



Mass upheaval deepens, Berlin Wall opened

For political revolution in East Germany!



Wallace/SIPA

After decades of enforced “peace and order”, during which contradictions accumulated under the heavy-handed rule of East Europe’s seemingly most entrenched Stalinist regime, this autumn the lid finally blew off the East German pressure cooker. Beginning in August, tens of thousands of youth streamed west, first through Hungary, then Czechoslovakia and Poland. The 40th anniversary of the German Democratic Republic (DDR) in October was met with mass opposition demonstrations that escalated week by week. Hundreds of thousands marched in Leipzig and then up to a million in East Berlin. In order to head off the protests, ailing DDR chief Erich Honecker was ousted and replaced by his former protégé Egon Krenz. When this didn’t stop the protests, the cabinet resigned en masse, followed by the Politburo. In a desperate effort to get a step ahead of events, on 9 November the new rulers opened up the Berlin Wall.

Suddenly, East Germans could cross into West Germany with no more than a stamp on their personal ID card. Over the following days, several million people—somewhere between a quarter and a half of the entire population of the DDR—took the opportunity to visit “over there”. Downtown West Berlin was jammed at all hours as East Germans spent the 100 DM (£35) “welcome money” doled out by the West German government...and went home. By

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Workers soviets must rule in all Germany!

For a Leninist-Trotskyist workers party!

We print below the text of the statement issued by the Trozktistische Liga Deutschlands, German section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), 200,000 copies of which are now being distributed in Berlin.

Workers throughout the world seeking the rebirth of genuine communism are

watching the dramatic events in East Germany. “Russia was the spark—Germany will be the flame”, proclaimed a banner, a slogan from the KPD of the ’20s, in the massive 4 November East Berlin demonstration. The developments in the DDR pose point blank *proletarian political revolution*. This means ousting

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Penguin Books

For the communism of Lenin, Luxemburg and Liebknecht!

For a working-class revolutionary resolution in Ireland!

[Received 30 September, 1989]
Belfast

Letters,
Workers Hammer

Dear Comrades,

In 'Workers Hammer' No. 109, September 1989, you demand an immediate withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland. You claim that this is a proletarian solution.

Despite this your analysis seems to be basically pessimistic. You claim that workers' solidarity in the course of this century has been temporary and transitory. But the trade unions—often the same trade unions—absorb the energies of the working class throughout the 32

counties. Trade unions have developed ways of dealing with paramilitaries of all persuasions by using aspects of the state structure against them.

You say that the RUC and UDR and UVF are sectarian and reactionary and "must be smashed"—by whom? Immediate, unconditional withdrawal would leave the various paramilitaries intact, and presumably leave most of the guns in the hands of the UDR and RUC. There would be large bodies of armed men determined not to be absorbed by what you characterise as a "bourgeois clerical Republic".

Despite this characterisation you describe the Ulster Workers Council strike of 1974 as "reactionary". This is despite the fact that the UWC had ranged against it the bourgeoisies of the UK, Eire and

the USA. The Protestant bourgeoisie in the six counties whinged about their being prevented from making money by the plebs' behaviour.

The strike was triggered off, not by the Sunningdale Anglo-Irish Agreement itself, but by the forcing of the pace on the Council of Ireland aspect of the Agreement. There was also, co-incidentally, the judgement of the Supreme Court in the Republic, in the case brought by Kevin Boland that the signing of the Agreement did not infringe Articles 2 and 3 of Bunreacht na hEireann.

The articles in question laid claim to the six counties as of right, in 1937, despite the fact that in 1925 the Dublin government had signed an agreement with London and Belfast accepting the border. This was because the Border Commission, despite the high hopes rested in it by Nationalists was intent on giving Northern Ireland a very large chunk of eastern Donegal, while awarding the Free State with a few tiny pieces of territory. The fact that the Belfast government assented to the area around St. Johnstone remaining part of the 26 county state gives the lie to the notion that the statelet of Northern Ireland is in itself a gerrymander.

You write: "The British bourgeoisie is trapped in Northern Ireland." The bourgeoisie are definitely not trapped in Northern Ireland. They will be prepared to shed the blood of working class soldiers and UDR and RUC personnel for

decades to come. The notion put about that the six counties are being used as a testing ground for varieties of repression is not entirely inaccurate.

It is the British left especially the self-consciously revolutionary left which is in a state of utter confusion about Northern Ireland. There is a chorus demanding troops out sooner or later. But no real thought is engaged in as to what would happen when such a circumstance occurred. Your own article is incoherent. It demands immediate withdrawal and also the disarming of the Protestants—something which it would probably take decades to achieve.

The left should be demanding that the people of Northern Ireland should have full civil rights within the United Kingdom state until such a time as there is agreement in the region to leave the UK state. This means that we should have a real vote—we should be able to vote for parties which will rule the state, and not just parties which represent the worst of the two sectarian blocs. This is the path towards a situation where the working class can discuss our mutual future in reasonable calm. If the troops left tomorrow there might not be an appalling blood-bath, there might be a quiet taking over by the "bourgeois clerical Republic". At the very best we would have exchanged one minority problem for another.

Yrs.
Sean McGouran

WH replies: Sean McGouran's letter gives us the opportunity to polemicise on the Ireland question from a different angle; here we are dealing with the arguments of a "left" Ulsterman rather than the usual vicarious Green nationalism of our fake-left opponents. To begin with, the British military presence in Northern Ireland spanning the last two decades has meant a reign of deadly terror directed at the minority Catholic population. The Bloody Sunday murder of 13 demonstrators in Derry; SAS "undercover" killings; the RUC "shoot-to-kill" policy; the atrocities of the UDR overlapping heavily with the Loyalist paramilitary groups are all the product of years of collusion between the "security" forces. The British army has incited, perpetrated and defended this death squad terror. The prerequisite for any just solution must be the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland.

Contrary to what McGouran asserts, we do not believe that this constitutes a proletarian solution. In fact the *Workers Hammer* article he objects to explicitly states: "The withdrawal of the army from Northern Ireland will not by itself resolve the conflicting national/communal claims of the Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. Nor will British imperialism be defeated via the nationalists' 'armalite and ballot box' strategy". The necessary joint class struggle across the sectarian divide will not be realised by supporting such sectarian mobilisations as the 1974 Ulster Workers Council (UWC) strike as McGouran does, nor by his prettifying the brutal British military occupation of the North.

McGouran's arguments in support of the UWC strike are not new; this position became the hallmark of the "British and Irish Communist Organisation" (B&ICO)

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TROTSKY

For soviet power in Germany!

In November 1918 the war-weary German masses rose up, toppling the Kaiser and forming workers and soldiers councils (soviets). The new Social Democratic government of Ebert and Scheidemann sought to maintain the capitalist-imperialist order in the name of "democracy" (bourgeois parliamentarianism). The Spartacusbund led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg called for a soviet government allied to Bolshevik Russia. The Social Democratic regime and



LENIN

the military high command crushed the Spartacus uprising in January 1919, utilising the Freikorps fascists who then murdered Liebknecht and Luxemburg.

In the sequel, the beheading of the German proletarian vanguard—the absence of a hardened, tested communist party like Lenin's Bolsheviks to lead the mighty German workers movement to power—proved critical for Europe and the whole world. The German revolution of 1923 was defeated, leaving Soviet Russia isolated and prey to Stalin's Thermidor, while the terrified German bourgeoisie turned to Hitler's fascists. The German defeat led straight to the transformation of the revolutionary Comintern into an instrument of betrayal for anti-revolutionary gangsters like Stalin (and epigones like Walter Ulbricht) who murdered communists while refusing to fight fascists, as well as to Nazi genocide and the carnage of imperialist world war.

This quotation is taken from Liebknecht's speech to a mass demonstration in Berlin in mid-December 1918:

Comrades, fellow soldiers, and friends. Today, when the first Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils assembles, is a historic moment.

The first task facing the congress is to defend the revolution and defeat the counter-revolution by disarming all generals and officers, abolishing the previously existing military authority, forming a Red Guard to complete the social revolution, and rooting out the remaining counterrevolutionaries. And, I might add, even though it will upset some misguided and misled proletarians, that includes the Ebert-Scheidemann government....

What we have right now in Germany is not a socialist republic but a capitalist one. The proletariat must still bring the socialist republic into being through struggle against the present government, which is buttressing capitalism. We demand that the congress assume full political power so that it can institute socialism and that it not turn the power over to a national assembly, which would not be an organ of the revolution. We demand that the congress of workers' councils extend the hand of friendship to our Russian brothers and invite them to send their representatives. We want world revolution and the unification of workers of all countries under workers' and soldiers' councils.

—Karl Liebknecht, "The Congress Must Assume Full Political Power" (December 1918)

WORKERS HAMMER

For a federation of workers republics in the British isles!
For a Socialist United States of Europe!

Monthly newspaper of the Spartacist League, British section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

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For a federation of workers republics in the British Isles!

For a Socialist United States of Europe!

Beginning with this issue the above slogans will be incorporated as part of the inner masthead of *Workers Hammer's* editorial box. At the time of the establishment of our Glasgow station we noted the challenge presented to a small propaganda group of running branches in what are, in effect, "semi-different countries". Above all, programmatic precision is necessary. As Leninists we seek to be "tribunes of the people", forging a vanguard party that addresses all forms of oppression, thereby enabling the working masses to transcend national and other divisions in the interest of class unity. We seek to struggle through means that are proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist against the treacherous parliamentary reformism of the British Labour Party—the party of "John Bull" socialism and the Union Jack—whose leaders are lackeys of British imperialism and betrayers of class struggle.

