



South Africa: Forge a Bolshevik party!

Black labour can break apartheid chains

On 12 June the white-supremacist regime clamped a nationwide 'state of emergency' on the seething black rebellion in South Africa. This totalitarian repression aimed above all to prevent the general strike called for 16 June, the tenth anniversary of the Soweto uprising. However, that day millions of black workers defied police-state terror and shut down the apartheid economy. Due to Pretoria's draconian blackout on news and the cowardly self-censorship of the imperialist media, very little is known about what is now happening in South Africa. It is clear, however, that the organised black proletariat stands as the main force of resistance. Protest strikes against the arrest of trade union activists under the 'state of emergency' have continued, most notably in the diamond mines. And, as we go to press, the largest black trade union federation COSATU has announced a nationwide 'day of action' for 14 July.

Even as the apartheid butchers carry out mass terror in the townships, they rightly point to the Thatcher government as their staunchest overseas apologist and ally. Yet the outrage felt among broad sectors of the population in Britain against the apartheid regime and the Thatcher government is channelled by Neil Kinnock's Labour Party and the liberal-Labourite Anti Apartheid Movement into nothing more than building an obscene popular front for imperialist sanctions -- ranging from Tory 'wets' (and even the queen) to the fake left. The 28 June 'anti-apartheid' march in London attracted 100,000 people. But the demonstration was aimed by its organisers at pressuring the racist Thatcher to impose 'sanctions' against her Pretoria allies and paving the way for a Labour electoral victory.

On 19 June, a week after the South African 'emergency' was decreed, the Spartacist League/US sponsored a talk titled 'Avenge Soweto -- Workers to Power!' in New York, given by Reuben Shiffman, co-chairman of the Partisan Defense Committee and a member of Transport Workers Union Local 100. We print below sections of his talk (originally printed in *Workers Vanguard* no 407, 4 July), edited for publication.

In the last seven weeks there have been two of the most massive general strikes in the history of South Africa, which have shaken the apartheid police state. They are the culmination of a mounting revolt that has sustained itself now for almost two years, since the autumn of 1984. These events, as any major social struggle on this scale, pose the question of power: who shall rule in South Africa? The racist, white-supremacist regime has



May Day 1986 — Black workers shut down apartheid economy in biggest political strike in South African history.

responded with mounting repression, mixed with the pretense of reform. The present revolt was set off by a proposal for a new constitution which would grant a sham parliament to the Indian and coloured (mixed-race) minorities while underlining and reinforcing the disenfranchisement of the black African majority of 23 million. It was an attempt to divide the oppressed peoples of South Africa against one another. However, the constitution had completely the opposite effect. It served to unite the Indians and the coloureds with the blacks and launched the present revolt, which has swept through all sections of society, including strata of the privileged whites.

In another apartheid 'reform' in 1979 the regime sought to legalize black unions after a strike wave which had lasted for six years. They hoped by legalizing the unions that they would be able to control them and subordinate them to the state. Instead the black unions have become a mighty fortress of workers power against the white-supremacist police state.

This spring, while Botha abolished the pass laws, he strengthened his bonapartist police powers and certain laws to evict black people from the so-called 'white homeland'. This constitutes 87 per cent of South Africa, including all the ports, major cities, the industrial and mining heartland, the arable land, etc. Blacks are relegated to the 13 per cent of the land that is not productive, that contains no industry or mineral wealth.

In the streets of Crossroads, a squatter settlement of 100,000-200,000 on the outskirts of Cape Town, the Botha regime has incited black vigilante squads to attack the homes of militant leaders. With the complicity of the police and with police-supplied arms and Molotov cocktails, systematically the residents were burned out, and today bulldozers plow through what remains of the homes that had been established by these people, to drive them out of Cape Town.

Nevertheless, one gets the picture of a regime that is striking out in different di-

continued on page 2

page 4

**WRP: rallies for
anti-Communism**

page 6

**Sri Lanka army
invades Tamil North**

page 8

War criminal Waldheim

South Africa...

(Continued from page 1)

rections, pursuing contradictory policies, unsure of itself, a regime that has lost its nerve. And this is not belied by the present draconian police powers, which are almost absurd in their authoritarian measures. Now there is no judicial review of anything the police do, whether they shoot down youth on the streets, or detain, torture and kill. This is a license to torture, a license to kill, that has been enshrined now in the official register of the South African government.

It is even considered 'subversive' to comment on these measures, or on anything that the government is doing in the present crackdown. On TV news today they showed a picture of the *Sowetan*, which is the major black newspaper in South Africa. It's actually quite conservative. The front page had big blank spaces where it would normally report what's actually going on. Then Pretoria's 'Minister of Information', as in Orwell's *1984*, gets on TV and says, 'Maybe we'll have to declare these white spaces subversive too!'

Nevertheless, all of these measures -- the killing of over 1900, mainly black youth, the endless detentions and torture of thousands more, including now major trade-union, nationalist and community leaders -- have not quelled the revolt at all. There has been a breakdown in the coherence of the apartheid

Quote of the month



Trotsky and Lenin

The dual nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy

In late 1937, during discussion preceding the founding of the Socialist Workers Party, a dispute broke out on the class character of the Soviet Union under Stalin which is of particular relevance over Poland today. This fight presaged the split from Trotskyism two years later by an anti-Soviet opposition led by Max Shachtman and James Burnham. Trotsky intervened in the discussion to insist that the USSR was still a workers state, albeit bureaucratically degenerated, and analogous to trade unions led by pro-capitalist bureaucrats, such as the American Federation of Labor then headed by William Green.

The function of Stalin, like the function of Green, has a dual character. Stalin serves the bureaucracy and thus the world bourgeoisie; but he cannot serve the bureaucracy without defending that social foundation which the bureaucracy exploits in its own interests. To that extent does Stalin defend nationalised property from imperialist attacks and from the too impatient and avaricious layers of the bureaucracy itself. However, he carries through this defense with methods that prepare the general destruction of Soviet society. It is exactly because of this that the Stalinist clique must be overthrown. But it is the revolutionary proletariat who must overthrow it. The proletariat cannot subcontract this work to the imperialists. In spite of Stalin, the proletariat defends the USSR from imperialist attacks.

-- Leon Trotsky, 'Not a Workers' and Not a Bourgeois State?' (November 1937)

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, Eibhlin 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.

White police state rules by terrorising black majority.



regime, which does not mean that this regime has lost its bloodlust. There are plenty of would-be Hitlers in the racist apartheid police state. More than one third of the white electorate supports parties to the right of the ultrarightist Nationalist Party that is governing the country. There are plenty of people who would like to carry out a racist holocaust to silence the present level of black revolt.

But the present situation very much resembles what Lenin said in 'Left-Wing' Communism:

'The fundamental law of revolution, which has been confirmed by all revolutions and especially by all three Russian revolutions in the twentieth century, is as follows: for a revolution to take place it is not enough for the exploited and oppressed masses to realise the impossibility of living in the old way, and demand changes; for a revolution to take place it is essential that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way.'

And that seems to be the case in South Africa today -- a prerevolutionary situation. The masses -- as demonstrated by this picture of a black youth standing before the red flag of the October Revolution -- desire not only revolution but communism insofar as they understand it (which is not much) and solidarize, insofar as they know about it, with the Russian Revolution of 1917, which freed the Russian 'prisonhouse of peoples' from tsarist absolutism and capitalist exploitation.

Workers to power -- Forge a Bolshevik party!

But for such a revolution to triumph it needs a Bolshevik party such as Lenin and Trotsky built, and this does not now exist in South Africa. What are the program and prospects for South African Bolshevism?

One of the crucial lessons of the Russian October Revolution is the genuine solution to the national and democratic tasks in countries that represent uneven and combined development, that combine, for example, the tribalism and forced retribalization of the bantustan with the advanced industry and modern technology of an imperialist power that you see in South Africa. To solve these questions requires the conquest of power by the proletariat leading and reconstructing the oppressed nation.

Let us take just one elementary democratic demand that you will see no nationalist or other group on the left raise in the context of South Africa. In the United States, in Europe, in Sri Lanka, wherever the question arises, the Spartacist tendency demands full citizenship rights for foreign workers. If you work there and contribute to the wealth of the country, certainly you deserve all the rights of full citizenship. In South Africa every black worker is treated as a foreign worker, stripped of every democratic, civil and human right.

But this is particularly the case for the migrant workers from the bantustans and from countries like Lesotho, Botswana and Mozambique. The demand of full citizenship for foreign workers necessarily cuts through nationalism because it addresses the question of the relationship of South Africa to the rest of the continent, and the fact that the South African black proletariat and particularly the strategically placed miners are the powerhouse for the emancipation of all sub-Saharan Africa.

And this is why Trotsky's program of the dictatorship of the proletariat to reconstruct the oppressed nation is so very powerful in the South African framework. But the problem is, as we wrote in an article last year ['South Africa: Razor's edge', *Workers Hammer* no 68, April 1985]: 'The black proletariat is still being used as cattle to haul the ideological cart of nationalism.' Mainly the ANC (African National Congress). This was clearly seen in the formation last December of the half-million-strong Congress of South African Trade Unions, whose president, Elijah Barayi, is an old ANC militant.

The ANC came up with a strategy of making the townships 'ungovernable', after they were already ungovernable, and of making apartheid unworkable after it had already been shown to be unworkable. It also conducts a campaign of guerrilla warfare, which requires tremendous heroism and shows that they have a very powerful degree of support within the country. Insofar as this guerrillaism is aimed at military targets, we hail it. But the guerrillaism has taken a sinister turn, with so-called 'soft' targets, including civilian white populations, such as in the Durban bombings on Christmas and recently. And this is to be condemned. It does not serve the oppressed, it serves the oppressor, to harden the white population and disorganize the masses.

But this guerrillaism is only incidental to the strategy of the ANC, which is to pressure the more 'liberal' sections of the English-speaking capitalists represented by Gavin Relly. We're talking about a man who controls one half the Johannesburg stock exchange and is the principal benefactor of apartheid superexploitation, for which thousands of blacks give their lives and thousands are permanently maimed yearly. The strategy of the ANC in this regard was laid out quite clearly by its publicity director, Thabo Mbeki, earlier this year:

'If we can mobilise them and form some kind of alliance with them [that is, South African businessmen and other white liberals], then we are talking not of overthrowing the government but of turning so many people against it that it would be forced to do what Ian Smith had to do.' Namely, in Rhodesia, culminating in the Lancaster Agreement of 1979 when Zimbabwe became simply another neocolonial member of the British Commonwealth with black faces in high places. White capitalists actually saw their investments made more secure by a black-run regime that suppressed workers with more savage labor legislation than is seen even in the apartheid police state itself, and a regime that has conducted a tribalist war against the minority peoples of Zimbabwe.

