

Thatcher's racist reign

"The police are murderers!" was the chant that rang out from more than 500 angry demonstrators outside Kensington police station in London's Notting Hill Gate area on 9 October. Hours earlier Anthony Lemard, a 36-year old black man, a well-known figure in the community, a fit and healthy father of two young sons, was found dead in police custody. Anthony Lemard's relatives first heard of his death through a radio news broadcast. As with the near-fatal shooting of Mrs Cherry Groce in Brixton and the cold-blooded murder of Mrs Cynthia Jarrett in Tottenham last year, the cops were out to foment a racist bloodbath. A spokesman for the local Mangrove Community Association, of which Lemard was a member, denounced the racist cop provocation: "The implication was that if police action provoked an inner city riot the police were prepared for it" (*Caribbean Times*, 17 October).

Thatcher's racist cops are murderers! With increasing frequency and murderous ferocity, the Iron Bitch has been unleashing her thugs-in-blue against Britain's largely black and Asian inner-city ghettos. Recent months have seen a dizzying succession of racist attacks and provocations: military-style police invasions of the ghettos under the guise of 'drug busts' like last month's rampage in Bristol's St Paul's area; flagrantly racist deportations and immigration/visa restrictions; vindictive imprisonment of victims of racist cop terror.

Particularly since the miners strike shot the 'Falklands factor' from under her, Thatcher has been trying to revive racist 'law and order' as her ticket to another term in Downing Street, while carrying out a deliberate and vengeful vendetta against the black and Asian minorities who were among the staunchest supporters of the heroic miners. And with Thatcher's reign undermined by a year of bitter class struggle in the coalfields, the fascist scum have been crawling out of the woodwork ever more boldly to demonstrate their reliability as shock troops for racist reaction—to murder and maim blacks and Asians. As throughout NATO Europe and America, the imperialist war drive against the Soviet Union means war on workers and minorities at home.

But Thatcher's concerted drive to



Rod Leon/Caribbean Times



John Harris [IFL]

Workers, minorities hate racist strikebreaker Thatcher. Left: 9 October protest against racist killer cops outside Kensington police station following death of Anthony Lemard. Right: Militant miners march against Thatcher. Forge a Bolshevik party to act as tribune of all the oppressed!

For trade union/minority mobilisation to smash cop/fascist terror!

foment interracial violence has not washed with the population at large. In the aftermath of the miners strike, the Thatcher government is brittle, discredited and despised. The predominantly white miners experienced first hand the treatment meted out for decades to blacks, Asians and Irish in this country: they learned some hard lessons about the real character of the bosses' 'democracy' and the need for class unity across race lines. Hundreds of miners were sacked or imprisoned. And ever since then the Labour traitors who stabbed the miners in the back—'left', right and centre—have been working overtime to bury the legacy of that strike. Judas Kinnock wants to catapult into Downing Street on the basis of established credentials as a slicker strikebreaker and more 'refined' racist than the ham-handed Thatcher.

But even with the pro-capitalist

labour fakers clamping down sharply on social struggle, this racist society remains deeply class polarised. Workers action, galvanising behind it all the oppressed and fed-up in this clapped-out hellhole of a country, can bring Thatcher down and open the road to a revolutionary workers government. First and foremost that requires a political struggle to oust the Labourite misleaders of all stripes and to forge a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party which will be a tribune of all the oppressed. Workers revolution is the only way to sweep away the fascist marauders, killer cops and their paymasters once and for all.

THE INVASION OF ST PAUL'S

A week before Anthony Lemard's death, 19-year old Simon MacMinn, a white youth from the Broadwater Farm Estate in Tottenham, was sent

away for seven years—for allegedly throwing some rocks and stealing a couple of cans of Coke during last year's cop invasion. When the police rampaged their way into Broadwater Farm last year, they came out one short. Local black councillor Bernie Grant expressed the sentiments of every decent person at the time when he said, finally it was the cops who got a 'bloody good hiding'. And the racist pigs have been smarting ever since, trying to wreak vengeance on the community. Notably the stiffest sentence meted out thus far to the 75 defendants in the frame-up show trial went to a white. What particularly irked the police and their masters was that their racist invasion was warded off by a *multiracial* defence.

In September, on the heels of similar provocations over the summer in Brixton, Tottenham and Hands—*continued on page 4*

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fuels Orange terror... p 3**

**The 1956 Hungarian
workers uprising... p 6**

Apologists for Wapping sellout

London N5
17th September 1986

Dear Comrades,

Your backpage 'Defeat at Wapping' article (*Workers Hammer* no 82, September 1986) is wrong, abstract and useless. The Spartacist League/Britain's approach is in stark opposition to the speech, reprinted in the same issue of *WH*, by James P. Cannon to American Communist miners in 1924:

'The close and intimate contact with the practical problems of the daily struggle and with the comrades who directly face them, serves as an unerring corrective to any tendency there might be in the party to deal with these problems in an abstract or purely doctrinaire fashion.'

The News International dispute has *not* been defeated, yet, over two weeks after you pronounced it 'a defeated struggle'. There is a picket line outside 'Fortress Wapping', and there is an official strike. Yet as you claim this isn't a picket

line and isn't a strike, can we expect to see SLers working at Wapping? And contrary to what you claim in paragraph six of the article, tear-gas has not been used so far in this dispute.

What militants find odd is that the SL hadn't been seen for over four weeks, and then arrogantly arrives to lecture printworkers that they are defeated. To rub it in, you then decorate this same article with a scab *Sunday Times* photo!

Today, yet another round of secret negotiations have broken up, with Murdoch's management issuing yet another 'final offer' to the print unions. Given the current political climate in Britain and the Dean/Dubbins and TUC/Kinnock leadership, it is a credit to the printworkers that they have fought so hard so long. This dispute is a microcosm of the changes and contradictions in British society today.

Has it been a model Kinnock strike as you claim? Militant printworkers and supporters have fought

police violence valiantly; have warmed to the spontaneous combustion of scabby warehouses; have aided scab drivers with rock hard directions; and have chased the openly pro-sellout Shadow Employment Minister, John Prescott, out of a support group meeting.

The unions' national and 'left' London leaders have given Kinnock, the courts and the bosses big successes. But after eight months they haven't had it all their own way. There are desperate illusions in 'the next Labour government', and there is a virulent racism amongst some sections. Communists intervene with a programme to win, and to actively combat backwardness. Where was the SL's political battle to win the hearts and minds of these workers in struggle? The SL has supporters in print, what have they done? Has the SL intervened in the FSSU or other support groups? *WH* makes much of the 15 March night when militants tore down an outer fence at 'Fortress Wapping'; but you don't indicate the next step.

Consumer boycotts and voting Labour Party in some months' time will not win justice for the sacked printworkers. This dispute poses the question for leftists of how to build real communist leadership in struggle. What has the SL done? How has the SL countered defeatism? We, too, look forward to a NUM candidate to stand against Kinnock, and to a sacked NI printer to stand against John Prescott and Robert Maxwell's Labour Party. But sloganising, like the slanderous International Communist Party's 'Build a Trotskyist leadership, now!', or your 'Forge a Trotskyist party!', gets nowhere. The ICP fight for their rotten politics at Wapping,

and you don't bother; and with your defeatist line, we agree, why bother!

Communist greetings,

John W
Geoff P

Workers Hammer replies: As Stalin reportedly said, paper will take anything that's printed on it. John W and Geoff P quote an excellent speech by the late veteran American Communist and Trotskyist leader James P Cannon—whose central point is the struggle for a Leninist party and for communist politics in the trade unions against the pro-capitalist misleaders—to suit their own anti-Leninist vendetta. What these self-styled 'militants' find 'odd' is our refusal to pull our punches in the interests of peaceful coexistence with the Labourite traitors who sold the Wapping printers down the river. It's no surprise to us. They and their guru, one Arnie M, are embittered renegades who quit our party over the last few years of anti-Soviet war buildup because they couldn't take the heat (indeed Arnie M advocated 'entrism' liquidation into the Labour Party even before he quit). Today they are to be seen giving away a wretchedly apolitical handout at Wapping misnamed 'Picket', which alibis the bureaucracy's refusal to fight while provocatively smearing the Trotskyist Spartacist League as 'scab of the week'.

What's really behind this letter is election fever for Judas Kinnock's Labour Party. These creeps are at the tail end of the syphilitic chain that stretches from Kinnock through Benn and Scargill down to the reformist and centrist 'lefts', all al-

continued on page 9



TROTSKY

The Road to Peace

At the height of the Korean War, American Trotskyist leader James P Cannon warned that the Cold War between imperialism and the Soviet Union is rooted in irreconcilable class differences. Polemicising against the 'detente' illusions of his day, Cannon wrote that genuine peace will not be achieved through diplomatic double-talk, arms agreements or 'summits', but through international proletarian revolution.



LENIN

The ultimate aim [of American foreign policy] is nothing less than the overthrow of the Soviet Union, its dismemberment, and the re-establishment of the private property and landlord system, overthrown by the Revolution in 1917. The United States is driven, as the price of its own existence as the leading imperialist power of the world, to include all these aims in its program. That is what its diplomacy works for and that is what they are arming for.

Pacifist sermons will not deflect them from their course. Pseudo-serious chatter about the 'necessity and desirability of peaceful coexistence' can deceive and disarm workers and sincere but impractical people who think the boon of peace can be bought with shibboleths. But peace cannot be secured that way....

The class struggle of the workers, merging with the colonial revolutions in a common struggle against imperialism, is the only genuine fight against war. The Stalinists who preach otherwise are liars and deceivers. The workers and colonial peoples will have peace when they have the power and use their power to take it and make it for themselves. That is the road of Lenin. There is no other road to peace.

—James P Cannon, 'The Road to Peace' (November 1951)

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For a proletarian perspective in Ireland!

NATO accord fuels Orange terror

In the ten months of its existence, the Anglo-Irish Accord has fuelled a frenzied wave of ultra-rightist Orange terror in Northern Ireland unparalleled since the early 1970s. Throughout the summer, communalist Protestant rallies and marches rocked the province, as masses of Loyalists turned out in their traditional 'marching season' to vent their anger at Margaret Thatcher and her 'traitorous' accord with Dublin. Inevitably, these Orange mobilisations have been orgies of anti-Catholic hatred. More people have been forced to flee their homes than at any time since the early 1970s; twelve-foot high corrugated iron fences separating Catholic and Protestant neighbourhoods have proliferated.