The bourgeois revolutions stemming from the time of the Reformation and Oliver Cromwell were incomplete and differentiated in their impact on the peoples of the British Isles. The belated development of capitalism in the Celtic areas, relative to England, undoubtedly helped establish conditions in which Scottish, Irish and Welsh workers were propelled into the forefront of militant class battles. Beyond that, their best representatives such as James Connolly and John Maclean—who fought the illusions in the imperialist monarchical "United Kingdom" prevalent in the workers movement—have been spokesmen for proletarian internationalism. At a time when he was still a passionate advocate of the Russian Revolution, it was aptly said: "Our rulers fear Maclean more than they do the whole Labour Party." We seek to tap the better revolutionary traditions of these islands, including those of the Cromwellians, the Jacobin republicans and the Chartists.

Decaying British capitalism has long been over-ripe for revolution; its death agony has been prolonged by Labourite treachery. Today, the de-industrialisation of Britain has hit Scotland with a vengeance, while the demise of manufacturing is mirrored in the wreckage of great industrial ports like Glasgow, Liverpool, Belfast and Newcastle. Capital investment, such as it exists, is overwhelmingly concentrated in the southeast, centred upon London. Experiencing the same social rot and immiseration faced by those in South Wales, the North of England and much of the Midlands, the working people of Scotland have a felt sense of national oppression heightened under Thatcher's rule. In the absence of a revolutionary alternative, Labour's betrayal of the heroic miners strike of 1984-85 and its role of enforcing Thatcher's obscene poll tax in Scotland have fostered significant illusions in the bourgeois nationalist SNP.

Counterposed to Labourite Unionism and English chauvinism as well as to the NATO-loyal SNP, we communists fight for a federation of workers republics in the British Isles. We uphold the right of self-determination for the Scottish and Welsh nations and a working class

revolutionary resolution in Ireland. The prospects for an independent Scotland however would be bleak, and for Wales even more so. Our perspective of triumphant, unified class struggle to overthrow capitalism points to amiable and easy resolutions of national questions. Its defeat leads less clearly in other and likely miserable directions. The subjective factor of the revolutionary party may well be the decisive factor in what remains an unresolved question.

For authentic Leninism in the British Isles!

Our slogan of a federation of workers republics points to the necessary interlinking of class struggles on the British Isles. Certainly given the preponderant weight of England, genuine progress to a socialist order requires that the English bourgeoisie be defeated and Westminster rule smashed "in the belly of the beast". In *State and Revolution*, Lenin—following Engels—noted that in general Marxists uphold "the republic one and indivisible". But in the special conditions of the existence of four nations, he argued that a "federal republic" would be a step forward in the British Isles. Our call for a federation underscores the *voluntary* nature of such an association. The slogan has an algebraic character; we do not presume in advance what the constituent elements of such a federation will be. As such it is analogous to and an extension of our call for an Irish workers republic as part of the socialist federation of the British Isles, which was designed to take account of the unresolved question of where the Protestant community will fall.

Britain is an older bourgeois society in which significant pre-capitalist vestiges remain. The question of the monarchy is not "trivial", as much of the fake left claims; it is the lynchpin for archaic values, servility, hierarchy and acceptance of the established order. Trotsky scored the "conservative stupidity" of the Labour Party's defence of royal power, noting that in a time of political crisis it would become the rallying point for social reaction. The monarch, House of Lords and established churches are integral props to the maintenance of capitalist class rule in Britain; they will be swept away by proletarian revolution.

Spartacist contingent on 1989 Bloody Sunday commemoration march.



Nationalism is a bourgeois ideology, necessarily positing the oppression of other peoples and races. The English bourgeoisie certainly has no monopoly on chauvinism, as is evident from the whipping up of racist and fascist terror against the Asian and black communities in Scotland, as well as in England. As communists, we fight for full citizenship rights for all foreign workers and immigration rights for their close family members.

Against both the overtly pro-NATO, pro-EEC Labour Party tops and the "little Englandism" of the Bennites, we stand for the Socialist United States of Europe. Socialism will not be constructed in one isolated country but requires its extension internationally, both with a view to defence against the class enemy and to genuinely exploit the advantages of common economic planning. Writing in 1928, Trotsky noted: "It was no mere accident that, despite all prejudices, the slogan of a Soviet United States of Europe was adopted precisely in 1923, at a time when a revolutionary explosion was expected in Germany, and when the question of the state interrelationships in Europe assumed an extremely burning character." The failure of the German Revolution was the immediate precipitant to the consolidation of a conservative

bureaucratic caste in the USSR that spurned proletarian internationalism. Stalin & Co, under the watchword of "building socialism in one country", transformed the parties of the Third International into instruments of class collaboration and social patriotism. In reaffirming the early Comintern's slogan of a "Socialist United States of Europe", junked by the Stalinists, we do so in the spirit in which Trotsky spoke of a "European Federation of Workers and Peasants". He thus underlined its voluntary character (like that of the early Soviet republic), in which the right to enter or leave is left up to the participating sub-units. Of course, if there is a counterrevolution somewhere, it's not a question of withdrawal—but of civil war.

Without a party firmly grounded in Bolshevik principles there will be no proletarian revolution on the British Isles. The abortive character of British communism resulted not from the fact that it was "too Leninist", but rather the reverse. Above all, we seek to be guided by the experiences of the Bolshevik Party which in the complex circumstances of the tsarist prisonhouse of peoples, led the working masses and oppressed to power through proletarian internationalist means. ■

Spartacist League class series

What is communism?

Manifesto of the Communist Party
—Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

Ninety Years of the Communist Manifesto
—Leon Trotsky

Thursday, 23 November

Origins of Marxism

Socialism: Utopian and Scientific
—Frederick Engels

"From Jacobinism to Bolshevism: In Defense of the French Revolution" in *Workers Vanguard* nos 484, 486

Thursday, 7 December

Marxist economics

Wage Labour and Capital Wages, Price and Profit
—Karl Marx

"For central planning through soviet democracy" in *Market Socialism in Eastern Europe*, Spartacist pamphlet

"Workers: You produced America's Wealth—Take it! Crash of '87" in *Workers Vanguard* no 439

Thursday, 21 December

Marxism and the state

The State and Revolution
—VI Lenin

"The Bolshevik Revolution: How the working class took power" Parts I and II, in *Workers Vanguard* nos 460, 462

Thursday, 4 January

All classes held at 7:30 pm in the North Room Conway Hall Red Lion Square, WC2 (Nearest tube: Holborn)



Readings available and for more information, contact the Spartacist League, PO Box 1041, London NW5 3EU (01) 485 1396

Sub drive success

Congratulations to all comrades for their hard work in making the 1989 *Workers Hammer* subscription drive a success. We exceeded our national quota of 340 points by 32 per cent with a total of 449 points. Regional sub trips throughout England, Scotland and in South Wales as well as a week-long visit to Dublin augmented efforts in London and Glasgow.

In addition to the 178 single subs sold to *Workers Hammer*, we sold a total of 31 joint subscriptions to *Workers Hammer* and *Workers Vanguard* (the fortnightly newspaper of the Spartacist League/US) and a further 33 triple subs including *Women and Revolution*, journal of the Women's Commission of the SL/US. Another 33 single subs to *Women and Revolution* were sold as well. This year's winner was comrade Debbie in London who sold 51.5 points.

This autumn's sub drive took place as the crisis of Stalinism worldwide exploded dramatically. The Russian Question was key to selling subscriptions to the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) press. Our Marxist analysis of events in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China—our Trotskyist programme of socialist revolution in the capitalist countries and workers political revolution in the degenerated and deformed workers states—provides a sharp alternative to the anti-communist propaganda peddled by the capitalist media.

On the campuses, comrades found that students while politically raw were looking for answers against mind-numbing "end of history" and "death of communism" gobbledegook. Over two-thirds of Glasgow's 97 points were sold on university campuses, particularly at Glasgow and St Andrews universities. At the London School of Economics, Swansea University and other campuses, the ICL's English-language theoretical journal *Spartacist* headlined "For Workers Political Revolution in the USSR!" particularly helped sell subscriptions.

A highlight of the sub drive was the Dublin trip, centred on Trinity College, which netted 51 points. In particular, *Women and Revolution* was a big hit with its coverage of the fight to defend abortion rights. Our team arrived in Dublin in the midst of a battle against the reactionary Catholic fundamentalist SPUC's (Society for the Protection of the Unborn



London, 28 October: Spartacist contingent on march to protest the death of Şihö İyigüven, Kurdish victim of murderous Home Office racism.

Child) campaign to jail student leaders for attempting to disseminate information on abortion. Our slogans "For free abortion on demand", "For the separation of church and state" were warmly greeted. As one comrade reported: "What made the greatest impression on me, and I think the other comrades, was the woman question in this priest-ridden island. Spain and Portugal, bad as they are, do not compare. It's clear that the liberation of women through socialist revolution is going to be absolutely key for the communist vanguard in Ireland." Ten students attended our public meeting at Trinity entitled: "Defend the gains of the October Revolution! For workers political revolution in the USSR!"

The trip to Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield, re-subscribing miners and other readers in the area as well as selling new subscriptions to students, yielded 56 points. *Workers Hammer* told the truth in the 1984-85 miners strike; we exposed and fought the Labour Party/TUC leadership, the right and "lefts", who knifed that heroic class battle. Our small but

consistent core of subscribers among the miners and other trade unionists is a precious asset in the struggle to construct an authentic Leninist vanguard on these isles. In the same spirit, we welcome our new readers among Scottish workers, including several who work in the oil industry.