The point is that we need today in South Africa a party like the Bolsheviks built. We need such a party because it is only through a revolution like occurred in Russia in which those who labour rule, in which those who produce the wealth own the wealth, that the social surplus can be devoted to the socialist reconstruction of society. South Africa does not have to go the way of Zimbabwe and the other African neocolonial regimes. I just read in Saturday's *New York Times* about the Sudan, a country wracked by famine, by racial war between the Islamic north and black south in which over a million people died a decade ago. The result was that the Sudan is now an 'Islamic republic'. This article described the situation of amputated beggars who go about re-

viled by society because they tried to steal, or were accused of stealing, a loaf of bread. This does not have to be the future of South Africa, which has the industrial power, the mineral resources, the wealth created by many of the peoples of southern Africa, to build a just society that can emancipate all of southern Africa.

So what needs to be done? Trotsky stated: '... in the conditions [in South Africa] of an approaching political crisis, there must be created special illegal nuclei of the party apparatus.... The most important form of the illegal or semilegal work of revolutionaries is the work in mass organizations, particularly in the trade unions.' This was said 50 years ago and these tasks are long overdue.

The black African trade unions began in the aftermath of the [Russian] October Revolution, inspired by that revolution and by the Industrial Workers of the World in the United States. It was initiated by people like SP Bunting, who later became a Communist, who would talk often in halls like this in Johannesburg, to multiracial but largely black audiences. And he would ask them, 'What do you want?' Their answer would be: 'Sifuna zonke' -- everything. It is time to begin the construction of the party so that those who have toiled so long can have what is rightfully theirs: everything.

Sanctions and imperialist hypocrisy

In this country, virtually the whole of the fake-revolutionary left tails after the likes of former Tory top cop Leon Brittan and Labourite CIA-lover Denis Healey in calling for sanctions, either openly appealing to Thatcher (as do the Communist Party and Socialist Workers Party) or trying to use the working class to pressure her through the call for 'workers sanctions'. Thus, on the 28 June march, the centrist Workers Power's repetitive chorus was, 'Don't wait for Thatcher -- workers sanctions now!'

In his talk, 'Avenge Soweto -- Workers to Power!', Reuben Shiffman exposed and denounced the hypocrisy of American imperialist politicians and spokesmen who call for disinvestment and economic sanctions against South Africa. During the discussion period this provoked a young black activist to question whether on the issue of divestment we did not end up on the same side as Reagan, Thatcher and the other right-wing friends of the apartheid state. Following are portions of the talk and summary remarks which address this question.

They had a big march for sanctions on June 14th. Here's a demonstration that takes off from Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, a plaza named after one of the people who was principally responsible for the assassination of one of Africa's most eminent black nationalists, Patrice Lumumba. I propose that after a socialist revolution in this country, we rename that square Patrice Lumumba Plaza. And they marched around for five miles in the hot sun to hear [racist New York City mayor] Ed Koch talk about fighting apartheid!

Yesterday Congress passed a bill calling for economic sanctions against South Africa as part of a campaign of pressure on Botha to behave himself. What's going on here is Congress is trying to save South African capitalism from a regime that seems to be losing control. It's that simple. 'Get it under con-



Centrist Workers Power provides 'left' cover for imperialist sanctions. Trotskyists insist sanctions are aimed at keeping South Africa safe for capitalism.

trol!'. That's the message. Whether it comes from Reagan (remember 'constructive engagement'?) or from the sanctimonious sanctions people in Congress, the message is the same, to save South Africa from the civil war it so desperately needs.

This is what we call the contra Congress. This Congress recently lifted the Clark Amendment, which is just kicking over a stone so you know what's actually happening in Angola. So now we know the CIA's been sending millions all along to UNITA -- South Africa's contras in Angola -- who are held at bay only by the Soviet-backed Cuban troops. It's all in pursuit of the anti-Soviet war drive. In Angola the not-so-Cold War is the struggle between apartheid enslavement and national independence.



The red flag flies over funeral of Peter Nchabeleng, anti-apartheid fighter killed while in police detention.

This is the same Congress that, after the United States bombed and raped and pillaged and murdered two million people in Vietnam, voted to continue this country's economic boycott of Vietnam. If sanctions are such a powerful demand, then why didn't the antiwar movement in the '60s and '70s -- which included many of the anti-apartheid liberals running around today -- say: 'This is genocidal what the United States is doing in Vietnam -- let us have a boycott of America!' But you didn't hear anybody say that. Then they might not be able to buy a color TV or something, right? It's a ridiculous demand if you think about it.

When this country was formed, when the white man came to this country, they killed the native population through genocide, unlike in South Africa where the white population exploited the native population. The United States has been able to export its colonialism and to ravage and exploit South Africa, the Philippines and other countries around the world, so you don't have to see it up close. With one exception: it imported black slaves from Africa. The black question in this country -- that is the link with South Africa and the rest of the African continent. What racist hypocrisy for people in this country to appeal to, of all people, Ronald Reagan!

But let's take some of the alternatives to Ronald Reagan running around out there. How about [black Philadelphia mayor] Wilson Goode? He didn't need emergency regulations to bomb black Philadelphia and to hold the victims of that bombing in prison to this day. Koch's killer cops do not need emergency regulations to kill black youth on the streets of New York and torture them in the stun-gun [police station] precincts out in Queens. In the United States the killing still goes on, it's just not written into the law ... yet. Although with Rehnquist as chief of the Supreme Court, I wouldn't place any bets. The kind of society that Ronald Reagan is trying to create is not all that unlike South Africa. To take black society, to push it into the townships, into the ghettos of hopelessness and despair, where it can easily be sealed off and given the Philadelphia treatment.

What is lacking here in the United States, and also lacking in South Africa, is a Bolshevik party, the general staff of the social revolution that this country so desper-

ately needs. The demonstration -- at least in embryo -- of the capacity of such a party was November 27, 1982. The Ku Klux Klan announced, since their candidate was in the White House, they were going to celebrate in the streets of Washington. This is the nation's capital and a largely black city. The declared aim of the Klan march was to kick out the immigrants, a key question in this country as well as in South Africa. But everyone knew, it's the Klan, they're really targeting the blacks. We were determined to see that the Klan was not going to march. We got behind that proposition major labor unions throughout the mid-Atlantic area. And we were able to build a demonstration, with substantial assistance from them and from the black community in Washington, of more than 5000 people, who stopped the Klan

from marching. That was a big victory.

We organized that demonstration against not only the forces behind Reagan but the forces of the Democrats, especially the black Democrats, the Walter Fauntroy of the Free South Africa Movement, who told blacks to stay away from this demonstration and organized alternative soup kitchens. But black people in Washington, many of them recently from the South, knew all too well what the Klan meant and they turned out to stop them. And that demonstration then took the purported Klan route and turned it into an anti-racist victory march. They marched up to Lafayette Park in front of the White House, where Reagan had hoped to stage this Klan march while he was chatting with -- guess who? -- South African foreign minister Pik Botha! It was a triumphal march in which, as comrade Al Nelson said, we did not see white sheets, only the red flag of revolution.

We often hear from militants: 'Reagan's against sanctions, Thatcher's against sanctions, Botha's against sanctions, apartheid's paid tribal chief Buthelezi is against sanctions, and you're against sanctions. So that's strange company to keep.' What's really going on here in terms of this sanctions debate?

First of all, divestment is taking place massively in South Africa, and Reagan does not object one bit. Last year alone 38 US businesses pulled out of South Africa. Every bank now refuses to make loans to South Africa, and this is not because of the great appeal of the Free South Africa Movement to the moral conscience of the American imperialist ruling class. They know a shaky investment when they see one. If the regime is able to impose a silence upon this revolt as it did in the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre of 1960, all of this investment will be rushing back into the country.

After Sharpeville you had this same hand-wringing. World opinion was horrified. They all went to the UN and expressed their moral indignation by passing a total sanction on military goods to South Africa. There has been a total ban imposed by members of the UN on shipping military goods to South Africa since 1963. In that period South Africa has become not only the strongest military power on the African continent but has become a major exporter of arms. How has this happened? Instead

continued on page 10

Revelling in Healy's 1983 anti-Scargill witchhunt

WRP: rallies for anti-Communism

Scarcely sixty people were scattered throughout London's large Conway Hall on 26 June as the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) sponsored one of a series of meetings for Solidarnosc activist and self-styled 'Polish Trotskyist' Stefan Bekier (see article, page 5). Five months ago, we pegged the WRP's so-called post-Healy 'reexamination' as 'crystallising in an appetite for an opportunist anti-Soviet lash-up which will take them into the Labour Party' (*Workers Hammer* no 76, February 1986). With this series of rallies for anti-Communism, the post-Healy WRP proclaims its allegiance to Neil Kinnock's Cold War Labour Party and trumpets its 'continuity' with the vicious anti-Communist witchhunt of miners leader Arthur Scargill inspired by the Healy/Banda gang on the eve of the miners strike at the 1983 Blackpool TUC.

The Spartacist League is proud of the fact that, uniquely on the left, we exposed the WRP's sinister role in that right-wing/Tory attempt to isolate the miners union in preparation for Thatcher's union-busting onslaught. Healy/Banda's *News Line* -- joined by Fleet Street and 'new realist' rights like Frank Chapple and Len Murray -- tried to crucify Scargill for his correct denunciation of Polish Solidarnosc as 'anti-socialist'. We nailed the WRP as 'Fingermen for Labour/TUC right against Scargill and the miners' (see *Workers Hammer* no 62, October 1984) and said: 'Hate Thatcher/MacGregor -- Hate the WRP!' Many militant miners did -- and still do. The wretched turnout for these meetings (a similar meeting in Leicester attracted 18 people) testifies to the widespread contempt for Solidarnosc, and Bekier openly complained that he was having trouble conning British trade union militants into giving their support to Reagan and Thatcher's favourite 'union'.

The WRP's current public relations campaign for Solidarnosc is an outrage to working-class militants, who recall how the Polish Spencer union hailed Thatcher as a 'wise and brave woman' and embraced its fellow 'democratic' scabs in Notts during the miners strike. Even an open Labourite like NUM general secretary Peter Heathfield, explaining that the NUM has 'no relationship with Solidarnosc', can 'question whether it is a trade union' (*Intercontinental Press*, 30 June).

