

For a REAL INVESTIGATION INTO BLACK DEATHS NOT A ROYAL COMMISSION COVER UP!

Workers Defence Now!

Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars are being offered to anyone who can help identify the killer of Australian Federal Police Assistant Commissioner Colin Winchester. The media has been flooded with reports about how loved ones live in fear every time their beloved police officer goes out on a mission. One cop dies and the media responds with hysterics. But what about the thousands of Black people who have been killed by the Police? As well, of course, there are the thousands who merely get bashed. Police terror is part of everyday life for thousands of Black people. The somewhat disproportionate concern for the death of a cop as compared to the death of thousands of Black people is deliberate. They want to legitimise state repression of the Black people.

In 1988 the Federal Government recognised that Black people were being killed and called a Royal Commission. This was prompted by Australia's Bicentenary. During 1988 the Australian Government tried to persuade not just all Australians but the world what a great and wonderful country Australia is. There were festivals, exhibitions and Expo 88. But what about the Black people? The Hawke government knows that unless it can present a serious answer to this question millions of Asians, Africans and Pacific Islanders will not be impressed, no matter how spectacular the pageantry. The Muirhead Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody was Hawke's attempt to show that his concern was more than just verbal and that he was seriously trying to deal with the problems of the Black people.

In December the Muirhead Commission (which, despite the retirement of Mr. Justice Muirhead, is not over) brought down some major recommendations. As it shall be shown, these recommendations are a smoke screen. In no way will they stop or even impede Black people being killed. — "Abolition of the offense of public drunkenness and changes in the law to force police to consider alternatives to jail for drunk people." This sounds progressive and taken in another context it would be. However, it blames Black people for their own deaths and diverts from the fact that these deaths are murders. It takes quite a bit of dexterity for anyone to hang themselves. How is it that so many 'drunk' Blacks are doing it? Because the police are doing it for them. No doubt the recommendation will be looked upon by many as removing a pretext for their arrest. Well it is very easy for the cops to find another one, "vagrancy", "jay walking", or even "assault". These are easy charges to lay on any one who the cops find an inconvenience. Cops are killing Blacks in custody. not alcohol.

"All police cells should be upgraded and redesigned to reduce suicide opportunities". One Black has recently been found dead in one of these cells "redesigned to reduce suicide opportunities". These deaths are murders.

"Police and prison officer recruits should be vetted to eliminate racists". No doubt the more blatant examples of racism will be singled out, such as an offensive picture of Black Brisbane Broncos rugby league star Joe Kilroy with a noose around his neck and a flagon in his hands, stuck up in a police locker— room, will be singled out for attention and those coppers who are less discrete about their language may be singled out. No doubt coppers will work at a way of passing an "non racist" test that may be introduced, that is if it is introduced. The whole police force is an instrument for racist oppression. This fact is not changed by removing some of the more blatant and crude forms of this

racism. In fact, Muirhead, by his reforms, wants to legitimise the police force. By recruiting more Black cops and prison officers apparently things will be different. It will also make no difference whatsoever if policy officers study Black culture. It is useless to expect the State to be anything else but a repressive agent for imperialist capitalism against working class and the Black people. We need an enquiry on our terms, so we can do something about these attacks. The only effective weapon we have to beat the racist state is workers defence.

On the surface it would appear that the newly formed National Unions Coalition with the Aboriginal Movement (N.U.C.A.M.) may be a step in this direction. However, anyone looking to this alliance for direct action to defend Black people is going to be out of luck. At the launching of N.U.C.A.M., Stan Sharkey B.W.I.U. bureaucrat and Association for Communist Unity member put it as follows: "One of the media asked me if those unions associated with N.U.C.A.M. are going to take industrial action if the government does not come up with a treaty?"

Well, let me say that what is required to ensure that the wrongs are corrected is much more complex than organising a strike. What is needed is a campaign of awareness within the community, as I said earlier the link between Aboriginal land rights and Aboriginal culture.'

"We need to do much more to answer the racism, the crude racism that is still this day being projected by the Copelands and others of this world and there is going to be a long complex political struggle necessary if we are going to succeed." Quoted in T.U.C.A.R. newsletter 9/88.