The fight against the racist terror of the NF/BNP fascists and of the capitalist state is increasingly urgent in both England and Scotland. Our coverage of the brutal racist murder of Ahmed Shekh in Edinburgh and the subsequent judicial whitewash of the race-terrorists helped expand our readership. And in Liverpool, an anti-racist theatre group, The Network, has undertaken to stop the Labour-dominated Wirral Council from building a replica of the Confederate ship, *CSS Alabama*. Our review of The Network play "Roll Alabama Roll" (see "The flag of slavery must not fly over Merseyside!", *Workers Hammer* no 109, September 1989) introduced *WH* to new readers in that area. Our defence of Salman Rushdie against the Islamic fundamentalist

mobilisations and ayatollah Khomeini's death sentence has also won new readers, not least among those communities most oppressed by the fundamentalists and at risk by the racist backlash inspired by the book-burners.

This year's sub drive followed the Partisan Defense Committee-initiated international campaign which raised over £30,000 to aid the civilian victims of the CIA's counterrevolutionary *mujahedin* cut-throats in the front-line city of Jalalabad in Afghanistan. Jalalabad besieged was the focal point of imperialism's *jihad* (holy war) against social progress and the Soviet Union. Jalalabad victorious can inspire revolutionary struggle throughout the region, from India to Turkey. Unlike the Labourites, social democrats and fake-Trotskyists who condemned the Soviet intervention in 1979, the ICL (then the international Spartacist tendency) said: "Hail Red Army!" When Gorbachev pulled out in order to appease the imperialist West, we denounced this betrayal of the Afghan and Soviet peoples and offered to organise an international brigade to fight to the death against the CIA's cut-throats. The Afghan government declined that offer; however, in response to its appeal for "a broad campaign of humanitarian assistance" the PDC campaign for material aid was launched. In sharp contrast, those Stalinists who had initially supported the Soviet intervention (eg, the *Morning Star*) embraced Gorbachev's betrayal, while some of the "left" Stalinists in their trail simply despaired.

The Asian community of Southall was particularly generous in their contributions to the PDC campaign and our eye-witness coverage of the civil war in Afghanistan was central to our sale of subscriptions on street sales and door-to-door there. The end of the sub drive was marked by public meetings in London and Glasgow featuring an eye-witness account from the ICL's special *Workers Vanguard/Le Bolchevik* correspondent who visited Jalalabad and Kabul last July. There he spoke to the fighters who held out and victoriously broke the *mujahedin* siege of Jalalabad and reported on the on-going civil war as a communist and a partisan of the military victory of the PDPA forces against reaction.

We welcome our new readers and encourage all of our readers to send in your comments, criticisms and questions. We look forward to providing revolutionary internationalist coverage of the historic events which are now taking place and which so urgently require the re-forging of the Fourth International, party of world revolution. ■

Workers Hammer subscription drive



Final total			
Local	Quota (in points)	Final Totals	%
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Regional	85	153	180
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Irish Workers Group calls on pope to expel Chinese ambassador Where LRCI lurks on China

Some months ago, mimicking our founding of the International Communist League, Workers Power and its confederates set up the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI) to address the "crisis of Stalinism". But their attempts to deal with events in the Soviet Union, East Europe and China have exposed increasingly frenzied gyrations. In the Soviet Union they share the Kremlin's line of opposing in principle the right of self-determination, while simultaneously capitulating to openly counterrevolutionary nationalist movements in the Baltic (see *Workers Hammer* no 110, October 1989). In 1981, while admitting that Solidarność was overwhelmingly dominated by capitalist restorationist forces, they supported it anyway; today they hollowly opine "No return to capitalism!", while courting the PPS-RD, which doesn't see anything worth defending in the collectivised property forms. And where there have been the beginnings of genuine proletarian political revolutions, as in China, LRCI's version of "solidarity" with the beleaguered workers and students has meant appealing to the class enemy.

On 6 June, the Irish Workers Group, ostensible co-thinkers of Workers Power in Britain, issued a grotesque statement headed: "Solidarity against the Beijing butchers! Expel the Chinese ambassador now!" This is a *de facto* call for rupturing diplomatic relations, a measure generally undertaken on the eve of war. This revolting appeal to the clerical-bourgeois Irish state—with its constitutional allegiance to the pope—to isolate the Chinese deformed workers state is nothing but a social chauvinist pledge of alliance with the bourgeoisie *against* a workers state.

The IWG, as well as British Workers



Beijing, Spring '89: Masses in Tiananmen Square singing the *Internationale*. Trotskyists call for proletarian political revolution to oust bureaucracy—not capitalist reprisals against workers state.

Power, also advocated that the unions embargo all trade to China. In practice, such "workers' sanctions" organised by the pro-imperialist labour bureaucracy would be nothing more than backhanded support for imperialist economic blackmail, undermining the collectivist foundations of the Chinese deformed workers state and punishing the Chinese workers to boot. In fact, WP and the IWG are echoing the likes of the American AFL-CIO leaders and anti-communists like Kinnock, who accuse Bush and Thatcher of being "too soft" on China. The imperialists only gave Deng a slap on the wrist because they are mindful of his services as an ally against the USSR and Vietnam and because they want to maintain the openings for capital penetration produced by the Chinese bureaucracy's "free market reforms".

Of course, if workers in Ireland should demand the expulsion of the Chinese

ambassador, then why not those in the US, Japan and Britain? Indeed the IWG, Workers Power et al claim to be part of an international organisation that is "democratic centralist", ie, one that ostensibly has a common programmatic line. The British WP, in fact, does not raise this call, restricting itself to an appeal to the unions for "workers' sanctions". The apparent difference is due to expediency, not principle. Obviously WP would be embarrassed to appear so overtly in bed with the notorious Thatcher. But what if Labour were in power? Indeed, Workers Power has already made clear in at least one instance that it is prepared to *appeal directly to the imperialist state* for sanctions. In a "manifesto" issued shortly before the last general elections, it wrote: "We must demand that Labour immediately imposes economic sanctions on South Africa" ("The class struggle and the elections", April 1987).

Obviously the IWG and WP think it's more "politic" to appeal to Haughey than Thatcher, despite the fact that the Irish "free state" has a long history of virulent anti-Sovietism. It did not establish diplomatic relations with the USSR until well after WWII. In 1961 it blocked with the imperialist powers in opposing the admission of China to the UN, demanding the withdrawal of Chinese forces from Korea. Irish troops have been prominent in UN military interventions designed to prop up neo-colonial relationships, as with the overthrow and assassination of Patrice Lumumba in the former Belgian Congo, and in the policing of Lebanon and even areas once part of the British empire, such as Kashmir and Cyprus.

With its mumbo-jumbo "methodology" that Ireland is an "imperialised" country, the IWG glosses over the class character of the Irish *bourgeois* state. In the July-October 1981 issue of *Class Struggle* the IWG even went so far as to demand of the Fianna Fail government that it "open the arsenals to the forces of the anti-imperialist United Front and the labour movement as the only real defenders of national independence and freedom". And this is not the first time WP has employed bogus "anti-imperialism" to support clerical reaction. Thus, in Iran, under the pretext of supporting the "anti-imperialist united front", Workers Power ended up in bed with the bloodthirsty anti-communist Khomeini and his mullahs.

While professing Trotskyism, the Soviet defencism of Workers Power and its international confederates is purely nominal. In actual practice, they end up embracing the Khomeinis, Walesas, Haugheys and Kinnocks—those who are mortally hostile to proletarian revolution, to defending and extending the gains of October. ■

Workers Power

"Organisers retain right to refuse entry"

"Organisers retain right to refuse entry": thus reads the fine print of Workers Power's advertising brochure for its "weekend of political discussion and debate" in London, 18-19 November. As mass upheaval pregnant with proletarian political revolution spread throughout East Germany, the centrist Workers Power group conducted its closed cell event on "Stalinism in crisis" at the Polytechnic of Central London. Boasting crèche facilities and disabled access, the WP's august gathering also warmly welcomed the anti-Soviet Socialist Organiser and Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) groups—not to mention the pro-Solidarność Polish Socialist Party-DR. But it was *verboten* to the "undesirables" of the Soviet-defencist Spartacist League.

This is too bad, because one of the co-authors of the Prometheus Research Series "Documents on the 'Proletarian Military Policy'" and director of the

Prometheus Research Library was interested in the debate on "Trotskyism and World War Two" scheduled for the weekend. But he was male, white and unfortunately a Spartacist and was interested in discussing the question. So it looked like there would be little civil rights for such a person in accordance with Workers Power's prior practices.

This recalls another recent action by the Workers Power coterie. Not so long ago Workers Power and Sean Matgama's Socialist Organiser got into an argument about the property of some WP internal bulletins. Somebody leaving Workers Power for Socialist Organiser wanted to keep his bulletins. They were part of his intellectual history and he may have even written in them. But Workers Power practises a version of the Official Secrets Act. So, the WP branch organiser of the (Iranian) comrade involved "asked for the return of the originals which he refused

to do". In the WP's own words:

"Of course we have no sanction against such a comrade except to make clear to other left wingers who know him and us that this constitutes disloyal behaviour. What our organiser said to him was that we would brand him on the British and Iranian left as a thief, a liar and having joined a pro-Zionist organisation." (letter from Workers Power, signed by Dave Stocking, 10 October 1989)

We see a coming together between these two examples of WP behaviour. Workers Power is what is called a closed organisation—with a great deal to fear. Detering someone familiar with the Proletarian Military Policy from criticising Broué's comments in *Cahiers Léon Trotsky*, making a real threat against a young Iranian—these actions do cause one to infer a large degree of artificiality in the "programme" of Workers Power.

There may be some benefit for the Marxist movement in a discussion among those who have thought about Trotskyism in World War II. But WP's promulgation that they are the exclusive owners of the intellectual products of their members is not merely a parody of the Official Secrets Act, it would mean that in fact most of the extant Marxist archives would have long since been destroyed by the Noskes of the social democracy.