Bekier had the gall to compare the miners' heroic struggle to Solidarnosc' reactionary power play, crowing 'in our country we had a revolution and here you had only [!] a general [miners] strike of one year'. Poland did have a social revolution in the late 1940s, under the aegis of the Stalinist occupation -- and Bekier's lot sought to overturn it through counterrevolution. Indeed he admitted that not once in Solidarnosc' 1981 programme is the word 'socialism' even mentioned and that 'many Solidarnosc leaders think that the market economy is the best'.

When a Spartacist League spokesman (edited statement printed below) kicked off the floor discussion by exposing Solidarnosc' clerical-nationalist traditions and capitalist-

restorationist programme as counterposed to the struggle for Polish Trotskyism and proletarian political revolution based on defence of the collectivised property forms, the WRP's rally for Solidarnosc counterrevolution turned into a vitriolic 'third campist' attack on Trotskyism and the Trotskyist SL. Out the window went the WRP's recent pretensions to 'workers democracy' -- which, as with all reformists and centrists, never stands in the way of their opportunist appetites when it



Frank Chapple and Len Murray at 1983 Blackpool TUC; WRP's pro-Solidarnosc attack on Scargill fuelled Cold War witchhunt.

comes time to suppress revolutionary criticism. Meeting chairman Mick Bishop (who had earlier threatened outright exclusionism) bureaucratically cut off our comrade and had him dragged away from the microphone. Nevertheless a second SL supporter managed to get the floor and contrasted Solidarnosc' crawling to Reagan and the Vatican with the 1956 Hungarian workers uprising, whose leaders like Pal Maleter sported a red star rather than a crucifix and publicly denounced pro-capitalist elements. At the Leicester meeting several days earlier, Bekier addressed our spokesmen in the language of Solidarnosc anti-Communism to which he is accustomed: 'It is very easy to be here in England and carry the propaganda of the Soviet embassy... I want to say to you if you come to Poland -- I don't wish bad things to you -- but if you told those things in any factory, to any workforce, to any occupation you will be simply killed. It's simple, like that.'

True to form, Workers Power intervened to play its chosen role of centrist middleman, providing a 'left' cover for Solidarnosc counterrevolution. WP spokesman Dave Hughes made it clear that 'unlike the Spartacist League', WP supports the Polish 'trade union' -- and then acknowledged that there were a 'series of programmes' within Solidarnosc which were 'objectively programmes to push Poland in the direction of capitalist restoration', that its ally the Church was an

agency for capitalist restoration and denounced the call for 'freedom of the KPN'. Why then does Workers Power still support Solidarnosc? Why did it march alongside the KPN at a 1981 protest against the Jaruzelski regime's counter-coup? Why did it push the KPN's favoured slogan of Poland out of the Warsaw Pact? When Hughes chastised a WRP speaker for calling Stalinism 'counterrevolutionary through and through' and voiced worry of Stalinophobia, a French co-thinker of Bekier implored, 'I hope that we share this hatred of the Stalinist bureaucracy', while Bekier cordially reminded Hughes that WP had previously engaged in an exchange of correspondence with the Polish Vargaites. Revolution, counterrevolution, who cares? The centrists of Workers Power are accomplished at plagiarising the trenchant Trotskyist analysis of the Spartacist tendency, only in order to render it toothless and rob it of any programmatic conclusions.

We didn't have to wait for this speaking tour to know the WRP's trajectory; its insistent refusal to break with the Stalinophobic underpinnings of its past -- which led it to support virtually every hostile regime or movement bordering the Soviet Union -- paved the way. Early on it was clear that for all its talk of 'reexamination', the WRP was committed to anti-Sovietism and Labour-loyalism. The WRP itself, in a letter by Bob Archer (see below), made it clear that our Trotskyist Soviet-defencism, particularly over Poland and Afghanistan, was beyond their pale. At a 30 April public meeting, Cliff Slaughter came out with a chemically pure 'third camp' statement on Poland when he said our call to 'Stop Solidarnosc counterrevolution' meant to 'support one counterrevolutionary in putting down another', concretely ruling out any bloc with the Stalinist bureaucracy against imperialist/restorationist threats.

Confronted with the test of Reagan/Thatcher's criminal attack on Libya -- clearly linked to the anti-Soviet war drive -- the WRP chose the occasion to denounce the Russians, carefully limiting its touted 'defence of Libya' to what was acceptable to the anti-Soviet social-pacifist Labour/CND misleaders, doing nothing within the labour movement to actually fight for defence of Libya. In sharp contrast, the Spartacist tendency sent a journalistic team to Tripoli to express our solidarity against the imperialist attack and said: Reagan/Thatcher hands off Libya! Defend the Soviet Union!

In the struggle of Trotsky and Cannon in 1939 against Burnham and Shachtman, Trotsky argued for the unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union against that Soviet-defeatist opposition even when the Soviet forces invaded Poland in an alliance with Hitler's Germany. He also made another point, against the people who did not see the contradictory character of Stalinism; that it was peculiar in that case that the Jews and the Communists fled from the Nazi zone of occupation to the Soviet zone of occupation, whereas the capitalists and the landlords fled from the Soviet zone of occupation to the Nazi zone of occupation. My family in fact was in that former group.

Now it is not surprising that the WRP today is tending to dismiss the 1939-40 fight. In fact I think this speaking tour and this series of meetings is significant in the history since the break with Healy. Because by this speaking tour you are proudly proclaiming that you are embracing the legacy of Healy at Blackpool in 1983, where the WRP's action, its anti-Communist attack on Arthur Scargill for his correct opposition to Polish Solidarnosc fuelled a witchhunt by people like Frank Chapple and Fleet Street.

So let's look at Solidarnosc. The tradition of Solidarnosc is the tradition of Josef Pilsudski and the tradition of the Home Army, which spent most of its time killing Communists and Jews. This is what Solidarnosc stands for -- this poster glorifying Pilsudski put

continued on page 10

WRP-no truck with Trotskyism

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY
International Relations Bureau
21 (B) Old Town,
London SW4 0JT
April 28, 1986.

Eibhlin McDonald,
Spartacist League Central Committee.

Dear Comrade,

Thank you for your letters of March 12 and April 14 1986, which were discussed at the meeting of our Central Committee held on Sunday, April 20. I have been asked to reply to them.

First of all, may I apologise for the Comrades in our office who misplaced the April 12 letter, so that the Party was unable to consider in time your request to send observers to sessions of our eighth congress.

The Committee felt that it would in any case be wrong at this point to enter into formal relations to the extent of receiving your observers at our congress. The differences you mention run very deep. For example, the WRP defends the right of Polish workers to have free trades unions, and we demand the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

We have, of course, no intention of limiting the public discussions and informal contacts that have developed over the last few months.

In particular, I am glad to confirm that your representative will be the first to be called in the discussion at the meeting this Wednesday night.

Yours fraternally,
Bob Archer

Vargaites push Solidarnosc

Apologists for counterrevolution

The following article is translated from Le Bolchevik no 60 (January 1986), monthly newspaper of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France.

It was at the University of Nanterre, on 12 December 1985, that we saw a kind of wretched bloc for a meeting of 'solidarity with Solidarnosc' which came just after the 'revelations' of *Liberation* on the financing by the CIA of this 'self-managed' organisation. This strange bloc went all the way from the anti-communists of SMOT, 'free trade union' of the USSR, whose representative spent his time slandering the Bolshevik Revolution and reviling Lenin, through the anarchists of the Hungarian journal *Istok*, who are opposed to the planned economy, and the [Mandelite Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire] LCR which extols the miraculous virtues of 'self-management' (and why not the 'mixed economy' like in Nicaragua?), to the Ligue Revolutionnaire Ouvriere (LOR -- Revolutionary Workers League). For



Lech Walesa and crucifix. Counterrevolutionary Solidarnosc embraces reactionary heritage of Pilsudskiite Polish nationalism: anti-Sovietism, anti-Semitism.

those who might not know about the LOR and its section in Poland which works in Solidarnosc we present here a brief historical outline.

Cliques and cliques

It is 1973. The [Lambertiste Organisation Communiste Internationaliste] OCI, now the PCI-MPPT, is beginning its rightward turn towards capitulation to the popular front of 1973-4. Apparently in order to remove any idea of factional struggle against the new 'line' from the minds of its militants, the Lambert-Just leadership launches a brutal campaign of political intimidation which ended with the expulsion of an OCI CC member Michel Varga, accused of being an agent of the GPU and of the CIA (for good measure), and his supporters. A commission of inquiry formed on the initiative of the iSt and bringing together [Lutte Ouvriere] LO, the LCR and the American [Socialist Workers Party] SWP, ended up concluding that these accusations were not proved at all -- for our part we consider them to be slanders. Nevertheless the shady and extremely dubious Varga has consistently refused to shed any light on his past, in particular the fact that at the end of the 1950s he sought subsidies from the American State Department (see *Documents sur 'l'affaire Varga': La lutte de la tendance spartaciste internationale pour une commission d'enquete impartiale* [Documents on the 'Varga Affair': The struggle of the iSt for an impartial commission of inquiry], LTF pamphlet, September 1977).

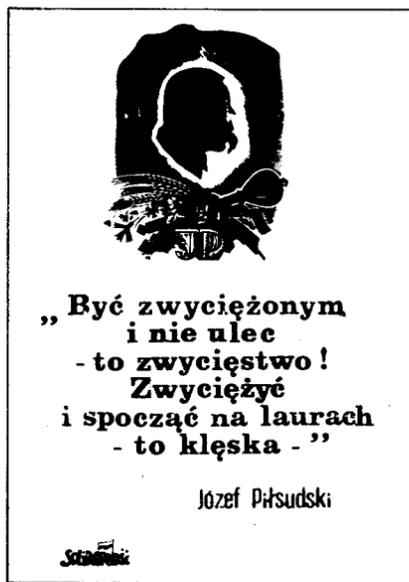
For example the anti-Semitic character of this individual is indubitable. Several of his letters, in relation to a Jewish militant, talk about 'exclud[ing] this dirty Yid from the cultural milieu [of the Hungarian emigres]', or again

'... I'm not an anti-Semite either, but let's look things in the face: the Jewish question exists. I don't hate them, but I'm

fed up with their trying to act in our name; they are trying to lead Hungarians...' (ibid, quoted in *Spartacist* no 24, Autumn 1977)

Thus it was Michel Varga who was the originator of the LOR, which then immediately proclaimed itself the 'Fourth International'. Varga himself was expelled from his organisation in January 1985: not to finally clear up the mystery of his past, but because, if one can believe the LOR, of a 'political break'. During these years this tiny organisation was known above all, at least in France, for its 'initiatives' which were characterised by an insane voluntarism -- like a march on the Berlin Wall! -- and a profound Stalinophobia lacking nothing in comparison with its parent organisation the OCI-PCI-MPPT. Then along comes Solidarnosc, the company 'union' of the bankers and the CIA.

