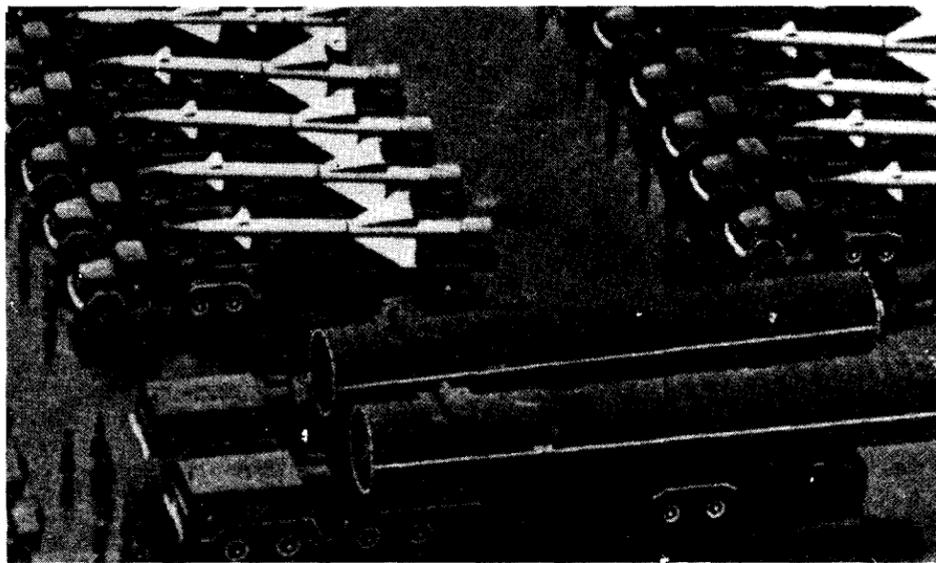


Defend the Soviet Union through world revolution!

Gorbachev talks "peace" with war-crazy Reagan



TASS



Guardian

Soviet missiles on display in Red Square (left). Gorbachev with imperialist warmonger Reagan (right). Disarmament hoax endangers Soviet workers state.

The following article is adapted from Workers Vanguard no 443, 1 January 1988.

It almost seemed like the fulfilment of a Christmas wish: peace on earth, goodwill towards men. Here was Rambo Reagan glad handing and joking with the head of the Soviet "evil empire", raising toasts to peace and disarmament. The Marriot Hotel temporarily renamed its restaurant the Cafe Glasnost. And Washingtonians who had lined the streets for days to get a glimpse of the Soviet leader cheered when Gorbachev forayed out from his ZIL limousine to meet them in the flesh. Little children hoisted on their fathers' shoulders waved the American flag in one hand and the Soviet red flag in the other.

To hard-core right-wingers the sight of government workers at the Department of Commerce taking down the Great Seal of the United States and replacing it with an emblem showing the stars and stripes combined with the hammer and sickle must have seemed like the anti-Communist soap opera *Amerika* come true. Jeane Kirkpatrick warned Reagan not "to set aside a lifetime of caution concerning what communists are like and how we should deal with them" – to wit, "the only good 'un is a dead 'un". The day before Gorbachev arrived, the Zionists staged a demonstration of 200,000. But on this one, die-hard Russia haters were out in the cold, leaving right-winger Howard Phillips to complain that Reagan was serving

as a "useful idiot for Kremlin propaganda".

That the year 1987, which began with the screening of *Amerika*, ended with Mikhail and Raisa Gorbachev filling television screens singing rounds of the Russian ballad "Moscow Nights" in the White House over and over is testimony to how far the Reagan administration's fortunes have fallen. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* (11 December 1987) remarked: "Americans compare him [Gorbachev] not only to his doddering predecessors, but to their own president, twenty years Mr. Gorbachev's senior, who is so clearly in the twilight of his career." In fact, a *Washington Post/ABC News* poll following the summit found that more Americans had a favourable view of Gorbachev than of Reagan. As one conservative Republican quipped, "The good news is Gorbachev got out of town and didn't win the nomination."

The popular euphoria over the Reagan/Gorbachev summit demonstrated the superficiality of the anti-Communist Rambo mentality in the US population. People overwhelmingly desire peaceful relations with the Soviet Union. But the war-crazed nuclear nuts who rule the declining American empire have no such intentions. If they are willing to limit some existing (particularly Soviet) arms, it's because they're madly developing new weapons systems themselves. "Arms control" is a hoax, which in no way reduces the threat of nuclear war hanging over mankind. The Soviet Union should build and acquire the weapons it considers necessary without encum-

bering defence of the land of the October Revolution by "arms control" agreements with its implacable imperialist enemy.

Behind the euphoria there is a fundamental conflict: the Stalinists in the Kremlin want coexistence, the imperialists in the White House want *counterrevolution*. Just a week before Gorbachev's arrival, Reagan denounced "Communist tyranny" in a speech to the ultraright Heritage Foundation. Before the summit Reagan declared that the Soviet leader had better come prepared to "bargain" over "regional issues" such as Afghanistan and Nicaragua. But when Gorbachev obligingly sweetened his terms for a Soviet withdrawal from Kabul and offered to cut off military aid to Managua, Reagan pretended not to hear. And on the heels of the summit, the Pentagon set off a nuclear blast in Nevada. Moscow, which had been observing a unilateral testing moratorium, countered with a test of its own.

For 70 years – under Republican and Democratic administrations, in periods of Cold War and "detente" (the unmentionable "D-word" in Washington for most of Reagan's presidency) – US imperialism and its allies have maintained their goal of overthrowing the Russian workers revolution which shook the world. From the American expeditionary force sent to Arkhangelsk in 1918 to snuff out the newborn Soviet state to the deployment of contra cutthroats in Nicaragua and Afghanistan today, the imperialist rulers have waged bloody war against the USSR. There can be no peace on this planet

until capitalist exploitation, the source of imperialist war, is rooted out. The road to peace lies through defending and extending the gains of October through world socialist revolution.

AFGHANISTAN, NICARAGUA: CRUSH REAGAN'S CONTRAS!

In Washington, the Kremlin bureaucracy once again made clear its willingness to sacrifice other people's revolutions on the altar of "peaceful coexistence". Gorbachev reportedly told Reagan that the Soviet Union would cut off military aid to the embattled Sandinista regime in Nicaragua – restricting arms shipments to "small arms for police work" – if the US stopped supplying the contras. This would represent a betrayal of the Nicaraguan Revolution, for which more than 50,000 workers and peasants have already given their lives. Nicaragua faces a host of US bases and airfields just over the border in Honduras and is besieged by the CIA's mercenary terrorists striking from Honduras and Costa Rica. A cutoff of vital Soviet aid would be a green light to the imperialist warmongers.

Even as the ink was drying on the missile treaty, Reagan was pushing hard for renewed aid to his contra killers. The White House surfaced a Nicaraguan traitor, former Sandinista Army major Roger Miranda Bengoechea, putting in his mouth tales of Nicaraguan plans to conquer Central America with Soviet support. Congress agreed to \$14 million in

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NUM elections:

Miners: break with Labourism!

As elections for NUM president take place, the mineworkers union is at a crossroads. Confronting a viciously reactionary government which has already carried out massive pit closures and would like to privatise the coal industry, miners are well aware that the existence of their union, jobs and communities is at stake.

A little over two and a half years ago the biggest class battle in this country for decades came to an end. For 12 months the miners and their wives held at bay the concentrated forces of the capitalist state. The strike inspired millions of trade unionists and minorities who justly hate Thatcher and understood that a victory for the miners would also be a decisive victory for them. In the end the strike was defeated because it was stabbed to death by the Labour Party/TUC misleaders. Judas Kinnock, as he was reviled in the pit villages, supported Thatcher's scab ballot and violence-baited miners for defending their picket lines. The right-wing trade union tops ordered their members to scab, while the "lefts" promised solidarity but refused to call their unions out in joint strike action. Twice the

dockers struck but were ordered back to work. The Labourite misleaders did not want to shut down the country because they did not want to fight for genuine workers power.

The strike exposed starkly the vile rottenness of the Labour Party and its pretensions to represent the interests of the working class. It posed the burning need for a revolutionary party that can lead the working masses to victory. Anyone who claims the mantle of a workers leader must be judged according to this criterion. Thousands of militants in the coalfields and elsewhere look to Scargill, not Kinnock, for leadership. But despite the Labour Party's treachery during the miners strike, Scargill brought out the NUM vote for the arch-scab Kinnock. In backing him, therefore, Scargill bears a major responsibility for maintaining the Labour traitors' hold over the working class. For this reason we do not advocate a vote for Scargill in the NUM elections.

John Walsh, the right-wing non-entity who is running against Scargill, is obviously worthless and backed by the coal bosses. His campaign is a bad joke and he doesn't stand the chance of a snowball in hell. Walsh



Observer

Miners gala, June 1987: Arthur Scargill shares platform with Judas Kinnock.

wants to negotiate with the scab UDM and go along with the Coal Board's union-busting "flexible working" arrangements. Earlier he was a proponent of the divisive incentive scheme that pits miner against miner. During the strike he stated that the British judiciary is fair! Walsh obscenely blames the NUM's difficulties on the militancy of the union. His message is "class struggle doesn't pay". But union concessions won't appease the bosses. Even the government admits this. As one Coal Board official put it: "Mr Scargill's opponents on the executive are decent men whom we could talk to, even if they have a naive belief that if they offer concessions we will be able to do the same. We cannot." (*Financial Times*, 21 December 1987).

Scargill argues that miners should re-elect him because the Coal Board, the government and the bourgeois media hate him. It is undoubtedly the case that the bosses, as well as Neil Kinnock & Co, would prefer someone more pliable than Scargill. And many militants in the coalfields have rallied behind Scargill, not only because they take his rhetoric as good coin but also as a gesture of defiance toward their enemies. Predictably, all the fake-revolutionary organisations have come out for Scargill. His refusal to break with Kinnock would hardly dissuade groups like the Socialist Workers Party, Workers Revolutionary Party, Workers Power, etc since they also advocated a vote to the Labour traitor as a "lesser evil". In doing so, they acted as part of the syphilitic chain which leads straight from the Labour tops through the "lefts" like Scargill to the ostensible revolutionary left.

Following the miners strike the trade union tops consciously demobilised social struggle so that Kinnock could pursue the yuppie vote. Along with other "lefts" Scargill covered up Kinnock's treachery. Thus during the Wapping lockout the "left" print union leaders demobilised picket lines in favour of a toothless consumer boycott in order that Kinnock would not be embarrassed by militant class struggle. Other trade union leaders sat on their hands: the struggle was isolated and smashed.

