



Smash apartheid! For workers revolution!

Avenge black South African martyrs!

At daybreak on Thursday, June 9, the savagely racist South African regime lynched three militant anti-apartheid fighters of the African National Congress (ANC). Thelle Mogoerane, 23 years old, Jerry Mosololi, 25, and Marcus Motaung, 27, were sentenced to death for their participation in attacks on police stations as part of the recent ANC campaign of carefully selected and effective attacks on institutions of apartheid repression. The widespread support for the ANC and these militants among South African blacks was demonstrated when two hours before their execution bells pealed across Soweto. This massive black 'township' southwest of Johannesburg with a population of one and a half million was the focus of the 1976 black rebellion which swept across South Africa. Now the Soweto bells toll not only for these heroic anti-apartheid fighters but will sound the death knell for the hideously oppressive system they seek to overthrow.

The death sentences and hangings by the apartheid regime evoked outrage and protest throughout South Africa and the world. Braving the bloody machinery of repression 700 black students at the University of Zululand battled police and burned a police car. In a country where blacks have been stripped of every right, including symbolic expressions of national pride, where carrying the ANC emblem is an act of treason, 400 students marched through the streets of Durban carrying the banner of the ANC until they were scattered by the police. Fearing the spread of these protests to the black working masses, the South African government banned a rally in Soweto and subsequently prohibited all protests throughout the country for 48 hours.

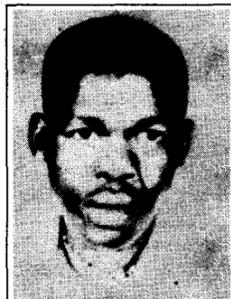
For in the black 'townships' like Soweto -- virtual prison labour camps -- there is concentrated a brutally oppressed but increasingly powerful black proletariat. In its hands are the means to break the shackles of apartheid. As Marx observed, capitalism creates in the industrial proletariat its own gravedigger. Nowhere is this more true than in South Africa. In its aspiration to develop a modern capitalist economy and to be a regional imperialist power, South Africa's white ruling class has been forced to recruit and train a concentrated black proletariat, thereby undermining the very institutions of apartheid (migrant labour laws, pass laws, the bantustan system) through which five million whites dominate, oppress and exploit 21 million blacks. The dramatic upsurge of the black trade-union movement in the past few years



has shaken this racist police state to its foundations.

Understanding that South Africa can easily explode, its bloody imperialist allies in the Thatcher government, the EEC and UN Security Council appealed to the Botha regime to stay the lynchings of the ANCers. It was certainly not out of concern for 'human rights' but for the survival of the apartheid state that Reagan and his dragon lady Jeane Kirkpatrick at the UN mildly rebuked their allies in Pretoria. The Washington-Pretoria axis has increasingly become an important part of US imperialism's anti-Soviet war drive, backed by Thatcher's government here in Britain. South Africa's top military man, General Constand Viljoen, claims that Russia has 'hijacked' the region's 'freedom movement'. Certainly General Viljoen and the rest of South Africa's white rulers keenly remember that in 1975-76 Soviet-backed Cuban troops turned back their attempt, actively supported by Washington, to conquer Angola. If Soviet-backed Cuban troops can hold South African imperialist ambitions at bay in Angola, imagine what a few divisions of the Soviet Army could do. The South African failure to take Angola was an important blow against the apartheid state. And every such blow contributes to unleashing the power of the South African black proletariat, the powerhouse for socialist revolution throughout the continent.

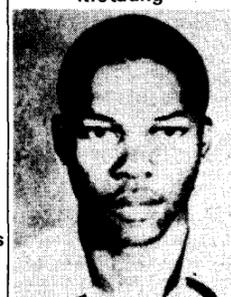
The Botha government and its imperialist allies have, of course, tried to brand the ANCers as 'terrorists' -- the same regime that imprisoned Nelson Mandela, the ANC president, on the notorious Robben Island for more than two decades. Recently he and five others



Mosololi



Motaung



Mogoerane

Striking South African gold miners under police guard. Black labour is the Achilles heel of apartheid.

have been entombed alive, kept isolated and confined together in a damp cell and not allowed out of doors for over a year. And contrast the recent actions of the ANC with the indiscriminate bombing in Maputo (Mozambique) and massacre in Maseru (Lesotho) by the apartheid butchers in Pretoria to see who are the mass murderers and who fights for human dignity and freedom. Unlike many other nationalist organisations who act in the name of the oppressed, the ANC has been highly selective, choosing real targets of imperialist domination and racist oppression in which innocent victims are minimised: a nuclear power plant, police stations, air force headquarters.

These are the police stations which contain the thousands of blacks arrested every day for petty violations of the apartheid pass and migratory labour laws as well as the 'political crimes' of supporting left-wing, labour, nationalist and democratic causes. In these police stations they are tortured, often to death, or sent to prisons where they are 'found' hanged like courageous white union organiser Neil Aggett. Further, the recent ANC actions were carried out with a sophistication that indicates a professional, highly trained cadre and wide support within South African society, including among elements of the white community, a fact which must really rattle the racist bigots of Pretoria.

The most important point is that made by

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Chilean masses awake ...p6

Mandel's USec: 'Solidarity' with NATO social democracy

Counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarnosc is hailed by many in the West: from Reagan, Thatcher and the pro-imperialist social-democratic parties to sundry fake 'revolutionaries'. Of the latter, perhaps none are more rabid than the followers of Ernest Mandel in the pseudo-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec). The USec's local supporters of the Socialist League, having shed their former International Marxist Group label in order to liquidate into the Cold War Labour Party, have copied the Solidarnosc logo for the masthead of their new paper. *Socialist Action* greeted the pope's recent anti-Communist pilgrimage with the front page banner 'Defend our unions! Katowice -- workers unfurl Solidarnosc banner during papal mass...' and a cartoon of the pontiff intoning 'Workers of the world unite!' They write that 'the message of Solidarnosc closely resembles our vision of socialism: the fight for an alternative to capitalism and Stalinism, for genuine workers democracy' (8 April).

The 'message of Solidarnosc' is clericalist, Polish nationalist anti-Communism, as a mere glance at a newspaper photo or television report of the papal visit shows. But *Socialist Action* and the rest of Mandel's followers are not suffering from short-sightedness. In the name of 'anti-Stalinism' these fake-Trotskyists are putting themselves forward as the left wing of imperialism's anti-Soviet war drive. Mandel himself is globetrotting from Europe to Canada and Australia preaching the unity of NATO-loyal social democrats and Catholic activists against the bureaucratic 'bosses' in the Soviet bloc. At conferences in Winnipeg and Melbourne Mandel went absolutely berserk in heated confrontations with our comrades of the Trotskyist League of Canada and Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand. What really drove him up the wall was our characterisation of Solidarnosc as a Polish company union for the CIA and bankers. Pounding the podium in Melbourne, flailing his arms and shouting at the top of his voice, Mandel ranted that Solidarnosc's clerical-nationalist leaders 'are the best socialists in the world' and screamed like the worst anti-Communist 'third campist',

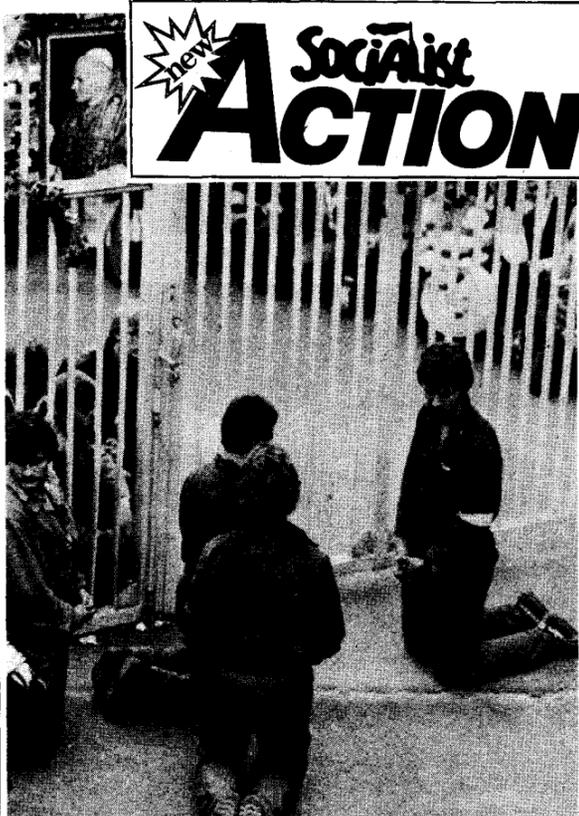
'Who are the bosses of the Polish factories today? The American imperialists? Are they ruling in Poland or is it the Polish bureaucrats? So what is a bosses' union in Poland? ... The bosses' unions in Poland are the state-governed unions led by the Polish bureaucracy.'

USec thieves fall out, again

Once an armchair guerrillaist, Ernest Mandel today is a demagogic Cold Warrior -- the pope's 'Trotskyist'. The European-centred Mandelites have thrown themselves whole hog into the 'solidarity with Solidarnosc' campaign of NATO social democracy, especially in Mitterrand's France. However their American bloc partners and rivals, Jack Barnes' Socialist Workers Party (US SWP), have been more circumspect about openly demonstrating their membership in the pro-Solidarnosc unholy alliance, perhaps so as not to give Fidel Castro too great displeasure. Barnes has officially denounced Trotskyism and written off the Mandelites as 'hopeless, irreformable sectarians', the better to pursue 'fusion' with the

unsuspecting Cuban and El Salvadoran CPs, the Sandinista government and tiny Grenada's New Jewel Movement. In one of his polemics against the Barnesites (who also support Solidarnosc), Mandel tries to paint them as Spartacists, who openly proclaimed 'Stop Solidarnosc counterrevolution'. He writes:

'The answer given by people like the "Spartacists", who capitulate to Stalinism, is clear: one cannot apply the united front tactic to the defence of Polish workers rights when their aggressor is the bureau-



'Solidarnosc' Action's 'vision of socialism'

cracy of a workers state.... They say we must not apply the workers united front tactic for the defence of trade unions, trade unionists and the workers right to strike in Poland because these workers are, in their great majority, reactionary ("pro-imperialist"). Their trade union is a "scab" one, and their strikes are "counterrevolutionary". It does not matter much if the Spartacists add: all this is the product of 35 years of "Stalinist madness". But since the "Stalinist madness" (that is, the bureaucratic dictatorial regime with all its political, economic and ideological byproducts) is hardly an affair of the past, such an "analysis" necessarily represents a rejection of any political revolution and of any defence of workers in Poland or in the other "Peoples Democracies" and in the USSR until an undefined future (when Stalinism's crimes stop producing "regrettable effects"?). ('Effective Solidarity with the Polish Workers and the Struggle Against Imperialism', [US SWP] *International Internal Discussion Bulletin* vol XVIII no 6,

September 1982)

This attempt by Mandel at a polemic against the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) is an exercise in confusionism, in part deliberately so since his main purpose is to tar Barnes' SWP with the brush of Spartacism. In the first place, as any reader of our material on Poland knows, the iSt has never maintained that Solidarnosc is the only and inevitable popular reaction to Stalinist rule. (It is Mandel who holds up clerical-nationalist Solidarnosc as a model for the workers movement everywhere.) From the 1979 Gdansk-centred general strike we have emphasised the radical differences and discontinuities between the present Polish crisis and the previous crises of Stalinist rule in Poland and elsewhere in East Europe.

Thus in 1956 the overwhelming majority of the Polish working class and intelligentsia genuinely wanted and believed in 'the broadest socialist democracy' promised by liberal-nationalist Stalinist Wladyslaw Gomulka. It was the endless broken promises of reform by all wings of the Polish bureaucracy which caused much of the working class to look towards the Catholic church and 'free world' imperialism for salvation. Equally obvious and striking are differences between Solidarnosc and the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. The Hungarian workers councils were for the most part led by long-time Communist cadre who were breaking from Stalinism in various directions. The forces of clerical-nationalist counterrevolution around Cardinal Mindszenty were relatively weak and widely despised among the urban proletariat and intellectuals.

By contrast, Solidarnosc was led from the outset by hardened anti-Communists trained and nurtured in the social-democratic and clerical-nationalist 'dissident' circles which flourished in Poland in the late 1970s under the protection of the Catholic church. When Anna Walentynowicz, whose firing sparked the Gdansk-centred August 1980 general strike, was asked by Western journalists if she was a socialist, she replied, 'I am a believer.' The first national congress of Solidarnosc voted down a proposal to include socialism as part of its programme. The term 'socialism' is never mentioned in its 43-page programme. Perhaps that's why Mandel calls them 'the best socialists in the world'. Every workers movement in Europe claims socialism as its ultimate goal, a necessary concession by the social-democratic and Stalinist bureaucracies to the anti-capitalist consciousness of their ranks. But Solidarnosc was characterised by an anti-socialist consciousness, the ideological predominance of clerical-nationalism, and strong illusions in the 'liberating' role of Western, especially American, imperialism.