With the increasing sectarian polarisation has come a rash of communalist killings—like the gruesome murders 17 September of Catholics Raymond Mooney and Joseph Webb by the 'Protestant Action Force'. In industry Loyalist fanatics have dragooned Protestant workers into joining these attacks. Loyalists at Short's aircraft factory abused and threatened the small minority of Catholic workers there—provocatively draping the walls with Unionist flags—and followed it up with a strike by 1000 Protestants, who only went back to work when management promised to fly the bloody Union Jack.

Catholic and Protestant social security workers in Lisburn opposing threats by the Ulster Defence Association to drive Catholics out of town spread across the province to 14 different offices and to the government buildings in Stormont. What is desperately needed is the intervention of a Trotskyist vanguard with a revolutionary working-class perspective.

DOWN WITH NATO'S DEAL!

It is not the British army's stalemate with the Provisional IRA or any perceived successes by the Republican forces that prompted the Anglo-Irish Accord at this time, but the dictates of the imperialist war drive against the Soviet Union. Reagan/Thatcher want to wean the Republic away from 'neutrality' and into a fuller part in NATO's war plans. Dublin has been given a role in deciding what happens in the North, implicitly posing a reunification of the island, in return acknowledging that the partition will not be undone without Protestant 'consent'. Thatcher hopes to ride out the wave of Protestant anger at what they see as a sellout of their interests. But the accord's operational clout is in closer cooperation against 'terrorism'. Thatcher hopes to prop up the CIA-funded SDLP in the North and the Dublin bourgeoisie hopes to keep Sinn Fein from exploiting the vol-

Loyalist bigots mobilise communalist frenzy in opposition to Anglo-Irish Accord.



John Voos

acquired, and the Stalker inquiry was aborted when it threatened to uncover the activities of an RUC death squad. We demand the immediate unconditional withdrawal of the British army—Smash the RUC/UDR!

The US, who brokered the deal, has offered Dublin assistance in modernising its police force while making it easier for Britain to get its bloody hands on suspected Republican opponents; thus Reagan secured Congressional approval for a new extradition treaty with Britain and the US Supreme Court recently refused to hear an appeal against the new law. In September \$50 million was handed over to the British and Irish ambassadors as aid for Northern Ireland. 'Only Ireland and Israel could have got this dough this year', said one American politician (*Observer*, 28 September). And the traditional pro-Irish lobby in the Democratic Party is being used to threaten recalcitrant Protestants, by questioning US defence contracts to Short Brothers.

ant ascendancy in the North is necessarily oppressive to the Catholics, so too the forcible reunification of Ireland would simply reverse the terms of oppression.

The partition of Ireland was and is a reactionary imperialist partition. But British imperialism has never been simply—nor always principally—dependent on this division. Today the partition and the sectarian divide are obstacles to broader strategic aims, namely the anti-Soviet war drive, though the consummate masters of imperialist 'divide and rule' in London remain concerned to ensure some measure of capitalist stability. Britain wants neither a revolutionary outburst nor a Lebanon-style communal war. The Protestants see the accord as foreshadowing a reunification of Ireland and attacking their position. Their mobilisation against the accord has taken a reactionary form, with the most communalist and even fascist elements in the lead. The 'invasion' of the South by a mob led by MP Peter Robinson was an ominous sign of the determination of such bigots to take the war to the Catholics rather than submit to Irish nationalist rule or be driven into small ghettos. As the 10 October *New Statesman* reported, the National Front has appointed a fulltime 'liaison officer' to 'turn the Front's patchy organisation in the North into a well-oiled electoral machine capable of winning seats in Loyalist strongholds'. But elections aren't the name of the game: 'Evidence is mounting that NF members have been involved in the worst outbreaks of Loyalist rioting, including attacks on the Royal Ulster Constabulary and on Catholic families living in mainly Protestant areas.'

LABOURISM v TROTSKYISM

Fake-left apologists for Republicanism poo-hoo the possibility of a reactionary pogromist solution involving forcible population transfers, massacres and the consolidation of a Protestant state. There is 'no mileage' in the idea of an independent Ulster, says *Workers Power* (September 1986): 'Without the forces of the British state behind it Loyalism is in the final analysis impotent'. Explain that to the Protestants—who already have plenty of guns and can be expected to handle them at least as well as the Christian Maronites in Lebanon.

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Donald McCullin/Magnum

British troops in Northern Ireland rampage against Catholic communities. Troops out now!

The urgent need to fight for defence of the beleaguered Catholic communities in the North against Orange terror must not be left to the Catholic minority alone. That united anti-sectarian working-class defence is possible is shown by the sporadic but significant instances of anti-sectarian strike action amidst the heightened sectarian polarisation. Early this year mainly Protestant bus crews in Belfast walked out in protest against Orange thug attacks on their members. In late August strike action by

atle situation in the South. Sinn Fein is looking to abandon its traditional abstentionism in southern elections, posing the possibility it might even hold the balance of power in the Dail.

For the oppressed Catholics in the North, the accord offers nothing. Crucially the RUC must be preserved as an instrument of imperialist rule. Together with the British army the RUC turns a blind eye to much of the Loyalist terror directed at the Catholics. The RUC murderer of Sean Downes has been

FAKE LEFT IN A MUDDLE

The British fake left are at sixes and sevens over the Anglo-Irish Accord, and especially the Protestant reaction. 'On the face of it, the Unionist reaction is hard to understand', laments the centrist *Workers Power* (December 1985/January 1986). It must be a case of pique by 'increasingly marginalised' politicians or 'simply a question of xenophobia' claims the left-Stalinist *Leninist* (13 May). The international Cold War context passes by them all and their capitulation to petty-bourgeois nationalism blinds them to unruly reality and uncomfortable facts. Stripped of various pseudo-historical and economic 'theories', their position is that the Protestants amount to nothing more than pawns of imperialism.

But the current crisis sharply reveals that the Protestants are a distinct, class-stratified community, not part of the Irish Catholic nation and defining themselves very much against it. Ireland is a case of *interpenetrated* peoples. The fake left's shibboleth of the absolute right of 'self-determination of the Irish people as a whole' necessarily denies that the Protestant community is distinct and therefore has legitimate rights of its own or denies that its rights matter in any case since it is (at the moment) the oppressor. Just as the Protest-

Thatcher...

(Continued from page 1)

worth, 600 police invaded Bristol's St Paul's, arresting more than 70 people. But local residents fought back with rocks and petrol bombs, leaving nine cops wounded in the fray. Of sixteen people brought to court, only two were charged with drugs offences, the rest with effectively defending themselves against the cop terror. A local clergyman observed: 'What was amazing was the restraint of the community for two-and-a-half hours, when they were faced by a phalanx of police officers with their riot shields' (*London Standard*, 12 September). We say: Free Simon MacMinn! Drop the charges against all victims of racist police terror/dragnets! Free the imprisoned miners!

The anti-drugs furore is part of a drive to regiment society—particularly targeting doubly oppressed minority workers—in line with anti-Soviet war preparations and to restore the tattered social fabric ripped open by the miners strike. The government's line that hundreds of heavily armed riot cops systematically invade the black ghettos in order to pick up a handful of drug peddlars is so patently flimsy that nobody believes it. 'Sure, we do drugs round here', said one St Paul's youth. 'Show me any slum in Britain today that doesn't. Round here you take them just to get through another day' (*Times*, 13 September). Upper-class snots can retire to their private clubs for all-night gin-and-tonic sloshes, but for a ghetto kid to seek temporary escape from the oppressive conditions of ghetto life and the despair of a future on the dole becomes a 'crime'. What's needed is to organise the anger and outrage of the ghettos and channel it into effective social struggle behind the power of the integrated proletariat for jobs for all and a decent life.

JUDAS KINNOCK: RACIST, STRIKEBREAKER, ANTI-COMMUNIST

Instead the Labour misleaders stifle class struggle and promote racist protectionism. Following last year's cop riots, Kinnock and Hattersley solidarised with the racist attacks by denouncing Bernie Grant. Last month's Labour Party conference voted down the cosmetic demand for 'black sections' by five to one, while refusing to allow black leaders like Grant time to address the conference. Meanwhile strikebreaker Kinnock pushes Labour's 'Invest in People' programme, with its nationalist appeals to 'Buy British' and 'British jobs for British workers'. The racist character of this appeal is underscored by the fact that the fascists too have organised marches around this slogan. And their means of implementing this reactionary programme is death camps and gas chambers for all 'foreigners'.

The Labour 'lefts' like Tony Benn and Arthur Scargill join enthusiastically in pushing this protectionist poison. And when it comes to rampant cop racism, all they and the likes of Bernie Grant (as well as the pseudo-revolutionaries) can offer is 'police accountability' and Labour Party 'black sections'. The reformist illusion that the racist cops can be made accountable to anybody but the racist bosses is a dangerous set-up which disarms

workers and oppressed minorities. And the idea that Her Majesty's Labour Party will change its racist record and programme by sucking blacks and Asians into racially defined ginger groups is a travesty. The miners strike showed the road to transcending racial and sexual divisions through *sharp class struggle against the common class enemy*.



Workers Hammer
Struggle against racist terror means defence of Soviet Union.

A look at France shows the outlines of what a Kinnock government would mean. Five years of Cold War 'Socialist' Mitterrand's popular-front government meant vicious austerity attacks on French workers' livelihoods and organisations, draconian racist repression of North African and other minority and immigrant workers and prepared the way for a dramatic strengthening of Le Pen's sinister fascist Front National. The recent 'anti-terrorist' visa restrictions are an expedient to expel predominantly Arab minority workers. While not a single American has been turned back for lack of a visa, some 30 per cent of North Africans—many of them residents or relatives of residents—have been stopped from entering the country.