The class peace enforced by the bureaucracy has paved the way for intensified Thatcherite reaction. Industrial jobs continue to be slashed in

steel, rail and mining. The working class and poor are butchered because no money is spent on the crumbling National Health Service or on decent and safe transport. These attacks can be reversed through sharp class struggle. For example, after the King's Cross inferno, had the rail union leaders taken strike action, they would have rallied the support of hundreds of thousands of people against the butcher Thatcher, but the trade union leadership has continued in retreat. The miners strike that began at Frickley last summer over the Coal Board's draconian disciplinary code was stifled by prominent Scargill supporter and Yorks NUM leader Jack Taylor, while Scargill himself maintained a studious silence.

CLASS STRUGGLE V LABOURITE TREACHERY

It is necessary to forge a leadership in the trade unions based on a programme sharply counterposed to all variants of reformist social democracy. A central issue is complete independence of the unions from the capitalist state. Surely miners have had plenty of firsthand experience with the cops and the courts. Indeed, hundreds of militants remain sacked while Welsh mineworkers Dean Hancock and Russell Shankland languish in jail. This makes all the more disgusting the antics of the South Wales NUM leadership in threatening to use the bosses' courts to prevent the NUM elections.

When the coal industry was nationalised, mineworkers were fed the phoney lie that they were now partners with management. A variety of class collaborationist practices, such as arbitration and the dues checkoff, were institutionalised. While the Coal Board's new disciplinary code must be smashed, the old system of "impartial" arbitration is no answer for trade unionists. Disputes should be settled on the spot through union action. And while Scargill is certainly right that big-time UDM scabherders like Lynk and Prendergast have no place in any genuine union, the NUM has tied its own hands by maintaining the dues checkoff. When the Coal Board collects NUM subscriptions, it gives them enormous power. Not surprisingly, it has used this leverage to discriminate

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TROTSKY

Lenin on defence of the Soviet Union.

Reformists and Stalinists of all stripes hail the recent missile agreement signed by Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev as a step forward for the cause of "peaceful coexistence". The leaders of the October Revolution and the founders of the Soviet Union took a counterposed view, denouncing any notion of a

lasting peace with the imperialist warmongers as a foolish dream.



LENIN

When we discussed the Treaty of Brest, when the question of peace arose early in January 1918, we did not yet know when, and in which other countries, armies would begin to disintegrate....Unless we defended the socialist republic by force of arms, we could not exist. A ruling class would never surrender its power to an oppressed class. And the latter would have to prove in practice that it is capable not only of overthrowing the exploiters, but also of organising its self-defence and of staking everything on it. We have always said that there are different kinds of wars. We condemned the imperialist war, but we did not reject war in general. Those who accused us of being militarists were hopelessly muddled. And when in the report of the Berne Conference of yellow socialists I read that Kautsky had said that the Bolsheviks had introduced not socialism but militarism, I smiled and shrugged my shoulders. As if there was ever a big revolution in history that was not connected with war! Of course not! We are living not merely in a state, but in a system of states, and it is inconceivable for the Soviet Republic to exist alongside of the imperialist states for any length of time. One or the other must triumph in the end. And before that end comes there will have to be a series of frightful collisions between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois states.

- V. I. Lenin, "Report of the Central Committee to the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)", 18 March 1919

WORKERS HAMMER

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Workers Hammer sub drive success

Congratulations to all comrades on the successful completion of the Autumn 1987 *Workers Hammer* subscription drive. Beginning in early October and concluding with the Spartacist League national dayschool on 22 November, the sub drive netted a total of 721 points, 120 per cent of our national quota of 600. The 277 subscriptions sold included 44 joint subs to *Workers Hammer*, *Workers Vanguard* (newspaper of the SL/US) and *Women and Revolution*, 37 WH/WV joint subs and 139 subs. to WH only.

This autumn's sub drive was planned as a campus-centred push and over half the total points were sold on the university campuses to new student subscribers. Special packets containing articles on the events in the Soviet Union and on the struggle against apartheid in South Africa were offered with joint subscriptions. Interest was particularly keen about Gorbachev's Russia. Unlike the anti-Soviet Labourite left or the fragmented Stalinist milieu, we in the Spartacist

coverage of the Soviet Union not available in the publications of any other tendency.

In addition to campuses within Sheffield, Birmingham and London, we made trips to regional campuses in every area. London sold 57 points each at the University of Kent and the University of Essex in Colchester as well as subscribing a modest number of Cambridge students at the alma mater of Kim Philby. Comrades from London and Sheffield went to Scotland where we sold an impressive 87 points—most of them at the university campuses in Edinburgh, Glasgow and at St Andrews. Sheffield teams went to Leeds and Manchester, a joint team from Birmingham and London went to Liverpool.

New readers were attracted to *Workers Hammer* in large part because of our ongoing coverage of the fight against fascist thugs in the Sheffield city centre. Especially given the Socialist Workers Party's (SWP) grovel-



Sheffield, November 28: Spartacists and other anti-fascist militants at Exchange St, defending area from NF scum.

heavily involved in defending our sales teams in Sheffield against the NF/BNP fascist thugs. On 24 October, a united-front mobilisation in the city centre brought out members of the NALGO Black Workers Group, Sheffield Defence Campaign, Workers Power, students from Sheffield University, individual trade unionists from the Post Office and the NUM. For three weeks afterwards, the streets were cleansed of the fascist filth. But the fight continues (see articles this issue).

It is no accident that the same fake-left organisations who prostrated themselves before Kinnock in the last election have taken the stance of anti-fascists in Sheffield. Against the stream of despairing Labourite reformism, we fight to mobilise the independent power of the working class in alliance with all the oppressed to smash the ominous growth of race-hate terrorists in Thatcher's Britain. This sort of working-class action requires a leadership not tied to the dead-end of parliamentary lobbies and NATO-loving Labour "statesmanship" of the sort that knifed the heroic miners strike. Our revolutionary opposition to support for arch-scab Judas Kinnock was another point which attracted interest throughout the sub drive.

The well-attended Spartacist League

national dayschool concluded the hard work of the subscription drive. Presentations at the dayschool included a report on the Soviet Union by comrade Fred Purdy, recently returned from Moscow and Leningrad during the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, a talk on the revolutionary working-class strategy to smash apartheid in South Africa by comrade Cheryl Myall and a report from the Sheffield anti-fascist campaign by comrade Patrick Sliney, a Spartacist supporter and former car worker sacked for his efforts to stop the use of scab coal by British Leyland during the miners strike. New subscribers and leftists from a wide variety of national and political backgrounds turned out for the meeting.

The national winner of the sub drive was comrade Debbie from London (100 points); runners up were comrades Mike (60 points) and Pat (47 points) from London. Honourable mention goes to comrade Jo from Birmingham and Eibhlin from London (43 points each).

Workers Hammer welcomes our new readers and our resubscribers. We will strive to make our Marxist monthly newspaper readable and informative as well as the only publication to put forward the Bolshevik programme for proletarian revolution in Britain. ■

sub drive final totals



Local	Quota*	Total*	%
Birmingham	90	104	116
London	305	446	146
Sheffield	205	159	78
At Large	—	12	—
National	600	721	120
* In points			

League have a coherent analysis of the nature of the Soviet degenerated workers state, defending it unconditionally against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. Our slogans "Return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky!" and "Defend the Soviet Union through World Revolution!" underline the fact that while the Stalinist bureaucratic caste remains in power, the land of October will be in mortal danger from rapacious imperialism. Our new readership can look forward to more authentic Leninist

ling refusal to defend themselves or anyone else against fascist attack in Sheffield, those students who had previously seen the SWP as the "only game in town" politically were given a communist alternative. On a number of campuses, spirited discussions and debates took place with SWP members centring on the Spartacists' fight for a united-front mobilisation to smash the fascist threat in Sheffield versus the SWP's explicit "ignore the Nazis" position. Throughout the sub drive, comrades and friends were

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Thatcher's subway inferno

Butcher of the Belgrano hits King's Cross

The following article first appeared in and is adapted from Workers Vanguard no 441, 27 November 1987.

King's Cross station is the busiest rail and underground junction in London, serving some 250,000 people daily: working people, shoppers, schoolchildren, tourists. Those unfortunate enough to be there at 7.30 on the evening of Wednesday, 18 November 1987 found themselves caught in a blazing inferno. At King's Cross, as at most other tube stations, there are no smoke detectors, no automatic sprinkling system, no fire alarms, no illuminated exit signs. And so they died.

Ceramic tiles exploded off the ceiling, concrete walls cracked, metal ticketing machines melted. In a matter of minutes, a sheet of flame and smoke emanating from a 50-year-old wooden escalator had engulfed the station's huge ticket concourse. Some 31 are now dead. Others are fighting for their lives at hospitals with scorched lungs and burns over three-quarters of their bodies. Had the blaze erupted only an hour or two earlier, the death toll would have been ten or a hundred times higher.

This was no accident - it was wanton murder through negligence. The government has deliberately run down the antiquated London underground, slashing its subsidies, "privatising" maintenance and refusing to implement elementary fire detection and prevention measures. And the finger of guilt points straight to the same war criminal who ordered more than 300 young sailors aboard the Argentine cruiser *General Belgrano* killed in cold blood more than five years ago: Margaret Thatcher.

Even Thatcherite tabloids like the *Daily Express* (20 November 1987) headlined, "They Knew Tube Was a Death Trap". That very day, London Regional Transport (LRT), the government agency which runs the underground system, threatened to discipline King's Cross transport workers for distributing leaflets to passengers warning of fire risks! Also on 18 November the LRT announced it was slashing several million pounds more in expenditures,

King's Cross, the day after. Thirty-one died - victims of decaying British capitalism.

including one-third of its escalator improvement budget.

From 1980-85 there were 13 major fires on the underground. After the Oxford Circus blaze in November 1984, a report issued by the London Passenger Transport Research Group warned: "The London underground system has fallen far below the safety standards elsewhere." It correctly predicted that if major fire prevention steps were not implemented "...luck has a habit of running out". The government's cynical response was to ban smoking on trains, a measure it extended after the King's Cross inferno. Meanwhile, in the maniacal pursuit of its objective of turning London's mass transit into a privately operated "profit-making" operation, the Thatcher government cut expenditures to the bone.

Platform staff at King's Cross had been axed from 16 to 10 and the cleaning staff from 14 to 2. One maintenance worker who told the press that these old escalators required enormous amounts of grease, making them an obvious firetrap, was promptly warned by management, to stop talking to the media. A project to rip out building materials covered

with "black asbestos", which burns with ferocity while giving off lethal fumes, was discontinued last August when the money was diverted to "securitise" the station - ie, to nail impoverished riders who can't pay the exorbitant fares. At the time, contractors were told by a senior LRT official: "It's a gamble, but we just have to pray there won't be a fire until March 1988 when we can start spending on this again" (*Daily Express*, 20 November 1987).

