



Smash the sectarian divide—for a class axis

Troops out of Ireland now!

Shoot-to-kill has always been the policy of Maggie Thatcher's triggermen in Northern Ireland. The Stalker enquiry showed that. The bloody-minded British imperialists who prate about "human rights" are terrorists with state power. Now another enquiry, the judicial inquest into the assassination of three IRA members by SAS hitmen in Gibraltar, has proved that this was a cold-blooded execution.

On Thursday, 8 September, Professor Alan Watson, the pathologist retained by the Thatcher government for the Gibraltar inquest into the SAS assassination of three IRA members last 6 March, testified of the death of Sean Savage:

"He had been shot five times in the head, five in the back of the chest and in the left leg and right arm. There were wounds to the left cheek, left side of the neck, left eyebrow, left frontal area of the scalp, left temple...right side of the head and the top of the scalp" (*Guardian*, 9 September).

When asked by Paddy McGrory, the lawyer representing the families of the IRA victims if strike marks left on the ground indicated that four of the bullets were "fired into his head as he lay there", Professor Watson replied: "Yes, that would be reasonable".

In total, Savage was shot sixteen times. Mairead Farrell was not only shot twice in the head, but the three bullets that were fired into her back cut her heart and liver to pieces. Daniel McCann, the third victim, was shot twice in the back and twice in the head. Soldier F, the head SAS assassin on the spot has contradicted himself three times at least in his testimony. And it is being floated that the Cabinet papers covering the decision to use the SAS in Gibraltar are unlikely to be released under the 30-year rule. In short, the government has been caught out lying once again. And since Gibraltar, the SAS assassins have struck again. On 30 August, three more members of the IRA – Brian Mullin and the brothers Gerard and Martin Harte – were ambushed and murdered on a country lane in Omagh.

In fact, leading up to Gibraltar, the



Labour Herald



Independent

British troops rampage in Northern Ireland (left), SAS hitmen slay IRA volunteers in Gibraltar (right). Imperialist occupation of Northern Ireland seals sectarian divide.

British government's campaign of terror on the streets of Northern Ireland had been escalating. And if anything it has heightened since then. Three mourners of the Gibraltar victims were murdered at their funeral. Aidan McAnespie, a prominent Republican supporter was murdered at an Army/RUC checkpoint on his way to a local football match. And most recently, three Catholics were injured by plastic bullets in west Belfast in an incident set off by soldiers taunting local residents over the murder of the three IRA men in Omagh.

These atrocities serve to warn anyone who wants to fight against the British imperialists that in terms of state-sponsored terror, it is open season on the oppressed Catholic minority. The continued presence of British troops not only perpetuates the oppression of the Catholic minority but exacerbates the existing sectarian divisions, inhibiting the possibility of forging proletarian class struggle that can unite the Catholic and Protestant working masses. *Troops out of Ireland now!*

SMASH THE ANGLO-IRISH ACCORD

Thatcher's government is committed to maintaining the ascendancy of the Protestant community in the

North over the oppressed Catholic minority. And the Anglo-Irish accord, which the Protestant reactionary leadership is so up in arms against in no way contradicts this perspective. Now nearly three years old, it was originally brokered in Washington (with the full backing of the Tories and Labour alike) as an attempt to soften longstanding national antagonisms by appealing to the bourgeoisie's common interest on both sides of the Irish Sea: anti-Sovietism and anti-communism. There is no bar to Irish participation in the anti-Soviet war drive through NATO and moreover, as part of the London/Dublin rapprochement, the British Trident submarines – now a key factor in the NATO anti-Soviet arms build-up – will be able to nest in Irish waters.

The Anglo-Irish accord, designed to cement cooperation between the armed forces of Britain and Ireland, has not achieved its goal of breaking the IRA. Thatcher's "new" security proposals, centred on eliminating the elementary democratic "right to silence", represents a back-handed way of reintroducing internment – if you remain silent you are presumed guilty. To a large extent this simply demonstrates the government's desperation. Internment was officially ended years ago, simply because it didn't work!

The accord also facilitated the passage of the extradition treaty, supported by Thatcher, the chauvinist Labour Party, and Irish prime minister Charles Haughey. Yet by now even a large section of the southern Irish bourgeoisie sees this as a liability. The recent protests over the extradition of the IRA's Robert Russell underline how deeply despised this treaty is in the Republic. Coming on the heels of the case of the Birmingham Six, unjustly imprisoned for years, and the witchhunt against John Stalker over his exposing of the shoot-to-kill policy – only the most recent atrocities of the British courts – the Irish masses know that British "justice" means vile repression.

The government has by no means had things all its own way. Over the past few months the IRA has struck some blows against the forces of British imperialism and its agents in the North: it has scored against the British army alone – eight in Ballygawley, six on a Derry fun run, one at the Inglis barracks in Mill Hill in London, and a couple more soldiers on NATO duty on the continent. In fact, the British army is now in the midst of a nearly hysterical mole hunt. As Marxists we shed no tears for the soldiers, judges, Loyalist

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For a Socialist Republic of United Kurdistan

Iraq's massacre and imperialist hypocrisy

The so-called "ceasefire" negotiated by the UN may not have ended the savage and senseless war between Iraq and Iran. But it has given these two self-proclaimed "revolutionary" regimes the respite to concentrate their forces on what they do best: massacring their own oppressed peoples. Since the middle of July the Baghdad generals have launched yet another offensive against Iraqi Kurdistan, where also many Assyrian Christians live. This time they sent 60,000 troops equipped with panzers, helicopter gunships, heavy artillery, napalm and Kurdish refugees say, poison gas. Tens of thousands of refugees have been forced over the rugged mountainous border into Turkey, where Kurds have been historically more oppressed than anywhere else. Meanwhile, Ayatollah Khomeini, who inaugurated his Islamic "revolution" by killing more than 10,000 Kurds, is presently mas-

sing troops inside Iranian Kurdistan.

Dominating the headlines, condemnations of the use of poison gas issued forth from imperialist capitals like Washington and Bonn. British imperialism lagged behind its cousins, maintaining a discreet silence. There are a variety of reasons, including as the *Guardian* (15 September) speculated, a desire not to offend the brutal Ozal regime in Turkey. West Germany does a brisk business selling "C-weapon" materials to Iraq and the US recently refused to sign an international ban on producing or using these weapons. Amnesty International, one of the first organisations to expose the massacres in Iraq and report the use of chemical weapons, appealed to the UN Security Council. But the UN is the same institution that dismembered Palestine and provides the border guards for Israeli expansion, that murdered Congolese nationalist leader

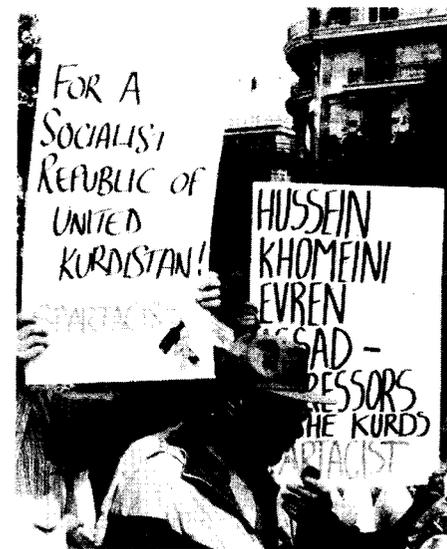
Patrice Lumumba and dismembered that fledgling African nation, that provided sanction for the US rape of Korea and protected thousands of Nazi war criminals after World War II including, of course, its own secretary general, Kurt Waldheim. Its predecessor organisation, the League of Nations, was responsible for imposing the imperialist partition and balkanisation of the Near East after World War I, by which Kurdistan was denied its right to self-determination and divided between four capitalist powers: Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria. British imperialism played a leading role in this carving-up of Kurdistan. And today 20 million Kurdish people are denied their own nation-state.

Charges of poison gas use have been denied both in Baghdad and by NATO's frontman in Ankara, Ozal. That is not surprising as Turkey makes a nice profit pumping oil from Iraq (to be precise, from Iraqi Kurdistan) to the Mediterranean. As part of its "face-lift" for entering the European Common Market, the Turkish dictatorship has crowed about its "humanitarian" treatment of refugees from Iraq, which consists of shipping the men back and keeping the women and children penned up in carefully guarded camps to which outside medical and relief assistance has been denied. According to the TKP's (Turkish Communist Party) *Iscin'in Sesi* (5 September 1988) Turkey has denied refugee status to the Kurds, proffering instead the meaningless status of "temporary stay". Meanwhile southeastern Anatolia, where most of Turkey's over eight million Kurds live, remains under martial law. Referred to as "mountain Turk" since Ataturk and denied the use of their language, today even their villages have been militarised and their militants jailed and murdered.

Iraq has used poison gas in Kurdistan since October, 1983. Last March in a battle against Iranian troops, Ba'athist forces dropped chemical weapons on the Kurdish village of Halabja, killing more than 5000 men, women and children. To break resistance to Baghdad's domination, the bonapartist regime is pursuing what US imperialism called in Vietnam a "scorched earth policy":

"President Saddam Hussein has razed villages - no less than 3,000 out of Kurdistan's 4,000 are believed to have disappeared, deported tens of thousands of inhabitants - either to easily controllable settlements in Kurdistan or to concentration camps in the far south of Iraq - and Arabised the more sensitive areas such as around the Kirkuk oilfields." (*Guardian*, 14 September).

Hussein's pretext for yet another murderous campaign against the embattled Kurds was that their nationalist forces collaborated with Khomeini's troops. Indeed the historic bourgeois (and pre-bourgeois) nation-



Workers Hammer
London, 10 September: Spartacists protest massacre of Kurds.

alist leaders of Iraqi Kurds, the Democratic Party of Kurdistan (DPK) headed by the Barzani clan and the more recently formed (1975) Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) headed by Jalal Talabani have received support from both Khomeini and the Shah. The latter exploited the Kurdish resistance to force Hussein to sign the 1975 Algiers agreement granting Iran shared sovereignty over the Shatt Al-Arab estuary. The Algiers agreement also meant Baghdad-Teheran collaboration in crushing the Kurdish resistance until Hussein tore up that agreement in 1980 by launching a territorial war against Khomeini's newly formed theocratic dictatorship. Meanwhile, the leader of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (DPIK), Abdel Ghassemelou, announced recently that Khomeini was about to attack his forces because he had in turn accepted aid from Hussein. When asked by the *Suddeutsche Zeitung* (16 September) about the Kurds in Iraq he stated: "We are not separatists. We are Kurds, but we are also Iranians." Therefore, Hussein was their problem, it was not the job of his organisation to come to the aid of the Iraqi Kurds.

The Near East, and Kurdistan in particular, give dramatic testimony to the inability in the epoch of imperialism's decline, for capitalism to solve even the most elementary democratic and national aspirations of the oppressed, toiling masses. Petty-bourgeois leftists who supported Arab nationalism and the "Arab revolution" when that was in vogue, and then switched over to the "Iranian revolution" of Persian chauvinism and Shiite obscurantism, reaped the spoils of their tailism in the Iran-Iraq war, especially on the killing fields of Kurdistan. And among the Kurds, some from Iraq consider themselves to be "hezbollahi" (Shiite fanatics) while other Kurds in Iran are being slaughtered by Khomeini's hezbollahi. A proletarian perspective for the Kurdish people is needed to combat these religious and regional divisions as well.

