

Hands off Libya! Defend the Soviet Union!

Reagan/Thatcher: bloody murderers

For Margaret Thatcher, it was 'inconceivable' not to participate, as fully as Britain's standing as a second-rate imperialist power would allow, in Reagan's Libya atrocity. Four years ago the Iron Bitch vented her bloodlust on several hundred young sailors aboard the Argentine cruiser *Belgrano*. Now she could revel in the terror-bombing of defenceless men, women and children in Libya by the considerably more formidable firepower available to her fellow anti-Soviet maniac in the White House. While America's other NATO allies sought to distance themselves from Reagan's murderous Libya raid, 'Rambo's daughter', as the 17 April *Guardian* put it, prides herself as 'a fellow crusader against evil empires of any kind'.

But if Rambo Reagan is momentarily 'standing tall' as a wave of patriotic fervour sweeps America, Rambo's daughter is in deep, deep trouble. Already reviled by broad sectors of the population for her year-long civil war against the miners and her attempts to incite a racist bloodbath in the inner city ghettos last autumn, the Thatcher government has been plunged into even deeper crisis over the Libya bombing. Were it not for the social-patriotic misleaders who animate Her Majesty's *Loyal Opposition*, workers action could bring Thatcher down.

As the US F-111s returned to their bases in Britain following their dead-of-night bombing

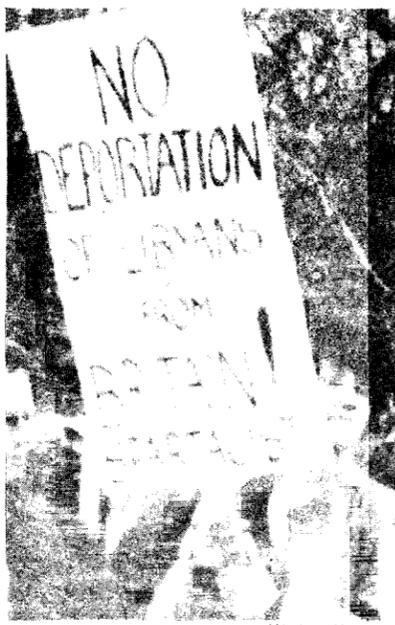
continued on page 8



Patrick Robert — Sipa-Special Features

Reagan/Thatcher murder mission was aimed at killing Qaddafi and family and terrorising Libyan population. British-based US F-111s rained death and destruction on Tripoli residential areas.

No to deportations of Libyans!



Workers Hammer

Spartacist League placard at 15 April US Embassy protest.

Not content with its bloody partnership in the terror-bombing of Tripoli and Benghazi, the Thatcher government has embarked on a racist round-up and deportation of Libyans from Britain, viciously labelling them 'dangerous to national security' and 'potential terrorists'. In a dawn swoop across Britain on 22 April, cops from eleven forces descended on twenty-one Libyan nationals (many of them resident in this country for several years and most of whom were students) and whisked them off to detention, with no right of legal assistance or appeal. One of the victims of this vile attack, a second-year PhD student at University College, Swansea, was frog-marched away by twelve policemen. By the weekend, the twenty-one were on their way out -- and Thatcher's Home Secretary Douglas Hurd has threatened more.

This calculated chauvinist onslaught targets all of the estimated 7000 Libyans in Britain (about 2000 of them students), including those who are political opponents of Qaddafi and may be at risk if sent back to Libya. Meanwhile, another 225 Libyans in Britain, all students of aircraft engineering and maintenance, have been banned from flying on the pretext that they might turn into 'kamikaze' pilots! The whole labour movement must protest these racist attacks. Stop the deportations! Reagan/Thatcher bloody hands off Libya!

And labour must clear out of its house pro-imperialist, racist scum like Kinnock's shadow home secretary Gerald Kaufman. This anti-Arab Labour Party pig denounces Thatcher for being too soft and too slow: 'In the two years of complacency following the death of WPC Fletcher, why have the Government suddenly acted with such speed? Have they at last realised, following approaches from this side of the House two years ago, that some potential terrorists are at large in this country?' (*Guardian*, 23 April) This filth recalls the obscene insult flung by Don Concannon, who during the 1981 Irish hunger strike visited Bobby Sands in his cell just to inform him that the Labour Party was backing Thatcher to the hilt.

The Labour Party is a consummately *bourgeois* workers party whose role today is to police the working class and minorities of Britain in order to regiment them for Reagan/Thatcher's war drive against the Soviet Union -- and the codeword is 'international terrorism'. When it comes to racism and deportations, the Labour Party stands second to none. It was Labour that in the 1970s imposed the outrageous 'virginity tests' on Asian women immigrants. We say: Stop the deportations of Libyans! Deport Thatcher to Tripoli to be tried by her victims for mass murder! ■

Neil Kinnock - no friend of the miners

20th March 1986

Dear Comrades,

It is some time since my last contribution to *Workers Hammer* in which I expressed my anger over what I considered false imprisonment of the two South Wales lads who apparently 'murdered' a scabberding taxi driver during the Coal Strike of 1984/85. I write now of my impressions when attending a demonstration in London on Sunday 2nd March 1986. It was held in protest over the jailing of mineworkers, of the sacking of mineworkers as a result of 'offences' by them in the course of that dispute. It was also called to celebrate the first anniversary of the end of that strike.

I attended the demonstration as a redundant mineworker who lost my job as a result of the strike being lost when the colliery I worked at closed, and to those who may think that I readily grabbed the 'fortune' offered me by the National Coal Board for the loss of my employment with them, I will say this. I do not consider the £10,000 lump sum and £58.00 per week until I am sixty five to be the fortune that the Thatcher Government and the Coal Board would have people believe, and I most certainly did not fight for twelve long and

hard months for the benefit of living the rest of my life in near penury.

I therefore attended the march to celebrate not the first anniversary of the end of the strike, but to celebrate the second anniversary of the start of that great event, for without question its failure has resulted in many job losses especially in the South Wales coalfield where there are over 7000 mineworkers now out of work, 4500 of them in my own area with the threat of more to follow.

During the march I spoke to many mineworkers from other coalfields throughout the country who, I am pleased to say are not only still working, but are still militant toward the Coal Board against their policy of victimisation toward them in apparent revenge for their strike action even after twelve months of the dispute being lost. I also spoke to miners who had been sacked for the part they played in the dispute, but surprisingly, I did not meet any miners who were made redundant because of the vicious pit closure programme over the last twelve months. It would appear therefore that I may have been the only redundant mineworker there. It was great though to be once again among the people that have been

continued on page 10



News Line
TUC chief Norm Willis greeted with a noose by militant South Wales miners, 1984. Remember the Labour/TUC traitors!

Quote of the month



Trotsky and Lenin

Defend colonial peoples against imperialism

When Mussolini's Italy invaded Emperor Haile Selassie's Ethiopia in 1935, Trotskyists gave unconditional military support against this colonial aggression, and denounced the 'neutralists' of the centrist London Bureau and British Independent Labour Party who claimed this colonial war was simply a dispute between dictators. A July 1936 resolution of the Fourth International stated:

The struggle against war, properly understood and executed, presupposes the uncompromising hostility of the proletariat and its organisations, always and everywhere, toward its own and every other imperialist bourgeoisie....

The struggle against war and its social source, capitalism, presupposes direct, active, unequivocal support to the oppressed colonial peoples in their struggles and wars against imperialism. A 'neutral' position is tantamount to support of imperialism. Yet, among the announced adherents of the London Bureau congress are found ILPers who advocate leaving the courageous Ethiopian warriors against marauding Italian fascism in the lurch on the grounds of 'neutrality', and 'Left' Poale Zionists who are even at this moment leaning upon British imperialism in its savage campaign against the legitimate, even if confused, struggle of the Arab peasantry.

-- 'Resolution on the Antiwar Congress of the London Bureau', *Documents of the Fourth International -- The Formative Years (1933 - 1940)* [1973]

WORKERS HAMMER

Monthly newspaper of the Spartacist League, British section of the international Spartacist tendency

EDITORIAL BOARD: Len Michelson (editor), Jon Branche, Alec Gilchrist, John Masters, Eiblin McDonald, Fred Purdy, Ellen Rawlings

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Ian Donnelly

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Patricia Matthews

Published monthly, except in January and August, by Spartacist Publications, PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE

Subscriptions: 10 issues for £2.00, overseas airmail £5.00

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint

Printed by Slough Newspaper Printers Ltd (TU) ISSN 0267-8721

Lambert and 'CIA socialism'

London
9/2/86

Dear comrades,

In the February 'Workers Hammer' you say you've 'scrupulously documented' the degeneration of the IC.

Well I'm doing some investigations of my own in that area and I'd be interested if you've got anything on Lambert. I want to know two things -- Why was there a split? Was it all Healy's fault? What happened to them after the split?

You mention in passing that OCI/PCI TU functionaries in Force Ouvriere are taking CIA money. That's a very serious thing to say and I'd like to know more. Also what about the British end, Blick/Jenkins. Do you have stuff on this sort of thing like your 'Healyism Implodes' i.e. solid facts but analysis as well. I enclose £1 for cost of any back issue of a Spartacist/WV with this sort of thing + p and p.

Yours fraternally,
George Hallam

Workers Hammer replies: Pierre Lambert's French Parti Communiste Internationaliste (formerly OCI) is today a deeply anti-Soviet, reformist outfit working the fringes of Francois Mitterrand's Socialist Party. As we reported in *Workers Hammer* no 75, January 1986, a number of PCI members are paid functionaries of the Force Ouvriere (FO) union federation, which the French newspaper *Liberation* revealed last November has been taking money from a CIA conduit, Irving Brown's National Endowment for Democracy. We wrote: 'For the past 15 years at least, the Lambertists have regularly voted for [FO president] Bergeron's report at FO conventions --- giving political support for this CIA tool.... In 1983-84, the PCI pulled all their supporters out of the French teachers union -- until then one of the only French unions which had not succumbed to a Cold War split -- and took them into Force Ouvriere, putting the finishing touches on Irving Brown's wrecking operation' ('The Cold War connection').

And what was FO doing with its CIA money? According to Bergeron, 'Among those helped by the union ... were trade unionists from Poland, Afghanistan and Latin America' (*International Herald Tribune*, 28 November 1985). In other words, 'free trade unions' (the CIA codeword for counterrevolution in the deformed workers states) like counterrevolutionary Solidarnosc, Islamic reactionaries in Afghanistan, and who knows what in Latin America -- probably some of Reagan's murderous contras and death squads in El Salvador.

Last year the PCI threw all of its forces

into creating the MPPT (Movement for a Workers Party) with the backing of part of the FO bureaucracy. The MPPT's programme is pure-and-simple bourgeois parliamentarism -- its founding charter calls for a system where 'the people's elected representatives can plainly fulfill their role of political expression of the citizens' -- and explicitly anti-revolutionary, the preamble of its charter warning that the Mitterrand government has created a 'political vacuum', 'thus favouring the most extremist solutions'. It's as if one decided to build a second-rate version of the Labour Party with the politics of (and support from) Lord Frank Chapple or Bill Sirs!

Lambert's British acolytes in the Socialist Labour Group recently excluded Spartacist League members from a 'public' meeting featuring PCI spokesman Pierre Broue, with SLG leader John Archer frothing that we had 'slandered' the PCI over the CIA/FO connection. But this scandal is all too real, having elicited comment in newspapers from *Le Monde* to the *Guardian*. Now, in the past two weeks, the PCI has undergone a major split, and guess who Lambert is blaming? Certain 'bureaucrats' in Force Ouvriere....