The sole piece of firefighting apparatus on site, a 1928-model manually operated "waterfog" device, was locked behind an oak door off the machinery room beneath the escalator. The station has no emergency exits nor effective warning system, so even as passengers were trying to flee through entrances which had turned into chimneys, people continued to enter the station as passing trains dropped off passengers. Plans for a new pedestrian tunnel connecting platforms internally had been shelved for "cost considerations", so passengers trapped below were directed up another escalator into the fiery concourse.

But for the heroism of the King's

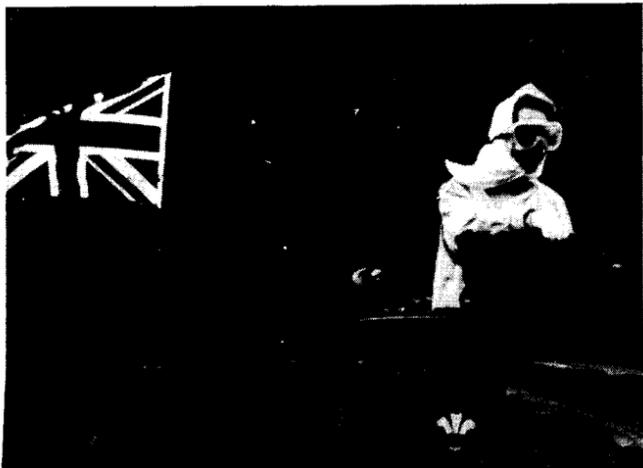
Cross workers and the firefighters who arrived on the scene, the disaster would have been even worse. Scores of nurses and other medical personnel reported to nearby hospitals on their own volition. Among those who died was at least one King's Cross attendant as well as station officer Colin Townsley of Soho's "Red Watch" fire brigade, a 23-year veteran firefighter. After hearing the screams of passengers trapped below, Townsley decided to go down himself despite ordering his crew to get breathing apparatus first. For days Londoners turned out to lay flowers for those who died, and particularly for Colin Townsley.

In her ghoulish tour of the disaster area, Thatcher cynically praised the firemen and other rescue workers. This is grotesque hypocrisy - Londoners should probably consider themselves fortunate that there were any firemen there at all, or hospitals to treat the victims. Some 800 London firefighter jobs are to be cut, while University College Hospital, a teaching hospital where most of the emergency patients were treated, is slated for closing. Across the board, the

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Dobney/Independent



Peter Jordan

War criminal Thatcher on NATO manoeuvres (left); funeral for heroic fireman Colin Townsley, martyr of underground inferno (right).



Garry Measer

Open letter to Darts Which side are you on?

Below we reprint the leaflet distributed by the Spartacist League in Sheffield on 27 November 1987.

To the editor:

The front page article entitled "Political Violence" which appeared in your issue of 25 November is politically stupid and dangerous. Your treatment of the months-long struggle by the Spartacist League to mobilise trade unionists, students, minority and anti-racist organisations to rid the city centre of menacing fascist punks as an "ongoing street battle between extreme left and right-wing political factions in the city" is an affront to all those who have joined us in the fight to cleanse the streets of fascist filth. At issue here is not a battle of ideology: fascists are action groups organised for systematic terror against blacks, Asians, Irish, gays, Jews, socialists and ultimately the trade unions. Hitler's stormtroopers weren't people with a set of "race-hate ideas" - they were genocidal mass murderers. In Germany, too, they started as small bands of thugs breaking up meetings, beating up Communists, attacking Jewish people and anyone else on their hit list. They should have been crushed in the egg; as Nazi leader Joseph Goebbels later admitted: "If the enemy had known how weak we were, it would probably have reduced us to jelly".

Today in this city and on this campus, small bands of fascists have been breaking up meetings and attacking leftist newspaper sellers. Through such actions, they will recruit and grow unless they are stopped. As the *Darts* article mentioned, only last month a campus Labour Committee on Ireland meeting was attacked by BNP fascists and, as it

Sheffield University Student Union paper *Darts* (25 November 1987) peddles anti-militant Labourite rubbish.



neglected to mention, one student was injured to the point that he had to seek care at hospital. The effect of your photo story with its false equation of left and right "extremists" is to set up anti-fascist militants for victimisation. On the heels of the fascists' incursion onto the campus, this is particularly noxious. It is also in the tradition of Labour traitors like Neil Kinnock and Norman Willis who denounced the "violence" of the miners defending their strike against scabs and armies of Thatcher's police. Such violence-baiting garbage served a political purpose for Kinnock et al: to isolate the heroic miners and leave them to the tender mercies of the capitalist state. We don't know what purpose

the obviously pro-Labour *Darts* and its editor Andy Gilgrist believe their article will serve. We do know that at least some of the *Darts* staff think that the fascists should be stopped when they crawl out of the sewers to menace the working people of Sheffield.

In the current Cold War climate of Thatcher's Britain, race terrorist attacks are on the rise. The anti-fascist monthly *Searchlight* (October 1987) quoted a report detailing over 305 acts of terror directed at the ethnic minority community in an 18 month period in Leeds alone. Preparations for a war against the Soviet Union abroad mean unleashing the fascist bands at home. For our part, we won't forget that 20 million

Soviet citizens gave their lives to fight the Nazi scourge during the last World War. Neither will the Soviet masses. Of course the Labour Party is as hostile to the Soviet workers state as it is to British workers struggles which threaten the capitalist status quo.

The fact that anti-fascist militants were able to administer a lesson in basic hygiene to the fascist scum last Saturday is a good thing. Maybe the BNP swine will think three times before smashing up another Ireland meeting. You write that our "admitted plan is to prevent any fascist groupings gaining a platform in Exchange Street". "Admitted"? Is this a cub reporter's attempt at investigative journalism? The Spartacist League's position in this country and internationally is quite open: we are for the mobilisation of the organised working class in alliance with all the oppressed to smash fascist terror, to defend the workers movement and minorities from the violence of the fascists; the petrol bombings, the lynch ropes, the shots in the night. On 24 October, members of the NALGO Black Workers Group, the Sheffield Defence Campaign, Workers Power, individual trade unionists from the Post Office and the NUM as well as Sheffield University students turned out with the Spartacist League to ensure Exchange Street was clean - and the fascists did not show their faces that day. It is this sort of determined united-front action that we have been fighting for, which can and must stop the NF, BNP and other fascist outfits.

We know only too well that the pro-Kinnock, Russia-hating fake "left" - most centrally the Socialist Workers Party, whose own members

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Workers Power behind the lamppost

How centrists "fight" fascism

When the centrist Workers Power group went hysterically pro-Kinnock in the last elections, we observed that the organisation had adapted itself to the worst symptoms of Labourite liquidationism - including "insensitivity" on the race question. During the pre-election period, *Workers Power* lectured Kinnock & Co to turn to the "ordinary" worker, to undercut the "right" which "seeks to present them [Labour] as behind the scenes conspirators concerned at best only with the interests of minorities" (see *Workers Hammer* no 87, April 1987). This "advice" was of course offered at a time when Kinnock was witchhunting the gays and lesbians, the black sections and the "loony left" in the Labour Party. Today in Sheffield, Workers Power has managed to vacillate wildly

over what should be a very elementary question: the necessity to stop race-hating fascists menacing the city centre. For the most part, WP's twists and turns have led it into the "ignore the fascists" camp of those like the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of Tony Cliff who oppose on principle any anti-fascist mobilisation.

Regular readers of *Workers Hammer* will know that ever since we discovered that fascist punks in the Exchange Street Castle Market area of Sheffield, the Spartacist League has fought for a united-front defence against these Hitlerite scum. In the course of that fight, the political lines have been drawn sharply between ourselves and the SWP, whose Labourite politics dictate passive, Gandhi-style response to fascist at-

tacks on its own members at best and attempted demobilising of those organising to sweep the fascists off the streets at worst. Workers Power parroted the SWP's do-nothing line until a fascist attack on the Sheffield University campus elicited outrage among students, creating a climate where ignoring the fascists was hardly the flavour of the month. All of a sudden, Workers Power was interested in united-front action against the fascists in the city centre. Better late than never.

Workers Power's line change didn't stay changed for very long. They joined us at Exchange Street on 24 October, when members of the Black Workers Group of NALGO, Sheffield Defence Campaign (in which WP is active), students and individual trade

unionists also turned out in response to our call for action against the fascist threat in Sheffield. Later, we heard that WP, along with the Sheffield Defence Campaign, was calling for some kind of anti-fascist action on 28 November. And on 28 November we mobilised more than our usual defence forces in hopes of a joint action. Early intimations that WP's "mobilisation" wasn't going to amount to much proved true enough. The one placard announcing the event at Sheffield University campus disappeared as soon as the campus press publicised - and slandered - the SL's anti-fascist work (see article above).

A dozen or so members of Workers Power and the Sheffield Defence Campaign showed up on 28 November

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Return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky!

(continued from page 1)

contra aid (not \$8 million as widely reported) and delivery of "previously purchased" arms shipments. Emboldened by these measures, on 20 December the contras launched a bloody attack on three gold and silver mining towns, Bonanza, Rosita and Siuna, in the jungles of north-eastern Nicaragua. The attacks were timed so that the contras could withdraw under the cover of a Christmas truce which other contra forces freely violated. Residents implored the "freedom fighters" not to destroy their mining works. The contras' response was 19 villagers killed and nearly 100 injured (*New York Times*, 25 December 1987).

The mounting pressure against Nicaragua has highlighted tensions inside the petty-bourgeois nationalist Sandinista regime. Defence Minister Humberto Ortega announced plans to enrol 600,000 Nicaraguans in the army and reserves. This would mean that virtually every able-bodied adult man and woman would be armed, a formidable obstacle to a US invasion and occupation of Nicaragua. His brother, President Daniel Ortega, said this was only a "proposal", but warned: "Let the

"fully grasped" the statement at the time. But Washington isn't interested in "negotiating" over Afghanistan, because Reagan – solidly backed by the Democrats – wants to keep the blood of Soviet soldiers flowing. They figure that thousands of Afghan reactionaries willing to fight a "holy war" against Communism while the West whips up its "human rights" propaganda is too good a deal to pass up.