Far from relegating political revolution in Poland (not to speak of elsewhere in the Soviet sphere) to some indefinite future, we have written that the near-bloodless suppression of Solidarnosc' bid for power has created an opportunity to break a section of the Polish working class from the current infatuation with Wojtyla's Vatican and Reagan's 'free world'. Thus we have insisted that now is a critical moment to create in Poland underground Trotskyist cells of an educational and propagandistic nature.

Workers united front with NATO?

As to Mandel's 'workers united front' with NATO, Trotskyists do not make united fronts against the Stalinist bureaucracy with anti-Soviet social democrats whose purpose is to whip up Cold War hysteria. This was clearly explained by the then-revolutionary US SWP of James Cannon when the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 was crushed by the Soviet army. At that time the social-democratic Reuther regime of the US United Auto Workers union launched a 'solidarity' campaign, demanding among other things that Washington initiate 'a United Nations International Police Force to move in and resist aggression in such cases as that of Hungary'. The SWP not only refused to support Reuther's campaign but sharply denounced it:

'... it isn't any principle of international working class solidarity that motivates Reuther and Meany's stand on Hungary. Their

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Stalinist deal with the Vatican?

The pope of counterrevolution

Pope John Paul Wojtyla's eight-day 'pilgrimage' to his Polish 'homeland' unleashed an orgy of anti-Communist and anti-Soviet demonstrations, as all knew it would. He reignited the forces of clerical-nationalist counterrevolution which were temporarily checked by General Jaruzelski's December 1981 countercoup against Solidarnosc bid for power. Everyone has been asking, why did Warsaw allow it? What did the beleaguered Polish Stalinists hope to gain from the pope's inflammatory visit?

There are sensational and increasingly detailed reports of a deal between the Vatican pontiff and the Polish general. Allegedly martial law would be lifted in exchange for the disappearance of Solidarnosc and a return to oblivion for its leader, Lech Walesa. A new 'union' would be sanctioned under the direct control of the Catholic church hierarchy. In addition, the church would establish a bank, providing loans for Poland's several million peasant smallholders and peasant entrepreneurs. In turn, Western imperialist powers -- Wojtyla's masters -- would lift sanctions to ease the economic pressure on Poland.

We are not in a position to know if such a deal were made. But we warn: this would threaten the very foundations of proletarian state power in Poland, endangering the entire Soviet bloc. The Catholic hierarchy seeks institutionalised control over the economic life of the nation, interposing itself as an intermediary between the regime and the petty bourgeoisie and working class. We Trotskyists, who in late 1981 proclaimed 'Stop Solidarnosc counterrevolution!', insist that only through proletarian political revolution in the bureaucratically degenerated and deformed workers states and socialist revolution in the capitalist West can the forces of counterrevolution be defeated.

Cold War crusade in Poland

Throughout his tour Wojtyla whipped up anti-Communist hysteria, exhibiting his authority in Poland in order to increase his bargaining power. For more than a week he roamed the country, preaching the gospel according to NATO, demanding Polish 'sovereignty' and 'freedom' from Russian 'domination':

- 'The fate of Poland in 1983 cannot be a matter of indifference to the nations of the world, especially Europe and America' (Warsaw).
- 'Solidarity' was a time 'when the Polish worker stood up for himself with the gospel in hand and a prayer on his lips' (Czestochowa).
- 'Do not be swallowed up by immorality and indifference.... The nation is called to victory' (Krakow).

Pope Wojtyla was the imperialists' man in Poland. His visit gave a 'legitimate' cover for massive anti-Communist demonstrations, far and away the largest since Walesa's power grab was spiked one and a half years ago. Altogether, an estimated ten million people filled the churches, the parks, the football stadiums dominated by monstrous altars and crosses. Solidarnosc activists brandished their crosses and banners, wore their Black Madonna pins, flashed their V-signs and marched through the streets proclaiming, 'The priests are with us. The pope is with us.'

It was a week-long orgy of anti-Russian Polish nationalism: every religious image made political, every 'sacred' site chosen to further the chilling appeal: the pilgrimage to

the icon of the Black Madonna of Czestochowa, credited with having broken the siege of the 'foreign invaders' (Swedish Protestants in 1655). 'Before your altars, we entreat you, O Lord, deign to restore us to a free homeland', intoned the pope, dressed in royal crown and red cape emblazoned with the Polish eagle and the cross. Home Army songs are sung at mass, along with 'O God, Who Has Defended Poland' and



Polish workers salute anti-communist pope in Nova Huta.

'March, March Dombrowski', ode to the emigre general who fought the Russians under Napoleon. And everywhere Wojtyla warns about the 'arrogance of power'.

The beleaguered Stalinist officialdom is dismayed by it all. 'The pope is the only authority in the country', one of them exclaimed. A genuinely communist regime, as opposed to this wretched bureaucracy, would have a base in the population to pursue the struggle against clericalism. What is involved is not a religious

issue, a matter of personal faith in god. Marxists do not go around burning crucifixes and knocking down churches. If the church stays out of political life, then social development over the generations will determine whether or not people continue to believe in an afterlife.

But Wojtyla is making a bid to enhance the already enormous political weight of the Catholic church in Polish society. (In fact, the

Italian wing of the Vatican is clearly upset that the Polish pope has become so deeply embroiled in the political life of his homeland.) After his second meeting with Jaruzelski, a son of the Polish upper classes educated by the Jesuits, reports began circulating about a deal, most of them emanating from Rome.

Lech Walesa is reportedly being dumped as the church's favourite son in Poland. Since the general strike on the Baltic coast in August 1980, the Vatican has constantly praised him for having uncompromisingly and unconditionally followed the directives of the church.

This, of course, led him to become a front man

for Western imperialism, financially for the West Germans, militarily for the Americans. His proud boast was that he had never read a book -- which is how he got invited to lecture at Harvard University. He is a Polish version of Father Gapon, who was finally murdered by the Social Revolutionaries as a tsarist agent. Well, now the Vatican paper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, observes, 'Officially Lech Walesa once more leaves the scene' because 'he has lost his battle'.

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CP's Morning Star wars

The recent set-to over the *Morning Star* ought to be a lesson for any decent militant who still places some hope in the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB). Though the main protagonists, in typical Stalinist fashion, did their best to bury politics, it is the political issues that are tearing the CPGB apart. Under the impact of the Cold War, and particularly the events in Poland, the long festering feud between the Eurocommunists and the pro-Moscow 'tankies' has burgeoned.

It is this Cold War divide which underpins the squalid bureaucratic struggle to control *Morning Star*. Not only were there counterposed slates for the Peoples Press Printing Society (PPPS) Management Committee (the 'independent' cooperative set up by the CPGB to show its 'broad democratic' credentials -- a far cry from the Leninist policy of the paper as the mouthpiece and collective organiser of the revolutionary party). Editor Tony Chater refused even to print a statement by CPGB general secretary Gordon McLennan and denounced the CPGB Executive Committee as an 'outside body'. 'We are after all a newspaper, not a Communist Party bulletin', he explained. While the Eurocommunists pushed a strong 'pro-party' line in the PPPS shareholders meetings, the 'tankie' backers of Chater waxed eloquent on the importance of working in 'broad democratic' organisations and labelled the Eurocommunists as 'sectarian'. As far as 'fighting' Eurocommunist anti-Sovietism, the best the 'tankies' could do was a motion calling for 'more vivid, detailed and sympathetic coverage of the enormous achievements of the existing socialist countries' -- which was given precisely one minute discussion time in one meeting!

But *Morning Star* is already run by 'tankie' favourite Chater. And just look at its coverage of the pope's visit to Poland. Under headings such as '750,000 hear the Pope's sermon

on freedom' *Morning Star* prattles on about the pope's 'strong affirmation of the freedom and national identity of Poland' and 'powerful plea for the rights of workers'. Even a separate article intended to take up the church's attack on abortion rights, is in good part a benign account of the church's 'case' (*Morning Star*, 21 June 1983).

All this is of course consonant with the policies of the Stalinist bureaucrats who created the mess in Poland and who let the pope visit. But in Poland right now it is flatly counterposed to the defence of the deformed workers states against imperialism and counter-revolution. Yet, such is the devotion of the small 'Leninist' grouping to reforming the CPGB that they still urge Chater, who according to their leaflet 'has far surpassed the Eurocommunists in liquidating the "Morning Star" as a Party paper', to join a 'principled bloc against opportunism'!

There is an alternative for those who don't want to build class-collaborationist 'broad democratic' alliances or 'left unity' tailing of the Labour/TUC bureaucrats, who want to defend the Soviet Union, and who want to build a revolutionary party to lead the struggle for workers revolution not prop up a decrepit second-rate version of Labourite reformism. It is the example of the young CP/YCL militants who have been won to the Trotskyist politics of the Spartacist League (see for example, 'CP/YCL: No place for Communists', *Spartacist Britain* no 50, June 1983). At the 'Marx with Sparx' festival there was wide interest, particularly among youth, in learning about their struggle. No doubt other members of the CP/YCL who wish to struggle for revolutionary bolshevism and not squabble over one or another road of liquidationism will follow their example.

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RCP and the Russian question

Born-again Cliffites on the move

This month the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) is holding a 'labour movement conference' entitled 'Preparing for Power'. Is the RCP going to provide revolutionary answers to the burning questions of the day, in particular the imperialist war drive against the Soviet degenerated workers state? The answer is no, a thousand times no.

These Little England parochialists even deny that the war drive is directed against the USSR. They are mired in the pro-imperialist 'third camp' along with Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party from which they emerged ten years ago (however much they hate to be associated with this name, we must tell the truth). They are 'anti-imperialists' who side with the CIA-backed Islamic reactionaries in Afghanistan, and who abandon the fight for free abortion on demand in Ireland in order to maintain their anti-Leninist tailing of petty-bourgeois Green nationalism. They are 'anti-racists' who oppose the demand 'no platform for fascists' and indeed have shared a platform with these vile scum. They are incapable of drawing the class line on the main questions facing the proletariat -- from defence of the workers states abroad to defence of the unions at home. Behind their 'creative' verbiage and 'born-again' posturing is a refusal to take a stand on or even recognise the past achievements of the working class. As Trotsky said, 'Those who cannot defend old positions will never conquer new ones.' The Spartacist League is proud to stand on the heritage of Leninism and Trotskyism, and to say 'We are the party of the Russian Revolution.'

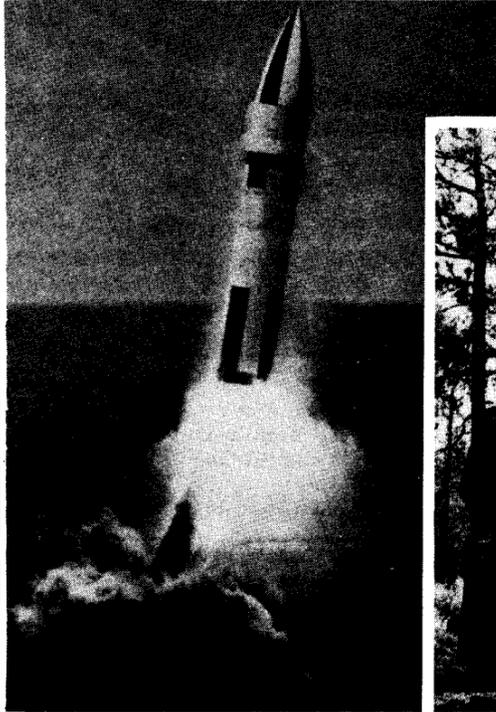
Anti-communist Polish Solidarnosc

The RCP likes to talk about the need for serious Marxist study, especially when they want to avoid committing themselves on paper to a position. Of course, this doesn't stop them taking a position in reality. While it took them a good year after the shah was overthrown to collect enough quotes from the *Financial Times* to produce a fourth-rate *New Left Review*-style position paper on Iran, in the meantime they were happy to tail the 'anti-imperialist' Khomeini and support the exclusion by mullah-lovers of the Spartacist League from anti-shah demonstrations. So too with Poland, an acid test for would-be revolutionaries today. The RCP doesn't know what the class nature of the Polish state is, but they sure as hell know they are against it. And their 'democratic' blinkers send them headlong into the embrace of reaction.