In recent years, 'anti-terrorism' has become a codeword for anti-Sovietism. As Reagan's staunchest ally, the Iron Lady has no dearth of experience in this area, from indiscriminate arrests of Irish in Britain to mass deportations of Libyan students. But the government's recent imposition of visa requirements for visitors only from the Indian subcontinent and West Africa—formalising a longstanding policy of discriminatory racist exclusions—dispensed even with the figleaf of 'national security'. Sri Lanka was omitted from the list of South Asian countries only because Tamils seeking to flee communalist terror in that country are already subjected to such restrictions! The grotesque scenes of thousands of African and Asian visitors/immigrants penned in at Heathrow while the tabloids scream about 'Asian floods' recalls the fascists' cry: 'If they're white, they're all right; if they're black, send them back!' Now the government is threatening to abolish MPs' long-standing right to stop refusal-of-entry orders, while mooting plans to screen African entrants for AIDS! What next—tattoos on the wrist?

But the Tories are not breaking new ground with these reactionary

proposals. It was the last Labour government which instituted the disgusting 'virginity tests' for Asian women immigrants and it was Labour that prepared the racist Nationality Bill which the Tories enacted. The labour movement must fight to smash racist deportations and immigration laws. Full citizenship rights for all minority/immigrant workers and their families!

COLD WAR MEANS WAR ON WORKERS AND MINORITIES

Throughout NATO Europe, a steep increase in racist and fascist attacks is the domestic corollary of the anti-Soviet war drive. When US president Reagan and West German chancellor Kohl paid homage to the Hitlerite SS killers at Bitburg, they sanctified the Nazis' genocidal drive to 'purify' Europe of Jews, gypsies and 'Bolsheviks'. And the social-democratic lieutenants of the bourgeoisie are no less anti-Communist. Ramsay MacKinnock made an anti-Soviet pilgrimage to the Berlin Wall in October to rebut Reagan/Thatcher's 'soft on Russia' baiting. While there he listened avidly to a special British military briefing explaining how 'West Berlin could be defended now as it was in the final days of the Hitler regime, when a ramshackle German army inflicted severe casualties on the Russians' (*Guardian*, 16 October). Is Kinnock trying to make up for having missed the Bitburg visit? The Russians liberated East Europe from Nazi barbarism, and the imperialists and their lackeys want to overturn that victory. From the start of renewed Cold War, we have insisted: Anti-Soviet war drive fuels fascist growth! Smash the bosses' war on workers and minorities! Defend the Soviet Union!

While in this country the fascists are still relatively isolated (Thatcher having stolen many of their



Washington Post

Spartacist League/US-initiated Labor/Black Mobilization stopped fascist KKK march, Washington DC, November 1982.

clothes), of late there has been a disturbing rise in fascist provocations. In South London's Mitcham area in late September, three black youth were set upon by a gang of forty knife-wielding racist thugs: one was stabbed in the stomach, a second in the lungs and chest, the third slashed in the face. In Manchester, a young Bangladeshi school student, Ahmed Iqbal Ullah, was murdered in September by a white racist youth in the school's

playground. Though some thousand outraged residents of the community demonstrated in protest and anger, the local Labour Council has tried to hush up the murder. In Birmingham fascists have sent death threats to Socialist Action supporters while the British National Party seizes on government-promoted AIDS hysteria with sinister appeals demanding, 'Homosexuality kills—Kill homosexuals!'

Mass trade union/minority mobilisations can crush the fascists in the egg. But the Labourites and their fake-left allies prefer to stick their heads in the ground and do nothing, even while hypocritically celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the heroic Cable Street demonstration that stopped Mosley's Brownshirts from marching through the then primarily Jewish London East End. *Socialist Action*, while reporting in mindnumbing intricacy the minutiae of life in the Labour Party, refuses even to publicise the threats to its own supporters. The Socialist Workers Party—author of the pop-frontist Anti Nazi League which led 80,000 anti-fascist militants away from confronting the fascists at Brick Lane—chose the occasion of a broad-based campaign to drive National Front organiser Patrick Harrington off North London Poly two years ago to dismiss the struggle against fascism as a 'diversion'. Meanwhile the anti-fascist magazine *Searchlight* revealed last month that a gang of fascist skinheads who deem themselves 'gay skins' had been used as GLC-approved stewards at this year's CND Glastonbury Fayre and June's anti-apartheid march!

Several years ago in Newham, Asian youth heroically mobilised to physically smash gangs of fascist marauders, albeit eschewing a working-class orientation. Latterly, however, the organisers of the Newham defence campaigns have

involved themselves in the so-called Anti Fascist Action, a conscious rehash of the late-seventies ANL. Instead of seeking to mobilise militant anti-fascist defence, the AFA appeals to bourgeois 'anti-Nazi patriotism' (ie Churchill's war to maintain Britain's colonial possessions!), to the point of organising a march for Remembrance Day 'in memory of those who fought fascism in World War Two'. Typically, the centrist Workers Power group has

All honour to Soviet submariners

On 3 October, a fire broke out on a Soviet nuclear-powered submarine some 1000 kilometres (620 miles) northeast of Bermuda. The Soviet press agency TASS released details the next day, reporting that there were casualties and three Soviet sailors died in the accident, but there was no danger of a nuclear incident. The international Spartacist tendency sent a telegram of condolences, printed below, to the Commander in Chief of the Soviet Navy. Subsequently, on 6 October, TASS reported that despite rescue efforts by Soviet ships 'the submarine ... sank at a great depth'. Fortunately, there were no further losses.

05 October 1986

To: United Nations Mission of the USSR, New York
TASS, New York
Embassy of the USSR, Washington, D.C.
Consulate of the USSR, San Francisco
Embassy of the USSR, Paris
Pravda, Moscow
Soviet Navy, Moscow

Attn: Commander-in-chief of the Soviet Navy

We note with extreme regret the loss of three of your men in active duty in the Atlantic Ocean.

We must believe that the mission of the boat was related to the defense of the peoples of the world against imperialism.

We can only hope that the boat remains operational in pursuit of its mission.

And we wish to extend our profound condolences to the families and comrades of the men who died in performance of their duties, and we can only wish very well for surviving members of the crew.

Helene Brosius, Secretary of the international Spartacist tendency

Spartacist League/U.S.
Trotskyist League of Canada
Lega Trotskista d'Italia
Spartacist League of Australia/New Zealand
Ligue Trotskyste de France
Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands
Spartacist League/Lanka
Spartacist League/Britain



Workers Hammer

London, 30 September: Spartacist League demands freedom for Eleuterio Gutierrez.

London, Paris demonstrations to free Bolivian miner

Twice in the last year, the rightist, US-backed Bolivian government of Victor Paz Estenssoro has declared a state of siege to crush worker-peasant rebellion against IMF starvation policies. The brutality of the repression has been directed at the militant tin miners, one of whom, Eleuterio Gutierrez, has been locked up for the last 12 months on fabricated charges in the stinking jails of the mining town of Oruro. On 30 September, comrades of the international Spartacist tendency participated in protests in London and Paris demanding freedom for Gutierrez and all victims of rightist repression in Bolivia.

The demonstrations were initiated by Workers Power, a British centrist grouping which claims to be Trotskyist. In London, where a modest picket was held in front of the Bolivian embassy, approximately half the participants were supporters of the Spartacist League. Spartacists carried the slogan 'For a Bolivian Trotskyist Party', which Workers Power considered not in the spirit of 'unity'. In Paris, a dozen of our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France and several Latin American exiles showed up but only a handful of French Workers Power supporters.

joined the AFA, even as it admits that the AFA 'has tried to copy' the ANL's popular frontism (*Workers Power*, October 1986).

The Labour movement can and must mobilise to stop fascist and racist attacks. An injury to one is an injury to all! When the Ku Klux Klan threatened to march through largely black Washington DC in 1982, the Spartacist League/US initiated a 5000-strong Labor/Black Mobilization, with the support of seventy local unions, to stop the fascists in their tracks, facing down an army of cops and Klan-endorsed president Reagan. Not surprisingly, black Democrats of the type of Jesse Jackson—who goes around embracing arch-racists—wanted nothing to do with this overwhelmingly black militant mobilisation. And Jackson's right-hand man is Louis Farrakhan, a nationalist demagogue who wanted Malcolm X killed and spews anti-Semitic filth. Nationalism is a death-trap for the oppressed; what is required is a revolutionary perspective.

FORGE A BOLSHEVIK PARTY!

Above all this means a political struggle to forge a proletarian vanguard party in opposition to reformist and nationalist illusions. The working class must be split

from the Labourite misleaders, from the 'left'. While the Labour/TUC 'lefts' mouth pious 'anti-racist' phrases, they are the chief advocates of fascist protectionism and abjure working-class mobilisation in favour of pressurising the bourgeois state to 'ban the fascists' and implement 'community control' of the racist, strikebreaking cops. When the police rerouted British Rail and London Transport trains in July in order to ambush Brixton, the 'left' NUR/ASLEF bureaucrats turned a blind eye. Trade

union action could have stopped the cop invasion!

From the racist immigration restrictions to the dangerous censorship of the recently imposed 'video nasties' act, the ruling class is firing a broadside against democratic rights across the board. Meanwhile killer cops and fascist marauders take their cue from the patrician rulers to carry out bloody terror on the streets. In the epoch of its decay, capitalism regurgitates the crudest barbarities of the past, in ever viler form. What is needed to

wipe out capitalist oppression root and branch is a Bolshevik Party of the type which led the Russian workers and oppressed minorities to victory in 1917, a party which will act as tribune of all the oppressed and exploited around the world. The death of Anthony Leonard, the retribution meted out to the Broadwater Farm fighters, the daily terror and oppression faced by blacks and Asians must and will be avenged through proletarian justice. But for this the working class must seize state power. ■

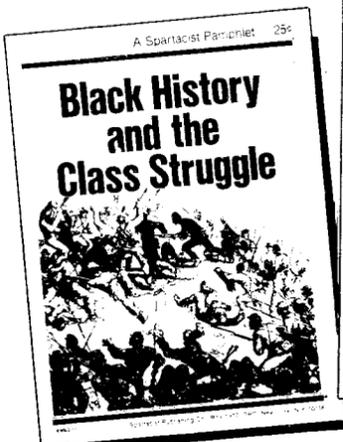
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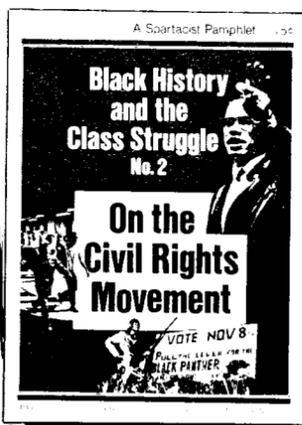
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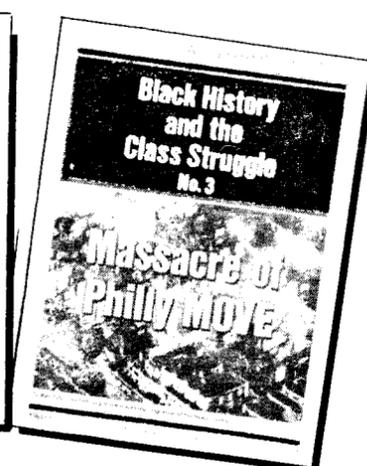
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The 1956 Hungarian workers uprising

Defend the gains of the Russian Revolution!