Only the international Spartacist tendency, which gave no political support to nationalism, could fight every injustice to the Kurdish people and take a position of revolutionary defeatism on both sides of the Iran-Iraq war, pointing out that it provided the best opportunity to carve out an independent Kurdish nation-state since the short-lived Mahabad "Kurdish Republic" of 1946. Hussein's present genocidal campaign against Iraqi Kurds is his own acknowledgement of

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Lenin on the National Question

Leninists give no political support to bourgeois nationalism. In the case of interpenetrated peoples, such as in Ireland, we oppose the "self-determination" of one people achieved at the expense of the other. To this necessarily murderous dead-end, we counterpose the liberation of oppressed peoples under the red banner of proletarian international revolution.



LENIN



TROTSKY

The awakening of the masses from feudal lethargy, and their struggle against all national oppression, for the sovereignty of the people, of the nation, are progressive. Hence, it is the Marxist's *bounden* duty to stand for the most resolute and consistent democratism on all aspects of the national question. This task is largely a negative one. But this is the limit the proletariat can go to in supporting nationalism, for beyond that begins the "positive" activity of the *bourgeoisie* striving to fortify nationalism.

To throw off the feudal yoke, all national oppression, and all privileges enjoyed by any particular nation or language, is the imperative duty of the proletariat as a democratic force, and is certainly in the interests of the proletarian class struggle, which is obscured and retarded by bickering on the national question. But to go *beyond* these strictly limited and definite historical limits in helping bourgeois nationalism means betraying the proletariat and siding with the bourgeoisie. There is a border-line here, which is often very slight and which the Bundists and Ukrainian nationalist-socialists completely lose sight of.

- V I Lenin, "Critical Remarks on the National Question" (1913)

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Tony Cliff on "fighting" Le Pen

SWP pushes ANL pop front

When Jean Marie Le Pen, sinister fuhrer of the French fascist Front National (FN), polled more than 14 per cent of the vote in the presidential elections last Spring, millions in France and throughout Europe reacted in shock and revulsion. Notorious as a torturer in French imperialism's brutal colonial war in Algeria, Le Pen earned international infamy for his declaration that the Nazi gas chambers were a "minor detail" of history. Inevitably the spectacular electoral successes of the FN have been accompanied by a crescendo of murderous attacks on immigrants, Jews, gays and the labour movement. A confident, well-organised and growing fascist organisation is the legacy of the Mitterrand popular front. For five years following its victory at the polls in 1981 on a programme of anti-Soviet Cold War militarism, the class-collaborationist alliance of Francois Mitterrand's Parti Socialiste (PS), the Stalinist Parti Communiste Francais (PCF) and sundry bourgeois "radicals" imposed savage capitalist austerity measures on the French working class and unleashed the wave of racist terror now reaped by Le Pen.

The French "far left" has a dismal record of prostration to the Mitterrand bourgeois government and failure to organise a class-struggle riposte to Le Pen. Here, the Russia-hating state-capitalist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of Tony Cliff has leapt into polemical action, exhorting the fake-Trotskyist Lutte Ouvriere (LO) and Mandeliste Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire (LCR) to do something about Le Pen's fascist bands. To be precise, the SWP upholds as a model for the French left its own work in the Anti Nazi League (ANL) in the 1970s. This was the central feature of SWP speeches at its summer "Marxism 88" debate with the LCR on Le Pen and of a series of written polemics in its press, magazine and quarterly journal. The correct policy to fight fascism in France - and Britain - is an urgent question for the international working class. But the Cliffite SWP, its self-serving mythology about the Anti Nazi League notwithstanding, is as far from providing the answer as the targets of its polemics.

In a lengthy article in the Summer 1988 edition of the SWP's *International Socialism* Chanie Rosenberg attacks LO for refusing "to organise or participate in counter-demonstrations or even make anti-racist and anti-fascist propaganda on the grounds that it would 'be making publicity for Le Pen'." It also scores the LCR for its abasement before the Mitterrand popular front (while the SWP itself supported Mitterrand) and adaptation to the liberal SOS Racisme group. Certainly LO is, to put it kindly, a colour-blind workerist outfit which has shunned participation in significant anti-fascist mobilisations. It will not even call Le Pen by his right name: a fascist. For its part, the LCR in the early 1970s engaged in militant confrontations with the fascists; the group was in fact banned in 1973 by the state. The conclusion it drew from this repression was to flip-flop from substi-



Le Bolchevik

Rouen, 1981: French Trotskyists mobilise labour united front to stop fascist terror. Banner reads: "Popular Front Disarms Working Class! Smash Fascist Vermin! For Workers Self-Defence!"

tutionism to abject popular frontism. Today it can be found marching alongside the likes of the anti-Soviet Juquin, leader of a split from the PCF in the direction of social democracy.

But the Cliffites' sagacious lecture to the French left could constitute a polemic against the SWP itself. Its own recent contributions to "anti-racist and anti-fascist" struggle in this country include fighting to "ignore the Nazis" and prevent united-front action against marauding fascist punks in Sheffield city centre, even though *Socialist Worker* salesmen were themselves victims of assaults by these skinhead fascists (see *Workers Hammer* no 93, November 1987). In 1986, when militant anti-racist students at Bristol University mobilised to stop racist Unionist MP Enoch Powell of "rivers of blood" infamy from spewing his race-hate, SWP members united with the Labour Club to protect him. The real and standing policy of the SWP is made explicit in their internal bulletin:

"We are saying at present, organise specifically against the nazis, and we'll build their organisation.... If the nazis start paper sales we should not pay them any special attention. If they attack a SW sale, make a tactical retreat and start again the following week" (*Discussion Bulletin*, August 1984).

SWPers au courant with what passes for the theoretical underpinnings of this position will explain that they won't defend even their own members against fascist attacks because Britain is in the throes of a "downturn" and militant class struggle is therefore rendered impotent. This pseudo-theory (closely paralleling the "new realism" of the CIA-loving TUC/Labour Party right wing) is the product of a profoundly defeatist programme used to justify, for instance, the SWP's crossing of miners' picket lines during the 1984-85 strike. Now as France becomes the European country with a mass fascist movement the SWP holds meetings entitled "France: Lessons of the Upturn!"

Rosenberg mendaciously asserts that fascism isn't much of a problem in Britain because "the fascist movement was nipped in the bud by the ANL". The marginal electoral impact of groups like the British National Party (BNP) and NF is cited by the

SWP as evidence that fascism is no longer a threat. But those Asians, blacks, gays, Irish and leftist victims of fascist and racist attacks would take issue with the SWP. Indeed the competent anti-fascist monthly *Searchlight* (June 1987) has persistently chronicled "the astonishing and unrelenting increase in racist attacks which now afflict minority communities all over the country". And one reason for the electoral decline of the NF was that a goodly proportion of its programme was adopted by Thatcher - from whipping up anti-immigrant hysteria, to unleashing the racist cops against the inner cities. Furthermore, the NF/BNP do not operate primarily as electoralist parties. On the contrary, the appeal of fascism to enraged petty-bourgeois and lumpen elements lies in its programme of terrorist action against oppressed minorities and the workers



Workers Hammer
SWP's ANL channelled anti-fascist struggle into impotent liberal rallies.

movement.

In addition to using its former ANL activism as a club in the polemics with the LCR, LO et al (the Cliffites have a little group in France), we suspect the SWP hopes to convince its own younger members that today's "turn the other cheek" anti-fascist work is really just the fruits of a victorious struggle waged by the SWP in the 1970s. Thus, after being beaten up by a skinhead Nazi on a sale, a young SWP militant can take solace in the leadership's assertion that the fight against fascism has already been won. But the stubborn fact is that the Anti Nazi League not only *did not* smash the fascists, it was in fact a popular-frontist lash up designed to avoid confronting the

NF in the streets through diversionary carnivals, concerts and impotent liberal rallies.

It is scarcely credible today, but in the 1970s young militants did join the SWP because of its reputation for fighting fascists in the street. SWPer and ANL activist Blair Peach, murdered by the police during an anti-fascist protest in Southall in 1979, is rightly honoured by thousands of anti-fascists as a hero and martyr. Often the SWP's tactics involved substitutionist physical confrontations with the NF and the thousands of cops assembled to defend them.

After the summer 1977 mobilisation against the National Front in Lewisham, a rabid Fleet Street witchhunt was launched against the SWP. At this time, the ANL was formed as a "people's front", an attempt to unite all opponents of fascism around a programme acceptable to the liberal Lords, trade union bureaucrats and Labour politicians who offered their best Sunday speeches in return for the SWP's promise to bolster their "left" credentials. As Trotsky explained, the fascist bands must be smashed by united, militant mobilisations based on the power of the organised working class. Despairing of this perspective, the alternatives of isolated confrontations between leftists and the fascists and their cop protectors or popular front diversions such as the ANL are two sides of the same coin.

Socialist Worker Review (June 1988) tells it like this: "Once the Socialist Workers Party had shown that large numbers could be mobilised in active opposition to the fascists it was possible to force some

sections of the left reformists in the Labour Party (including Neil Kinnock!) and in the unions into a united front." Kinnock recognised the reformed character of the SWP and stated baldly that he was proud to be an officer of the ANL because it was "an alternative to street fighting". Grotesquely, the ANL sought to compete with the fascists in patriotism when the NF celebrated British imperialism's "Remembrance Day" of victory over its German rivals in two world wars. The NF marched to the Cenotaph and SWP leader Nigel Harris screeched "Who the hell's side were they on?"

The nature of the ANL was most graphically exposed by its Carnival 2

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South Korea's police-state Olympics

On 1 September, South Korean soldiers armed with semi-automatic rifles escorted the Olympic torch into the city of Kwangju on its way to the site of the upcoming games in the capital of Seoul. Student protesters were all the more outraged because Kwangju was the site of the 1979 massacre in which hundreds were mowed down by South Korean units which had been withdrawn from the border with North Korea and replaced by the US Army.

In recent months the US-backed police state has been shaken by massive workers' strikes and student protests. To secure social peace the generals are preparing for the Olympics as for war. A force of 120,000 police and soldiers has been mobilised under the pretext of "anti-terrorism" to "protect" the games. A special commando unit has been formed consisting of sharpshooters also trained in the more deadly martial arts. The right-wing *U.S. News & World Report* quipped: "With Korean security on a hair trigger, fans might want to think twice before leaping up to cheer the home team - or suddenly reaching for a stick of gum."

The entire 600,000-man South Korean army as well as the 40,000 US troops stationed there will be placed on full alert during the games. A squadron of US fighter planes has been moved from Japan to Korea, a US Navy carrier task force will patrol offshore and AWACS aircraft will be flying overhead. The North Korean regime (which has refused to participate in the Seoul Olympics) rightly called the games "undisguised war maneuvers".

To hold the Olympics in Seoul is itself a Cold War provocation. For it was on the Korean peninsula in 1950 that the Cold War turned into a hot war. It was here that US and British imperialism moved to "roll back Communism", beginning with North Korea, only to be stopped by the Chinese army backed by the Soviet Union.



South Korean student protesters defy "free world" dictatorship. Korea must be reunified through socialist revolution in the South, proletarian political revolution in the North.

Independent

Workers, students defy US puppet regime

sula-divided between the "free world" military dictatorship in the South and the grotesquely deformed workers state in the North - has been a trip wire for World War III.