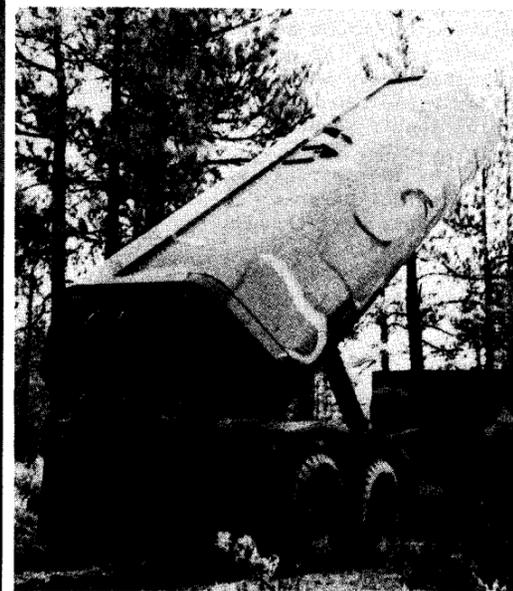
With typical bombast the RCP declares: 'What should revolutionaries do? The first priority is to strengthen the anti-bureaucratic forces. Class conscious workers have every interest in the overthrow of the Polish regime, for as long as the bureaucracy exists communism will stand discredited and nationalism will flourish. Revolutionary communists must not draw back from this struggle

even if in the short run the nationalist forces gain the upper hand.' ('Poland's Black December', January 1982)

In other words, who cares if the 'anti-bureaucratic' opposition is revolutionary or counterrevolutionary -- anything would be better than the present Polish regime. At least most of the other pro-Solidarnosc fake lefts try to claim that it is progressive. For the RCP it doesn't matter if it is funded by the Vatican and CIA and dominated by Pilsudskiites, anything would be better than the Stalinists. Ever since 1917 such 'anti-bureaucratic', 'anti-totalitarian' verbiage has been used by 'socialist' fakers as



RCP claims there is no imperialist war drive against the Soviet Union. Presumably, in their fantasy world, Cruise missiles (right) are aimed at Bonn and Tokyo, and Polaris (left) at West Belfast?



an excuse for allying with counterrevolution against the workers states.

The RCP's criticism of Solidarnosc is that 'it remained a trade union movement for reform'; it was not ready 'for an all-out struggle for power'. The initial massive strike wave which gave birth to Solidarnosc represented the workers' reaction to years of Stalinist bureaucratic mismanagement, privilege and abuse, but from the beginning it contained dangerous clerical-nationalist influences. In its leadership and course, Solidarnosc -- contrary to the RCP's claims -- did not 'remain a trade union movement for reform'. With its first national congress in September 1981, decisive elements were pushing a programme of open counterrevolution. Not that that matters to the RCP, which supports the 'anti-bureaucratic forces' anyway.

Presumably to excuse itself, the RCP claims that:

'The only choice seems to be between the Warsaw bureaucrats on the one hand and nationalism and the church on the other. At the moment there can be no doubt that workers will opt for the latter.

'Polish workers will not take on the church and pro-capitalist forces so long as the bureaucracy survives.'

As Trotskyists we raised a third choice -- the only true alternative -- for the Polish proletariat: unconditional military defence of the Polish workers state against counterrevolution, expressed in our slogan 'Stop Solidarity's counterrevolution!', and a programme for political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats (see 'What next for Poland?', *Spartacist Britain* no 40, March 1982). This is the only independent class perspective, and to implement it it is necessary to build a Trotskyist vanguard party in Poland. The RCP's perspective is, in contrast, a latter-day variant of 'After Hitler us'. Can anybody seriously think that Polish nationalism and pro-imperialist clerical reaction would just melt away with the fight against bureaucracy? That US and West German imperialism would sit back and do nothing as 'nationalism and the church' overthrow the bureaucracy?

Would-be 'Marxist' theoretician and muddle-headed RCP leader Frank Richards has repeatedly stated that 'the development of a Marxist analysis of the Soviet Union is an urgent task'. So urgent that the RCP for the half-dozen years of its independent existence (and before that when its leaders were in the RCG) has been postponing putting a clear position down in writing. Presumably Frank and his mates have read enough Marx to realise that Cliff's state capitalist theories are anti-Marxist. But why do they reject the Trotskyist analysis of the degeneration of the Soviet Union? Because of what goes with it: the unconditional military defence of the USSR against imperialism and counterrevolution and the programme for political revolution that goes with it. In the new Cold War it's not popular in petty-bourgeois and social democratic circles to defend the Soviet Union. Trotsky explained the significance of this defence:

'First the defeat of the USSR would supply imperialism with colossal resources and could prolong for many years the death agony of capitalist society. Secondly, the social foundations of the USSR, cleansed of the parasitic bureaucracy are capable of assuring unbounded economic and cultural progress, while the capitalist foundations disclose no possibilities except further decay.' (*In Defence of Marxism*)

When it comes to dealing with the class nature

of the Soviet Union, the RCP has to borrow from Kautsky in order to justify its 'unique' (non-) analysis.

While it may have a hard time saying what the Soviet Union is, the RCP has had no compunction about telling us what it is not. It is not capitalist, it is not a workers state degenerated or otherwise, and there is nothing 'progressive' about it.

While the June 1983 issue of the next step says 'workers can have no truck with anti-Soviet propaganda', the July issue states flatly that 'The Soviet Union is an enemy of the working class.'

(Note: not the

Stalinist bureaucracy, but the Soviet Union *per se*.) With such little insight into its class nature the RCP has had to hide behind vague, abstract statements: 'The October Revolution has been overturned into a system of bureaucratic oppression' (June 1983). It is 'bureaucratic despotism' (December 1981). If this is the best these 'creative' charlatans have to offer, then workers should ask them a few questions.

Is the bureaucracy the bearer of a new system of economy peculiar to itself and impossible without itself or is it a parasitic growth on a workers state? What is the class meaning of 'bureaucratic despotism' (have you been reading Karl Wittvogel by any chance)? And what about 'Stalinist economics' -- just how can the economic structure of the Soviet Union be characterised? The RCP claims that 'the restructuring of the economy, however, cannot be achieved within the present relations of production' -- whatever they are ('Poland's Black December'). If the bureaucracy has become a new type of exploiting class with an independent role in the production process, when was the state which issued from the October Revolution overturned? Was this a 'peaceful transformation' or did a social revolution take place? By whom and when? Is this 'new' form of society a progressive development or an historical regression from the most advanced capitalism? Were twenty million citizens of the Soviet Union wrong to die defending the USSR against German imperialist invasion in the Second World War? Would the RCP have stood on the side of the Korean workers and peasants and the Chinese Stalinists against the United Nations imperialist forces in the Korean War, or does it agree with Cliff that workers had no side? What about defence of China in the India-China border war?

The RCP has been very coy about answering these questions for a long time now. And no wonder when we look at one of their rare efforts to bring their 'analysis' out of the closet. In a book review (most of what the RCP has to say about the Russian question is buried in book reviews), they complain:

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5000 blacks and workers stopped the fascists in Washington DC in November 1982 Spartacist-initiated demonstration. RCP cynics say this was 'publicity stunt', oppose 'No platform for fascists'.

Ireland: Catholic, Protestant bigots target homosexuals

Dublin anti-gay killers go free

In September 1982, Declan Flynn was attacked by a gang of youths out 'queer-bashing' in Fairview Park, Dublin. He almost managed to outrun them but was tripped, savagely kicked and left to die a slow and agonising death, choking on his own blood. Today his murderers are free to roam the streets.

If Declan Flynn had 'only' been injured, it is almost certain the perpetrators wouldn't even have been arrested. Irish law treats petty crime with more severity than such murderous attacks on homosexuals. Flynn's killers admitted to at least 20 other attacks in the preceding six weeks. A gay man who had himself been attacked carried out an investigation and handed the gang's names over to the police even before the murder. Not once did the Gardai appear to take the slightest interest. After the murder, no arrests were made for 36 hours. And at the trial all the accused admitted from the start that they had deliberately set out to attack any homosexuals they could find.

The Dublin Gay Collective described the trial: 'The defence stressed the gay aspect throughout: evidence was taken from one witness that just before the murder he had given Declan "a peck on the cheek" while other people were watching. The implication being that such provoking behaviour explained the action.' (*Qare Times*, undated)

Declan Flynn had, after all, committed the 'crime' (literally under the Republic's laws) of being gay. Indeed his killers' only remorse was at the possibility they had made a mistake and killed someone who wasn't homosexual. The judge directed the jury to find the gang guilty not of murder but of manslaughter, and on March 8 sent

them home with suspended prison sentences. A fortnight later the trial of Robert Nicholl in Ballymena, Northern Ireland, came to an end. He was accused of stabbing to death a gay man, Henry McLarnon. 'There had been a considerable degree of provocation', said the Lord Chief 'Justice' of Northern Ireland. 'It looks as though he was defending himself, not from the threat of grave violence or death, but from the perverted sexual advances of the deceased....' Reason enough for another verdict of manslaughter and another suspended sentence.

Obviously 'Justice' Lowry didn't think this case as serious as one he presided over a year previously. Then two men were jailed for a total of five years for consensual sex! The British laws which decriminalised private homosexual acts between no more than two men aged 21 or more were only introduced in Northern Ireland at the insistence of the European Court of Human Rights in 1982. Early in 1978 the Callaghan Labour government dropped liberalising measures in return for the support of the Reverend Ian Paisley and the Ulster Unionists in propping up their minority government. At the time Paisley had organised a 'Save Ulster from Sodomy' campaign and was aligned with Catholic Cardinal O'Fiaich in opposing even these minimal measures. When it comes to anti-gay attacks the religious bigots, Protestant and Catholic, are united.

The Fairview and Ballymena sentences were legal endorsements of the murder of gays! No wonder that on the evening of March 8 the leader

of the Dublin gang felt able to lead a 'victory parade' around Fairview Park, chanting 'We are the champions!' Indeed he was the 'champion'. Reactionary religious bigotry is a strong and integral part of Irish nationalism and Ulster Protestant communalism. In the infamous anti-homosexual trial of Oscar Wilde, the prosecution lawyer was none other than Sir Edward Carson, leader of the Protestant opposition to Irish independence. The Irish nationalist leader Parnell was destroyed as an effective nationalist politician when it was revealed that he was an 'adulterer'. And the Irish patriot Sir Roger Casement was executed after a trial at which he was attacked as much for being a homosexual as for trying to smuggle arms into Ireland via a German U-boat during WWI. Ireland is indeed a place where the sentiments expressed by Voltaire are apt. To paraphrase, true freedom will come when the last capitalist is hung from the entrails of the last clergyman.

When the 'sentences' of Declan Flynn's murderers were announced there was an uproar throughout the Republic and the Dail even called a special debate. However most of the deputies used the case as an excuse to call for more 'law and order'. A few prattled on about the need to give legal protection to every minority, but these people are not prepared to repeal the (British) Act of 1861 which makes homosexuality illegal.

While there is no special revolutionary programme for homosexuals, the communist programme includes demands which address the special oppression of homosexuals. But unlike sectoralists, revolutionaries understand that the fate of homosexuals -- like that of any other oppressed group -- is determined by the course of the class struggle. Hence, one's attitude towards cases such as the anti-gay murder of Declan Flynn offers a test of one's commitment to the full and all-sided emancipation of the oppressed. Various liberals, most of the Irish left and the nationalists of Sinn Fein and the IRSP were prepared to condemn the sentencing and agreed to sponsor a demonstration in protest. But given the capitulation by all of them, in one form or another, to the reactionary anti-abortion crusade (see 'Clerical crusade targets Irish women', *Spartacist Britain* no 46, December 1982-January 1983), no confidence can be placed in their willingness to defend democratic rights for gays. The Spartacist League demands: Jail the killers of Declan Flynn and Henry McLarnon! Government out of the bedroom! Abolish the age of consent -- no legal constraints on consensual sexual activity! Full democratic rights for gays!

It is no great coincidence that the same Act which criminalises homosexuality also outlaws abortion in the Republic. The oppression of women and homosexuals is related to the nuclear family. Unlike the oppression of women, the special oppression of homosexuals is not directly based on the economic institutions of capitalism, rather it is rooted in the sexual morality of the bourgeois family. The nuclear family, with its sexual division of labour based on child-rearing, conditions sex roles which are infinitely oppressive to those who deviate from bourgeois 'norms'.

