

# WORKERS HAMMER

No 62

October 1984

20p/10p to strikers

Formerly Spartacist Britain



Pickets battle cops at Allerton Bywater, Yorkshire, 21 August. Break the strikebreakers! Spread the strike!

John Sturrock (Network)

## Break the strikebreakers

From Brighton to Blackpool, the past month confirmed in open conference the undisputed authority of the miners in the eyes of labour and the oppressed, and the undisguised bankruptcy of the official leadership of the labour movement. The TUC's promise of 'total physical support' in early September has meant the scuttling of the potentially explosive dock strike and a drive to bury the miners in the bosses' ACAS. Labour's 'support' four weeks later was instantly translated into an obscene speech by Neil Kinnock at Blackpool praising the 'legality' which today means police-state terror and Thatcherite union-bashing.

While 'Labour leader' Kinnock imagined himself in the white wig and black robe of a High Court judge, Margaret Thatcher had one of her hirelings provocatively violate the Labour Party conference in order to serve miners leader Arthur Scargill with a writ threatening imprisonment for contempt. Scargill's reply compared admirably with the hack Kinnock: 'I want to make it absolutely clear that if the choice facing me is to be committed by the High Court to spend a prison term in Pentonville or any other jail for standing by this trade union or our class, or alternatively having to live with the imprisonment of one's mind for betraying one's class then there is no choice as far as I am concerned. I stand by my class and my union.'

### Tough talk and treachery

The miners have stood and fought valiantly for their class for seven long and bitter months. They have taken more than 8000 arrests, seen two of their comrades murdered and thousands more injured, their families deprived of daily necessities -- in order to stand firm in the face of a vicious capitalist government which seeks to drive the working class ever deeper into immiseration and turn back nearly a century of hard-won trade union rights. All signs point to a hard, cold and bitter winter. As coal stocks at the power stations dwindle, the long-awaited confrontation over the movement of coal from the pitheads now looms on the horizon -- and Thatcher will not hesitate to use the troops. Yet for all the cheap words of praise and empty promises of support, all that has been decided at Brighton and Blackpool is that the NUM membership is left to fight alone through the winter. *Enough treachery! The miners must not stand alone! Strike now with the miners!*

### 'Lefts' bail out Judas Kinnock

### Strike now with the miners!



Arthur Scargill gets the applause at Labour Party conference. But despite the ringing declarations, strikebreaker Neil Kinnock still holds the power.

The sentiment to fight is certainly there. The union-hating *Sun* was shut down for four days in early October when printers walked out in protest at a front-page editorial slinging the miners as 'scum of the earth'. And from the

militant Cammell Laird shipyard occupation in Birkenhead, ruthlessly crushed by a military-style police raid, to strikes against racist victimisation in the car industry, the sentiment to join the miners in strike action against the Tory union-bashers is pervasive.

Even the traditionally right-wing pit deputies voted 82 per cent in favour of strike action, which could lead to a total shutdown of the scab coalfields in Notts and elsewhere in the Midlands. While the NACODS sellout leaders continue might and main to prevent a strike through a scabby 'compromise' with MacGregor, one of them revealingly confessed: 'I did not believe that this Government was out to destroy the trade union movement, but when I see the kind of treatment being handed out to a small, moderate organisation like ours I start to wonder' (*Guardian*, 25 September).

Too true! But for all the pious phrases of 'unity' and 'solidarity' mouthed at Brighton and Blackpool, the Cold War right-wing heads of the steel and electricians unions continue with unabashed scabherding. And the engineering, transport and G&M leaders who claimed *five weeks ago* that they would start blacking coal supplies in the power industry just keep on meeting, discussing and resolving to ... meet and discuss some more. The strategic Shirebrook rail depot, which controls coal output from Notts and supplies the central power grid, has been run for months by a handful of scabs while some 70 per cent of NUR and ASLEF members there remain suspended without pay for following union blacking instructions. The 'left' rail union leaders have finally been forced to call a one-day regional strike for 9 October in protest against the victimisations.

The sellout of the three-week-long dock strike in mid-September by the 'left' T&G leaders was so dirty not even the *Morning Star* could make it look presentable (though they tried). It gave a green light to the Tories to step up provocations against the NUM, including the arrest threat against Scargill and renewed sequestration threats. Angry militants from Southampton and Merseyside lobbied the Transport House ratification meeting to denounce the settlement, which allows scab coal to pour into Ravenscraig while providing not even a paper guarantee against the use of scab labour on the docks. Scargill, after the fact, denounced the

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Setting the record straight

# An exchange on British Trotskyism

North Finchley  
8 July, 1984

Dear Comrades,

We were greatly interested to read the article 'How Miners Fought the Government in W.W.II' which appeared in *Spartacist Britain* for July, 1984. It is an interesting subject, but we have to confess we feel that it has been dealt with in a disappointing manner.

Firstly, phraseology and facts quoted (e.g. the '18,000' fined or jailed under the anti-labour laws in the War, and the incident we quote from the *Daily Worker* of the magistrate criticised by the C.P. for leniency) show that use has been made of our book, *Two Steps Back*, yet, whilst your debt to Robert Black's and Richard Croucher's books is admitted, no such courtesy was extended to ours. We can only assume from this that whilst you have no objection to your readers checking your sources in the works of bourgeois academics or Third Period sectarians, you do not feel that they should be directed to works reflecting the outlook of revolutionaries in the Labour Party. That says volumes for your own outlook and attitudes. That such is no accident is proved by your previous use of our book in the polemic against Stalinism in *Spartacist Britain* for May, 1983, again without acknowledgement.

A careful perusal of your account in the article shows that you are none too scrupulous with your use of sources on your own account. Far from W.I.L. refusing 'to consider critical support to Labour whilst it was in the coalition', WIL repeatedly campaigned under the slogan 'break the coalition, Labour to Power', and consistently leafletted Labour Party Conferences along these lines during the War -- as well as keeping some of its supporters as dues-paying Labour Party members. We notice that you yet again lift out of context Grant's remark about the Eighth Army to try to prove that the W.I.L. was a social chauvinist organisation, whereas all who were present know full well that he was referring to the immense pro-working class agitation that was going on in the ranks of that army at the time -- in which W.I.L. members, among others, played a role. Another hoary old chestnut also gets raked out again -- that W.I.L. 'refused' to send a delegate to the founding Conference of the Fourth International. Anyone at all remotely acquainted with the full documentation, and the facts of the case, can

say that W.I.L. entrusted a sealed statement to the Conference to one of the British delegates, accepting the Conference's authority, but that, being almost wholly made up of young unemployed workers, it could not afford its own delegate. Moreover, whilst the official section refused to print 'The Death Agony of Capitalism', the W.I.L. got out a copy as quickly as it could.

The selective use and part censorship of your sources is repugnant to the methods of Leninism -- such a presentation, as Lenin himself said, could be 'dismissed with a wave of the hand'. We look forward to a disclaimer, or at least an explanation from you. And as we do not want this letter to suffer the same fate as our book in your editorial practice, we have sent copies to other socialist newspapers. The ball is now firmly in your court.

Fraternally,  
Sam Bornstein and Al Richardson

*Workers Hammer* replies: Napoleon once remarked that the English were a nation of shopkeepers; the petty proprietorial tone of comrades Bornstein and Richardson's letter underlines how appropriate this remark is in relation to present-day English social democrats. The comrades seem to think they are the only people with access to back files of the Communist Party's *Daily Worker* and the Trotskyist *Socialist Appeal* during World War II. Their book *Two Steps Back* is interesting, though it covers much of the same ground as Robert Black's earlier (and superior) *Stalinism in Britain*, but thoroughly within the context of a polemic for utter entombment within the Labour Party and a rejection of the need for a Leninist party. In a

**VOTE AGAINST THE COALITION**

Workers of Death!  
Remember when you vote, that a vote for the Labour Candidate is a vote for Churchill and the Tories.

Remember, it would not make the slightest difference to the position in Parliament on the policy of the Government if the worst die-hard Tory were standing in the place of the Labour Party Candidate and were elected.

Because there is no CLASS position being put by the Labour Party. The Labour Party has surrendered every scrap of independence of the Trade Union and Labour movement to the capitalists.

The workers have given all the capitalists have taken everything. But property has not been conscripted. The property owners and industrialists have been free to exploit the con-



Labour Workers! Don't be driven further

Trotskyist RCP opposed voting for Labour when in wartime coalition, warning 'A vote for Labour is a vote for Churchill' (*Socialist Appeal*, February 1945).

supposedly Trotskyist book dealing with Stalinism and its betrayals in World War II, *Two Steps Back* has not a single mention of the key Trotskyist position of unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union against imperialism, while it approvingly quotes arch anti-communist Herbert Morrison's attacks on the CP no less than four times.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about Bornstein and Richardson's letter is that it attempts to make the Workers International League (WIL) appear programatically worse than it actually was. They defend its worst positions and try to deny its best ones. They reject our assertion that the WIL refused to give critical electoral support to the Labour Party while Labour sat in the coalition government of Winston Churchill. However, in an article entitled 'The Ballot Box Test' (*Workers International News*, March 1940), written while Chamberlain was still prime minister and before Labour had formally joined the government, the WIL argued:

'When the Labour Party openly abandons even the pretence that it is fighting the Tories, adopts their programme and concludes a truce with them, it becomes impossible to support an official Labour candidate, because a vote for Labour then means a vote for Chamberlain.'

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# Greetings from Barcelona

Barcelona  
21 September 1984

Dear comrades,

Congratulations on the first issue of *Workers Hammer*. Having had my reservations about the projected name change, I was pleased to see that the result is in fact a very attractive Trotskyist newspaper. The points you make about the left press in Britain are very correct. Who needs a paper called *Socialist Action* in a country where social democracy holds a virtual monopoly on working-class activity? Of course it's fine if your 'vision of socialism' is being a satellite of the anti-communist British Labour Party and tailing Solidarnosc. The name *Spartacist* is evocative. It represents the rich revolutionary traditions that the iSt proudly claims as its own; and there's a blood line between Spartacism and social democracy, between Rosa Luxemburg the revolutionary, and Scheidemann the hangman. I agree that *Spartacist Britain* did not reflect either our organisational norms or the traditions of the British proletariat. *Workers Hammer* is different. It's hard and uncompromising and it's unmistakably a Spartacist newspaper. I wish you the very best of luck with the sub drive.

I think the heroic British miners would be heartened to hear of the interest their struggle has aroused in this country among ordinary working people, even if concrete solidarity has not been forthcoming. The reformist union bureaucracies here are currently engaged in working out yet another 'social and economic pact' with the bosses, a Spanish-style social con-trick in

which the workers get the shaft. On a recent demonstration here, everybody I spoke to had heard of the British miners' struggle, and a number of Spanish workers asked me for NUM stickers. I had a lively discussion with some Stalinist workers from the pro-Moscow PCC [Catalan Communist Party] who were particularly interested when I explained the openly strike-breaking role played by the PUWP in Poland.

It's worth pointing out that the Polish bureaucracy in particular has a very ignoble history of such scabbing in the name of 'peaceful coexistence' with the imperialists. On at least two occasions the Polish bureaucrats shipped coal to the Franco regime during strikes by Asturian miners -- this treachery was subsequently exploited by that miserable Eurocommunist scab Carrillo in factional battles against his pro-Moscow opponents in the PCE. An even more grotesque, though lesser known Stalinist betrayal, was Castro's lowering of the flags to half mast on the death of Franco, a hideous insult to the Spanish proletariat. Many Stalinist workers here, as in Britain, are baffled by such anti-proletarian acts of treason, but only the Spartacist League has consistently exposed the programmatic roots of betrayal by a contradictory bureaucratic caste which is capable, in elementary self-defence, of checking clerical-nationalist Solidarnosc, while at the same time conciliating the reactionaries at home and abroad at the expense of the workers and oppressed.

