an ideological prop for imperialism. Henderson gratuitously complements Hardy for supporting land rights Yet during the fifties and sixties Henderson's mates, rightwingerslike the NCC and Santamaria fought Hardy tooth and nail Despite political flaws, there is no denying his lifelong commitment to the oppressed. Political lessons can be learned from these struggles. We hope that these lessons are learned so the oppression, exploitation and misery that Frank so genuinely hated, can be vanished from the world for good.

An open letter to the Permanent Revolution Group

THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION GROUP of New Zealand, section of the International Bolshevik Tendency has a long history. It starts in the early seventies with a split in the New Zealand Spartacist League between Bill Logan and Adaire Hannah who supported the International Spartacist Tendency (since renamed International Communist League) and Owen Gager. Logan and Hannah formed the Spartacist League Australia and New Zealand. Along with David Scott and comrades from the USA they migrated to Australia. SLANZ intervened on the Australian left to split and fuse subjectively revolutionary elements. They published Australasian Spartacist. After going to England to found the Spartacist League/Britain Bill Logan was charged with "gross moral turpitude" and expelled from the I.S.T. These charges were based on his alleged practice as a leader of SLANZ.

The Permanent Revolution Group is in solidarity with the political record of SLANZ and the I.S.T. The I.S.T, they argue, was fundamentally orthodox up until 1983 when US troops were intervening in Lebanon. They do disassociate from the organisational practices of the Logan/Hannah SLANZ leadership. However they claim that these were the norm in the I.S.T. The specific charges laid by I.S.T. against Logan are not, to our knowledge, publically answered in any I.B.T. or P.R.G. publication.

Permanent Revolution Group claim to have made organisational corrections. They claim that their internal practice is not in any way bureaucratic. However they have not made, nor see the obligation to make any serious evaluation of the SLANZ record. Couldn't bureaucratic errors have led to political ones? Making a political balance sheet of the SLANZ record could be invaluable from the point of view of group education anyway. But we find that the PRG's presumption that bureaucratic organisational errors did not lead to political errors to be staggering. Bill Logan's comment when asked why P.R.G. was making no balance sheet was "because life's too short". Well we think that life's too short to be making the same mistakes again!

SLANZ's errors were immense. In fact they were fundamental. It lacked an understanding of Marxism.

Through their paper Australasian Spartacist (ASp) we got plenty of stories - how the S.L.L. violated workers' democracy; how John McCarthy (leader of the Mandeliste Communist League) was inconsistent in his characterisation of the Labor Party; how the Communist League was inconsistent in its defense of Black victims of state repression because of its desire to tail the Black movement, how the S.W.P. was inconsistent in building a broad movement

in defense of victims of repression in Chile when it excluded from the platform, views critical of the popular front perspective of Salvador Allende. Now most of these criticisms have a validity. And they should have been raised. Very rarely however was there anything resembling a Marxist analysis of the tendencies SLANZ was trying to regroup in Australasian Spartacist.

Apart from the Healyite Socialist Labour League (who sealed its members off from criticism with a blood line) the closest tendency to SLANZ was the Communist League. Let's give this tendency a bit of a scrutiny.

The Communist League developed in sympathy with a whole militant layer of workers surfacing during the late sixties and early seventies. At the end of the sixties, the long boom was coming to an end.

Unemployment, mass unemployment, was becoming a feature of Australian society. Simultaneously Australia was being defeated in Vietnam. It was losing to the Stalinist-led national Liberation Front. This stimulated mass defiance within the Australian working class. It was this sort of spirit that released Clarrie O'Shea. The ALP leadership was forced left to play its role of tying workers to the system. However, sections of the working class were not bought off. They wanted to defy the incomes plans of Clyde Cameron and the desire of Labor tops to integrate unions into the capitalist state. At the time the Communist Party of Australia put on a strongly anti-Labor face (albeit confused). This confusion was partly deliberate as the CPA wanted to both differentiate from Labor and adapt to sections of the Labor Left.

The CPA had a profound influence over this layer. This was understandable as the CPA was linked to the Vietnamese Stalinism which stimulated this radicalisation in the first place. Whilst only a relative few actually joined the CPA, the CPA-influenced the militancy of the N.S.W. Builders Labourers' Federation, the metal workers in the Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union, the power workers of ECCUDO, building workers in Queensland, the Workers' Control Movement as well as resident action and petty bourgeois radical movements. CPA militancy was exposed by its ties to the bureaucracy. For example in June 1973, AMWU Assistant secretary Laurie Carmichael was forced to apologise to the car workers at Ford Melbourne for agreeing to a very minimal wage deal behind their backs. Only a month earlier at a mass conference he proclaimed his adherence to workers' control and self-management! Actions like this turned militants *away* from the CPA.