In December 1982 the Vargaite *Quatrieme Internationale* proclaimed:
'The philistine social-democrat, Eurocom-



unist, Stalinist and petit-bourgeois have recently been seized by a salutary terror on hearing the words dictatorship of the proletariat. Well gentlemen, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the MKS and MKZ of the Polish revolution, look at the Solidarnosc congress. 'That was the rebirth of the dictatorship of the proletariat.' (*The Trotskyists in the Polish Revolution*, December 1982)
Unfortunately it is enough to 'look at the Solidarnosc congress', and more precisely the theses adopted by that congress, to see that the reality is palpably different. Indeed the first thesis of Chapter III declares:

'The bureaucratic barriers which render impossible the functioning of the market must be abolished. The central administrative organs in the economy must not impose either courses of action or orientations on enterprises, no more than on suppliers or customers.'

Chapter I for its part stipulates:

"Solidarnosc", in defining its goals, bases itself upon the Christian ethic, on our national and working-class tradition, just as it does upon the democratic traditions of the world of labour. John-Paul II's encyclical on the Labour of Man was a fresh stimulant for us in our activity.' ('The Programme of Solidarnosc', *The full text of the theses produced by the Congress of Delegates at Gdansk, 7 October 1981*, Presses universitaires de Lille, January 1982)

And the rest is of a piece.

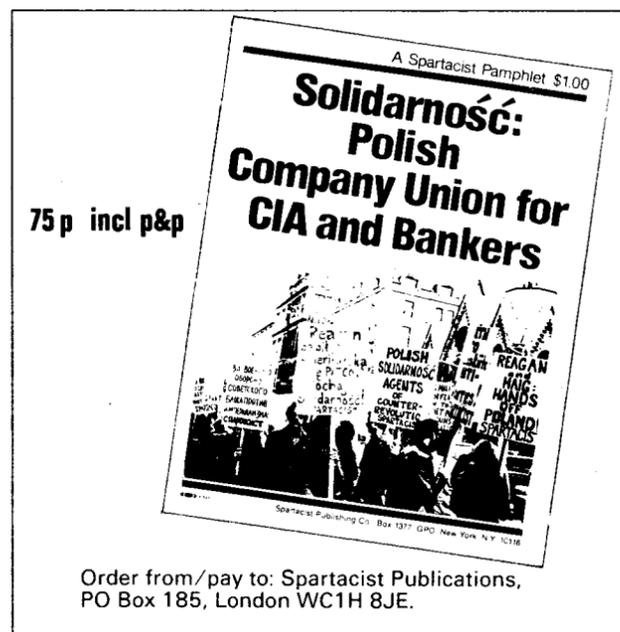
Now listen to how the LOR characterises the political forces present in Poland. Here one finds some extremely forceful criticisms of clerical-nationalism and of the Polish 'social democracy', which one would search for in vain in the press of, for example, the LCR: 'The opposition of the Episcopate is that of a former landed proprietor who, slowly but con-

sistently, aspires to reconquer his lost privileges and property,' '...the reactionary theory of the "national state", in which the Catholic religion is the Polish nationalist membership criterion' of the bourgeois ideologues; 'the tradition of lordly arbitrariness and of Jesuit obscurantism ... of pogroms organised by the national-democracy ... the tradition of the policeman's truncheon and of shooting down demonstrators under Pilsudski ... The "independence" programme of Pilsudski boiled down to attacking the Russian Revolution as a simple pawn of French and British imperialism.... Such are the historical traditions of the Polish social-democracy.... The present reality of the social-democracy is no better' (*La Quatrieme Internationale*, October-November 1985). And the LOR even claims for itself the internationalist struggle of Rosa Luxemburg! But all this highly lucid analysis of the forces which dominate Solidarnosc doesn't prevent the LOR from blocking with these not very appetising groups in this clerical and reactionary 'union'. Thus the Vargaites become, not the left wing of Solidarnosc, but a left cover for this reactionary political bloc which is in fact a 'union' in the pay of the imperialists.

It's not very surprising therefore that when, at the 12 December meeting, we asked Stefan Bekier, a member of the 'LOR of Poland' [Revolutionary Workers League of Poland], if the 'freedom for all political parties' which they demand also meant freedom for bourgeois parties, he replied in the affirmative. His reply really inspired a salutary terror in us! No, the soviet democracy for which we fight and which forms part of our programme of political revolution in the degenerated and deformed workers states has nothing to do with bourgeois democracy -- which moreover would be very likely in a Solidarnosc-Wojtylist Poland to take the form of a highly undemocratic White Terror. In 1956 the Hungarian workers exclusively defended the rights of parties declaring themselves for the defence of collective property -- thereby excluding the bourgeois restorationist parties -- and crushed the fascists. In December 1981 we chose our side, placing ourselves *militarily* on the side of Jaruzelski in the face of the threat of counterrevolution.

How can the LOR justify its capitulation to the groups which it denounces at such length? Thanks to the dogma -- inherited from the OCI-PCI-MPPT -- that the Stalinist bureaucracy is the 'principal force' working for capitalist restoration in the degenerated and deformed workers states. According to this theory Jaruzelski and his ilk are simply agents of imperialism who, in collusion with Reagan and John Paul II, work to overthrow the workers' gains. It is certainly true that the Stalinist bureaucracy of Poland or the USSR eternally pursues the chimera of 'peaceful coexistence' with imperialism. Yes, its policies push the working class into the arms of the worst reac-

continued on page 10



Order from/pay to: Spartacist Publications, PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE.

For a federated workers republic of Lanka and Eelam!

Sri Lanka army invades Tamil north

The following article was first printed in Workers Vanguard no 405 (6 June), fortnightly paper of the Spartacist League/US.

Vowing to 'exterminate' the Tamil militants in the North of Sri Lanka, on 17 May the rightist government of JR Jayewardene mounted its largest military offensive ever against the Jaffna peninsula, stronghold of Tamil guerrillas fighting for a national homeland ('Eelam') in the Eastern and Northern provinces of the island. The Tamil people of Sri Lanka are a national minority, distinguished from the majority Sinhalese by language and religion (Tamils are mainly Hindus while Sinhalese are mostly Buddhists). Some 9000 troops of the mainly Sinhalese army advanced on Jaffna from three directions while army forces holed up in the old Dutch fort shelled the city. Aerial bombardment, strafing from helicopters and naval shelling of coastal villages have been going on for weeks, leaving hundreds of civilian casualties.

But JR's offensive ground to a humiliating halt as the troops encountered fierce resistance from well-equipped Tamil guerrillas. The roads into Jaffna were mined and a key bridge blown up; the government forces, stopped at Elephant Pass, retreated into their fortified enclaves and launched another wave of bombing attacks to terrorise the Tamil population. As one Sinhalese commander put it, admitting they were unwilling to take the massive casualties required to crush the rebels, 'You cannot win a guerrilla war when your enemy is fighting on home territory with the backing of the people. The Americans lost in Vietnam' (*Guardian*, 21 May). And JR's ferocity is no doubt tempered by the fear of provoking a military intervention on the part of India, where Rajiv Gandhi faces substantial pressure from the 50 million Tamils in the southern state of Tamil Nadu.

State terror against the Tamils

Coinciding with the army invasion of the North, a government decree put Tamil employees of state-run institutions in Colombo and the South on involuntary 'leave' from their jobs. This blatantly racist move, which in effect convicts Colombo Tamils of being a fifth column of potential terrorists, underlines the regime's deprivation of civil and national rights to its Tamil citizens. In the summer of 1983 many hundreds of Tamils were killed in Sinhalese communalist pogroms instigated and led by government thugs, which brought massive murder and destruction of Tamil-owned (and Indian-owned) property in Colombo. This was a calculated attack by the Sinhalese chauvinists on the economic interpenetration of the island's peoples, intended to obliterate the significant layer of Tamil merchants in the capital. In the East, the government has combined army atrocities with intensification of long-standing schemes to settle poor Sinhalese there in order to shift the ethnic balance.

In the overwhelmingly Tamil North, where growing separatist sentiment had forced the mainstream Tamil politicians to espouse the 'Eelam' demand, the regime deprived even these moderate parliamentarians of a voice in the system by making explicit disavowal of Eelam a condition for them taking the seats to which they were elected. Thereby the Jayewardene government ousted the largest single Opposition from Parliament and in effect disenfranchised the entire northern population, which it then subjected to military occupation. And in recent years an ominous pattern has emerged of sporadic organised Sinhalese thug violence against the hill country Tamil plantation workers, who for decades have kept the economy afloat by providing most of Sri Lanka's exports for foreign currency. According to human rights workers, in the North and East there were 2578 confirmed killings of

JR Jayewardene's army tries to 'exterminate' Tamil militants in Jaffna.



civilians in the ten months up to February of this year; in the same period 12,105 Tamils were reported arrested and 547 'disappeared'. It is the Sinhalese chauvinist state which has dragged the country to the brink of civil war.

Jayewardene, having devoted months under a fictitious 'cease-fire' to pacifying the Eastern region and building up the military, moved on the North with the intention of finally crushing the Tamil resistance and wiping out their cadres. The openly pro-US regime appeals to 'the English-speaking world' to help 'suppress the alarm and rebellion here' (*Sunday Times*, 11 May), and the imperialists have obliged. The Sri Lankan army is now equipped with 150 armoured personnel carriers from South Africa, 21 US-built helicopters, six Marchetti planes from Italy, as well as 50 patrol boats and some 40,000 land mines (*Asiaweek*, 1 June). British and Israeli

its allies.

In a pitch to his anti-Soviet allies, Jayewardene paints the Tamil insurgents as Marxists: 'Terrorism is no longer ethnic but an attempt to install a communist dictatorship by force and destroy Sri Lanka's democratic form of government' (*Times*, 19 May). Unfortunately, the Tamil militants, however just their struggle against genocide and for national self-determination, are far from being Marxists. The logic of petty-bourgeois nationalism has led them increasingly into acts of pointless slaughter of innocent civilians and bloody fratricidal warfare between rival Tamil groupings. The massacre of over a hundred Sinhalese pilgrims at Anuradhapura, a historic Buddhist site, last May marked a clear turn towards targeting Sinhalese civilians for indiscriminate attack.