We have scrupulously documented the degeneration of the Lambert organisation from the days when, together with James Cannon's American SWP and the British Healy group, it helped form the anti-Pabloite International Committee in 1953. Lambert & Co supported Healy's bureaucratic expulsion of the Spartacist delegation from the 1966 IC conference, only themselves to fall out with Healy five years later. Ostensibly the 1971 split occurred because Healy 'rediscovered' Trotskyism in relation to Guillermo Lora's Bolivian POR, which had joined the IC under OCI sponsorship a year earlier. The POR had a policy of conciliating the 'left' bourgeois nationalist MNR government following the 1952 Bolivian uprising, a policy which came to disastrous fruition in the rightist coup of 1971. Of course Healy's 'defence of Trotskyism' was cynical fakery, since he had already expressed his own egregious popular-frontist appetites over Chile, Ceylon and the so-called 'Arab Revolution'. The real reason for the split was organisational: with the POR and its roots amongst the strategic Bolivian tin miners, the OCI and not Healy would have had the upper hand in the rump 'IC'.

At the time of the split we characterised the OCI, which contained a core of cadre with continuity back to the Trotskyist movement of the 1930s, as a 'serious current with a persistently rightist thrust' (see *Workers Vanguard* no 3, December 1971). In January 1973 we wrote them a letter expressing our desire to

continued on page 10

Reagan/Thatcher murder mission provokes mass protest

The main enemy is at home!

In leaving Tripoli following the US Sixth Fleet attack in the Gulf of Sidra in March, a journalistic team of the international Spartacist tendency issued a statement pledging the IST to 'undertake every effort to propagandise the need for the world working class to take the side of Libya against US imperialism'. The terror-bombing of Libya by British-based US F-111s several weeks later made that pledge particularly relevant to the tasks of Trotskyists here, as mass protests swept Britain in outrage over the murderous raid and the Thatcher government's enthusiastic complicity.

The Spartacist League threw its forces into these demonstrations in order to hammer home the connection between Reagan/Thatcher's criminal assault on the Libyan people and the imperialist anti-Soviet war drive. We organised a series of four public meetings around the country, titled 'The Russian question point blank' and featuring an eyewitness report from Tripoli during the earlier attack. While the rest of the left has either taken a dive on defence of Libya or sought to amnesty their 'own' bourgeoisie through pushing social-patriotic anti-Americanism, we fought for effective, broad-based united-front action in defence of Libya. Our central banner on the demonstrations reads, 'Reagan/Thatcher bloody hands off Libya! Defend the Soviet Union!'

On the evening of 15 April, immediately after the attack, SL contingents joined protests in London and Birmingham. In London, CND had called demonstrations both outside the US Embassy in Grosvenor Square and outside Downing Street. Our chant, 'Reagan, Thatcher, hands off Libya!' was picked up by many of the several hundred demonstrators at Grosvenor Square, which included a contingent from the Banda/Slaughter Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) as well as supporters of the pro-Moscow opposition within the Communist Party, the Communist Campaign Group. But both the Stalinists, who shortly wandered off, and the ostensibly Trotskyist WRP refused to join in our spirited chants of 'Defend the Soviet Union!', instead counterposing in unison: 'US bases out of Britain!'

To underscore the full and enthusiastic complicity of the Thatcher government in Reagan's bloody operation, the SL contingent then led some eighty demonstrators, including the WRP contingent, on a march to Downing Street, where some 2000 protesters were already gathered. As the march approached Downing Street -- with an SL banner at its head reading, 'Down with Reagan! Down with Thatcher! For workers revolution!' -- it was greeted enthusiastically by many of the demonstrators already there. CND leaders tried to push the line that what was criminal about the American aggression and Thatcher's involvement was that it set the British people up for 'terrorism'. But the general tenor of the



Workers Hammer

Spartacist contingent at 18 April protest in London. While fake lefts push anti-Americanism, we say: The main enemy is at home!

crowd was one of outrage at both Reagan and Thatcher, and fear that their insane war provocations would trigger nuclear world war.

The same evening some 60 people gathered in protest in Birmingham, where a Spartacist contingent raised the call, '1,2,3,4, No to NATO's Libya war -- 5,6,7,8, Defend the Soviet workers state!' On 19 April another 10,000 protesters rallied in Grosvenor Square and Hyde Park, with police arresting dozens who staged a sit-in on Oxford Street. Spartacist comrades sold almost 600 newspapers at the day's events, making a total of more than 1000 sold on Libya protests in four days.

Looking for a 'third camp'

In contrast the fake revolutionaries, tailing as usual after the Labour 'left', have pushed anti-Americanism while providing a 'left' cover for the anti-Soviet war drive which is the motive for the terror-bombing of Tripoli. Incredibly (but typically), not one other organisation raised a call to defend the Soviet Union against the war drive on any of the Libya demonstrations. In the face of an imperialist attack which even the bourgeois press recognises is aimed at the homeland of the October Revolution, fake Trotskyists like the WRP and Workers Power (WP) group are looking for a 'third camp' position.

The gymnastic contortions of WP over Libya and the Russian question have been astonishing even for these classic centrists. WP couldn't even get it together to send a paper seller (let alone a contingent) to the initial protests at Grosvenor Square and Downing Street. They did manage to find some people for the Birmingham protest where, even after goading from our comrades for their refusal to chant any Soviet-defencist slogans, they could only manage a CND-style feeble chorus of 'No to war drive -- Close the bases now!' By 18 April they managed to produce a leaflet which, after sixteen paragraphs of waffle, listed five 'clear and unequivocal' slogans including 'Defend the USSR against any attacks by imperialism'. But someone must have noticed this dangerous (almost 'Spartacist') line wobble because, lo, a week later their newspaper appeared and the five slogans had become four. 'Defend the USSR' having vanished in the mist.

Behind this disappearing act lies WP's effective denial that there is an anti-Soviet war drive. According to their leaflet, Reagan's attack had nothing to do with the USSR: 'In striking at Libya Reagan serves a warning to other anti-Zionist forces such as Syria and encourages the bellicosity of

Israel.' So that's why the USS *Yorktown* stopped off at Sevastopol on its way to the Gulf of Sidra -- to scare the Syrians! Further, WP claims the Russians were even *complicit* in the attack on Tripoli:

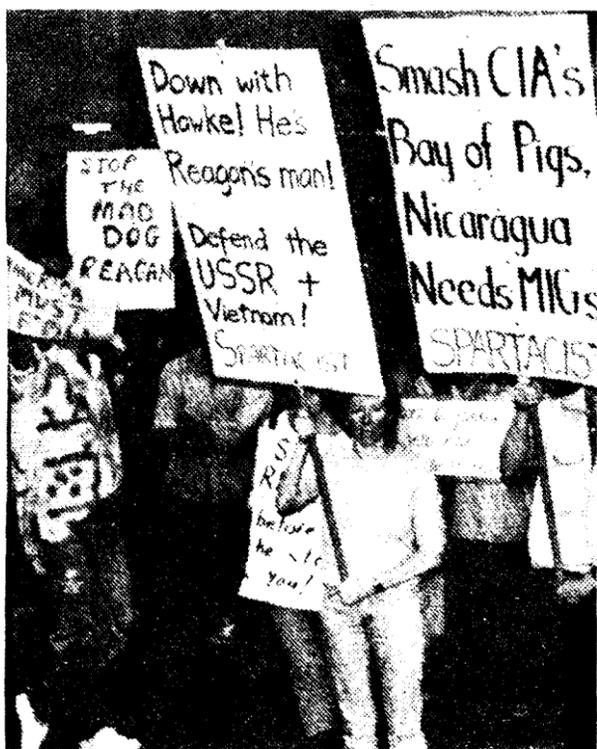
'Indeed, the actions against Libya took place with full prior knowledge by the Kremlin of US targets and timing -- informed as they were by US intelligence. This allowed the USSR to remove its ships, personnel and equipment from the field of attack... Had the Kremlin so much as made it clear that they would refuse to take any evasive action, Reagan would not have dared risk a major confrontation with the USSR.'

Similarly, the WRP sought to justify its refusal to call for defence of the USSR with the bogus argument that the Soviet Union has done nothing to defend Libya. Funny, those looked like Tupolev transports and Soviet SAMs the US was targeting...

These self-proclaimed Trotskyists think Reagan's anti-Soviet war talk is just that -- talk. So Reagan wouldn't dare 'risk a major confrontation with the USSR'? In the last five years, the US has staged one provocation after another against the Soviet Union. Russian submarines were struck by American ships in November 1983 and March 1984; a Soviet carrier was sideswiped by a US Navy vessel in April 1984; in November of that year, the USS *Nimitz* and *Arkansas* went to within five miles of Cuba to tow out a disabled US spy ship; and in December 1984, two Navy carrier battle groups staged manoeuvres only 50 miles off Vladivostok, hub of the USSR's Pacific defences, causing the Soviets to launch a full-scale defensive alert. And add to that the Korean airliner provocation into Siberia in 1983 and now the incursion into the Black Sea. There is a method in this madness: the Reaganites think that if they continue escalating the pressure, the Russians will surrender. Hitler tried it once, and lost. We say: Don't mess with the Russians!

Trotskyists understand that the Kremlin Stalinists' policy of 'peaceful coexistence' with imperialism acts as an obstacle to defence of the Soviet Union. But we counterpose a perspective of international proletarian revolution, including proletarian political revolution to replace the conciliationist Kremlin bureaucrats. But for outfits like the WRP and WP to denounce the Soviets for a supposed failure to aid Libya is pure hypocrisy. When the Red Army undertook a major, progressive intervention in Afghanistan seven

continued on page 10



Australasian Spartacist

Sydney, Australia: Spartacists denounce Reagan's terror-bombing of Libya.

WRP after Healy:

The god that failed?

We print below, in edited form, the remarks of Spartacist League speaker Faye Koch at a 30 April public meeting of the Banda/Slaughter Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) in London. This was a continuation of an earlier meeting on 'The tasks of the Fourth International'. The dwindling attendance at these meetings is itself a barometer of the political downward spiral of the post-Healy WRP in recent months. While some 500 attended the first gathering in London in November, the second was attended by about 100 people, and the most recent by less than 70.

Following three interventions by our comrades, WRP main speaker Cliff Slaughter felt compelled to defend his organisation's implicit 'third campism'. In an attempt to obscure the WRP's refusal to defend the Soviet Union in concrete circumstances (eg Libya), Slaughter falsely claimed we 'entrust the defence of the Soviet Union and the gains of the October Revolution to the Stalinist bureaucracy'. Yet again, he defended the WRP's support to capitalist-restorationist Polish Solidarnosc as though it were analogous to defending the trade union movement here, thus obliterating the class difference between the Polish deformed workers state and imperialist Britain. Our call to 'Stop Solidarnosc counterrevolution', said Slaughter, meant to 'support one counterrevolutionary in putting down another'. Thus Slaughter flatly and explicitly repudiates Trotsky's analysis of the Stalinist bureaucracy as a *contradictory* caste formation, and his perspective that a bloc with the bureaucracy can be permissible and necessary in defence of the social bases of the workers state against capitalist restoration.

True to form, Slaughter again refused to comment on the 1966 International Committee (IC) conference where Healy/Banda bureaucratically expelled the Spartacist delegation for refusing to bury our differences and scrape before the 'great leader'. Since the ousting of Healy seven months ago, we have insisted that the WRP could either return to the revolutionary Trotskyism espoused in such documents as the 1961 'World Prospect for Socialism' or take Healy's Stalinophobic heritage in the direction of mainstream Labour-loyal fake Trotskyism. The more the WRP hardens on the latter course, the more it is compelled to rewrite history.