For decades anyone in South Korea who even spoke of reunification risked imprisonment, torture and assassination. But today popular sympathy for reunification, spearheaded by the militant student protests, is so intense that even the US puppet regime of Roh Tae Woo is paying lip service to it. In July Roh announced an opening to the North, permitting trade, family

cation - proletarian socialist revolution against the Cold War neocolony in the South, proletarian political revolution against the Stalinist regime in the North.

SOUTH KOREAN WORKING CLASS SHOWS ITS POWER

For decades South Korea has been ruled by a succession of generals trained and selected by the Pentagon. Following last year's months-long labour and student revolt, the military regime in Seoul has taken on a parliamentary facade. A majority in the impotent National Assembly is now held by liberal opposition parties led by Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam. While the feuding Kims don't like one another, both are currently on amicable terms with President Roh, who was trained for the job at Fort Bragg, North Carolina and later with the US forces ravaging Vietnam. The so-called "democratisation" of South Korea is pure hype. With its weak native bourgeoisie, its huge and combative proletariat and radical student movement, this Cold War front line state can exist only as a military dictatorship (open or disguised) or it won't exist at all.

In addition to heralding its phony "democratisation", propagandists for US imperialism point to South Korea as a great success story of "free enterprise" capitalism. But the South Korean "economic miracle" is based on subjecting workers to the highest rate of exploitation in the industrial world. An American liberal who visited a Seoul factory last year wrote to the *New York Times* (5 January):

"Conditions were reminiscent of the 19th-century Lawrence, Mass., textile mills. Teen-age women, recent arrivals from the countryside, work 13-hour days, 6-day weeks, for 65 cents an hour. They live in hostels above the factories, 10 to a room, returning half their wages to the American-owned

company for 'room' and meals." *Business Week* points out that South Koreans work over the course of a year 40 per cent more hours than Americans and 25 per cent more hours than Japanese. At the same time, South Korea's industrial plant, heavily financed by American and Japanese capital, is among the world's most advanced. The result is bloated profits for the *chaebols* - the huge state-sponsored monopolies like Hyundai, Daewoo and Samsung - and their Wall Street and Tokyo backers.

Until last year independent trade unions in South Korea were effectively suppressed. The only legal unions were company unions under the umbrella of the state-sponsored Federation of Korean Trade Unions, which enforced labour discipline hand in glove with company goons, the KCIA spy agency and riot police. This corporatist straight-jacket was ripped apart by a massive strike wave centring on the notoriously reactionary Hyundai empire (see "South Korea: Strikes Shake Dictatorship," *Workers Vanguard* no 435, 4 September 1987).

Again this spring a strike wave involving over a thousand separate industrial actions shook the *chaebols*. The core of the South Korean industrial proletariat went out - auto workers at Hyundai and Daewoo, shipbuilders at Samsung. At Hyundai Precision and Industry Co strikers held eleven executives, including the founder's son, hostage in the company compound for seven days. Throughout South Korea workers took on the *kudasan*, the bosses' paid goons and strikebreakers.

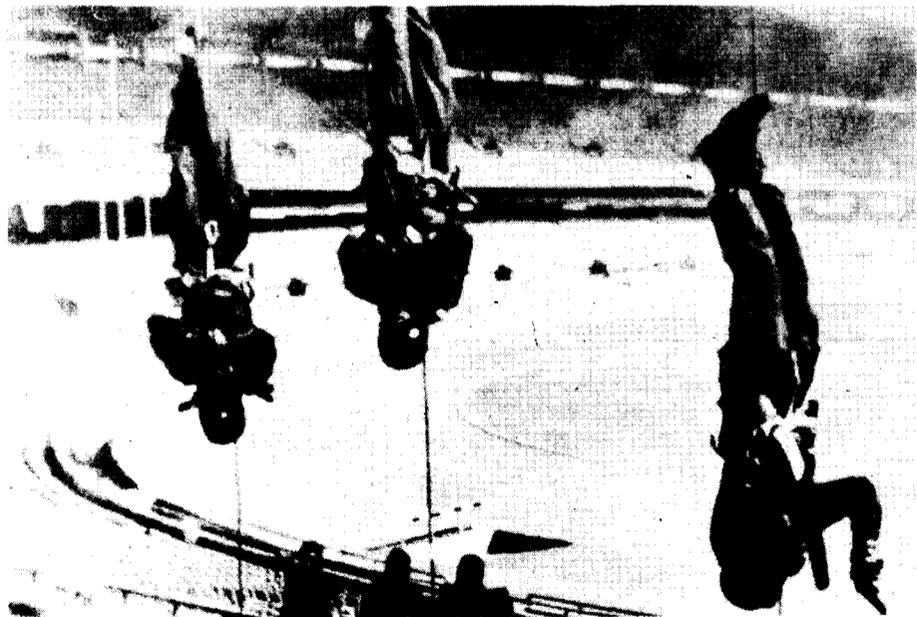
The strikes ended with wage increases averaging 20 per cent. Even the *Wall Street Journal* conceded that the *chaebols* could easily absorb the additional labour costs. Profits are expected to increase by 30 per cent this year, while South Korean companies routinely achieve double-digit gains in labour productivity. Nevertheless, the Korean bourgeoisie and their imperialist overlords have to be nervous about the emergence of a combative and independently organised proletariat. They are sitting atop a volcano.

Imperialist agencies are working overtime to co-opt and control the new South Korean unions. Thus last winter the AFL-CIO sponsored "training sessions" for union leaders at various South Korean universities. The AFL-CIO bureaucracy is notorious as an instrument for CIA-backed intervention to smash labour militancy throughout the American empire - while pushing racist, anti-Asian protectionist chauvinism at home.

South Korea's new unions are admirably combative but at present remain narrowly economist in their demands. Yet just to exist requires a direct struggle with the state. Any serious struggle to put an end to the series of brutal dictatorships which have ravaged the country since the post-war American occupation must point to a workers revolution and, in turn, to a struggle to smash the Cold War partition of Korea along the 38th parallel while defending North Korea against imperialism.

FOR THE REVOLUTIONARY REUNIFICATION OF KOREA!

The question of reunification has been placed on the centre stage of South Korean political life with the



Special commando unit trains for Seoul Olympics. Spectators had better not make any sudden moves.

Der Spiegel

The American Caesar, Douglas MacArthur, suffered the most humiliating defeat of his career when the Chinese Red Army crossed the Yalu and smashed the US Eighth Army. In response MacArthur wanted to bomb China. US president Harry Truman vetoed this move, fearing it would trigger World War III by provoking Russia. Ever since the 1953 truce, the totally militarised Korean penin-

visits and student exchanges. In late August South Korean politicians and North Korean bureaucrats met at the Korean War truce village of Panmunjom, but their talks went nowhere.

The notion that reunification can be achieved peacefully under the banner of "democracy" is a liberal nationalist pipe-dream. The national and social liberation of the Korean people requires revolutionary reunifi-

militant student protests beginning last June. University students planned to march to the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ, actually one of the most militarised zones on the face of the planet). At Panmunjom they were to meet with a delegation from the North's Kim Il Sung University to demand co-sponsorship of the Olympics, the ouster of US troops, and reunification of the country.

As the students prepared to march from Seoul's Yonsei University and ten other campuses, they were surrounded by 60,000 riot police equipped with armour-plated vans shooting rapid-fire tear gas grenades. Courageously, the students fought to break off the police cordon, hurling rocks, bricks and firebombs while chanting "Down with the military dictatorship!" and "Drive out the Yankees who enforce the partition of our land!" The march to Panmunjom, however, was stopped by the massive use of police-state repression. And when onlookers protested the brutal treatment of the students, police tossed tear gas grenades into the crowds.

A few days later as a sop the Roh regime permitted a thousand students to stage a ceremony near the North Korean border, where they prayed for the reunification of their country. But neither the riot police nor tame pray-ins have dampened the student movement for reunification. In August South Korea's campuses were again battlegrounds between Roh's police and student protesters trying to march to the border.

The Western press and the Seoul

regime describe the student protesters as radical extremists and leftists. However, the protesters appear to express liberal illusions in pure, classless "democracy" as well as resurgent Korean nationalism, directed centrally against the United States. The *New York Times* (10 June) quoted one student leader:

"Our ultimate goal is not just blind unification, but achieving sovereignty under an independent regime.... We have realized we can't have true democracy with a regime represented by military force and manipulated by a foreign invasive force - the United States."

Along the same line, the *San Francisco Examiner* (15 June) quoted Kim Jeunggi, who originally proposed the march to Panmunjom:

"The division of our land by superpowers, spearheaded by the United States, has brought immeasurable trials and tribulation to our people. We have now reached a point in our history when we ourselves must get rid of the barbed wire fence that divides our land."

That the students are marching against American imperialism is a good thing, and it is true that the US is a barrier to reunification. However, the Cold War division of Korea is rooted in the class war of world capitalism against the Soviet bureaucracy degenerated workers state. A nationalist programme can neither understand the division of Korea nor mobilise the forces necessary to overcome it. The students' courageous attempt to march to Panmunjom defied the anti-Communist



George Mitchell

Combative South Korean proletariat has the power to overthrow Cold War police state.

Korea 1950. Imperialism's bid to "roll back" communism was stopped by Soviet-backed Chinese forces, led to Cold War division of Korea.



Thames Television

hysteria of Seoul's rulers and the US masters. But the students surely wouldn't like North Korea if they ever got there.

The other side of the students' just hatred for US imperialism and its local puppets has been a tendency to prettify conditions across the 38th parallel. "Campus bulletin boards are filled with photographs of life in North Korea, including some of women working in key positions, and messages condemning America", reported the *San Francisco Examiner*. The relative social equality forged in the North on the foundation of a collectivised economy contrasts starkly with the filthy rich bosses side by side with extreme poverty in the capitalist South. And the advancement of women is a critical question in Korea, so recently a peasant/feudal society in which women were routinely bought and sold as wives, and where today women workers get paid half their male counterparts' wages.

Nonetheless, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a far cry from a workers paradise or an egalitarian society. On the contrary, Kim Il Sung & Son run the most grotesque Stalinist regime in the world. Officially proclaimed Great Leader and Sun of Mankind, Kim has created a personality cult which makes Stalin look like a modest soul. The comparison which comes to mind is the deification of the old Roman emperors. The Great Leader has set out to create a dynasty by naming his son, Kim Il Jung - officially known as "the dear leader" - heir apparent. Government workers devote a month a year to studying the writings of Kim & Son, whose contributions are elevated

far above those of Marx, Engels and Lenin. Little is known about the North Korean economy since the regime publishes no usable economic data. We do know, however, that much of the scarce foreign exchange is spent on full-page ads in the Western press glorifying the Great Leader.

If South Korea's student nationalists prettify North Korean Stalinism, they view the Soviet Union as the other "superpower" responsible, along with the US, for the division of their country. But such an equation is radically and dangerously false. The Soviet Union is the military/industrial bulwark of all those countries where capitalism has been overthrown. Only fear of war with Russia prevented US imperialism from A-bombing China in the Korean War, and reunifying Korea as an American neocolony. Opposition to US imperialism means defence of the Soviet Union as well as North Korea and all the other deformed workers states.

Korea must be reunified through proletarian socialist revolution in the South - the only way to smash the generals and chaebols and break the hold of US imperialism - and proletarian political revolution in the North based on workers democracy and internationalism. A unified Korean workers state would have an enormous impact on the Chinese deformed workers state and on imperialist Japan, which ruled Korea as its colonial master for the first half of the 20th century, and could thus ignite the working classes throughout East Asia.