On 3 May an Air Lanka aircraft was blown up on the runway at Katunayake International Airport in Colombo, killing 16, mainly foreign tourists on their way to the Maldives Islands, and including the wife of a PLO ambassador. Probably only a delay in the scheduled departure time prevented the plane from exploding in midair. Tourism was meant to be one of the pillars of the capitalist prosperity promised by Jayewardene's UNP government, and the airport bombing is clearly a devastating blow to tourism, logical from the indefensible nationalist standpoint as an effective act of economic warfare.

Soon after, a bomb exploded in the Central Telegraph Office, killing at least eleven and injuring over 100. Situated in downtown Colombo, in a country where only the rich can afford telephones, the CTO is usually crowded with ordinary people. These bombings were acts of indefensible indiscriminate terrorism, which can only deepen the communal divisions and provoke bloody anti-Tamil pogroms. In fact the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students claimed responsibility for both the airport bombing and the telegraph office attack. Another group took responsibility for a dam collapse in April which killed 40 people. During a Buddhist religious festival (24-25 May), 20 Sinhalese villagers, including women and children, were massacred allegedly by Tamils at Siripura, near Trincomalee, and another 12 were killed in nearby villages (*Le Monde*, 27 May). An explosion at a food and soda processing plant in Colombo on 30 May killed ten workers and injured 50.

All the Tamil armed struggle groups, with their nationalist politics, countenance such attacks on innocent civilians, lending credence to the regime's attribution to them of any and every atrocity. Thus the massacre at Siripura, which presents some unusual features -- mainly, the immediate presence on the scene



Colombo, July 1983: Government-instigated pogroms slaughtered hundreds, burned Tamil-owned shops to the ground.

commandos are training counterinsurgency teams, while thousands of officers are sent to Pakistan for training; British and South African mercenaries are piloting the bombing runs over the North. And Jayewardene can no doubt rely on the backing of his pal Reagan, holding out as bait the strategic naval base at Trincomalee for US warships in their hostile encirclement of the Soviet Union and

of reporters and photographers, who have been kept out of the Trinco area for many months, and the prompt appearance of a detailed article on it in the *New York Times*, which has been virtually silent on recent events in Lanka -- is attributed to Tamil militants by the government which in this context can expect to have its version widely believed.

Fratricidal warfare

Some of the ugliest incidents have occurred in the course of the bloody internecine warfare among the Tamil organisations themselves. As many as 300 Tamils were killed in recent fighting between the Liberation Tigers (LTTE)



Tamil demonstrators in London appeal for help to capitalist India.

and the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), said to have been sparked by the kidnapping by TELO of two of the Tiger commanders. In three days, the better-organised Tigers wiped out all 24 of TELO's camps and assassinated the TELO commander, Mohan Sri Sabaratnam. *Le Monde* (14 May) cites an eye-witness report by a journalist of the United News of India, who describes how 'fifty young Tamils belonging to the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation, some of them 13 or 14 years old, were burned alive in public after being doused with gasoline by their adversaries'.

Noting the ominous shift among the Tamil groups from attacking legitimate targets of military occupation to victimising innocent Sinhalese civilians, and the rise of violent clashes among the Tamil nationalists themselves, we wrote last January:

'The petty-bourgeois nationalist Tamil organisations have come to mirror the worst Sinhala chauvinism of the traditional Ceylonese left parties with their own murderous logic of racialism and nationalist communalism. Marxist revolutionists, who base themselves on the morality of internationalist class struggle, abhor racialism in all its forms, and find deeply repugnant the terror methods of gangsterism employed by those who fight in the name of social justice.' ('Bloody communal terror in Sri Lanka', *Workers Hammer* no 75, January 1986)

The nationalist perspective of the Tamil insurgent organisations has led them into reliance on capitalist India and the regime of Rajiv Gandhi -- itself stained with the blood of communalist slaughter in the Punjab and Assam -- to save the Lankan Tamils from JR's genocidal terror. And the Tamil groups have remained indifferent to the struggles of key potential allies among the exploited Sinhalese workers in the South and particularly the plantation Tamils on the upcountry tea estates, struggles which point towards the possibility of a progressive class-struggle alternative to the current spiral of bloody communal violence.

Plantation Tamils key to revolution in Lanka

Under pressure from the plantation workers, their main organisation, the Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC) led by S Thondaman -- trade-union boss, big landowner and cabinet minister in Jayewardene's government -- called a three-month 'prayer campaign'. Plantation workers were to 'pray' for five hours a day, a threat

to utterly disrupt tea production. Two days after this thinly disguised strike began on 14 January, it was called off as the government promised to grant citizenship to 94,000 'stateless' Tamils and their dependents who had been disenfranchised since independence in 1948. Despite the wretched slave-labour conditions and communalist terror they continue to face, wresting from the state a promise of citizenship rights is a victory for the plantation Tamils and a demonstration of the power of working-class action. And whatever the CWC's claims that 'problems can be resolved through peaceful dialogue and prayer without resort to conflict and confrontation' (*Sun*, 21 January), it was not neo-Gandhian prayer but strike action which achieved it.

Predictably, the promise to grant citizenship unleashed paroxysms of anti-Tamil chauvinism among Sinhala communalists. Leading the pack was the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) of former prime minister Mrs Bandaranaike, who told the Sinhalese to 'get ready for a war with the estate workers'. And on the weekend of 25-26 January, Sinhala communalist thugs attacked the Tamils in the Nuwara Eliya hill country district. But this time the plantation workers fought back: tens of thousands went on strike, many estate workers armed themselves, they felled trees and rolled rocks down from hilltops to block the movement of police and army convoys. An SLFP leader lamented that the police were afraid to go onto the tea estates to make arrests. Fearing a 'third front' the government made an effort to cool the situation by appearing even-handed.

When the new citizenship law was enacted on 1 February, the SLFP representatives stomped out of Parliament in protest. But the blatant Sinhala chauvinism of the SLFP -- which first gained prominence in the '50s with their 'Sinhala only' campaign against Tamil language rights -- has never prevented the fake-left parties of Ceylonese parliamentary reformism from joining wholeheartedly in SLFP popular front coalitions. The cravenly reformist Communist Party and the stinking corpse of the Lanka Samasamaja Party (LSSP), sometimes falsely characterised as 'Trotskyist', were thoroughly discredited when they joined Mrs B's popular front government and hailed the 1971 massacre of Sinhalese youth who rose up against it.

Today, as the SLFP aims to renew its popular front of Sinhala racialism in the form of a 'National Front' with the Buddhist religious hierarchy, the reformist left is dutifully tagging along behind. The NSSP, the 'New' LSSP formed by a split in the 1970s after the old LSSP had thoroughly discredited itself by slavish subordination to Mrs Bandaranaike, showed itself wedded to the same popular front perspective as its parent when it hailed the

Spartacist League/Lanka, have fought consistently in defence of the Tamils and for the right of Tamil national self-determination, in the framework of a Leninist/Trotskyist programme of internationalist class struggle.

The plantation workers are not the only section of the working class to show combativity. In March nurses went on strike for almost a month. The government banned their union and seized its funds under the emergency regulations. Notably, like the plantation strikes and the militant strikes at textile factories like Polytex and Magnum, these struggles centrally involve women workers. Deeply oppressed, and all too often treated with disdain and indifference by Lankan and Eelamist leftists alike, these women have shown their willingness and capacity for struggle. Militant class-conscious women can and will be won to communism and will be among its best fighters.

The bonapartist JR regime faces pressures from all quarters. In Jaffna prior to the army invasion of the North, Muslims protested the terror-bombing of Libya by JR's friend Reagan in a 2000-strong demonstration. More recently fighting in the Slave Island quarter of Colombo left seven dead, as local inhabitants, mainly Muslims and Tamils, resisted the riotous soldiers from a neighbouring army camp. The regime continues to imprison Sinhalese leftists accused of having ties with Tamil groups, as well as countless Tamils held under the draconian 'Prevention of Terrorism' laws. The imperialist blood-suckers of the International Monetary Fund have threatened to cut off 'aid' and loans unless the government demonstrates it can find a 'solution' to the ethnic problem and get back to the orderly business of making money for domestic and multinational capitalists and their world bankers. Meanwhile the army seethes with mutinous elements and Jayewardene's own party is itself rent with factions including an ultra-racialist wing which sees JR as 'soft' on the Tamils. And the regime has succeeded in deeply antagonising anew its powerful neighbour India, which could swat away Jayewardene's forces with minimal effort.

But Tamil Eelam achieved on the bayonets of the Indian army could be at best a pathetic client of capitalist India, itself a prison-house of peoples with its own bitter communal divisions and murderous suppression of minorities. A socialist Eelam is conceivable only in the framework of proletarian revolutionary struggles of the key plantation Tamils and Sinhalese workers to overthrow capitalist rule in the South as well, and the extension of revolutionary conflagration to the oppressed masses of the Indian subcontinent.

Indeed any perspective for revolution in Lanka makes little sense unless the island is

Spartacist League contingent in protest against anti-Tamil terror in Sri Lanka, London 1984.



SLMP, a thoroughly bourgeois split-off from the SLFP, as a 'working-class formation'. On the question of rights for plantation Tamils, the SLMP has declared that the new citizens would be 'an additional burden which the economy cannot bear' (*Sun*, 27 January). And the Communist Party paper *Aththa* worried: 'There is the possibility of Indians and people from Tamil Nadu infiltrating the plantations. It will be the Sinhalese people who will be in danger' (quoted in the *Island*, 6 February).

Against the wretched popular frontism and pandering to Sinhala chauvinism of the reformist Lankan left, the international Spartacist tendency and its section on the island, the

seen as a staging area for proletarian revolutionary struggle throughout the Indian subcontinent. Ceylon has always been an organic cultural component of India; the island's history has always been linked to that of the mainland except when the English made Ceylon a separate administrative unit for their own convenience. The best traditions of the old Ceylonese Trotskyist movement date back to World War II when the Ceylonese communists were united with their Indian comrades in one party of common struggle against British colonialism and capitalism.

In the period since independence in 1948, continued on page 11

Fascist past gets big vote in Austria



World Jewish Congress
Kurt Waldheim (left) with Waffen
SS in Yugoslavia, 1945

War criminal Waldheim



Reuters
Waldheim campaign poster.
Sticker says, 'Now more than
ever!'