The Catholic church, bulwark of reaction in the Republic, does all within its power to bolster the family; today it is leading the campaign for a constitutional amendment to ensure existing anti-abortion laws can never be repealed. This campaign is composed of groups who have opposed every attempt at reform of Irish social law. Naturally abortion, divorce and homosexuality are anathema to those who see the bourgeois family as an 'ideal'. It is almost certain that nobody from the amendment campaign would disagree with one of its leaders when she denounces gays as 'deformed' and says 'there's something wrong with people who think they are gay' (quoted in *Qare Times*).

The workers and oppressed in Ireland require a revolutionary party built through a struggle to overthrow British imperialism and the Irish bourgeoisie and win the proletariat from nationalism/communalism, both Orange and Green. It may be understandable that many gays are suspicious of fair-weather friends on the left, whose 'solidarity' lasts exactly as long as a relatively liberal political climate. In the British left press the murder of Declan Flynn has gained barely a mention from the same



Dublin, March 19: Demonstration in outrage at Fairview Park murder trial verdict.

people who sing the praises of the Irish nationalists. No wonder -- these are the same people who paint the Ayatollah Khomeini and good Catholic Walesa as the socialist's answer to the resurrection!

The Russian Revolution of October 1917 showed the way for the liberation of all the oppressed, including gays. In December 1917 every anti-homosexual law was abolished, as part of a conscious move to spread the revolution into every area of life. The Bolsheviks' guiding principle was:

'It [Soviet legislation] declares the absolute non-interference of the state and society into sexual matters, so long as nobody is injured, and no one's interests are encroached upon.' (*The Sexual Revolution in Russia*, Grigorii Batkis, 1923)

While proletarian rule will do much to end homosexual oppression, the final eradication of all ideological oppression of homosexuals cannot occur until the family is replaced in socialist society. With the Stalinist political degeneration, the nuclear family was reinforced and laws against homosexuals were reinstated; nevertheless, in the Soviet Union the proletarian property forms -- the social basis for an end to all oppression -- remain and must be defended against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. Only a political revolution can oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and restore a healthy workers state.

It is the working class that has the social power to create a new society in Ireland as everywhere else. In Ireland, Catholic and Protestant workers are divided along communal/national lines while the capitalists, clergymen and reactionary demagogues on both sides encourage not just religious bigotry but the oppression of women and vile anti-homosexual prejudice. Only workers revolution can equitably resolve the communal divisions. Only a planned economy can begin to tackle the permanent mass unemployment and poverty and lay the basis for a society where the oppressive bourgeois family can be replaced through the socialisation of domestic labour and women's full integration into production. The Spartacist League fights for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the British army from Northern Ireland, for the separation of church and state throughout Ireland, for an end to Orange privilege in the six counties and against forcible reunification, and for an Irish workers republic, part of a socialist federation of the British Isles. Only the revolutionary vanguard fighting on the communist programme can act as the 'tribune of the oppressed', linking the defence of specially oppressed groups -- like gays -- to the social power of the working class. ■

More readings on Marxism and gay oppression:

- 'Marxism and homosexual oppression', *Australian Spartacist* no 36, October 1976
 - 'From the Gay Left to Trotskyism', *Workers Vanguard* no 172, 9 September 1977
 - 'Labor Must Defend the Rights of Gays!', *Women and Revolution* no 25, Winter 1982-83
- 50p inc p&p from: Spartacist Publications, PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE



Australian Spartacists protest anti-gay round-up, 1978.

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1973: Popular Front brought bloody coup... 1983: Now 'unity' with Pinochet's henchmen

Chilean masses awake

On June 14, hundreds of thousands of Chileans joined in a national 'day of protest' against the decade-old dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet. The demonstrations extended from banging pots and honking horns in middle-class neighbourhoods to bonfires and barricades in the impoverished *poblaciones* on the outskirts of Santiago. More than 1300 people were arrested and three killed as the Carabineros clashed with protesters in the centre of the capital. 'People of all ages and classes joined in defying the government', reported the liberal *New York Times* with satisfaction. When the government responded by arresting Rodolfo Seguel, president of the Copper Workers Federation (CTC), and other miners' leaders, it was met with a call for an unlimited general strike beginning June 23. The work stoppage was largely limited to copper miners (who had already been out for a week) and the truck owners, and on June 26 the action was called off on orders from the Catholic church hierarchy.

The military regime, as usual, blamed everything on 'the Communist Party and its known and permanent strategy of violence and subversion'. Pinochet proclaimed, 'We are going to send the politicians back to their caves to end this problem.' While the reformists (Socialists and Communists alike) are tied to a wretched 'multi-sector front' dominated by former Pinochet supporters, their Christian Democratic allies were angling for a coup by 'democratic' officers -- a petition calling for a 'change in command' is now circulating in the barracks (*Clarín* [Buenos Aires], 23 June). But even though the May/June actions have been led by forces seeking a 'negotiated transformation', this crisis must be seized upon to build a revolutionary opposition rooted in the Chilean proletariat. The Trotskyists of the international Spartacist tendency demand, as we have ever since that tragic September 1973: 'Smash the junta -- For workers revolution!'

The bloody defeat of the Chilean proletariat ten years ago raised once again fundamental lessons of the communist movement. Salvador Allende's Unidad Popular (UP) coalition of mass reformist workers parties allied with tiny middle-class liberal formations was a classic 'popular front'. And as in the 1930s (in France, Spain and Chile notably), this class-collaborationist bloc paved the way to disaster by subordinating the workers to 'democratic' bourgeois politicians like Christian Democrat Frei and 'constitutionalist' officers like Pinochet. The UP literally disarmed the Chilean masses militarily and politically, preventing any serious resistance to the coup. The 1973 defeat was severe, but not a holocaust as in China 1927 or Germany 1933, after which the proletariat did not raise its head for a generation. As a Spartacist League/US Political Bureau meeting stated a few months after the coup:

'The urgent and central political task facing the Chilean and international ostensibly revolutionary left is to assimilate concretely the lessons of popular frontism with or without revisionist "structural transition to socialism" or petty-bourgeois guerrillaist rhetoric. Our international tendency is uniquely qualified programmatically to assist in such a regroupment perspective. Objectively, the stage in Chile is being set for a giant civil war, perhaps within a few years, because the underlying enthusiasm and capacity of the proletariat have not been exhausted. But without the painstaking and



Militant Chilean copper miners.

their approval, and the American embassy protested against the arrest of Seguel. From the beginning it has been clear that the current unrest reflects a split in the Chilean ruling class. While the work stoppage petered out, influential imperialist mouthpieces insist that Pinochet's days are numbered.

The organisers of the May and June actions were clearly rightist in orientation. While three union leaders associated with the Communist Party (PCCh) were arrested, the Copper Federation is controlled by Christian Democrats. CTC/CNT leader Seguel even brags that on 11 September 1973 he hung out the Chilean flag in support

of the Pinochet coup. The other leading group is the Democratic Workers Union, an outfit associated with the American Institute for Free Labor Development, a CIA 'labour' front formed by the anti-Communist American AFL-CIO and leading multinational corporations. These company unionists were actively involved in the US campaign of 'destabilising' the UP regime, as were the truck drivers whose lengthy 1972 and 1973 lock-outs were financed directly by the CIA. By forming a political bloc with these paid agents of imperialism, the 'Socialist' and 'Communist' sellouts are once again preparing to sabotage the workers' struggles if they go beyond the limits of (bourgeois) 'democracy'. Genuine revolutionaries would have intervened in the recent protests organising independent actions and warning the masses against 'unity' with such criminals who howled with the wolves for the Pinochet bloodbath.

Who supported the copper miners?

The fake lefts are predictably enthusing over (in the words of the US *Guardian*, 29 June) a 'new generation of labor leaders defying Pinochet'. Some are touting Seguel as a 'new Walesa'. Certainly this Christian Democrat who hailed Pinochet is just as reactionary as the head of the Polish company union for the Vatican and Western bankers. But how has it come to pass that these are the most prominent Chilean union leaders today? What we are witnessing is the heavy legacy of the UP popular front, ten years later. In the last months of the Allende regime, the leftist government repeatedly acted to hold back militant workers (as in the *cordones industriales*, district factory committees representing the embryos of dual power), to give back plants seized from the capitalists, to enforce a 'gun control' law through searching factories and leftist party offices. This not only greatly demoralised the most class-conscious proletariat in South America, but in the case of the famous El Teniente copper strike, the popular front forced many into the arms of the right. This betrayal is vividly recalled by every copper miner in Chile today.

The May-June 1973 miners strike was called to demand payment of a cost-of-living adjustment, due under a 'sliding scale' won initially from the imperialist copper corporations and maintained by the state mining company CODELCO in 1972. As the US tightened the screws on Chile, 'making the economy scream', rather than proceeding to expropriate the bourgeoisie the Unidad Popular tried to squeeze better-paid sectors of the working class. When the miners struck for their rights, they were denounced as 'privileged' and 'economistic', including by much of the 'far left'. The foaming PCCh Stalinists even called the strikers 'fascists'. Yet the miners in the past had been the vanguard of the Chilean labour

Pinochet to the wall! Workers to power!

patient construction of a Bolshevik party by work from both without and within the country, this momentous opportunity can be let slip.' ('Perspective for proletarian revolution in Chile', *Workers Vanguard* no 41, 29 March 1974)

As the Pinochet regime finally begins to totter, this task has never been more urgent.

Split in the ruling class

The June 14 protest came in response to the army crackdown against a similar action a month earlier. The hard core of the May protests was in the slum neighbourhoods, where barricades went up in full daylight and the riot police launched murderous charges. Today the junta has become almost completely isolated from the civilian population, supported on its bayonets alone. Chile's so-called 'economic miracle' produced by the notorious 'Chicago boys' of Milton Friedman has devastated the country: official unemployment well over 30 per cent, spiralling bankruptcies. With massive discontent at every level of the population, Pinochet's agony has begun.

In late May a National Workers Command (CNT) was formed, headed by CTC leader Seguel. The objective of the CNT action was proclaimed to be 'total recuperation of [the people's] dignity and full democracy'. While the day of action began with some bomb explosions of suspicious origin, the protest was utterly peaceful, if not to say impotent. Copper workers refused to eat in company canteens, schoolchildren stayed at home etc. Once again government repression hit the poor neighbourhoods hardest. Seguel talked of Gandhi, while CNT leaders 'privately blamed leftist youths [for the city centre clashes with police] who said they were outside their control' (*New York Times*, 15 June). The next day plainclothesmen arrested the 29-year-old CTC chief, soon to be followed by the rest of the copper union leaders.

This finally provoked a strike, as workers at the El Salvador, El Teniente and Andina mines walked out. The unions at Chuquicamata, the largest open-pit copper mine in the world, buckled under to government pressure. As the strike continued CNT leaders called for a national work stoppage; they were joined by small businessmen who are on the verge of bankruptcy as a result of the country's staggering depression. The Christian Democrats indicated

movement, as they are once again today. They had voted for leftist union leaders, even supporting a tiny left-reformist split from the Socialist Party which refused to join the UP. The strike leader, Guillermo Medina, though a former Christian Democrat, was elected as a maverick with leftist support, and some Socialist union officials voted for the strike. But when Allende declared military rule in the mining town of Rancagua and tried to force the strikers back to work, this changed dramatically.

While the entire Chilean popular front was denouncing the miners, the Spartacists supported their just action ('Defend Chilean miners' strike', *Workers Vanguard* no 23, 22 June 1973). We have discussed the 1973 copper strike in detail in our review of the sophisticated Stalinist propaganda film, *The Battle of Chile*. We pointed out that 'the profits from *El Teniente* went not to the workers but to buy the armed forces new airplanes and guns which were later used to massacre leftists by the tens of thousands' ('How *The Battle of Chile* disarms the workers', *Workers Vanguard* no 202, 21 April 1976). And in the crucial last months of 1973 we repeatedly put forward a revolutionary programme of extending strike action, factory and hacienda takeovers, calling to turn the *cordones industriales* into genuine soviets, to break with the bourgeoisie and fight for workers' action to smash the impending coup, for a workers and peasants government. We repeatedly recalled our 1970 warning, issued while the rest of the left was hailing Allende:

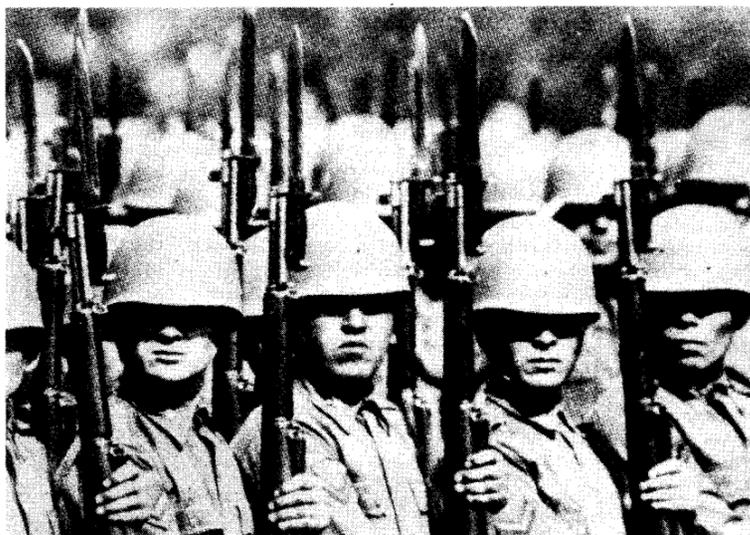
'It is the most elementary duty for revolutionary Marxists to irreconcilably oppose the Popular Front in the election and to place absolutely no confidence in it in power. Any "critical support" to the Allende coalition is class treason, paving the way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people when domestic reaction, abetted by international imperialism, is ready.'