The point of long complex political education is to do something and to win allies to that action. Education which is counterposed to doing something is worse than useless. The fact is that while Stan Sharkey educates about the merits of Black culture (if he does that) Black people will continue to face attack, from the capitalist system and the capitalist state. The best education Stan Sharkey could give is to argue for direct action by showing that a white working class that allows Blacks to become under attack from the capitalist system without solidarity cannot fight the capitalist system. But of course he has no intention of doing this because he has given up any desire to fight capitalism a long time ago. Australian workers have fought for the Black people, although inconsistently and not in a class-conscious way. It's time the tradition was begun again. N.U.C.A.M. is in reality a bureaucrats mutual admiration society. The Black bureaucrats show that they can deliver the Trade Union bureaucracy. The Trade Union bureaucracy use it to display its antiracist credentials.

Building real solidarity is literally a question of life and death. Workers Defense must begin now! Had there been workers and Black defense within the Redfern area the cops would be less willing to pursue their brutal actions, knowing that these would have consequences. As long as the Black people continue to remain isolated then the easier it is for the State to attack them. Those Black bureaucrats who support a police presence, or oppose anyone doing something about it, should be removed.

For a real Workers Commission into State repression against the Black people.

For organised Workers Defence against Police attacks.

For the right of self-determination for the Black people.

Northern Territory Blacks under attack

A businessman is threatening to sue the Northern Lands Council, the organisation of Blacks which administers much of Arnhem Land. Mr. Frank Wheeler, an executive director of a machinery company, was refused permission to enter Aboriginal waters with his speed boat, He is suing N.L.C. for \$500,000. He points out that two others were allowed to take a boat trip in October. This case has serious implications for the Black people. It is an acid test of how real control of their land actually is. If the N.L.C. loses, not just will they be \$500,000 out of pocket, but their lands will be forced open to any boating speedster, or four-wheel drive fanatic who feels like a joy ride. The Communist Tendency supports fully the Black peoples right, not just to control this land but to leave Australia if they so desire. We support self-determination for the Black people and for the Torres Strait Islanders. Whilst this can only be fully achievable under socialism the limited extent it is achievable now must be defended and extended. This attack must be fought all the way. Not just by the N.L.C. but by working class solidarity.

ACOA Deeming defeated. Hawke's allies win

The Administrative and Clerical Officers Association is a key union covering Social Security staff and other public servants. Unfortunately, it doesn't cover all Social Security staff. Others are members of the Australian Public Service Association (A.P.S.A.), This division is used by the government (their boss) to frustrate strike action, The December election saw victory to the so-called "Activist" team led by Wendy Caird over the Rank and File team led by Trevor Deeming. In the New South Wales Branch the victory was clear and across the board. What the victory means is wholesale co-operation between the A.C.O.A. in N.S.W. and the Hawke government. Brian Robson, the Federal Secretary, is a close friend of Brian Howe, the Minister of Social Security. Wendy Caird is his comrade. The stakes are high. The Hawke government stands for an attack on Social Security. Central Office is in the process of being abolished. Instead there is to be a system of large regional offices and local shopfront offices. Hundreds of jobs are to be lost in this process. Also the services to beneficiaries will be cut drastically. For example, if the D.S.S. make an error, beneficiaries will instead of going to the local suburb have to go in some cases twenty kilometres to the Regional Office to see their file. The file will not be available at the local shopfront office. Then, when they get there, it could take up to a week for them to consult the relevant material. Then, when all this is checked and forms are filled out, any alteration is subject to the approval of the Regional Manager, who has absolute control. This amounts to a massive attack on both Social Security workers and Social Security recipients.

These attacks prompted the longest and most militant strike in the history of Social Security. Unfortunately, the action was cut short. Trevor Deeming agreed to a deal, which meant the saving of some of the jobs in exchange for the cessation of strike action. His agreement was subject to the ratification of Social Security workers. Unfortunately, at a mass meeting of strikers in Sydney his deal was accepted by a narrow majority. Of course, the country is more right wing and so a statewide vote would have been clearly for a return to work. The Caird leadership uses the political backwardness of the country offices to deter militancy. However, it does this cynically. It was the Cotter leadership (previous to Deeming) which maintained the country offices in a state of backwardness. The leadership of Trevor Deeming was the decisive factor that swayed the Sydney meeting to return to work. Yet there was no objective need to return. Workers were still prepared to continue striking. There had not been a campaign to bring out other public servants in solidarity. The strike hadn't even been spread to the C.E.S. Victory required an all at strike of all public sector

workers. Deeming gave up before this had been even attempted. What was extremely serious was the fact that not only did Deeming cease strike action, he also abandoned any campaign against the Hawke government plans for Social Security. Strikes can't last forever. Even with the best tactics strikers can be defeated. However, in no way should this signify abandonment of struggle against such a reactionary proposal. Not one job should be bargained away. If strike action proves difficult, other tactics should be introduced. Yet for Deeming the (unnecessary) end of the strike meant the end of struggle. This is selling out.