It will be difficult indeed for the Moscow bureaucrats – who from Stalin on have sold out countless revolutionary struggles around the globe in their search for a *modus vivendi* with imperialism – to reach a settlement with forces so reactionary that some of them see the deposed Afghan king as some kind of commie dupe. Yet Gorbachev's efforts to strike a deal with the mullahs and their patrons in Washington, rather than mopping up the *mujahedin*, have already needlessly prolonged the war, leading to rising frustrations inside the Soviet Union. On 26 December, some 16 people were arrested in Moscow for protesting Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Even worse, the Kremlin tops may actually pull out their troops,



L.Y. Leonidov
VI Lenin and Leon Trotsky, leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution and founders of the Communist International.

noted that there were now some tens of thousands of women working in factories, in government offices, and some at high levels in the ruling party:

"Before the revolution, women did not have the opportunity to get to such high positions. The majority of university students are women or girls. There are also 15,000 women in the Afghan army." Any Soviet pullout that puts in danger the present limited reforms would be a bloody betrayal of Afghan women. Victory to the Red Army! Extend the social gains of the October Revolution to Afghan peoples!

THE ROAD TO PEACE

The only tangible result of the Washington summit was the signing of the already concluded intermediate nuclear forces (INF) treaty specifying the destruction of all shorter- and medium-range missiles. Chief among them are the Soviet SS-20s, and American Pershing 2s which can hit Moscow in a mere six to eight minutes after firing. For *Pravda*, the treaty was nothing less than "a watershed dividing the era of a growing nuclear threat from the era of the demilitarization of man's existence." Liberal peaceniks joined Stalinists in a sigh of relief: the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* even moved the hands of their Doomsday Clock back, from three minutes to six minutes before the midnight of nuclear annihilation. In fact, this so-called "zero option" was first conceived by the Reagan regime as a propaganda ploy, a deal so unfavourable to the Soviets that they would have to refuse it.

Under the INF treaty, the Soviets

must destroy four warheads to every one of the US. The weapons scheduled for elimination cover only a tiny percentage of the total nuclear arsenals, however. More serious could be the proposal for an across-the-board 50 per cent strategic arms reduction treaty (START), supposed to be the centrepiece of a projected Reagan visit to the USSR. Eliminating half the Soviet missile fleet could mean a qualitative weakening of its deterrent effect and an invitation to the nuclear cowboys in Washington to launch a first strike. It's precisely the Reaganauts' fevered dream of regaining first-strike capability that is behind the "Star Wars" programme. Here, also, Gorbachev acquiesced at the summit, agreeing to treaty language allowing for widespread testing of space weapons. The Stalinists may be gambling on disarray in the Reagan administration, Congressional resistance to junking the ABM treaty, and the high glitch rate of the technologically improbable Star Wars scheme. But no serious military man would bank the defence of the Soviet Union on that.

Meanwhile in Europe the NATO powers continue to build "independent" nuclear stockpiles. Thatcher, of course, has made British nuclear capacity a central plank of her anti-Soviet foreign policy. And the Labour leadership has fallen right into step with this. Labour MP Peter Shore in a recent article in the *Guardian* (28 December 1987) expresses these lackeys' anxiety that the British bourgeoisie might be left behind – or out – of the imperialist nuclear club: "If Britain possesses 500 Trident warheads and the Soviet Union 6,000, what on earth could we gain by elim-



Owen Franken/Sygma

US troops on "Big Pine" exercises in Honduras, 1983. Central America is hot spot in Reagan's Cold War drive. Nicaragua needs Soviet arms!

right tremble before the justice dealt by our people." The Nicaraguan masses, he said, could "invite those that have property and riches to hand them over to the workers" (*New York Times*, 17 December 1987). Managua broke off cease-fire negotiations with the contras under the Arias "peace" plan. And next door in El Salvador, guerrilla leader Ferman Cienfuegos declared: "It would be political idiocy to disarm.... They would annihilate us. There would be a bloodbath."

On Afghanistan, Gorbachev trumpeted his willingness to strike a deal for the withdrawal of Soviet troops and the formation of a government of "national reconciliation" including representatives of the CIA-backed feudalists. Reagan was literally walking Gorbachev down the Rose Garden path when the Soviet leader said that from the moment the US announced a stop to arming the Islamic rebels, Soviet troops would refrain from military operations. The State Department only acknowledged Gorbachev's offer two weeks after the summit, claiming that "tired" American officials hadn't

setting the stage for a massacre of leftists, workers, women and indeed anyone leading a modern lifestyle – as well as threatening the Soviet Union's vital southern flank.

The status of women is everywhere a barometer of social progress, and in Afghanistan the Red Army stands between the bloodthirsty Islamic reactionaries and women who for the first time have been given an opportunity for liberation from medieval oppression. An article in the *Toronto Star* (29 November 1987) detailed some of the gains for women under the Soviet-backed government, including "the freedom to dress as they please, to work in the civil service, to join the armed forces and other institutions". The article quoted a 26-year-old woman fighter, "Commander Roziya":

"I command 5,000 Tajik tribesmen, a thousand of whom are armed. I usually carry my Kalashnikov, but I know how to use a pistol, rifle, hand grenades and all other weapons.... I like the Russians. They help us."

And the general secretary of the All-Afghanistan Women's Council



Times
Iron Lady with Gorbachev at Brize Norton. Reagan's anti-Soviet consort Thatcher does her bit for imperialism's disarmament scam.

inating our 500 – and leaving the Russians with 5,500 to threaten us at will?...The possession by both France and Britain of an independent nuclear capability remains a major counter and deterrent..." NATO might well retain and upgrade short-range nuclear forces as well as deploy more sea-launched and air-launched Cruise missiles to compensate for the withdrawal of land-based Cruise and Pershing 2s. Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe underlined the imperialists' enthusiasm for the treaty, announcing from NATO headquarters in Brussels that "The earliest possible ratification is overwhelmingly in the Western interest" (*Independent*, 12 December 1987).

At the same time, the French and West German imperialists are striving to make the Paris-Bonn anti-Soviet axis viable, as the recent joint military manoeuvre on 21-25 September 1987 showed. France, with the summit agreement signed, will become the only Western power with intermediate nuclear missiles on the European continent. What the successors of Hitler's Third Reich really want is to put their hands on some nuclear missiles like the French "Pluto" and "Hades".



Observer

Red Army intervention opens road to liberation of Afghan women. No "deals" with cutthroat CIA-backed mullahs!

ballistic missiles defense research declined, all major arms control agreements have stimulated defense spending."

The only reason the post-1972 period was an exception was the "Vietnam syndrome", popular revulsion against US militarism produced by the long, losing colonial war against the Viet-

himself with the mantle of V I Lenin, the leader of the October Revolution, saying: "We also remember another concept of his – disarmament, a world without arms or violence." Lenin's Bolsheviks certainly believed in world peace, but they understood that this could only come about through international workers revolution. In 1916, at the height of World War I, Lenin wrote:

"Finally, our 'peace programme' must explain that the imperialist powers and the imperialist bourgeoisie cannot grant a democratic peace. Such a peace *must* be sought for and fought for, not in the past, not in a reactionary utopia of a non-imperialist capitalism, not in a league of equal nations under capitalism, but in the future, in the socialist revolution of the proletariat."

– "The Peace Programme", March 1916

The Bolsheviks carried out their programme in the October Revolution and the formation of the Communist International. But while recognizing the need to deal with the imperialist powers as long as they existed, the revolutionary Soviet regime never pretended that this would produce anything but a short-term truce.

The illusory programme of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism didn't begin with Khrushchev but with Stalin, a corollary of his schema of building "socialism in one country", and it has always been a threat to the Soviet degenerated workers state. But with war-crazy Reagan in the White House, such detente illusions become ludicrous. This is the man who warmed up for a radio address with his infamous "joke": "My fellow Americans, I'm pleased to tell you today that I've signed legislation that will outlaw Russia forever. We begin bombing in five minutes". This comment nakedly

expressed imperialism's goal of "rolling back" the October Revolution, through nuclear war if necessary. As Richard Pipes, a top White House policy adviser, said shortly after Reagan took office, the Soviet Union faced the choice of "changing the Communist system in the direction of the West or going to war".

This programme of exporting counterrevolution is not new, nor even particularly Republican. Commenting on the policies of Democrat Truman during the Korean War, American Trotskyist leader James P Cannon wrote in his pamphlet, *The Road to Peace* (November 1951), "They demand that the Soviet Union and revolutionary China cease to exist as they are at present constituted." He spelled it out:

"The ultimate aim 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."

Cannon concluded: "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." ■



Yevgeni Khaldei

Soviet red flag flies in Berlin, May 1945. 20 million Soviet people died in struggle against Nazi invasion.

The history of this century has shown that the road to war is paved with "disarmament" conferences. As one bourgeois commentator, Richard Haass of Harvard's Kennedy School, noted in a recent *New York Times* (21 December 1987) article:

"The [Soviet-American] rivalry is not a problem that can be solved: it is a condition that can be managed only in part....

"With the temporary exception of the 1972 ABM treaty, after which for several years our spending on

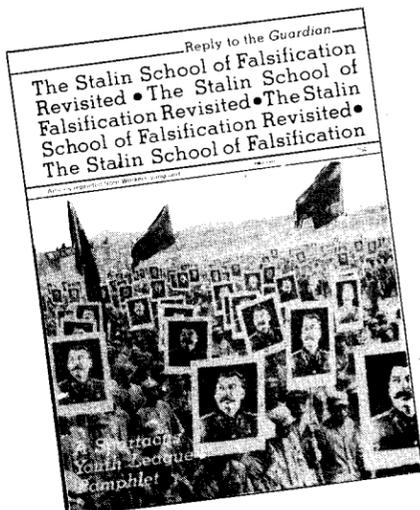
name people, whose victory won with enormous sacrifice provided a breathing space for the Soviets to achieve rough nuclear parity with the Americans. And the "rivalry" between the United States and the Soviet Union is a struggle between irreconcilable class interests and social systems. It is axiomatic for Marxists that ultimately either socialism will triumph, or capitalism will thrust the world into barbarism.