A few months ago, I spoke with a Czech delegate to the CJC (Communist Youth) festival. He explained: the national economic interests of

Poland prevent the government from supporting the miners at this point. OK so we agree. Socialism in one country/peaceful coexistence means scabbing on workers involved in life and death struggles against the class enemy. As Marxist internationalists we fight for the rebirth of the Trotskyist Fourth International, and we are inspired by such acts of proletarian internationalism as that demonstrated by British workers refusing to load the *Jolly George*, or by the battalion of Welsh miners who went off to fight with the Spanish Republic, shoulder to shoulder with their comrades from the mines of Asturias, and the textile mills of Barcelona. Communist greetings,  
Michael

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## South Wales miner speaks:

# 'Thatcher won't beat us down!'

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** On Friday, 28 September the London Spartacist League held a public meeting on the miners strike which featured, among others, guest speaker Don Hughes, a striker from South Celynen colliery in South Wales. Comrade Hughes was one of only seven members of the South Celynen NUM who initially voted for strike action last March. We offer for our readers in abridged form Comrade Hughes' presentation, which was the high point of the public meeting, and thank again the comrades who attended for the generous £80 collection taken there on behalf of the South Wales miners.

The national coal strike now has been going on for over seven months. It has been a strike which has been hard, it has been brutal and it has been violent. It has been hard because the repercussions to mineworkers' families leaves a lot to be desired. There is tremendous hardship in the mining valleys of South Wales, as there is in other coalmining communities throughout Great Britain. It has been bitter, because of the frustration of not being able to speak to fellow trade unionists who daily since the strike began, have been passing through official NUM picket lines. These are the people whom the media so courageously state as 'working miners'. Well I can tell you this, my friends. As far as the NUM is concerned when we call an official strike there are no working miners. The people that go through picket lines are *scabs*. There is no work in Great Britain for any mineworker that belongs to the NUM.

I also mentioned violence. This is a great bone of contention. Margaret Thatcher and her gang of traitors whine incessantly to the media, 'Why doesn't the NUM condemn the violence on the picket lines?' Neil Kinnock and his merry men, they say the same thing, 'It's about time that Arthur Scargill and the NUM executive condemned violence on picket lines.' David Steel also, and his roly-poly lot, David Owen and his bunch of turncoats, they've all got the same idea, that the NUM should condemn violence on picket lines. Well comrades, I can tell you this, from day one, through the media, the NUM has consistently condemned violence on the picket line. We have sent requests to every chief constable in every mining area to call off their dogs.

Proof of this is the fact that at the present time there are just over 8000 mineworkers who have been arrested. There are over 6000 pickets that have been injured, 1000 seriously. There have been four deaths as a result of picketing, two actually died on picket duty and two lads from South Wales from a pit about nine miles away from us at South Celynen, they died while going picketing in a car accident. Everywhere you go from day one, NUM pickets are subject to harassment by the various police forces that have been gathered together in different areas. In the counties of Nottingham, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Warwickshire and Staffordshire they are virtually police states. The villages there are under siege, you are not allowed to walk down the street without being stopped and being questioned. I know, I've been there. They use truncheons as though a man or woman would throw confetti at a wedding. They hit everyone and everything they see in front of them. They mean to teach mineworkers a lesson.

But I'll tell you this, my friends, mineworkers are a very strange breed. They're not intellectuals, if they were of course they wouldn't be in the pit. They're hard, rough and the majority very crude men. And they are men who through the very nature of their work are not easily frightened. So Margaret Thatcher can get no solace from the fact that she is going to beat us back to work. It just won't be the case.

Regarding scabbing. We in South Wales, unfortunately, are the only area of the NUM left without a single scab going through picket

lines. Mind you, we have had two. We had a man from Bedws in Mid-Glamorgan by the name of Ron Jones. He went back to work because he had no money, he said. Well, he may be right. It's a long time since a lot have had any money. But I have no intention, my friends, of ever going back to work until my union tells me to do so. That man lasted two days.

The other one was from the Garw Valley, a man by the name of Monty Morgan, a big, strong, hard, tough ex-Royal Marine, the media said. And he came on the television on the Welsh news. And he said 'Yes, it's about time somebody did some-

Workers Hammer

**MINERS, T&G, RAIL: FOR A FIGHTING TRIPLE ALLIANCE!**  
**ALL-OUT JOINT NATIONAL STRIKE NOW!**  
**SHUT DOWN THE COUNTRY!**  
SPARTACIST LEAGUE



Miner Don Hughes speaking at Spartacist League public meeting in London, 28 September.

thing, and I'm doing it, I'm going back to work'. This big, strong, tough marine lasted exactly three days.

A week last Thursday one of the members of my photographic society came up to me and he said, 'What do you think of Monty Morgan, then?' I said 'Is he dead?' 'No, no' he said, 'I mean what do you think about his cat?' I said, 'What do I think about his cat?' 'Aye', he said, 'he had a cat for thirteen years', he said, 'and a gang of pickets went and broke its back. What do you think about that then?' 'Disgusting' I said. 'To take vengeance on a scab', I said, 'through injuring a perfectly harmless and innocent animal is absolutely deplorable', I said. 'It would have been much better if they had broken bloody Monty Morgan's back.' (laughter)

But you see, my friends, you may ask, why is it that we have no scabs now in South Wales? The answer is quite simple. Mining in South Wales is a little bit different to the other coalfields, because in South Wales there has always been a tradition, sons have always followed fathers into the mines. Myself, I am a third generation miner at South Celynen colliery. My grandfather worked there for 36 years, until he lost both his legs in an underground accident, in 1930. The coal owner of the day paid him generous compensation for the loss of his two limbs: he had thirty pounds. My father of course followed him into the pit once he left school, and he worked 51 years at South Celynen colliery underground, until he retired at 65. He unfortunately dropped dead before he could reach 66. Nothing remarkable about that, for the expectation of life of a mineworker doesn't extend much more than 72 or 73. And I have been there also since September 1948.

So comrades, that's the secret. It's the tra-

ditional aspect of mines, of mining in South Wales. When one man goes against the tide, not only does his workmates, but everyone in the community knows that man for what he is. And he is treated as such. I quote from Jack London: 'When a scab walks down the street, men turn their backs, the angels weep in heaven and the devil shuts the gates of hell to keep him out. That is Jack London's definition of a scab.'

### A man's right to work

You all know, in this room, what the strike is all about. One thing, comrades, and one thing only. It is about a man's right to work. It's about a man's right to go into his community with his head held high, saying, 'Yes, I am supporting my family. We are going to one place or another for our holidays this year. I work, and therefore I've earned it.' It is that element of pride in all of us. Unfortunately we have a government in power at the present time who thinks to have a job is a privilege. It's not, comrades, it is a right, it is a right to every man and woman in this country if they so desire to earn their living.

This case of uneconomic pits is rubbish. You see, I will give you an example of what happened in my own pit. Three months before the strike started, we opened up a new coal face. It was one of the most remarkable coal faces that mineworkers at South Celynen colliery have ever seen in their lives. The face extended a length of 230 metres and it was 14 foot high -- of absolutely clean coal, high quality steam coal. Now with conventional cutting methods being employed in the mines today, one cut along that coal face could have produced enough coal, the pit couldn't even wind it, because it takes a minute to wind two tons of coal from pit bottom to pit top. They could simply have not had the winding capacity to cope with just one cut. And the pit would have made a handsome profit.

But what did the Coal Board do? Instead of investing as they should have done in proper roof support systems to enable that coal to be cut, they brought in a roof support from another colliery, which had already closed, with the consequent result that coal is only being mined 230 metres in length and six foot six in height. There is seven foot six of coal, my friends, left beneath the faceworkers' feet, to be lost for all time.



Picket line violence: cops in riot gear bash up striker at Maltby, 24 September. For mass labour mobilisations to smash police terror in the coalfields!

Before I left home this morning I found two of my pay slips. For a craftsman to earn £112 before deductions and take home £68, there's something very radically wrong. During one of my travels, I was told about an incident which took place, towards the end of last November in this city of London. Sotheby's put up for auction a pair of Queen Victoria's drawers. And those most royal of lace-edged antiques was bought by a Scottish gentleman, for £270. That, my friends,

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## Letters from our readers:

# 'Congratulations on Workers Hammer'

Bristol  
23 June 1984

Dear comrades,

Whilst on a recent miners demonstration in Cardiff I agreed with one of your comrades to take a strike special subscription (£1.00 for 5 issues)....

I also purchased a copy of the Solidarnosc pamphlet (and have read it) and a copy [of] *Women and Revolution* (Spring 84) more recently. I was most interested in the article on incest which I thought was bold and perceptive. There are few socialist/communist journals that would have dared tread on such 'delicate' ground, more power to your elbows. I have also enclosed £1.50 for the next four issues of *Women and Revolution* hoping they will be of similar quality....

Yours with comradely thanks,  
Ian Denison

Bristol  
1 October 1984

Dear comrades,

... Finally, I would like to congratulate you on the launching of *Workers Hammer*. I hope that this takes you a step forward and am sure that it will live up to the high standards of *Spartacist Britain*.

Yours fraternally,  
Ian Denison

[Dunscroft, S Yorks]

Dear Comrades,

I do appreciate your coverage of issues and events but after 6 months on STRIKE can't afford a subscription. Can you waive the fee for striking miners?

The piece on SWP's position on picket lines and RCP's position on closed shop and on a ballot and Workers Power's call for a 'national vote' need producing in one leaflet and distributing to picket lines to let everyone know who stands where.

RG's  
David Douglass

Cwmcarn, Crosskeys, Gwent  
19 September 1984

Dear comrades,

... At the time of writing this, I have not yet received my copy of *Workers Hammer*. I did

hear from Martyn and his brother Howard about the change of name and, personally I very much like the change, but [comrade], to quote a well known saying, it is not the name on the package that counts but the contents within. I am confident that your paper will live up to its new title as it did to its old one in all matters.

It only remains for me to say that I look forward to seeing you and your other comrades this weekend and to tender fraternal greeting to all others within your valued movement.

Sincerely yours,  
Don Hughes

Dear Comrade Editor,

What a surprise to have received my copy of *Spartacist Britain* only to find it had been substituted by a copy of the *Workers Hammer*. Thankfully the contents hadn't changed, but why on earth choose that name. Surely it would have been an ideal opportunity for a Bolshevik Party to call its organ the *Truth*.

Keep up the good work.

Yours fraternally,  
R P Hall,  
Warsop Main NUM

*Workers Hammer* replies: We are gratified by the response to our paper and its new name from readers old and new. We appreciate the plight comrade Douglass describes. It is for that reason, and our recognition of the political importance of establishing the widest possible readership among this fighting layer of the working class, that we have introduced our special 50p introductory subscription for miners. We also thank comrade Douglass for his leaflet suggestion.

Opinions on the change to *Workers Hammer* from our readership seem to be running about four-to-one in favour. Comrade Hall's sentiment is well-taken. Palpably the truth is a powerful weapon of the revolutionary vanguard in this country. From the oh-so-democratic pretensions of this murderous imperialist ruling class and its anachronistic monarchy to the dreary windbagery of the Labourite politicians, capitalist Britain is truly a land of cant and hypocrisy.

But in choosing *Workers Hammer* we wanted a name that conveyed an active, and necessary, tool of the workers in their struggle. We note

in Nigel Tranter's excellent historical novel, the *Robert the Bruce* trilogy, the speech he imputes to Robert, King of Scots, on the eve of the battle of Bannockburn in 1314, where the Scots inflicted a decisive defeat against their English oppressors under King Edward I, the notorious 'Hammer of the Scots':

'Today is fate hammered out on the anvil, hammered into shape.

'But mark you, today we are the hammer, not the iron! And the land, our land, is the anvil. The iron is the arrogant, invading English host, which once more desecrates our land. But this time, friends, is the last. This time, we shall hammer and bend and mould that great unwieldy host....'

The heroic miners strike is an impressive example of how class struggle can break down national and racial divisions within the working class and forge unity in struggle against the common class enemy. We seek to provide the hammer -- a revolutionary programme and party -- with which the powerful multi-national and multi-racial proletariat of these islands can finally break and destroy this arrogant, oppressive and exploitative ruling class. ■

## Dig deep!

NUM Derbyshire Area  
Warsop Main Branch  
26-9-84

Dear Brother,

Could you please help our cause and place the following advert in your free section.

CHURCH WARSOP WOMENS ACTION GROUP  
- desperately require donation of food & monies in our effort to feed our families and sustain our struggle.