Adapted from Workers Vanguard no 460, 9 September 1988.

SWP...

(Continued from page 3)

in the autumn of 1978. While the NF marched virtually unimpeded into the heavily immigrant East End of London, well over 60,000 people mobilised by the ANL were "rocking against racism" on the other side of the city and listening to speeches which appealed for the marchers not to "play the fascists' game" and split the Carnival's "unity" by moving to Brick Lane. There a maximum of 1200 anti-fascists, including a spirited Spartacist League contingent, were grossly outnumbered by thousands of fascists and cops. Tony Cliff, in a moment of rare candour later admitted that in order to maintain unity with Kinnock et al, it was necessary to prevent a street confrontation with the National Front. The SWP's ANL scabbed on anti-fascist struggle.

To advocate the ignoble experience of the ANL as a model for mobilising against Le Pen's FN is criminal. Having joined the rest of the reformists and fake-Trotskyists in supporting the Mitterrand popular front, the SWP faces a problem with its attempts to export its ANL mini-version. French workers have already experienced five years of the real thing! One organisation has stood out on the French far left for its refusal to capitulate to Mitterrand, our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyiste (LTF). Drawing on the lessons of the victorious Russian Revolution and the popular front betrayals of the 1930s which led to the Petain dictatorship in France and Francoism in Spain, the LTF has fought for the independent mobilisation of the workers and oppressed against the fascist threat. In 1981 the LTF initiated a successful trade union-supported protest in Rouen which called a halt to fascist attacks on left-wing newspaper sellers. A-

gainst the capitulation of the fake-left to the anti-Soviet Cold War, the LTF are known as forthright defenders of the Soviet Union against imperialism and the threat of internal counterrevolution represented by the likes of Solidarnosc and the Russian fascist Pamyat organisation.

Fascist growth in France and elsewhere is inextricably linked to the imperialist war drive against the Soviet degenerated workers state. Those, like the SWP, who long ago abandoned the elementary task of defending the USSR against imperialism cannot and will not lead the struggle to defend the workers and oppressed against imperialism's fascist dogs of war. As the LTF call for a contingent in the PCF-organised demonstration against Le Pen last January put it:

"Worker/immigrant defence groups based on the unions must defend the factories and immigrant neighbourhoods against the fascist

gangs!... Ever since 1981, Mitterrand's anti-Soviet, anti-working class and anti-immigrant popular front has paved the way for reaction and the fascists. Four times, that's enough! We must break the infernal cycle of popular front/ reaction, build a revolutionary party which fights for a real workers government to expropriate the bourgeoisie, to undertake the socialist reconstruction of France in the framework of the Socialist United States of Europe and to inflict the fate of the Russian pogromist Black Hundreds on Le Pen's gangs."

The French working masses need a revolutionary leadership to smash Le Pen and the racist capitalist system which spawns such filth. The reformist SWP, eager, if left-talking, supporters of Labour traitors at home and the likes of Mitterrand abroad, are an obstacle to the building of that urgently needed Bolshevik Party. ■

David North: Joseph Hansen's natural son



Workers Press

The article below is reprinted from Workers Vanguard (no 456, 1 July), newspaper of the Spartacist League/US. Following the implosion of Gerry Healy's WRP, a fragment joined North's IC rump. It calls itself the International Communist Party.

American Workers League leader David North has made no small effort to ensconce himself as the undisputed "leader" of the shattered remnants of Gerry Healy's corrupt International Committee (IC). To do so of course requires that North declare all of the other former leading lights of Healyism (including the "founder-leader" himself) to be hopeless "renegades". Never mind that North was trained, tutored and installed as a leader by the same crew he now denounces in order to proclaim himself to be the sole surviving repository of Healyite "orthodoxy".

One of the most recent instalments of this cynical charade is North's book *The Heritage We Defend*. Ever so modestly described as "A Contribution to the History of the Fourth International", in reality it is a 500-page treatise against Healy's long-time hatchet man Michael Banda. Against Banda's ignorant, anti-Trotskyist "Twenty-Seven Reasons Why the IC Should Be Buried Forthwith and the Fourth International Built" — a way station on Banda's road to becoming a Stalinist PR man — North attempts to claim as his own the revolutionary heritage of James P Cannon's [US] Socialist Workers Party. This is really egregious considering that the Workers League published hundreds of pages written by their former leader Tim Wohlforth, sneering that Cannon was a barely Marxist, vulgar "window smasher". This was Wohlforth's way of making himself out to be, in effect, the first real American Marxist.

As for North, he was specially chosen by Healy to be the WL "leader" as a reward for his eager services as mouthpiece for Healy's obscene "Security and the Fourth International" campaign — a psychotic smear job impugning the integrity of the old, revolutionary SWP and Trotsky himself. Slandering the SWP's Joseph Hansen as a conscious agent of the FBI and the Russian secret police, and an accomplice in the murder of Trotsky, the Northites have for over a decade echoed the Stalinist lie that Trotsky was killed by one of his own.

"Security and the Fourth International" grew straight out of Gerry Healy's own particular combination of years of political banditry and paranoid megalomania. It was Healy's

way of "explaining" his International Committee's failure to definitively expose and defeat Pabloism, the revisionist current originated by Michel Pablo which in the early 1950s abandoned Trotskyism with the perspective of liquidation into the mass Stalinist and social-democratic parties. In the 1960s Joseph Hansen became the main spokesman of the Pabloite degeneration of the SWP as it abandoned the struggle for an independent proletarian vanguard. But in-

stead of political struggle the Healyites concocted their devil theory that Hansen had been hired by the US government and the Kremlin Stalinists to destroy the SWP.

Declaring themselves to be the Fourth International, Healy's IC kept up a vicious vendetta against the long-since reformist SWP, including the use of the capitalist courts. This is not the only time they crossed the class line. A secret report (which surfaced as part of the fallout from the

Healyites' spectacular implosion) by an IC Commission to investigate "the corruption of G. Healy" details pay-offs that were received for services rendered to a variety of oil-rich Arab despots. This included supplying photographs to the Iraqi embassy of a demonstration of opponents of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime in Iraq. The report of the IC investigation says that while the "Commission has not yet been able to establish all the facts...a receipt for £1,600 for 16 minutes of documentary footage of a demonstration is in the possession of the Commission". An indisputable and monstrous fact is that the Healyites hailed the execution of 21 Iraqi Communists by Ba'ath rulers in 1979. Healy's pay-off was blood money!

As the Spring 1988 issue of *Solidarity*, a British journal of "libertarian socialism" which leaked the secret IC report, notes: "It is certain that the anti-Healy camp know far more about the dirtier aspects of the WRP's past than they have so far publicly admitted.... These include North, who has resolutely chosen not to make public even the skeletal information we publish...." Of course he hasn't. Of all Healy's former lieutenants, North is uniquely the one who clings to the real "heritage" of Healyism — in particular the scandalous "Security and the Fourth International" campaign.

"COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY THROUGH AND THROUGH"

But North could well be hoist on his own petard. In *The Heritage We Defend* he writes that "Trotsky had branded the Stalinist bureaucracy as 'counterrevolutionary through and through....' One can look through everything Trotsky ever wrote and never find this falsely and stupidly one-sided formulation. On the contrary, as he said in "The Class Nature of the Soviet State" (October 1933): "Whoever fails to understand th[e] dual role of Stalinism in the USSR has understood nothing." The formulation "counterrevolutionary through and through" which North embraces was the work of...none other than the devil incarnate of Healyism, the arch-agent himself — Joseph Hansen.

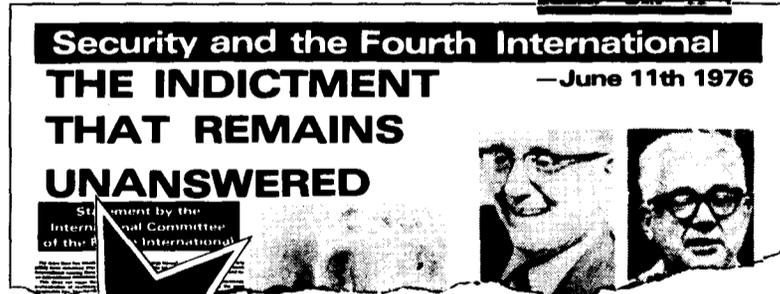
It first issued from the big and unwise mouth of Dave Weiss (D Stevens) during the 1952-53 fight against the pro-Stalinist liquidators in the Cochran-Clarke faction in the SWP. And it was Hansen who landed the assignment of defending Weiss' statement. This Hansen did with his usual quite



Stanton/Pathfinder Press

American SWP's Joseph Hansen framed by Healy/North's psychotic "Security and the Fourth International" smear, which parroted Stalinist lie that Trotsky was killed by "one of his own".

Bulletin



Spartacist protest against Healyite Big Lie campaign. We defended Hansen as "an honest revisionist".



Workers Vanguard

capable vigour, including the amplification that the Kremlin Stalinists were not only "counterrevolutionary through and through" but "to the core" ("What the New York Discussion Has Revealed", Joseph Hansen, SWP Internal Bulletin, vol 15, no 4, February 1953). Indeed Hansen was the biggest exponent, if the number of pages count, of the view North falsely ascribes to Trotsky.

Yet who in the Soviet Union could be characterised as "counterrevolutionary through and through"? Only an out-and-out Great Russian fascist, something out of the present-day *Pamyat* or perhaps a CIA mole in the KGB could fit this bill. But this certainly doesn't describe the Stalinist bureaucracy. A conservative nationalist caste resting on the proletarian property forms established by the Russian Revolution, the Kremlin bureaucracy is the product of and reflects the *contradictions* of a bonapartist regime issuing from the degeneration of a workers revolution in a backward country surrounded by imperialism.

In "Not a Workers' and Not a Bourgeois State?" (November 1937), Trotsky explained:

"The proletariat of the USSR is the ruling class in a backward country where there is still a lack of the most vital necessities of life. The proletariat of the USSR rules in a land consisting of only one-twelfth part of humanity; imperialism rules over the remaining eleven-twelfths. The rule of the proletariat, already maimed by the backwardness and poverty of the country, is doubly and triply deformed under the pressure of world imperialism....

"In its capacity of a transmitting mechanism in this struggle, the bureaucracy leans now on the proletariat against imperialism, now on imperialism against the proletariat, in order to increase its own



World Publishing



G Neri

Who in the Soviet Union could be "counterrevolutionary through and through"? Only CIA agents or Russian fascists like General Vlasov (left), who collaborated with Nazi invaders, or anti-Semitic *Pamyat* leader Dmitri Vassiliev (right).

socialism in one country."

Far from characterising the bureaucracy as "counterrevolutionary through and through", in the *Transitional Programme* the founding document of the Fourth International, Trotsky wrote that "all shades of political thought are to be found among the bureaucracy: from genuine Bolshevism (Ignace Reiss) to complete fascism (F. Butenko)". The dual nature of the Kremlin oligarchy is fundamental to the Trotskyist position of unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union combined with the call for political revolution to oust the bureaucracy.