At the ceremony signing the INF treaty, Gorbachev sought to cover

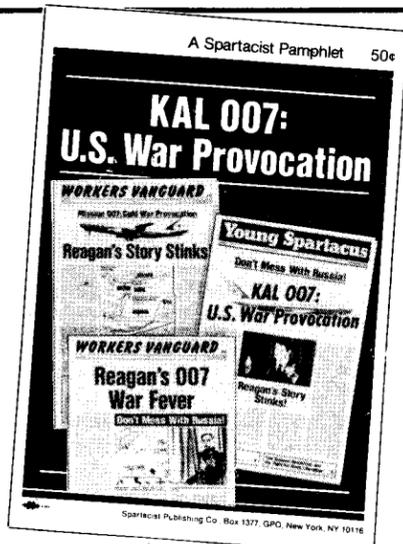
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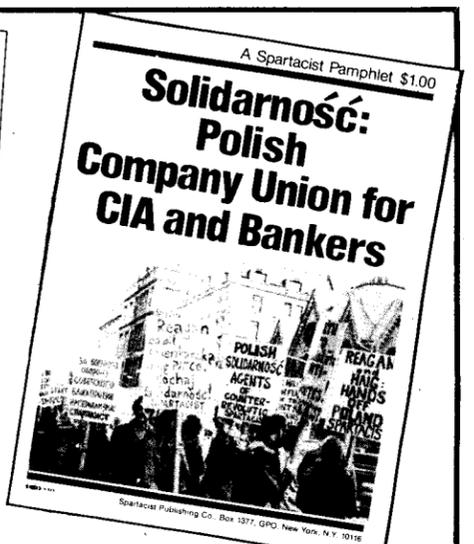
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Ireland ...

(continued from page 12)

ammunition it needed. In early December, the treaty was cleared through the Dublin parliament with one proviso: warrants for extraditions will not only have to pass through the British attorney-general, but the Irish one as well. The Thatcher government is hypocritically complaining that this proviso will only complicate the existing extradition procedure because, as a political appointee, the Irish attorney-general might be "biased". This so-called complication may in reality be advantageous for the British government. Unlike his English counterpart, the Irish attorney-general may actually be able to spell Irish names correctly. In the past, would-be victims of British "justice" from the Republican movement have escaped because of misspelt names on British writs.

There was another sad and grotesque result of the bombing. As a rule, Catholics do not wear "Remembrance Day" poppies in Northern Ireland. But as "a gesture", young students from a local Catholic grammar school were seen wearing them at the silent vigil staged by the people of Enniskillen around the war memorial on the Wednesday evening following the bombing. While testifying to the deeply-felt outrage among Catholics and Protestants alike over Enniskillen, this gesture embraced a symbol of British imperialism. The war memorial in Enniskillen is a statue of a World War I soldier: it is part of the Unionist mythology that they won partition as a result of the tens of thousands of their volunteers who were slaughtered in the Battle of the Somme. But not only Protestants

were sacrificed on the altar of imperialist profit, so were thousands of workers and peasants from the Catholic community. Some of these, as James Plunkett poignantly described in *Strumpet City*, were trade union militants blacklisted for their role in the 1913-1914 Dublin lockout. Sold out by the British trade union bureaucracy and the nationalists alike and unable to find jobs to support their starving families, many enlisted in the British army just to put bread on the table. As the great Irish revolutionary leader James Connolly wrote in *Workers' Republic* (6 November 1915) in response to



Clive Limpkin - Associated Newspaper Group

British troops, sent in by the Labour government, enter Derry on 14 August 1969.

nationalists like John Redmond who assured the British government that the Irish Volunteers would co-operate in the war effort:

"Full steam ahead John Redmond said/ that everything was well chum;/ Home Rule will come when we are dead/and buried out in Belgium."

Thus a layer of the Dublin trade

union movement was slaughtered as cannon fodder for bloody British imperialism. But much of the Irish proletariat participated in the heroic 1916 Easter Uprising, one of the many anti-imperialist revolts against the First World War. In that war the Irish workers saw the concrete possibility to overthrow British rule.

In recent months Kneel Kinnock has, predictably, presided over the vile victimisation of the Irish in his own party. MP Jeremy Corbyn's research assistant—a one-time Republican supporter who has championed the cause of the innocence of those wrongly convicted for the Guildford

and Woolwich bombings—was witch-hunted out of the Houses of Parliament on grounds of "security". And the Labour-dominated Camden Council is repatriating Irish homeless within its own borough. This is an act which the fascist NF—which calls for repatriation of non-English peoples—could endorse with relish.

The only leading member of the

Labour Party to ignore the deputy head of Sinn Fein—the political wing of the IRA—Danny Morrison's advice to "keep your head down" following Enniskillen was Ken Livingstone. Livingstone instead called for troops out of Ireland. A fawning "left" Kinnock loyalist, Livingstone of course waited until the general election results were obvious this summer before he publicly criticised Kinnock's stab in the back of the miners strike. In the case of Enniskillen, he appears to have been so outspoken because by-and-large his heavily immigrant constituency agrees with him.

It is Labour, the party of the Empire, that sent bloody Mountbatten in as the last viceroy of India. It is the Labour Party that sent the troops into Northern Ireland in 1969. (And it has now emerged that that darling of the British ostensible left, Bernadette Devlin, telephoned Downing Street to beg for the troops to be sent in at the time [*Independent*, 14 December 1987]). It is the Labour Party that enacted the vicious Prevention of Terrorism Act and unleashed the SAS killers on the Catholic community in the 1970s. And it is the Labour Party who stood hand-in-glove with the Tories by obscenely telling Bobby Sands to go ahead and die. In government or as Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, the Labour Party implements and defends British imperialism's bloody policies from Ireland to the Falklands.

NOT ORANGE AGAINST GREEN, BUT CLASS AGAINST CLASS!

The Enniskillen bomb is of a piece with acts of indiscriminate terrorism like that of the IRA bombings of the Abercorn Cafe in 1972, La Mon House in 1978 and the INLA bombing at Ballykelly in 1982. In Britain it compares to the Birmingham pub bomb-

Free the Birmingham Six!

The six men framed up for the 1974 Birmingham pub bombings are now awaiting the verdict in their appeal for a new trial. Paddy Hill, Hugh Callaghan, Johnny Walker, Richard McIlkenny, Gerry Hunter and Billy Power have languished in prison for 13 years. Beaten and tortured by the cops, four of the six signed phoney "confessions" which in every case were retracted. The shreds of forensic "evidence" used to railroad them has been reduced to rubble. The six were arrested en route from Birmingham to Belfast within hours of the bombings. They were travelling to Belfast to attend the funeral of a friend, IRA-member James McDade, who had blown himself up while planting a bomb. The fact that these men were going to McDade's funeral was more than enough for the police. The Birmingham Six were "convicted" before they ever got to the shabby proceedings which passed for their trial. Free them now!

In the immediate aftermath of the IRA's criminal pub bombings which killed 21 people, the bourgeois media whipped up intense anti-Irish hysteria. Revenge attacks against the Irish community began immediately. Irish-owned businesses were petrol bombed in the Midlands and in London. Irishmen were not safe to walk the streets nor even at their workplaces. At British Leyland's Longbridge factory, workers staged a mass walk-out taking to the streets with homemade plac-

ards saying "Hang IRA Bombers". Roy Jenkins, the Labour government's home secretary at the time, promised tough measures and he delivered. A week later, the notorious Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) was slammed through parliament. The Act made the IRA illegal and gave the police even more draconian powers. "Terrorist" suspects could be held up to a week without charge and both police and immigration authorities were authorised to expel or refuse entry to "terrorist suspects" or to anyone suspected of harbouring them.

It was in this climate that the Birmingham Six were "tried" and convicted. The evidence was virtually non-existent. The retracted "confessions" were not only internally inconsistent—as to who placed what bomb where—but also did not match the evidence presented by police as to in what kind of containers and where the bombs were placed. There was photographic and medical evidence that the men had been beaten in police custody. And finally, there was the highly dubious nature of the forensic tests that purported to show that two of the men had handled nitroglycerine.

It was not until the publication of Chris Mullin's book *Error of Judgement* in 1986—as well as *World In Action* programmes on TV which tore apart the forensic "evidence"—that public opinion became widespread that the six were framed. Mullin, now a Labour MP, system-

atically destroyed the case against the men (and even tracked down the IRA men responsible for the bombings). It was his book that set the stage for the appeal to take place. As Mullin wrote in the preface: "Nothing can bring back the lives of the twenty-one people who died on that terrible night, November 21, 1974. We can, however, restore to six men, who have served eleven years in prison for a crime they did not commit, what remains of their lives."

During the 28-day appeal, which ended in early December, experts demolished the credibility of the Greiss test performed by forensic scientist Dr Skuse. Even one of the three judges hearing the appeal was forced to comment on the constant "revisions" in Skuse's testimony. "Pressured" into retirement in 1985 after his evidence was questioned, Skuse "refused for 18 months to tell the Home Office the formula he had used in his most important test for explosive traces. He had earlier given a different formula during a *World In Action* television documentary on the case" (*Independent*, 10 December 1987). The same article reports that a cleaner described "seeing blood on the walls of a police cell, a prison officer described injuries on the men when they arrived from police custody..."

But British "justice" triumphed and the Appeal Court judges turned down Lord Gifford's motion for the

defence that the men should be released without being subject to a retrial. "Evidence" is not the question. Chris Mullin said of the appeal's chances: "Many people in high places know they've got the wrong people, but I'm not optimistic. British judges do not have a good record of owning up to mistakes" (*Observer*, 1 November 1987). And Sinn Fein's *An Phoblacht* (19 November 1987) wrote:

"Later, Irish Republican Army Volunteers captured at Balcombe Street, London, claimed responsibility for the bombings and proclaimed the total innocence of the Guildford and Birmingham defendants and the Maguire family. The IRA were able to provide detailed information that could only have been known to participants. This evidence was never allowed to be heard by a court or considered grounds for a new trial."

Ominously, Channel 4 was recently banned from transmitting a reconstruction of the appeal based on court transcripts, as the *Observer* (27 December 1987) comments "apparently for no better reason than that the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Lane, thought it might bring his court into disrepute". But for the murderous British ruling class the verdict was not "an error of judgement". They wanted Irish blood, they wanted a quick conviction for the pub bombings. The facts be damned. Free the Birmingham Six now! Smash the PTA!

ings (for which the IRA claims responsibility) and the Harrods Christmas bomb of 1983.

Enniskillen was so criminal that the Sinn Féin/IRA leaders were themselves compelled to apologise for this "tragedy" and "mistake". The IRA's petty-bourgeois nationalist strategy of pressuring the Green bourgeoisie and British imperialism into realising a "united Ireland" through the "armalite and the ballot box" necessarily includes the use of indiscriminate terror against civilian targets. Behind the terrorism of the IRA lies a programme of Irish Catholic national unity (the 32 county, united Ireland) against not only British imperialism but also the Northern Ireland Protestant community. This leads straight to atrocities like Enniskillen.

Sometimes the IRA is more on the mark: in contrast to Enniskillen, Marxists do defend against the capitalist state the perpetrators of such acts as the killing of British soldiers at Warren Point, the recent wave of bombings against police stations in the North, the assassinations of Airey Neave and Earl Mountbatten. Likewise, the shooting of Loyalist politician George Seawright, who wanted the Belfast city council to buy an incinerator to burn Catholics, was a defensible act.