For revolutionary communists any leader who makes such a treacherous sellout in warrants recognition as part of the "rank and file". It is the responsibility of revolutionaries in the Social Security to expose Deeming as nothing less than a treacherous bureaucrat. There is no case whatsoever forgiving Deeming even critical support during the last A.C.O.A. election. It was the responsibility of revolutionaries to expel him from the rank and file group and, if that fails, put forward a principled candidate. To do anything less is to be tainted with Deeming's betrayals. The Far Left have a strong presence in the A.C.O.A. They all, including the International Socialists, Socialist Action, Socialist Echo and the Communist League, vocally opposed Deeming's call for a return to work. Yet, when it comes to the election, they all roll up behind Deeming. The International Socialists in their paper *The Socialist* point out Deeming's refusal to call an all-out strike. Yes, this a correct criticism. However, his selling out of Social Security workers jobs is somewhat more serious. I.S. have had cadre in that union for over ten years. Why don't they have their own candidates? It is clear that I.S. haven't really broken from the bureaucrats, who they claim to condemn. They 'oppose' them yet don't raise their banner lest they be alienated from them.

The Communist League have an article in their paper *Socialist Press* written by their only A.C.O.A. activist and their recognised leader h1l Sandford. This article does not mention the name Trevor Deeming once. It is therefore unclear to say the least whether he is included as part of the "strong base (that) exists to build the fight against this government". "In this fight the members will continue to come into direct conflict with both Caird and Robson and other left supporters of this government", we're told. But the point is that Trevor Deeming is a key obstacle to workers in Social Security learning the political lessons. Making no comment about Trevor Deeming in an article on A.C.O.A. only enhances his credentials. As long as the rank and file refuse to act against Deeming, then they are his prisoners and are seen understandably as party to his sellouts. In another article *Socialist Press* urges "a fight against the Trade Union leaders who have acted as the policemen to impose wage-cutting demands of the Hawke government". But it appears that this does not apply to the left bureaucrat Deeming, who was until recently N.S.W. State Secretary of the A.CO.A. Sandford attacks Caird's refusal to support an all-out strike, but Trevor Deeming refused to carry this out also.

There is as well another important aspect of communist work in the A.C.O.A. It involves the unemployed. Social Security workers are not merely workers. They police the unemployed by implementing measures which restrict their movement to a new area, their sex lives, their personal behaviour (whether or not they are considered acceptable to look for work). They can and do deprive unemployed people of what meagre amount the dole is. They determine whether single parents are eligible by deciding that an affair makes them a defacto couple. They police how single parents (usually mothers) look after their children. In these capacities Social Security workers act as part of the policing mechanism of the system. Communists in the Department of Social Security have a responsibility to blackban all attacks against the unemployed pensioners and single parents. No

one should be cut off their benefit, No one should be deprived of their existence Unemployed should not be handled and harassed by the State. This is a fundamental question for Social Security workers. They are either part of the State or against the State. If they are party to the attacks on the unemployed, then they can't fight the State when it attacks them. Deeming has not made a consistent and categoric stand in support of the unemployed (by, for example, banning cutting unemployed off the dole). In fact, his ally, Allison Adler, actually rejects any real solidarity! The Far Left have not fought for the unemployed either. It is not enough to be consistent unionists. Communism requires more than just improvements in wages and conditions for Social Security workers. A communist intervention requires breaking Social Security workers from being part of the capitalist system. A nucleus of a real communist party must be built among Social Security workers.

The spartacist League and Marxism continued from RED 4

The two camp theory of the world laads to Stalinism. The Spartacist call for a war between the Soviet Union and China has already been pointed out in this article. However, as well as this, the SparLacist League have been apologists for the Vietnamese Stalinist bureaucracy Tha' held a demo once, demanding Pol Pot Out of the U.N. No communist should be in an'way or have anything to do with what Lenin called a 'thieves picnic', but the point of the demo was that it should recognise the Vietnam backed Heng Samrin! Recently their September issue of Australian Spartacist is lavish with its praise for the Vietnamese invasion however it turns a blind eye to the real threat of capitalist restoration which comes both from Pol Pot and the Vetnamese sponsored regime. Since 1979 the

Vietnamese have supported a nrrke,. economy, a stock exchange, free elections and any government so long as it excludes Pol Pot. In other words, they threaten Capitalism.