Workers Power is an organisation that you ought to look at three times and then not get near. We hope that the young Iranian comrade got to keep his bulletins and at sometime it would be good to have a public chat with Al Richardson about Trotskyist policy in WW II where Workers Power does not control the non-attendance thereat.

Workers Power is welcome to our public forums, but then we have public forums.

For political revolution in East Germany!

(Continued from page 1)

eliminating travel restrictions, the DDR succeeded in stopping the mass out-migration. But it didn't quell the explosion of social unrest at home. Scores of protests took place around East Germany, with slogans calling for free elections and an end to the ruling Stalinist Socialist Unity Party (SED) political monopoly. On 17 November, some 10,000 students demonstrated in East Berlin. We of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) distributed thousands of leaflets (see translation, page 1) which were eagerly snapped up, and a French student comrade addressed the rally.

The opening of the Wall and the continuing upsurge in East Germany sent shock waves through the world. East Germany is the pivot of what has heretofore been known as the Soviet bloc; Berlin has been the focal point of the Cold War for more than four decades. The crisis of Stalinist rule in the bureaucratically deformed workers states of East Europe has reached the flash-point. Already in the summer, the bankrupt Polish Stalinists began bailing out, giving way to an openly counterrevolutionary Solidarność-led cabinet. This autumn the Hungarian Stalinists split as leading elements laid plans to sell off the nationalised economy to international capitalists. In Bulgaria, arch-Stalinist Todor Zhivkov has been ousted. And now, inspired by the mass upheaval in the DDR, a quarter of a million people demonstrate in Prague against the hard-line Communist Party leadership installed in the suppression of the 1968 "Prague Spring".

The changes at the top in East Germany were clearly egged on by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. And behind the turmoil in East Europe stands the troubled "reform process" in the Soviet Union opened up by Gorbachev's policies of glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring). Expanded freedom of the press and political life in general has produced enormous intellectual ferment, including an intense interest in the ideas

of Leon Trotsky. The miners strikes last summer demonstrated the power of the Soviet proletariat and have given rise to independent workers organisations, which in many cases have affirmed their commitment to genuine socialism.

Yet four years of attempts to impose market-oriented economic policies have

longer in front of stores with no consumer goods. Workers seethe with anger at price-gouging by private "cooperative" enterprises. And Vorkuta coal miners are again on strike, now in direct violation of anti-strike laws.

Imperialist ideologues are crowing about the supposed "death of Commun-

carving up the socialised economies of the Soviet bloc.

The Stalinist bureaucracies are certainly at the end of their rope, but as was seen in the Beijing spring and with the Soviet miners strikes over the summer, the working class is entering the battle. And the workers sure aren't fighting to



On Saturday, 4 November up to a million protestors jammed into East Berlin's Alexanderplatz after marching past the parliament buildings.

unleashed centrifugal forces throughout the USSR. From Central Asia to the Western borderlands, national antagonisms threaten to tear the multinational USSR apart. In the Caucasus and Moldavia conditions are close to civil war. And in the Baltics pro-capitalist nationalists are driving hard for counterrevolution behind the slogan of independence. Meanwhile, attempts to invigorate the economy after the Brezhnev "years of stagnation" are backfiring. Queues grow

West European Common Market rulers meet to lay plans for "re-integrating" East Europe, ie, for a capitalist takeover of their socialised economies. US president George Bush and French leaders earnestly discuss the implications of a capitalist reunification of Germany, as West German companies draw up plans for reopening their pre-1945 plants in the DDR. The would-be participants in the imperialist feast are already celebrating, licking their chops at the prospect of

reintroduce capitalist exploitation! At the same time, from the USSR to China to the DDR, what is crucially lacking is a proletarian leadership organising on a genuinely communist programme of defence of the socialised economy against capitalist restoration, shattering the bureaucracy and establishing workers democracy based on soviets, fighting for communist unity against imperialism and for international socialist revolution.

The bourgeoisie has swallowed its own lying equation of Stalinism with communism. Their eyes have been fixed on counterrevolutionary movements like clerical-nationalist Polish Solidarność and on pro-capitalist elements in the Stalinist bureaucracy. During his recent tour of the US seeking to entice imperialist investment and aid, Lech Walesa "told a press conference that the government owns 90 percent of the Polish economy, and 80 percent of it is for sale" (*Washington Post*, 18 November). To make Poland attractive for Western capital, the Solidarność-led government is insisting on an end to strikes. But it will take more than a strike ban to rein in the Polish working class as it faces 30 per cent unemployment, the elimination of food subsidies and an end to social services. In order to overcome popular resistance to a "shock" austerity plan engineered by Harvard economist Jeffrey Sachs, one Polish economist commented that the government would need "a safety net of the Chilean type: the military would have to do it" (*New Yorker*, 13 November).

Poland under Solidarność is no rags-to-riches capitalist success story—on the contrary, it's on the brink of collapse. Already there are soup kitchens, and as part of privatising urban transport to make it profitable they're talking about raising fares from 70 zlotys to 1070 zlotys. Now the formerly official Stalinist-led union federation OPZZ is vowing to

continued on page 8

Help raise the banner of Trotskyism in Germany

Give to the Lenin-Liebkecht-Luxemburg fund

"The extermination of capitalism, the establishment of the socialist order of society, is possible only on an international scale—but, of course, it cannot be carried out at a uniform pace in all countries. The work has begun in Russia, it must be continued in Germany...."

Thus declared Karl Liebknecht in November 1918. But the movement towards socialist revolution in Germany was crushed by the Social Democrats and later sabotaged and perverted by the Stalinists. This led to Hitler's bloody victory, as a prelude to World War II and the imperialist Cold War. Today we are seeing a historic opportunity to raise the banner of genuine communism in the industrial heartland of Europe. The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)—committed to continuing the work of Lenin, Liebknecht and Luxemburg—is now engaged in an intense campaign to build a Leninist-Trotskyist party in all of Germany.

In 1953, East German workers were

the first to rise up against Stalinist bureaucratic rule while calling on their class brothers in the West to join them. Today Stalinism is wounded, but communism lives—from Soviet coal miners to East German workers to Salvadoran insurgents. For proletarian political revolution in East Germany and socialist revolution in West Germany! For revolutionary reunification of Germany in a Socialist United States of Europe!

The International Communist League has already produced 200,000 copies in German of our leaflet, "Workers Soviets Must Rule!" The Trotzistische Liga Deutschlands, German section of the ICL, has reprinted its pamphlet "Market Socialism" in East Europe". Your contribution is urgently needed to carry out this vital work. Make donations payable/send to: Spartacist, PO Box 1041, London NW5 3EU. Earmark for: "Lenin-Liebkecht-Luxemburg Fund" (or simply "3-L's Fund").



German Trotskyist leaflet calls for "Workers Soviets To Power!"

Workers soviets must rule in all Germany!

(Continued from page 1)

the Stalinist bureaucracy and erecting in its place *real workers soviets*, like those established in the October Revolution, based on collectivised property. This in turn can be the spark for socialist revolution in the capitalist West.

East Berliners flooded across the border into West Berlin on the night of the 9th. Except for a handful all went back. Kohl tried to address a "victory rally" in West Berlin but was drowned out with boos and whistles. When he tried to strike up a chorus of "Deutschland, Deutschland über alles", Brandt, Momper & Co sang along, but the boos and whistles drowned them out. And an attempted Nazi march on the Brandenburg Gate led by Republikaner Führer Schönhuber was turned back by crowds shouting "Nazis out!" East German workers are jubilant that the Wall is coming down, but they don't want a revanchist capitalist reunification.

One placard on 4 November read: "Hungary '56, China '89", and the spectre haunting the bureaucracy was the 17 June 1953 East German workers uprising, the first in East Europe against Stalinist bureaucratic rule. West German revanchists have tried to usurp June 17, and the East German bureaucracy spread the same lies about the uprising. But it belongs to the German working class. On that day East German workers appealed to their class brothers and sisters in the West to rise up against their capitalist masters. At the train station in Halle, workers greeted a train from the West with a banner proclaiming, "We're cleaning house in Pankow [East Berlin], now you sweep out the crap in Bonn." Ulbricht was saved only by Soviet tanks. In any case, what was required then as well as today is fraternisation with the Red Army. As Siberian and Silesian miners strike against the ravages of "market reforms", the East German workers can make common cause with their class comrades and be the springboard for proletarian political revolution throughout East Europe and the Soviet Union.

The Red Army crushed the Nazi regime and established a bureaucratically deformed workers state east of the Elbe. But the resurgence of German nationalism and fascist terror has not been restricted to the West German successor state of the Third Reich. There, the first victims of fascist terror are immigrant workers. And now similar attacks, for example on Vietnamese workers, are taking place in East Germany. Hostility to immigrant workers such as the Poles has been expressed even in the mass protest demonstrations, as in Dresden. Instead, as a banner on 4 November declared, "For Communist Ideals! No Privileges!" This means: *Full citizenship rights for immigrant workers East and West!*

Today a wing of the East German security forces shows its support for revanchist capitalist restoration under the watchword of German nationalism by cloning a new generation of fascist terrorist skinheads and scum, the existence of which the bureaucracy has done its best to deny. A banner of an anti-fascist contingent at the 4 November demonstration read, "Weimar: 160 Nazi Skinheads Organized a Manhunt". Even the perimeter of this massive demonstration was infested with fascists from West and East. Just as Russian workers must smash Pamyat, workers/minorities in East and West Germany had better organise to crush these vermin *now!*

A demonstration of 50,000 SED [Soc-

ialist Unity Party] members in East Berlin on 8 November demanded "No sellout of the DDR", for "real plans", and "return to Lenin". Stalin gave central planning a bad name. The East German economy is the most successful in Eastern Europe. Workers may chant "Gorby, Gorby, help us". But by and large they reject Gorbachev's "perestroika" and "market socialism", which have bred increasing misery and national conflict from the Balkans to the Baltic and Caucasus. East German workers are not about to surrender the social gains they have won. Attempts to form a Solidarność-style

economist Leontiev) can permit investments in line with the democratically-controlled growth of investment and consumption.