However, Workers Power is not about to denounce the act because they "defend the right of the Provisionals to struggle by any means to end Britain's rule". The simple fact that the Enniskillen bombing has absolutely nothing to do with ending British rule does not enter WP's arguments. And no wonder, since Workers Power capitulates slavishly to Green nationalism. In the same issue, WP refers to the "pro-imperialist majority resisting withdrawal", thus equating the entire Protestant population with the likes of Ian Paisley.

The necessary class links between the Protestant and Catholic proletariats can be forged through a programme which fights the oppression of the Catholic masses at the expense not of their Protestant class brothers, but of the capitalists. In the North overall unemployment in both communities is running in real terms at over 20 per cent and for some Catholic areas it is even more than 40 per cent and even up to 60 per cent for the youth. And if you do have a job and you are Catholic, no matter what your skills, you get the dirtiest jobs and often suffer daily provocations from Loyalists at work. Joint class struggle against a ruling class out to crush the workers of both communities is urgently necessary. Smashing the sectarian divide which chains



Radio Times Hulton Picture Library

The Somme, 1916: British, French and German imperialist carnage cost over 1,000,000 casualties.

Even such defensible acts of Republican terrorism are in no sense part of a communist-proletarian strategy. Terrorism, as a strategy, is a flip-side of despairing reformism. As Leon Trotsky wrote in 1934:

"Individual terrorism is in its very essence bureaucratism turned inside out. For Marxists this law was not discovered yesterday. Bureaucratism has no confidence in the masses and endeavors to substitute itself for the masses. Terrorism works in the same manner; it seeks to make the masses happy without asking their participation. The Stalinist bureaucracy has created a vile leader-cult, attributing to leaders divine qualities. 'Hero' worship is also the religion of terrorism, only with a minus sign."

—"The Stalinist Bureaucracy and the Kirov Assassination,"
28 December 1934

The British fake left, usually preoccupied with licking Kinnock's boots, shamelessly tails the IRA... from afar. One particularly revolting example of this vicarious blood-thirsty "war is hell" line is the centrist Workers Power group. In its December 1987 issue, *Workers Power* writes that "We have no hesitation in saying that in that war we are for the IRA and against the British army". Enniskillen "went badly wrong" on the other hand, and none of its consequences are any good for the struggle against British rule.

both Catholic and Protestant workers to their oppressors is a key task of revolutionists. A genuine Leninist vanguard party, forged in struggle against all variants of nationalism and pro-imperialist economism and in intransigent opposition to British imperialist domination, could galvanize the oppressed masses across communal lines and on both sides of the Irish Sea. The heroic miners strike of 1984-85 posed the possibility of such a perspective, as Irish workers on either side of the sectarian divide joined in defence of the British miners' class war against Thatcher.

The programme of such a revolutionary party would include the demand for full democratic rights for the Catholic population, against entrenched Orange privilege. It must also advance a series of transitional demands which transcend the constraints of capitalism, including a sliding scale of hours and wages. Revolutionary working-class unity cannot simply be forged around economic demands. For programmatically-based anti-sectarian workers militias to combat Orange and Green terror and imperialist rampage! Such militias would necessarily include at least one representative of each community. The conflicting claims of the Irish Catholic and Ulster Protestant communities cannot be democratically resolved within the framework of capitalism. As communists, we put forward the call for an Irish

Clive Limpkin



The terror of British troops is part of the day-to-day life of the Northern Ireland Catholic community.

workers republic in a socialist federation of the British Isles. As we wrote in "Theses on Ireland" (*Spartacist*, Autumn 1977):

"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. This recognises that the nature of the Protestant community has not yet been determined in history. As such, it is counterposed to calls for a 'united workers republic' or for a 'united socialist Ireland' (where this demand is not simply an expression for left/nationalist or Stalinist two-stage theories). 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."

While nationalists like the IRA and those fake-left armchair republicans in Britain like the Workers Power group preach forcible reunification with the Southern Republic, one look at this clericalist hellhole is enough to understand why not only the Protestants abhor it, but why the working class and youth of the South are desperately trying to escape. The draconian anti-abortion law is enshrined in the constitution. The recent referendum to legalise divorce fell before a clericalist-orchestrated campaign exploiting peasant fears over land inheritance. A pint - about the only form of social release in the whole country - now costs regu-

larly up to £1.50.

Public service unions have agreed with the government to help it shed 10,000 jobs. Young workers on a scheme similar to YTS in Britain have just suffered a £10 a week wage cut, while the army spends millions on rifles to "fight" the IRA. The "official" unemployment rate is 19 per cent. Over 30,000 are emigrating a year and indeed the main political parties are calling on the young to do so. The lucky ones make it to the US, albeit as illegals. If they come to Britain, they may well end up unemployed, homeless, repatriated or perhaps in a mental home - the rate of admission of Irish people to mental institutions is two and a half times that of the English and Welsh.

As one of our comrades noted on his recent return from Dublin:

"Everytime I go home, I am convinced more than ever of the dead end of nationalism; it stares you in the face. The poverty, the hunger, the countless deaths for what - the right to print a postage stamp, to run the tricolour up the flagpole. Songs of the dead won't put bread and butter on the table. It won't deal with the gombeen man [cockroach capitalist] and his brother in arms, the church. The only way out of such misery is when the Red Flag flies over Ireland and alongside Scottish, Welsh, and English workers we will establish a socialist federation of these Isles - what a memorial to those who have fought and died."

British Troops Out! For an Irish Workers Republic as part of a socialist federation of the British Isles! ■



Workers Hammer

Spartacist League anti-imperialist contingent on June 1981 march in London.

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Down with racist immigration bill!

In 1979 Margaret Thatcher rode to power in large part on a wave of anti-immigration hysteria, explicitly trying to woo fascist NF supporters with her vile talk of the "British character" being "swamped" by people with a different culture. Now the racist Tory bitch and her cabinet rabble are gearing up to deliver on past promises.

The new Immigration Bill before parliament is the most significant piece of immigration legislation since Edward Heath's 1971 Immigration Act which effectively put a stop to primary immigration, particularly of black and Asian peoples from Britain's former colonial empire. The provisions of the new bill exemplify not only the racism and xenophobia of this government, but also its sheer vindictiveness. The bill has three main components. Firstly, it will take away the right, particularly of Bangladeshi women and children to join husbands and fathers in Britain. Bangladeshis – among the last to emigrate here – already face horrendous obstacles to being reunited with their families. For example, it took Talal Jabar, a British citizen of Bangladeshi origin, twelve years of pleading with immigration officials before his wife and two sons were allowed to join him. The bill would grant dependants entry only if it can be proved that they can be maintained and accommodated. Recently declared as "intentionally homeless" and denied council housing by Tower Hamlets' Liberal-run council, the vulnerable Bangladeshi community in London's fascist-infested East End will be in a particularly impossible situation. Many families will face the prospect of permanent separation.

But it is not only Bangladeshi families who will be affected; the proposed bill would apply the ruling on maintenance and accommodation to all British citizens who wish to bring in a foreign husband or wife. As a *Guardian* (18 December 1987) article noted: "One bizarre effect of the bill is that British men with foreign spouses will, like British women, be subject to marriage tests. If the bill had been in force when Dr David Owen married, his American wife would [have] faced a range of tests before being granted



Peter Trievnor
Heathrow's Terminal 3: Asian women at racist immigration check-point.

entry." The bourgeoisie probably won't face too much difficulty bringing in their spouses, but if you're unemployed or a student living in a bed-sit you can forget about marrying someone who is foreign. What's next – anti-miscegenation laws?

The other main provisions of the bill entail cutting the period of visits by foreign nationals to Britain from one year to six months and the criminalisation of "overstayers" who will lose their right of appeal unless they have been resident here for seven years. Such measures will lead directly to an increase in deportations and an escalation of police raids against foreign-born workers. That is precisely the kind of climate Thatcher et al are trying to create with this latest piece of racist legislation. The Conservative Manifesto was explicit on this in 1979; it read in part: "The ethnic minorities have already made a valuable contribution to the life of our nation, but firm immigration control for the future is essential if we are to achieve good community relations. It will end persistent fears about levels of immigration..." (quoted in *Race, Government and Politics in Britain* [1986]). Additionally, simply to tap into racial, religious and moral bigotry, the bill would prevent husbands in polygamous marriages from bringing in second

wives for settlement.

Labour politicians have been making some noises against the immigration bill. The black Labour MP Diane Abbott denounced the bill in her debut speech in parliament and even the unspeakable Roy Hattersley – the witchhunter of black sections in the Labour Party – grumbled about the Tories' "tawdry little measure". However, there has long been a consensus among Tories and Labour alike on the need to halt the immigration of black and Asian people to these shores. In office Labour brought, among other things, the racist obscenity of "virginity" tests for Asian women. It was Labour's 1977 Green Paper on Nationality which prepared the way for the Tories to enact the 1981 Nationality Act. One of the results of the latter is that from the end of 1987, the right to registration of certain Commonwealth citizens will no longer be automatic – the Home Office will have at its disposal discretionary powers. In any event, many black and Asian families will be unable to afford the exorbitant registration fees. And everybody affected by this measure – including Irish residents – will now live under the fear and pressure: "What will happen if I can't become a British citizen?" It's a bad news bill for a

lot of the population, as it's meant to be.

In London, the Labour-run Camden council has been scandalously implementing Enoch "rivers of blood" Powell's programme of "voluntary repatriation" – against homeless Irish people. Racist anti-immigration hysteria is fuelled as well by protectionist poison and calls for import controls to "save" British jobs pushed by Labour politicians, including and especially "lefts" like Livingstone, Benn and Scargill.

The plight of Tamil refugees detained on board the prison hulk *Earl William* underlined the responsibility of the workers movement to fight against the racist repression against immigrants and refugees. Initially, the local Harwich branch of the National Union of Seamen refused to work the floating prison, but this important act of solidarity was scuppered when the national leadership stepped in. Recently, the Home Office has won an appeal to deport six Tamils seeking asylum from the anti-Tamil terror rampant in Sri Lanka – an ominous ruling which threatens doom for all those seeking asylum from murderous regimes.

The ruling classes of every capitalist country have escalated racist attacks on immigrants, minorities and foreign-born workers as a key to their overall offensive against the working class. Last year mass student and trade union protest in France forced the reactionary Mitterrand/Chirac government to back down on some of its anti-immigrant measures. Hard class struggle is necessary to turn the tide of Thatcher's vicious racist, anti-working class attacks, of which the immigration bill is a part. Only when the unions are broken from the "little England" nationalism and racism of the Labour/TUC tops and are led by a revolutionary Bolshevik party can the power of the organised working class be wielded on behalf of all the oppressed and exploited and overthrow the decaying capitalist system once and for all. Stop the deportations! Full citizenship rights for all foreign-born workers and their families! No to racist immigration laws! ■

Workers Power...