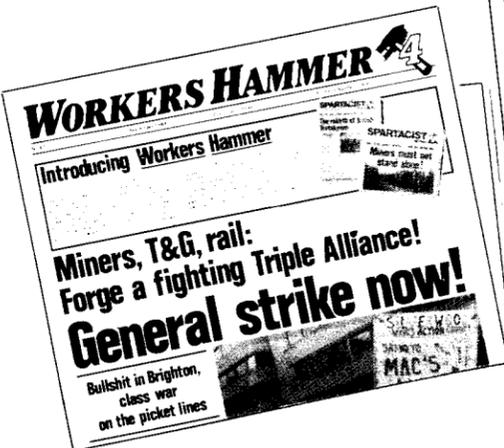
Yours fraternally,  
D.G. Daniels

Donations to: c/o 98 St Lawrence Ave  
Bolsover  
Chesterfield  
S44 6HT

# Subscription drive SUCCESS!

In launching this subscription drive introducing *Workers Hammer*, we placed priority on reaching out to militant miners at the forefront of the class struggle. The response was gratifying, particularly given the hardship facing strikers' families: over half the subs sold were the miners introductory specials. Class-conscious militants need a paper that tells the truth! Door-to-door sales garnered 36 subs in the Kent coalfield and another 34 in one South Yorks mining village, Dunscroft. Roving teams to Wales and Scotland significantly increased our readership in those areas. The eight new subscribers in BL and the sub bought by TGWU branch 5/35, West Midlands lorry drivers, reflected the impact of our exposure of the disgusting scab coal operation in BL. Comrades sold subs on picket lines, at demos, strike centres and their workplaces and on campuses. The London branch's focus on Tamil militants netted 15 points. Included in the total were 24 subs to *Women & Revolution*, 10 to *Young Spartacus* and 38 joint *Workers Hammer/Workers Vanguard* subs.

We salute comrade Debbie H (London), who came first with an impressive 49 points, comrade Emma G (also London) with 39 and Pat S, a supporter in Rover Solihull who sold 25 points. Welcome to our new readers. And if you haven't yet done so, subscribe now to the only Marxist press in Britain.



	Quota	Points	Percentage
Birmingham	80	89	111
London	175	215	123
Sheffield	80	87.5	109
Other	-	12	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>403.5</b>	<b>120</b>

## subscribe now!

- 10 issues of *Workers Hammer* for £2
- Special introductory offer: 5 issues of *Workers Hammer* 50p to striking miners, £1 to others
- 10 issues of *Workers Hammer* plus 24 issues of *Workers Vanguard*, Marxist fortnightly of the Spartacist League/US, £6 (all above subs include *Spartacist*, organ of the international Spartacist tendency)
- 4 issues of *Women & Revolution* for £1.50

Name .....  
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Make payable/post to: Spartacist Publications, PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE

**Black all coal! Picket lines mean don't cross!**

# Shut down BL's scab operation!

The dirtiest open secret of the Midlands trade union movement is the massive scab coal operation at BL plants. Tens of thousands of tons of scab coal have been pouring into plants like Rover Solihull and Longbridge since the miners strike began, building up an estimated five-six months' stockpile. And this is one story you won't read in the *Morning Star*, since Communist Party supporters like Longbridge convenor Jack Adams and Rovers convenor Joe Harris have been in the front lines of this scandalous backstabbing operation directed at the miners.

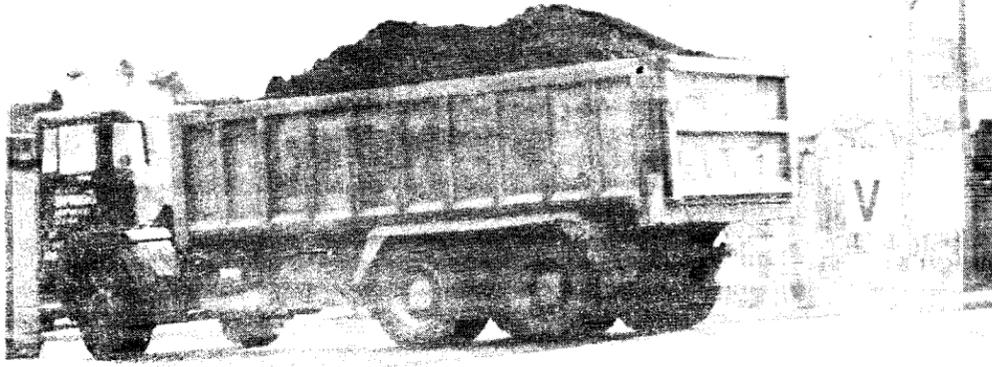
Beginning with our May leaflet to BL workers, through our aggressive exposure of the scab coal at a June rally at Salliey Gates, the Spartacist League has sought to rouse the labour movement to do something about it. SL supporter

Patrick Sliney, a TGWU militant, has fought to get the coal blacked at Rovers, mobilising several dozen workers to demand that the union take all necessary action, including strike action. And while they've done little enough to stop the scabbing, even official trade union bodies have felt compelled to lodge protests. The latest was the Birmingham Trades Council, which in a 7 September letter complained to Jack Adams: 'The Birmingham Trades Council has been disturbed to hear that scab coal is stockpiled at Longbridge and that scab coal is still, apparently, being delivered to the factory.'

Well, predictably Adams -- who's been carrying out his blackleg policies for seven full months in defiance of both NUM and TGWU instructions to black coal -- was hardly swayed by this latest appeal. In a reply addressed to the Trades Council, Adams complained of the interference 'by some third party elements'. In short, he would damn well scabherd as much as he saw fit. Adams also told the Council that in line with the 'spirit as well as the letter of the TUC's decisions' the stewards council at Longbridge would 'accommodate' official pickets from South Wales NUM commencing September 16. But Adams' terms specified that the pickets were

not to prevent workers from entering the plant or handling the already stockpiled coal inside. In short, the NUM could set up a token 'informational' picket of four miners (even Denis Healey is prepared to accept six!) as long as they didn't interfere with production!

A few days later the Trades Council appealed directly to BL workers: 'Clearly, if trades unionists working in these establishments are prepared to use stockpiled coal then the miners' struggle will be set back. We should now make a call on all these trades unionists to carry out TUC policy and boycott this scab coal and oil substitutes, whether stockpiled or not... All trades unionists should bring forward their claim so that action can be taken alongside the



Scab coal goes into BL

Workers Hammer

miners.' But the Trades Council did nothing to back up its appeal. Were it serious, it would dispatch mass pickets to the BL plants to shut down the scab operations. And no phoney 'informational' picket lines: picket lines mean don't cross!

The Spartacist League stands for industrial action alongside the miners to build a general strike that can bring down Thatcher. There are few sections of workers who have more reason to join the miners' fight than the BL workforce. BL was the first significant target for the Thatcher Cold War anti-union crusade. Tens of thousands of jobs were slashed away, the stewards' organisation ravaged by repeated victimisations. Only in the last year the endless speed-up and the vindictive management regime has provoked unofficial strike after strike. And now the Austin Rover Group (principally Longbridge and Cowley) has a major pay claim in for November 1. We say: bring forward all the

claims across BL! Stop the return to plant bargaining -- stop scab coal in BL! Strike now to roll back management's attacks and alongside the miners!

While the actions of CP convenors like Jack Adams are particularly despicable, they are consistent with the overall policy of the Communist Party. And the pro-Kremlin wing of the party is no better than 'Euros' like Adams: after seven months the tankie-controlled *Morning Star* has not printed a word about scab coal in BL!

At a public CP meeting held in Birmingham on September 13, CP industrial organiser Pete Carter lauded the recent TUC conference, incredibly claiming that we now had a General Council capable of turning the TUC into a 'real campaigning body'. But Carter's attempt to bury the issue of scab coal flopped. Nigel Ashfield, secretary of the Lea Hall NUM strike committee, intervened to demand that scab coal be blacked in the BL foundries, noted that the miners had gotten no cooperation from the Longbridge convenor, and added that he had personally written a letter of protest to the CP, to which he had received no reply. Rovers militant Pat Sliney pointed to the role of CP union leaders in sabotaging the efforts of car militants to black the scab coal. In reply Carter could only whine that if steelworkers crossed NUM picket lines, then how could you expect car workers to do otherwise -- in effect admitting that he had the same policy as Bill Sirs! And as the meeting broke up, one frenzied CPer physically assaulted Pat Sliney while he had his back turned.

What it boils down to is a question of leadership. The trade union fakers say that to black coal means shutting down the plants. For Import Controls Committee chairman Jack Adams, dedicated to 'British industry' and 'British jobs for British workers', scab coal is just part of 'saving BL'. And the rest of the fake left is little better, having ignored the scabbing at BL for months and then belatedly seeking to cover themselves. When miners did put up small pickets at Longbridge this month, supporters of groups like the SWP ignored them and went into work, anyway! As for Workers Power, its one steward at Longbridge has apparently quit the plant in the middle of this great class battle. Only the Trotskyists of the SL have consistently fought to mobilise the car workers to fight alongside the miners to defeat bloody Thatcher and win this crucial class war. ■

**Reinstate Nat Akinbayo!**

# Racist victimisation at Ford Dagenham

In a blatantly provocative and racist victimisation in mid-September, management at Ford Dagenham car plant sacked Nat Akinbayo, a black shop steward. On 21 June Aki approached foreman Barry Moody to demand that he stop assigning inspectors to give orders to hourly workers, a clear violation of union work rules. The foreman later accused Aki of damaging the roof of a Sierra by pounding it with his hand. Not only did four witnesses testify the car was already damaged when it came out of the ovens, but indeed, Aki has crippled hands with plastic artificial joints, which would shatter under such impact! Foreman Moody is a notorious racist white South African who has regularly engaged in racist harassment and abuse of minority workers. He, not Aki should be run out of the plant!

Aki is a militant steward who has fought for his members against the company's racist harassment and violation of agreed union procedures. His sacking after ten weeks suspension outraged the workforce -- and finally forced the shop stewards committee to call a strike. But convenor (and CP supporter) Joe Gordon and the union officialdom continued to drag their feet, refused to organise solid mass pickets and, after a couple of days, ended the strike, accepting a phoney 'independent arbitration' enquiry which offers nothing. Reverse the sellout -- all-out strike action now! Reinstate Nat Akinbayo!

The intensified racism directed against the heavily minority workforce of Dagenham is part of the targetting of blacks and Asians by this

racist bourgeoisie, as it seeks to whip up patriotic hysteria for its anti-Soviet war drive. At Birmingham's Longbridge plant, BL management similarly sacked militant black worker Zedekiah Mills last spring for defending himself against a foreman's racist abuse. For two weeks BL workers struck solidly in support of Mills, before the strike was called off by sellout convenor Jack Adams.

But car workers have the power to strike back. The miners have shown the way with their militant battle against Thatcher's bloody union-bashing government. Ford workers have taken thousands of redundancies, and now the foundry

and engine plants at Dagenham are under attack. Both car workers and miners have every interest in shutting down the operations of the car bosses, who are using scab coal to keep their operations going. And the presence of striking miners on the picket lines of car workers would go a long way in building effective picket lines that no one dares cross. Bring forward the pay claims of car workers and strike now! The whole TGWU should be brought out alongside the miners. We need a class-struggle leadership to defend the trade unions and stop the Tories' job massacre. Defend Nat Akinbayo! Strike with the miners to win! ■

## SPARTACIST CLASS SERIES

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# Hate Thatcher/MacG

In his new book *Sparks Fly*, notorious anti-communist and scabherder Frank Chapple describes the vicious witchhunt of miners leader Arthur Scargill at the Blackpool TUC one year ago:

'... can anyone seriously challenge my contention that I spoke comprehensively for the British trade union movement when I lambasted left union leaders for junketing off to hobnob in Moscow while refusing to talk to our own elected government at home? Or when I ridiculed those who thought we should take to the streets to drive Mrs Thatcher from office?...

'I was less reticent over Arthur Scargill's next extraordinary gaffe. News Line, the Trotskyite Workers' Revolutionary party newspaper, published a letter from Scargill in which he described the banned Polish trade union, Solidarity, as "an anti-socialist organisation which desires the overthrow of a socialist state". The Trots took full advantage of him by dropping their bombshell story in the middle of TUC week. It came on top of his one-sided Moscow speech, blaming Margaret Thatcher and Reagan for being the main threat to world peace.