When the Wall started coming down on Friday [9 November], the West German stock market went up, because Frankfurt bankers and their SPD front men are dreaming of bleeding East Germany dry the way they have Poland and Hungary. To defend collectivised property and to attack the world market, East Germany needs a stable, readily convertible currency (eg, based on the gold standard like the Soviet Chervonets in

the Frankfurt bankers by proletarian revolution in the West—to which immigrant workers are key. We Trotskyists call for the *revolutionary reunification of Germany* through socialist revolution in the West and proletarian political revolution in the East. Because of the strategic weight of Germany in Europe, reunification, if it is not to recreate an imperialist behemoth, a Fourth Reich, can only be as part of a *Socialist United States of Europe*.

The huge protest demonstrations, impressive in their discipline, remain dominated by petty-bourgeois forces like Neues Forum and the Social Democrats (SDP). On November 4, Neues Forum called for "free elections" supervised by the UN, ie by imperialism, while the SDP, just like Helmut Kohl, called for a return to a "market economy". When the SPD and their hangers-on talk about "democratic socialism" they mean "democratic" counterrevolution, of which the SPD intends to be the general staff. While Kohl was booed down, Brandt and Momper were cheered. The Social Democrats are the main danger for East German workers.

The International Communist League and its German section, the Trotskistische Liga Deutschlands, uphold the Trotskyist position of unconditional defence of the social gains of the October Revolution and its extension from East Berlin to Havana against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. In contrast, the social-democrats faking as Trotskyists such as Ernest Mandel and the Bund Sozialistischer Arbeiter surrender these gains at every point they are challenged. They backed Solidarność' counterrevolutionary bid in 1981 and opposed the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan against imperialist-backed clerical reaction in 1979.

To date no left opposition has surfaced within the SED. Yet there have been expressions of support for real communism in the DDR, such as the signs on 4 November calling "for a new communist party". As in 1953, what is lacking today is a proletarian internationalist vanguard party fighting for power. Forging such a party requires returning to the Bolshevism of Lenin and Trotsky! Hail Rosa Luxemburg, the greatest founder of German Communism, murdered by the Freikorps at the behest of the SPD leadership! The German Revolution, East and West, needs a Leninist-Trotskyist workers party! ■



1982: TLD denounced Social Democratic anti-Sovietism. Banner reads: "For the revolutionary reunification of Germany—For Socialist Revolution in the West, Proletarian Political Revolution in the East!"

anti-Communist "free union" have fizzled.

Workers in the DDR have followed attentively the strikes against perestroika of Soviet miners. The factory committees the miners have organised are the *core of real workers soviets*, which are the key if economic planning is to be controlled by the working class. Although tremendous ferment exists in the plants, the working class remains politically atomised, eg, there have as yet been no strikes, which would immediately be *political*. Workers councils must be established at the point of production with control over quantity and quality. Computerised input-output analysis (developed by Russian-born

1923). However, an isolated revolutionary East German workers state would still be threatened by the power of cheap commodities, as Marx warned.

There can be no genuine socialism in half a country facing an economically far more powerful imperialist neighbour. From the podium of the massive 4 November demonstration writer Stefan Heym was enthusiastically received when he said, "Socialism, not Stalinist but the real thing, which we want to finally build, for our benefit and that of all Germany, is unthinkable without democracy." The defence of collectivised property in East Germany requires its extension to the West. That means the expropriation of



Revolutionary soldiers, sailors and workers march through Berlin in 1918. The 1919 Spartacus uprising was crushed by Social Democrats in the service of capitalist reaction.

East Germany...

(Continued from page 6)

resist the government's starvation policies. Polish workers will fight to resist the ravages of capitalist immiseration. Meanwhile, in neighbouring Hungary capitalists are flocking to Budapest in hopes of buying up state properties at fire-sale prices, while the workers are driven literally to the brink of starvation. A *New York Times* headline noted: "Capitalism Comes to Hungary With a Vengeance". Even right-wing cosmetics tycoon Ronald Lauder, who owns two outlets in Budapest, says: "It's inevitable.... Two, three years, and there will be a backlash against this capitalist exploitation."

And in East Germany, the overwhelming mass of the people have no desire to restore capitalism. The *Wall Street Journal* (6 October) reported why "many—perhaps most" East Germans don't want to leave or see their country swallowed by the capitalist West:

"One reason is that it's easier to find a true believer in socialism here than perhaps anywhere else in Eastern Europe. And while many now decry the kind of communism they've got, they still admire the theory while also fearing what life would be like under capitalism. They see capitalism as possibly threatening the comfortable system that guarantees their jobs, low-cost housing and free health care and education."

Moreover, the SED ranks have begun to rebel. On 8 November, tens of thousands of party members demonstrated outside the Central Committee meeting. They succeeded in forcing a party congress (to be held on 15 December) where they can vote out the leadership, and local SED units dumped four out of the eleven recently appointed Politburo members. When a party official tried to get them to sing the old German social-democratic anthem, the demonstrators responded by singing the *Internationale*.

On 9 October in Leipzig, events came perilously close to a Beijing-style massacre, as Honecker ordered the army to shoot demonstrators. He was overruled and then ousted. But the ruling bureaucracy, including Gorbachevite "reformers" like Prime Minister Hans Modrow, cannot produce the "socialist renewal" they talk of. Events in East Germany point to a proletarian *political revolution* that would defend the existing social gains and open the way to genuine socialism. The Stalinist and infuriatingly Prussian bureaucracy is stifling the development of the most industrially advanced state of the Soviet bloc. What's needed is the proletarian democracy of soviets (workers councils), led by a genuine communist party based on the Bolshevik internationalist programme of Lenin and Trotsky. A political revolution in the



Demonstrator calls "For a New Communist Party!" (above). Banners at 4 November protest read: "For Communist Ideals—No Privileges", "For a German Soviet Republic—Build Soviets!" (right).

DDR would send out a clarion call to workers from Hungary and Poland to the Soviet Union, and would have an electrifying impact on West German workers and throughout capitalist West Europe.

But a little bit of political revolution is a chancy thing. At bottom, either the workers take political power or capitalist counterrevolution takes the ascendancy. In the regular Monday night demonstration in Leipzig on 20 November, for the first time right-wing nationalist slogans appeared calling for a capitalist reunification of Germany. "Deutschland—Ein Vaterland" (Germany—One Fatherland) proclaimed one banner. Meanwhile, in West Germany reactionary forces have been venting their rage against DDR immigrants: in Hannover, two "Trabis" (the East German Trabant car) were burned. And in Göttingen, anti-fascists who confronted neo-Nazis were assaulted by police, who drove one woman to her death in the path of an oncoming car. German workers, East and West, must mobilise their class power to smash the fascist threat.

For the revolutionary reunification of Germany!

No sooner had euphoric East Germans poured across the Berlin Wall to go window-shopping on the Ku'damm and gorge themselves on chocolates than every leading capitalist politician started talking about reunification. What separates East and West Germany are fundamentally counterposed social systems, not mortar and brick. Since its erection in 1961 the Wall has been Western imperialism's favourite Cold War symbol. As we wrote



Placard recalls earlier challenges to bureaucratic rule—'53 East Berlin uprising, '56 Hungarian revolution, '68 Prague spring, '89 Tiananmen massacre. "Mistrust is good."

in *Workers Vanguard* no 459 (12 August 1988):

"The imperialists hate the Berlin Wall because it was erected as a barrier to the capitalist reunification of Germany. The Wall was a measure, albeit a bureaucratic one, to defend the collectivized economy against imperialist pressure, specifically the massive hemorrhaging of state-trained East German professionals and skilled workers to the West...."

the Bundestag rising to sing the *Deutschlandlied* when the Wall was opened, and by the consensus programme presented by Christian Democrat Kohl demanding the DDR dismantle the planned economy as a prerequisite for Western financial aid.

Today the West German SPD leaders are assiduously cultivating DDR oppositionists, bringing over the head of the newly founded East German Social



17 June 1953: Soviet tanks in East Berlin to put down workers uprising. When DDR workers rose up against Stalinist misrule, they called on their West German class brothers to "sweep out the crap in Bonn".

But what brought the Wall down in the end was not imperialist revanchism, but social struggle by the East German masses. Today, free passage across the Wall can also serve as a springboard for revolutionary unity and common struggle by the working masses of the capitalist West and the East German deformed workers state.

Yet many of those who believe in socialism for East Germany are convinced that a socialist revolution is impossible in West Germany, or at any rate so remote as to have no bearing on current politics. Consequently many DDR oppositionists see the Social Democracy (SPD) as the only alternative in West Germany. But the SPD has only administered German capitalism on behalf of the Krupps and Thyssens, including presiding over mass layoffs such as at Rheinhausen last year, while acting as a cornerstone of NATO in building up the Bundeswehr as the strongest imperialist army in Europe. Towards East Europe, and East Germany in particular, the Social Democrats under Willy Brandt were the architects of the *Ostpolitik* that has become the common policy of German imperialism. This was symbolised by

Democratic Party (SDP) for "consultations", passing out advice to Bärbel Bohley of the Neues Forum not to push too fast. This line was summed up in a recent article by former SPD chancellor Helmut Schmidt (*Die Zeit*, 17 November) calling for pumping in "many billions of D-marks...over several years", for joint ventures and "training of managers and unions". In Schmidt's scenario for counterrevolution, "The property question is not yet important, for now. Rather what's immediately posed is the independence of enterprise management" and "competitive markets", to eliminate the "centralized bureaucratic command economy".