The Spartacist League hail the Red Army in Afghanistan. Revolutionary communists give their Muslem guerilla opponents no support whatsoever. However. the Red Army has discredited the name of communism by propping up one wing of the ruling elite. However, the Communist Tendency does not call for withdrawal but for unity between Afghanistani proletarians and proletarians in the Red Army for revolution, The Spartacists have not thought about revolution, only in terms of the capitalist regime propped uc by the Stalinists or the guerillas backed by imperialism.

Another notable Spartacist League convergence with Stalinism concerns their attitude to the Polish Trade Union Solidarnosc (Solidarity). Understandably, the working class of Poland were angry at enforced austerity due to Poland's expanding foreign debt and bureaucratic inefficiency", However, the programme of their leadership, including Loch Walesca, was and is reactionary and utopian. Walesca has had illusion in collaboration both with foreign imperia lists and with the Stalinist bureaucracy Solidarnosc supports market socialism. Yugoslavia has market socialism, but it also has massive inflation and unemployment This is no gain whatsoever to the working class, although it is not capitalism. The leadership of Soiidarnosc has to be fought. The question is how? For the Spartacist League 'it means giving military support to the bureaucracy, to smash it down. When there was the threat of Soviet invasion it opposed "violence directed agai nst soldiers or officers (which) would sabotage the proletarian cause' Australasian Spartacist, May IUST. The working class in Poland was not armed. What the Spartacists demanded was Polish state repression of the working class. Events in Poland have shown that the imperialists distrust the working class, even when led by reactionaries. It is an abomination of Marxism to arque that the orqanisd working class could in power create an alien social system. The most probable outcome of a bid for power would be a split.

Because we want a split so as to create a healthy Polish workers movement to create political revolution We can't support that movement being crushed by bureaucrats

It is of no surprise that the Spartacist League honoured the death of Stalinist bureaucrat Andropov with such guarded compliments as "He curbed the excesses of the bureaucracy." "He made no overt betrayals to imperialism." "He sought to increase productivity." Andropov deserves no honour apart from being regarded as a counter-revolutionary bureaucrat. He sought to increase productivity. Yes, he also increased discipline over the working class. And as for making no overt betrayals to imperialism, the fact that he was not involved in a sell out of the magnitude of the Spanish Revolution was more because of lack of historical opportunity.

Another feature of note is their economism, their refusal to understand the distinction between Trade Union and political struggle. For them Trade Unions have "no inherent limitations". Steve Haran. For them Trade Union leaderships are the leadership of the working class. In Revolutionary Communist Bulletin No. 2, Joseph Seymour argues as follows: "Jesson's article perpetuates the myth that Trade Unions are simply bargaining agents for particular groups of workers and are inherently political." "While this may be true in the nineteenth century when labour unions were weak, defensive organisations, it is not true now. In all advanced capitalist countries and particularly in countries like New Zealand which have mass social-democratic parties, trade unions exercise considerable influence in all aspects of political life." "The task is not as Jesson contends to 'divert the economic struggle to a political struggle', it is to overthrow the conservative and reformist bureaucracy and pursue a revolutionary policy on both the industrial and political level." "To assert that Trade Unions are inherently parochial and economist organisations is undialectical." "To say that unions as such (i.e. as bargaining agencies for particular groups of workers) cannot be revolutionary is a tautology." "The point is that unions can give birth to other forms of organisation (e.g. parties, general strike committees, workers councils) and can provide the structure for workers insurrection," Bruce Jesson referred to was a member of the N.Z.S.L., who was part of the majority Gager wing.

The expression 'divert the economic struggle to a political struggle' comes not just from Jesson but from Lenin and it is Marx and Lenin who are under attack. Wages, Prices and Profit is one Marx's key works. An important conclusion is as follows: "As to the limitation of the working day in England, as in all other countries it has never been settled except by legislative interference." "put in all events the result would not have been achieved by private settlement between workingmen and capitalists." This very necessity of general political action affords the proof that in merely economic action capital is the stronger side." No, Marx was not talking about a situation when unions had 'little social power'. Both Gager and Jesson saw the need to work in the Trade Unions. But the point is that the dynamic of the existing struggle within trade unions is not revolutionary. What is avoided is the question of state power. No doubt some will argue that when trade unions picket lines are forced to confront the cops the question of state power is posed. In his article, A Third Period of Comintern Errors Writings 1930, Trotsky attacks precisely this view as a betrayal as follows:

"A political strike is not a strike in which communists carry out political agitation but a strike in which workers of all occupations and plants conduct a struggle for definite political aims. Revolutionary agitation on the basis of strikes is a task under all circumstances; but the participation of the workers is political, that is revolutionary strikes is one of the most advanced form of struggle and occurs only under exceptional circumstances." (emphasis CT).