'Not surprisingly, my views were avidly canvassed and I said: "I regard these sort of remarks as the ravings of an idiot." There was a consensus of like opinion among the moderates and even his left pals were embarrassed by his outburst....

'... the more the public see of TUC delegates backslapping Scargill, the more they'll be convinced that we're all a bunch of loopy militants.'

It was no accident that the *Sunday Times* (2 September) chose to print this excerpt from Chapple's book on the eve of last month's Brighton TUC, a reminder to the bosses' tools on the TUC to do the dirty against Scargill again.

Uniquely the Spartacist League told the truth about the Cold War Thatcherite witchhunt of Scargill a year ago and how it was used to isolate the militant miners leader and the NUM as a whole in order to push through the backstabbing 'new realism' policy. And, as we said then, 'Uniquely we Trotskyists who openly said "Stop Solidarnosc Counterrevolution" have no qualms in defending Scargill against these anti-communist, anti-working-class attacks' (*Spartacist Britain* no 52, September 1983). The TUC Cold Warriors who led the attack on Scargill over his correct condemnation of Solidarnosc -- Chapple, Bill Sirs, Alastair Graham, Terry Duffy -- have much in common. All are sponsors of the pro-NATO, CIA-backed Labour Committee for Transatlantic Understanding; all are vociferous in opposing any action against Thatcher's attacks on the trade unions and in urging workers to cross miners' picket lines.

How does the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) fit in with this lot? What sort of revolutionary party is it that would provide grist to the mill of the likes of Chapple? In their battle against Thatcher/MacGregor striking miners may have come across *News Line*, paper of the so-called WRP. This organisation, led by Gerry Healy and Mike Banda, claims to support the miners, even to be a Trotskyist party fighting for socialist revolution. But don't be fooled: the WRP is no friend of the miners, nor is it revolutionary, nor is it a workers party.

Despite its periodic oh-so-revolutionary declamations, the WRP is a gang of political bandits presently outside the workers movement. In the eight years since the Healy gang set up *News Line* as a lavish four-colour daily (mysteriously sustained by a group of a few hundred members) it has been, above all else, a mouthpiece of Libyan dictator Muammār Qaddafi, avowed anti-communist, maniacal protector of Idi Amin and self-proclaimed apologist for Adolf Hitler. Even when

the Ba'athist regime of Iraq executed 21 Communist Party militants in 1978, *News Line* stood by its dictators. To any decent working-class militant, that will seem odious enough. At Blackpool however *News Line* was able to make a tangible and significant impact on the class struggle in Britain. And on whose behalf?

### Scargill, Solidarity and the WRP

The Blackpool TUC opened with an affirmation of loyalty to Reagan's barbarous KAL 007 anti-Soviet war provocation. Already Scargill was under attack for his Moscow speech which stated the simple truth: that 'Ronald Ray-gun and the plutonium blonde' were bent on nuclear war against the Soviet bloc. The order of the day at Blackpool was the drive by Chapple and other CIA-supporting bureaucrats on the TUC right to impose the policies of 'new realism' on the British union movement. These policies -- cooperating with the union-bashing Tories over anti-union legislation, 'loosening the ties' with the Labour Party and opening the road to conciliation with the Cold War II union haters in the SDP -- were soon to be drawn in the blood of the NGA and trade unionism at GCHQ Cheltenham. They were a statement of willingness to act as policemen for Thatcherite austerity, domestic fist of the imperialist campaign against the gains of the working class internationally, above all the war build-up against the USSR.

This is where the Healyite WRP entered the picture. Two months earlier, in July, the WRP had written an 'open letter' to Scargill, demanding that he withdraw his attack on Polish Solidarnosc made at a Communist Party rally the previous month. Scargill replied five days later. In a letter to WRP General Secretary Mike Banda, the miners leader affirmed, 'I am opposed to Solidarity because I believe it is an anti-socialist organisation who desire the overthrow of a socialist state' (emphasis in original). *News Line*, a daily paper, waited fully seven weeks before publishing Scargill's letter and their rejoinder. When it finally came out, on the third day of TUC week, it exploded like a bombshell in the middle of Blackpool's mini-Cold War.

*News Line* archly claims, 'We chose to publish this correspondence during TUC week in order to ensure the widest circulation within the labour movement.' But the principal recipients of this 'widest circulation' would appear to have been the right-wing labour bureaucrats and their Fleet Street friends. *News Line's* story was catapulted onto the front pages of many of the most virulently anti-union, anti-communist Tory rags in the country.

Was this not predictable? By the time *News Line* chose to publish Scargill's letter, he was already the subject of anti-communist vilification from the right wing at Blackpool; *News Line* was certainly aware of this fact, since it ran daily coverage of the congress. Any intelligent observer of the labour movement could have assumed that this letter would add fuel to the right-wing fire against Scargill, given that the mainstream of the Labour Party/TUC leadership, echoing the ruling class, deem support to Solidarnosc a sacred cow. It would appear to any sensible working-class militant that there was an ulterior motive to *News Line's* decision to



## Scargill, the WRP

**Scargill's letter**

Dear Mr Banda

I am opposed to Solidarity because I believe it is an anti-socialist organisation who desire the overthrow of a socialist state' (emphasis in original).

**Michael Banda replies**  
(General Secretary of the Workers Revolutionary Party)



Union-hating Fleet Street rags witchhunt Scargill after News Line counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarnosc.

publish the letter when it did. Those miners, for instance in South Yorkshire, who cancelled their orders for *News Line* in the wake of the Blackpool TUC certainly felt that the Healy outfit was whoring for Thatcher against the miners in this action. Indeed to anyone familiar with the role played by the so-called Labour Committee for Transatlantic Understanding within the British labour movement, the intervention of the Healy group at Blackpool might reasonably have looked like one of its scenarios.

That the reformist TUC 'lefts', including leading supporters of the Communist Party like Mick McGahey, failed to rise in Scargill's defence against the *News Line*-inspired vilification should come as no surprise. For all their 'militant' blather, these 'lefts' maintained their normal posture, seated on their hands. We in the Spartacist League stand politically opposed to Scargill's left reformism, with its nationalist protectionism and support for a Labour government under the likes of Neil Kinnock. Nor is Scargill politically friendly to us; in the past he has been known to crumple Spartacist League leaflets and throw them to the ground. But we stood firm against the witchhunt orchestrated by the Cold Warriors on the TUC. We recognised at the time that it was directed not only at Scargill as an individual but at isolating the NUM in the labour movement, the better



Blackpool TUC, September 1983: Anti-communist witchhunt of militant miners leader Arthur Scargill (left) by Cold Warriors Frank Chapple, Len Murray (right) & Co prepared the way for backstabbing 'new realism' and Thatcher's assault on NUM.

# Against Scargill and the miners

# MacGregor - Hate the WRP!



of NUM leader's opposition to

to set this powerful union up for the attack that was forthcoming. While disagreeing with Scargill's characterisation of the bureaucratically-deformed Stalinist-run Polish workers state as 'socialist', we wholeheartedly agree that Solidarnosc is an anti-socialist organisation which seeks the bloody return of capitalism to Poland.

*News Line* is by no means unique in its support for the Vatican/CIA-inspired Solidarnosc. From Fleet Street to the fake-left press, that support is well-nigh unanimous. But with its action at Blackpool a year ago *News Line* went further than the fake-left supporters of Solidarnosc. Its support for counterrevolution in Poland was translated into valuable ammunition to Fleet Street and the TUC Cold Warriors to advance the cause of anti-working-class reaction at home. Long before Chapple's book, it was patently obvious that Scargill and the left had suffered a defeat at the hands of the Cold War right at Blackpool; that this was a victory for Thatcher; that the witchhunt of Scargill over Solidarnosc facilitated that defeat. Yet the WRP indicated no remorse, much less self-criticism, over its role. On the contrary, it boasted about it, rapidly releasing a pamphlet entitled 'Scargill, Solidarity & Workers Revolutionary Party'.

Now, a year later, *News Line* (3 September) reviews Chapple's book under the headline 'Thatcher's favourite union chief' and sputters, 'Chapple has deployed all the literary devices of a "Sun" leader-writer to abuse miners' leader Arthur Scargill and other left-wingers'. Nowhere in the article does *News Line* dissociate itself from the rather prominent role Chapple himself attributes to it in his abuse of Scargill. One would expect a socialist newspaper, an honest newspaper, a newspaper concerned with standing with the miners and against scabherders like Chapple to consider it necessary to take up such matters. If Chapple can be labelled 'Thatcher's favourite union chief', wouldn't it be equally apt to call the WRP 'Thatcher's favourite "revolutionaries"'? We say: Hate Thatcher/MacGregor -- Hate the WRP!

### The only 'union' Thatcher and Reagan love

It is no accident that Polish Solidarnosc is the issue that the Healyites chose to launch their attack on Scargill. As *News Line* (9 September 1983) observed, it is a 'touchstone for the international workers' movement'. The consolidation of Solidarnosc as an agency for im-

perialist interests and capitalist counterrevolution at its first national congress in 1981, pipping off the just grievances of the Polish workers against years of bureaucratic mismanagement, gave an enormous impetus to NATO's Cold War II against the deformed and degenerated workers states. So when Gerry Healy plumped for Solidarnosc he jumped into bed with a pretty scrofulous lot: Reagan, Thatcher, 'Socialist' austerity-monger Mitterrand, CPGB Eurocommunists, the small-time reformist American Socialist Workers Party of Jack Barnes whom the Healyites have been smearing for years as 'FBI agents' -- not to mention the likes of Frank Chapple and Denis Healey.

*News Line's* attempt to put an 'orthodox' gloss on its support to counterrevolution with talk of 'political revolution' is just so much cynical hogwash. In Hungary 1956, which was an incipient proletarian political revolution, the insurgent workers were *suppressing* reactionary rabble instead of being led by them. The Trotskyist programme of workers political revolution is based on *defence* of collectivised property.

We supported the Stalinist regime's spiking of Solidarnosc's power bid through martial law, whilst continuing at all points to argue that the Stalinist progenitors of Poland's crisis were incapable of politically defeating Solidarnosc or destroying its basis of support in the private landholding peasantry. We fight for a Trotskyist party, which would counterpose to Solidarnosc the necessity for unions independent of the ruling bureaucracy but firmly based on defence of the collectivised property and planned economy, for the separation of church and state, for cancellation of the debt to the imperialist bankers, for the construction of workers councils (soviets) as the basis for a workers government of the Bolshevik type. Trotskyist propaganda cells must be created among the historically socialist Polish proletariat to restore the deep and rich Marxist tradition personified by Rosa Luxemburg.

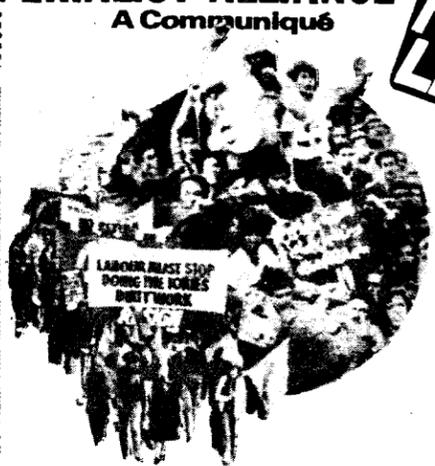
Is there a militant worker anywhere in the world who isn't aware that Solidarnosc is the *only* 'trade union' in the world that Reagan and Thatcher support? When Scargill uttered words to this effect Healy's 'dialectical' pen-pushers took a page from a primer on formal logic, turned it upside down and accused Scargill of 'smearing' Solidarnosc. At least Scargill can recognise a scab in Poland as well as in Nottinghamshire -- and Solidarnosc is a scab 'union' if ever there was one. When Scargill appealed to the Polish Stalinist regime to cease exports of scab coal to Britain during the strike, *News Line* (7 May 1984) claimed, 'If



### ANTI-IMPERIALIST ALLIANCE

THE official delegation representing the General People's Congress of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Central Committee of the Workers Revolutionary Party of Britain met in London on August 8, 1977, and agreed on the following communiqué:

1. We are...  
2. We are...  
3. We are...



Anti-communist Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi, WRP's 'united front' partner.

there was a free trade union movement in Poland, Scargill's plea would have been heeded.'