(*Spartacist* no 19, November-December 1970)

(These articles are collected in our Spanish-language pamphlet, 'Chile: Lecciones del Frente Popular', *Cuadernos Marxistas* no 3.)

Only the Trotskyists, who defended the Chilean miners both against the UP and Pinochet, have the moral authority to speak to the copper workers today and warn them that their present Christian Democratic union leaders will block any genuinely militant struggle against the hated Pinochet dictatorship. It is necessary to forge a revolutionary leadership of the Chilean workers movement. This cannot be done through joining the various 'left' blocs, including such bureaucratic shells as the 'CUT [United Workers Federation] in exile', but only through intransigent struggle against all brands of popular frontism and reformism.

Today even the most radical elements of the Chilean left are calling for a new edition of the UP, which prepared the way for Pinochet (Allende's last minister of defence) by demobilising, demoralising and directly repressing the combative workers. But the major parties are promoting an even more sinister popular front with the very counterrevolutionaries who worked together with the CIA to prepare the 1973 coup, who for years cheered the 'patriot' Pinochet ... until their own profits were affected. The PCCh is one of the most abysmally reformist parties in the firmament of Latin American Stalinism. For seven years after the generals and admirals took power, it continued to preach the 'peaceful road' lie. In late 1980 these gravediggers of the revolution reluctantly came out for 'armed struggle' to 'restore democracy'. This empty gesture is now being used by the Christian Democracy to keep the Communists out of its multiparty fronts. But this has not stopped the grovelling Stalinists from supporting them from the outside. In January, PCCh leader Corvalan issued a call for:



Pinochet's army: ten years of terror against the working class.



'... an understanding with all opposition forces of the left, centre and right to reconstruct the country ... even though this implies that the left will not participate in the government.' (*El Puelche*, April 1983) The Socialist Party (PS) has again split into a myriad of squabbling groupings: MAS, USOPO, CNR, Consensus Group, 24th Congress, Spark, Commander, Vanguard Tendency, Workers Front etc. But even the most left-talking sectors of the PS are holding up bourgeois democracy as the alternative to Pinochet 'fascism'. The *Tendencia Vanguardia* proclaims 'there is nothing to make pacts with the bourgeoisie about' and calls for a 'democratic republic of workers'. This republic would be based, however, on a constituent assembly with no mention of a workers and peasants government, ie of a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. Its economic programme would not go beyond a debt moratorium, a 'radical change of the agrarian system', various nationalisations, workers control and 'promotion of workers' rights' -- in other words, for a capitalist 'mixed economy' rather than socialist revolution.

What about the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR), at one time the nemesis of the CP which even blamed the Pinochet coup on its supposed 'ultraleft' excesses? Under the UP the MIR followed a policy of 'critical support' to Allende, providing a squad of bodyguards to the 'companionero presidente' while fostering land takeovers which went beyond the narrow limits of the land reform inherited from the Christian Democrats. As guerrillaists they had no confidence in the power of the working class: during the crucial months of 1972-1973 the MIR was pushing its empty *comandos comunales* ('professional' barrio militias) and stood largely outside the mushrooming *cordones industriales*. After the coup it sponsored some ill-fated adventures while insisting on the suicidal policy of keeping all its militants inside the country. Today the MIR has issued a disgusting appeal for petty-bourgeois exiles to return to Chile using various kinds of imperialist aid ('Carta abierta al exilio chileno', January 1983), and MIR leader Andres Pascal Allende sent a positively grovelling letter to the president of the Christian Democrats, praising the PDC leader's 'high civic profile', praising Christian Democracy's supposed aspiration for 'real mass democracy in Chile' (!) and proposing points for a social pact (*AIR*, January-February 1983).

For a Chilean Trotskyist party!

The days are numbered for the Pinochet regime. Meanwhile the Argentine junta, which already suffered a disastrous defeat through its Falklands/Malvinas adventure is now facing a swelling tide of outrage over the ghosts of the 'dis-

appeared'. In Bolivia the (not very) 'popular democratic' government is being challenged by the very working class it claims to represent. The opportunity is posed throughout the Southern Cone of Latin America, that the overthrow of the bloody rule of the military butchers could open the road to workers revolution. And to the north, Central America is aflame with revolutionary struggle. What is needed is a Bolshevik vanguard, built in the struggle to reforge Leon Trotsky's Fourth International, to mobilise the proletariat on the programme of permanent revolution.

Suffering through the long night of military bonapartism, the Chilean masses certainly yearn for 'bread, justice and freedom'. They can and must be mobilised around democratic demands, but these can be won only through revolutionary struggle against the bourgeoisie. In a military confrontation between bourgeois democracy and bonapartism, the working class fights on the side of the former, with the Spanish republic against the Francoists, with Kerensky against Kornilov. But the working class defends democracy, and its democratic rights in particular, with its own revolutionary methods and against all the parties and politicians of the class enemy.

Not a treacherous social pact to provide immunity for the torturers and killers, but people's tribunals to mete out justice to the junta criminals and their accomplices! Smash the CNI/DINA secret police, stronghold of the Pinochet dictatorship! For the formation of soldiers' and sailors' committees in the armed forces, to mobilise the worker-peasant ranks against the Prussian-minded officer caste, uniformed guard dogs of the bourgeoisie! For an agrarian revolution -- the peasants must seize the landed estates! No negotiated 'return to the barracks' with carefully orchestrated 'free elections' (manipulated by the CIA), but a revolutionary constituent assembly.

None of these demands can be achieved except through a mass workers' uprising, to overthrow the butcher junta and establish a workers and peasants government. Moreover, a victorious workers revolution would immediately pass on to socialist tasks, including expropriation of the capitalist class. Today it is vital to begin organising in clandestinity the future workers militias, to rebuild the *cordones industriales* as potential soviets, and to forge the nucleus of a Leninist-Trotskyist party in struggle against all variants of popular frontism. Once again, the Trotskyists warn: popular front means workers' blood! Only a struggle for proletarian revolution can avenge the martyrs of Pinochet's terror and open the road to liberation. *Pinochet al paredon, obreros al poder!*

Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 333, 1 July 1983



London, June 15: Spartacist contingent joins picket against visit of Chilean naval minister.



Spartacists march against the junta (New York, September 1976).

Fake lefts rush to revive Labour

So the election has passed, and Labour lost big. What now? We are witnessing today a deep crisis of Labourism under the impact of the anti-Soviet Cold War and the economic collapse of British capitalism. The Labour Party, with its organic ties to the trade unions and its long history as the hegemonic party of the British working class, isn't about to disappear. But the fact that millions of workers aren't buying its reformist 'answers' only reinforces the necessity to fight for a *revolutionary alternative* -- a Trotskyist vanguard party, based on a programme of revolutionary class struggle and built (above all in the unions) in the fight to smash the Tory/employer onslaught. This is the perspective of the Spartacist League. In contrast, the various fake Trotskyists are today scurrying off to variously rebuild, renovate, reorient, give new leaders to and generally save the wretched, organically pro-capitalist Labour Party.

That is manifestly *not* what the working class needs. The 'Let's bomb Russia' Thatcherites threaten yet more unemployment, 'law and order' racism, union-bashing and war. Their Labour opponents, pathetically promising their own versions of Cold War austerity, are today a grotesque sight -- widely discredited, utterly unable to galvanise mass hatred of the Tories for any kind of struggle (or even for a vote!) The barons of Congress House, having finished with the hapless witchhunter Foot, are now trying to revive the party via the Kinnock/Hattersley leadership 'dream ticket'. The Benns, Livingstones and Scargills object, seeking instead to spruce up the party by giving it a more 'left' image. And hanging to their coat-tails, flapping their free arm and holding their various schemes for 'defending' and 'rebuilding' Her Majesty's decrepit Labour Party in their teeth, come *Socialist Action*, *Socialist Organiser* and the other fake 'revolutionaries'.

When Tony Benn and Arthur Scargill spoke at a packed-out post-election CND rally in East London on June 29, the hordes of *Socialist Action* supporters and their kindred spirits flocked to hear words of 'encouragement' from their left-Labourite idols. Despondency, depression, despair were off-repeated words. No wonder: pegging everything these days on

Labour's electoral fortunes, the fake revolutionaries who boost Labourism are naturally depressed. A score of *Socialist Action* sellers outside uniformly shouted 'Rebuild the Labour Party' (while *Spartacist Britain* salesmen rejoined, 'Don't rebuild the Second International -- Reforge the Fourth International!'). For the ever more craven opportunists of *Socialist Action* and *Socialist Organiser*, 'revolutionary'



politics has been reduced to plumping for Neil Kinnock in the Labour leadership stakes, at least once their no-hope favourite Eric Heffer is out. ('A rotten opportunist', confessed the 17 June *Socialist Action* of Kinnock, 'But to refuse to back him against Hattersley and Shore in the final analysis would be ultra-left stupidity.') So now it is 'ultra-left' to not cosy up to a wretchedly red-baiting reformist like Kinnock!

So craven are these revolutionaries that Benn and Scargill, seriously intent on rebuilding working-class illusions in Labour, come out sounding positively militant compared to their fake-Trotskyist boosters. Scargill not only attacked the last Labour government for 'trying to practise capitalism better than the Tories' but declaimed how 'every single freedom' was won outside parliament'. Benn, without a seat after losing in Bristol, denounced the aim of the imperialist war drive as 'planning to destabilise Russia the way they destabilised Allende in Chile'. We warn: these people may talk left, but their record shows them to be dyed-in-the-wool labour lieutenants of British capitalism. The fake revolutionaries applaud them, but in the coming period they will be the most dangerous (because most duplicitous) obstacles to workers' fight to defend their rights and go forward in the fight to overthrow the capitalist system.

From *Socialist Organiser* and *Socialist Action*'s support to Kinnock and generally rebuilding Labour to the (ex-SO) Internationalist Faction's call to 'develop new leaders in the workplaces, the unions and the LP' (emphasis added), to Workers Power's 'fight to win the unions and the Labour Party to real anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist demands' -- the fake Trotskyists are abandoning the struggle for a revolutionary party even in words. We say it is necessary to *break* the stranglehold of the Labour/TUC bureaucrats on the working class, to forge a revolutionary leadership in the trade unions, to build an internationalist party of proletarian revolution, part of a reformed Fourth International. This is the only way to smash the attacks of the war-mad capitalists and lead the proletariat in a struggle for power. *Give Thatcher the social explosion the Labour leaders dread!* ■

Steelworkers...

(Continued from page 12)

strike the NF tried to march through Corby. The despair bred by unemployment and by class battles defeated can only contribute to an anti-working-class climate of vicious reaction.

Far from saving jobs, protectionism is the road to industrial rot -- as is sharply illustrated by today's bankrupt capitalist Britain. Under the impact of the Great Depression in 1932 British capitalism turned to protectionism, claiming it would 'rationalise' its declining industries behind tariff walls. After World War II successive Labour governments nationalised and then subsidised failing or bankrupt industries and firms, including steel. The result of half a century of protectionism is an industrial wasteland, depression-level unemployment and the wholesale impoverishment of the working class.

Similarly in America, the decrepitude of the steel industry is a consequence of 15 years of protectionism. In 1956 the US was by far the largest steel producer in the capitalist world, with a production capacity of 130 million tons to Japan's 14 million. Over the next 20 years Japan not only overtook the US in steel-producing capacity but did so at a cost per unit nearly 50 per cent less than in American mills, and this despite the fact that Japanese wages rose far more rapidly than American. This happened because the American steel cartel failed to modernise -- and every year the US steel industry, protected behind tariff systems and 'voluntary' export restraint agreements with Japan, becomes more backward, its plants more dilapidated.