(continued from page 5)

to pass out "educational" leaflets in their version of "anti-fascist struggle". WP's political cowardice was manifest in the context – they boycotted their own action. A reading of this (unsigned) leaflet entitled "Watch Out – Fascists About" is enough to make any anti-fascist militant gag with disgust. There is no call for action – such a call would be inimical to the liberal line that fascists should be "pedagogically" returned from the error of their ways. Instead, WP's leaflet is a nauseating "debate" against the fascists and their "bad ideas"; for instance, the following description of what fascist organisations stand for: "...a legally enforced RACIAL and GENDER pecking order! White Anglo-saxon MEN should rule the world. Women should be tied to the kitchen sink. Lesbians and gay men should be persecuted."

That doesn't quite capture it, comrades. Bourgeois "democracy" is based on enforced racial and sexual oppres-

sion. Fascism, as understood by Marxists, is a form of bourgeois rule that is based on *genocidal terror* and the *extermination* of minorities, trade unions, homosexuals, left organisations. Fascists organise on the basis of such action: the firebombing of Asian homes and shops, the murder of black people on the street, the smashing-up of socialist meetings.

But the leaflet WP saw fit to distribute went beyond offensive inanity. In "pedagogically" arguing against the race-hate filth spewed by the fascists, it accepted their premises. Thus, the leaflet informs us that, contrary to the fascists' claim that black people cause unemployment: "The worst unemployment areas in Britain, are the very areas with the least numbers of black people!" Outrageously, the leaflet goes on to explain that "in the 1930's when unemployment was even higher than today – there were few black people anywhere in Britain". So what are we to make of this? In the United States, extremely high unemployment in, for instance, Detroit, corresponds to a very high concentration of black people. Black oppression

in large part means being the "last hired, first fired". That capitalism's crisis and massive unemployment spawn the growth of fascist outfits feeding on poverty and despair is an ABC proposition for Marxist revolutionists. It is also ABC that we organise to fight tooth and nail against such race-terrorist filth. Today this is an urgent, concrete task: fascist groups have targetted for *murderous attack* gays, blacks, Asian and Irish people. Throughout the pubs and clubs of the Sheffield area, too, a slice of apartheid is evident in the racist anti-gypsy bans. But from WP to the rest of the Labourite left there is no opposition to such atrocities.

Simply put, WP's "anti-fascist" leaflet panders to the worst racist prejudices in a hideously racist society. Every Spartacist comrade who had been won from another left organisation (the IS/SWP, the WSL, the IMG, etc.) exclaimed upon reading it that: "No matter how bad things were in X organisation – in my day, we'd never have put out something like this!" And it's probably no accident that

Workers Power has refrained from any coverage of the fight against fascism in Sheffield.

Workers Power's right-wing Labourite lurch has necessarily entailed rotten positions on the race question. And its performance in Sheffield constitutes a "new low" for this centrist grouping. To be sure, consistency has never been WP's hallmark. Its gangrenous anti-Soviet strain leads it not only to twists and turns on key questions such as Afghanistan but also reduces it domestically to abysmal failure in the fight against fascism. There is here an integral link: the domestic reflection of imperialism's war drive against the Soviet workers state means racist reaction with a vengeance at home. From their assumption of the "white man's burden" of campaigning for Kinnock during the elections to their spineless default in the fight against fascism in Sheffield, *Workers Power* is the living example of "capitulation in command". On just such a petard have many ex-centrists been hoisted – en route to liquidation in the Labourite graveyard of would-be revolutionists. ■

King's Cross ...

(continued from page 4)

Thatcher government's cutbacks have meant death and destruction.

On 13 November 1987, the satirical magazine *Private Eye* had sounded the alarm again over conditions in the London tube, citing the "vulgar policy of tarding up stations...as a cosmetic exercise", and warning, "the Underground system continues to degenerate as it is atrociously managed. New lifts and escalators fail to work, nothing is repaired, stations get more and more squalid." In the same issue, a sardonic piece headlined "Channel Ferry Arrives Drama" captured the quality of Thatcher's Britain, crowing that "A cross channel ferry, *The Spirit of Money Making*, today arrived at its destination without any major disaster occurring."

This was a reference to the *Herald of Free Enterprise*, the channel ferry which capsized last March outside Belgium's Zeebrugge harbour, killing some 188 crew members and passengers. The shipowner violated every known safety regulation, routinely overloading and regularly leaving harbours with loading doors open to cut turnaround times. And like the *Titanic*, to cut costs the ship was constructed with no vertical bulkheads, guaranteeing that it would sink as soon as it took on water. Yet the Thatcher government "inquiry" scapegoated three crew members, refusing to prosecute the company on criminal charges.

The *Free Enterprise's* parent company, P&O owns Bovis Ltd, one of the non-union contractors hired by LRT to make the underground's escalator department more "cost effective"! Bovis, which was founded by the father of Thatcher's former minister for education, Keith Joseph, makes its money through exorbitant "management" fees involved in subcontracting construction work through the notorious "lump labour" arrangement. With the smashing of any effective union over a decade ago, building workers – including large numbers of Irish labourers – are forced to work "off the books" at grossly substandard wages and benefits. Since 1981 the death rate for "self-employed" construction workers has doubled, while serious injuries have shown a threefold increase (*Listener*, 12 November 1987).

The London tube fire and channel ferry disaster are only the most recent in a series of deadly non-accidents. A year ago 45 oil riggers were killed when their helicopter crashed off the Shetland Islands in the North Sea, the result of known design flaws and lack of maintenance, as the oil magnates leech billions in profits out of the blood of the workforce. Meanwhile the National Health Service, starved of funds, continues to crumble: infants dying because of shortages of staff, mothers undergoing childbirth without the option of anaesthesia, nurses overworked and underpaid, well over a half million people stuck on waiting lists (often for over a year) for much-needed operations. Imperialist decay internationally and the decrepit state of British capitalism are directly reflected here, as the bosses privatise the profits, "socialise" the losses and bury the victims of this inhuman system. Like Union Carbide at Bhopal, India, their main worry now is how big the insurance claims will be.

For the Thatcher government now to call a "public inquiry" around King's Cross is like calling in the arsonist to investigate the fire. During the Falk-

lands/Malvinas war, the Iron Lady sank the Argentine cruiser *General Belgrano* in an act of sheer vindictive cruelty. Although the British war cabinet knew the *Belgrano* was outside the "war zone" and heading back to port, hundreds of Argentine sailors were sent to an icy grave anyway. The British people are now learning through bitter experience that their lives as well as cheap in the eyes of Thatcher and her henchmen.

The Labour Party has moaned about Thatcher's budget cuts, and wagged their fingers during question time in parliament. But from waving the Union Jack during the reactionary Falklands/Malvinas war to enacting their own round of cutbacks, these fakers prop up British capitalism. The last Labour government called out troops against striking firemen and ambulance workers. And Labour leader Neil Kinnock worked overtime to sabotage the powerful year-long miners strike of 1984-85. It was this defeat that has emboldened Thatcher to launch her latest round of deadly cuts.

Not phoney "inquiries" but class struggle mobilisations linking the unions with the oppressed are the way to reverse Thatcher's brutal attacks. Millions of people can now see the palpable link between the attacks on government workers and the vile condition of social services. In the wake of the King's Cross massacre, strike action by London's rail and bus workers would elicit a powerful response. But the Labourite union tops have sat on their hands. What is necessary is the forging of a Leninist-Trotskyist vanguard party through splitting the working class base of the Labour Party from the pro-capitalist tops. Such a party will act as tribune of the oppressed, mobilising all the downtrodden in this society behind the social power of the proletariat. It will take workers revolution to sweep away the rotting edifice of British capitalism and avenge the manifold crimes of mass murderer Thatcher and her whole criminal class. ■

NUM ...

(continued from page 2)

in favour of the scab UDM in Nottinghamshire. Abolish the dues checkoff – the union must collect its own dues!

It is elementary that trade unionists should oppose Thatcher's job cuts and privatisation schemes. Miners, with their traditional militancy, are resolved to fight, but they must link up in struggle with millions of other workers and oppressed under Thatcher's guns. Only a centralised planned economy achieved through proletarian revolution can rebuild Britain's decayed industrial base and provide jobs and decent living standards for all.

Labour's post-war nationalisations were carried out by huge compensations to the parasitic former owners, with the working masses left to bear the burden through low wages, high taxes and ever-increasing jobless levels. The reformist "solution" to unemployment is to demand massive import quotas, thereby pitting workers in different countries against each other for a declining number of jobs. This poisonous chauvinism was transcended at least for a period during the coal strike. Trade unionists internationally – from the Soviet Union to America to super-exploited black South African mineworkers – gave substantial material assistance to the British miners. Facing their own pit closures, French miners dumped lorry-loads of coal bound for Britain. These examples of international solidarity must not be forgotten.

NUM leaders like Scargill assert

that the union's policy of applying sanctions to South African coal imports will aid oppressed workers there. Of course, concrete measures like union blacking of scab coal in the event of a South African mineworkers strike are legitimate acts of solidarity. But a permanent boycott of South African coal would only increase unemployment among black mineworkers. And in fact such sanctions schemes boil down to being a barely disguised form of protectionism. Thus, Scargill recently travelled to Belgium to argue that the Common Market should ban coal imports from a number of countries, including South Africa, on the grounds that this would increase mining jobs in Europe! This is not "solidarity" at all but simply a ploy to throw the brunt of unemployment on even more oppressed workers elsewhere. Not surprisingly, the Tory European Parliament spokesman on energy policy applauded Scargill for his "constructive comments" (*Guardian*, 3 December 1987).

These kinds of chauvinist appeals only encourage racist backwardness at home. Some months ago we criticised the Hatfield Main NUM branch leadership in South Yorkshire for initiating a demonstration to ban South African coal. We noted that support for trade protectionism plays into the hands of fascist groups with their slogan of "British jobs for British workers". This they strenuously denied, while resorting to an attempted anti-communist ban of our press to shut off debate. However, an article in the December 1987 issue of the anti-fascist journal *Searchlight*, reporting on the activities of NF scum in the South Yorkshire mining town of Doncaster, notes that, "Efforts by National Front nazis to join a campaign by miners for a ban on coal imports have brought a hostile response from the National Union of Mineworkers." NUM members should draw the appropriate conclusion: protectionism is racist and anti-working class.