Like hell! Solidarnosc leader Lech Walesa has lately been telling all and sundry that Maggie Thatcher is a 'wise and brave woman' who 'will find a solution' to the miners strike, while railing like the Iron Lady herself against miners' 'violence' (see 'Walesa loves Thatcher', *Workers Hammer* no 61, September 1984). Three years ago, when Reagan was smashing the PATCO union in the US, Solidarnosc conspicuously refused to solidarise with the American trade unionists. Instead Walesa hailed Reagan's 1980 election as 'a very good sign for the world and for Poland' and proclaimed Reagan's America to be the model for the sort of 'democracy' he wished upon the Polish workers (in a CBS television broadcast, 2 November 1981).

'Now the facts are', says *News Line* (16 July 1983) 'that it is the leaders of the Polish government, all leading members of the Stalinist Communist Party, and not Solidarity, who have relations with Reagan and the big American banks.' As Trotskyists we know only too well how the Stalinist policy of conciliating imperialism undermines the workers states. But let's look at the *real* facts. On 18 October 1981, barely two months before Solidarnosc's bid for power, Walesa was wined and dined at a hush-hush breakfast (subsequently exposed in the 16 December 1981 *Le Canard Enchaîné*) with some twenty top-level American financiers and industrialists (including the presidents of Ford, Westinghouse and General Dynamics) who flew in just to meet him at a posh restaurant at Paris' Charles de Gaulle airport. Does *News Line* suppose they were discussing shop-floor organisation?

We hit the nail on the head when we dubbed Solidarnosc a 'Polish company union for the CIA and bankers'. It is well-known that the Healyites engage in CIA/cop-baiting of groups on the left. Yet when it comes to Solidarnosc, they care remarkably little about the CIA funds conduited to it via the American trade union confederation and European social democracy, or the backing of CIA radio station 'Radio Free Europe'. 'Every trade union in the world is penetrated by the CIA', they dismissively claim. But the point, as Frank Chapple & Co would certainly tell them, is that Solidarnosc was *run* on the CIA's Cold War programme ('free trade unions', 'democratic' counterrevolution etc).

In his reply to Scargill's letter Banda asserted (*News Line*, 7 September 1983) that 'Solidarity has never sought state power nor anything like it.' Really? At the now notorious secret Radom meeting of Solidarity's governing body on 3 December 1981, Warsaw branch leader Bujak declared, 'The government should be finally overthrown, unmasked and deprived of any credibility.' Walesa sought to disguise their counterrevolutionary aims, but went on to declare:

'After all, let us realise that we are bringing this system down. Let us at last realise this. If we agree to have private storekeepers, buy up state farms and ensure complete self-management, this system will cease to exist.' (*Washington Post*, 20 December 1981)

On 12 December 1981 Solidarnosc called for a national referendum, to be conducted by itself, on whether the Polish United Workers Party should continue to run the country and whether the link with the USSR should be ended, advocating a 'temporary non-communist government' and 'free elections'. It was in response to these moves that the Stalinist regime finally moved to stop Solidarnosc's bid for power through imposition of martial law. Just like the anti-communist Fleet Street rags, *News Line* quivered with rage that 'hundreds of Polish workers, including coalminers, have been shot down, baton-charged and jailed by the military dictatorship of Jaruzelski'. Let's talk proportions here: seven dead in Poland in defence of an historic gain for the working class; tens of thousands

slaughtered in defence of clerical reaction in Iran by the execution squads of the WRP's favoured Khomeini regime (see *Labour Review*, June 1983, for one of the more recent Healyite hosannas to Iran's 'revolutionary' regime).

Well, if Solidarnosc was interested in state power, maybe it wasn't pro-capitalist? According to the *News Line* of 16 September 1983, 'Even a cursory glance at the documents of the Solidarity Congress of August 14-26 1981, leave no doubts about Solidarity's anti-capitalist nature.' As the WRP itself reprinted these documents in its journal *Labour Review* (January 1982), we can assume that the following passages came to its attention:

'The present system of providing enterprises with planned directives, rewarding them for

continued on page 8

(Continued from page 7)

satisfying pre-set figures, supplying them with appropriate raw materials, investments and financial means to fulfill their planned objective, limiting employment and wages, setting prices etc. -- this whole so-called firm hand over enterprises maintained by the centre, must cease to exist. *Enterprises must be independent, self-managed and self-financing.* ('Position on the social and economic reform of the country', p468, our emphasis)

Just what self-financing means is explained later on: 'This means that enterprises functioning better will be able to develop and those functioning badly may even go bankrupt.' As thousands of redundant workers in Britain know well, as the striking miners fighting for their jobs and those of their sons and daughters understand in their guts, this is how the *capitalist market* functions. The breaking-up of the centrally-planned economy in Poland, which these documents advocate in effect (even without immediate wholesale denationalisation) could only have meant the introduction of mass unemployment and the opening up of the economy to even greater penetration by foreign capital. To us Healy's 'Polish socialism' sounds awfully like devastated Liverpool or the Rhondda valley.

### WRP: whores for the Cold Warriors...

In its reply to Scargill, *News Line* (9 September 1983) claimed: 'He who injures Solidarity injures the international working class, and particularly the British working class at a time when trade union rights are under vicious attack from the Tory government.' Frank Chapple, in very similar terms, argues that, 'Throughout TUC week Scargill did maximum damage to free trade unionists at home and abroad.' Meaning what? Scargill 'proposed defiance of any laws inspired by Norman Tebbit, then the employment secretary, but his rabble-rousing was voted down'. There's more like the truth: Scargill opposes Solidarnosc and opposes the anti-trade-union laws; while he who lines up with CIA-backed 'free trade unionism', counterrevolution and imperialism in Poland will more than likely make himself available as hatchetman for Reagan/Thatcher's open agents within the British workers movement, the CIA/NATO/IMF lovers in the Labour/TUC right wing.

At the same time, the WRP seeks to appeal to militant youth and workers disaffected with the betrayals of the Labourites with a load of anti-Labour rhetoric. Thus *News Line* of 8 September 1983 attacks Scargill for his support to the Labour Party:

'Scargill's opposition to Solidarity is closely linked with his unprincipled support for the election of another treacherous Labour government in Britain. By supporting Labour at the polls, he has favoured the election of a government completely committed to NATO and the preparation of nuclear war against the USSR and Poland.'

You want to know the true measure of Healy/Banda's 'revolutionary opposition to Labourism'? Let the Central Committee of the WRP have the floor:

'The working class stood alone and voted solidly Labour in spite of the betrayals of the reformist Labour Party leaders. We called for a united class vote against the Tories and a complete rejection of the blandishments of the Alliance and that is what happened.' ('The only way ahead after the General Election', *News Line*, 13 June 1983)

That's what we mean when we say 'political bandits'! Sometimes you just can't get it right, can you Gerry? The WRP's fantasy world notwithstanding, Scargill's opposition to Solidarnosc is not in line with, but out of step with the Cold War consensus demanded by the Labour Party leadership. Would it not be more appropriate to draw the conclusion that the WRP itself 'favoured ... a government completely committed to NATO', and that this is indeed 'closely linked' with their support for Solidarity, as shown in the Blackpool TUC. Likewise in the US Healy's satellite group for years called on racist neanderthal Cold War bureaucrat George Meany to 'Build a Labour Party'. If such a monstrosity were to arise it would be a party immeasurably worse than even that of Denis Healey and Frank Chapple. Meany's successor as head of the AFL-CIO, Lane Kirkland, today sits on Ronald Reagan's Salvador Commission as it devises defences for the death-squad regime in El Salvador.

Unlike the WRP charlatans, Trotskyists fight to build revolutionary workers parties through breaking workers and the oppressed from their pro-capitalist misleaders. With Foot/Healey campaigning openly on a platform of Cold War Social Contract austerity, the Spartacist League refused to offer critical support to the Labour

Party in the 1983 election (unlike, for example, 1974), whilst emphasising there might be a basis for selective critical support to any Labour candidates who broke ranks and counterposed themselves to the Cold War leadership. With the deep split effected inside the Labour Party by the onset of Cold War, we have intervened with the call to 'Drive out the SDP fifth column' -- the likes of Denis Healey and Roy Hattersley who have no place in the labour movement -- and to place the Little England 'socialists' like Tony Benn in a position of power where the bankruptcy of their left reformist politics could be more effectively exposed and combatted. This would aid in winning the masses of workers away from the Labour misleaders, 'left' as well as right, to a revolutionary programme and party.

### ...and messengers for Qaddafi

What is the history of this 'workers revolutionary' newspaper which gets favourable mention from some of the most openly counterrevolutionary anti-working-class elements on and off Fleet Street? *News Line* made its appearance in May 1976, two months after the first Healyite daily *Workers Press* folded with the presumption of 'lack of funds'. Ever since it has been a mouthpiece for the megalomaniacal ravings and 'people's democracy' pretensions of Libyan dictator Qaddafi. In the year around *News Line's* appearance WRP members reportedly visited that devoutly anti-communist dictatorship three times. Early on *News Line* (26 February 1977) hailed the London publication of Qaddafi's Green Book as 'an uncompromising rejection of parliamentary democracy in favour of "the authority of the people"' and featured a favourable interview (14 September 1976) with the head of Qaddafi's 'trade union federation'. Our American comrades noted at the time:

'The WRP's shameless presentation of Qaddafi's repression of the Libyan working class leaves no doubt of its utter subjugation before this capitalist dictator... even a cursory glance at *News Line's* year-long pandering to the oil-rich Qaddafi forces the observation that there is something very rotten in the state of Denmark.' (*Workers Vanguard* no 158, 20 May 1977)

Shortly thereafter, *News Line* (10 August 1977) issued a grandiose 'joint communique' announcing 'a united front of the forces of the Libyan revolution and the Workers Revolutionary Party', pledging the WRP to 'unconditionally defend' Qaddafi's 'leadership against imperialism and its agents'.

When, less than two years later, the Iraqi Ba'athist regime executed 21 Iraqi CP militants as part of a major crackdown on this mass party

of the Iraqi proletariat, this judicial murder horrified all even halfway decent elements within the labour movement. But *News Line* (2 February 1979) defended the Iraqi capitalist regime, justifying the execution 'for illegally forming cells in the armed forces. The purpose of these cells was to fight against the government.' The Healyites' shameless defence of white terror, later supplemented by ardent support for the 'Iranian revolution' -- Ayatollah Khomeini's ghastly Islamic hell -- demonstrated the truth of our observation that:

'For a small propaganda group without a significant mass base, moreover, program is decisive in determining a group's class character. In the case of the Healy/Banda organization, the contradiction between its "Trotskyist" pretensions and the dictates of its Libyan patrons has repetitively come down in favour of the latter.' (*Workers Vanguard* no 230, 27 April 1979)

When the WRP's Vanessa Redgrave brought a libel suit against *Socialist Organiser* editor Sean Matgamna in 1981, the WRP conspicuously chose not to contest Matgamna's allegation that the WRP has received material aid from Libya.

Even before the appearance of *News Line* with its enthusing over Qaddafi's Libya, it had been commonly held among the left that the Healy group combines idiot organisational sectarianism with the wildest gyrations of gross political opportunism to create an aura of extreme instability. It appears widely accepted by many leftists that they have a readiness to employ physical gangsterism against left-wing opponents. Such views are reinforced by the fact that, as far back as 1966, there was the infamous 'Tate affair', in which Healy took legal action in the bosses' courts against several left-wing papers to suppress a protest letter by Canadian United Secretariat supporter Ernie Tate alleging that he'd been beaten up outside a meeting of Healy's organisation, causing hospitalisation. Yet Healy never denied, in the words of his solicitor, 'a disturbance on the pavement' which came when 'Mr Healy, in fact, asked a steward to clear the pavement' (where Tate was standing).