“The identification of economic strikes with political strikes creates confusion which prevents the Trade Union leaders from correctly approaching economic demands.”

In the LaTrobe Valley power workers strike the Spartacist League argued “Like Hawke, the so called communist John Halfpenny has argued that this strike is not ‘political’. Halfpenny lies. The Age and the Financial Review at least know the truth. They know that the \$40 wage claim is a direct challenge to the indexation wage freeze and the government policy of cutting real wages.” S.L. Leaflet Reject the Sellout.

A strike for a \$40 wage rise is a trade union struggle. Of course what politics can fight for Trade Union demands is a vital question. However, in no way were the power workers fighting for a generalised demand which would have covered the whole of the working class, but a demand which could have been incorporated into their Trade Union Award. This is the most overt case of their economism, however not the only one. Against Fascism the Spartacist League call for Trade Union workers defence to acquaint the fascists with the pavement

Of course no revolutionary can oppose this. However, it’s simply not good enough. Whereas communism is revolutionary hence Fascism is the ideology of petty bourgeois despair. To defeat Fascism it is required to have a programme to win the petty bourgeois over to the proletarian vanguard. It is also required that revolutionaries challenge the chauvinism that the racists feed off. Immigration controls, import controls and all forms of racism must be consistently fought. If politically the balance of forces are more in our favour then the physical fight is easier to win. In Queensland when the SEQEB power workers were under attack the Spartacist League called for consistent picket line action, a break from the A.L.P., the Trade Union bureaucrats and the Prices and Incomes Accord. The Communist Left (from which the Communist Tendency is in continuity) showed that the weakness of the working class in Queensland was linked to the strong domination of multinational capital and strong rural section of the economy. Farmers gravitate to whoever is politically strongest and, due to a politically weak working class subordinate to the system and a failure to raise demands which show that problems they face such as mortgages can only be resolved by fighting for proletarian power. The Spartacist League perspective was consistent unionism, the Communist Left perspective was revolutionary communism.

Given that the Spartacist League are revisionist on the national question and are economist it is no accident that they revise Lenin’s analysis of the labour aristocracy. For the Spartacist League the term is virtually equivalent to a labour bureaucracy. Lenin showed that sections of the working class were bribed by imperialist super profits. He quotes Engels: ‘There are no workers parties here, only Conservatives and Liberal-Radicals and the workers gaily share the feast of England’s monopoly of the world market and the colonies.’ Spartacist League leader, D. Strahan, even denies the Protestant workers in Ireland are a labour aristocracy!

This article is not a complete critique of the Spartacist League. There are many areas of difference not dealt with (such as the Kerr Coup, Iran, Whether Black Land Rights are Equivalent to Bantustans in South Africa!). The purpose of this article is merely to analyse the main trends that constitute Spartacist revisionism. Whilst the Gager-Logan dispute has been referred to a proper assessment is beyond the scope of this article. But it must be said that whilst Gager’s stand contained errors and exaggerations he was orthodox on key political questions. The Spartacist League have been thoroughly dishonest. He is accused of “arming the people” ‘against the Trade Union Movement”.

These quotes are torn out of context. By arming of the people Sager meant working class and allies. Gager was “against the Trade Union Movement”, from the point of view of counter-posing a political party. The two quotes together as presented by Spartacist make him appear a union smasher. Using the same method one could falsify them by pointing out that they stood for “arming the workers” “against the independent women’s movement”. No! The Spartacist League absolutely do not stand for shooting down the women’s movement, but this is just the sort of falsification where this school of quotation addition may lead. In short, the Spartacist League are an exSchactmanite sect who are converging with Stalinism, liquidating into the Trade Union struggle and adapting to chauvinism. No doubt their tough rhetoric and organisational presence will make them a pole of attraction which will appeal to some people. But constructing a Marxist tradition is what they are not doing.