Our origins in and continuity with the anti-revisionist stance of the IC of 1953-66 and our consistent refusal to capitulate to Healy (as Banda/Slaughter did) is an embarrassing bogeyman to them. So they try to treat us as 'non-persons'. A case in point is the 15 April *Workers Press*, whose photo of the WRP contingent at a 15 April Libya picket is



Pathfinder Press

American Trotskyist leader James P Cannon led 1953 IC fight against Pabloite revisionism. Where does WRP stand on that anti-revisionist struggle?

captioned: 'The immediate response to the bombing was a picket outside the US embassy -- followed by a spontaneous march to Downing Street.' Hardly a Marxist conception, spontaneity. This particular 'spontaneous' march happened to be initiated, organised and led by the ... Spartacist League.

The WRP leadership may not want to acknowledge the existence of our Trotskyist organisation, but their membership is looking for answers. Though WRP spokesmen refused to take up a single one of the political attacks made by our comrades in the course of seven interventions at a 26 April WRP dayschool in Nottingham, the fewer than 90 people there bought more than 70 items of Spartacist literature. Indicative of the WRP's current trajectory is the fact that Workers Power was invited to lead a workshop outlining its 'plague on both your houses' attitude to the 1953 IC fight against Pabloite liquidationism and Alan 'Scab' Thorne to lead another on trade unions and the Transitional Programme.

London, 15 April: WRP contingent 'spontaneously' following Spartacist lead in march from US Embassy to Downing Street. WRP tries to 'disappear' Soviet-defencist SL to cover its own 'third campism'.



Workers Press

It was the SL which gave a counter-presentation in defence of the early IC -- to which neither WP nor the WRP could manage a reply!

As an SL supporter at the London public meeting put it, what brings this centrist swamp together is that they all support 'Khomeini's Iran, Red Army out of Afghanistan, counterrevolution in Poland'. And at home that means *strategic* support to the Labour traitors: 'come the next general election in Britain, all of these parties will be out campaigning for the Labour Party, it doesn't matter how much they say tonight about Neil Kinnock.'

The WRP's insistent refusal to break with the anti-Soviet underpinnings of Healy's crimes can only lead it in the direction of deepening and explicit anti-Leninism. Notably, WRP spokesman Richard Goldstein, at a London WRP class on 25 April, went out of his way to assert that just as Healy wasn't infallible, neither was Lenin. No, Lenin wasn't 'infallible' -- but he built a party that led the only successful workers revolution. And the WRP is going in a very different direction.

I want to go back to part one of this public meeting. Those of you who were here would remember that in the presentations we heard lots of stories about the crimes of Gerry Healy and the atrocities he committed. However we noticed that there is a 'god that failed' quality in the WRP's approach to its split with Gerry Healy. We of the Spartacist League consider the organisation question very important and key for revolutionaries. In 1967, for example, we said 'Oust Healy!' -- over one thing -- when one comrade, namely Ernie Tate, was beaten up by the WRP and then they tried to throw him in jail. In 1966, we also considered a split over this question; however, the programmatic conclusions came out over the

following several years. In 1966, we raised our criticisms to the comrades at the International Committee conference: our understanding of the struggle for the Fourth International, Pabloism and the Marxist analysis of Cuba. I would like to ask the comrades where they stand on the presentation of the Spartacist League to the 1966 conference. We are still waiting for the answer.

Coming out of our experience with Gerry Healy, we did not junk communism because of that. Because Gerry Healy denounced the dialectic and stood it on its head and in fact used it as a mode of control, we did not junk the dialectic. In fact, we consider it key in understanding especially the Leninist position on the question of the Labour Party.

We bring you our criticisms coming from a different tradition and a different programme. This meeting is on the struggle for the Fourth International and the tasks of the Fourth International. I must say that there are comrades in the WRP today who have already gone

over and denounced the Fourth International altogether, like Mike Banda. Those of you who want to be Trotskyists, who want to remain Trotskyists, should look at the experience of Lenin and how he fought to build the Third International, and the experience of Trotsky and how he fought to build the Fourth International. For example, Trotsky used the key programmatic questions of his day, the question of the Chinese Revolution, the question of Soviet economic policy in conjunction with 'socialism in one country', and the attitude on the Anglo-Russian Committee. And he used these as a touchstone and judged organisations on those questions. We follow that example, we stand on that tradition and our struggle to reforge the Fourth International is built on those lessons. Therefore we have been raising the key programmatic issues of today with you comrades of the WRP.

That is mainly the Russian question today. Cannon made the point that those who touch the Russian question touch the question of revolution. That is especially the case today when there is an anti-Soviet war drive to smash the Soviet Union, the war drive of Reagan and Thatcher. So if you look at it, wherever this question comes up concretely, we see that the policy of the WRP is more akin to a 'third campist' position than a Trotskyist position.

Libya is a good example of that. We stand for the military defence of Libya against Reagan and Thatcher. We say: Hands off Libya! Our stand is clear -- in order to take this position we don't have to paint green into red, we don't have to pretend the 'Green Revolution' is a red revolution, unlike the comrades of the WRP who still carry on the classless conception of the 'Arab revolution'. We don't have to say 'comrade' Qaddafi. We stand for the military defence of Libya and we also

continued on page 11

Who bombed Berlin disco?

Reprinted from Workers Vanguard no 402,
25 April 1986

Something is fishy about Reagan's story, the pretext for the US terror-bombing of Tripoli. The La Belle discotheque in West Berlin was bombed April 5, killing a black American GI, Kenneth Ford, and a Turkish woman, Nermin Haney, and injuring 230 others. The White House claims the disco was bombed by agents acting under Libyan orders, a charge which was bought wholesale and echoed *ad nauseam* in the American bourgeois press. The lead editorial in the 20 April *New York Times* claims that 'proof of Libyan complicity' is affirmed because 'skeptical Democrats in Congress' and 'West Germany's Chancellor Kohl' believe it. Well, we know about 'skeptical' Democrats. If it's so believable, where is it? The fact of the matter is, they haven't released one shred of evidence. Nothing.

What the *Times* (and others) did not see fit to print, and effectively hid for a number of days, was the vital fact that the soldier killed was black and La Belle was a well-known soul music club frequented by black GIs and foreign workers. When we read of this in the 7 April *Los Angeles Times*, we wondered. In the scenario worked out in Washington months ago to 'get Qaddafi', the bombing of the Berlin disco fell in the time slot assigned by Reagan for Libyan terrorism. Qaddafi may not be very likeable, but as the head of an Islamic North African country, it doesn't seem reasonable or likely that he would order the mass murder of blacks and Muslims. Indeed, it seems much more like the *modus operandi* of fascist killers, who have launched numerous murderous attacks on Turks in West Germany and West Berlin. And when we began checking into the various accounts, we found that a neo-Nazi outfit had claimed the heinous bombing of the La Belle disco. This lead was buried, except for some whispers in Berlin.

In the US, where the state-sponsored 'terrorism' scare is being trumpeted as the marching song on the road to World War III against the Soviet Union, whatever the White House says is printed as truth, unless proved otherwise. Among the few media in America not buying the White House story whole hog is the black press, which is none too pleased by the Reaganites' bloody assault on a North African country. 'Libya Bombing Gets No Cheers', headlined the front page of the *Amsterdam News* (19 April), noting that while Reagan asserted that 'Libya was responsible for the nightclub bombing and the Trans World Airline bombing ... the President presented no evidence to support his allegations.'

By now the American public is used to White House spokesman Larry Speakes' Newspeak and all the verbal contortions surrounding the 'overt/covert' war against Nicaragua, where Congress openly discusses how much funding to give the 'secret' CIA-financed contra war. Now we are told that the US' 'incontrovertible evidence' of Libyan involvement is 'too sensitive



Protesting outside US Embassy in London, 15 April — not all Americans bought Reagan's lies.

Workers Hammer

La Belle disco was popular among black GIs, a fact hushed up in American press. Kenneth Ford's mother holds photo of son killed in bomb blast.



to discuss'. Whereupon Reagan gets on the box with the story of intercepted cables and broken codes supposedly proving that 'orders ... sent from Tripoli to the Libyan People's Bureau in East Berlin' directed the Berlin bombing. If there really were secrets they're trying to protect, this procedure is guaranteed to blow anything or anybody's cover. When Qaddafi was asked about the 'secret message', he just laughed, saying, 'We defy them, we challenge them, to publish it.'

Both Libya and East Germany have explicitly denied the US charges. On April 9, UPI reported from Tripoli that 'Khadafy said he was not responsible for the TWA and West Berlin attacks, and he challenged the Reagan administration to prove its claim. "This is an old story", he said. "The world has not heard any evidence or any proof about this old story. It is only an excuse for aggression against an independent state".' On April 10, the East German foreign ministry issued a statement expressing disgust and indignation over the bombing, calling it a 'criminal act' which they had nothing to do with. Again after the US terrorist assault on Libya, AP (17 April) reported, 'East Germany denied today that the Libyan Embassy in East Berlin had orchestrated the April 5 bombing of a West Berlin discotheque.'

And Washington keeps changing its story. The first version was the one about the 'communique' which US intelligence said they 'intercepted from Colonel Qaddafi to his envoys in East Berlin congratulating them on a job well done'. This was floated for a few days, then they withdrew it and subsequently officials 'flatly denied' all knowledge of it. As political/intelligence analyst Leslie Gelb wrote of the daily shifting accounts: 'Officials' assertions that the evidence is "strong but inconclusive", or that it is "incontrovertible" tend to be tied to their policy stances. For example, several who say the evidence is definitive seem to favor a strong military response' (*New York Times*, 12 April). Such blatant 'news management' led Robert MacNeil on the MacNeil-Lehrer TV news show to comment on the 'nearly universal skepticism' concerning the Reaganites' story. As for the West German government, they continued to label the 'evidence' of a Libyan link 'not completely clear' -- until the US attack, whereupon Helmut Kohl declared it fact.

'Signature of the Nazis'

Nine days after the West Berlin incident, the *New York Times* (14 April) ran a story belatedly reporting that the American soldier was black, and that there was something strange about the disco bombing:

'But one of the mysteries of La Belle is why Colonel Qaddafi would approve an assault on a disco patronized heavily by black G.I.s and foreigners from third world nations.'

'One of the dead in the blast was a 21-year-old black soldier, Sgt. Kenneth Terrance Ford, and the other was a 28-year-old Turkish woman, Nermin Haney; among the 230 wounded were a number of Arabs. A curious mixture of victims for an Islamic revolutionary and professed defender of the downtrodden.'

Curious, indeed. Particularly in view of the fact that several groups had taken 'credit' for the bombing, including supposed leftists and an Arab group, but 'none with known ties

to Libya', according to the 6 April *Washington Post*. What has not been reported here is that one of the groups claiming to be the authors of the indiscriminate terror at the La Belle disco was a fascist organization.

On April 6 *Die Wahrheit*, newspaper of the West Berlin section of the East German Communist Party, wrote of the bomb investigation that 'the right-radical spectrum is no longer being excluded', particularly given the claim from the 'Wehrsportgruppe Hess', or 'Hess Defense Sport Group'. Rudolf Hess, a leading Hitler deputy, imprisoned for life in Berlin's Spandau jail, has been the object of repeated fascist campaigns for his release. One of the leading fascist terror groups in West Germany was the notorious Wehrsportgruppe Hoffmann, since banned. Is the 'Wehrsportgruppe Hess' the old Hoffmann gang in new guise?

On April 7, *Die Wahrheit* wrote that La Belle was 'known as a meeting place for foreign citizens', raising speculation concerning right-wing elements and 'certain tendencies hostile to foreigners, which even extended to the head of the [Berlin] Senate'. The article reported that 'slogans calling for the persecution of foreigners' were found scrawled nearby the disco, reinforcing the view that the bombing could be the work of fascists. Exactly one week before, on March 29, a powerful bomb exploded in Berlin at a meeting of the local German-Arab Friendship Association, in the Turkish district of Kreuzberg, injuring seven people.