On the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian workers uprising, we reprint below the concluding portion in edited form of a presentation given by Spartacist League/US Central Committee member Joseph Seymour at a 1982 Spartacist educational in the US. This talk was first printed in the October 1982 issue of *Young Spartacus* while the first portion, which focussed on the 1917 Russian Revolution and the later Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet workers state, was carried the previous month.

Below, comrade Seymour contrasts the Hungarian Revolution to *Solidarnosc*' counterrevolutionary power bid in 1981. The pro-socialist Hungarian workers who rebelled against the oppressive Stalinist bureaucracy made it clear that they were not fighting to restore the old Hungary of the landlords, counts and Cardinal Mindszenty. A quarter century later, however, Stalinist suppression, mismanagement and corruption drove masses of Polish workers into the arms of the CIA, NATO and pope Wojtyla.

When Poland was on the brink of civil war, before the December 1981 Stalinist counter-coup, we demanded 'Stop *Solidarnosc* counter-revolution!' Waleza and Co's attempt to make Poland the front line of NATO's anti-Soviet war drive had to be stopped. Today on the 30th anniversary of the crushing of the Hungarian workers, the continuing crisis in Poland points to the burning necessity of constructing Trotskyist vanguard parties in East Europe and the USSR. Armed with the Trotskyist programme of workers political revolution in the East and socialist revolution in the West, they will lead the Eastern European workers—and their Soviet class brothers—to oust the parasitic Stalinist bureaucratic castes and establish workers democracy.

Despite all the anti-Communist propaganda about Soviet 'imperialism', the creation in 1944-48 of a Soviet sphere of influence in East Europe was a defensive military act. The Soviet dissident Roy Medvedev, who is very hostile to Stalin and quite hostile to Great Russian chauvinism, has written recently:

Hungary 1956:
Insurgents
topple Stalin
statue.



'In 1944-45 there was a unanimous feeling in Russia that the strategic frontiers of the USSR must be pushed a long way back....' ('The USSR and the Arms Race', *New Left Review*, November-December 1981) In doing so, the Kremlin bureaucracy was also forced to carry out a deformed social revolution from above, that is, the establishment in East Europe of states institutionally similar to Stalin's Russia.

But the different historical process by which the East European bureaucratically ruled workers states came into being and their different role in world politics has produced a very different political consciousness among the masses of those countries. This is quite apparent in the present Polish crisis when all bourgeois journalists, even the most anti-Communist, report that the typical man-in-the street in Moscow or Leningrad has no sympathy whatsoever for Polish *Solidarnosc*.

What's involved is not that the Stalinist system is popular in Russia and unpopular in East Europe. In fact, in the late 1940s it's very possible that the Polish, Hungarian and Czech working classes had more illusions in Stalinist 'socialism' than the Russians, who had lived with it for many a year. But in Russia the system has a certain national legitimacy. Millions of Russians have parents or grandparents who fought on the Bolshevik side in the 1918-21 civil war. Millions of Russians fought and died defending what they regarded as 'the socialist fatherland' against Nazi Germany. In East Europe, by contrast, the system was

imposed from without and therefore has shallow roots in those societies. So when the masses turn against the bureaucracy, they turn with the added force of nationalism.

Another important difference concerns the popular attitude toward Western, especially American, imperialism. Although the Russians lost 20 million people defending themselves against German imperialism, they did not achieve real peace afterward. The US A-bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki not to defeat Japan—it was already defeated—but to intimidate the Soviet Union. In the late 1940s-early 1950s Washington officials openly proclaimed 'the American century' based on a monopoly of nuclear weapons. They routinely threatened a pre-emptive nuclear first strike against Russia. The Soviet masses lived with the acute knowledge that any day Moscow, Leningrad or Kiev could be turned into another Hiroshima. The working masses of East Europe found themselves in a somewhat different situation. They could entertain the illusion that somehow they could opt out of the Cold War polarization, that they could become neutrals between Russia and the US.

For these reasons the East European Stalinist regimes have been more brittle, more unstable—for both good and ill—than the Soviet Stalinist regime. As a result one has seen in East Europe both an incipient proletarian political revolution in Hungary in 1956 and a counter-revolutionary mobilization in Poland which was checked for the time being last December. We have written much on the Polish crisis,

but the 1956 Hungarian Revolution is no doubt unfamiliar to most of you.

FORMATION OF STALINIST HUNGARY

When Stalin's Red Army took over Hungary in 1944, the bourgeoisie was not immediately expropriated either economically or politically. In 1945 the Stalinists allowed a more or less free election. Given that Hungary was then a largely peasant country, over 50 per cent of the vote went to the Smallholders Party, a bourgeois clericalist party. The urban working class and more radical petty bourgeoisie split their votes about evenly between the social democrats and Stalinists. Since the Stalinists had the real power, they imposed a coalition government called the Patriotic People's Front or People's Patriotic Front, something like that.

It was not until 1947-48 that the bourgeoisie was politically and economically expropriated. Only then were leading bourgeois politicians like Smallholders' leader Ferenc Nagy forced into exile and the arch-reactionary Cardinal Mindszenty arrested. Industry was then nationalized, and the first five-year plan was begun in 1950.

The 1945-48 'popular-front' period had a significant effect on the attitudes of the Hungarian working masses. No one wanted to go back to the pre-1944 Horthy regime. It was universally hated. However, to many people the 'popular-frontist' interregnum of 1945-48, at least on its political side, looked like the good old days compared to what came afterward.

The relatively lengthy 'popular-

frontist' period also created certain left/right tensions among the Stalinists themselves. Some of the Stalinist cadre and ranks felt impatient with the slow pace of the social transformation, what party boss Matyas Rakosi called 'salami tactics'. This incipient left opposition crystallized around the minister of the interior Laszlo Rajk, head of the national police—the hard cop in the 'popular-frontist' regime.

Rajk had perfect credentials to become a corpse in Stalin's East Europe. He had fought in the Spanish Civil War. And whereas the other leading Stalinists, Rakosi and Imre Nagy, had spent World War II in Russia, Rajk was the leader of the Communist underground in Horthy's Hungary. He was by all accounts, including those of non-Communists, a man of personal moral rectitude, rather austere and dedicated to the communist cause as he understood it. He was therefore something of a hero figure to the younger Hungarian Stalinist workers and intellectuals, who saw in him the best of their generation.

In 1949 Tito's Yugoslavia broke from the Kremlin. This sent Stalin into a murderous frenzy, seeking to kill every potential Tito in East Europe. Rajk was arrested and tortured. Reportedly they threatened to kill his baby daughter unless he confessed, which he did. At his show trial the main charge against him was that he was planning to enslave Hungary to 'Yugoslav imperialism'.

In the early 1950s, 'Titoism with its 'workers self-management' postured as a more national, more democratic, more authentic form of socialism than Stalin's Russia. Among East European Communist



Der Spiegel

Veteran Communist Pal Maleter, popular hero of the Revolution.

oppositionists there was a tendency to idealize the Yugoslav 'road to socialism' as an alternative to Stalin's terror-state, on the one hand, and Western bourgeois democracy on the other.

THE 'NEW COURSE': 1953-56

Of all the Stalinist regimes in East Europe, Rakosi's Hungary was unquestionably the most bloody. More Communists were killed under Rakosi than under Horthy. The political police, the AVH, constituted one per cent of the entire population of Budapest. They were not motivated primarily by ideological fervor—they were basically high-paid gangsters with incomes ten or

twelve times that of the average worker. When they were killed during the revolution, it became a ritual to pin their pay slips to their corpses.

The post-1953 crisis of 'de-Stalinization' had a particular impact on Hungary, where the Kremlin knew



Lessing/Magnum

Hungarian insurgents with captured Soviet armoured car in 1956.

the pressures were building up for an explosion. To forestall this the Soviet leadership forced Rakosi to step down as prime minister, and he was replaced by Imre Nagy, who had a reputation as a liberal Communist. Nagy proclaimed the New Course, sort of an early version of Dubcek's 'socialism with a human face'. But Rakosi, rightly fearing the vengeance of his legion of enemies, hung on to power and by 1955 managed to oust Nagy.

Thus, between 1953 and 1956 the Hungarian Stalinist bureaucracy was ripping itself apart through a severe polarization between the bloody Rakosi clique and the mass of Communist Party members who supported the national-liberal Nagy. Rajk's widow, Julia Rajk, was released from prison under the New Course and in the summer of 1956 here is how she addressed a group of Communist oppositionists:

'I shall never rest until those who have ruined the country, corrupted the party, destroyed thousands, and driven millions into despair receive their just punishment. Comrades, help me in this struggle.' (quoted in Bill Lomax, *Hungary 1956*, 1976)

Behind the Communist opposition stood, passively for the moment, the working masses of Hungary.

As a concession to this opposition in early October a small item appeared in the party press announcing that Laszlo Rajk would be rehabilitated. Two hundred thousand people in a city of one million showed up for this ceremony. The mass turnout for Rajk's rehabilitation foreshadowed the revolutionary explosion just two weeks later. By way of historical comparison, one can say that the event which foreshadowed the eruption of Solidarnosc was pope Wojtyla's visit to Poland in the summer of 1979. The political distance between Hungary in 1956 and Poland in 1980-81 can be measured by the political distance between Laszlo Rajk, a hard-bitten left Stalinist, and Wojtyla, who even within the framework of the Catholic church is a reactionary.