If anti-Semitism was the 'socialism of fools', so now trade protectionism is the 'economic planning of fools', with a new set of scapegoats. In the US it is Japan; in bottom-of-the-heap Britain it is Japan, West Germany, the US, France, Italy ... every other however-marginally industrialised nation. US presidential hopeful Walter Mondale laid out the consequences at a recent electrical workers union conference:

'We have got to get tough -- and I mean really tough! -- with nations that use our

markets but deny us their markets! And I'll tell you today that if you try to sell an American car in Japan, you better have the United States Army with you when they land on the docks!'

And remember how the Labour/trade union bureaucrats here at home rallied round Thatcher's war effort in the South Atlantic last summer. Protectionism helps feed the imperialist war drive, whose ultimate target today is the Soviet Union, home of the world's first workers revolution.

But it's not only Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition and its trade union backers who constantly seek to prove their loyalty to capitalist Britain. The Fourth Division team, the Communist Party, tries to out-jingo the Tories, writing in the *Morning Star* (12 March) that 'The MacGregor proposals make a mockery of Thatcher's Buy British campaign.' In a disgusting article in *Scottish Marxist* (Spring 1983) the CP dismisses the 'lack of the potential for any major fight against closure amongst the Ravenscraig workforce' and instead makes a hero of ... Tory Scottish Secretary George Younger. (Younger wants to 'save' Ravenscraig by decimating the Welsh steelworks at Port Talbot.) The CP's record of treachery is long and inglorious: during the 1980 steel strike prominent CP trade union supporters knifed the solidarity strike of 8000 Sheffield engineering workers. And while the British CP pleads for protectionism at home, the CPUSA joins the flag-waving demonstrations to 'stop British steel' in America.

Jobs at Ravenscraig and Fairless can be saved; the question is one of leadership. Many steelworkers do want to fight back, as the recent strike over redundancies in the South Yorkshire area earlier this year demonstrated. Ten thousand steelworkers were out; flying pickets shut down eight special steel plants; 3000 more came out in Scunthorpe and on Teeside. Bill Sirs, desperate to avoid calling up the spirit of 1980, had the gall to say that the South Yorkshire strike was 'the first occasion that our members have been prepared to take some action to save their jobs'. One Rotherham striker told us, 'If we don't take a stand now, there's no chance.' and that 'if it takes 13 weeks, it will take 13 weeks!' On the very day these workers went reluctantly back to work, having gained *nothing*, the *Morning Star*

scandalously ran an article with a 'victory' headline. Such 'victories' as this the working class can do without!

In order that this kind of militancy not be undermined and thrown away, a new revolutionary leadership is necessary. That means providing a class-struggle alternative to the politics of all sections of the existing leadership, as militants from three US steel plants, Gary Works, Inland and South Works did at their USWA branch 'local' meetings. As reported in *Workers Vanguard* (no 331, 3 June 1983), they spoke out against the protectionism of the bureaucrats, and their programme of derailing any concrete struggle to defend jobs at Fairless and throughout the industry. In Gary Local 1014, one militant warned against the 'treason' theme, 'the kind of language you use to whip up a war in which workers fight each other instead of fight the companies.' Instead, he said, 'we need a class-struggle fight to reverse all the layoffs, fight Reagan's anti-labor "national interest", and work with workers in other countries to stop the capitalists' worldwide assaults on labor'.

British capitalism is in deep crisis. Thatcher and the Tories are turning whole regions of the country into industrial wastelands and making living conditions ever worse for those in work. Steelworkers could spearhead a struggle to turn it all around and there are real opportunities to wage a joint fight with US steelworkers to smash the US Steel/BSC redundancies. Three years ago British steelworkers waged a long and militant strike enforced by mass picketing and flying picket squads. With a class struggle leadership, these workers are capable of decisive action to halt redundancies which could ignite a powerful working-class mobilisation to topple Thatcher. For sit-down strikes to defend jobs! Smash the Tebbit Act and all Tory anti-union attacks! No sackings! No to import controls! Jobs for all through work-sharing on full pay and a sliding scale of wages to meet inflation! Fight for a class-struggle leadership which can break the Labour/TUC bureaucrats' stranglehold on the trade unions and for a revolutionary party to fight for a workers government based on socialist planned economy in which production is based on need not profit. The main enemy is at home! ■

May 25 saw another genocidal attack on the Kurdish people by the Turkish bonapartist military junta, in cooperation with the dictatorial Ba'athist regime of Iraq. Two elite units of the Turkish army were sent across the Iraqi border in order to shoot Kurds who were crossing into Iraq. The *Guardian* (28 May 1983) commented that the 'fighting may have begun ... when 7000 Iranian Kurds are believed to have tried to cross from Iran into Turkey and travel from there into Iraq'. A May 31 statement by the Association of Kurdish Students Abroad (AKSA) commented that 'Heavy fighting is going on and ... the Turkish army is said to be rushing more troops to its eastern frontier with Iraq.'

The Turkish foreign office openly admitted the Turkish-Iraqi collaboration in this attack, stating that 'consultations took place with our friend and neighbour the Iraqi government on the development'. Meanwhile the right-wing Turkish bourgeois paper *Gunaydin* praised the operation with chauvinist hysteria as a 'lesson' given to the Kurds.

No doubt this attack has whetted the appetites of Turkish irredentists who lay claim to areas like Mosul in Iraq. The Turkish junta is not only a key component of the imperialist encirclement of the Soviet Union but has been encouraged to play a role in maintaining counterrevolutionary 'order' in the region. However, an article in *Iscinin Sesi* (13 June 1983), paper of the 'Leninists' of the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) does not even mention the Kurds. They justify a joint demonstration held in Germany with Iraqi organisations on the grounds not of defending the Kurds against an attack made with the collaboration of the Iraqi regime but because 'what is in question is an attack against Iraq'. They talk of 'the importance of establishing an alliance between Kurdish democrats and the Leninist forces of the TKP', but in this concrete case they produce an effective denial of any defence of the rights and existence of the Kurds.

Stop genocide of Kurds!



London, 31 May: with signs in English, Turkish, Farsi and Arabic, Spartacist contingent protests at Turkish embassy, calling for right of self-determination for the Kurds.

This 'operation' follows the Turkish junta's recent condemnation of 35 Kurds to death in Diyarbakir for establishing a nationalist movement. This is one of several mass trials where leftists, working-class militants and even bourgeois liberals are being sentenced to life imprisonment and even death. Already the dungeons of the junta are full and torture is commonplace.

The Kurdish people are divided among five countries. The largest concentration is in Turkey, amounting to one fifth of the country's 50 million population. Since the September 1980 military takeover the junta has intensified the attacks on Kurdish nationalists and leftists (attacks which also occurred under the previous civilian regime), denying that a distinct Kurdish people even exists. Even using the Kurdish language in speech and literature is illegal and the junta's recent constitution further legitimised its repression, intimidation and murder.

Meanwhile in Iraq, deprived again of basic democratic rights, the Kurds live under the dictatorial repression of Saddam Hossein's regime and continuously face forced population

transfers. In Iran since the coming to power of the Persian-chauvinist fanatic Ayatollah Khomeini genocide against the Kurds has intensified, forcing many to try and escape the country. But in this attempt many fall into the murderous hands of the Ba'athists of Iraq and the Kemalist chauvinist military of Turkey. In Syria too, the Kurds suffer deep national oppression. In the Soviet Union the Kurdish community enjoy conditions far better than their compatriots face in the four capitalist states. In the latter their very right to exist is denied from all quarters.

To protest the latest attacks on the Kurds, a picket of the Turkish embassy was organised in London on May 31, with participants from AKSA, the Kurdistan Solidarity Committee, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the Committee for Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey, supporters of the 'Leninists' of the TKP and others. A contingent from the Spartacist League/Britain (SL/B) joined the picket, carrying placards in Farsi, Turkish, Arabic and English demanding 'Stop the genocide of the Kurds in Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria' and 'For the right to self-determination of the Kurds'. While some other demonstrators (including supporters of the TKP 'Leninists') chanted 'United Nations -- where are you?' the SL/B counterposed 'United Nations, den of thieves, is no friend of the Kurds -- Out of the Middle East now!' Other SL/B chants called for workers and peasants governments throughout the Middle East. At the end most of the Kurds sang their national anthem, while the SL/B and some Kurds sang the 'Internationale'.

It is the elementary duty of the international proletariat and defenders of democratic rights to come to the defence of the Kurdish people against the all-sided genocide. Down with the butchers of the Kurds! Stop the genocide of the Kurds in Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria! For the right of the Kurds to self-determination! Forward to a Socialist Federation of the Middle East!

Build the Spartacist League/Lanka Forward to a workers and peasants government!

Since its formation two years ago the Spartacist League/Lanka (SL/L) has pursued the politics of revolutionary class independence. Against the Sinhala-chauvinist left which is tied to the popular front of the bloody Mrs Bandaranaike, the SL/L is fighting to build a Leninist-Trotskyist party to unite the toilers of Lanka.

The SL/L has distinguished itself by its consistent fight against anti-Tamil terror when the rest of the left has been silent. It publishes both *Lanka Spartacist* in Sinhala and *Illangai Spartacist* in Tamil. Our comrades have forged a crucial link between the students of the mainly

Sinhala Colombo University and the Tamil students at Jaffna University, organising militant protests against plans for total segregation of Sinhalese and Tamil students and the near elimination of higher education for Tamil youth.

As Leninists we support the right of national self-determination for the Tamil people, that is, the right to a separate state in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Ceylon. But the Tamil nationalist programme for a mini-state of 'Eelam' is both utopian and an obstacle to the struggle for power.

In Lanka, where the term Trotskyism has been sullied through decades of betrayal by centrists and reformists falsely claiming the Trotskyist mantle, the SL/L seeks to bring honour to the name of Trotskyism. Forging a revolutionary party in the interests of the stateless 'Indian' Tamil plantation workers, the viciously exploited women of the 'Free Trade Zone', the Sinhala workers, the 'Ceylon' Tamils of the Northern and Eastern Provinces and all the oppressed, the SL/L seeks to open the road to revolution in all of South Asia. Forward to a South Asian Soviet Federation!

As part of an international effort to help the SL/L continue publication of its two journals, *Lanka Spartacist* and *Illangai Spartacist*, and expand its revolutionary activities, the Spartacist League/Britain is running a fund drive. We urge readers of *Spartacist Britain* to contribute generously. Make cheques payable to 'Spartacist League' and post immediately to: SL/Lanka Fund Drive, Spartacist League, PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE.

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South Africa...

(Continued from page 1)

Trotsky in a section of his essay, *Their Morals and Ours*, appropriately entitled, 'Morality of the Kaffirs'. In polemicising against those renegades from Marxism like Max Eastman who claimed that applying different criteria to the actions of exploiters and exploited signified standing at the level of the 'morals of the Kaffirs', Trotsky wrote:

'A Kaffir who has not been demoralised by missionaries to the marrow of his bones will never apply the selfsame abstract moral norms to the oppressors and the oppressed. Yet he will easily comprehend that it is a function of these abstract norms to prevent the oppressed from arising against their oppressors.'

The lynching of the three ANC militants evoked an international outcry because South Africa is a hideous microcosm of the relationship of imperialist power to the oppressed nations and toilers of the world. Therefore the oppressed everywhere feel a special kinship with anti-apartheid fighters in South Africa. This is true for oppressed minorities, especially blacks, in Britain. And it is true for American blacks whose sense of identity with the oppressed of South Africa has been deepened by the viciously racist administration in the White House.

It was no mere coincidence that on the same day that Reagan invited apartheid butcher Botha to meet him at the White House, last November 27, he also gave the fascist Ku Klux Klan a green light to parade through the streets of Washington to the White House for the first time in 57 years. It was the power of the working class, demonstrated by the 5000-strong Labor/Black Mobilization initiated by the Spartacist League/US that stopped the Klan on November 27 and then took over their parade route for a victory march against racist terror. Given the Botha visit, we like to think that a blow was struck against race-terror in South Africa as well.