And on April 8, *Unsere Zeit*, newspaper of the West German Communist Party, published a commentary titled, 'The Signature of the Nazis', noting that the disco bombing looked more like the work of the fascist perpetrators of the Bologna railway station bombing that killed 80 people in 1980 or the Oktoberfest bombing of the Munich beer festival by neo-Nazis that same year.

As we go to press we learn that these reports have finally broken through the wall of silence. An article by Norman Birnbaum in *Der Spiegel* (21 April) reports:

'The "proofs" of Qaddafi's responsibility for the Berlin disco explosion have reportedly convinced everyone -- except for the West Berlin State Security.'

'These officials deserve respect. In a city where the word "protecting power" causes so many to snap to attention, it takes courage to so directly contradict an American president.'

'The more is said about Qaddafi's guilt, the more I recall the former CIA official who commented on every revelation by our government on Central America with professional disdain: "I personally produced much better fabrications."'

'Because the disco was a friendly atmosphere for black Americans and Turks, it is not unthinkable that Berlin neo-Nazis were at work here.'

The West Berlin police are evidently not pursuing this line of inquiry. This is hardly surprising. Consider the recent scandal surrounding the forced resignation of West Berlin's interior minister and deputy mayor, Heinrich Lummer. According to *Der Spiegel* (7 April), Lummer funneled several thousand German marks in Christian Democratic Party funds to a fascist outfit. Lummer has also been implicated in supplying arms to the fascist Lebanese Phalange and was a bosom buddy

continued on page 10

Book review: Move Your Shadow

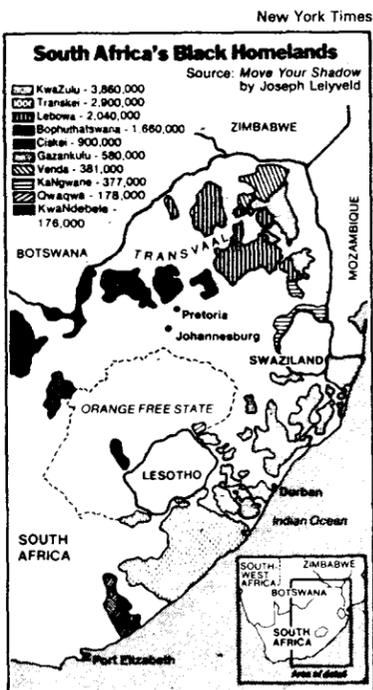
The living hell of apartheid South Africa

By Alan Roux

In his Pulitzer Prize-winning account of life in white supremacist South Africa, *Move Your Shadow* (New York, 1985), Joseph Lelyveld tells of a visit to a wealthy Afrikaner farm and a desolate camp for blacks nearby on the open *veld* (plains) of the Orange Free State. At the end of the day, he watches as both are blotted out by a huge dust storm. He reflects that 'the dust storm was exactly what the producer of a second-rate TV documentary might have seized on for his fade-out on such a day. But I had grown mistrustful of all South African metaphors. The thought of an inevitable catastrophe was frightening, but even more frightening was the thought that it could be indefinitely deferred.' Lelyveld looks at South Africa through the eyes of an American liberal, but here he comes to a conclusion most liberals shy away from, as they take refuge instead in mealy-mouthed rhetoric of 'peaceful change'.

A long-time *New York Times* foreign correspondent, Lelyveld is currently the *Times* London bureau chief and has been mentioned as a contender for the succession to powerful Executive Editor AM Rosenthal, who is scheduled to retire. Politically, Lelyveld identifies himself as 'a naive democrat who believes in what a South African Cabinet member dismissed as "simplistic Western solutions"'. Though he is on target about the tendency of American liberals 'to misconstrue the conflict, to talk about human rights and living standards while fuzzing the central issue of power', he is basically indulgent toward what he calls the 'earnest but inconsistent dabbling' of US imperialism in southern Africa. The strong point of Lelyveld's powerful narrative is not his political conclusions, but his sharp newsman's eye for the hideous contradictions in the land of apartheid which cry out for revolution.

Lelyveld found the title for his book in a handbook of phrases in *Fanagalo*, the *lingua franca* which originated with the influx of men from many different black tribes to work South Africa's gold mines. *Fanagalo* consists chiefly of expressions used by the racist white foremen to order black workers around. *Susa lomtunzi gawena* ('move your shadow') was listed in the phrase book as one of several handy expressions for white golfers to use on their black caddies. It's an apt metaphor for life in South Africa, where the apartheid rulers



Bantustan system is key to super-exploitation of black labour.

White police state rules by terrorising black majority.



fear even the shadow of the black man falling on their special preserve of white privilege. Such concrete details that illuminate the anatomy and pathology of social relations under apartheid, so violently contradictory yet so deep-rooted -- these are the stuff of *Move Your Shadow*.

This book is Lelyveld's summing up of what he personally saw and heard during his tour as the *Times* correspondent in South Africa. He does not devote much attention to news events or to well-known South African political figures such as PW Botha, the Mandelas and Bishop Tutu; nor does he explain the origins of apartheid in settler colonialism and capitalist development. But combining a journalist's tenacity with a novelist's command of the language, Lelyveld fills a need in the literature on South Africa for a reasonably comprehensive book that gives you the harsh feel of life under apartheid. Having grown up in South Africa, I expected that reading *Move Your Shadow* would bring back many memories. But it is a measure of this perceptive account that I continually found myself reflecting as if for the first time on things that had seemed simply normal when I was there -- it was like being given a sharper lens.

One recollection concerned my nine months as a conscripted *troepie* in the apartheid army. To a *troepie* who showed any lack of obedience, the redneck Afrikaner corporals would scream, 'Jy raak wit, troep!' ('You're acting white, private!'). At the time and since, I don't recall anyone reflecting on the irony of one white disparaging the 'whiteness' of another in an institution dedicated to slaughtering blacks. In South Africa the domination of white over black is the relation of master and subordinate, stamped on the whole society; to tell a *troep* he can't act 'white' is the clearest way of telling him he has no rights.

'A nation of sleepwalkers'

Move Your Shadow represents a powerful application of Lelyveld's principal maxim as a journalist: that each person is an expert on the circumstances of his life. Instead of just reciting statistics on black migrant labour in South Africa, he makes the acquaintance of migrant workers employed in his block of flats and, on their annual leave, drives them the soul-destroying hundreds of miles back to the starving KwaZulu bantustan where their families are forced to live. Perhaps his most memorable eyewitness reporting concerns the insane apartheid project that is the latest bantustan, KwaNdebele.

In order to create KwaNdebele, the Botha

regime uprooted hundreds of thousands of blacks -- destroying neighbourhoods in Pretoria, evicting labour tenants from white-owned farms, expropriating landowning agricultural communities (so-called 'black spots') -- and dumped them in the rural ghettos known as 'closer settlements'. To get there, Lelyveld writes, 'You drove through the Pretoria suburbs and then through more than forty miles of rich [white] farm country before you hit it; then you could drive another forty miles, and it was seldom out of sight: a serpentine stream of metal shanties and mud houses the metal roofs of which were typically weighted down by small boulders to keep them from blowing off the Transvaal's violent hailstorms. Such sights can be seen in other countries, usually as a result of famines or wars. I don't know where else they have been achieved as a result of planning.'

KwaNdebele has no economy of its own. The only jobs are in distant Pretoria. But the apartheid social engineers are prepared to invest heavily to keep KwaNdebele's people in the status of perpetual 'commuters'. The South African government's subsidy for bus transport between KwaNdebele and the Pretoria area works out to more than \$1,000 per passenger per year -- it adds up to more than KwaNdebele's 'gross national product'! Lelyveld rode the 2.40 am bus KwaNdebele workers must endure just to get to work each day and got the riders to tell their own stories:

'John Masango ... said he worked six days a week at a construction site near Benoni, an industrial town forty miles on the far side of Pretoria, taking three buses each way. Even at the concessional rates arranged by the authorities for KwaNdebele, the total bus fares he paid out in a week gobbled up one-quarter of his wages. He was fifty-three years old, and on days when he was not required to work overtime, he could get back to Kameelrivier by eight-thirty at night. Only on Sundays did he ever see his home or his family in the light of day... With four hours' sleep at home and a couple of hours' sleep on the bus, he managed to stay awake at work.'

In Pretoria, KwaNdebele is viewed 'as a tremendous success for the racial planners', he reports. A high official said seriously blacks didn't want to live in towns: 'They were much happier with their own kind out in the bush. The Afrikaans term he used was doodgelukkig ("dead happy"). That seemed singularly apt for emergent KwaNdebele, a nation of sleepwalkers.' Lelyveld reminds himself that the KwaNdebele 'commuters' are more fortunate than many South African blacks -- they at least

have jobs and 'live with' their families.

These journeys measure the gulf (the moat?) apartheid has dug between black and white. While the nature of apartheid is brutally clear to the blacks who live under it, the whites who live off it are experts in masking the reality of oppression from themselves. This applies to all ruling groups, but reaches fantastic proportions in 'white South Africa'. Having uprooted millions, apartheid ensures that 'Hardly anywhere do whites now have to live near blacks ... and hardly anywhere is it even necessary for them to see where blacks live, except occasionally at a distance from a passing car.' For the whites, 'the resentment in the depths, among blacks and browns, is beyond their comprehension'.

Throughout the book, Lelyveld dissects the racist consciousness of whites, from the kept 'sociologists' who lament that the black 'national character' is 'inimical to growth', to the baas on the farm who 'knows the black' but not the real name of his oldest servant. 'If whites took the long view, they would be in a panic', Lelyveld observes. In fact, panic is not far below the surface; but the whites' overwhelming monopoly of force gives them the luxury of projecting 'any version of reality they please', from the myth of 'separate development' under apartheid to the recent delusion that apartheid is being reformed out of existence.

This delusion in particular is annihilated in *Move Your Shadow*. Lelyveld has actually been the *New York Times* correspondent in South Africa twice, and this has given him a certain vantage point on the evolution of apartheid. He was first sent there after covering the racist murder of three civil rights workers in Mississippi during the 'freedom summer' of 1964. When Lelyveld arrived in South Africa in 1965 the apartheid rulers had crushed all organised opposition and they booted him out eleven months later. In 1980 they let him return, apparently hoping to impress him with their 'reform' programme -- or did they perhaps just want him to see how firmly they were still in control?

The changes Lelyveld found in 'white South Africa' are rather bizarre. The dour Afrikaner who in the 1960s cited scripture to sanctify apartheid is now an 'arriviste puritan' aping every Western consumer fad. Clad by Gucci, he mixes with blacks at casinos and fancy restaurants; he dares to be regaled by Richard Pryor tapes. Apartheid too is reclothed, in jargon borrowed from American sociology, and dismissed as passe. But the reality, which Lelyveld graphically documents in thousands of miles of travel throughout the bantustans, those barren fragments of land where millions have been sent to starve, is that apartheid has been and is being relentlessly extended. When the umpteenth *verligte* ('enlightened') Afrikaner rhetorically asks him if he sees any changes, Lelyveld replies, 'Yes, I never imagined they would be able to carry apartheid so far.'