In 1975 Vanessa Redgrave, whose filmstar lifestyle might not disgrace Nancy Reagan, dragged British Leyland car worker Alan Thornett (who broke with the WRP in 1974 to form the centrist Workers Socialist League) into court over a personal loan. She did it again six years later with her libel suit against *Socialist Organiser's* Matgamna. (Though for all his disgust with the WRP's support to anti-Communist juridical murder in Iraq, Matgamna shares Healy's bed when it comes to anti-Communism in Poland.)

The WRP's current role is all the more dis-



Workers Hammer Friends of Solidarnosc, Polish company union for CIA and bankers: Gerry Healy, Margaret Thatcher, Denis Healey



gusting in the light of the earlier history of the Healy tendency. For the Spartacist tendency it is important to expose the reality behind the WRP's miserable facade of Trotskyism because we stand in Britain and internationally as the continuators of the authentic revolutionary programme of Leninism which the WRP's predecessors, the Socialist Labour League (SLL), once upheld.

### The revolutionary traditions of Trotskyism

During World War II the Stalinist Communist Party of Great Britain prostrated itself before Winston Churchill, the butcher of Tonyandy, in the name of a 'war against fascism'. The Stalinists broke strikes, witchhunted the Trotskyists as 'Hitler's agents' and supported imperialism's suppression of independence struggles by Britain's colonial slaves. The British Trotskyists (including present-day WRP leaders) stood, despite flaws, as a beacon to the most militant layers of the working class -- those who, like miners from Kent to South Wales and Yorkshire, braved Churchill's troops and all the bosses' anti-union patriotic propaganda to strike for their rights.

The SLL itself was formed following the Hungarian Revolution of 1956; Healy's group recruited an impressive layer of CPGB intellectuals and trade union militants through a principled and highly effective campaign in support of the heroic Hungarian workers' upsurge against Stalinist bureaucratism and for workers democracy. In the late fifties and early sixties the SLL's *Labour Review* waged an important theoretical struggle against the revisionism of Michel Pablo and Ernest Mandel, which had destroyed the Trotskyist Fourth International from within. Pabloism argued for an abandonment of the perspective of workers revolution, seeking to liquidate the Trotskyist vanguard parties and programme necessary to lead the working class to power in favour of pressuring Stalinist and social-democratic bureaucrats to the left and later uncritically hailing petty-bourgeois nationalist guerrillaism as well.

It was on this basis that the predecessors of the international Spartacist tendency, the Revolutionary Tendency fighting the same Pabloist liquidationism within the American Socialist Workers Party, sought to make common cause with Healy in Britain in the struggle for the principles of Trotskyism. Our efforts were ultimately blocked by the sectarianism and bureaucratism of Healy (see the documentary record in our *Marxist Bulletin* series). In 1962 Healy and his American toad Tim Wohlforth engineered an unprincipled split in the Revolutionary Tendency -- blocking an effective factional struggle in the SWP -- and subsequently got us bureaucratically expelled from that organisation. In 1966 Healy expelled our comrades from an international conference when we refused to bury our political disagreements. These centred on Healy's absurd claims that Cuba remained a capitalist country and that the Fourth International had already been 'reconstructed' and the Healy group was it. In contrast we insisted that the political struggle against Pabloism must be carried through on an international plane in order to



News Line stood by its dictators even when Iraqi Ba'athist regime murdered Communist Party militants.

From an historical point of view, the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party of Iraq has played a hundredfold more progressive role in the Middle East than Stalinism.

8 March 1979



It is true that 21 CP members were executed early last year for illegally forming cells in the armed forces. The purpose of these cells was to fight against the government. There are no prizes for the answer to what would happen to Ba'athists who set up cells in the Soviet army. They would be ruthlessly purged!

2 February 1979

reforge an authentically Trotskyist Fourth International. Healy demanded at the conference that we denounce ourselves as 'petty-bourgeois American chauvinists' as evidence of unthinking loyalty. This was an excuse to justify the split and further exposed Healy's bureaucratic methods.

The political basis for these anti-Leninist organisational methods became clear shortly thereafter as the Healyites took the side of Mao Tse-Tung's Red Guards in the bureaucratic infighting of the Chinese 'Cultural Revolution' and enthusiastically embraced the anti-working-class Arab nationalist regimes of Nasser's Egypt and Syria in the name of a mythical 'Arab Revolution'. The Healy group also began advancing the strategy of 'Make the Lefts Fight', a demand that the left Labourites oust Wilson & Co and lead the Labour Party on so-called 'socialist policies'. (For a period in the 1950s Healy had been deeply immersed in the Bevan wing of the Labour Party.) Around then in 1968 the SLL hailed the Vietnamese Stalinists as 'instinctive' Trotskyists who had 'outlined a strategy for the conquest of power' (*Fourth International*, February 1968). In short, the Healyites betrayed the Trotskyist programme, abandoning the need for independent Leninist leadership in the struggle for workers power. Thus they embarked on the road which has brought us the sorry WRP of today.

### Hate the WRP — Fight for Trotskyism!

Britain's miners are locked in a battle with a ruling class whose war on the workers' unions is a necessary corollary to war preparations against the deformed/degenerated workers states. And the more decrepit its system gets, the more the ruling class is capable of finding even the most unsavoury allies to use against the workers it exploits. That is where the WRP enters the picture. With their unabashed defence of the most brutal and grotesque reactionary white terror against women, minorities and working-class militants in the Middle East, the Healy/

Banda gang have shown that their stomachs are never too queasy for any task at hand.

And their support for counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarnosc at a time of imperialist hysteria against opponents of that CIA 'union' gave them an opportunity to convince working class militants that these messengers for Qaddafi were also prepared to be whores for Thatcher. At Blackpool, *News Line* 'took full advantage' of Scargill to, quite literally, become a bludgeon against militancy in the hands of Thatcher's favourite union chiefs.

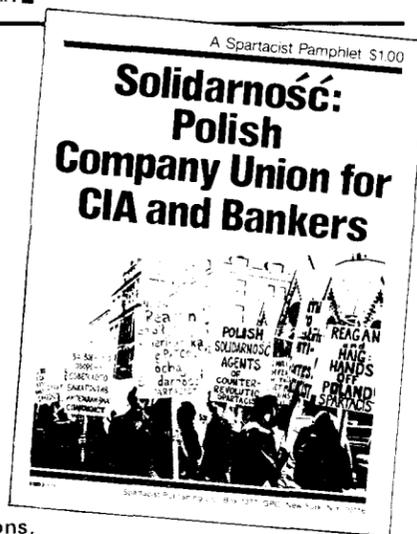
Every working-class militant should look forward to the day when the Healy/Banda gang is politically removed as a menace to the left and labour movement. And every miner who hates Thatcher and MacGregor should, rightly, hate the WRP as well. This expose is one aspect of our all-sided struggle to build the genuinely Trotskyist mass revolutionary party the British working class so desperately needs to put an end to the death agony of this worm-eaten capitalist system. ■

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## British Trotskyism...

(Continued from page 2)

Using the slogan 'Break the coalition -- Labour to power', the WIL stated that it would only offer critical support to Labour when and if Labour broke with the coalition government and stood in its own name. They maintained this policy throughout the war years. In the 1945 Neath (Glamorgan) by-election Jock Haston stood for the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), formed after the fusion of the WIL with the Revolutionary Socialist League, against a Labour candidate. The organ of the RCP proclaimed, 'Vote against the Coalition' and stated, 'Remember when you vote, that a vote for the Labour candidate is a vote for Churchill and the Tories' (*Socialist Appeal*, February 1945). Today it is the international Spartacist tendency uniquely which stands by Trotskyist principle and refuses to extend critical support to reformist workers parties that are in popular-front coalitions.

While falsely adducing to the WIL their own support to the social-imperialist Labour Party, however, Bornstein and Richardson seek to deny the WIL's adaptations to social-chauvinist sentiment within the working class during the war. They claim that we took Ted Grant's reference to 'our Eighth Army' out of context. Here is the full quote:

'We have a victorious army in North Africa and Italy -- and I say yes, Long live the Eighth Army because it is our army.' (*Workers International News*, January 1944)

While the WIL carried out some effective agitation among rank-and-file soldiers in the Eighth Army, this shameless statement by Grant, coming in the context of the Eighth Army's victories against the Germans in North Africa, could only fuel illusions that the British imperialist army was waging a war against fascism. Let us not forget too that at this time the British army was playing a key role in suppressing incipient proletarian revolution in Italy.

In fact Grant's statement was unfortunately not out of the general context of the WIL's adaptation, which expressed itself in its aggressive espousal of a variant of the 'Proletarian Military Policy' (PMP). Initially adopted by the American Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), but never seriously implemented in practice, the PMP sought to intersect anti-fascist sentiment within the working class with the call for workers control over military training for the bourgeois army. During the invasion fever of 1940-41, when a German invasion appeared imminent, the WIL raised the slogan, 'Arm the workers to defeat the threat of invasion' and called for a 'workers militia' incorporating the Home Guard. Likewise the WIL stood delegates for the factory Joint Production Committees, union-management efforts aimed at increasing war production, and raised the call for workers control of production in the context of denunciations that 'Britain's war production is in chaos' (1942 WIL leaflet for a public meeting on 'Workers Control of Production').

As we pointed out in our original article, the WIL's susceptibility to such social-patriotic pressures was related to its origins as an unprincipled, cliquist split which refused

to accept the discipline of the Fourth International. Bornstein and Richardson claim that the WIL was unable to attend the founding conference of the FI in 1938 simply because of dire poverty. The FI thought otherwise:

'The invitation of the International delegation to this group to be represented and present its point of view to the world conference, either by delegate or letter, was disregarded; all we have is a statement, apparently addressed to the world at large, rejecting in advance any decision of the world conference not in accord with their own untenable demands.' ('Resolution on Unification of the British Section', from *Documents of the Fourth International 1933-40*)

This was only the most glaring example of a profoundly anti-internationalist streak in the politics of the WIL's central leadership, symptomatic of an adaptation to Labourism and 'fog-over-the-channel' parochialism which is the bane of the British left to this day. When James P Cannon, founder of American Trotskyism and Trotsky's trusted collaborator, visited Britain just before the war to try to bring about a fusion of the WIL and the official British section, he found himself being treated like an ignorant American hick.

Despite its programmatic deficiencies, the WIL sought to stand against imperialist war and the social-democratic and Stalinist hangmen. While Bornstein and Richardson peer out from their Labour Party nest, the Spartacist League seeks to educate a new layer of Trotskyist cadre, but not to the social-democratic parochialism that has for so long masqueraded as Trotskyism on this island. ■

settlement outright: 'We do not expect anyone to make deals which result in people crossing our picket lines.'

While the dockers were out, the country was poised on the verge of a general strike -- a general strike which could have been realised had the leaders of the rail and transport unions seriously implemented their pledges of solidarity and joined the miners in all-out strike action. What is needed now is to reverse the sellouts and for all unions which claim to support the NUM to *strike with the miners*. Trade union defence guards must be organised to repulse strikebreaking cop/scab terror. Militants from other striking unions, women's support groups, the unemployed and minority organisations must be drawn in to form joint elected strike committees which could lay the basis for alternative organs of power to the strikebreaking capitalist state. What is needed above all is a leadership prepared to go into a classwide showdown with the capitalist state. But the pro-capitalist bureaucrats fear and hate the prospect of such a confrontation which would necessarily pose the question, which class rules? Thus they threaten to strangle the miners' heroic fight.

## Kinnock spits on miners' struggle

What was clear throughout the week at Blackpool was that deep and antagonistic forces are pulling and tugging at the Labour Party, pointing on the one hand to cowardly, parliamentarist crawling before Thatcher and, on the other, towards class struggle which could sink the Tories. A thoughtful editorial in *Race Today* (October/November 1984) summed up the situation going into Blackpool:

'The Labour Party goes to Conference in October with much on its plate and little appetite for the tasks at hand. The leadership, whose major reason for existing is the political defeat of the Thatcher government, can hardly be said to be in the vanguard of that struggle.'

'The party has been completely displaced by the National Union of Mineworkers and its leadership overtaken by Arthur Scargill.... It is ironic that Kinnock et al will only retain some semblance of authenticity in the current political struggle if the miners are defeated.'

If it were up to Kinnock, 20,000 miners would long ago have lost their jobs; far better for Kinnock to lose his.