The international Spartacist tendency (iSt) hails the courageous militants of the ANC. Even though the ANC does not have the resources to directly militarily defeat South Africa, nevertheless it is in a state of war with the apartheid regime. In that war we stand with the ANC militants against racist oppression. But their struggle is thwarted and subverted by the ANC's strategy, also promoted by the Stalinist South African Communist Party, of seeking to pressure 'liberal' elements in the white ruling class such as gold and diamond magnate Harry Oppenheimer, and the 'democratic' imperialist countries, such as Thatcher's Britain and Reagan's America, into forcing the South African government to abandon apartheid. The apartheid regime cannot be 'reformed', it must be smashed. Under the leadership of a revolutionary vanguard party, the black working class mobilising behind it all of the oppressed masses of South Africa will be the gravedigger of apartheid. And on that grave will arise a black-centred workers and peasants government.

Break the chains of apartheid slavery!

The executions demanded an immediate outcry from all workers and socialist organisations and decent people everywhere. The iSt immediately swung into action, organising emergency demonstrations and participating in protests against the lynchings. In London a 20-strong Spartacist League contingent joined a picket outside South Africa House on June 8, raising militant chants like 'Free the endangered ANC militants!' and 'Black workers take the lead! Smash apartheid -- For workers revolution!' More than 50 copies of *Spartacist Britain* were sold, outlining the proletarian-revolutionary strategy for smashing apartheid.

Our militant intervention disturbed some Anti Apartheid Movement (AAM) and ANC supporters on the picket, who sought instead a lame liberal protest complete with priests. One, particularly upset at a placard calling for defence of the Soviet Union against the NATO war drive, unsuccessfully tried to have us thrown off the picket. Two weeks later AAM/ANC supporters went further, calling on Thatcher's cops to exclude Spartacist salesmen from a 25 June picket demanding the release of imprisoned ANC leader Nelson Mandela.

The AAM and British ANC supporters seek to pressure the imperialist government to take action against South Africa. Yet this same government is up to its eyeballs in collaboration with Pretoria. Its police turn a blind eye to South African secret police harassment and repeated arson and break-ins against anti-apartheid activists in London. Indeed a previous British government helped to set up the notorious BOSS. The AAM in particular looks to a 'liberal' wing of imperialism, centred on Labour Party poli-

ticians. You only have to look at Labour's record in office -- policing colonialism from Kenya to Tanganyika, flagrant violations of their own 'sanctions' to shore up the white-supremacist regime in Rhodesia -- to see how this is counterposed to defence of the oppressed. To this dead-end strategy Spartacist comrades counterposed a call 'For international trade union action to free ANC militants!'

Our comrades of the Spartacist League/US also highlighted this call in their activities organised against the June 9 lynchings. SL/US contingents joined protest demonstrations in New York and Chicago. In the latter city, picket organisers from the Communist Party preferred to abandon their own demonstration rather than march alongside Trotskyists. Our comrades remained to carry forward the protest, calling for 'Vengeance for the ANC three', and were well received by black passers-by who shouted encouragement and bought 100 pieces of literature. Los Angeles Spartacist comrades built a demonstration outside the South African Consulate on June 8 in less than a day, with some 30 people turning out to protest. And in San Francisco a picket called by the SL and the new Labor/Black League for Social Defense drew 75 people, again on less than 24 hours notice. Speaking at the picket, a militant from the dockers union (ILWU) called for labour solidarity against the apartheid executions, demanding the ILWU stop working all ships to and from South Africa. This would be a powerful demonstration of labour action, a show of solidarity that would have impact around the world, representing far more of a threat to the murderous apartheid system than dozens of 'vigils' and pickets.

ILWU members in the Militant Caucus (a union opposition politically supported by the SL/US) have been fighting to put this programme into action. On the eve of the executions, a South Africa-bound ship was due to arrive in the port; however it anchored out in the bay that night. When it docked the next morning, it was met by a picket line of SL and Labor/Black League supporters. Militant Caucus members approached their union brothers calling on them to refuse to work the ship. Among Militant Caucus spokesmen at the dock that morning was ILWU Local 10 Executive Board member Stan Gow. In 1976 and 1977, after the Soweto rebellion, Gow fought for the union to black South African cargo; earlier this year he fought for similar action to stop military goods to the bloody Salvadoran junta. For this latter fight, the local union bureaucrats (including prominent supporters of the US CP) have tried to railroad him out of his union position. But hundreds of union brothers turned out to a Local 10 meeting late last month to defend Stan Gow and stopped the bureaucrats in their tracks.

A UPI photo of the June 8 San Francisco demonstration showed the integrated crowd of blacks and whites, workers and socialists, voicing their outrage over the apartheid execution. SL/US spokesman Al Nelson concluded the demonstration by saying, 'These men are waiting to die. If we cannot save their lives, then one day we will avenge them, when the working class takes power.'

Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 332, 17 June 1983

Mandel...

(Continued from page 2)

'internationalism' appears on the scene only when it meets with the approval of the U.S. State Department and is always in tune with Big Business foreign policy promoted by the U.S. government.

Indeed, Reuther went Secretary of State Dulles one better by proposing, Nov. 13, that the U.S. initiate a permanent UN army to intervene in Hungary. The aim of such

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intervention would inevitably be the restoration of capitalism in Hungary, something that is diametrically opposed to what the workers are fighting for.' (*Militant* [US], 24 December 1956)

Today Mandel is striving for a united front with NATO social democracy in support of counterrevolution in Poland. But back in the mid-1950s, when East Europe was actually pregnant with proletarian political revolution, Mandel and his then party boss Michel Pablo were leading advocates of Stalinist self-reform! In a resolution by the Pablo-Mandel International Secretariat of the Fourth International on the 17 June 1953 East German workers uprising, these liquidators called for 'real democratisation of the Communist Parties' -- ie the governing Stalinist bureaucracy -- and assured workers that 'they [the Stalinists] have been obliged to continue along the road of still more ample and genuine concessions.... From now on they will not be able to stop halfway' (quoted in 'Towards a History of the Fourth International', part 4 vol 3, [US SWP] *Education for Socialists Bulletin*, March 1974). Moreover, in contrast to the then-Trotskyist American SWP, the Pablo-Mandel IS pointedly refused to call for the withdrawal of the Soviet troops which put down the June 17 revolt. This conciliation of Stalinism, denying the need for an independent Trotskyist leadership, was a major factor in the destruction of the Fourth International by Pabloist liquidationism.

Likewise, in 1956 Pablo/Mandel hailed Gomulka's accession to power as a political revolution against Stalinism and favourably contrasted Gomulka's Poland to the actual political revolution in Hungary:

'In Poland, thanks to the leadership role which the workers party was able to play, taken over, transmuted by the Gomulka tendency, itself an expression, albeit deformed, of the true tendency of the masses, yet a centrist tendency nonetheless evolving to the left -- the political revolution of the masses against the bureaucratic regime was able to do without wandering in uncertainty and confusion and avoiding the dangers inherent in such a situation....

'In Hungary, the absence of any centralized and however minimally clear leadership provoked, in contrast, after a certain point, exactly these shortcomings and dangers....' (*Quatrieme Internationale*, December 1956)

In reality, Gomulka's accession to power prevented a political revolution and set into motion a chain of developments which led eventually to the counterrevolutionary eruption around Solidarnosc. By glorifying the Gomulka regime as the overthrow of Stalinism, Pablo/Mandel helped discredit Trotskyism in Poland and so strengthened the forces of clerical-nationalist reaction as the only perceived alternative to Stalinist rule. And today Mandel and his followers hail this reaction as their 'vision of socialism', while snuggling ever closer to the Cold War social-democratic labour lieutenants of the capitalist class throughout West Europe.

Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 332 17 June 1983

Pope...

(Continued from page 3)

Walesa is undoubtedly too far gone to have learned from what is happening to him, so we will not lecture to him that the path of the socialist class struggle is the way. But maybe others in Poland will learn from his contemptible fate.

For decades the Polish Stalinists have conciliated the Catholic church in a vain effort to secure social stability. After the 1956 'thaw' the church was allowed to become the only voice of political opposition. At the same time, the Polish Stalinists abandoned agricultural collectivisation and so perpetuated a class of priest-ridden peasant smallholders hostile to socialism. When Karol Wojtyla, then archbishop of Krakow, was elected the first Polish pope in 1978, we warned:

'To the Stalinists Pope John Paul II may seem a prince of peace and detente, a man of the post-Helsinki period. Domestically the Gierk regime portrays him as a symbol of Communist-Catholic coexistence. But he now stands at the head of many millions of practicing Catholics in East Europe, a tremendous potential force for counterrevolution. And it is precisely the Stalinists who are responsible for the existence of this grave threat to the social conquests of the degenerated and deformed workers states.' ('The President's Pope?', *Workers Vanguard* no 217, 20 October 1978)

Behind Pope Wojtyla stands the power of Western imperialism, now in particular its ca-

capacity for economic blackmail. Poland owes \$25 billion or more to Western bankers and governments. The Jaruzelski regime hoped that allowing the pope's visit would ease Reagan's economic sanctions and perhaps open the way for additional Western credits or, at least, easier repayment terms. The minister of religion and atheism, Adam Lopatka, explained this disastrous manoeuvre: 'The trip by the head of the Vatican state and the church will make the continuation of this unfriendly policy towards Poland more difficult.' Not a chance. Reagan & Co will stop being 'unfriendly' towards Poland only when Wojtyla is in power in the Belvedere Palace and Jaruzelski is in prison or dead.

While the Moscow Stalinists have taken a harder line on Poland than their Warsaw counterparts, they very much want to cut down their present massive subsidies to the Polish kulaks and neo-Pilsudskiite scum. So the Kremlin, too, is under pressure to accept a deal with the Vatican. The Polish crisis is the product of decades of capitulation by the Stalinists to capitalist restorationist forces and world imperialism. A Trotskyist leadership in the USSR would make short shrift of the mess in Poland.

Wojtyla's anti-Communist pilgrimage and the reported deal to establish a church-run 'union' in Poland demonstrate anew that the Stalinist bureaucracy acts as a transmission belt for the imperialist pressures on the Soviet bloc. There can be no 'peaceful coexistence' with the Vatican, the International Monetary Fund, Ronald Reagan, NATO and other agencies of global counterrevolution. The social gains of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and their extension to East Europe after World War II can be defended only by proletarian political revolution which ousts the Stalinist bureaucracy and restores the Soviet Union, land of the October Revolution, as a bastion of world communism.

Adapted from Workers Vanguard no 333, 1 July 1983

RCP...

(Continued from page 4)

'Another issue that the "degenerated workers state" brigade will not recognise -- because it will blow their entire theory -- is that planning does not exist in the Soviet Union.' (*the next step*, June 1981)

According to another article, 'the absence of workers' democracy militates against any attempt to plan the economy' (*the next step*, January 1983). We are thus left with the equation: no workers democracy equals no planned economy equals no workers state. Following in the footsteps of Kautsky and Shachtman, the RCP junks the Marxist theory of the state by denying that it has any economic content -- that state power is based on armed bodies of men committed to defending *specific property forms*. As Trotsky wrote in 'The Class Nature of the Soviet State':

'A class is not defined by its participation in the distribution of the national income alone, but by its independent role in the general structure of the economy and by its independent roots in the economic foundation of society. Each class (the feudal nobility, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, the capitalist bourgeoisie, and the proletariat) works out its own special forms of property. The bureaucracy lacks all these social traits. It has no independent position in the process of production and distribution. It has no independent property roots. Its functions relate basically to the political technique of class rule.'

Where Marxists hold that the class character of a state is determined by the property re-

lations it defends, the RCP holds that the class character of the property relations is determined by the political regime. Like all good social democrats, they empty the state of its materialist content and reduce the question of socialist property to one of democracy. Despite the degeneration of the political system, certain fundamental accomplishments of the October Revolution remain such as the abolition of private property, the monopoly of foreign trade and the collectivised planned economy, which at base represent the dictatorship of the proletariat. Let the RCP try to explain how a backward, mainly peasant, economy was transformed (despite massive bureaucratic parasitism and mismanagement) into a modern industrial society which is now the second industrial power in the world -- *without planning*. (For a detailed discussion of planning in the Soviet Union we refer readers to our pamphlet 'Why the USSR is Not Capitalist', while the contradictory nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy is discussed in our article on Poland, page 2, this issue.)

But this is not the only way the RCP denies reality in order to escape defending the Soviet Union. According to *the next step*:

'The arms race is widely perceived as an East-West matter. Yet though East-West conflicts exist, they are secondary to those within the imperialist camp. All the demonology America creates around Andropov is an attempt to get its rivals to see that the American way is the only way.' (June 1983)

In the next issue they explain that 'Inter-imperialist, not East-West, rivalry is at the centre of the USA's Central American crisis'. And their recent election programme claims that in terms of 'fighting the war drive', in Britain what is key is the 'struggle for Irish freedom'.