'W-A-R'

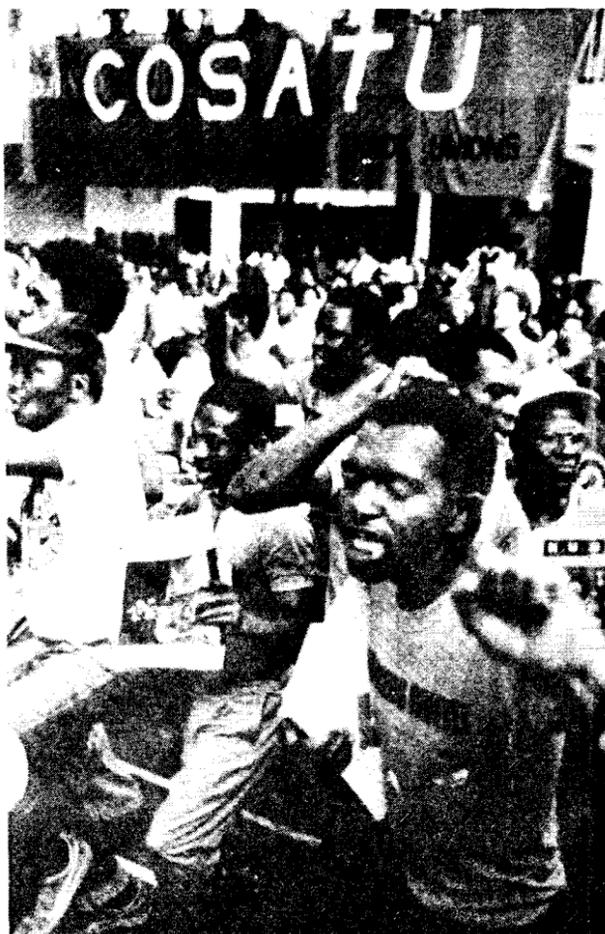
Move Your Shadow was not written to demonstrate a political thesis, but the cumulative effect of its description makes a statement of cardinal importance: apartheid is a social structure as elaborate, as entrenched, and as inimical to all forms of human emancipation as slavery was in the American South, or tsarism in Russia. No amount of reformist tinkering, 'responsible' imperialist statesmanship and divestment 'pressure' will eradicate it. It will take social revolution to topple the edifice of apartheid slavery which has created glittering empires for the 'Randlords' while the black toilers who dig the gold are denied every right.

In the chapter titled 'Controlled Strength' Lelyveld depicts not just the nightmare of surveillance and torture in which the South African security police envelop their opponents, but also the enormous capacity for racist violence of the white population at large. There is a licensed private gun for every white adult male. After two bull terriers break their chains and kill the household's black maid, the SPCA is besieged by whites wanting to buy the dogs.

In 'W-A-R' Lelyveld delineates the military weakness of the African National Congress, the emphasis on martyrdom. He understands that Nelson Mandela 'has become the living symbol of his movement and the personification of the bondage of his people'. But why have the ANC and the allied South African Communist Party (SACP) proven unable to lead a revolution in the land of apartheid, where the dramatic social contradictions have repeatedly reached the boiling point? The pressure cooker of apartheid's social oppression and social

contradictions compel Lelyveld to see beyond his frequently stated liberal anti-communist prejudices. Thus, he writes of the SACP:

'South African security men tirelessly spread the ancient allegation that the minuscule, antediluvian Communist party which has dutifully followed Moscow's line on Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Afghanistan, dominates Umkhonto we Sizwe ('Spear of the Nation'), the [ANC's] underground's military arm.... If this is so, then the effect for many blacks is not to lower the prestige of Umkhonto we Sizwe but to raise that of the Communist party.'



Achilles' heel of apartheid capitalism is dependence on black labour. Black unions have the power to bring South Africa to a standstill.

Lelyveld would not be surprised at the appearance of the Soviet red flag with its hammer and sickle at funerals for black militants over the last year. He goes on:

'The immediate attraction is its supposed extremism -- ideology comes later, if at all -- because the choice for blacks between "moderate" and "radical", as it is defined by whites in South Africa, is a choice between reaching some accommodation with apartheid and insisting on full citizenship.'

In fact the combination of the ANC's call to 'make the townships ungovernable', appeals for an international boycott and meetings with leading capitalists like Anglo American's Gavin Relly, are all part of a programme in which militancy is employed in the service of pressuring apartheid capitalism to reform itself and, ultimately, finding accommodation with it.

'South Africa could be worse than Belgium and Northern Ireland and Lebanon all rolled into one', an Afrikaner law professor told Lelyveld, 'underscoring with a curious combination of pride and alarm the possibilities of racial and ethnic strife'. *Move Your Shadow* anatomises the social divisions fostered by apartheid that could produce such a disaster. Apartheid, pyramid-like, not only keeps white over coloured (mixed-race) over Indian over black, but maintains a complex hierarchy among the blacks. A fortunate few may own homes in segregated areas within

'white' South Africa. The KwaNdebele 'commuters', less fortunate, are still better off than the migrant workers, who are in turn better off than those who can only starve in the bantustans or seek work illegally.

Talking with a young man cast to the bottom of this pyramid, Lelyveld finds him blaming the blacks who have jobs for his plight. Lelyveld describes also the grotesque little black tribal despotisms that police the bantustans for apartheid. When rural blacks are to be forcibly moved from land they have cultivated for decades to the bare veld in a bantustan, workers from a distant tribe are employed to do it. In the tribal violence of recent months we have seen the success of apartheid divide-and-rule tactics in inflaming divisions.

'South Africa awaits its Lenin'

Workers Vanguard has, uniquely on the left, warned that so long as the national principle predominates, there is a danger of a multi-sided communal-race war in which blacks would today be overwhelmingly the victims. The black nationalists cannot overcome the divisions fostered by apartheid -- witness the confrontations between the largely Xhosa United Democratic Front and Gatsha Buthelezi's Zulu *impis*, and between black township youth and migrant workers this past year. But with its six-million-strong black working class as the motor force for proletarian revolution, the class principle can prevail in South Africa.

The biggest weakness of Lelyveld's book, a direct result of his liberal politics, is his denial of the significance of the black workers movement. He measures the distance between white and black, but he does not show the utter dependence of 'white South Africa' on black labour. His discussion of the black trade unions falls in the chapter, 'Controlled Strength', where he describes the roundups, the hideous torture of union militants, the tremendous courage of those who persist in the face of inhuman cruelty.

Lelyveld is markedly defeatist about the black unions, commenting on the 'touching but basically dizzy sense of invincibility', the 'atmosphere of a revival' in the union headquarters, raising an eyebrow when told 'that the power of the new black unions would ultimately put an end to the pass laws, the migrant labor system, and the Group Areas Act'. 'On subsequent trips to East London and Port Elizabeth', he writes, 'I saw how hope was systematically cut down to size, how the reality of white power in South Africa gradually made itself felt.'

But there is a reason for the tremendous energy and hope unleashed with the explosion of black unionism -- organised as *workers*, black militants had touched on the source of power, the motor force of social revolution. The black unions today are no longer just 'green branches ... regularly pruned', as Lelyveld writes. As organised workers stand up for their rights against the apartheid bosses, the whole range of apartheid practices is thrown into flux. A small but interesting example is the fate of *Fanagalo*, the artificial language of apartheid command. With black miners now organised in a powerful union, the bosses can no longer simply tell superexploited migrant workers what to do. As contracts are thrashed out, as the miners raise their demands, *Fanagalo* is proving to be increasingly obsolete.

With hundreds of thousands of members, organised now in every important industry of this heavily industrial country, the black unions have the power to bring the country to a standstill. The power, but not the programme. Lelyveld notes that the ANC in 'nearly a quarter century of exile has failed to produce a South African *What Is To Be Done?*' Or, as *Newsweek* correspondent Ray Wilkinson put it last September, for which he was expelled from the

continued on page 9

Workers Hammer South Africa packet

Articles from *Workers Vanguard*
and *Workers Hammer*

£1, incl p&p.

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



Libya...

(Continued from page 1)

raid 14 April, Reagan and Thatcher must have rubbed their hands in glee. Thatcher's initial absurd lies to the contrary, this was no 'surgical military strike', but a *murder mission* to kill Qaddafi and terrorise the Libyan people. The Pentagon later admitted that Libyan army bases were not the target. They bombed Qaddafi's residential compound in Tripoli, his alternate headquarters in Benghazi, his personal transport carrier. With Thatcher's blessing, the F-111s were loaded with anti-personnel cluster bombs -- and their gory effect was evident on every TV screen the



You adopted me, Reagan assassinated me.

Newsday

Photo distributed in Libya shows Qaddafi with baby daughter Hana.

following evening. Washington wanted a visible bloodbath. As one reporter in Tripoli noted:

'The American attacks on a missile base at Surt and on Libyan vessels in the Gulf of Sidra last month, although they may have cost the lives of more than 60 Libyan sailors, made so little impact on this country's major cities that Qaddafi domestically was able to claim the engagement as a victory.' (*Washington Post*, 15 April)

So Reagan and Thatcher have their 'victory': they managed to kill Qaddafi's adopted baby daughter and to kill and maim more than 100 civilians. After two days of stories of gunfire in the streets and rumours of coups and Qaddafi's death -- purposeful wishful thinking by American intelligence -- the Libyan leader went on TV to denounce the bombing as barbaric and 'crazy'. 'We tell Reagan that he does not need to protect his children and his people', he said. 'We are not like you. We do not bombard cities.' Bursting into tears in front of Western reporters, his wife denounced Reagan and Thatcher as 'murderers': 'If the Americans and British are democratic, they should judge Reagan and Thatcher' and have them 'liquidated'.

Predictably, the Libya raid received bipartisan support in the US from Democratic Party 'doves'. The Democrats hate Qaddafi because, like Reagan, they link him with Russia. The pro-Irish lobby in the US Congress -- exemplified by the likes of Senator Ted Kennedy and House leader Tip O'Neill -- virtually crumbled when Reagan moved to push through an anti-IRA extradition bill in gratitude for Thatcher's support. Hailing Thatcher's Britain as 'our staunchest ally in our battle against international terrorism', Reagan proclaimed: 'We need to stand tall with our British allies at this important moment' (*Times*, 24 April).

Defend the Soviet Union!

Under Reagan, fighting 'international terrorism' has been the codeword for escalating anti-Soviet war preparations. Washington immediately tried to blame the Libya raids on the Russians. 'We urged the Soviets and East Germans to restrain the Libyans', State Department spokesman Bernard Kalb said. 'Had they done so, this entire cycle of events would have been avoided.' Indeed, even before

the US Sixth Fleet sailed towards the Gulf of Sidra in March, its ships had been engaged in a brazen provocation within Soviet territorial waters outside its major Black Sea naval installation at Sevastopol. The Soviets would have been entirely within their rights to have blown these Navy warships out of the water. Recognising that this could mean world war, the Soviets said, 'we showed patience and restraint' -- 'this time'.

In the wake of the Libya terror-bombing, Reagan vows, 'If necessary, we will do it again.' Meanwhile Thatcher orders wholesale expulsions of Libyans from Britain. In the face of opposition even from within her own Cabinet she hardlines it, committing Britain to supporting future raids while acting as drill sergeant among the more recalcitrant West European NATO partners. In preparation for the Tokyo summit, the US and Britain have gone all-out to consolidate support for their terrorist provocation among their imperialist allies. The ultimate target of these imperialist war provocations, of course, is the Soviet Union. In the classic style of Cold War brinkmanship, Reagan and Thatcher think they can terrorise the Russians into abject capitulation. The Libyan strikes will embolden the imperialists in their anti-Soviet war drive, aimed at 'rolling back' the 1917 October Revolution and restoring unhindered capitalist domination of the world.

As a team of journalists from the international Spartacist tendency which visited Tripoli in March, during Reagan's earlier attack, stated in a declaration to the press:

'We have come to Libya whilst the US imperialist 6th Fleet was threatening to repeat its criminal aggression against the Libyan state, in order to reassert concretely with our presence here the ist's deep respect and support for the just cause of Libyan independence and territorial integrity against assault by US imperialist aggression.'

'The terrorist actions of the US imperialists against Libya are part and parcel of the war preparations of the USA and NATO powers against the Soviet Union, Nicaragua, Cuba, Afghanistan, Poland, and any other country that is perceived as an obstacle to imperialist domination.'