Trotsky presented his fullest analysis of the contradictory nature of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the last political battle of his life, against the repudiation of Soviet defencism by the petty-bourgeois Shachtman/Burnham opposition in the SWP in 1939-40. Even in the context of some of the most heinous counterrevolutionary crimes of the Soviet government - the destruction of the Bolshevik Party, the strangulation of proletarian revolution in Spain by the Kremlin bureaucrats, the beheading of the Red Army - Trotsky never characterised the bureaucracy as "counterrevolutionary through and through". But Shachtman certainly did.

Defending Baron Von Mannerheim's Finland against Soviet intervention, Shachtman argued that in Poland the Red Army had acted only as a "counter-revolutionary force". Trotsky, who saw the possibility for a social transformation in Finland coming with the Red Army intervention, pointed to the expropriation of the capitalists and large landowners in Eastern Poland which took place despite the Stalinist degeneration of the Soviet workers state. Against Shachtman he argued: "the Kremlin with its bureaucratic methods gave an impulse to the socialist revolution in Poland.... This impulse in the direction of socialist revolution was possible only because the bureaucracy of the USSR straddles and has its roots in the economy of a workers state."

As Trotsky noted, the seizure of Eastern Poland was both "a pledge of the alliance with Hitler" and "a guarantee against Hitler" through the nationalisation of semi-feudal and capitalist property. To understand this means understanding real dialectical materialism as opposed to the cynical shell game of "dialectics" employed by the Healyites. For years they were distinguished by obfuscating, idealist lectures on the ever-mystical "dialectic" which nobody could understand - except Healy. Only the self-declared "founder-leader" was meant to understand, just as only he could determine "security" clearances. "Dialectics" and the "Security" slanders were the under-

pinnings of the Healy cult, designed to keep the membership completely confused and above all intimidated by their omnipotent leaders.

DAVID NORTH: A JOSEPH HANSEN OF THE SECOND MOBILISATION

But just how is it that David North has come to embrace the politics of Joseph Hansen - a man he has reviled as the sinister arch-nemesis of Trotskyism and slandered as the number one agent responsible for the supposed infiltration and takeover of the SWP by the US government? Applying the demonology of Healyism to North himself one can only ask: can he be far behind? Not subscribing to the paranoid conspiracy theories that are the stock-in-trade of Healyism against their opponents, we can trace the political genealogy of Hansen/North's shared anti-Soviet revisionism back to the source.

In his 1953 document "What the New York Discussion Has Revealed", Hansen proclaims: "I trace the current differences back to the discussion on Eastern Europe.... First of all, in taking the position that Stalinism had brought about an overturn in property forms in these countries, I raised the question myself as to how this affected our estimate of the political character of Stalinism. My answer was that the power to make such changes did not require us to revise the concept of Stalinism developed by Trotsky. Stalinism still remained counterrevolutionary to the core."

Leaving aside Hansen's wrongful attribution to Trotsky the view that the Kremlin bureaucracy was "counterrevolutionary to the core", his analysis of the differences that developed within the SWP and the Fourth International are quite to the point. The SWP had a very hard time for a couple of years explaining how deformed workers states were created in Eastern Europe. So did the leadership that emerged at the head of the

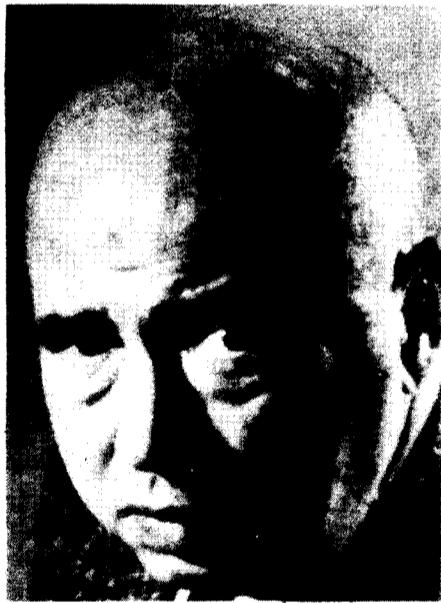
Fourth International in Europe where the most promising cadres had been killed by war and by fascist and Stalinist repression. As we noted in "Genesis of Pabloism" (*Spartacist* no 21, Fall 1972), they were confronted with the question:

"...is the Trotskyist understanding of Stalinism correct if Stalinism shows itself willing in some cases to accomplish any sort of anti-capitalist social transformation? Clinging to orthodoxy, the Trotskyists had lost a real grasp of theory and suppressed part of Trotsky's *dialectical* understanding of Stalinism as a parasitic and counterrevolutionary caste sitting atop the gains of the October Revolution, a kind of treacherous middle-man poised between the victorious Russian proletariat and world imperialism."

Empirical evidence tore a gaping hole through the Trotskyists' post-WW II attempt at wooden orthodoxy. The impressionistic Pablo simply threw overboard "the old Trotskyism" and declared that the Stalinists could play an "objectively revolutionary" role; his conclusion was deep entrisism into the Stalinist and mass reformist parties in Europe. During 1951-53, Pablo's liquidationism led to the destruction of the Fourth International. The SWP (with Healy in tow) waged a belated and partial fight against Pabloism, splitting out the anti-liquidationist International Committee. But a few years later over the Cuban Revolution the SWP followed suit and Joseph Hansen was the main theoretical apologist. The need for a Trotskyist party was dropped as Castro's petty-bourgeois guerrillas were embraced as the modern-day equivalent of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks.

In the name of combating Pabloite revisionism the Healyites reacted by simply putting a minus where the SWP put a plus. Making a caricature of the sterile, formal "orthodoxy"

continued on page 8



Donald Press

Max Shachtman

power. At the same time it mercilessly exploits its role as distributor of the meagre necessities of life in order to safeguard its own well-being and power. By this token the rule of the proletariat assumes an abridged, curbed, distorted character. One can with full justification say that the proletariat, ruling in one backward and isolated country, still remains an *oppressed* class. The source of oppression is world imperialism; the mechanism of transmission of the oppression - the bureaucracy. If in the words 'a ruling and at the same time an oppressed class' there is a contradiction, then it flows not from the mistakes of thought but from the contradiction in the very situation of the USSR. It is precisely because of this that we reject the theory of

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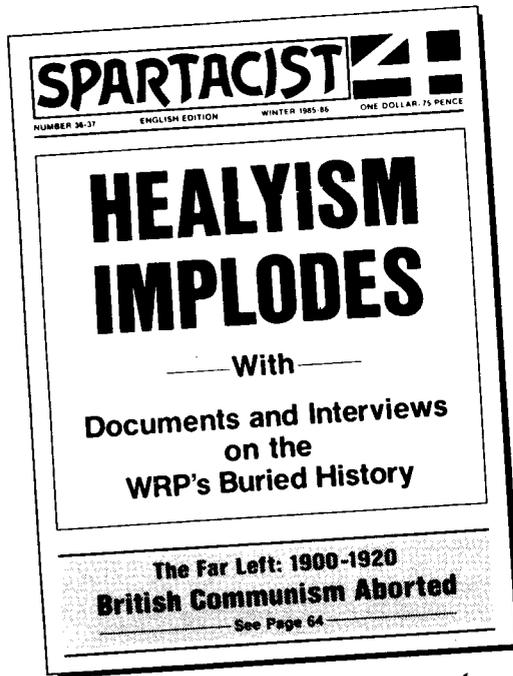
Leon Trotsky in Mexican exile. His last political battle was against petty-bourgeois faction that abandoned defence of Soviet Union.

David North...

(Continued from page 7)

that had characterised the post-World War II SWP, the Healyites argued that since there was no Trotskyist party in Cuba no social transformation had taken place – in short they stood Pabloism on its head. In contrast the Spartacist delegation to the 1966 conference of Healy's International Committee argued:

"...the petty-bourgeois peasantry under the most favourable historic circumstances conceivable could achieve no third road, neither capitalist, nor working class. Instead all that has come out of China and Cuba was a state of the same order as that issuing out of the political counter-revolution of Stalin in the Soviet Union, the degeneration of the October. That is why we are led to define states such as these as *deformed workers states*. And the experience since the Second World War, properly understood, offers not a basis for revisionist turning away from the perspective and necessity of revolutionary working-class power, but rather it is a great vindication of Marxian theory and conclusions under new and not previously expected circumstances."



When Healy's WRP/IC spectacularly blew up in 1985, special issue of *Spartacist* explored political roots: two decades of cynical political banditry. To receive a copy, send 75p to Spartacist Publications, PO Box 1041, London NW5 3EU.

—"Spartacist Statement to International Conference", (*Spartacist* no 6, June-July 1966)
The Healyites' opposition to the SWP over the Cuban Revolution had little to do with fighting the Pabloist liquidation of Trotskyism. In fact Healy's line was that the Fourth International had been rebuilt, the

International Committee was it, and Pabloism was simply proto-Stalinism. In contrast the Spartacist delegation to Healy's 1966 IC conference argued that the actual reconstruction of the Fourth International could only be achieved through completely rooting out this revisionism: "Up to now, we

have not done very well, in our opinion, in smashing the Pabloites; the impact of events alone, no matter how favorable objectively or devastating to revisionist doctrines, will not do the job." As we pointed out: "The 'orthodox' movement has still to face up to the new theoretical problems which rendered it susceptible to Pabloism in 1943-50 and gave rise to a ragged, partial split in 1952-54." This was borne out in the Healyites' embrace of various "Third World" Stalinists like Ho Chi Minh and Mao's "Cultural Revolution".

For daring to raise our political differences openly in 1966, we were denounced by Healy as petty-bourgeois American chauvinists, and expelled for refusing to confess to the charge. False confessions were a matter of "discipline" in the political cult of the megalomaniac Gerry Healy, the man whose shoes David North is desperate to fill. Almost two decades later Healy himself was ousted amidst lurid charges of moral turpitude levelled by his former lieutenants. In an interview "On the 1966 Split" in *Spartacist* (no 36-37, Winter 1985-86) covering the subsequent rather spectacular implosion of Healy's British Workers Revolutionary Party, comrade James Robertson commented:

Workers Power: the baggage of State Capitalism

David North's *The Heritage We Defend* is the subject of a critical review by *Trotskyist International* (Summer 1988), new journal of the centrist current led by the Workers Power group, the Movement for a Revolutionary Communist International (MRCI). In a nutshell, the review is devoted to again vindicating WP's "plague on both your houses" line on the 1953 split by the International Committee, then led by the American Trotskyist SWP of James P Cannon, from the Pabloist liquidationism which destroyed the Fourth International. Yet, throughout five densely packed pages, the review never takes note of North's ludicrous misattribution to Trotsky of Hansen's formulation that "Stalinism is counterrevolutionary through and through".

On the contrary, it takes the logic of this stupidly one-sided formulation to absurdity, asserting that "Castro and co, like Mao and Tito before them, carried out a counter-revolutionary overthrow of capitalism". Ditto for the bureaucratically imposed social revolutions in Soviet-occupied East Europe following World War II. In brief, according to Workers Power, every overthrow of capitalism since the Russian Revolution has been "counterrevolutionary". What could a counterrevolutionary overturn of capitalism mean—except, perhaps, a return to feudalism? The closest thing to this in recent times was the "Islamic revolution" in Iran. But there WP backed the mullah-led "mass movement" unconditionally, just as they supported Polish Solidarnosc' full-blown attempt at counter-revolution despite admitting the Solidarnosc leadership was committed to the restoration of capitalism.