Deputy SPD leader Oskar Lafontaine, meanwhile, says "the democratic opposition" in the DDR "wouldn't be helped by us putting it under suspicion of being handmaidens of the West", so don't complain that they talk about "democratization and reform of socialist society" rather than a return to capitalism (*Der Spiegel*, 25 September). But many who speak of socialist democracy in East Germany genuinely don't want to be a front for social-democratic counterrevolution. However, it is *impossible*—Stalin to the contrary—to build socialism in one

French Trotskyist student speaks at East Berlin rally

On 17 November, several thousand students from across East Germany rallied in front of the historic Georg Humboldt University in East Berlin, calling for an independent student association. A student comrade of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France spoke from the speakers platform.

"In 1986, we had a big student strike. But what was lacking was to link up with the proletariat. It's the same thing here. The East German students must ally themselves with the proletariat. What is on the agenda is political revolution. Political revolution means throwing out the bureaucracy. In

France, we have to make a socialist revolution, here a political revolution. If East Germany makes its revolution, West Germany will also make its revolution—there will be reunification on a revolutionary basis."

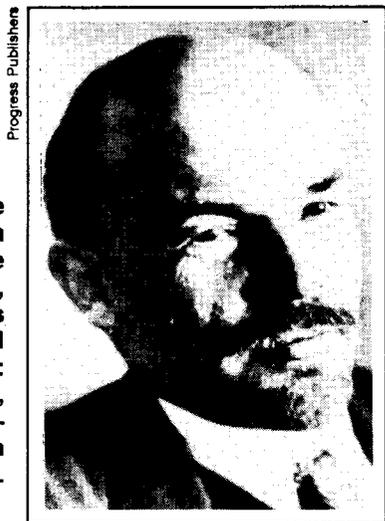
"We remember 1953 when the East German working class began a political revolution. Today, we have to do the same thing—and win...." Calling for an international revolutionary struggle, she noted that "behind Germany stands Europe and the world". She concluded with greetings in the name of the International Communist League.

country. And that impossibility is even more manifest for East Germany because of its intimate economic relation with a powerful West German capitalism.

We recognise that East German workers and leftist intellectuals, however much they would love to see a socialist revolution in the West, are convinced this is an utterly utopian prospect. But here they are truly underestimating their own capacity to change the world. And they also do not fully understand the degree to which it is the hideous deformations of Stalinism, and not the purported viability of capitalism, which have strengthened bourgeois, especially social-democratic, ideology among the West European working class.

The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia—a backward country then at war with Germany—radically and instantly changed the political consciousness of the German working class. During the 1920s the Communist Party embraced the best, most militant, most idealistic elements of the German proletariat, especially the youth. Lenin, Luxemburg and Liebknecht were inspirational figures for millions of German workers and leftist intellectuals in the Weimar Republic. However, the treachery and cowardice of the Stalinist and Social Democratic bureaucracies enabled the Nazis to take power and crush the strongest and best-organised proletariat in Europe.

For the
communism
of the
"Three L's",
fighters
for world
revolution:
VI Lenin,
Karl Liebknecht, Rosa
Luxemburg.



In the early post-World War II years the Stalinised Communist Party (KPD) was still a force to be reckoned with in what is now West Germany. Between 1946 and 1948, 70 per cent of the enterprise councils in the Ruhr coal mines were headed by KPD militants. In 1947 the KPD won 14 per cent of the vote in North Rhine-Westphalia, the industrial heartland of West Germany (Ute Schmidt/Tilman Fichter, *Der erzwungene Kapitalismus* [1978]). It was only after the Stalinist bureaucratisation of East Germany, and given the KPD's failure to lead militant struggles when they had mass

support, that the Social Democrats, agents of Western imperialism, gained political hegemony over the West German proletariat.

If the East German working class takes political power on the basis of soviet democracy and in the name of communist internationalism, the political consciousness of the West German working class will be overwhelmingly transformed. And not only the West German working class. The revolutionary reunification of Germany will change the world. As we pointed out in a statement by the international Spartacist tendency on the occasion of

Ronald Reagan's 1982 grand tour of Europe:

"Germany is the leader of Europe—for socialism or barbarism.... Only the workers of the world, who in Marx's words 'have no country,' can establish an equitable and harmonious international division of labor based on socialization of the means of production. The alternatives are nuclear barbarism or revolutionary reunification of Germany in the struggle for a socialist united states of Europe."

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 490, 24 November 1989

Stop Republikaner terror!

Defend West Berlin anti-fascists!

When former US president Reagan and Chancellor Kohl paid homage to the Waffen SS at their Bitburg graves in 1985, they helped fuel the resurgence of German Nazism that is taking place today. Notable has been the rapid growth of the fascist Republikaner, a split from Kohl's coalition partners, the right-wing Christian Social Union. Headed by "I was proud to be in the Waffen SS" Schonhuber, they have succeeded in regrouping old Nazis and recruiting from the Bundeswehr, cops and disaffected petty-bourgeois reactionaries. Seeking to spread their tentacles to West Berlin, they ran a racist campaign during the past city elections marked by intimidation, provocation and open violence.

On 14 January, in the midst of this "election" campaign, they staged an armed provocation and physical attack in the West Berlin neighbourhood of Moabit. In this integrated neighbourhood, inhabited by German and immigrant workers, fascists have frequently encountered strong anti-fascist sentiment. Further, the Republikaner targeted for their attack a restaurant that is a well-known meeting point for leftists and anti-fascists. Earlier that evening the Trotskistische Liga Deutschland (TLD) had shown a video of the successful labour/black mobilisation that stopped a KKK and fascist skinhead provocation in Philadelphia on 5 November 1988.

When supporters of the TLD and other customers went out to protest this disruption, they were violently attacked by the Republikaner, with one member of this fascist band brandishing a drawn pistol (which later turned out to be a gas pistol). One woman TLD supporter was kicked in the head. Nevertheless, eight victims of this fascist attack are threatened with three years in jail for "breaking the public peace by mob action" and other charges.

A campaign initiated by the Committee to Defend the Moabit Anti-fascists calls

for the immediate end of all legal proceedings against the anti-fascists. This demand is endorsed by a wide range of trade-union officials, anti-fascist organisations and prominent individuals, German and immigrant leftists and political parties including the Hamburg and West Berlin Alternative List or "Greens", the West Berlin Association of Victims of the Nazi Regime (VVN), Trade Unionists against Racism and Fascism in West Berlin, Esther Bejarano, chairman of the Auschwitz committee in the BRD, Hamburg; Ernest Mandel, Belgium; Society of Human Rights, Ankara, Turkey; Pan Am shop stewards (ÖTV trade union), West Berlin; Serge Klarsfeld, Lutte Ouvrière, Stephan Hermlin, East Berlin; Gerhard Leo, member of the presidium of the committee of resistance fighters of the GDR, East Berlin; Käthe Reichel, actress at the Deutsche Theater, East Berlin; Benito Wogatzki, writers' society of the GDR, member of the executive committee, East Berlin, Blamu-Jatz-Orchestra, Weimar; Sports show of the German gymnastic and sport club of the GDR, Leipzig, the Comité de défense sociale and the Partisan Defense Committee (PDC) in the US.

The PDC in Britain is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defence organisation which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League. The PDC here seeks to mobilise support for the Moabit anti-fascists. We call on readers of *Workers Hammer* to send statements of support and contributions for the defence of the Anti-fascist Moabit 8 to: Komitee zur Verteidigung der Antifaschisten von Moabit, c/o Werner Brand, Postfach 11 22 86, 2000 Hamburg 11, West Germany.

Adapted and updated from *Class-Struggle Defense Notes* no 11 (August 1989)

For worker/
minority
mobilisations
to crush the
fascists!
Hamburg, 1986:
Turkish leftists,
West German
trade unionists
protest against
racist murder
by skinhead
scum.



A pamphlet on the economics of the East European deformed workers states, analysing Yugoslavia, Hungary and East Germany in the context of Gorbachev's perestroika. The pamphlet considers the history of the ruling bureaucracies' efforts to combat stagnation through decentralisation and "market-oriented" reforms, and counterposes the Trotskyist programme for centralised economic planning based on workers democracy.

Available in German.

Make cheques payable/mail to:
Spartacist Publications,
PO Box 1041
London NW5 3EU



Guildford 4

(Continued from page 12)

Fianna Fail government, backed by the wretched reformists of the Irish Labour Party, continues to hand Republican suspects over to the British police.

In Britain, the obscene self-congratulation surrounding the state's admission of its guilt notwithstanding, the Guildford Four case has had a profound effect on an already shaken regime. Lords Denning and Hailsham are facing a possible libel suit from Paul Hill's solicitor for remarks implying that the four were guilty, although the conviction was obtained by "wrongful means". The "inquiry" into the Guildford Four is already being set up to do minimal inquiring—and not a lot of truth can be expected from the same rulers who brought you the ban on Sinn Fein.

There have been renewed calls in Britain as well for a review of the Birmingham Six—framed up by the notoriously corrupt, manifestly racist West Midlands police. Like the Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six were "guilty" of being Irishmen in the wrong place at the wrong time. Savagely beaten in prison, Patrick Hill, Robert Hunter, William Power, John Walker, Richard McKenny and Hugh Callaghan were also convicted on the evidence of forced "confessions" as well as the lying testimony of the discredited forensic scientist Frank Skuse. Now the cop who made the arrests of five of the Birmingham Six has stated that the

men are innocent; a prison officer has admitted that the six were beaten by police before and by prison guards upon their arrival at Winson Green jail.