In Afghanistan and Nicaragua, both under Reagan's guns, tens of thousands rallied in defiance of US imperialism after the attack. The pro-Sandinista newspaper *Nuevo Diario* wrote: 'Yesterday it was Grenada, today Libya and tomorrow Nicaragua.' Indeed, Reagan explicitly linked Libya to Nicaragua in his global counterrevolutionary plans, using the Tripoli bombing to try to push through arms aid for the CIA's anti-Sandinista contra terrorists. If most Americans (though barely half the black population) seemed to be buying Reagan's line on the Libya raid initially, this reactionary triumphalist mood is brittle. When Reagan moves to send 'American boys' to die on foreign soil, he will find the 'Vietnam syndrome' very much alive and still in his way. It's one thing for US bombers to rain down death in Libya with virtual impunity. But to take and hold Nicaragua would cost many thousands of American lives.

'Rambo's daughter' in trouble

In Europe, the Libya raid served to exacerbate existing fissures within the NATO alliance. Mass protests hit the streets in London, Athens and Madrid; demonstrators battled cops in Germany: it was an atmosphere not seen since the Vietnam war. In Italy dozens of factories were shut down by work stoppages to discuss the attack. In Britain, the Anglo-American terror-bombing unleashed a wave of opposition and outrage, in distinct contrast to the muted response to the earlier US provocation in the Gulf of Sidra.

One BBC news commentator noted that Thatcher was getting 'bouquets in the US and brickbats at home'. Only hours after news of the attack broke, several thousand demonstrators came out onto the streets, many of them headed straight for Downing Street. A MORI poll conducted the day after the bombing registered opposition by two-thirds of the British population to the attack; an even greater number opposed British participation. The sentiment among working people was aptly reflected in a resolution approved by the NUJ annual delegate conference, which condemned the raid and authorised a telegram of condolence to be sent to the Libyan government as well as 'calling on journalists in the US to stand firm against war fever'.

But for the social-patriotic Labour Party it was an ideal opportunity to rally around the butcher's apron and deflect any challenge to the Tory government and British imperial-

ism, just as they did at the time of Thatcher's bloody Falklands/Malvinas adventure. Labour leader Neil Kinnock counterposed to Reagan/Thatcher's blood-thirsty provocations an alternative imperialist policy of isolating Libya until 'the pressure of commercial, economic, financial, diplomatic and political sanctions squeezed the life out of the Gaddafi regime' (*Times*, 17 April). While shadow home secretary Gerald Kaufman railed against Thatcher for being too slow in booting Libyans out of the country, CIA-lover Denis Healey denounced the EEC for not policing 'terrorists' effectively enough.

What NATO-loyalists like Kinnock, Healey and the SDP are concerned about is that this latest action will exacerbate opposition to the Atlantic alliance and the presence of US bases here. A columnist in the pro-Atlanticist *Guardian* (14 April) on the eve of the attack expressed open concern that 'Rambo Reagan has achieved the impossible: he has made getting rid of the bases look not only conceivable but perhaps desirable'. Even Tory 'wet' Lord Carrington, NATO secretary-general, has been moaning about a split in NATO as a result of the Libya raid.

France in particular earned the Pentagon's ire by refusing to allow the US bombers to cross their airspace en route to Libya, forcing them to fly an extra 1200 miles in each direction. Was the bombing of the French embassy in Tripoli the Americans' reply? (No overflight? Take that!) But the difference between Reagan/Thatcher and the other European bourgeoisies (and their social-democratic lackeys) is essentially tactical -- having far more to do with geographic proximity to Libya (and dependence on Libyan oil) than anything else. Mitterrand is no stranger to state terrorism, as his lethal operation against Greenpeace in New Zealand and his despatching of troops to Chad and New Caledonia show. Meanwhile Mitterrand announces surveillance of anyone who has even visited Libya recently, and German chancellor Kohl echoes Reagan's preposterously unfounded charges that Libyan 'terrorists' were behind the indefensible Berlin disco bombing (see 'Who bombed Berlin disco?' in this issue).

The working class must stand militarily with Libya against this imperialist aggression. As Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the Russian October Revolution, wrote during the 1930s when European social democrats refused to defend colonial Ethiopia even against the Italian fascist Mussolini, on grounds that Ethiopia was led by a repulsive monarchical dictatorship:

'If Mussolini triumphs, it means the reinforcement of fascism, the strengthening of imperialism, and the discouragement of colonial peoples in Africa and elsewhere. The victory of [Ethiopia], however, would mean a mighty blow not only at Italian imperialism but at imperialism as a whole, and would lend a powerful impulsion to the



Thatcher's earlier murder mission: HMS Conqueror was ordered to sink Argentine cruiser *Belgrano* outside Falklands/Malvinas war zone.



Workers Hammer Photos



Down, Down Reagan!

A team of journalists from the international Spartacist tendency went to Tripoli in late March as Reagan attacked in the Gulf of Sidra. Sixteen years ago the British colonialists were booted out of their military bases in Libya, followed by dismantling of American bases. Now, as Thatcher aids Reagan, Libyan masses are demonstrating against US imperialist aggression.

rebellious forces of the oppressed peoples. One must really be completely blind not to see this.' ('On Dictators and the Heights of Oslo', April 1936)

Pentagon's Murder, Inc

The US attacks on Libya were planned nine months ago, long before the bombing of the West Berlin disco or the Rome/Vienna airport massacre which provided the excuse. As the *Sunday Times* (30 March) revealed, the Reaganites wanted to pick on somebody to restore US imperialist prestige on the cheap and send a message to the Soviet Union:

'At a White House meeting of the national security planning group in July there was general agreement that a target must be chosen.... Libya was the soft option with Gaddafi able to count only on words to support his leadership. The Arab world and the Soviet bloc would not back him with muscle....

'In December, at Bolling airbase outside Washington, a special conference attended by mainstream policy-makers from the White House, Pentagon, State Department and intelligence services agreed a broad outline for action.'

So Qaddafi, a military client of the Soviet Union and small-time Arab nationalist strongman whose own terrorism has never been shown to touch anybody abroad except Libyan dissidents, was chosen to take the rap for all the world's terrorist incidents -- by trying to murder his family! Referring to the death of Qaddafi's 15-month-old daughter Hana in the bombing of Tripoli, even former US president Jimmy Carter remarked that if someone had killed his daughter Amy 17 years ago, 'I would have sworn as long as my life existed, I would retaliate' (*New York Post*, 18 April).

In fact, with their far more deadly state terror, Reagan and Thatcher invite retaliatory indiscriminate terrorist attacks by anyone outraged by their imperialist crimes, like the murder of two British schoolteachers in Lebanon in apparent retaliation for Britain's role in the raid. Not only are such random, indiscriminate terrorist attacks abominable crimes, they are playing Reagan's game, helping him whip up war fever in an American population that ever since Vietnam has resisted every attempt to drag them into another dirty, losing colonial war.

In fact, the Reagan administration has a policy of assassination, and is openly bragging about it. The National Security Council had even drafted a statement describing Qaddafi's death as 'fortuitous', and War Secretary Caspar Weinberger was quoted by the *New York Post* as saying that Qaddafi had 'forfeited his right to occupy space on the planet'. The Libyan leader is labelled a 'mad dog' -- and we all know what you're supposed to do to a mad dog: shoot it.

It was a small-scale practice run for Reagan's nuclear first-strike plans against the Soviet Union, which call for 'decapitating' the Kremlin in the first few minutes of World

War III. This 'decapitation' policy was laid out in Jimmy Carter's Presidential Directive 59 in 1980. Of course, murdering foreign leaders is ostensibly prohibited by US law, but even this legal formality will be eliminated by a Congressional bill which would 'permit the President to order the assassination of a foreign head of state under some circumstances' (*New York Times*, 18 April).

The Pentagon warmakers think that their laser-guided 'smart' bombs will give them the pinpoint accuracy to accomplish this ultimate terrorist strike. And the main lesson they have drawn from the bombing of Tripoli was that high tech works. But Operation El Dorado Canyon was something less than the 'flawless success' claimed by Weinberger and Reagan. Credible Soviet accounts indicate six planes were lost in the raid. Fully one-third of the F-111s had to abort the mission because of mechanical failure, and their targetting can't have been too good unless they really intended to 'take out' a chicken farm two miles away from a Libyan air base, killing 300 chickens! This, and the explosion of the US' last two Titan missiles and the Challenger space shuttle, does not augur well for Reagan's 'Star Wars' plans.

Workers revolution — the only road to peace

The Libya raid drove home to millions the very real danger of nuclear holocaust posed by the US-led imperialist anti-Soviet war drive. Typically the Labour 'left' and CND renewed their pleas for nuclear disarmament, while directing all their fire at the 'superpowers' and trying to amnesty their 'own' bourgeoisie by pushing anti-Americanism. The call for the 19 April Hyde Park rally which featured Tony Benn and other prominent Labour 'lefts' was the social-patriotic appeal to 'Protect Britain and world peace'. These 'Little England' nationalists, with the fake revolutionaries tailing behind, focus on *American imperialism*, parodying Liebknecht's stirring internationalist appeal from World War I by turning it into the slogan, 'The main enemy is abroad!'

Such illusions to the contrary, Britain cannot opt out of the world. The only road to peace is workers revolution to smash the warmongering imperialist system internationally, extending the October Revolution which overthrew the Russian capitalist class in 1917 throughout the world. But the Stalinist rulers in Moscow are no less wedded to illusions in 'disarmament' and 'peaceful coexistence', the direct consequence of their treacherous programme of 'socialism in one country' rather than international proletarian revolution. Even as the Soviets were breaking off a planning meeting for the summit in the wake of the Libya bombing, Gorbachev was unveiling a new initiative for reducing conventional arms. But the NATO imperialists are only interested in disarming the Russians. For them, Reaganite rhetoric aside, 'detente' served to hold back the Soviet missile programme while the US rebuilt its nuclear arsenal which had deteriorated under the impact of the Vietnam war. For the Kremlin bureaucrats to be bargaining with the

Americans over the disarmament of the Soviet Union is a betrayal of the October Revolution.

In his July 1932 'Declaration to the Antirwar Congress at Amsterdam', Leon Trotsky trenchantly exposed the fraud of 'disarmament':

'Without the slightest confidence in the capitalist programs for disarmament or arms limitations, the revolutionary proletariat asks one single question: *In whose hands are the weapons?* Any weapon in the hands of the imperialists is a weapon directed against the working class, against the weak nations, against socialism, against humanity. Weapons in the hands of the proletariat and of the oppressed nations are the only means of ridding our planet of oppression and war.'

The imperialist war drive can only be answered by revolutionary class struggle. The working people of America and Britain, united with their class brothers around the world, must rise to their historic mission and disarm the bloody imperialists by smashing capitalist class rule and establishing the revolutionary regime of workers power. ■

South Africa...

(Continued from page 7)

country, 'Their revolution awaits its Lenin.' As we have insisted:

'The black proletariat is still being used as cattle to haul the ideological cart of nationalism. A Bolshevik party must be built to lead a victorious struggle for "amandla", power, for the oppressed, through workers revolution.' ('South Africa: Razor's Edge', *Workers Hammer* no 68, April 1985)

What is lacking in South Africa today is revolutionary leadership at the head of the burgeoning black workers movement. In the course of his book, Lelyveld makes several allusions to the history and literature of 19th century Russia. But even more important than historical similarities is the unique legacy left us by the Bolshevik Party that led the workers to power in October 1917. That legacy is embodied in the Trotskyist internationalist programme of permanent revolution, which holds that the emancipation of the oppressed nation can only be achieved through the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

A South African Bolshevik party must be centred on the black proletariat, and integrate the vanguard of the coloured and Indian oppressed masses as well as revolutionary whites. A book such as *Move Your Shadow* arouses the determination to smash apartheid; the international Spartacist tendency, inheritor of the lessons of October, has the programme to do it.