The following article is reprinted from Workers Vanguard no 404 (23 May), fortnightly paper of the Spartacist League/US. Waldheim has since been elected president of Austria by a 53.9 per cent majority.

Mr Kurt Waldheim, who may soon be president of Austria, is a fascist war criminal and a liar, and now everybody knows it. Yet even as his war record became the centre of the Austrian election campaign, Waldheim received 49.6 per cent of the vote 4 May, just shy of an absolute majority. In fact, all evidence indicates that the revelations only helped him. American and West German news media commented haughtily about a country where a Nazi past was an electoral plus. They were less exercised over the fact that this 'statesman', who since 1947 was on the United Nations' top priority 'A' list of mass murderers who should be brought to trial, had been elected UN general secretary from 1972 to 1982. Certainly the US had known for years, having officially and publicly listed Waldheim in 1948 in the US Army's 'Combined Registry of War Criminals'.

In March, amidst what was supposed to be a quiet and provincial Austrian-style campaign, the World Jewish Congress came out with its revelations of Waldheim's fascist past. Simultaneous articles in the *New York Times* and the Austrian magazine *Profil* exposed his 1938 enrolment in the Nazi SA and his war record as staff aide to General Alexander Loehr, the commander of German Army Group E, executed as a war criminal in Belgrade in 1947. This immediately sparked a nationalist uproar in defence of 'Austria's dignity'. Waldheim's ratings surged over his social-democratic adversary, Kurt Steyrer. The tiny Viennese Jewish community was bombarded with hate mail; a dozen graves in a Jewish cemetery were desecrated. Charges of 'outside forces' flew, and

stickers were pasted over Waldheim election posters, proclaiming 'Now more than ever!' -- a 1930s Nazi slogan.

After 'forgetting' his wartime activities in the Balkans for 40 years and disappearing them in his cover-up memoirs, when confronted Waldheim claimed he 'didn't know' about Nazi atrocities. Yet Waldheim knew more than anybody, as chief intelligence officer for the Wehrmacht army unit responsible for the bloody extermination of tens of thousands of Yugoslav partisans, and the mass deportations of 50,000 Greek Jews to the gas chambers. His next story was that he was only a modest soldier who, like thousands of other Austrians, just 'did their duty'. Here is the Eichmann defence turned into an election slogan! His claim that he was never a Nazi was done in by the discovery of his 1944 doctoral thesis lauding the 'Idea of the Reich' by the rabidly anti-Semitic 19th century German nationalist Konstantin Frank.

Waldheim dismissed the sinister hate mail as 'no problem really'. Obscenely equating the Nazi mass murderers with the heroic partisans who fought them, he remarked that 'many German soldiers were trapped and executed in a similar way'. And he cynically claimed his accusers would 'rekindle a new wave of anti-Semitism' in Austria (*Die Presse*, 24 March). But in this bastion of clerical reaction, anti-Semitism hardly had to be resuscitated: with only 7000 Jews left of 220,000 before the Holocaust, an official opinion poll showed that one person in five said they felt 'physical reluctance' to shake hands with a Jew. In Austria, where last February the defence minister personally 'welcomed home' SS Major Walter Reder from serving a 40-year sentence for murdering 600 villagers in Italy, the ruling class stands in unbroken continuity with the Nazi Reich.

The scandal over a Nazi war criminal heading a Western 'democracy' is making imperialist rulers squirm. In the midst of the uproar, West German chancellor Helmut Kohl praised Waldheim as a 'great patriot' and made it clear he would vote for him if he were an Austrian. After all, the upper levels of government, commerce and industry in the successor state to Hitler's Third Reich are crawling with 'former' Nazis like Flick and Thyssen. Last year there was a massive outcry when President Reagan joined the head of the German 'Fourth Reich' in symbolic reconciliation over Nazi SS graves at Bitburg, in order to prop up the US' most important NATO partner in the war drive against the Soviet Union. Now, ostensibly 'neutral' Austria, intertwined in a thousand ways with NATO and the European Common Market, is experiencing a Bitburg of its own.

Waldheim's war atrocities

'What is Waldheim's disease?' the wags are asking. 'That's when you grow old and forget you were a Nazi.' In two memoirs and his official UN biography Waldheim had maintained that after being wounded on the Eastern Front in 1941 he returned to Vienna to pursue his legal studies until the end of the war. In an interview for the initial 4 March *New York Times* article, Waldheim finally admitted serving in the Balkans, but claimed he 'knew of no war crimes or atrocities' ascribed to his

units, and that this was the 'first time' he had ever heard of mass deportations of Greek Jews from Salonika! Subsequently, he admitted he was on General Loehr's staff, but only as an 'interpreter'. Following disclosure of German army intelligence reports bearing his signature, Waldheim admitted analysing and passing on documents, but only as a desk man.

Was Waldheim a war criminal? The UN War Crimes Commission concluded in 1948 that there was a 'clear prima facie case' against him on charges of 'murder' and 'putting hostages to death' during the period from April 1944 to May 1945, and that he 'should be delivered up



Tanjug
Yugoslav partisans hanged by Nazis, 1942.

for trial'. These charges came from a December 1947 document, File F-25572, submitted to the UN commission by Yugoslavia, which was recently published by the Belgrade daily *Vecernje Novosti* (26 March). This article also notes a memorandum addressed to the Yugoslav embassy in London suggesting that particular attention be paid 'to registering Waldheim since there is strong evidence for this and the report is complete and sufficient'. Yet in the reams of material written in the Western press on the Waldheim affair, little attention has been paid to the original charges.

The Yugoslav news agency Tanjug has made available to *Workers Vanguard* translations of File F-25572 and other relevant reports which show that:

- According to a Wehrmacht clerk, Johann Mayer, who worked in the Intelligence-Counterintelligence (I-C) branch of German Army Group E, Lieutenant Waldheim was the O-3 officer in the department. 'Waldheim's task was to prepare drafts for his superior officer Lt. Col. Warnstorff on all actions of group I-C concerning procedures for hostages, reprisals, war prisoners and civilians.'

- According to an organisation chart of the I-C branch (*Novosti*, 31 March), O-3 was in charge of intelligence from the Allies, Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia, as well as radio interception. Also among its duties were 'mopping-up operations' and interrogations.

- According to convicted war criminal Egberg Hilker, Waldheim was responsible for a reprisal in October 1944 in which 114 people



AP
Reagan and Kohl at Bitburg, 1985 to rehabilitate Nazis in anti-Soviet war drive.

were killed and three villages burned between Kocani and Stip.

• Waldheim told *Vecernje Novosti*, 'I was on Kozara.' According to a 27 March Tanjug dispatch: 'In the offensive on Mount Kozara, in Summer 1942, the forces of Nazi general Loehr and quisling Ustasha and Domobrani (home guard) units of the Nazi-controlled independent state of Croatia carried out massive and unprecedented atrocities against the civilian population. Large numbers of innocent men, women and children were killed or deported to the Ustasha death camps of Jasenovac and Stara Gradiska. Sixty-eight thousand people from Kozara, including 23,000 children, were deported, very few of them to return to their demolished and burned homes.'

• Waldheim is listed in a Wehrmacht document as one of 30 German officers participating in the Mount Kozara operation, and he was awarded the fascist King Zvonimir Medal for 'merit under enemy fire' by the Nazi puppet state of Croatia for his role in the Kozara massacres.

In April 1943, Lieutenant Kurt Waldheim and Army Group E were based in and around Salonika, Greece. Salonika was once the largest centre of Sephardic Jews in the world. Yet by the end of the Nazi occupation, 96 per cent of Salonika's Jews had become victims of the Holocaust: 50,000 were deported to their death. ABC-TV's *Nightline* (24 April) showed a front page of the German army newspaper in the Balkans with a huge photo of 12,000 Jews lined up in front of the train station awaiting deportation. Leon Benmayer, now president of the small group of Jews who returned to Salonika, said:

'Everybody knew what was being done to the Jews, especially German intelligence officers. They knew about the trains of 50 cars that left every three days. They knew our yellow stars.... How can Waldheim say that he came to a city where maybe one-quarter of the population wore the yellow star and didn't notice that they all disappeared?' (*New York Times*, 10 April)

Waldheim's response to this and other charges was that he was only a translator. So, Leutnant, how do you translate 'Get into the boxcar, Jew'?

Now Robert Herzstein, a professor of history at the University of North Carolina and consultant for the World Jewish Congress, who unearthed the documents on Waldheim in the US National Archives, has produced evidence showing Waldheim directly involved in the deportation of nearly 1800 Greek Jews from the island of Corfu in 1944. Herzstein also found Army Group E's daybook, kept by Kurt Waldheim, which on 8 August 1943 recorded Hitler's order to kill captured partisans in Greece, and send suspected resistance fighters to labour camps. There is also the photograph showing Waldheim with Italian and German officers, including the commander of the Prinz Eugen Waffen SS Division in Montenegro, Yugoslavia in 1943. According to the division's history, the officers were discussing strategy during 'Operation Black', an anti-partisan sweep in which 16,000 Yugoslavs were killed.

Waldheim is clearly a war criminal. Was he a Nazi? *Novosti* quotes a fellow Wehrmacht officer who claims Waldheim rejected Nazism, 'more because of religious and conservative reasons than because of social or scientific reasons', and notes Waldheim's Jesuit education. The Waldheim family roots go back to the privileged bureaucracy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His father, Walter, was stripped of his job as a school inspector by the Nazis for being a follower of Austria's clerical-fascist ruler Kurt Schuschnigg. Waldheim claims he was only an opportunist, seeking to advance his own career -- a trait confirmed by those who knew him as UN secretary general. The scion of an old Viennese upper-class family longing for the return of the gilded Hapsburg court might well consider the Nazis *Untermenschen* (subhumans), along with the Serbs, Croats, Jews, Communists, Socialists and everybody else on the Nazis' hit list.

A home-grown fascist, then? Perhaps at the beginning. Documents show that Waldheim joined the Nazi student organisation in April 1938, three weeks after Hitler marched into Austria, and in November 1938 he enrolled in a mounted unit of the SA. This was just four days after the infamous 'Kristallnacht', the Nazis' night of anti-Semitic violence when Jewish houses and shops were destroyed and burned, and Jews were brutally beaten and killed. Austrian Nazi-hunter Simon Wiesenthal has noted that 'in comparison with the Viennese Kristallnacht, the one in Berlin looked like a cozy Christ-

mas party'. When Waldheim claimed not to know the 'riding club' was really a paramilitary Brownshirts unit, Austria's social-democratic chancellor Fred Sinowatz quipped, 'I get it, Waldheim wasn't in the SA -- only his horse was.'