Among the countries that Scargill urged the Common Market to target for coal import bans was Poland. This is an outright concession to anti-communism. In the past Scargill took a stand against such Cold War sentiments when he declared that Polish Solidarnosc, the only "union" in the world supported by Reagan and Thatcher, was anti-socialist. For this he was savagely red-baited by the Fleet Street press, Healy/Slaughter's *Newsline* and the labour bureaucracy at the TUC congress held on the eve of the miners strike. The attack on Scargill was a green light for Thatcher to attack the miners. And indeed the most virulent red-baiters of Scargill became the biggest scabherders against the miners a few months later. Those who won't defend the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states against imperialism and counter-revolution will sabotage union struggles at home.

Above all, the miners strike demonstrated the limitations of trade union reformism, no matter how militant. A new leadership must be committed to a revolutionary and internationalist perspective. It must act as the tribune of all the oppressed and fight intransigently against the imperialist anti-Soviet war drive. Such a leadership will not be thrown up spontaneously within the unions, even those like the NUM with strong traditions of combativity. Especially because the miners have been in the front lines of class struggle, many workers see the NUM as a political alternative to the likes of Kinnock and Willis. But a revolutionary leadership in the trade unions will only

be forged through the intervention of an authentic Bolshevik party.

FORGE A LENINIST-TROTSKYIST PARTY

Scargill is hardly an "unreconstructed revolutionary", as some of the bourgeois media claim. He is essentially a left Labour trade union leader, supporting "little England" reformism of the Tony Benn variety. At times in the past he has taken positions, such as his statement on Polish Solidarnosc, that have been at variance with mainstream British social democracy. But in the present context he has attempted to bury differences with Kinnock in order to preserve the "unity" of the Labour Party. And it is precisely this strategy that has paralysed and crippled the working class.

In an interview with an Australian journalist, Scargill asserted that the Labour Party could be pressured to the left if it lifted its bans against Communists: "I feel we have to look in the future towards the widest possible affiliation for all working-class parties on the Left within one party" (*Observer*, 22 November 1987). This is the standard theory peddled by Tony Benn, that the Labour Party is a "broad church" that ought to embrace all tendencies within the working class. And in the interests of "party unity", the "lefts" muzzle themselves while the right-wing Labour tops carry out their pro-NATO, scabherding policies. Labourite leftism is bankrupt as an alternative to Kinnock & Co. A revolutionary party must split the Labour Party, regrouping the working-class base away from the pro-capitalist tops, and lead them in a struggle for proletarian state power. As Leon Trotsky wrote: "In the epoch of imperialist decay the trade unions can be really independent only to the extent that they are conscious of being, in action, the organs of proletarian revolution." Then the miners and working masses who have displayed such militancy and self-sacrifice can finally triumph over their oppressors. ■

Darts...

(continued from page 5)

were the victims of fascist attack at Exchange Street – consider any anti-fascist mobilisation to be a "provocation". The SWP's line is explicit: do nothing, retreat, turn the other cheek. This is suicidal. The counter-position between this line and our call for united-front mobilisations against the fascists has been the key political debate in Sheffield over what must be done at Exchange Street. If *Darts* wants to parrot a line similar to that of the SWP, so be it. But going out of its way to discredit as "violent" and "extremists" those of us who refuse to stand idly by while the fascists organise smacks of something more sinister. You people may share a touching faith in the capitalist state with the Labour traitors. But we know that from the 1930s when Mosley's Blackshirts were protected against mass workers' protests by the cops right through to the 1979 cop killing of SWPer Blair Peach during an anti-fascist protest – the state is not neutral. It protects the fascists and victimises those of us who fight them. *Darts* not only does a disservice to the student population of Sheffield University, but is paving the way for its own repression by its false equation of the struggle against fascism with classless "political violence".

–Spartacist League
27 November 1987

Not Orange against Green, but class against class!

Break the spiral of reaction

As long as British imperialism – its troops, its SAS terrorists, its murderous intelligence apparatus – stays in Northern Ireland, the bloody communalist slaughter will continue and worsen. And in the two years that have passed since the signing of the US-brokered Anglo-Irish Accord, the situation throughout Ireland has become more bleak. In the North there has been an escalation of Loyalist anti-Catholic terror in the streets and on the factory floor, while the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and British Army have continued to enforce their "shoot to kill" policy against supporters of the IRA or anyone else who happens to be passing by when they are engaged in "anti-Republican" actions. The Provisional IRA has heightened its campaign of hitting state, civilian and so-called "economic" targets. British repression, increasing sectarian polarisation and the economic devastation which leaves the Catholic ghettos hellholes of despair and the Protestant working class areas hardly any better off can only be combatted by a proletarian revolutionary strategy. The elementary starting point of revolutionists must be the demand for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the British troops.

The Enniskillen bomb on 8 November 1987 which killed eleven, injured 61, 19 of them seriously, in the small country town in County Fermanagh was an indefensible crime from the standpoint of the world working class, an act of indiscriminate terrorism. The Provisional IRA had placed the bomb in a former Catholic school, now a community centre, in a spot where civilians traditionally gather each year to watch the "Remembrance Sunday" proceedings. While the IRA claims it did not trigger the bomb, regardless of how it was detonated the bomb was planted by the IRA at a gathering site of *civilian* not military personnel (the latter remained unscathed). Furthermore, this criminal and idiotic sectarian terror has played into the hands of the enemies of the Irish proletariat on both sides of the border and of the Irish Sea.

Thatcher – the butcher of the *Belgrano* whose hands drip with the blood of Bobby Sands and all the murdered H-Block hunger strikers – saw a chance to push the long-sought extradition treaty from Dublin. As ghoul-ish as ever, she rushed off for the memorial service at Enniskillen. For his part, Kinnock rushed off to Dublin to exercise his questionable "authority" and twist the arm of Republic of Ireland Prime Minister Charles Haughey over the same extradition



Infamous RUC murder of Sean Downes at Republican rally, Belfast, August 1984.

treaty. Even before the Unionists bayed for blood in Parliament, the reactionary Loyalist paramilitaries were answering their call. As the *Guardian* (11 November 1987) reported: "On Sunday night, five Catholic youths standing outside a hotel at the bottom of the Cliftonville Road in north Belfast were sprayed with gunfire from a passing car." The next day, a Protestant youth working on a building site in West Belfast was shot dead probably because he was mistaken for a Catholic. The day after that, a Catholic family was terrorised and beaten by a group of hooded men who burst into their home. A few days later, a Catholic chip-shop owner was shot to death in Belfast.

In the weeks following the bombing, Haughey dispatched 7000 cops and troops in a joint operation with the RUC, to hit Republican strongholds on both sides of the border. Haughey's old-time "Republican" cronies got targetted. When troops raided the home of Neil Blaney, a Donegal MP who claims to support the IRA, he cried "Betrayal". In another case, as the *Sunday Times* (29 November 1987) reports: John Kelly, "whom Haughey once described as 'the finest republican I have ever met' was also raided. Incredulous on his doorstep, he demanded of the raiding party: 'Have you searched Charlie Haughey's home yet?'" In all, over 55,000 homes were raided. The net yield: a few empty bunkers, enough guns and ammunition with which to rob a few banks and unfor-

tunately a Republican prisoner who had broken out of the notorious Maze prison and thought he had escaped to shelter in the Republic. Of course the whole point was that the South will be no "haven" for opponents of British imperialism.

It was a proof of loyalty to NATO's Ireland deal: the Anglo-Irish (Hillsborough) accord. Endorsed by Tories and Labour alike, it aims to enlist the aid of the Irish bourgeoisie in suppressing the Republicans and to wean the Southern state away from its nominal "neutrality" to full parti-

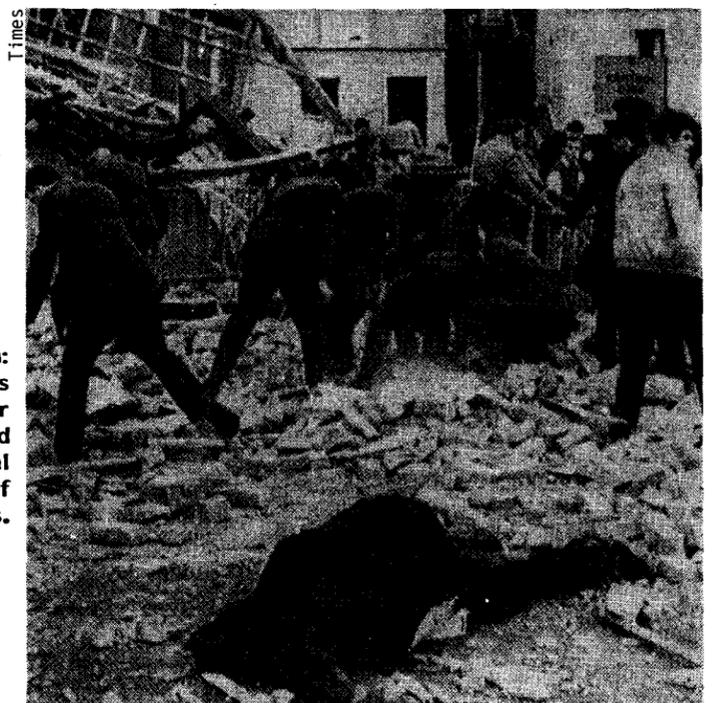
cipation in NATO's anti-Soviet war drive. Thatcher has plans to replace the land-based Cruise missiles which would be slated for the axe under Reagan/Gorbachev's arms deal with the new sea-based Trident D5 as her very own first strike weapon against the Soviet Union. As Paul Rogers points out in the *New Statesman* (4 December 1987):

"Britain's Trident submarines will be able to use the same patrol areas as the current Polaris submarines, allocated under a water space agreement with the United States and including the waters west of Ireland. From these waters, the Trident D5 missiles could be launched on depressed trajectories to hit targets in the Soviet Union as quickly as Pershing 2."

Over the past two years, Thatcher has been attempting to ride out Protestant anger at the accord having granted the Republic a token say in the affairs of the North by turning a blind eye to the heightened wave of Loyalist terror against the Catholic community. In the South, Haughey has had problems slamming through an extradition treaty at home. This is particularly the case now when the appeal of the Birmingham Six – framed up by the British government for the IRA's 1974 Birmingham pub bombings – for a new trial has received saturation coverage in the Irish media (see accompanying article). The Irish have paid with centuries of blood and have less than no faith in British "justice".

But Enniskillen helped to provide the Haughey government with the

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Enniskillen: rescue workers searching for dead and wounded after criminal IRA bombing of civilians.

British troops out of Ireland now!