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 402, 25 April 1986

CONTACT THE SPARTACIST LEAGUE:
BIRMINGHAM (021) 236 9774
LONDON (01) 278 2232
SHEFFIELD (0742) 751828

Kinnock...

(Continued from page 2)

my colleagues for thirty eight years of my working life.

Before and after the march there were many fine words spoken by a number of very fine speakers, but in my honest opinion they were empty words, for I considered that little was said that was worth noting. More or less everyone who spoke urged the return of a Labour Government at the next General Election, and more or less stated that such a Government would be the panacea of all our present ills. I hope that they are right. It was also stated that the threatened closure of the Bates Colliery in Northumberland would be opposed with the utmost vigour and with every means possible, even to the point that the Leader of the Opposition, the Right Hon Neil Kinnock would be throwing his weight behind the men employed at that pit to fight its closure (provided they do so within the law I assume). I would point out to the men at Bates Colliery that in Kinnock's area here in South Wales there were six pits working at the start of the Coal Strike, there is now only one left. In the twelve months since the return to work five of them have closed in his constituency of Islwyn. While I freely admit to being somewhat cynical at times, I must say that if I was employed at Bates Colliery I would be a trifle worried that Neil Kinnock is trying to do for them what he could not, or would not do for mineworkers in his own constituency. I fervently hope that any efforts he will make toward that end will be successful for the men employed at that colliery, and also for their dependent families.

At the start of the march I met a person who was, and I believe still is, an executive member of the NUM (South Wales Area). He possibly recognised me as being a worker at my former colliery, and he asked me if I was still employed in the industry. When I told him that I was now a redundant mineworker he said, 'What are you doing here then?' I told him that as one who had fought for twelve long and hard months for the right to a job, I considered I had every right to be there....

Finally I will say this, trade union leaders today are mostly out of touch with their rank and file memberships. It is now time for them to consider going out occasionally from their palatial offices and visit the places where their members work. It is their job to fight for their members, not anyone else, no secret deals with management and no compromises, for at present they seem to be doing little in this field. Disputes and industrial actions for whatever may be the cause are not won by words alone, it takes fearless leadership and presence on picket lines if people are no longer to be exploited or threatened with the dole queue as is so under any capitalist system. It is also equally the job of the rank and file union member to ensure that these people they elect to serve their interests do the job that they are paid to do, and must ensure that they attend as many union meetings as possible whenever they are called to make sure that this happens. Trade union members must remember too that the movement was born out of militancy, and any would-be leaders who consider themselves 'moderate' should be avoided like the plague. Failure to do this will mean that things within the trade union movement will continue as the 'status quo', and all future disputes will be doomed to failure, as with the Coal Strike of 1984/85 and, as it seems, the Sogat 82 and NGA dispute with Rupert Murdoch's newspaper group, News International.

Sincerely Yours,

Don Hughes
Former mineworker,
Celynen South Colliery (Deceased)
NUM (South Wales Area)

Lambert...

(Continued from page 2)

participate in the 'international discussion' which they claimed to seek, outlining our major points of political disagreement (reprinted in *Spartacist* no 22, Winter 1973-74). On the Russian Question we noted that the OCI's tendency 'to equate the struggle against imperialism with the struggle against Stalinism' had been taken 'a step further' when it denied the dual and contradictory nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy. By early 1974, the OCI had hardened into right centrism by calling for a vote to Mitterrand's popular front

in the French elections. Within a year they had crossed the rubicon to social-democratic betrayal by cheering on the (CIA-aided) Portuguese Socialist Party as they spearheaded a counterrevolutionary mobilisation against the Communist Party and the 'left' MFA popular front government. In the midst of a pre-revolutionary situation, the OCI stood on the opposite side of the barricades from the mass of revolutionary-minded proletarians.

The OCI's various British offshoots have carried their anti-Soviet reformism to a logical, anti-Communist end in the Labour Party. Robin Blick and Mark Jenkins, after brain-trusting the Thornett split in the WRP in the mid-70s, soon collapsed into witchhunting right-wing Labourism. The SLG which they left behind is a social-democratic sectlet buried in a couple of Labour Party wards. The sorry history of Blick/Jenkins and the SLG, and particularly that of the OCI/PCI, should serve as a salutary warning to members of today's post-Healy WRP about the political price to be paid for refusing to break from Stalinophobia and Labour-loyalism.■

Main enemy...

(Continued from page 3)

years ago these fake revolutionaries opposed it, screaming about 'Stalinist aggression'! In any event, the Trotskyist defence of the USSR has nothing to do with the immediate policies of the Stalinist bureaucracy but with the objective interests of the world proletariat.

Down with all imperialisms, not just American!

Eschewing defence of the Soviet Union against the war drive, the fake revolutionaries prefer to join with CND and the Labour 'lefts' and focus on opposition to *American imperialism*, in particular to US bases in Britain. At the 19 April demonstration, Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party even initiated the burning of an American flag -- but, conspicuously, you didn't see the Cliffites igniting a Union Jack.

There is an iron link between anti-Sovietism and the amnestying of one's 'own' bourgeoisie. Of course we oppose the presence of US bases in this country and throughout West Europe -- just as we oppose the British bases in Cyprus, Gibraltar and elsewhere, so conveniently ignored by the pacifists and fake lefts. But to campaign around this demand in this country under present circumstances is to embrace 'Little England' social-chauvinism and cover for the crimes of the *British capitalist class*, from Ireland to the South Atlantic to Libya itself. It is analogous to the campaign against German rearmament so beloved of British Stalinists and Labourites in the 1950s. And it is to sow illusions that a 'peaceful' capitalist Britain can somehow opt out of a world threatened with global thermonuclear holocaust. The presence of US bases in West Europe is *intrinsic* to the NATO alliance, not a reflection of some 'semi-colonial' relationship to the US as Labour 'lefts' like Tony Benn would have it. This imperialist anti-Soviet alliance must be *smashed*. Not surprisingly, WP et al make no criticisms of the Labour 'lefts' over Libya.

Four years ago hundreds of thousands of people marched in protest at Ronald Reagan's warmongering tour of West Europe. We wrote at the time:

'Capitalist America is the number one enemy of the world's working peoples. But "anti-Americanism" does not equal anti-imperialism. In the mouths of social democrats and Stalinists, anti-American rhetoric only serves to amnesty one's own bourgeoisie....

In Liebknecht's words, "The main enemy is at home!"' (*Spartacist Britain* supplement, 1 June 1982)

Today, in this country and elsewhere, millions of people are again scared out of their wits at the prospect of thermonuclear war. There is a real interest in a revolutionary-internationalist alternative to the popular-front pacifist nationalism supplied by the fake left. Hundreds of people on the Libya protests were eager to read our eyewitness report from Tripoli, 'Under Reagan's guns in Libya', in the last issue of *Workers Hammer*, and scores of *Workers Vanguard*s were sold to those who wanted to read the paper of the American Trotskyists who defend Libya and the Soviet Union against imperialism. Let's go forward to the building of revolutionary vanguard parties worldwide to overthrow this war-mad capitalist system! We say: Reagan/Thatcher hands off Libya! Defend the Soviet Union! The main enemy is at home!■

Berlin disco...

(Continued from page 5)

of Bashir Gemayel, whose assassination was the pretext for the Phalangists' mass slaughter at the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian refugee camps. Now West Berlin police have announced the arrest of a 'stateless Palestinian', probably from one of the camps, on 'suspicion of involvement' in the disco bombing; the alleged connection was not specified.

Reagan-Hitler: lying provocation

Speaking in the United Nations Security Council April 18, the Libyan ambassador, Dr Ali Treiki, accused the US of pursuing 'a campaign of aggression and provocation':

'What is the problem that exists between the United States and Libya? It is the same problem that exists between the United States and all small peoples, beginning with Nicaragua and Grenada and extending to Viet Nam, to Angola, to Ethiopia, to the Palestinian people and to the people of Namibia. The United States has fallen prey to the arrogance and madness of power, and it wants to become the world's policeman. Any party that does not agree to become a vassal and agent of the United States is an outlaw, a terrorist, a communist and a devil.'

Treiki said the US had 'attempted to forge documents, which were subsequently proven to be fabrications', and recalled 'the famous "Ems cable", fabricated by Bismarck when he wished to carry out aggression against France'.

Bismarck's forged cable totally distorting a report from the French ambassador was the pretext for the 1870 Franco-Prussian War. In September 1939, the Nazis had recourse to the same method of lying provocation. They dressed German concentration camp inmates in Polish uniforms, trucked them up to the frontier and then shot them, claiming 'self-defense' against a Polish attack on Danzig. As William Stevenson wrote in *A Man Called Intrepid* -- *The Secret War*, Hitler's 'ruse' worked:

'The *New York Times* reported that regular Polish Army troops took part in an attack on German positions and that this was the signal for a general offensive by Polish forces. The lie confused the British -- bound by treaty to help Poland if she was attacked first -- long enough to make intervention too late.'

And, of course, there was the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident in which the US falsely claimed they were fired on by the North Vietnamese: this Big Lie was used to provide the



—Subscribe!—

- 10 issues of *Workers Hammer* for £2
- 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
Phone
Address

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

'legal' basis for the entire Vietnam War.

We ask, *cui bono* -- who benefits? The La Belle bombing is oh-so-convenient for the Americans. In Reagan's attack on Libya in March, high US officials admitted the whole purpose of the Sixth Fleet's move into the Gulf of Sidra was a provocation against Qaddafi: 'If he sticks his head up we'll clobber him. We're looking for an excuse.' There is no reason to believe this is any different.

The US is now on war footing, and the imperialist press has been conscripted: it is no accident that the *New York Times* has been sounding like Hitler's *Volkischer Beobachter* these days. As columnist Alexander Cockburn said in a speech on American news coverage at the New School for Social Research:

'The basic technique of the Reagan administration has been to endlessly reiterate falsity. The president says black is the same as white. The press will initially worry about this and say, well, most people seem to agree that black isn't the same as white. Eminent academics are consulted; they say, no, there are definite distinct differences between black and white.

'Now Reagan keeps at it -- that is his genius, and his tremendous, and in a way reasonable, contempt of the media and of their senility.... He says no, black is unquestionably the same as white, there's a report from the Heritage Foundation to prove it. Then the media begin to fear that they might be excessively critical of the president, and they say, well, black is the same as grey, after all, when you look at it, to a degree, and grey possibly bears some identity to white, and therefore you can see that, in a characteristic leap, a conflation of these stages, it is true that black is the same as white, as the president says.' (WBAI, 6 March)

That was before the bombing of Libya. Today when The President says the evidence is 'irrefutable', they don't have to see it to believe it. Reagan said it, they all read it. Did the fascists bomb La Belle discotheque? We don't know, but Reagan's story stinks.■

WRP...

(Continued from page 4)

understand what is involved in this question -- in fact you yourselves made the point that Reagan's war drive is not only directed against small nations but ultimately he plans to take out the biggest 'terrorist' and 'evil' in the world, the Soviet Union.

But though you make that statement, what conclusions do you draw from it? In the recent pickets around Libya, you refused to chant 'Defend the Soviet Union!', to raise that question. In your article you seize on the opportunity just to denounce the Soviet Union, giving examples of the 'atrocities' of the Stalinist bureaucracy and how it's bad. It's ironic in fact -- here you're complaining how the Soviet Union didn't do enough to defend Libya. When the Soviet Union went in to smash Reagan's mullahs in Afghanistan you complained they do too much.

I'll tell you this: it should not be necessary in a meeting of comrades who consider themselves Trotskyist to state that the unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union and the other deformed workers states -- the Trotskyist position is very clear -- does not depend on the crimes or atrocities of the Stalinist bureaucrats and how bad they are. But it does depend on the class nature of those states. These are the ABCs of Trotskyism. You sell the book *In Defence of Marxism* outside, which in fact is precisely the fight over this question. Except you don't fight for the programme that Trotsky struggled for there.