Yet at Blackpool, the 'lefts' who support the NUM refused to pose a direct challenge to Kinnock's leadership and thus let him wriggle off the hook. The Kinnock/Hattersley nightmare ticket was unanimously reelected. Various resolutions calling for strike action with the miners or posing a challenge to Kinnock's sanctified Tory union-bashing 'legality' were either withdrawn or squashed. While Judas Kinnock spits on the miners' struggle and openly rubbishes Scargill in the Fleet Street press, the Labour/TUC 'lefts' acquiesce to the dictates of Labour Party 'unity'. But class-struggle unity centred on securing a miners' victory against the Tories is *counterposed* to unity with the right-wing strikebreakers who split the workers movement by keeping the miners isolated.

When the Spartacist League offered Tony Benn critical support in last spring's Chesterfield by-election, he refused rather than be associated with *our* call to drive Denis Healey and his NATO/CIA-loving gang out of the Labour Party. Now Benn is chief 'left' purveyor of 'unity' with the strikebreakers on the right. And Scargill is incapable of posing a consistent challenge to Kinnock's leadership because he does not have a consistent strategy to counterpose to the treacherous Kinnock's. For all his willingness to stand up to the Tories, Scargill's aim is not to lead a class-struggle offensive directed towards the overthrow of the capitalist system but towards a reformist scheme for bolstering British industry through the 'Plan for Coal' and under a future Labour government.

The right wing was on the defensive from day one at Blackpool. Kinnock was battered and bruised when resolutions supporting the miners and denouncing police violence were passed against his scarcely veiled opposition. Then his reselection scheme designed to weaken left and trade union influence was dumped and a motion to support potentially illegal budgets set by Labour councils passed. But Kinnock was not chased off the platform as any Tory making a similar speech in the presence of NUM supporters rightfully would have been, when he echoed Thatcher's rubbish against miners' 'violence' from the platform; indeed he was applauded.

# Drive fascist Harrington off NLP!

After a summer out mobilising for the fascists' deadly programme of race terror, Patrick Harrington is once more back at North London Polytechnic (NLP) as a direct provocation against students at this heavily minority college. Last term hundreds of students put themselves on the line in an attempt to drive this prominent member of the National Front off the NLP Kentish Town site. As the Spartacist League stressed in a leaflet distributed at the time:

'The NF's presence at NLP means a direct threat to the safety of every black, Asian, Irish, immigrant, Jewish, gay and socialist student and worker on that campus.... What is involved here is not Harrington's "right" to an education, but defence of the population of this city against race terror. If the fascists aren't stopped now, there will be more deadly attacks: more of the murderous firebombings which have plagued families in East London, more of the racist stabbings like that of Ala Miah Azad in February.'

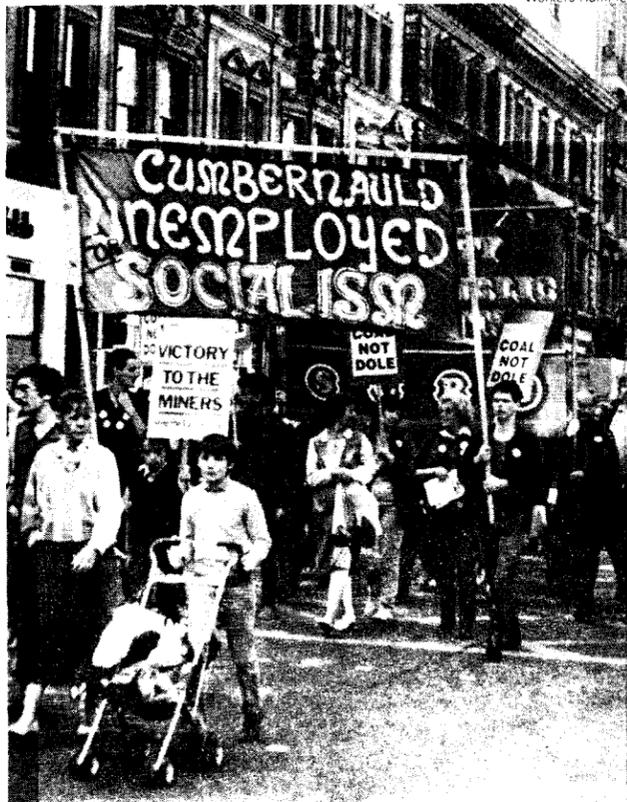
A Student Union Executive motion to a 4 October emergency meeting on Harrington points out that this past summer 'he acted as agent for the National Front candidate standing in the GLC bye-elections in Paddington' and 'appear[ed] at the Maidstone fascist march in "uniform"'. He has also been tape recorded at Chapel Market as 'saying that he agreed with firebombing his opponents'.

That some 600 students turned out for the emergency student union meeting is a measure of their anger that this slime has oozed his way back onto campus under the protection of the bosses' cops and courts. But the Student Union Exec motion to the meeting attempted to bury the fight within the bounds of legality, even accepting that Harrington has the 'right' to 'separate off campus tuition' and calling for 'peaceful mass demonstrations' conforming to High Court guidelines. A supporter of the Spartacist Society at NLP pointed to the example of the miners' powerful strike against the government and stressed the need for students to link up with the trade unions, who do have the social power to stop fascist scum like Harrington in his tracks. She called for Harrington to be 'driven off campus by mass student/minority/worker mobilisation'.

At a 100-strong picket on the following day, thoroughly disorganised by the student union, enabling Harrington to walk through unscathed, the Spartacist Society brought out nearly a dozen people, including members of the NUR and ASLEF from the heavily minority workforce of London Transport and several miners bearing placards reading: 'This miner says: Unions/Minorities must crush fascist scum!' The SL calls for all trade unions and student, minority and socialist organisations to mobilise to drive fascist Harrington off NLP. ■

Hattersley's right-wing document on the economy, which was praised even by the *Financial Times*, was approved overwhelmingly. So too was the new defence document which, while making the Healeyite right (and the Pentagon) uncomfortable by its unilateralist rhetoric, sharply reaffirms Labour's commitment to NATO. (And a non-nuclear Britain committed to NATO is an absurdity; the unilateralist pledges will be worth about as much as Michael Foot's were by the time a general election rolls around.)

A resolution upholding the right to form black sections was disgustingly slapped down by



Miners support march in Glasgow, 15 September: unemployed rally behind the strike.

a coalition of right wingers and the 'left' Militant tendency. This slap in the face to the thousands of blacks and Asians who have been among the most ardent supporters of the miners strike is a statement that Kinnock's Labour Party is not even willing to pay lip service to the fight against racism! Even an NGA motion to expel press tycoon Maxwell for his union-busting court suit was rejected. What sort of workers party is this? Workers need a revolutionary party, not a party of multi-millionaire strikebreakers, closet Tories and CIA-loving warmongers!

## Sink Thatcher!

Even a relatively small revolutionary party could tap the massive groundswell of support for the miners and harness it behind a strategy aimed at purging this abhorrent capitalist system. Yet the Labour-loyal fake Trotskyists enthuse over the miners' 'victory' at Blackpool. And the Communist Party (CP) offers nothing more than lying apologies for Kinnock and the TUC backstabbers. With the TUC pleading for private chats to hear Ian MacGregor's 'side', *Morning Star* (8 September) headlined, 'New TUC General

Council to give pit fight backing'. The TUC conference disowned even a paltry 10p a head mandatory levy, but the 22 September *Morning Star* crowed, 'TUC urges: "Dig deep for the miners"'. The 19 September *Morning Star* joined port employers in cheering the latest dock sellout, with the patently false claim "'No scab" assurance by BSC ends dock strike', and followed it up with a 21 September editorial headed, 'Follow transport union lead'. Indeed! In addition to Labour transport spokesman John Prescott, those most responsible for shoving through this sellout were such prominent CP supporters as Scottish TUC secretary James Moyne and TGWU regional secretary Hugh Wyper.

Britain's workers and oppressed desperately need a genuine communist party, like the one which led the Russian workers to power more than sixty years ago. Today the miners and their families have revived the best, class-struggle traditions of the British proletariat. When Soviet miners in the Ukraine recently offered a £50,000 contribution to their struggling class brothers here, one of their representatives explained, 'We, the Soviet people, remember well how in the years of civil war in Russia British dockers refused to load weapons intended for suppressing our revolution.'

A victory for the miners today will not only bring the vindictive Iron Lady Thatcher to her knees but open the road to doing away with the class system whose savagery and horror she so well embodies. A tragic harbinger of what Thatcher intends for the British working class when she talks about a return to 'Victorian values' is the recent death of a 14-year-old striker's son killed while scavenging on a spoil tip for coal to heat his family's home. And then the Tory government brutally denied the family Social Security funeral benefits as punishment for supporting the strike.

The depth of self-sacrifice and the breadth of support for this struggle is a recognition that on its outcome hinges the fate of trade unions, entire communities and the livelihoods and security of every working-class and minority family in this country. But the fight for victory is inextricably linked to the fight for a new leadership of the labour movement committed to uncompromising class struggle against the capitalists. That is why we say: *The miners must not stand alone! Strike now with the miners! Bring the Iron Lady to her knees!* ■

## Spartacist League Public Meeting

# Sink Thatcher!

Speaker: Tony Vanzler  
(Spartacist League Central Committee)  
Guest speaker: Dick Hall  
(North Derbyshire NUM, speaking in a personal capacity)  
7.30pm  
Tuesday, 9 October  
Roebuck Pub  
Charles Street  
Sheffield S1  
For more information phone (0742) 737067

# Trade unions: stop ships, planes to South Africa!

As tens of thousands of black gold miners and township residents are fighting the full fury of South Africa's apartheid state terror, solidarity action by the international labour movement is urgently necessary. Since the eruption of mass, anti-apartheid black protests in early September, the international Spartacist tendency and class-struggle union militants have called for an emergency international labour boycott of all cargo to and from South Africa.

On 20 September, militants of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) in the San Francisco Bay Area distributed a leaflet, issued by 25-year ILWU veteran Stan Gow, headlined 'Longshoremen: Hot Cargo [Black] All South African Shipping!' At the 24 September New York port meeting of the National Maritime Union (NMU), members of the Militant-Solidarity Caucus presented a resolution calling for 'stopping all ships and cargo to and from South Africa'. Britain's struggling miners are natural allies of the brutally oppressed black South African workers and should seek to forge concrete links of solidarity. Militant seamen and dockers here must fight for effective blacking of all South



Oakland, California, June 1983: militant dockers seek to stop South African ship to protest execution of anti-apartheid fighters.

African shipping -- which, to our knowledge, continues to berth at Southampton among other docks -- even as they continue to fight for solidarity strike action with the miners here.

Calls for union boycotts of transport and commerce with South Africa are not the usual empty liberal rhetoric. In Australia, maritime workers have begun to put solidarity into action. In response to the apartheid butchers' murderous suppression of mass protests in Sharpeville, beginning on 6 September workers in the port of Sydney blacked the South African vessel *Sasocan Nederburg*. First the Waterside Workers Federation boycotted the ship for 24 hours and then tugboat workers in the Firemen and Deckhands' Union of New South Wales refused to handle the ship for two more days.

In contrast to liberal 'disinvestment' schemes, which only prettify imperialism, Trotskyists have called on labour internationally to refuse to handle military cargo to South Africa. Today a boycott of all transport is called for to support the black revolt against apartheid. Come to the aid of our black working-class brothers and sisters facing murderous police-state repression in South Africa! Words are cheap. Now is the hour for concrete acts of labour solidarity!

Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 363, 28 September 1984

## Miner speaks...

(Continued from page 3)

to the penny, is double the amount which the NUM claimed for a faceworker back in 1977. And as I speak to you here tonight, a faceworker today gets £26 per shift. So that figure of £135 still hasn't been achieved seven years later. In fact, my friends, you could say that both this government and the Coal Board doesn't consider a faceworker in the British coal industry to be even worth as much as one leg of old Queen Victoria's drawers. (laughter)

And finally, my experience at Orgreave. That was something, comrades, which I never thought I would ever see in Britain. I saw scenes at Orgreave, which would have disgusted the Black-shirts in Germany in the 1930s. I saw old men knocked to the ground with truncheons. I saw a young woman pushing a kiddie in a carrycot knocked flying with a shield. And when an old gentleman dashed out from his garden, picked up the kiddie cot and took him into his garden for safekeeping, a policeman ran up behind him and hit him on the back of the head with a truncheon. That was absolutely terrible. I've seen old ladies as we were fleeing away from Orgreave come out to their front door with jugs and glasses of water and giving it to people who had been injured on picket lines. I saw more blood at Orgreave on that fatal Monday in June than you'll find in any blood bank here in London.