Workers Power carries the political baggage of its origins in a 1975 split from Tony Cliff's International Socialists (now the Socialist Workers Party). It was not until February 1980 and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan that WP renounced Cliff's "third camp" ("Neither Washington nor Moscow") line, adopting a

Tony Cliff's stepchildren

"State capitalist"
Tony Cliff broke
with Trotskyist
Fourth International
in 1950.

Socialist Challenge



formally Trotskyist position that the Soviet Union was a degenerated workers state.

In typically centrist fashion, however, Workers Power recoiled from drawing the hard revolutionary conclusions. In the abstract, WP called for defence of the Soviet Union; in the concrete, they had "no hesitation in condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan" (*Workers Power*, February 1980). But with mealy-mouthed gutlessness, they deemed it "tactically wrong" to openly join the imperialist outcry for Soviet withdrawal until "the forces exist in Afghanistan which can mobilise the masses for the major democratic and socialist goals, and hold the pro-imperialist forces at bay". Now, with a bloodbath looming, an April 1988 MRCI resolution continues to "condemn the invasion as counterrevolutionary", while simultaneously denouncing the Soviet withdrawal! Not one of the some two dozen slogans at the end of the resolution raises defence of the Soviet Union.

Workers Power's line on Afghanistan is a quintessential example of the "crystallized confusion" that Trotsky cited as a prime characteristic

of centrism. In the eight years since it repudiated its state capitalist position, WP has continued to try to keep one foot in each camp. In its "Twenty two theses in defence of Trotskyism" (May 1987), the MRCI asserts:

"We reject Stalinophobia – a differential hostility to Stalinism over social democracy or other alien class influences. This, with its emphasis on a monolithic nature for Stalinism ('counterrevolutionary through and through'), has led to softness and accommodation to social-democratic reformism...." But in practice, on every contemporary issue, Workers Power ends up refusing to defend the deformed/degenerated workers states. And elsewhere WP asserts: "Essential to Pablo's position was a revision of the Trotskyist understanding of Stalinism, i.e. that it is invariably a counter-revolutionary force" (*The Death Agony of the Fourth International*, 1983).

This is hardly an original thesis. Workers Power's Cliffite godparents like to claim occasionally (when overt anti-Sovietism is not in vogue) that they originated in a fight against

"the shamelessly opportunist support for Tito's Yugoslavia by the rest of the Trotskyist movement" (*International Socialism* no 76, March 1975). The Cliff group fought against Trotskyism, not Pabloism, arguing as early as 1948 that the Soviet Union and the deformed workers states were "state capitalist". They got themselves expelled from the Fourth International in 1950 for publicly repudiating the FI's defence of the North Korean deformed workers state against US imperialism. And it is precisely in the period 1948-51 that WP locates the definitive "collapse" into centrism of the FI.

Seizing upon the disorientation that gripped the entire world Trotskyist movement in the face of the post-WW II Stalinist overturns of capitalism in East Europe, Workers Power contemptuously dismisses the Trotskyists who fought the liquidationism of Michel Pablo, albeit belatedly, partially and primarily on their own national terrain, and who reconstituted themselves as the IC. Cannon just isn't up to snuff for Workers Power, because it took him a few years to catch on. But he led a fight to preserve Trotskyism against those who sought to destroy it. Workers Power takes no side in this struggle for revolutionary continuity, and they can hardly claim Cliff as the continuity of Trotskyism.

To believe WP/MRCI, from the FI's "collapse" until WP emerged full-blown on the scene like Athena from the head of Zeus, there existed no real Trotskyists on this planet. It requires a big dose of hubris for a group to anoint itself the first Trotskyists since Trotsky. We can only lay claim to continuing, as best we can, the struggle passed on to us by Cannon, and to him by Trotsky. We can, however, boast that we make available 25 years of our written material in bound volumes for critical examination by the working-class public. Workers Power, like all centrists, is loath to deal honestly with its own heritage. ■

"...we have some stuff to say now, because we were the principled people the whole way. And I would suggest that the main reason is not some morality associated with Americans versus English persons, but that over a long period of time, through many fights, through one tendency after another, we stood concretely for the defense of the Soviet Union, against imperialism, and against the damn Russian bureaucracy. That has in fact been our political compass, and it also generates a certain cultural superstructure and a certain morality."

THE "PRINCIPLES" OF POLITICAL BANDITS

The Healyites had no such compass. Despite their inverted Pabloism over Cuba, denying that a social revolution ever took place, Healy's International Committee had a perfectly Pabloite tailist line toward the Vietnamese Stalinists and went on to herald Mao's "Cultural Revolution". It was their support to the mythical "Arab Revolution" in 1967 that provided the theoretical preparation for their various forays across the class line, some of which have come home to haunt them. And it was under the cover of "anti-Stalinism" that the Healyites hailed the murder of 21 Iraqi Communists by the Ba'athist regime.

While they lined their pockets with Arab gold and availed themselves of the forces of the bourgeois state against leftist political opponents, the Healyites would still invoke Leninist "orthodoxy" when it suited their purposes. Last year saw North screaming foul at the SWP for using the capitalist courts against the workers movement, to wit suing the Workers League for costs in North's years-long court suit against the SWP (see "David North and the Law", *Workers Vanguard* no 430, 12 June 1987). More recently, witness the 1988 "Election Manifesto" of the Workers League's candidates for president and vice president. The call to "establish the political independence of the American working class from the capitalist class" is rather remarkable from an organisation which continues to drag leftists through the bosses' courts.

The WL's election manifesto also demands that "The working class must defend the Soviet Union". But repeatedly over the past two decades North's Workers League has taken

the side of virulently anti-Soviet forces - with Khomeini's mullahs in Iran, with the CIA's company union Solidarnosc in Poland, with US imperialism's Islamic cutthroats in Afghanistan. To cover for their anti-Sovietism the WL has invented a global conspiracy between Washington and Moscow. Or rather, they borrowed it from Pierre Lambert, Healy's one-time bloc partner, who regularly vituperates against a "counter-revolutionary Holy Alliance, sealed at Yalta", supposedly uniting the White House and the Kremlin. They just leave out the Cold War, and for a reason.

"Down with Imperialism and Stalinism! Unite Soviet and American Workers" was the front-page headline of a "Workers League Political Committee Statement" in the 27 May *Bulletin*. This slogan, equating the bureaucratic misleaders of the degenerated/deformed workers states with the capitalist class enemy, comes straight out of Lambert's Organisation Communiste Internationaliste. "Long live the struggle of the youth against the Stalinist bureaucracy and imperialism!" was the clarion call for the Lambertistes' 1971 Essen Conference. The OCI's Stalinophobia led it straight into the camp of the most rightwing Cold War social democrats. For example, several dozen of the OCI's members, including Lambert himself, served as paid functionaries of the French social-democratic union Force Ouvriere, which has been linked to the notorious CIA operative Irving Brown going back to 1947.

Applied to the US the Northites' resurrection of this slogan leads straight to the State Department "socialism" of Norman Thomas and Max Shachtman in his later years. The *Bulletin* writes that "Gorbachev's policies of *perestroika* (restructuring) and *glasnost* (openness) are the road to the restoration of capitalism in the USSR and the transformation of Stalinist bureaucrats into capitalists." Evidently, for the Northites, no counterrevolution to overthrow the remaining gains of the October Revolution would be required, just a cold transformation of the Soviet degenerated workers state into a capitalist state imposed from the top. As Trotsky argued, this is to run the film of reformism in reverse, positing a peaceful transition from a workers state to capitalism.

The Northites' "analysis" of where Gorbachev's Russia is going is unmitigated Third Campism, which parenthetically is a quintessential expression of petty-bourgeois American chauvinism - the charge which Healy came up with and North continues to trumpet against the Spartacist League. North's view is reality seen through the prism and under the pressure of US imperialism. As Trotsky argued against Shachtman and Burnham in "A Petty-Bourgeois Opposition in the Socialist Workers Party":

"A vulgar petty-bourgeois radical is similar to a liberal 'progressive' in that he takes the USSR as a whole, failing to understand its internal contradictions and dynamics. When Stalin concluded an alliance with Hitler, invaded Poland, and now Finland, the vulgar radicals triumphed; the identity of the methods of Stalinism and fascism was proved! They found themselves in difficulties however when the new authorities invited the population to expropriate the landowners and capitalists - they had not foreseen this possibility at all!"

- LD Trotsky, *In Defense of Marxism*

Healy and North also charged the Spartacist League with being "agents" of Joseph Hansen because we were among the first to protest Healy's despicable "Security and the Fourth International" slanders. In protest demonstrations outside Workers League meetings we defended Hansen as "an honest revisionist". That's more than we can say for North and his gang who have grievously crossed the class line so many times that who, what or where they are is forever a subject for debate.

We waged a relentless political struggle against Hansen's anti-Trotskyist revisionism. Healy could never have done so because it would mean confronting his own politics. So he "explained" the SWP's degeneration by slandering Hansen as a government agent who was hired to infiltrate and destroy the SWP. Yet here is North peddling Hansen's "counter-revolutionary through and through" line. Any of the WL leader's acolytes who accept the demented logic of his "Security" scam ought to be asking some nervous questions. How did it happen? Did Hansen secretly recruit North? And who will the next "great leader" be?

Consider the fate of North's former

lideres maximos. Yesterday's self-declared "founder-leader" Gerry Healy is today's KGB agent, according to the *Bulletin*. In North's eyes, every one of Healy's lieutenants (except North himself, of course) has become a demoralised renegade - from Banda to Cliff Slaughter, the longtime "theoretical" mouthpiece for Healyite crimes, who now admits that the "Security" slanders were a fraud. And let's not forget Tim Wohlforth, Healy's former hapless American toady, who warmed the seat North now occupies at the head of the Workers League. Wohlforth was axed amidst allegations of CIA connections through the family of his girlfriend Nancy Fields. Actually, to say he was axed is unfair to the real character of Wohlforth - he even voted for his own expulsion. Truly the son of "the god that failed", in 1981 Wohlforth resurfaced in the pages of *New Left Review* in the role of saved-again social democrat denouncing Soviet totalitarianism.

Stalin never claimed that *all* the Bolshevik Central Committee at the time of the October Revolution were counterrevolutionary spies and traitors. Exempted were Lenin, a few who died early and a couple who lucked out and died a natural death at old age. David North, the new boy of the IC leadership, declares that every well-known leader of the British Healyites (SLL/WRP), and not least the leading American satellite, Wohlforth, are degenerate if not deeply flawed or downright wrong from the beginning. Thus North claims that he is the legitimate heir to what? At least Stalin, by hiding Lenin's break with him, could claim the great Lenin. Moreover, Stalin could cite himself as an "Old Bolshevik". But North, until the final implosion of the WRP, was a self-confessed toady to the "great" Gerry Healy and the heir to Tim Wohlforth.

Only someone who wanted to be "the leader", no matter of what, would be so desperate to claim the heritage of authentic Healyism. To any rational elements in North's WL and IC we can only say: Your organisation is rotten through and through and to the core! North is attempting to secure his position at the head of an organisation with a heritage of corrupt links with various murderous Arab colonels and sheiks. That this is not a suitable vehicle for the socialist liberation of mankind is a vast understatement. ■

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Labour Party...