I'll give you one example. We know the crimes of the Stalinist betrayers. Look at Poland. It was the Stalinist bureaucrats who mortgaged the Polish workers state to the Western bankers and they led to the development of an organisation such as Solidarnosc. However it should be understood very clearly that Solidarnosc is a counterrevolutionary organisation, and when it developed to that position at its 1981 congress, we said: Stop Solidarnosc counterrevolution! The Stalinist bureaucrats were only able to check that, but they cannot solve the crisis created by Stalinism in Poland. It takes a Trotskyist party and political revolution to do that. The struggle for political revolution and support for Solidarnosc are totally counterposed.

This position should ring bells for every member of the WRP. When the WRP supported the execution of 21 Iraqi Communists, we heard a lot about how they were Stalinists. Cannon

makes a point that we differentiate our anti-Stalinism from the anti-Stalinism of the bourgeoisie. The WRP amalgamates them, and this is at the centre of this question. It was because of that logic you set up Scargill at the Blackpool conference, it was a continuation of the same policy. Many miners will remember the WRP and the 'contribution' it made to the miners strike at the Blackpool conference in 1983.

Since 1966, in fact going back to 1963, we have documented every departure from Marxism which was made by the Healy organisation: 'Security and the Fourth International', embracing the 'Arab revolution', beating up Ernie Tate, Solidarnosc today, Scargill. And in every one of those testing questions, we were right and the WRP was wrong. So now the WRP wants to draw the 'logical' conclusion that they were right and we were wrong!

So I would like to hear comrade Slaughter and the others say what they think of these criticisms that we have raised and where he stands on 1966. I want to repeat that because Healy was bad we didn't conclude that you have to junk communism. And just because it took you comrades 20 years to see some of these things, it doesn't mean that you have to junk communism either. We are fighting for communism and our struggle to reforge the Fourth International is part of that.■

Wapping...

(Continued from page 12)

Neil Kinnock's rules. Some 500 pickets have been arrested over the months as the cops have been allowed to ride roughshod over strikers and their supporters. And now the smell of a sellout deal with Murdoch hangs heavily in the air, as a TUC-sponsored joint negotiating committee effectively concedes every one of Murdoch's original 'dirty dozen' demands. This strike can still be won -- and if there is to be a future for trade unionism in Murdoch's sprawling empire, it must be won. What is needed is mass pickets to shut down Fort Murdoch, backed up by a couple of dozen well-placed TGWU juggernauts. Victory to the News International strike!

The key to turning this strike around is the fight for an alternative, class-struggle leadership. Militants must move to organise elected joint strike committees of all the print unions and fight within those committees for solid picket lines that nobody crosses and for blacking action to halt distribution of Murdoch's scab rags. Instead of bureaucratic hobnobbing at the top, appeals must be made to the ranks of printers, miners, transport workers, all trade unionists, to come out to the pickets. No backroom negotiations! No secret deals to sell 5000 printers' jobs down the road!

Above all this means a political struggle against the Labourite policies of the bureaucracy. What the Labour Party stand for in this strike is exemplified by the fact that *Labour is standing a Wapping scab* in the 8 May council election in Stevenage! Meanwhile the Labour 'left' *Militant* (25 April) runs an article from one Dave Power of Bemrose SOGAT complaining how he was 'abused' while waltzing through a printers picket line. And the so-called Communist Party too has two members scabbing at Wapping.

From the start of the strike, the union leadership -- with the support of the fake left -- has been pushing an impotent consumer boycott as a 'peaceful, legal' substitute for effective picketing and blacking action. We warned this was a diversion; now it is acknowledged that circulation of Murdoch's rags has been virtually unaffected by the boycott. Months after issuing 'instructions' to lorry drivers to black Murdoch, TGWU 'left' Ron Todd confesses that scabs will not be disciplined (*Guardian*, 4 April). As we've said before, instead of Todd sending engraved invitations not to scab, how about sending a couple of thousand militant TGWUers down to Wapping to hand-deliver anti-scabbing instructions! And what of miners leader Arthur Scargill? Scargill told Wapping pickets that, 'The TUC has to show that it does not merely represent on paper 10 million men and women, it has got to put that representation into action' (*Guardian*, 7 April). Scargill more than others should know what sort of 'action' the TUC carried out during the militant strike he led. Reliance on the TUC is a dead-end. The NUM should be mobilising its members by the thousands to head for Wapping.

The sentiment to bust union-buster Murdoch is there -- it must be channelled into effective action. Hundreds of printers with their

fists in their pockets go to Tower Hill hoping that 'tonight will be the night' when the scabs are taught some hard lessons. One SOGAT member's reaction to talk of a sellout was, 'Over my dead body!' *This strike can win*. Don't play by Kinnock's rules: For militant mass pickets -- Miners, lorry drivers, printers from throughout Fleet Street and beyond, all out to Wapping! Blockade Murdoch! Bust the union-busters!■

Orange terror...

(Continued from page 12)

the RUC in order to win a section of the paramilitary to more active participation in anti-Catholic violence.

Northern Ireland's current vortex of right-wing sectarian terror underscores the fact that any imperialist 'solution' to the Irish question can only be a reactionary one. British imperialist 'divide and rule' created the communalist conflict, historically upholding Protestant ascendancy in the sectarian Northern statelet and setting Orange against Green. British imperialism is the number one terrorist in Northern Ireland. On 26 April, IRA member Seamus McElwaine was brutally murdered by the SAS in Co Fermanagh; his comrade Sean Lynch was seriously wounded. McElwaine was initially shot and injured, interrogated for half an hour, then shot at point blank range. The sadistic RUC refused to call an ambulance, but instead brutally and gleefully tortured Lynch. We say: Defend the IRA against the British army! Troops out now!

What would really stop the Orange marauders and the imperialist army in their tracks are anti-sectarian workers militias, integrated from both communities and organised to repulse communalist attack from any side. This requires the programme and will of a revolutionary Trotskyist party, committed to expunging from the Irish working class the curse of Orange-v-Green terror and instead pitting the entire class against the real enemy: the imperialists and the Orange and Green capitalists. Key to this programme is the recognition that Northern Ireland's Protestants are a *distinct community* -- neither identical to the rest of Ireland's population nor simple tools of British imperialism who cannot be polarised along class lines.

The very ferocity of the Orange reaction to the accord, and the increasing talk of UDI (an Orange 'unilateral declaration of independence'), show graphically the distinct character of the Protestant community. The Anglo-Irish pact aims, first, to better suppress the IRA on both sides of the border, and more broadly, to open the door towards a reactionary reunification of Ireland, in which the island would be another NATO aircraft carrier and submarine base on Europe's Western approaches.

The Protestants see this pro-NATO imperialist agreement as threatening their interests as perceived. And indeed, if they calculate that the overheads are not too high, British imperialism could well junk the Protestants in favour of its more general long-term interests, not least the build-up of the war drive against the Soviet Union. Today the Protestants, unified on a reactionary basis, are strong enough to make British imperialism move with great care. Only a working-class programme can disintegrate this reactionary Protestant unity. Republican nationalism -- promising the Protestants only that they will be a minority in a Catholic-dominated all-Ireland state -- merely helps to drive Protestant workers into the arms of reaction.

Today mass unemployment and social deprivation in the Six Counties help to fuel sectarianism, as social discontent is channelled into 'us against them' conflict for jobs and decent housing. But the 22 per cent Protestant unemployment (among Catholics it is 35 per cent) is hardly the mark of a 'labour aristocracy'! There is an ongoing serious threat of massive redundancies in Belfast's Harland and Wolff shipyard and in many other sections of industry where for decades only Protestants have been employed. A revolutionary vanguard would lead anti-capitalist struggle for jobs and decent housing for all, without discrimination. While combatting imperialist repression and all aspects of sectarian privilege, it would oppose any forced reunification of Ireland, instead mobilising workers on both sides of the border and of the Irish Sea in a struggle for an Irish workers republic in a socialist federation of the British Isles. Smash Orange terror -- Defend Catholic communities! Not Orange against Green but class against class!■

No sellout! Mass pickets can turn it around! Shut down Wapping!



Print union bureaucrats march away from struggle.

Workers Hammer



Wapping strikers face down cops.

Workers Hammer

The three-month-old strike against Murdoch's union-busting now hangs in the balance. In recent weeks the Saturday night mass demonstrations outside Murdoch's scab fortress at Wapping have dwindled seriously. Then on 3 May more than 8000 printers and their supporters converged on Wapping and engaged in pitched battles with the cops in the largest, and bloodiest, protest yet. But the militancy of the printworkers is being squandered and misled by union bureaucrats who are moving hard towards a rotten sellout.

The demonstration, with a Scottish SOGAT banner prominent and many miners present, brought loud cheers from other printers and passers-by as it passed through Fleet Street.

Midland miners talked about how they were out to storm and take Murdoch's fortress. Within a minute of arriving at the plant gate missiles and smoke bombs flew and police charged into the crowd on galloping horses with truncheons drawn. *The cops were out to kill.* One Scottish printer suffered a heart attack during the melee but police prevented an ambulance from arriving. First-aid buses were full of pickets with serious head injuries. But especially in the early stages, several cops got a beating and one was nearly torn from his horse. Given systematic, organised and militant leadership, the cops could have been thrown back on the defensive and a serious move made to seize the plant.

Instead SOGAT marshals acted to *stifle* militancy, frantically trying to clear demonstrators from the area near the front gate and allowing police to run riot until they regained control. One Scottish SOGAT official told the crowd to 'fight' against police terror through ... the ballot box. Tony Benn added he would raise the whole question in Parliament. And later SOGAT leaders announced they would seek a 'public enquiry' into 'police tactics'.

Week after week, Wapping has been the scene for a sharp clash of appetites between militant strikers intent on victory and the cowardly bureaucracy intent on playing by scabherding

continued on page 11

NATO deal fuels communalist frenzy Smash Orange terror!

The wave of Loyalist terror that hit Northern Ireland in the wake of the Anglo-Irish Hillsborough Accord is swelling, and an anti-Catholic pogrom of ominous proportions is in the air. In Portadown on 31 March, thousands of Orange rioters tried to get past an RUC police cordon to attack a Catholic enclave. One rioter was shot in the neck, and subsequently died, when the RUC fired 148 rounds of plastic bullets, a weapon normally aimed by this loyal Unionist paramilitary at the Catholic minority to the applause of the Orange bigots. This was the signal for the start of a calculated frenzy of anti-Catholic terror -- largely ignored by the bourgeois media in Britain -- as well as massive Loyalist attacks on their own RUC, whom they now see as enforcers of the Anglo-Irish deal and 'traitors' to their sectarian cause. Loyalist thug Andrew Wright, chief of the ultra-rightist Ulster Clubs, threatened, 'before it [the accord] was signed, it was Them

against Us -- and the Them were the IRA. Now the Them is every Roman Catholic' (*Observer*, 20 April). It is urgently necessary to organise defence of the Catholic communities against Orange terror!

In April alone, about forty Catholic homes were stoned, firebombed, torched. The town of Lisburn was particularly targeted, with Catholic schools and libraries going up in flames. But Portadown and Belfast saw veritable orgies of violence as well. Cars and buses were routinely hijacked and set on fire, and automatic weapons bristled everywhere. In Belfast six hundred bus drivers stopped work on 9 April after seventeen attacks on buses had left two drivers injured. Meanwhile, about forty-five Protestant RUC families were also forced to move house in Portadown and Belfast after Loyalist mobs stoned and firebombed them. The Orange thugs are out to crack

continued on page 11



Loyalist thugs terrorise Catholic population in Northern Ireland.

Derek Spiers, IFL