But my friends, on closing, I'll tell you this. Have no fear, we feel that we are on a winning streak. The compassion and the kindness and the concern that I have encountered, especially in non-mining areas, is absolutely fantastic. Thank you all very much indeed, not only you in this room, but your supporters and your comrades who are not here this evening. A lot of your people have been down to my area. They have always been made very welcome, they always will be made very welcome. And if any of you want to come down and help your local branch there, you're all quite welcome to come. There is an awareness in South Wales for straightforward politics. ■

## South Africa...

(Continued from page 12)

ordered their re-arrest following a 7 September ruling by the Natal Supreme Court that their detention had been illegal. While Botha screams for the blood of these anti-apartheid fighters, provocatively reneging on an agreement to return South African arms purchasers arrested in Britain to stand trial here, the Thatcher government has done all it can to oblige Pretoria short of actually evicting the refugees. British officials deny them toilet facilities, access to relatives and reject requests to intercede on their behalf. And now three of the six who left 'voluntarily' have been arrested.

The British ruling class is tied by a thousand and one strings to the apartheid butchers in Pretoria, both economically and politically. Witness Thatcher's welcome to apartheid hangman P W Botha last June, and the red carpet treatment accorded to Botha sweetheart Zola Budd, while valiant anti-racist militants are virtually driven into the arms of Botha's torturers. Any reliance on 'democratic' British imperialism to aid the struggle against apartheid, through appeals for British disinvestment and sanctions, is fatal. Independent labour action must force the government to grant full political asylum to the three remaining inside the consulate and demand the release of all anti-apartheid prisoners in South Africa.

### For permanent revolution in South Africa!

As Marx wrote in *Capital*, modern society 'greet[s] gold as its Holy Grail, as the glittering incarnation of the very principle of its own life'. It was the extraction of this Holy Grail that gave South African capitalism its peculiar expression of *combined and uneven development*. The profitability of mining in South Africa has been historically maintained not through capital investment, which increases the productivity of labour, but through brutalisation and enslavement to increase the superexploitation of labour. To supply the raw muscle power and lifeblood to extract these riches from the bowels of

the earth the black peoples of southern Africa have been stripped of their birthright and land, and transformed through apartheid into a migratory labour force with its barracks-like compounds and onerous pass controls. The gold mines are a concentrated microcosm of the prison camp that South Africa is for black toilers.

Though apartheid has forcibly uprooted 3.5 million blacks and dumped them into the bantustan hell-holes, though it arrests hundreds and thousands a year for not having permits in their passbooks to be in 'white' South Africa, the lifeblood of the country's mines, ports and factories is black labour. Apartheid is, above all, a system for keeping black labour cheap and vulnerable. It leaves all those it does not need -- the children, the women, the old, the maimed, and an ever-increasing reserve army of the unemployed -- to the desperate poverty of the bantustans. Thus workers are paid little more than is needed to keep them slaving from one day to the next, always with a threat of deportation to the bantustans with a note in the passbook 'idle and undesirable'.

Yet the very 'success' of the system is driving it into crisis. The boom of the 1960s has given way to stagnation caused by an acute skilled labour shortage, low productivity and a weak domestic market. As an economist at the Chamber of Mines put it, 'You cannot run this economy on whites alone' (*Wall Street Journal*, 19 June). While discontent among the oppressed non-white masses, from Indian traders to coloured students to black African small farmers, is nearly universal, it is the five-million-strong black proletariat which has the power to bring the arrogant white supremacists to their knees.

Key to centralising and organising the enormous social power of this nascent black labour movement against the apartheid state is the organisation of its class-conscious vanguard into a Trotskyist party, as the leader of the oppressed nation. Such a party must base itself upon the lessons of the Russian Revolution, the only successful workers revolution and one which had to address the uncompleted bourgeois national democratic tasks. These lessons generalised in Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution demonstrate that the tasks of national reconstruction and emancipation, agrarian revolution and genuine democracy require for their resolution the seizure of power by the proletariat at the head of the urban and rural toiling masses: For a black-centred workers and peasants government in South Africa!

South Africa is a junior partner of the major imperialist powers as well as a regional imperialist power in its own right. The US and its imperialist allies' war to overturn the gains of the Russian Revolution is at the very heart of the Washington/London/Pretoria axis, as demonstrated in Angola, where Soviet-backed Cuban troops defend Angola from the apartheid *sjambok* (whip). From the gold and uranium mines of the Rand to the docks and industries of the Cape, every blow struck against apartheid is a blow struck against Reagan/Thatcher/Botha's sinister anti-Soviet war drive. The black proletariat of South Africa is destined not only to be the liberator of their oppressed nation, but by placing the country's vast mineral resources and industrial wealth at the service of social and national emancipation, it can be the powerhouse for social revolution throughout deeply oppressed and economically backward black Africa.

Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 363, 28 September 1984

## Blunkett attacks Sheffield strikers

On 4 October a month-old strike by more than 600 Sheffield council workers in the Housing Department spread when 400 Treasury Department workers walked off the job, threatening an all-out strike. The strike began when Sheffield Labour Council leader David Blunkett unilaterally ripped up a new technology agreement with NALGO members in the Housing Department. When staff protested that the new council document meant redundancies Blunkett suspended ten workers and then another thirteen who refused to scab. As one council worker put it, Blunkett was 'acting more like a Tory than a socialist'.

Blunkett is a darling of the Labour 'left' who brags about his support for the miners and Sheffield being a 'nuclear-free zone' and 'apartheid-free zone'. But he's acting more like Ian MacGregor trying to make the city council a union-free zone! Meanwhile, Sheffield has the worst housing record in Britain for minorities. Only last August the council attempted to drive gypsies out of the Attercliffe area of the city. Last January this 'socialist' joined in the anti-Irish hysteria after the Harrods bombing

and banned the annual Bloody Sunday commemoration march, giving the green light for a threatened National Front anti-Irish, anti-immigrant march. The Spartacist League (SL) fought to mobilise Sheffield's labour movement and minority population against the fascist threat.

Not surprisingly Blunkett hates the SL. In April 1983 he viciously slandered us as 'CIA agents' for refusing to fall in line behind Labour's election campaign, and for our uncompromising defence of the Soviet Union. But as Sheffield's minorities have already learned and council workers are now experiencing, the Labour Party offers little to workers and minorities. Municipal 'socialism' a la Blunkett means job-slashing attacks on workers and racist 'benign neglect' of gypsies and other minorities. An all-out strike by council workers now is needed not only to defend their jobs and union rights but could be a step towards spearheading a broader mobilisation of the Sheffield labour movement in solidarity with the hard-battling miners. Bust Blunkett -- No job losses! Victory to the Sheffield council workers strike! ■

## For international labour action against racist terror!

# Black workers battle South Africa apartheid

### Revolt in townships, class war in gold mines

The black revolt against apartheid rule reached a new level in past weeks as class war exploded in the gold mines, the key sector of the entire South African economy. When 40,000 members of the black National Union of Mineworkers walked out for a wage increase, the mine bosses responded with shotguns, rubber bullets, attack dogs and tear gas. In the town of Westonaria near Johannesburg striking miners were massacred. The papers claimed seven killed, but police refused to give details on the number of dead, saying 'clearing up' was still going on. Hundreds of workers were hospitalised with ruptured spleens, fractured skulls and other serious injuries. But the black miners were not cowed by this massive use of police-state terror. The very next day 10,000 of them struck for union recognition at Hartebeesfontein, 100 miles southwest of Westonaria. And the weekend before, more than 600 blacks were arrested across South Africa for attending illegal meetings.

Despite all its weapons and all its savagery, white-ruled South Africa is in deep crisis. At this crucial moment international labour action can be decisive in further weakening the apartheid state and opening the road to the liberation of the enslaved black masses. Transportation unions throughout the world must boycott all shipping and air traffic to and from South Africa. Working-class organisations must mobilise massive protests in solidarity with the embattled black toilers of South Africa. Free all victims of apartheid terror! The powerful British labour movement, in particular, must demand that the government grant political asylum to the anti-apartheid activists who have sought refuge in the British consulate in Durban.

### Black revolt hits goldfields

The current wave of anti-apartheid struggle began last month when 'coloureds' (persons of mixed race) and Indians defied mass arrests to boycott elections to the phoney parliaments, designed to line them up against the black African majority and provide a multiracial facade to former prime minister Botha's assumption of a presidency with dictatorial powers. Then early this month Sharpeville and other black townships in the mining/industrial area of the Transvaal erupted when protests against rent increases were met with bullets. It was at Sharpeville in 1960 that police killed 69 blacks at a peaceful demonstration, ushering in a period of massive state repression which stifled black struggle for over a decade. This time cop and army violence only fanned the flames. The enraged township dwellers hacked to death several local black puppets and torched government offices. The revolt soon spread to Soweto, with its two million inhabitants, which was the centre of the 1976-77 revolt.

It is, however, the half-million black gold miners who hold the key strategic position in the South African economy. Gold has dominated capitalist development in South Africa ever since it was discovered on the Rand in the late 19th century. Today South Africa holds 70 per cent of the world's gold reserves outside of the Soviet bloc and gold accounts for half of South



Racist South African state seeks to crush black militancy. Smash apartheid! For workers revolution!

Africa's export earnings. The country's large but technologically backward manufacturing sector depends upon these foreign exchange earnings to import capital equipment.

Marxists know that any serious labour struggle challenges capitalist property rights and so collides with their armed guards, the police and army. In South Africa this is true with a vengeance, since any black working-class action challenges the apartheid system. In the mines, for example, black workers are frequently physically assaulted by their white racist supervisors. Any black worker who fights back is sacked. Now, however, the union has been able in some cases to save the jobs of mineworkers sacked after getting into fights with their shift bosses. One black gold miner expressed his belief that some day the union will be strong enough to tackle the question of whether migrants could live with their families (*New York Times*, 15 March 1983).

The question of leadership is sharply posed



Gold miners: key to black workers power in South Africa.

in the mines today. Seven of the eight mines struck last month are owned by Anglo-American, a huge conglomerate which is the core of the Oppenheimer family empire. The Oppenheims represent the so-called liberal wing of South African capitalism. Faced with the labour upsurge of the 1970s, Anglo-American's board saw that black unions of some sort were inevitable. Instead of waiting for bitter strikes it decided to let organisers into the mine compounds 'on the theory that it is easier to negotiate with recognized leaders of organized unions than to confront an angry mob' (*New York Times*, 15 March 1983). The South African National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) is a product of this company union strategy. Its general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa was once on the board of the Urban Foundation, an Anglo-American-funded body which promotes elite housing and training for the black petty bourgeoisie. The NUM gets most of its funds from that Cold War creature of the American labour bureaucracy and CIA, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. But in the explosive conditions of South Africa today even this tame black union can easily get out of control.

Much of what has happened in the mines in the past few weeks is murky from a distance. According to the *Financial Times*, the period leading up to the strike and contract settlement was carefully choreographed by management, complete with a face-saving additional 2.3 per cent last-minute pay offer, which the NUM leadership apparently accepted just after the strike deadline had passed. The *Wall Street Journal* (19 September) lauded the settlement, which, it said, 'demonstrated -- for the first time -- that at least some mining companies in South Africa were willing to deal with a black union'. But the superexploited black miners did not dance for their masters. Tens of thousands of them went on strike while unorganised workers went out on their own. The mining bosses reacted, as usual, with massive police violence. This is a sign not of the strength and stability of apartheid but of its weakness.

It was to behead the protests against Botha's election farce that the apartheid regime moved to detain the Durban Six, leaders of the United Democratic Front and the Natal Indian Congress, including the 71-year-old former ANC leader Archie Gumede. The six sought refuge in the British consulate in Durban after the regime

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