(Continued from page 12)

The "economic miracle" of Thatcher's free market place is threatening to turn into a disaster, as the massive trade deficit recently highlighted. With absolutely no new net industrial investment since 1979 and an economy run on credit-fuelled spending, the chickens eventually have to come home to roost. In this context, the bankruptcy of Labourite reformism is glaringly clear. In its 22 August issue, the *Guardian* wondered aloud in a leader: "Is Labour's goose cooked?" Labour's five point trailing in the polls 14 months into the life of Thatcher's third term seemed to the *Guardian* "disheartening, especially when faith is eroding in the Government's handling of several important issues.... More worrying still is the evidence from the *Guardian's* latest Marplan that although people's fears are growing about the economic prospects for themselves and their families, there is still no general belief that Labour would handle things better: rather the reverse."

Small wonder. At the recent TUC conference Kinnock dropped by to suggest the unions work with Thatcher in promoting slave labour schemes for the unemployed which the bureaucrats made a great show of refusing to do (although many will). As for any programme to fight for jobs for the millions thrown on the scrap heap, the gentlemen of the TUC maintain a deafening silence. They did busy themselves with the prospects of Britain's membership in the EEC and working to get a slice of that pie; as Ron Todd put it while explaining the chance to make "progress" through the European Commission: "In the short term we have not a cat in hell's chance of achieving that at Westminster." Although previous opposition to the Common Market as promoting capitalist interests was often couched in protectionist terms, when the TUC opposed entry we explained this was "a victory for the British working class, but a hollow one" (*Workers Vanguard*, no 15, January 1973). We recognised Britain's entry as a fundamental attack on the British working class and explained:

"The Common Market is in no

Corrections

In *Workers Hammer* no 99 (July/August 1988) a photo caption of the Soviet red flag flying in Berlin was incorrectly dated. It read "May 1985" while it should have read "May 1945".

In the same issue, a line was dropped from the article "Workers movement: drive out fascist Skeggs!" The second paragraph of the article should have begun with the sentence: "Until 1986, Skeggs was employed by Labour-run Lewisham Council as a librarian."

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Laurie Sparham (IFL)



Daily Mirror

Labour "statesmen": Kinnock/Hattersley (top left), Tony Benn, and Ramsay MacDonald.

sense progressive. It is originally the product of U.S. imperialism's mobilization against the Soviet Union. It is an arena in which the European national bourgeoisies bilk one another and the rest of the world. It is a vehicle for capitalist collaboration against the European labor movements, which have shown little international solidarity."

Only unity on a socialist basis, accomplished by proletarian revolution and the expropriation of the giant monopolies, can institute rational world-wide economic development without exploitation. For a Socialist United States of Europe!

The other "highlight" of the Bournemouth TUC conference was the expulsion of Eric Hammond's EETPU. This supremely hypocritical act will undoubtedly be hailed as a class-struggle victory by the various fake-left groups who have been clamouring for the TUC to boot out the electricians. It takes a lot of chutzpah for the likes of Norman Willis to lecture anyone on betrayal! In any event, the EETPU was not expelled for its scabby role in the miners strike, the print workers strike or its no-strike deals - on which Hammond assuredly has no monopoly. As for the question of "single-union" deals, the objectionable thing about the EETPU is that they are sweetheart deals containing no-strike clauses. We advocate industrial as opposed to craft unionism and do not oppose "single-union" deals *per se*. The real fight - within the EETPU and the rest of the trade union movement - must be to oust the bureaucrats, right and "left" - talking - and replace them with a class-struggle leadership.

FORGE A BOLSHEVIK PARTY

To break the working masses from the stranglehold of the Labour Party is a key strategic task of a revolutionary party. The tactics adopted by revolutionaries (eg critical support, conditional opposition, standing independent candidates against Labour, boycotts) are simply means to this end and are meaningless unless inextricably linked to the building of a communist pole to which the workers and oppressed can be rallied. A perfectly horrible example of the Labourite liquidation of most of the fake-left is the Communist Party of Great Britain which has dotted the i's, crossed the t's and come out against even the conception that class is the primary and fundamental division in society. The CPGB has out-Kinnocked Kinnock by unequivocally attacking "unilateralism" from the right and embracing all sorts of "socialist share ownership" nonsense while they were at it. So moved by the CPGB's latest pronouncements

was Bryan Gould that he favourably compared their "update" to the already miserably revisionist *British Road to Socialism* with the Labour Party attempts to "modernise". From the *Sunday Times* (28 August 1988) comes this advice to Kinnock: "the Labour leader could do worse than lift the ban on Communists joining his party; they could help him to turn outwards as they have. Doctrinally, they are as pragmatic as he is. Organisationally, they could take on both the hard-left and the union stick-in-the-muds".

Of course, the Communist Party has long operated as a third-rate appendage to the Labour Party, and the Euros' former comrades - the *Morning Star* grouping, the CPB - carry this baggage. They stand on the *British Road to Socialism* to this day, with its assertion that "the people of

Britain can transform capitalist democracy into a real People's Democracy, transforming Parliament".

Now, as well, the *Morning Star* "tankies" are closer to the Euros on the Russian question and have touted Gorbachev's treacherous withdrawal from Afghanistan with no less "peaceful coexistence" fervour.

The fake Trotskyists, virulently anti-Soviet for the most part, also cling to the pat formula: always support the "lefts" against the right and always support Labour against the Tories. This applies to the more left-talking of the breed, the centrist Workers Power group, which along with the rest advocated a vote to the unspeakable scab Kinnock in the general election. If ever there was a time to stand a communist candidate independently against Labour, the last election certainly was it. But the very idea of such a tactic had *Workers Power* lecturing about the dangers of splitting the "unity" of the labour movement.

We Spartacists have fought against this stream of Labourism. When most left groups said vote Kinnock, we distributed thousands of copies of a special *Workers Hammer* supplement which told the truth: "Class traitor, race-hater, anti-Soviet scab - Down with Judas Kinnock!" When the anti-Soviet drums beat over Solidarnosc and Afghanistan, we stood then as now for defence of the USSR against the Tories and the Labour traitors. When the racist cops were unleashed against the people of Handsworth, Brixton and Tottenham we fought for union/minority defence of the communities. Our task remains to win to the programme of revolutionary Trotskyism the cadres to lead the British October. ■

Iraq...

(Continued from page 2)

this. And Hussein's enemy in Teheran is equally a bloody persecutor of the Kurdish people. A demonstration called in London by the Iraqi Kurdistan Front (Britain) on 10 September to protest Baghdad's brutal offensive in Iraqi Kurdistan showed that a deformed nationalist perspective still dominates. As the demonstration took off for the Iraqi embassy, the Spartacist contingent raised our placards, including those denouncing the mullahs as well as the Iraqi colonels, Turkey's Evren as well as Syria's Assad. The organisers - including supporters of the Iraqi CP - resorted to calling the police in order to force an exclusion of our revolutionary defeatist and Soviet defencist politics.

The Russian revolution demonstrated that in this epoch democratic rights and principles can only be fully

realised by the revolutionary proletariat in power. That is why many Kurds look to the Soviet Union, despite its Stalinist degeneration, where their brothers and sisters enjoy democratic national rights together with the achievements of 20th century science and technology. As we stated in our greetings to a Kurdish conference held in central Europe in the summer of 1984:

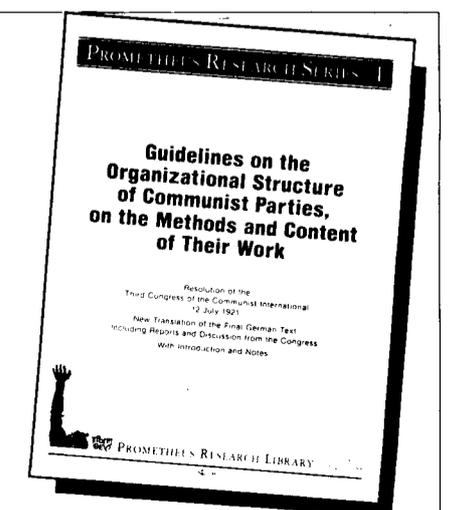
"The solution to the oppression of the Kurdish masses can only be region-wide, involving the smashing of four reactionary bourgeois regimes.... Our model is Lenin's Russia of 1917-1924 where the Bolsheviks offered the national minorities the option and the advantages of association with the Soviet Federation. For our part, we are dedicated to the forging of the internationalist party of worldwide proletarian revolution and speak to you in the understanding that the future of humanity depends on its construction." (*Workers Vanguard* no 362, 14 September 1984). ■

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Ireland...

(Continued from page 1)

reactionaries who have served either as agents of British repression or engaged in sectarian terror against the oppressed Catholic community. We defend against the capitalist state the Republican perpetrators of acts that directly target British imperialism and its agents. However, the IRA is as likely to target Protestant civilians as it is the British imperialists. The sectarian logic of its programme leads not only to "tragic accidents" such as the recent deaths of Sean Dalton and Sheila Lewis in an IRA ambush aimed at entrapping the RUC but to outright criminal acts of indiscriminate terror such as the bombing at Enniskillen which left eleven Protestant civilians dead. Targetting

the strong pitted against the weak one gets abuse and oppression, forced population transfers, conquest and annexation. As communists, we believe that there is a far better (and less bloodthirsty) way, based upon a class solution.

There are powerful bourgeois forces who are increasingly impatient with letting things go on as they are in Ulster. It has been long recognised that from a rational economic standpoint the Ulster connection is a loser. Its highly subsidised shipbuilding and heavy engineering industries have long since become obsolete. In addition billions are spent on supporting the military presence, an expenditure increasingly resented by the British populace.

A number of possible options are available. One is that you decide to give up some territory, say Derry, which is largely Catholic. You

"Apart from the UDR and RUC, the Protestants own most of the 100,000 or so guns – mostly shot-guns – which are legally held in the province. There are also an unknown quantity of revolvers, rifles and machine guns held illegally by Protestants in self-defence and, of course, by the paramilitaries."

Rather fantastically, the *New Statesman* assumes the Protestants wouldn't use those guns if they were threatened with economic sanctions by the British government. (We haven't noticed the Boers in South Africa throwing away their guns and taking to the hills in response to threatened sanctions.) The call for a forcibly reunified Ireland is simply a call to reverse the terms of oppression and therefore a recipe for large-scale communal war, in which it is not obvious who would be the victors and who the losers. In the last analysis, the only alternative to communal war in Ireland is proletarian class struggle.

Withdrawal of the British troops is a necessary but not sufficient condition for any solution of the national question in Ireland. Then it becomes a question of the relationship of forces. The indispensable factor, lacking today, is the existence of a Leninist party that combats all forms of national and social oppression. Such a party would demand full democratic rights for the Catholic minority. Rather than pitting Protestants against Catholics over who gets what share of the existing scraps under capitalism, we call for jobs for all through work sharing at no loss of pay. Smash RUC and UDR! For programmatically based workers militias to combat Orange and Green terror and imperialist rampage. No to forcible reunification – for an Irish workers republic within a socialist federation of the British Isles.

Even in seemingly intractable situations of intense nationalist rivalry, there are opportunities, however transient, for a Leninist party to intervene to transcend the sectarian divide. In Ireland there are such traditions of united working class actions as the 1907 Belfast shipyard workers strike and the 1919 engineering strike. During the Belfast outdoor relief workers strike of 1932 Catholic and Protestant workers not only struck together but fought pitched street battles against the RUC.

in 1969, a move supported by fake leftists like Tony Cliff with the lie that the soldiers would protect Catholics, simply sealed in place the emerging sectarian violence that consciously targeted the embryonic class unity. The experience of the civil rights movement is, in fact, a powerful argument against groups today like the Militant Tendency or Sean Matgamna's *Socialist Organiser* who claim that British troops exert a civilising influence against sectarianism.