The Communist League fundamentally adapted to that layer who went beyond the CPA. Oh yes! There were plenty . of statements in their paper *Militant* on how "It is our job to arm the vanguard politically" etc. They meant it. But their "politicisation" was totally inadequate. This was shown by their programme for workers control. "No to a wage freeze...no to incomes policy" This programme is totally insufficient in breaking workers from reformism. Many militant workers then would have opposed the incomes policies but still supported the capitalist state. They may have opposed some of the policies of the reformists. But their consciousness remained within a reformist framework. This was shown by the fact that when Whitlam Labor was under attack, these same militants rallied to Labor. And "opposition to Laborism" both from the CL and their proclaimed vanguard— collapsed. The Communist League like the CPA abandoned any politically independent position to mobilise workers around the banner of "fighting Fraser" in other words behind the banner of Labor

An effective struggle against the Communist League required a Marxist critique of their total political framework. This includes an overall analysis of Australian capitalism, the collapse of the post war boom and Australian manufacturing, Australian stalinism and the effects of Vietnamese stalinism, the Whitlam Government and reformism and as well, of course of that militant layer that the CL proclaimed as the vanguard. This SLANZ didn't do, Instead we got plenty of examples of their tactical failings and inconsistencies. It is true that SLANZ attacked in general the Mandelbrot notion of a "new mass vanguard" But nowhere was there any indication of a Marxist critique of the method of the Communist League. In fact you said in *ASp* June 1974 that the CL and SLL had "fundamentally the same politics" Well they are both centrist. But fundamentally, this is not true, The SLL were an extreme left wing of reformism. They were a reconciliation between Trotskyism and Labourism which pandered to chauvinism. Because you were unable to make a Marxist analysis you were unable to regroup the Communist League. And SLANZ failed in its stated objective — to regroup the subjectively revolutionary left.

We raise the Communist League as an example. But it be said that SLANZ had a revolutionary analysis. SLANZ characterised the Communist Party as "destalinised reformism". This is superficial. The CPA had broken from Moscow fundamentally to the right But it was still tied to the stalinist movement through its ties to the VWP. Leading members especially Laurie Aarons considered that they were applying the Vietnamese road to Australian conditions. The CPA's role in the antiwar movement was dictated by the diplomatic needs of the Vietnamese stalinists. Although its analysis of the CPA was out SLANZ, to its credit, pointed out the stalinist nature of the NLF and defended the Vietnamese Trotskyists.

SLANZ failed to make a Marxist analysis. on such questions Australian capitalism in general as well as specific issues such as Whitlam Government (why it was elected, its strategy and why it got sacked.) It had no analysis on issues such as unemployment Steve Haran CPA member who got expelled for fighting for Spartacist politics, argued that such an analysis was unnecessary as Australia was not qualitatively different from advanced capitalist countries. He is wrong on two accounts. Australia is a colony with a mini imperialist domain. But irrespective a Marxist analysis is required of the country you are working in, in the context of its position within world capitalism. Otherwise a political programme is dead.

"Australia is not a colony" "It has one of the highest standards of living in the world" said *ASp*. Welt Trotsky in his *Manifesto of the Fourth International* (Writings 39-40) argued that Canada "with all due respect to the British Crown" was becoming an "integral part of the United States" He then pointed out that Australia was going down the same path as Canada. In 1939 the Fourth International publication *New International* features articles by S Bollard and N Origlasso concerning the nature of Australian capitalism. Both of the articles have flaws. But they both analyse the links between Australian parties such as National and Country to comprador and imperialist capital. Both writers agree with the Communist Left categorisation of Australia as simultaneously a colony and a mini imperialist power. Despite faults both writers had a frame work which you

totally lack. They analyse class forces, draw out the link between political relationships and the revolutionary conclusions for the proletariat.

You have attacked Owen Gager as a “crackpot chauvinist” for considering Australia to be a colony and his support for demands which complete the bourgeois democratic revolution. These he put on the agenda as part of a Trotskyist programme.

Let's quote from the Canadian Trotskyists, the Socialist Policy Group:

“A National Program for the CCF...

.2) We should champion complete Canadian Independence.

The Privy Council in England has still the right to veto

Canadian legislation and steadily uses that power to encourage the Hepburns and other provincial sectorialists to dodge national responsibility. The Canadian workers and farmers need complete freedom from the Privy Council. We must advocate abolition of all Privy Council powers to interfere in Canada.”

(Cited from Trotskyism and the CCF/NDP Revolutionary Trotskyist Bulletin no 3 Trotskyist League of Canada).

The November 11 1975 constitutional crisis exposed your bankruptcy. SLANZ argued that democratic demands for a republic were “non class” and not to be raised. You argued that the CIA had nothing to do with the sacking of Whitlam. This has been shown to be false.

No doubt you will claim in your defence that you fought for the Transitional Programme. But did you? In many circumstances you called for “nationalisation” instead expropriation. Even more serious is your persistent calls for “defensive general strikes” which you argue the bourgeois state wont attack. To the contrary Trotsky argued a general strike required education to go from the defensive to the offensive. He argued that general strikes required workers militias. There is nothing that Trotsky wrote under any circumstances to suggest he advocated “defensive general strikes”

However the point is that your programme is dead. For SLANZ and the PRG programme is espoused independent of any serious class analysis and independent of material relations.