But by the end, there can be no doubt. Waldheim's 1944 thesis, written as the Nazi Reich was already heading toward a Wagnerian *Goetterdaemmerung* (twilight of the gods), declared that 'the concept of Reich corresponds to the innate drives of the German nation'. 'Today', he wrote, 'after overcoming so many ... difficulties and obstacles, the idea of a unification of all Germanic groups has been realized -- although in a more disciplined form ... in consequence of the current great conflict of the Reich with the non-European world, in magnificent collaboration of all the peoples of Europe under the leadership of the Reich, the way is being pre-



Vienna 1934: Austrian workers, organised in socialist armed militias.

Harald Nap

pared against the ... danger from the east' (quoted in the *Nation*, 17 May). And then Waldheim headed back to the Balkan front to instil some Nazi 'discipline'.

Austria and the German Reich

Tito's partisans, heroically fighting in isolation in the mountains, managed to hold out against the monstrous Nazi terror and inflict punishing blows on the German and Italian imperialist aggressors. They defeated the royalist Chetniks, who were aided by the imperialist Allies, and smashed the Croatian fascist Ustashi. In alliance with the Soviet Red Army, they emerged victorious, overcoming centuries of national hatreds in the Balkans. The Communists' fight for national equality made it possible for a predominantly Serbian CP to mobilise partisans from all nationalities, such as the Croat and Muslim minorities of Bosnia, and for the first time lay the basis for a united South Slavic state. The 'Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia' was the product of this historic victory. If today national tensions are once again on the rise in Yugoslavia, it is because of its character as a *bureaucratically deformed* workers state.

As the capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Vienna was once the political and cultural hub of central Europe. The glittering cosmopolitan life here stood in sharp contrast to the rural hinterland, and it was distinguished in particular by the Jewish intelligentsia who made important contributions in almost every field. Names such as Sigmund Freud, founder of psychoanalysis; the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein; writers such as Arthur Schnitzler, Stefan Zweig and Karl Kraus, the Vienna/Prague circle of Franz Kafka, Max Brod and Franz Werfel; the artist Max Reinhardt and the musician Gustav Mahler come to mind. The leaders of the Austrian working class such as Victor and Friedrich Adler and Otto Bauer were also Jewish. At the same time anti-Semitism runs deep.

With the Austro-Hungarian Empire having lost the war against Prussia in 1866, and being reduced to its German-speaking corner as the result of World War I, Jews were made the scapegoats for the demise of imperial glory. The Trotskyist Abram Leon, who died in Auschwitz, wrote of Vienna in his outstanding

Marxist work, *The Jewish Question*:

'Anti-Semitism showed its roots most clearly in Vienna, one of the great centers of Jewish immigration before the first imperialist war. The petty bourgeoisie, ruined by the development of monopoly capitalism and headed for proletarianization, was exasperated by the mass arrival of the Jewish element, traditionally petty-bourgeois and artisan.'

Adolf Hitler, himself an Austrian from Salzburg, in describing his student years in Vienna wrote in *Mein Kampf*: 'I had turned into a fanatical anti-Semite.'

Today Austria likes to preserve the myth it was an innocent victim of Nazi occupation through *Anschluss*, the 1938 annexation of Austria into the German Third Reich. In reality the German tanks were greeted by hundreds of thousands who cheered wildly when Hitler rode into Vienna, thus destroying the

reactionary Catholic Austrian state. A century earlier, had unification with a bourgeois-democratic Germany been achieved as an outgrowth of the 1848 revolution, this would have been a progressive achievement. If in 1938 there was no noticeable resistance to Hitler's occupation of Austria and fascist rule, but instead euphoria on the part of the impoverished petty bourgeoisie, it reflected the decisive defeat of the Austrian working class in the civil war of 1934 by the bonapartist Dollfuss regime.

In 1934, with the German workers already under the Nazi jackboot, the workers of all Europe looked to Vienna. For days, the Austrian proletariat fought pitched battles against the Austro-fascist *Heimwehr*, which later joined with Hitler. Socialist workers militias of the *Schutzbund* defended every working-class housing estate, every meeting place they could. But the Austrian workers were abandoned by their social-democratic leaders, who never believed in proletarian victory, and the 1934 uprising was smashed. As Trotsky wrote of the coffeehouse rhetoric of 'Austro-Marxism' in his article 'After the Austrian Defeat' (March 1934): 'It turned revolutionary action into a legalistic-literary threat that it did not take seriously itself.' Already in 1918 Austrian social democracy had sided with its own bourgeoisie by joining the constituent assembly against the workers' soviets.

Austria today is not a nation, but a remnant of the breakup of Austro-Hungary, a provincial little Alpine republic with a deeply reactionary hinterland. (Its very name in German, *Oesterreich*, means the 'eastern empire'.) Under Hitler there were 500,000 Nazi party members in Austria, a higher proportion than in Germany itself. But, exempted from the Allied imperialist victors' phoney 'de-Nazification' campaign, in 1949 every one of the Austrian political parties presented former Nazis on their electoral slates. Long-time Austrian chancellor, Socialist Party (SPO) leader Bruno Kreisky, a Jewish anti-Zionist and survivor of the Nazi concentration camps, had four ex-Nazis in his first cabinet. Friedrich Peter, the head of the ultraright Freedom Party, presently part of a coalition

continued on page 11

Waldheim...

(Continued from page 9)

government with the SPO, was an Obersturmfuehrer in the First SS Infantry Brigade which participated in the mass execution of Jews during its operations in the occupied Ukraine.

Today, the Austrian working class still needs a party worthy of its heroic fight of 1934, a Trotskyist party with a programme to conquer state power and sweep away the festering Nazi filth and the whole putrified reactionary bourgeois state. Such a party must be forged in combat against the social-democratic traitors of the SPO, which is still the recognised party of the Austrian working class. Key to splitting this bourgeois workers party along class lines is the fight against Austrian chauvinism. Thus Kreisky initially commented that the Waldheim revelations were a 'monstrous meanness', while the SPO presidential candidate Steyrer proclaimed that 'Austria is capable of dealing with her problems herself' (*Die Presse*, 27 March).

Revolutionary opposition to resurgent Austrian nationalism means the most forceful defence of Austria's biggest minority, the 30,000-strong Slovenian population in the southern province of Kaernten. After *Anschluss*, the rabid nationalism of the German-speaking population gave Kaernten the reputation of the 'Fuehrer's most faithful district'. Recently officials ordered reductions in the teaching of Slovenian in the schools, in a move to force the population to speak German. It was in this enclave of diehard nationalism, where the Nazis carried out fierce reprisals against villages suspected of harbouring partisans, that Waldheim made some of his most demagogic appeals. Only by smashing bourgeois class rule will the victims of the Nazi terror, such as the inmates of the Austrian Mauthausen concentration camp, be avenged and social justice achieved through proletarian class rule.

The main enemy is at home!

In 1947, Yugoslavia sought Waldheim's extradition for war crimes. However, a 21 April Tanjug dispatch states, 'In the era of Cold War and the deterioration of international relations with all the attendant negative consequences, there evolved a negative attitude also towards the extradition and punishment of war criminals. In the given situation, the U.N. Commission of War Crimes was abolished. Subsequently, the Yugoslav State Commission for War Crimes also ceased to function.' A *Washington Post* (1 May) article, 'Belgrade Kept Silence on Waldheim War Charges,' cites Tito's 1948 break with Stalin and Belgrade's subsequent 'overriding priority of maintaining good relations with Austria, a major trading partner and neutral buffer amid nonaligned Yugoslavia's three Soviet Bloc and two NATO neighbors'.

Perhaps diplomatic considerations influenced Belgrade to drop the issue. However, this is small potatoes compared to the more than 40-year coverup of Nazi war criminals run by the United States government. In mountains of files in the National Archives, military archives, CIA/FBI dustbins, etc, there are the records of literally thousands of Nazi war criminals who were smuggled out of Europe along the nefarious OSS 'rat line' to safe harbour in Paraguay and Argentina, or who were imported wholesale into this country by 'Operation Paper Clip' to service new masters in the 'war against Bolshevism'. Andrija Artukovic, the former police boss of the Nazi puppet state of Croatia, who was last week sentenced to death by a Zagreb court, was harboured for decades by the US because the notorious Ustasha 'Butcher of the Balkans' might face 'persecution' in a Communist state!

Now Attorney General Edwin Meese is to decide if Waldheim's name should be placed on an INS list of those excluded from entry into the US. The man whose hand was behind the bombing of the black MOVE commune in Philadelphia has no more right to pass judgment on mass murder than the fire-bombers of Dresden did in the Nuremberg war crimes tribunal! Moreover, we have to ask why it took the initiative of the World Jewish Congress to finally investigate the damning documents in the US National Archives. According to a former Austrian official and OSS agent in World War II, when Waldheim was hired as personal secretary to the foreign minister in 1946, it was with the explicit support of American intelligence. Robert Herzstein notes:

'One question that comes to mind is whether Mr. Waldheim, an important figure in Germany Army intelligence ... went to work in a higher capacity for the West after the war. He was a multi-lingual intellectual who had expertise in the evaluation of intelligence from Communists.... Did he now put his skills to work for the West, with the understanding that the war crimes allegation would be allowed to drift into oblivion?' (*New York Times*, 8 April)

There is also the stance taken by Simon Wiesenthal, who claims there is 'no evidence' that Waldheim committed crimes -- in spite of the Yugoslav and American documentation. It is perhaps relevant that Wiesenthal is a well-known supporter of the same right-wing Austrian People's Party (the OVP) of which Waldheim is the presidential candidate. More importantly, in an interview in the *New York Daily News* (16 May), Wiesenthal accuses the World Jewish Congress of creating a Bitburg for Austria. This implicit apology for Reagan is no surprise coming from a man who has joined the campaign for CIA funds to the Nicaraguan contras, and who in 1984 gave an award to Jeane Kirkpatrick as a 'Humanitarian Laureate'. And the Israelis seem none too happy with the WJC's revelations.

The World Jewish Congress has done a real service in exposing Waldheim's past as a Nazi war criminal. But these Zionists cannot resist equating Waldheim's supporters with the entire Austrian people. WJC executive director Elan Steinberg told the Austrian magazine *Profil* in a March interview that if Waldheim was elected, 'Everybody with an Austrian passport will have this cloud of uncertainty travel with him' (*New York Times*, 17 May).