Inter-imperialist conflict is endemic to the capitalist system, and in the context of the international capitalist crisis and the relative weakening of American imperialism we hear once again talk of a German-dominated Europe and the rearmament of Japan. In solid Stalinist tradition, the Soviet bureaucracy tries to peacefully coexist with imperialism -- which only weakens the Soviet Union. Does all this prove the RCP correct? No! As we wrote about last year's US/West Europe pipeline sanctions dispute:

'At bottom it represents the intersection of the two main forces driving us toward World War III -- the appetite of capitalist imperialism -- openly and loudly voiced by Reagan -- to overthrow the Soviet Union ... and the intensifying inter-imperialist economic conflicts.' ('Behind Reagan's pipeline fiasco', *Spartacist Britain* no 45, November 1982, emphasis in original)

But if the anti-Soviet war drive is so 'secondary', why is the United States encouraging one of its main rivals, Japan, to rearm? Reagan is concerned about Central America, not because he is afraid of losing a few markets to the EEC, but because he does not want to see other Cubas on his doorstep and indeed sees successful counterrevolution in the area as the first stage in 'rolling back Communism'. Where does the RCP think that the new Cruise missiles are targeted? Tokyo? Is Polaris aimed at West Belfast?

And what about Germany? Is the inter-imperialist conflict going to bypass Berlin? We noted at the time of the recent German elections that, 'For European [especially West German] imperialism, promoting internal counterrevolutionary forces in the Soviet bloc seems less risky than attempting a nuclear first strike' ('West German elections Cold War turning point?', *Spartacist Britain* no 48, April 1983). What lies behind West German imperialism's support for the 'peace movement' in East Germany and talk of (bourgeois) reunification? But then the only characterisation the RCP can offer of East Germany is that of 'bureaucratic despotism'.

Reformist gimmickry

Refusal to defend the Soviet Union and the other deformed workers states against imperialism represents a capitulation to the imperialist bourgeoisie. And naturally that capitulation will not reveal itself simply on the issues of the war drive, Poland and the nature of the Soviet Union. The push for an anti-Soviet consensus creates tremendous pressure on organisations like the RCP. For one thing this deep Cold War divide makes it impossible for them to continue sitting on the fence. Today the RCP is fragile, intermittently bizarre and increasingly sucked closer into the embrace of social democracy.

The fragility shows in its discovery of a sliding scale of workers democracy, whereby Spartacist supporters may or may not be admitted to RCP public meetings. In Sheffield not at all, in Liverpool sometimes if the Manchester leadership is not there, in Birmingham only two Spartacist supporters allowed in, and in London they'll take the money but allow only one speaker. They can't deal with the political de-

bate that workers democracy necessarily entails.

Just as they will not defend the workers states, so the RCP can't defend the workers organisations in this country. Their policy for scabs is to 'send them to Coventry' -- isolate them by not speaking with them. But it is a basic axiom of the class struggle that picket lines mean don't cross, and that means scabs get dealt with accordingly. The RCP also opposes the closed shop and union dues check off, important measures associated with the establishment and defence of the workers unions. Like the workers states these don't measure up to the RCP's 'democratic' criteria and so should be junked completely, giving the green light for the bosses to attack union organisation on the shop floor.

The RCP is a small organisation strutting about posing as a 'Party'. Not so long ago it used to dismiss the Labour Party as a 'bourgeois' party. Now it offers to support any election candidates from 'other established parties' who endorse its minimal programme, and goes about bragging about how many Labour councillors have endorsed its reformist schemes for 'PTA free zones'. In Leeds the RCP talks about forcing the local council to 'withdraw funding from the police if they insist on enforcing it [the PTA]' (*the next step*, May 1983). Two years ago they talked about building 'Women for Communism'; now they call for 'free the family from the Tories'. The RCP's Workers Against Racism front group once promoted 'volunteer patrols' to 'isolate' racist thugs (*the next step*, March 1982) as a substitute for mobilising the social power of the organised working class. Now they mumble about being 'determined to force the local Labour council to translate its anti-apartheid rhetoric into action' (*the next step*, February 1983). When our American comrades organised a labour/black mobilisation of 5000 primarily black workers to stop the fascist Ku Klux Klan from marching in Washington DC last November 27, RCPers dismissed it as a 'publicity stunt'. They explicitly reject the call for 'no platform for fascists' and Bermondsey by-election candidate Fran Eden actually shared a platform with a fascist on election night.

'Forcing' local arms of the capitalist state to do various things for the oppressed -- this is what the RCP's programme increasingly amounts to in practice. An editorial in the June 1983 *next step* spells it out:

'Our programme is about workers' control. The working class must begin to assert control over different aspects of capitalist society today, to prepare itself to run a workers' state tomorrow.'

We call this reformism -- or, more precisely, classic social-democratic gradualism. Another RCP front group proclaims that 'it is not the job of anti-imperialists to offer alternative policies in Ireland' ('Anti-imperialists' guide to the Irish war'). *Real* internationalism means not just fighting for 'Troops out now', and certainly not politically championing Green nationalism. It means building internationalist revolutionary parties with a programme of socialist revolution. This the RCP manifestly does not have, for Ireland, for Britain, for anywhere else.

Five years ago the Spartacist League issued a leaflet for a Revolutionary Communist Tendency (as the organisation was then called) dayschool. We wrote:

'The RCT attempts to demarcate "tasks" for revolutionaries in Britain, without the necessary international framework in which Leninists must situate such tasks. It is developing, not *internationalist* cadres with a world outlook who are capable of elaborating a world programme, but narrow little-Englanders, forever consumed with the question "what should *British* revolutionaries do?" From such a starting point, it is impossible to answer even *this* question... 'The RCT is not seriously interested in developing such cadres, in building a party to struggle for state power. When it *does* fight for programme (as on Ireland), it fights around democratic demands alone, saving its speeches on the dictatorship of the proletariat for Saturday afternoons in Conway Hall. This classic division between minimum and maximum programme will undoubtedly lead the RCT, whenever it departs its study circles, to more gross and obvious opportunism...' ('RCT: Wrong tasks, wrong methods', 5 August 1978)

Today with the RCP's straight capitulation before the anti-Soviet war drive, and its increasingly opportunistic (and bizarre) gyrations at home, our prediction is being borne out. The RCP is a classically petty-bourgeois organisation which cannot tell the class line and which is no more able to build a revolutionary alternative to the Labour Party than Tony Cliff. Having already marched on the side of reaction in Afghanistan and Poland, where will the RCP's next step take them? ■

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SPARTACIST BRITAIN

Defend jobs with sit-down strikes!

Steelworkers: Don't buy protectionist poison!

The capitalists' attacks go on: now thousands more jobs in the already ravaged British and American steel industries are up for the chop. US Steel chief Roderick and British Steel master-butcher Ian MacGregor have hatched an international cost-cutting exercise whereby the hot strip rolling mill (which carries out the finishing processes) at BSC's Ravenscraig works will be shut, and the steel shipped in its raw slab state for finishing at US Steel's Fairless Works near Philadelphia. In turn, production of raw steel at the US plant, which is carried out by the antiquated and costly open-hearth method, would be stopped. BSC, via a private trust, would invest £100 million in Fairless in exchange for 'guaranteed' sales of 3½ million tons of raw steel per year, with US restrictions on imports circumvented. The cost? The loss of at least 2500 jobs in Scotland and 2000 more in the US.

MacGregor of course presents this as a way of 'saving' Ravenscraig from total shutdown. But Bruce Millan, Labour's shadow Scottish secretary, wasn't simply electioneering when he warned that, 'This is clearly a device for closing Ravenscraig in two stages and this is something MacGregor has wanted all along.' The last three years have seen at least 80,000 jobs disappear in the British steel industry, with works from Corby to Redcar shuttered for good. Devastation in the American industry has been just as severe. The response of the Labourites and of steel union leaders on both sides of the Atlantic has been to plead for tougher controls on imports to 'protect' domestic industry. 'Save British steel', say Bill Sirs and his Iron & Steel Trades Confederation (ISTC) leadership. 'No British steel', say United Steelworkers of America (USWA) union badges protesting the Ravenscraig/Fairless deal.

These reactionary protectionist campaigns won't save a single job. The ISTC and USWA bureaucrats may mouth the words 'international solidarity', but by rallying workers round the flag and the 'national interest' a fight for protectionism can only fuel nationalist reaction and set worker against worker. What is needed is immediate militant action, directed not against foreign workers and the goods they produce, but against the bosses and their political hatchet-men, labour-haters Thatcher and Reagan. The steel magnates won't 'save' one job unless working-class struggle forces them to. Let them import all they want. *But any move to make a single Fairless or Ravenscraig worker redundant should be answered with immediate sit-down strikes!*

British, US trade union bureaucrats wave the flag

What is so criminal is that all of the tens of thousands of job losses in the British steel industry need never have happened. They have been the price of the betrayal of the 1980 national steel strike by Sirs and the ISTC leadership. As we argued at the time, this strike 'posed the possibility and necessity of a general strike to crush the Tories' attacks, break the stalemate in the class struggle and the stranglehold of the Labour and trade union bureaucrats, and point the proletariat on the road to the seizure of power' (*Spartacist Britain* no 21, May 1980). Extending the strike to other key sectors of industry in a fight to roll back the bosses' offensive was a very concrete possibility. Even at the last moment dockers

were voting in favour of national solidarity strike action, while outraged Rotherham pickets wanted to stay out and fight. But Sirs & Co pushed through their sellout -- and the results have been disastrous.

The union chiefs have offered the perspective of waiting for another Labour government of austerity and Cold War as the way to save jobs. (Arch right-winger Sirs has even touted a Labour-Alliance coalition.) They have particularly promoted the import controls at the heart of Labour's Alternative Economic Strategy as an alternative to strike action. This strategy is provenly bankrupt. Who today will claim that 'waiting for Labour' is an answer to anything? But the bureaucrats keep singing the same nationalist, class-collaborationist tune.

Asked by *Spartacist Britain* what plans he has for fighting the threatened redundancies at Ravenscraig, Tommy Brennan, secretary of the ISTC Scottish Area Committee and convener of the local shop stewards committee, says 'we have to sit back and wait until MacGregor puts his pro-



Union bureaucrats claim workers' enemy is foreign imports not domestic bosses. British steelworkers protest imports (left), while US worker protests British steel (inset).

posals to the government'. Sitting back and waiting is the last thing steelworkers need! Asked about strike actions and sit-downs, Brennan says, 'We have various options and strike action is the very last option we would be prepared to consider.' Brennan's first option is 'building broad support' in Scotland ... including, notably, the church. Brennan wants to mobilise Scottish *national* (ie capitalist) opinion, as he expressed at the Scottish Council of Labour conference in March when he said: 'Rob Roy MacGregor robbed the rich to pay the poor. Yankee MacGregor is robbing the poor to pay the rich.' This kind of class-collaborationist nationalism is a dangerous dead-end for Scottish and all steelworkers.

But it is of a piece with the chauvinist crusade being conducted by American steelworkers leaders. On a May 2 demonstration in Chicago called by some USWA 'dissidents' the placards read 'US Steel deceives steelworkers and America' and 'US Steel Dumps on American Made'. They (literally) waved the Stars and Stripes -- and there was not one word on the impending redundancies at Fairless. Even the notoriously

right-wing USWA president Lloyd McBride and his cronies decided to get in on the act when they realised that the demonstration would not threaten but reaffirm their pro-capitalist programme.

Having just grovelled before the bosses to negotiate an all-time sellout contract which offers the company about £10,000 per worker (!) in 'givebacks', the USWA leadership has now ruled out any strike action to stop redundancies.



McBride plans to squander the union's \$185 million strike fund on a court suit against US Steel, claiming the proposed imports from BSC violate a trade agreement, and on a 'media campaign' to halt imports. Local union leaders at Fairless have approved a resolution calling on workers to refuse to unload British steel if the deal goes through. Not only does this target the wrong 'enemy', but by then thousands of jobs on both sides of the Atlantic will have already been lost!

Protectionism — poison for the working class

When steelworkers adorn their cars with stickers bearing the Union Jack and the slogan 'Save British steel', we point out that it is this sort of chauvinism which enabled Thatcher to use the Falklands war to defeat the ASLEF strikers and which makes the 'Falklands factor' a force in demobilising class struggle still. And protectionism fuels racist reaction. It is the fascist scum of the National Front who march under the banner, 'British jobs for British workers'. In the wake of the defeat of the steel

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