Braithwaite following the expiry of the cop Keith Blakelock at the police riot at Broadwater Farm in 1985 is widely recognised as the racist frame-up it is. *Free the*



The Birmingham Six photographed shortly after their arrest. From left to right from top: Patrick Hill, Hugh Callaghan, Johnny Walker, Richard McKenny, Gerard Hunter and Billy Power. Free them now!

On their release from prison, Gerard Conlon and Paul Hill defiantly announced their intention to campaign vigorously for the Birmingham Six. And there are other victims of cop/court frame-ups languishing in prison today. The conviction of Winston Silcott, Engin Raghup and Mark

Birmingham Six and Broadwater Farm Three!

The freeing of the Guildford Four came just before Thatcher's recent "troubles" with the Chancellor and economic policy regarding the European Community. Within the divided bour-

geoisie, a section truly believes Thatcher is unfit to rule and must go. There is a whiff of the end of regime in the air. But Kinnock's Labour Party, looking more electable than ever, is an *avowed enemy* of class struggle and the rights of the oppressed. The Labour leadership, right and "left" will pull out all the stops to keep the workers in line between now and the next election. And once in power, the Labour Party will attack the working people at least as viciously as Thatcher's Tories have done. That is what is required to administer the state of a decaying capitalist order.

As Paul Hill put it in an interview with *Socialist Worker* (25 November) when asked if he was "optimistic" about having been released during a "massive crisis" for the Tory government: "Yes, but I was convicted under a Labour government. The PTA was passed under Labour. Repression in prisons and control units were passed under a Labour government." And when the troops were sent into Northern Ireland, they marched to the command of a Labour Prime Minister. Of the release of the Guildford Four, Paul Hill notes, "I expected Irish people to be glad. But it wasn't just Irish people. It was blacks, Indians and many English people." Paul Hill continues to be a target of British state repression. *Drop all charges against him now!* The construction of an authentic Bolshevik vanguard party, forged in ruthless opposition to the Labour traitors of yesterday and tomorrow, is necessary to lead victorious socialist revolution. Only then will justice be served and the victims of capitalist injustice avenged. ■

Don't debate them - crush the BNP !

Scotland: Militant Tendency polices anti-fascist youth

GLASGOW—From the *Militant* (22 September) we read that the fascist British National Party (BNP) has stepped up its activities in the Glasgow Pollok area. One hundred to two hundred youth gathered at a local bar to discuss handling this race-hate scum: according to the *Militant's* account, "the atmosphere was electric", surrounded by slogans such as "We will smash the BNP and the National Front scum"; a set of gallows was painted on the floor with a swastika on the end of the rope. The *Militant* proudly explains how it managed to *keep things safe* for the BNP at this gathering. In *Militant's* own words:

"We decided to challenge the fascists to an open debate—originally to be held in a local football ground. Some of the youth wanted to take matters into their own hands. But we said we should wait until we had this meeting. Although normally we wouldn't have considered debating with fascists we realised we could thoroughly discredit them in the eyes of the youth—and thought they probably wouldn't turn up anyway."

And not only once, but the *Militant* "approached the fascists again about a debate". In the event, the BNP found it "too dodgy" to turn up in front of the youth in Pollok. They certainly did not decline in fear of *Militant*.

This constitutes a new low for the Labourite liquidators of *Militant* who claim to be some kind of socialists. *Militant's* social democratic framework now includes "debating" and politely discussing things out with fascists. This is not only the "logic" of parliamentary cretinism, but also deadly dangerous. It is ABC for Marxists that fascists are not a debat-

ing society. Their genocidal programme means terror *in action*: their stock-in-trade is the firebomb, the knife, the gun, the lynch rope. They must be crushed by the mobilisation of the organised workers movement in alliance with all the intended victims of fascist terror: Asian and black people, gays, Jewish people, Gypsies, leftists, Irish and immigrant communities. "Debate" and discussion with these thugs only emboldens them and provides them with a platform and legitimacy on which to recruit.

In Scotland today, racist attacks and violent fascist provocations are escalating. The Ku Klux Klan race terrorists have begun a concerted recruitment drive in Scotland, burning a six-foot cross outside Murrayfield Rugby Stadium. Last January in Edinburgh two young black men were attacked by a gang of white youths. Ahmed Shekh, a student and a refugee from Somalia was murdered, his friend Abdirizak Yusuf was stabbed and seriously injured. Of three thugs arrested at the murder scene at least one, Terence Reilly, was a self-proclaimed fascist. Although caught with a knife in his hand and blood on his shirt sleeves, Reilly was acquitted by an all-white jury—giving a green light to other racist terrorists (see "Racist murder in Edinburgh: avenge Ahmed Shekh!" *Workers Hammer* no 108, July/August 1989).

According to a 1986 report on racism in Glasgow, two independent surveys reported that a study "among Indian, Pakistani and Chinese families in the

South of the city showed a massive 96 per cent have suffered some form of racial harassment" (*Evening Times*, 10 June 1986). That the *Militant* article boasting of its attempt to debate the BNP does not mention racism is no aberration. This is the group which once ran the city council in Liverpool, where vicious racism and segregation are rampant and which "refused to acknowledge race as an issue, arguing that disadvantage was purely a class issue" (*Independent*, 15 October 1988). *Militant* (11 August) also reports with pride that in the course of its anti-Poll Tax campaign, "Groups of casuals [in Scotland, fascists in 'casual' dress—*WH*] stop to sign up, buy a paper and fill the rattling tins with their loose change. They get a Pay No Poll Tax sticker and wear it as a badge of honour." The same Labour Council in Glasgow to which *Militant* pleads its anti-Poll Tax case has just been subjected to a study in racism; damning evidence of racism within its housing department was among the findings. The conclusion of one of the researchers was that "Glasgow is one of Britain's most racist cities" (*Evening Times*, 9 October 1989).

Routinely witchhunted by the Labour leadership, *Militant* clings to the Labour Party, with its vile racism and anti-working-class treachery. Indeed, the very selected works of Ted Grant (*The Unbroken Thread*) include the following call in 1948 on a Labour government to introduce "legislation to make fascist propaganda and organisation illegal". This call

on the capitalist state (under Labour, of course) to "outlaw" fascism is criminal reformism. It is the capitalist system which breeds the fascist bands and it requires the destruction of that system to smash the fascist menace once and for all.

The social decay of de-industrialised Britain is manifest in Scotland; the devastation of major industry has created a layer of almost permanently lumpenised youth. Pollok is one of the most deprived areas of Western Europe. Fascist outfits like the BNP will ply their race-hate trade among these desperate layers of society; it is the duty of communists to smash the fascists before they can fester and grow. As we wrote in our article "Skinheads: psycho killers on the loose" (*WH* no 101, October 1988):

"The key is revolutionary leadership—a workers movement which is not afraid to draw clear class lines, which is willing to organise a fight for workers power to resolve the crisis of bourgeois society. A revolutionary leadership of labour could draw to its side in the anti-capitalist struggle many layers of the most oppressed including desperate youth, but instead the bankruptcy of the cringing reformists leaves a vacuum which the fascists are eager to fill, while others on the left seek to compete with the fascists on the latter's terrain."

The cringing reformists of *Militant* do their bit both to shore up the rotting corpse of Labourite social democracy and to compete with the fascists on their terrain. Workers, youth, minorities: with "friends" like *Militant* you do not need enemies. ■

Victory to the ambulance workers! Strike to win!

As the dispute between the country's 22,500 ambulance workers and government enters its eleventh week, Thatcher and her union-busting cronies are putting everybody's life at risk. The government is on a vindictive drive to "get" the ambulance workers and anyone else who won't knuckle under to the bosses' drive to make the workers and oppressed pay for this decrepit capitalist system. Shortly after workers started a "work-to-rule", the "health" secretary Kenneth Clarke called in the troops and locked out the crews, beginning in London, which has the largest ambulance service in the world.

From midnight on 21 November, ambulance crews throughout the country imposed a ban on all non-emergency services. Officers and control assistants in London have voted to "stand down" rather than put calls through to Scotland Yard and the army. Many hospitals are calling the ambulance workers at their stations rather than put

patients into the hands of the bungling and incompetent scabs. The government has responded by sending call up papers to Territorial Army members. Meanwhile Thatcher is pushing new anti-union legislation to victimise leaders of unofficial strikes.

One ambulance worker pointed out that "she could earn more for the same hours stacking shelves at a new DIY store on the outskirts of Brighton" (*Independent*, 3 November). She takes home £500 a month, including 18 hours overtime. Ambulance workers simply cannot afford to stay in their jobs. Many have trained for years as paramedics—making that crucial difference of a heart attack victim surviving long enough to get to the hospital. In a country where disasters like King's Cross and Clapham Junction are endemic, nearly the entire population sympathises with emergency workers who have so valiantly fought to save the lives of those the government's neglect

of basic services has put at risk. And not only has the government kept pay increases in the health services well below the rate of inflation, its attack on the ambulance workers is part of its drive to destroy the NHS through piecemeal privatisation.

But the leaderships of NUPE and other unions are not fighting to win. As the *Sunday Correspondent* (5 November) pointed out about Roger Poole, chief negotiator for the unions: "In the space of a week he has offered the Department of Health a no-strike deal, pleaded for government-sponsored arbitration and has now ruled out a strike—even if the government imposes its 6.5 per cent deal."

With "leadership" like this, the ambulance workers have their backs against the wall, as has the whole working class since the TUC/Labour traitors sabotaged the miners strike. Now the TUC offers token fund col-

lections for the ambulance workers while the Labour Party—eager to demonstrate anew to the bosses that if it becomes the governing party it will shackle the unions—counsels "don't strike". No to arbitration—strike to win! In the face of concerted government union-busting, health workers, firefighters and other unions should be mobilised alongside ambulance workers in joint strike action. No alliance with the racist, scab cops! Smash government anti-union laws through hard class struggle!