THE REVOLUTION

The Hungarian Revolution lasted only two weeks, from the anti-

Stalinist demonstration of October 23 to the re-entry of the Soviet army into Budapest on November 4. The revolution began with a largely student demonstration solidifying with the victory of Gomulka in Poland—he was considered the Polish Tito—and calling for the

reinstatement of Imre Nagy as head of the Hungarian government. Erno Gero, who replaced Rakosi after Khrushchev's 'secret speech' in February, denounced it as a counterrevolutionary mobilization, and when the unarmed demonstrators marched to the radio station to protest, the AVH opened fire on them.

Hungary then exploded. While the initial agitation was student-based, once the fighting started in most areas it was carried out by workers councils and workers militias. There were also more socially amorphous 'revolutionary committees' and the so-called 'freedom fighter' groups. But the core of the insurgency in Budapest and the other main centers were the workers councils.

The Hungarian army immediately ceased to be an effective force. Some sections of it went over to the insurgents; many soldiers turned their weapons over to the workers militias or 'freedom fighter' groups. Outside of Budapest the Soviet army tried to remain neutral, so most of the fighting was between the insurgent workers and the hated security police. Only in Budapest was there significant fighting between the revolutionary forces and Russian soldiers.

Militarily the turning point of the revolution was the attempt of the Soviet army to capture the Kilian barracks, the main stronghold of the Hungarian army within Budapest. The commander of the barracks, Colonel Pal Maleter, a veteran Communist, went over to the revolution and repulsed the Soviet attack. This setback caused the Russians to withdraw from Budapest though not from Hungary.

It's important to emphasize that this was a period of revolutionary anarchy. The Stalinist apparatus had disintegrated, but there was no centralized, nationwide revolutionary authority or organization. There were local workers councils, local revolutionary committees, local groups of 'freedom fighters'. When the Soviet army withdrew from Budapest, one saw the embryo of an effective revolutionary authority in the newly established National Guard under Maleter's command. It was composed in about equal parts of soldiers who had joined the revolutionary cause and of

workers militias. But its authority remained limited to the capital.

The Nagy government, which it must be emphasized again lacked control over events, tried to pacify the workers, telling them to lay down their arms. The Nagy regime moved successively to the right, bringing in bourgeois politicians from the 'popular-frontist' period of the late 1940s. Nagy also declared Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and appealed to the United Nations to defend Hungarian neutrality.

After the Soviet army intervened, the amorphous revolutionary committees and 'freedom fighter' groups disappeared and most of the right-wing agitators fled over the border. However, the workers councils organized a general strike which lasted well into December. In this way the proletarian centrality of the uprising was more evident in its aftermath than during the anarchic period of the revolution itself.

HUNGARY 1956 v POLISH SOLIDARNOSC

To contrast the Hungarian proletarian political revolution to the counterrevolutionary mobilization around Polish Solidarnosc, let's look at the attitude of the insurgent workers to socialism, to democracy, to the Communists, to the reactionaries and to the Soviet Union.

No one can deny that the Hungarian workers were in their overwhelming majority for socialism. The standard formula of the revolutionary organs was for 'an independent, democratic socialist Hungary'. These terms are not without significance in East Europe. When Solidarnosc issued a 44-page programmatic document in September 1981, the word 'socialism' was not once mentioned. And this was no oversight. The social democrats round Jacek Kuron proposed to mention 'socialism' so as not to appear so openly pro-capitalist, but this was overwhelmingly voted down by the delegates to the Solidarnosc congress.

While the insurgent Hungarian workers wanted a socialist economy, they believed they could combine this with parliamentary democracy. This was the weakest aspect in their consciousness. They demanded that the existing sham parliament be made a real parliament through free elections. Had this occurred the outcome might have been similar to the 1945 elections which gave a majority to the bourgeois-clerical Smallholders Party.

continued on page 8

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Hungary...

(Continued from page 7)

There was, however, also significant opposition to bourgeois parliamentarism within the revolutionary movement. One of the main centers of the revolution was the industrial city of Miskolc, sort of the Pittsburgh or Detroit of Hungary. The workers council there was led by dissident members of the Communist Party, who were well in control of the local situation. When it appeared that the Soviet forces were withdrawing, the Miskolc workers council sent a delegation to Nagy demanding that a new government be formed based on the existing workers councils, not through elections to a new parliament. Within Budapest another group of dissident Communists set up Radio Rajk, which likewise opposed restoring to power the old bourgeois parties.

There thus existed in Hungary tens of thousands of workers and radical intellectuals who thought of themselves as authentic communists. Had a Trotskyist party existed in this situation, it could have grown very rapidly and been in a position to break the majority of the pro-socialist working class from its remaining bourgeois-democratic illusions.

For the working masses in Hungary were not anti-Communist. There were, to be sure, some anti-Communist atrocities committed by lumpen gangs calling themselves 'freedom fighters'. Yet in all of the main organs of revolutionary dual power Communist Party members were elected to positions of leadership.

Most striking in this respect was that Pal Maleter emerged as the popular hero of the revolution. In innumerable interviews with the press, he insisted that he was a good Communist and would remain so. In one of these Maleter declared:

"If we get rid of the Russians don't think we're going back to the old days. And if there's people who want to go back we'll see!" To emphasize the last remark, he reached for his revolver holster

and assessed its historic significance, what they believed they were fighting for:

'The Hungarian revolution has revealed the utter degeneration of the lofty ideals of the Russian October that, forty years ago, inspired half of the world.... New roads, different from stalinist terror-communism or the social democratic trends fawning upon capitalism, are opening up before the international working-class movement.' (quoted in *ibid*)

If the Hungarian workers still had bourgeois-democratic illusions, they nonetheless were deeply hostile to capitalist reaction. Even the leaders of the Smallholders Party had to go around making speeches that they did not stand for a return to the Hungary of the counts, the landlords and the Gabor sisters. And despite the enormous sense of national unity among the insurgents, there were instances where the workers disarmed and dispersed outright clerical-nationalist or fascist gangs.

One of the more right-wing centers of the uprising was the city of Gyor near the Austrian border. Because of its location and its reputation as an anti-Communist center, a group of armed clerical-fascist adventurers attempted to take over the Gyor revolutionary committee. Within six hours they were dispersed by the local workers council. And this was in the most right-wing expression of the popular upheaval.

Along the same lines, a Yugoslav journalist in Budapest encountered a motley gang carrying anti-Communist signs:

'They were typical moderately fascist slogans—a demand to appoint Cardinal Mindszenty Hungarian Prime Minister and to expel the Communists. Only a day or two before, these people might have been hanging Communists if they had a chance. But now they had no weapons. Probably they had been disarmed by the National Guard....' (reproduced in Melvin J Lasky, ed, *The Hungarian Revolution*, 1957)

This incident alone clearly illuminates the difference between Hungary in 1956 and the Poland of the

burned the works not only of Stalin but also Lenin and even Tolstoy and Turgenev. But what stands out in the Hungarian Revolution was the degree to which the insurgents attempted to fraternize with the Russian soldiers and the degree to which they were successful. There were innumerable cases in which Russian soldiers refused to fight. In one widely reported incident a Soviet tank column gave a lift to a group of protesters marching to the parliament building, and when they got there, there was in effect a joint demonstration of Hungarian

broken from Trotskyism in 1940, refusing to defend the Soviet Union in World War II and developing the position that Stalin's Russia was a new, exploitative form of class society, 'bureaucratic collectivism'. Nonetheless, the Shachtmanite group still claimed to be orthodox Leninists. However, its advocacy of a 'bourgeois-democratic' counter-revolution (ie a sovereign parliament based on free elections) in Hungary 1956 crystallized its steady rightward motion and allowed the Shachtmanite majority to merge with official American



Workers Vanguard

SL/US protests opening of Solidarnosc US 'information' office in New York City, September 1981.

workers and Russian soldiers. Suddenly shots were fired from the top of the parliament building, most probably by the AVH. One of the reasons that the Kremlin leaders pulled their forces out of Budapest was fear of the effect on them of fraternization with the insurgent Hungarian masses.

The fresh Soviet troops sent in a week later were not only lied to about what was happening in Hungary; they were lied to that they were even going to Hungary. A leader of the insurgents in a small village in eastern Hungary recalled his encounter with the Soviet army: 'Some of the Russians thought they were in East Germany and that they would soon meet American "fascists" who had invaded the country. Other troops thought they were in the Suez Canal zone. Our people explained what was going on and what the Hungarian objectives were and what the Russians had done in Budapest. There was one captain who listened to all of this. He got redder and redder. We thought he was angry at us. Suddenly he threw his hat down and said: "Bulganin and Khrushchev would rape their own mothers!" He was very angry, but not with us.' (reproduced in *ibid*)

'State Department socialism'. A few years later Shachtman himself supported Kennedy's Bay of Pigs adventure.

A left opposition led by James Robertson, Shane Mage and Tim Wohlforth resisted the ISL/YSL's capitulation to social democracy. This grouping was the embryo of the present Spartacist tendency. In fact, Mage's polemic against the Shachtmanite majority on Hungary, 'The YSL Right Wing and the "Crisis of World Stalinism"', was a central element in the development of our tendency's understanding of proletarian political revolution and capitalist counterrevolution in East Europe (see Spartacist pamphlet, *Solidarnosc: Polish Company Union for CIA and Bankers*).

In fighting the right wing's going over to the camp of social democracy, these left Shachtmanites transcended left Shachtmanism. The events of the Hungarian Revolution affirmed Trotsky's position that the Stalinist bureaucracy was a parasitic caste as against Shachtman's or other new-class theories. The most hated, discredited Stalinists hid for their lives. Most of the others went over to the insurgency and attempted to place themselves at the head of it. They did not act like a ruling class, which consolidates in the face of a revolutionary upheaval by the oppressed class, but rather, as Trotsky had said, like a labor bureaucracy which shatters in the face of a workers' rebellion. If there is a proletarian revolutionary upsurge in this country, can you imagine factory managers, the editors of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the deans of Berkeley going over to the workers councils and seeking to give them leadership? It's inconceivable. Yet in Hungary in 1956 factory managers, directors of the mass media, rectors of universities did just that. They behaved rather like a union

AGAINST SHACHTMANISM AND MARCYISM

The Hungarian Revolution had an enormous impact on the left in West Europe and also in the United States. Especially significant for our tendency, it led to the consolidation of a left opposition in the Shachtmanite International Socialist League/Young Socialist League (ISL/YSL), and of a pro-Stalinist faction, the Marcy group, in the then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP).