The other response of the fake left in Britain is enthusing over Green nationalism. Thus, at the time of the criminal Enniskillen massacre, the English Workers Power group crowed: "We defend the right of the Provisionals to struggle by any means to end Britain's rule" (*Workers Power*, December 1987). But in the context of widespread revulsion in the Irish Catholic populace, the Irish Workers Power group had a totally opposite response: "The Irish Workers Group unequivocally condemns the IRA bombing at Enniskillen on November 8th" (*Class Struggle*, Dec '87-Jan '88). This bears out our often repeated observation of the essentially vicarious quality of the British fake left's cheerleading the IRA, ie the further away you are from the sectarian bombings, the louder you cheer. The Irish Workers Group apparently understands that if you want to have any standing as Marxists you cannot simply applaud such criminal terror. However, the IWG as well does not break from the framework of forcible reunification of Ireland; thus, while contradicted, it is sucked back into the vortex of left Green nationalism.

A Marxist programme is premised on the recognition that there are two communities in Northern Ireland, Protestant and Catholic. It is thus a situation of *interpenetrated peoples*, where under capitalism the self-determination of one people can be carried out only at the expense of the other. That is the quagmire of the nationalist programme in Ireland, however much "socialist" rhetoric is thrown in. Our call for no forcible reunification, for an Irish workers republic within a socialist federation of the British Isles, quite consciously leaves open the question of where the Protestants will fall in the course of the struggle for workers revolution in these isles.



Der Spiegel

IRA's Ballygawley hit: British troops don't have it all their own way.

Protestants simply because they are Protestants serves only to fuel the already bitter sectarian divide.

The IRA likes to claim that it is "at war" with British imperialism in Northern Ireland. Yet, this is hardly convincing. The Irish Republican "Army" comprises no more than 200 active servicemen; it has none of the elements of even an embryonic state apparatus, such as prisons, because it controls no territory. Since 1969, 410 British soldiers have been killed, along with 177 members of the Ulster Defence Regiment and 252 RUC officers. More people are killed in road accidents than that! In part, this simply reflects the fact that the majority (and best armed) section of the Ulster population is Protestant.

The British Leninist grouping, which cheers on Green nationalism, has a slogan: "make Ireland Britain's Vietnam". But what kind of war are they talking about in Ireland – communal war or class war? In Southeast Asia, there was a protracted, bloody struggle that was ultimately successful in defeating imperialism. The Vietnamese workers and peasants were struggling for social as well as national liberation. Yet the programme of Sinn Fein/IRA, reduced to its essentials, simply boils down to extending northward the territory ruled by the reactionary Irish clerical state.

FOR A PROLETARIAN SOLUTION

Viewed in perspective Ulster, as well as Cyprus, Lebanon and Lanka – areas riven by national hostilities – is not particularly exceptional. These are the particular times of troubles in which nation states, or peoples at least, have been compacted. Everybody has gone through this. The current Zionist state of Israel was erected through the forcible expulsion of the Palestinians; or one might look at the savagely bloody partition of the Indian subcontinent. Short of socialist revolution, with

forcibly evacuate all the Protestants and then at bayonet point run all the Catholics in. Then you have Ireland for the Irish, 100 per cent – with Protestants and Catholics on separate sides of a redrawn border. On Cyprus the Turkish army carried out a re-partition of the island through such a forced population transfer. But for the British bourgeoisie, this would cut across their political relations with the Irish state, as well as alienating the Irish minority within Britain.

There is a section of the British ruling class that advocates jettisoning the Ulster connection altogether, by seeking to establish a reunified bourgeois Ireland. This is particularly attractive, in that it would provide an inducement to lure Ireland into the anti-Soviet NATO alliance. The Tony Benn wing of the Labour Party has long supported a version of this, although they call for a "unified, neutral Ireland", under the auspices of the imperialist United Nations troops. (Perhaps Benn should consider how "successfully" UN troops resolved communal conflict in Lebanon.) Now the Labourite *New Statesman* (9 September) declares: "Troops out... is often a simple-minded political slogan. But it's simple-minded to fight an unwinnable war. There is an alternative. Britain can withdraw its troops – and the SAS – and use its economic clout to impose peace in Ireland."

Unlike much of the British fake left, the *New Statesman* realises there is a substantial obstacle to such a perspective: an intransigently hostile Protestant populace that does not long to be incorporated in the clerical state where you cannot even get a divorce or an abortion and where even the miserable social benefits available in Northern Ireland are non-existent. In the last analysis, it comes down to the question of force. The *New Statesman* admits:



Der Spiegel

Imperialist partition of India: bloody communal slaughter.

More recently, there was the initial stages of the civil rights movement launched in Derry in 1968. Such demands as "one man, one job; one man, one house" not only cut against Catholic oppression but also addressed the appalling conditions in working-class Protestant ghettos like Shankhill Road in Belfast, where 97 per cent of the houses had no indoor toilets and almost as many had no hot water. Significantly, the civil rights movement attracted the support of a number of Protestant shop stewards. The dispatch of British troops by Harold Wilson's Labour government

We are not blind to the difficulties of achieving this goal. Nor are we of the school of petty-bourgeois pessimists who see only the problems. The history of the working class in Ireland is not just one of sectarian divisions. But what has been missing is a revolutionary party on a programme which cuts through the sectarian divide and mobilises the working class for the seizure of power. Proletarian revolution is the only alternative to the social-darwinist method of resolving nationalist conflicts under capitalism: the bloody subordination of one people to another. ■

Break with Labour traitors Kinnock and Benn

Britain needs a fighting revolutionary party

Thatcher's Britain 1988: a squalid, decaying capitalist country ruled by a vicious strike-breaking, war-mongering Tory who thinks she's the senior statesman of the "free world". The government's hit list comprises most of the population - trade unionists, blacks, Asians, Irish, gays, women, pensioners, the unemployed, the sick, the youth, the bulk of Scotland. A recent Marplan survey indicates that less than one fifth of the British electorate supports either the present policies or the "fundamental principles" of Thatcher's government (*Guardian*, 17 September). Among the working class and broad layers of society there is every reason to fight. The missing ingredient, acknowledged widely, is any semblance of a fighting leadership to mobilise the power of the organised working class in alliance with all the oppressed. This country needs a thorough-going proletarian socialist revolution and a couple of ambitious five-year plans to begin to address the massive social rot. To get there requires a relentless political fight against the decades-long tradition of class treason, parliamentary cretinism and social patriotism. An authentic Bolshevik party must be forged in order to break the workers and oppressed from all wings of Labourite reformism.

The Labour Party, both its "left" and right wings, has served as loyal lieutenants for Cold War austerity. The miners strike, the most important class battle in decades, demonstrated that whenever fundamental questions are posed, the tactical differences between various Labourite reformists are subordinated. The "lefts" as well as the "rights" knifed the miners, ensuring that the NUM would fight alone against the full onslaught of the bourgeois state. After the strike was defeated, Kinnock & Co told the inner-city minority communities, besieged by police terror, to drop dead; Kinnock himself even laid a wreath for the racist cop Blakelock to make clear which side he was on. Striking printers were denounced as violent hooligans by the Labour leader even as hordes of club-wielding cops smashed-up demonstrations at Fortress Wapping. Vehemently hostile to any form of social struggle, Kinnock told everyone to shut up and vote Labour in the general election - aided by his "left" supporters in the party and trade union bureaucracy.

But the relative quiescence of class struggle imposed by the Labour re-



Stephan Cagnoni (Report)



Workers Hammer

Labour "lefts" knifed the miners (left), made empty "solidarity" speeches for beleaguered nurses.

formists is impermanent. The recent national Post Office strike is indicative of restlessness in the trade unions. Not generally a militant union, the UCW postal workers, whose wages are so low that overtime is often the only way to make ends meet, struck in disgust against constant management harassment and differential payments to attract workers in the Southeast. In reaction to the subsequent sellout, militants in a number of locations stayed out, passing "no confidence" votes against the bureaucrats. During the mini-strike wave last spring car workers, seamen and others walked off the job, mainly over wages. The grossly under-paid and over-worked NHS nurses also protested, despite the open opposition of Kinnock & Co to even a one-day strike. It was no accident that about this time, Tony Benn started making noises about challenging Kinnock. It's the classical division of labour: unity where it counts - eg against the miners strike - and "left" hot air aimed at bringing disaffected militants into the gravitational sphere of Labour, preferably in time for the next electoral contest.

BENN, KINNOCK: NO CHOICE

We give no support to either side in the present contest for leadership of the Labour Party. Despite a multitude of tactical differences ranging from "unilateral disarmament" to economic policy, there is fundamental unity between Kinnock and Benn on the key questions. The betrayal of the miners - aided by "left" trade union leaders like Ron Todd and Jim-

my Knapp who prevented joint strike action by their members - was a seminal test. Had the transport and rail workers joined the miners it would have been an effective general strike, posing the question of power: which class will rule? Benn and the "lefts" took their side: against the miners. At the party conference held in the middle of the strike, Kinnock was unanimously re-elected party head. In his writings on the general strike in Britain in 1926, Trotsky tried to warn the Communist Party about the treachery of the Labour/TUC "lefts" of the day: "...leftism of this kind remains left only so long as it has no practical obligations. But as soon as the question of action arises, the left wingers respectfully cede the leadership to the rights."

With imperialism gearing up for war against the Soviet workers state, the necessity to defend Russia against its capitalist enemies without and counterrevolutionary provocations within is an urgent task of the world working class. From Reagan and the Democrats in the US to Mitterrand in France, Kohl in West Germany and Thatcher in Britain, the capitalist rulers seek to grind down the workers and oppressed to pay for their arms build-up, to regiment the population for war. Again, the miners strike showed the connection between union-busting reaction at home and NATO anti-Soviet war preparations. On the eve of the strike, mine workers leader Arthur Scargill was subjected to a virulent red-baiting attack from the press for his accurate statement that Polish Solidarnosc was anti-soc-

ialist. At the 1983 Blackpool TUC conference, the cold warriors went after Scargill with a vengeance and no one from the conference floor, including the CP supporters, countered this anti-Soviet filth. This campaign, aided and abetted by Gerry Healy's WRP, served to isolate the embattled miners.

Benn and Kinnock simply offer alternative bourgeois strategies for the "defence" of British imperialism and the disarming of the Soviet workers state. Benn espouses the utopian reformist pipe-dream of "unilateral" disarmament where Kinnock is an unrestrained NATO-loving swine. As we wrote in the last issue of *Workers Hammer*:

"The idea that if Britain disarms, the island will be spared thermo-nuclear holocaust, is more than absurd on the face of it. The concept of 'neutrality' by this moribund capitalist power is equally laughable. The more earth-bound argument put forward by unilateralists is that Britain can set a moral example (!) which will then lead all the nuclear powers on the globe to disarm and thus rid the planet of the threat of annihilation altogether. The multilateralists hope to negotiate away Britain's nuclear arsenal for comparable reductions in Soviet nuclear weapons. The net result is the same dangerous call upon the Soviet degenerated workers state to disarm in the face of voracious, bellicose imperialism. Indeed, Benn calls for the mutual dissolution of NATO and the Warsaw Pact."

continued on page 10