This is true not just in Australia during the seventies but in New Zealand today. Your pamphlet against the CLNZ (before they changed their name to Workers Power) discusses the differing characterisation and tactical approaches to the New Labour Party. For PRG it is enough to classify it as a bourgeois workers party. You do not analyse its class roots. Bill Logan has indicated that when both PRG and CLNZ entered the NLP was new and its character unclear. May be! But you could have drawn conclusions.

Like CLNZ the Communist Tendency has an analysis that NLP was an embryonic popular front. We believe this to be so for the following reasons. New Zealand is a colony. In the epoch of imperialism the bourgeoisie in most circumstances no longer plays a progressive role. The New Zealand bourgeoisie is a comprador bourgeoisie as it has no intention of breaking NZ from imperialism, completing the bourgeois democratic revolution. In countries such as New Zealand the banner of the national bourgeoisie (as opposed to the comprador bourgeoisie) has been taken up by bourgeois workers parties such as the Labour Party. With its massive shifts to the right Labour as abandoned even any national bourgeois perspective. New Labour has taken up the banner. The NLP does not physically contain the national bourgeoisie but it aspires to represent their interests. This is why it is a popular front in embryo.

There was a lot of unclarity about its formation. Revolutionaries had a responsibility to intervene. Revolutionary intervention required a ruthless struggle against the bourgeois politics of Anderton. You have talked about a “united front with Anderton” May we ask, on what basis? You don't discuss the context in Against Centrism, you just pose your desire abstractly. Its not as if fascism was on the agenda! Any deal which prevent exposure of hie reactionary nationalist politics is counterproductive.

CLNZ had a similar analysis to Communist Tendency. It considered New Zealand a semicolony instead of a colony which we find inaccurate. It would be surprising if they didn't raise their frame work in the discussion. You debate terminology. You throw in examples of the popular front from Spain and the Russian revolution without any reference to class context! You don't address class analysis. You provide no evidence that you have any!

You reject our characterisation for China, Cuba, Vietnam, Kampuchea (etc) Workers and peasants state. To call them degenerated workers states we find inaccurate. Do you agree that the strategy for the East was liquidating the interests of the working class into a block behind the banner of the peasantry and the national bourgeoisie. The programmes of these fronts were thoroughly bourgeois. But under the pressure of events

these formations went further than their programme and expropriated the bourgeoisie. But they did not establish proletarian dictatorship. To call them "degenerated" or "deformed workers states" implies that somehow a dictatorship of the proletariat was established which under counter-revolutionary pressure got deformed. The dictatorship of the proletariat never occurred in Vietnam so the state formed after the revolution must be transitional to proletarian dictatorship—a workers and peasants state. What is the consequence of our classification? We are merely pointing out that peasant interests are reflected within the bureaucracy as a conducting medium for counter-revolution. In China during the Beijing massacres Deng used his social base amongst the peasantry to control the student upsurge. In Poland, not a

workers and peasants state, Rural Solidarity in Poland were the extreme right wing opponents of the bureaucracy which had no significant base in the peasantry..

The Hannah/Logan SLANZ was an economist. In polemics with Owen Gager and the Left Tendency of the CPA, you argued that trade unions have no inherent limitations" and "the Transitional Programme has the answer to economism. The dynamic of the trade union struggle is not revolutionary. The Transitional Programme is only revolutionary if it is raised in the context of breaking workers from

their politics. Workers no matter how militant on the trade union level still support the dictatorship of capital. They will do so until broken politically. This requires building a party and not a trade union caucus or rank and file group. In his article Third Period of Comintern Errors Trotsky points out that confusion between immediate trade union and political struggle constitutes a betrayal. As we have shown in our pamphlet Marxism and the Spartacist League SLANZ made such an error during the LaTrobe Valley power workers strike.

The international Bolshevik Tendency claim that the International Spartacist Tendency was orthodox in programme "up until 1983" There is no analysis of the Third Indochina War of 1979. Would the IBT have joined the 1ST in demanding "USSR HONOUR YOUR TREATY" (to Vietnam) Can you not agree that their demand amounts to a call for war between two states which, we all agree, have broken from capitalism? Perhaps we don't have the appropriate issue of your publications. But if you agree with us, you cannot say the 1ST was orthodox in 1979.

The Permanent Revolution Group (like SLANZ) is a middle class student regroupment outfit. It has tough polemic and rhetoric — but no Marxism. Your "analysis" reflects a total poverty. You will no doubt be controversial and "polarise the left" with your strident rhetoric. But you will not organise the proletariat around revolutionary programme.

Communist Left and Communist Tendency as a principled Marxist record despite having even less resources than you. In a recent issue of RED, we show that the crisis in Victoria involving Kennetts attacks on awards and the public sector, stems from the economic crisis and the failure of Labour under Cain. We show the dynamics of how Cain developed his strategy and why this failed. We do this not as an academic exercise but so the left in Victoria can draw lessons. We show that there is no going back to Cain and that fighting the attacks consistently means breaking from Labor. Communist Tendency alone on the Australian left presented such an analysis.

Life is too short to be making the same errors again. We urge you to reassess your attitude to the Programme and the record of the Communist Left of Australia. As your "programmes" devoid of a materialist Marxist analysis are sterile and dead.

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