The Shachtmanite tendency had

virulently anti-Communist and clericalist Solidarnosc.

The Hungarian uprising was not dominated by anti-Russian nationalism. There were, to be sure, a few incidents where mobs broke in to official Soviet bookstores and



Jean-Claude Lattes



SIPA

Unlike the pope in Poland, Hungary's Cardinal Mindszenty (left) had little influence over Hungarian workers. Lech Walesa (right) seeks blessing of the pope of counterrevolution in his 1981 visit to Rome.

and repeated, "We don't mean to go back to capitalism. We want socialism in Hungary." (quoted in *ibid*)

A few months after the revolution was suppressed, a group of Communist oppositionists put out a pamph-

bureaucracy.

The Marcyite position on Hungary is worth looking at because it represents the most sophisticated apology for the Kremlin's suppression of the revolution, far more sophisticated than anything the Stalinists could come up with. The official Stalinist line was that it was all a deep-laid imperialist plot. By contrast, the Marcyites did not so much attempt to prove empirically that it was a capitalist counter-revolution but rather maintained that in the absence of Trotskyist leadership any popular insurrection against a Stalinist regime had to go the way of 'bourgeois-democratic' counterrevolution.

This *objectivist* argument is presented clearly in the first paragraph of the main Marcyite document, V Grey's 'The Class Character of the Hungarian Uprising' (*SWP Internal Discussion Bulletin*, vol 18, no 1, January 1957). It begins:

'On October 23 the students and workers of Budapest demonstrated for a liberalization of the totalitarian Stalinist regime. Contrary to their own desires, the demonstration was swiftly converted into a full-scale, nation-wide counterrevolution throughout Hungary.' [emphasis in original]

If the workers and intellectuals in the decisive battleground of the uprising were against a counter-revolution, then how did it come about despite their desires? The Marcyites offer three reasons. One, 'It was due to the relation of class forces inside and outside Hungary.' This was obviously *objectively* given at the time. Two, 'It was due to the universal reaction against the crimes of Stalin.'

The third reason appears to stress the subjective factor: 'It was due to the fact that there was no Marxist (party) leadership to direct the struggle.' But how could a Trotskyist party develop in the Hungary of Rakosi, who in the most blood-thirsty manner crushed any form of political dissidence? The Marcyite position is a kind of Catch-22. In the absence of Trotskyist leadership, they assert, any popular upheaval against a Stalinist regime must become a counterrevolution. But in normal circumstances the Stalinists run a pretty effective police state. For a Trotskyist organization to be formed and to grow, the repressive apparatus of the Stalinist regime must be paralysed by a deep-going political crisis (eg the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, 'the Prague spring' of 1968).

THE REDS WILL BE BACK

It is this perspective which has guided our position from the onset of the Polish crisis with the Gdansk-centered general strike of August 1980 through the present. Although we fully recognized the clerical-nationalist, anti-Communist character of the leadership around Walesa, we nonetheless conditionally supported the Gdansk Accords which legalized Solidarnosc insofar as this also provided an opening for the development of a Trotskyist vanguard. As long as the situation remained relatively fluid, we oriented toward the formation of a revolutionary opposition which could fight and overcome the reactionary Solidarnosc leadership *from within*. It was only when Solidarnosc consolidated around a clear program for 'bourgeois-democratic' counterrevolution

at its first congress last September and the question of civil war was posed that we said Solidarnosc bid for power must be stopped, if necessary even by Stalinist bureaucratic suppression.

It's been stopped for the time being and in about as good a way as we could have expected. It was stopped by the Polish army, not the Russian army, and fairly bloodlessly. The conditions of repression are not at all severe. At the same time, as comrade Norden put it, for the mass of the Polish people this has been something of a cold douche, that is, a very powerful and sudden psychological political shock. Tens of thousands of Poles must be asking themselves, what went wrong? And there are probably not a few Polish workers and intellectuals who are open to a new road, not the road of clerical-nationalist counterrevolution but the road of proletarian political revolution. This is a very favorable time to construct underground Trotskyist propaganda in Poland to work for such a revolution.

While the East European Stalinist regimes—Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia—are more unstable than the Russian, it is hard to imagine a political revolution in these countries lasting more than a few months unless it extends itself to the Soviet Union, the dominant military/political power in that area. And when you consider the Soviet Union, the experience of the Bolshevik Revolution looms very large and remains very deep in the popular political consciousness.

So I'll end with an anecdote current in Russia in the 1960s after Brezhnev took over the reins of power from Khrushchev. Brezhnev, who comes from a poor background and was a metal worker in his youth, is taking his old mother around the Kremlin. He shows her the silverware which the tsars used. He takes her down to the garage and shows her his collection of foreign cars. When Nixon visited Moscow he brought a Cadillac or Thunderbird; when Willy Brandt visited Moscow he brought a Mercedes or Porsche. Brezhnev then turns to the old woman and says, 'Mother, haven't I done well for myself?' She replies, 'Yes, Leonid, you have, but what happens if the reds come back?' Well, we're the reds and we'll be back. ■

Wapping...

(Continued from page 2)

ready busily campaigning for the party that stabbed the miners in the back. A vote for Kinnock's Labour Party will be a vote for strikebreaking, for NATO's war drive, for Cold War austerity and union-busting. We say no! The miners fought for a solid year in defiance of open Labourite scabherding until they were finally defeated—ultimately not by Thatcher's cops and courts but by the treacherous passivity of the Labour/TUC 'lefts' who talked big and did nothing. A militant miner standing in opposition to the Labour Party in the next election would symbolise that road of class struggle in counterposition to parliamentary reformism and provide a platform for communists to propagandise for a revolutionary vanguard workers party.

Having done their best to bury the miners strike, Kinnock and his henchmen now seek to bury even its

memory. John W and Geoff P do their bit by trying to draw an equal sign between the miners strike and Wapping. Can anyone imagine Neil Kinnock congratulating Arthur Scargill for the way the miners ran their strike as he did with the print unions? In the final analysis the miners were defeated because the NUM leadership had nothing to counterpose to the Labour Party—militancy is not enough. But the printers strike had all the weaknesses of the miners and none of its strengths. At key points the Labourite NUM leaders defied Labour/TUC strikebreaking. But for all the evident militant aspirations of the Wapping printers (expressed most graphically in the 15 March picket which these characters pooh-poo), the fact is their struggle never broke out of the legalist stranglehold of the Labourite bureaucracy.

Had the NUM gone along with the TUC's clamour for a ballot, with its dictate of six pickets per gate, with the insane idea that a consumer boycott urging old-age pensioners not to buy coal would somehow advance the struggle against the NCB, *there would not have been a miners strike*. And had there been one, with the policies of the print union bureaucrats, what would it have looked like? Imagine the miners calling on railworkers to handle scab coal like printers were told to produce the *Times* supplements!

Geoff P and John W tell us the 'dispute' has not been defeated because it is still 'official' and there is a 'picket line' outside Wapping. In fact there are six pickets at Wapping and (at times) several thousand printers and supporters who are kept well away from the gates by union stewards. In the most craven tradition of 'informational pickets', this bureaucratic creation sanctions scabbing because there is no intention of shutting down production. As for 'official disputes', this is a truly revealing expression of the consciousness of parliamentarist British Labourism, for whom gradualism and the 'rulebook' are

the highest virtues. The teachers have been in 'official dispute' for some two years now; indeed one teachers' 'official dispute' lasted 25 years!

The subjective aspirations of Wapping militants notwithstanding, this has been the model Neil Kinnock 'strike'—stage-managed throughout and explicitly rejecting the 'violence' (ie militancy) of the miners strike. The Stalinist-influenced London leadership had the opportunity to turn the struggle around after the ranks decisively rejected Murdoch's 'final' offer and roundly booed the Dean/Dubbins leadership, but opted for more of the same dead-end strategy of reliance on boycotts and the scabby TUC, not to mention dragging the union through the bosses' courts. Meanwhile the Fleet Street Support Units, unable to offer any perspective other than pressuring the so-called 'lefts', have simply dwindled into demoralised clots of pro-Labour leftists. It is the likes of John W and Geoff P, who promote the bureaucrats' no-win 'picket lines', who have the politics of defeatism.

We advanced a strategy to win when it counted—for mass militant pickets to shut down Wapping, for effective solidarity action by other unions, particularly miners and transport workers, through blacking and picketing. But, as we emphasised, these elementary trade union tactics could only be implemented through an all-out political struggle against the sellout misleaders who acted as cops for Murdoch. We denounced the futile consumer boycott strategy for the diversion from militant struggle that it was. And as it became only too clear that the Wapping printers' struggle had been strangled in the service of strikebreaker Kinnock's electoral ambitions, we told the truth. That is our task as communists. And the many dozens of print militants who have bought and read our article will appreciate that. ■

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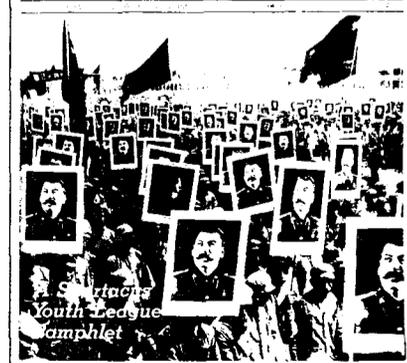
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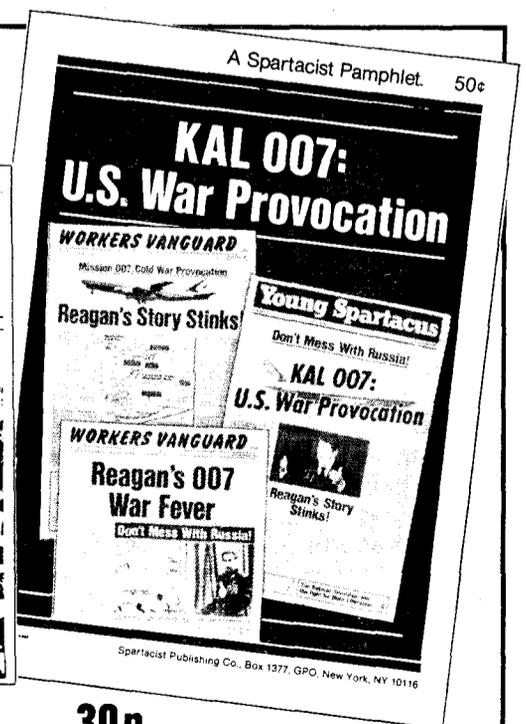
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Ireland...