Reagan's salute to the SS Nazi graves in Bitburg last year showed where the American bourgeoisie stands. German imperialism and its Austrian lackey at the time were defeated mainly due to the heroic struggle of the Soviet Union, at the cost of 20 million lives. The US emerged as the dominant imperialist force from the war which ushered in the 'American century', lasting all of 25 years until its defeat on the battlefields of Vietnam. Even before Germany surrendered, the American ruling class began recruiting 'former' Nazis -- from V-2 rocket expert Wernher von Braun and the anti-Soviet Gehlen spy apparatus to Gestapo butchers like Klaus Barbie -- and pressing them into service in its drive to reconquer the states torn from the grip of capitalist exploitation, first and foremost the homeland of the October Revolution. It will take world socialist revolution to bring all the imperialist war criminals to justice. And in this struggle, the main enemy is at home! ■

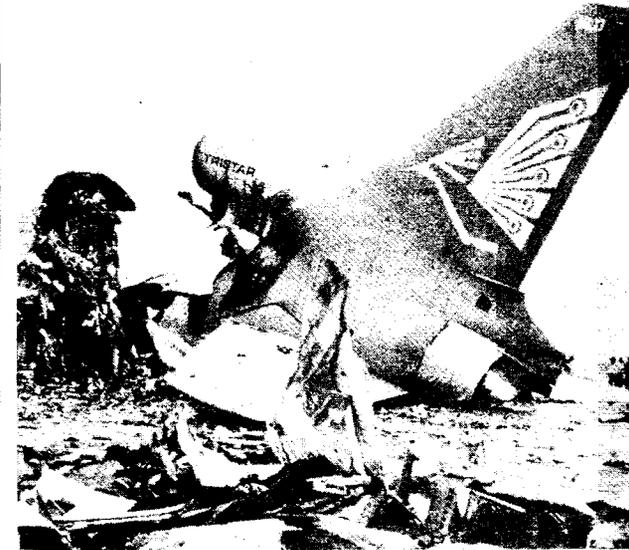
Sri Lanka...

(Continued from page 7)

the policy of Sinhalese racialist exclusivity sought to make external to 'our people' first the plantation Tamils and Burghers (mixed-race descendants of European settlers) and now the Muslims and Tamils. As the island today is torn apart by Sinhalese state terror and retaliatory Tamil terrorism against innocent civilians, it seems clear that the cycle of bloodbaths will not easily be broken. The pressure on India to step in to restore order is rapidly becoming irresistible. Rajiv Gandhi is perhaps impeded from action by his evident desire for a rapprochement with US imperial-

ism, and by the precarious condition of bloody national antagonisms inside India. But if he permits the Sri Lanka government to accomplish the genocidal slaughter of Tamil Hindus, it would mean his undoing as surely as his mother's falling out with the Sikhs meant hers. Sooner or later, and likely sooner, the Indian army will be forced to intervene in Lanka, the Sinhalese will 'get theirs' and the Tamils won't like it very much either.

As against the despairing perspective of nationalists, for whom guerrilla counter-terrorism and eventual Indian invasion represent the only logical programme, we fight for the perspective of revolutionary class



Tamil nationalist group now claims 'credit' for blowing up Air Lanka jet filled with tourists.

struggle across national lines. The bloody horror of communal slaughter, in India no less than in Lanka, will be ended only by international class struggle, uniting the toiling masses across all ethnic, national and religious divisions under the leadership of a world party of socialist revolution, a reborn Fourth International. For a federated workers republic of Eelam and Lanka, part of a socialist federation of South Asia! ■

Correction

The article 'Solidarnosc calls for Wall Street to run Poland' in *Workers Hammer* no 80 (June 1986) erroneously identified the French organisation Lutte Ouvriere (LO) as participating in last December's anti-Communist demonstration against the visit of Poland's General Jaruzelski. LO was, in fact, not present, though much of the so-called far left was. LO did, however, alibi CIA financing for the Force Ouvriere trade-union federation (see *Workers Hammer* no 75, January 1986). Since 1980, LO has always called for 'complete solidarity' with Solidarnosc, even though LO characterises Walesa's clerical-nationalist programme as 'completely counterposed to the future political and economic interests of the Polish working class'.

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



—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

Seize Murdoch's fortress Wapping!

Don't play by Kinno's rules!

The drawn-out strike by 5500 printworkers against Rupert Murdoch's vicious mass sacking and union-busting is an object lesson in Labourite treachery. The strike has continued since last February through the sheer fortitude and persistence of the rank and file and the support of militants from other unions, particularly miners. It has continued in the face of outright sabotage by the union bureaucrats -- notably Tony Dubbins of the NGA and Brenda Dean of SOGAT -- and equally treacherous collusion with the bosses' courts against the union by a pretend 'opposition' centred on the London SOGAT leadership and supported by the *Morning Star*.

Week after week, thousands of militants continue to march down from Tower Hill to The Highway, fists in their pockets, hoping tonight will be the night when the scabs are driven out of Fortress Wapping -- as they almost were on 16 March when a section of fence got torn down and the only thing between the strikers and the scabs was a thin line of SOGAT marshals. More than a thousand printers and their supporters have been arrested. Dozens have been injured by rampaging, truncheon-wielding cops. Even so, when the leadership forced a ballot in early June on a sellout proposal which wouldn't have saved a single job, the membership threw it back by a vote of more than 2 to 1. Since then, the twice-weekly marches have been ever more tightly regimented to avoid militant confrontation, and even paper instructions for secondary blacking have been abandoned. After five months, one thing is certain: the only road to victory lies through a political struggle against all those who place unity with scabherd Neil Kinno above all else. Break the Labourite stranglehold -- Don't play by Kinno's sellout rules! Victory to the News International strike!

The Labourite misleaders see their main task not as defending their union membership and leading it to victory but as policing the workers' militancy so as not to embarrass the would-be Labour prime minister. Dean opened up the June SOGAT conference in Scarborough with a vicious broadside against 'wreckers' in the union who sought more militant action. 'I am not interested in macho breast-thumping or street corner chants about "selling people down the river"', she railed. 'We owe it to ourselves, to our families and to Britain as a nation to return a Labour government.... We must not allow anything to come in the way of that.' She could not have put it any clearer: 5500 jobs are to be sacrificed to grease Kinno's way into Downing Street! And to drive the point home, Kinno and Norman Willis themselves were wheeled out. Kinno denounced those who 'advocated violence' (ie militant struggle), while Willis made a sales pitch for 'realism' (ie defeatism).

When Willis tried that in front of Welsh miners two years ago, they dangled a noose in front of his throat and booed him down. But the supposed opposition to Dean & Co, centred on *Morning Star* supporters in the London branch leadership like Mike Hicks and Bill Freeman, instead joined the chorus of 'unity'. Freeman took the floor to denounce pro-strike activists for 'disgracefully attacking Brenda

Dean'. The 12 June *Morning Star* whitewashed Kinno with the headline, 'Kinno praises SOGAT pickets', followed two weeks later (26 June) with an absurd claim that 'TUC supports Wapping pickets'. Try to sell that line to Wapping pickets!

The Thatcher government remains brittle, hated and self-evidently bankrupt. Serious militant struggle by the working class could not only smash its attacks but bring it down. But that means learning the central lesson of the miners strike: support for Kinno means defeat in struggle. It is necessary to split the Labour Party, winning its working class base from pro-capitalist reformism and the Labourite traitors, right and 'left', to a revolutionary vanguard party based on a programme of international class struggle.

It was a result of the miners' determined and militant struggle that Thatcher's popularity plummeted -- when the IRA carried out a bomb attack on Thatcher and her Cabinet in Brighton, they were cheered by millions of workers. The Iron Bitch could have been toppled from power. But the Labour Party and TUC joined forces with the Tories to ensure the miners' defeat -- and the 'lefts' in turn joined forces with Kinno and Willis. To have spread the miners strike into the needed general strike -- by bringing out the strategic, and 'left'-led, railworkers, dockers and transport workers -- would have posed sharply the question of power: Which class shall rule? And this the pro-Labour reformists, 'left' no less than right -- committed to maintaining capitalism -- want to avoid at all costs. Just as during the miners strike TGWU 'left' Ron Todd got the striking dockers back to work, so today he refuses to mobilise his lorry drivers to black Murdoch's scab rags.

One and all, the Labourites and their fake-left hangers-on are intent on burying the lessons of the miners strike. Kinno is widely reviled in the coalfields and among militants throughout the labour movement and minority communities for the racist Judas he



Wapping strikers face down cops.

Workers Hammer



Workers Hammer

Wapping strikers throw proposed sellout back at Dean and Dubbins. Strategy for victory through mass pickets and effective blacking means fight to break Labourite stranglehold.

is. And Kinno in government will be worse than Kinno in 'opposition'. Already he is promising to police the trade unions on behalf of the imperialist anti-Soviet war drive. John Prescott rails at the NGA conference: 'A Labour government should legislate to ensure that unions which defy an order to hold a pre-strike ballot lose their certificate of independence' (*Guardian*, 2 July). Roy Hattersley nonchalantly assures worried capitalists that stopping unemployment is 'not a priority' and affirms 'the most positive party commitment to NATO since the days of Attlee and Bevin'. Meanwhile Denzil Davies vows not to cut a penny from anti-Soviet war preparations. And they all join in racist diatribes against blacks and Asians who defend themselves against cop and fascist terror. While Kinno/Hattersley and their gang are assuredly 'positive' about NATO's war drive and its dictates for domestic austerity, the deep schism in the Labour Party induced by the Cold War and sharpened by the miners strike remains widespread at the base, who are disgusted with Kinno and everything he stands for.

But the fake lefts shower Kinno with praise, pledge him their support in '88 and drag their unions into the very same capitalist courts which robbed the miners of millions of pounds in blood money. And while Arthur Scargill excluded Eddie Shah's reporters from the NUM conference in June for Shah's union-busting at Warrington in 1983, his line to Wapping strikers is to keep on pressurising Willis & Co and fall in line for 'unity behind Kinno' and a new Labour government.

The fake revolutionaries are already trumpeting their 'socialist campaigns for a Labour victory'. The centrist *Workers Power* (June 1986), for instance, crowns its latest 'watchwords of the day' with the call: 'Force the Labour leadership to use the divisions in the Tories' ranks to encourage and support active resistance now to their attacks'. 'Force' Judas Kinno 'to encourage active resistance'? Truly, these people have short and selective memories -- from the miners strike to Wapping, Kinno's stock-in-trade is to use the 'divisions' between strikers and scabs to encourage defeat. With some consistency, WP also looks to Willis'

continued on page 10