(Continued from page 3)

One British group at least seems to have tumbled to this situation, after years of peddling the same pro-Republican myths. The 21 November 1985 *Socialist Organiser* writes:

'However painful it may be to Irish nationalists and those on the left who reflect their views to admit it, it is nevertheless true that the central obstacle to a united Ireland is not British opposition but the opposition of a million Irish people.'

The 21 August 1986 *Socialist Organiser* added:

'If the breakdown of the state were allowed to run its course freely, the result would be civil war: the Protestants would seize what they could and make it a through-and-through Orange state; Catholics in the Protestant heartland areas would be massacred or driven out; and the Catholic border areas would join the south, with the Protestants there suffering the same fate as Catholics in Antrim and Down.' But far from being a step towards a revolutionary position, for *Socialist Organiser* this analysis is aimed merely at justifying a position more in line with mainstream Labourism. 'Rationally and democratically', *Socialist Organiser's* solution is 'a united Ireland with regional autonomy for the mainly Protestant areas'. The flagrant absence—or even hint—of any socialist demands is quite deliberate: this is a call for a rejigged capitalist Ireland.



Derek Speirs (Report)

Clericalist anti-abortion mobilisation in the Irish Republic targets women's rights.

Socialist Organiser's proposal is just another version of what the Anglo-Irish Accord set out to achieve. But this is no surprise: these ostensible 'Trotskyists' are deeply embedded in Neil Kinnock's Cold War Labour Party, which backs Thatcher/Reagan's deal to the hilt, which sent the troops to Ireland in the first place, which denounced Bobby Sands as he was dying. Labour 'lefts' like Tony Benn, with his call for UN troops, have long been the spokesmen for various liberal imperialist 'united Ireland' solutions.

Only those inclined to see statues

move (and perhaps a few Solidarnosc-lovers who are conscious that priest-ridden Ireland is just the sort of place that the pope and the CIA would have Poland become) would choose to live in the Irish Republic, with its massive unemployment, clerical veto on any social reform and pervasive oppression of women entrenched in the laws against divorce and abortion. Thus, the recently defeated referendum to legalise divorce provoked a massive clericalist reaction. As one Irish bourgeois politician said, 'The Reformation, the Renaissance, the enlightenment, the French and American revolutions have all passed us by' (*Guardian*, 26 August). Ian Paisley is as reactionary a bigot as they come, but no Protestant worker is going to exchange the devil he knows for the one he fears.

To reformist tinkering we counterpose the Transitional Programme to mobilise the masses for the overthrow of capitalism, necessarily including demands which take up the oppression of the Catholic community in the North—but not at the expense of the Protestant workers—such as an end to discrimination in housing and jobs through decent housing and jobs for all, based on a sliding scale of hours and wages. Ireland cries out for a revolutionary solution. As we wrote in 'Theses on Ireland':

'We struggle for an Irish workers republic as part of a socialist federation of the British Isles. While the establishment of a united workers state of the whole island may be preferable, the above demand is algebraic, leaving open the question of where the Protestants fall.... Placing the demand in the context of a socialist federation has the additional advantage of highlighting the essential relationship of the proletarian revolution in the whole area and the virtual impossibility of the resolution of the Irish question on a working class basis outside this framework.' (*Spartacist* no 24, Autumn 1977)

FOR A PROLETARIAN PERSPECTIVE!

It is little wonder that this internationalist perspective does not sit well with various tailists of petty-bourgeois nationalism. For example, the 13 May *Leninist* carried a scappy and shopworn polemic against the Spartacist League which, among other things, asserts that the communalist turmoil in Northern Ireland is a 'revolutionary' situation. To be sure Lenin characterised imperialism as the epoch of proletarian revolution, but the promiscuous 'revolution'-mongering of the *Leninist*—from Turkey on the eve of its counterrevolutionary NATO coup to strife-wracked Northern Ireland today—has far more to do with its Stalinist/stagist view of revolution. Thus they claim the 'main contradiction' is 'imperialist domination of Ireland' and therefore the task of the hour is 'anti-imperialist democratic revolution'. The *Leninist* dresses up this hackneyed Stalinist 'two-stage' dogma—which insists there must first be a 'democratic' (bourgeois) stage and only later (actually never) a socialist stage—with talk about 'uninterrupted revolution' growing over from bourgeois democracy to socialism. But this is just a way to cover up uninterrupted class collaboration, uninterrupted bourgeois rule and uninterrupted revision of Lenin's understanding that the bourgeois state must be smashed

and cannot be reformed.

Similarly they claim that the SL 'fails to differentiate between the violence of the oppressed and the violence of the oppressors' through our call to combat Orange and Green terror. What is really at stake here is their failure to distinguish between a class line and national/communal division. Marxists have always opposed individual terrorism as a strategy, but we differentiate

No credit

James Larkin exemplifies tradition of class struggle internationalism for Irish proletariat. For workers revolution throughout the British Isles!



between defensible terrorism (eg the Brighton bombing) directed against the armed forces and political representatives of the imperialist state and indefensible criminal terrorism (like the Ballykelly bombing) indiscriminately targetting the population at large. Thus we demand the immediate release of Patrick Magee, jailed for the Brighton bombing, along with the other Republican political prisoners held in Britain's prisons and torture camps. But we condemn the IRA's recent threat to kill anyone working on police/military sites, which has already led to the murder of a 22-year-old Protestant electrician. Would the *Leninist* make no distinction between terrorist actions carried out by the Cypriot EOKA (led by the Greek fascistic revanchist Grivas) against British occupation forces and its massacres of innocent Turkish villagers?

Most amazing of all the *Leninist* denounces us as 'economistic' for pointing out that 'Catholic and Protestant workers alike rallied in class solidarity behind the British miners'. It was the context of this bitter class battle which made the attempt to blow away Thatcher and her gang the most popular action ever undertaken by the IRA in Britain. Under the impact of sharp class struggle the consciousness of workers can change, just as it did for the many miners (including the army veterans who returned their medals for service in Ireland) who came to realise that women, blacks, gays and Irish were among their staunchest allies. The links forged across the Irish Sea during that strike are exactly what the British and Irish proletarian revolutions need. We look to a revival of the traditions of joint struggle represented by Larkin, Connolly and their Clydeside comrades.

Recently there was an unofficial strike of Northern Ireland power workers. This powerful group of overwhelmingly Protestant workers were crucial in the success of the reactionary 1974 Ulster general strike. This year they refused to be the battering ram for the Loyalist demagogues who wanted a repeat of 1974. Now they are striking for their 'economist' demands. A revol-

utionary party would intervene in this situation to build on the links developed in the miners strike and seek to break these workers from the grip of Loyalism.

Key to this understanding is the Trotskyist perspective of permanent revolution that only the proletariat at the head of all the oppressed can solve the democratic tasks in the backward and underdeveloped countries. But ostensible Trot-

skyists like Cliff Slaughter's Workers Revolutionary Party and Workers Power are essentially no different from the Stalinist *Leninist* in promoting petty-bourgeois nationalism. After ritual genuflection to the need for a 'socialist programme' the WRP hails Sinn Fein's 'leadership of the national struggle in opposition to the treachery of the Irish bourgeoisie' and 'congratulates' it for fighting 'with an Armalite in one hand and ballot box in the other' (*Workers Press*, 22 March). Workers Power too parades a fig-leaf of talk about a 'workers republic' while endorsing the nationalist schema for the forcible reunification of Ireland. And what is the role of British revolutionaries? Why, 'Through the trade unions we must put pressure on the Labour Party' (*Workers Power*, February 1986). No matter that the Labour Party (including its 'left') has a hideous record of betrayal, silence and overt participation in British imperialism's crimes in Ireland. We seek to split the Labour Party, winning its working-class base from the social-imperialist traitors, and the issue of Ireland will be a crucial programmatic component in this break.

In the final analysis, these pseudo-revolutionaries' capitulation to pro-imperialist Labourism is counterposed to their vicarious enthusiasm over Republicanism. But at base they are all united in their repudiation of a perspective of workers revolution throughout the British Isles, subordinating the interests of the proletariat to Labourism on the one hand and Republicanism on the other. While combatting imperialist repression and all aspects of sectarian privilege, we recognise that the only democratic resolution in Ireland necessitates the smashing of capitalist class rule. We fight to forge Trotskyist vanguard parties on both sides of the border and both sides of the Irish Sea. Defend the Catholic communities! For programmatically based anti-sectarian workers militias to combat imperialist rampage and Orange and Green terror. No to NATO's Ireland deal—Defend the Soviet Union! Not Orange against Green but class against class! ■

Reagan...

(Continued from page 12)

bedrooms. Reagan and Rehnquist, Bitburg and Botha: a lot of people are plain fed up with the Reaganites and ready to say, screw you! And just when the bosses think it's lock-out city, union struggles flare up on the East and West Coasts. The objective possibility exists to *bring Reagan down through sharp class struggle, with the working class at the head of all the oppressed.*

BUST THE UNION-BUSTERS!

When the longshoremen struck, the Spartacist League rushed out a special four-page *Workers Vanguard* supplement headlined 'Let's Win This One!' We knew that the ILA was a key powerhouse of labor, with strong picket line traditions and a substantial militant black component in the membership. The strikers could not be so easily isolated, like Hormel meatpackers in rural Minnesota or Hispanic canner workers in Watsonville, California. And millions were prepared to rally behind the longshoremen: *finally*, they said, someone was taking on the racist labor-haters. Especially in the South, where the ILA locals are outposts of black union power, our perspective of class struggle and revolutionary integrationism got a solid reception.

In three days Spartacist teams hit 36 cities, distributing a quarter million WV supplements to longshoremen on all three coasts, to Boeing workers, striking steel workers, transit workers in New York, Philly and Chicago, and throughout black communities. ILAers deeply appreciated the supplement: we were virtually the only ones to defend them while the battle was on. The issue was a hit in black neighborhoods as well: sympathetic black merchants displayed the supplement prominently in their stores, check-out clerks in supermarkets were stuffing them in customers' shopping bags. Our paper struck a deep chord because it addressed the burning questions confronting the workers and oppressed: a program to bust the union-busters, to smash the Klan, to forge a workers party to defeat the war on blacks and labor with sharp class struggle.

BREAK WITH THE DEMOCRATS! DOWN WITH THE ANTI-SOVIET WAR DRIVE!

One striking longshoreman in Jersey spoke for millions of unionists when he bitterly noted, 'The whole labor movement should have been out there with PATCO; if we had stopped them at PATCO, then the auto workers, Teamsters, none of those guys would have taken concessions, we wouldn't be in the situation we are today.' But the PATCO debacle didn't have to happen, and it can be reversed. While the air traffic controllers were striking, in September 1981 the AFL-CIO bureaucrats called what turned out to be the largest labor demonstration in American history as 500,000 trade unionists marched through Washington, DC. If only a fraction of that strength had been mobilized in picketing out the airports, the strike would have been won in a few days. But the labor fakers kept the airports working, and distributed stickers reading, 'Solidarity in '81 - Victory in '82'. Their answer is not class struggle, but electing Democrats.

The Democratic Carter-Mondale administration, which slapped a Taft-Hartley injunction on the 1977-78 miners strike, paved the way for Reagan union-busting. (They also designed the plan for smashing PATCO that the Reagan gang carried out.) And since then Democrats have done their share of strike-breaking: Koch against New York City transit workers, Arizona governor Babbitt and Minnesota governor Perpich calling out the National Guard against Phelps Dodge strikers and Hormel workers, and from Philly to Detroit black Democratic mayors are the hatchet men for Reagan austerity. The pro-Democratic party labor fakers aren't about to mobilize against government strikebreaking, either.

Behind the bureaucracy's capitulation is anti-Soviet militarization. Since the ILA tops support the war drive, they ordered the membership to work the military cargo in Norfolk and other struck ports, scabbing on their own strike to aid Reagan/Botha's pro-apartheid puppet Savimbi.

Significantly, the last full-scale dock strike took place during the Vietnam War in 1971 when the ILA and ILWU [West Coast dockers' union] struck at the same time. But within six days the ILWU buckled under to a Taft-Hartley injunction. Before the 'cooling off' period against the ILWU expired, the ILA went back to work, and the strike seasawed from coast to coast so that both wouldn't be out at once. Behind this was the unwillingness of the pro-capitalist bureaucracy, both the ILA's Gleason and the ILWU's 'progressive' Harry Bridges, to confront the state, particularly in the middle of a war. And so longshoremen were made to eat Nixon's wage controls. While outfits like the Workers League capitulated to business unionism, refusing to even mention the war, the SL demanded: 'For Labor Political Strikes Against the War and Nixon's "Wage-Strike" Freeze!' (*Workers Vanguard* no 2, November 1971).

FOR WORKERS ACTION TO BRING DOWN REAGAN

Ever since Reagan busted PATCO, the American ruling class has been on the rampage against the labor movement - cutting wages, slashing benefits and taking away union gains won over decades of hard struggle. The *New York Times* (5 October) brags about management playing hardball, in a long article on 'Business Brings Back the Lock-out'. Beginning with the attack on black USWA workers at the Hess Oil refinery in St Croix, US Virgin Islands, this trend has gone national as John Deere and USX shut the gates. Last month Brooklyn Union Gas did just that to 2,300 clerks and mechanics in the Transport Workers Union. The boss arrogantly remarked, 'We have a policy at this company - no contract, no work.' But now some of labor's big guns are being forced to stand up or surrender - and the workers are in no mood to surrender without a fight.

A walkout on the Atlantic and Gulf Coast docks would in short order disrupt much of the American economy - the *Journal of Commerce* (3 October) headlined, 'Shippers Fear Heavy Losses If Strike Lasts Beyond 5 Days'. It would also disrupt the Pentagon's shipment of arms to its anti-Communist allies, from Zionist Israel to Reagan's contras around the globe. The late Isaac Deutscher caught this when during

the Vietnam War he told a gathering of Berkeley students that he would trade all their antiwar protests for just one dock strike. At the same time, the government would surely attack any serious longshore or Boeing strike as a threat to 'national security' if not outright aid to 'Soviet-sponsored terrorism'. Any strike here will become political from the start. We say: fight the anti-Soviet war drive by waging class war against the warmongers!

To win, the workers will need to mobilize support from broad sections of the American people. And this can be done. There is a reaction to Reagan reaction abroad in the land. In the black ghettos and Hispanic barrios there is deep hatred for everything this KKK-endorsed president stands for. Farmers, traditionally held up as the backbone of middle America, are in desperate straits. Even yuppie baby boomers can't afford to buy a house, and factory workers have seen their real wages decline steadily for the past decade and a half. The campuses are outraged over Reagan's flagrant backing of apartheid South Africa, and remembering the US' humiliating defeat in Vietnam, public opinion overwhelmingly wants nothing to do

with the CIA's contras in Nicaragua. And anyone who smokes a joint, buys a copy of *Playboy* or rents an X-rated video cassette is looking over their shoulder for the Meese police.

This country can explode, rising up against the Reagan White House. But for the workers and oppressed to emerge victorious, what's needed is a conscious proletarian leadership. And that means acting, as Lenin said communists must, as a 'tribune of the people', championing the cause of all the oppressed. A black longshoreman in Philadelphia who was prepared 'to do what it takes to stop the cuts' spoke bitterly of the horrendous firebombing of the black MOVE commune: 'Wilson Goode and everybody else responsible for those murders should be put in the electric chair', he said. An authoritative, combative workers leadership must be built in this country in irreconcilable opposition to the racist, pro-imperialist trade-union bureaucracy and their capitalist masters. The Spartacist League is seeking to build such a class-struggle workers party to lead the struggle for a workers government that will finally achieve freedom and justice for all the exploited and oppressed. ■

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American workers move

Class struggle can break Reagan

Almost unreported in the British media, a major outbreak of strike action hit the United States earlier this month. We abridge below an article on these strikes from Workers Vanguard no 413, 10 October 1986, newspaper of the Spartacist League/US.

When 30,000 longshoremen hit the bricks at 12.01 am, October 1, a knock-down, drag-out class battle was shaping up. East Coast dockers were fighting for all American labor. The maritime bosses were taken by surprise: they weren't expecting a walkout. They figured the dock workers would come crawling, do anything to avoid a strike. But the longshoremen said, 'No more givebacks!' Tens of thousands of tons of cargo were left sitting idle in the ports. Militant mass pickets shut down New York's key containerized facilities tight, and for a change it was the scabs who were on the receiving end (one reportedly broke his legs). It started off as the biggest labor confrontation since the coal miners strike in 1978-79. Even though within three days the leadership of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) called it off, much to the disgust of militant strikers, it's not over. Contracts were extended, 'cooling out' the situation for 45 days.



Arthur Grace

Reagan honours Nazi SS war criminals at Bitburg, Germany.

Longshore strike pickets at Port Elizabeth, New Jersey educate would-be scab lorry driver.



At the same time, on the West Coast Boeing aircraft workers were overwhelmingly rejecting a proposed contract. Twenty thousand workers packed into Seattle's Kingdome on October 3: seething mad, they shouted down union bureaucrats of the International Association of Machinists (IAM), demanding 'Strike, strike, strike!' Militants wore T-shirts with the slogan, 'The war is on!' One press account graphically depicted the massive anger and disgust for the gutless IAM tops:

'... machinists who assembled in the Kingdome to vote on the proposal ... booed their negotiating team, they booed the priest who gave the invocation and they especially booed the tyke who sang the national anthem, "America," and "God Bless America" and led them in the Pledge of Allegiance ... then hooted derisively as the union's general vice president, Justin Ostrow, said, "This is the best contract we can bring you short of a strike".' (*Seattle Post Intelligencer*, 4 October)

Ostrow reportedly remarked later that when your membership boos a

priest and the national anthem, you know you're in trouble. You bet! But the bureaucrats would rather be in trouble with the membership than with the companies. Shut down Boeing now! Smash the two-tier wage system! For a nationwide aerospace strike!

'Despite a series of recent union defeats and sellouts, the strike action is continuing. And now it's spreading to the heavy battalions of labor. Aircraft workers have got some muscle—use it! When ILA longshoremen—whose business union leadership is so conservative that it backed Reagan—and workers in defense plants are ready to walk, that spells bad news for the White House and the bosses.

Six years of Reagan reaction have systematically attacked virtually every sector of the American population. Blacks and other minorities had few illusions with the KKK's favorite 'Kandidate' in the White House. The limited civil rights gains of the 1960s have been under attack, busing rolled back in Norfolk and elsewhere. The brutal massacre of the black MOVE commune in

Philadelphia had the signature of the Reagan years all over it. But Reagan's apocalyptic Star Wars fantasies can't be financed simply by squeezing welfare [dole] mothers and the poor. So the unions came under the gun. When Reagan busted the PATCO air traffic controllers union in 1981, it set the stage for a massive concessions drive and outright union-busting. Scabherding on the elite PATCO union was followed by scabherding against Greyhound strikers, Phelps Dodge copper miners, Hormel packinghouse workers.

But today it looks like Reagan could be on the edge. A little over a year ago he shocked Americans by commemorating Nazi SS war criminals at Bitburg; now even most of Reagan's Republican Party has deserted him in overriding his veto of token sanctions imposed on Botha's apartheid South Africa. And with the Supreme Court headed by arch-bigot Rehnquist, one of the leading witchhunters behind the recent sodomy decision, even white middle-class Americans are worried about the sex police snooping around their

continued on page 11