The dilapidated and threatened NHS cannot provide decent basic medical care. The advanced state of decay of this society renders meaningless Labourite patchwork reforms. We need a revolutionary party to lead the struggle for a workers government that will expropriate the bourgeoisie and establish a planned economy that can provide decent wages and free quality health care for all.

Letter...

(Continued from page 2)

in the 1970s. The B&ICO acted as press agent for the UWC during the strike, distributing daily strike bulletins in Belfast's Orange strongholds. Their propaganda glorified Carson and Craig who in 1912-14 threatened a military insurrection against the British government if "Home Rule" were imposed. Like McGouran they tried to obscure the strike's sectarian image, emphasising Protestant opposition to forcible reunification under the Council of Ireland. Unlike much of the fake left, B&ICO recognised that the Protestants would not go voluntarily into a capitalist "United Ireland", but lacking a genuinely communist perspective they flipped over to tail plebeian Unionism.

McGouran's rejection of a revolutionary class perspective leads him to seek a solution within the framework of British imperialism. He advocates reliance on the democratic good graces of the "United Kingdom", wherein the people of Northern Ireland should plead for "full civil rights". We can think of a lot of people who would find this hard to swallow, including the Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six or the relatives of the Gibraltar Three. Furthermore, having recognised that the Protestants are heavily armed and would resist reunification with the South, McGouran goes on to argue that "If the troops left tomorrow there might not be a quiet taking over by the 'bourgeois clerical Republic.'" This is overly optimistic to say the least.

There are a number of possible "solutions" to Northern Ireland. The only certainty is that British military occupation will only lead to a more miserable denouement. When they get out a number of possibilities are posed. There could be the consolidation of a real Protestant nation, based on a sectarian, communalist blood-bath in the Irish Catholic community; or they could be wiped out; or else they could, in the context of a revolutionary working-class mobilisation, transcend these divisions. It is the latter course we communists seek to bring about.

The present six county enclave is a sectarian, Orange statelet which guarantees economic and political privileges for the Protestants. We demand an end to all discrimination against Catholics, eg in jobs and housing. We also understand that these demands must be linked to the

revolutionary transitional programme, must transcend the bounds of capitalism if they are to mean anything other than a more even distribution of poverty. The Protestants are not a labour aristocracy; they are a trans-class grouping. With or without the Catholic population Northern Ireland has one of the highest unemployment rates in Britain, housing for the whole of the working-class population is amongst the worst in Europe. The fact that the living standards of Catholics and Protestants is roughly equal, and together amongst the lowest in Britain, facilitates a proletarian solution.

We oppose forcible reunification and have no binding commitment to any particular unity. The Protestants of Ulster are a separate community, defined largely negatively. They are no longer part of the Scottish or English nations and certainly not part of the Irish Catholic nation. The state in the South is indeed clerical and reactionary: abortion is a crime against the constitution and carries a life sentence, divorce is illegal as are some forms of contraception and there is vicious anti-homosexual repression. Furthermore, the clerical state proscribes the reading of certain books and in fact mitigates against all the good things coming out of the 1640 English Revolution. We are for breaking the constitutional tie with the Church and its practices! An estimated third of the population in the South lives in poverty and massive emigration of the youth is endemic. Working-class based struggle against the bourgeoisie in the South is urgently necessary and would moreover assist in a proletarian solution to the Ulster problem. We raise the call for a workers republic in Ireland, part of a socialist federation of the British Isles, deliberately leaving open the question of the future role of the Protestants.

To take another situation of interpenetrated peoples—the Palestinians and Hebrew-speaking people in Israel and the occupied territories—the slogan "for a democratic secular Palestine" is raised by Palestinian nationalists. The Zionist state does have in common with the Southern Irish Republic a religion central to its constitution (as do various Islamic states) and is a monstrous oppressor nation against the Palestinians. But for the nationalists, this slogan means a reversal of the terms of oppression, the denial of the existence of the Hebrew-speaking people as a nation. A truly democratic secular Palestine requires the smashing of the local powers, the Arab regimes as well as the Zionist state, through working-class

struggle. As in Ireland, all "solutions" under capitalism—mass forced population transfers, further partition—can only bring untold misery for the masses of the region.

While the world bourgeoisie likes to make much of the fact that in the Stalinist-ruled deformed workers states the "leading role of the Party" was written into the constitution, the capitalist world is riddled with clerical states run by popes, imams, etc. This underlines the thoroughly reactionary, retrograde character of capitalism in its death agony. The bourgeoisie in its revolutionary age fought to create democratic secular states which



Army terror in Ireland.

is something vastly superior as a springboard for proletarian revolution than to have rival gangs of mullahs slugging it out in Ulster.

The nationalists from both sides of the sectarian divide in Northern Ireland have mobilised to derail joint class struggle whenever it was posed. And both sides have hard men. We defend against the state the IRA in the event of attacks on the British army or representatives of imperialist rule (Lord Mountbatten, Airey Neave). But we give no support to their nationalist political programme. We condemn as anti-working class crimes acts of terror against civilians like that at Enniskillen. We do not think that indiscriminate bombers of pubs, Loyalist or nationalist, should be walking around the day before or the day after. Integral to our perspective is the need for programmatically based anti-sectarian workers militias to combat Orange and Green

terror and imperialist rampage. As we said in "Theses on Ireland" (*Spartacist* no 24, Autumn 1977):

"Such militias will need a broad and strong programmatic basis if they are not to be derailed or coopted. They cannot develop just out of trade unionism but fundamentally require the existence of a strong and authoritative revolutionary cadre. Each militia unit would need at least one member of each community and the presence and strong influence of trained revolutionary cadre. Consequently, the demand for an anti-sectarian workers militia is closely linked to the growth of a Leninist party based on a developed revolutionary program."

The reactionary logic of McGouran's position is clearly expressed in the fact that his sympathy lies not with the victims but the bloody perpetrators of Orange sectarian terror, which he euphemistically refers to as "working class soldiers and UDR and RUC personnel"—those paramilitary forces integrally linked to the British army. The fact of these links does not mean there is an identity of interests between British imperialism and the Ulster Protestants. For the British bourgeoisie, the border is anachronistic from the standpoint of its long term interests. (Thus the NATO-brokered Anglo-Irish Accord—a fragile, often fractious, attempt to address this.) However, given the hostility of the Protestants to unification and the very real likelihood of bloody civil war, British imperialism tries to continue business as usual, investing as little as possible and keeping the lid on through military occupation (carried out under a Labour government, of course). *Troops out now! Smash the RUC/UDR!*

We oppose the oppression of one people by another. In the case of Northern Ireland, a complex situation of interpenetrated peoples, all solutions under capitalism can only be squalid, oppressive and unequal. The best solution is that of those with a vision of a workers republic—against both the Green bourgeoisie and the Orange order. ■

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Guildford Four finally released

British "justice" means racist frame-ups

Almost fifteen nightmarish years after their frame-up convictions for the 1974 Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings, Gerard Conlon, Carole Richardson, Paul Hill and Patrick Armstrong—the Guildford Four—were finally released from prison in mid-October. Following hard on the "revelations" of British army and police collusion with murderous Protestant paramilitary groups, the truth is now in the open: three young Irish men and an English woman have had a good part of their lives ruined in British prisons for a crime they did not commit.

Lawyers for the four say they now intend to press for compensation. Thus far the Home Office has agreed to make immediate interim compensation of £50,000 each to Carole Richardson, Patrick Armstrong and Gerard Conlon; Paul Hill who is on bail pending an appeal against another conviction is to receive £10,000. Millions would not give the four their lost years. Nor will jailing the criminals—including those highly placed—who framed them up, beat their confessions out of them, suppressed evidence to keep them behind bars. But elementary justice demands at least that.

With Anglo-Irish relations considerably strained over the open UDR/RUC/British army collaboration with the Protestant death squads and the prospect of lengthy appeal proceedings around the

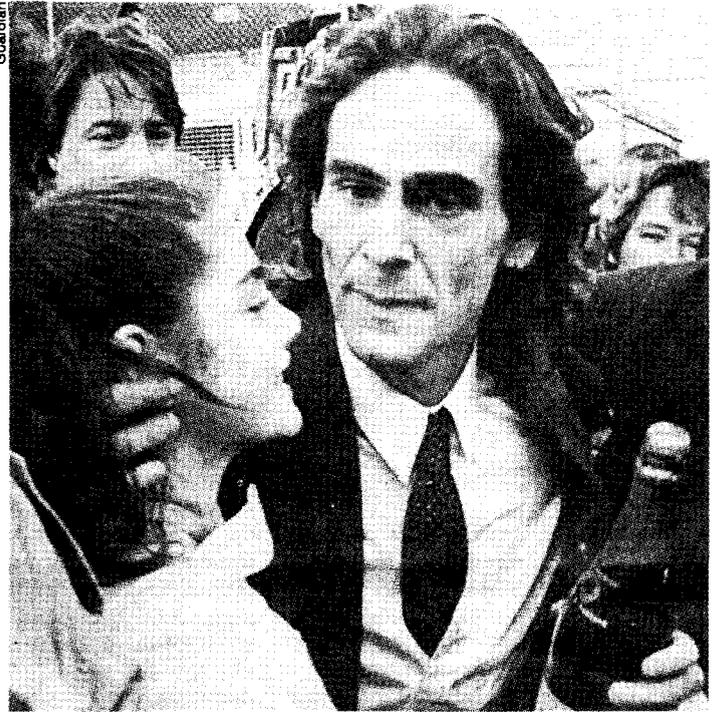
Guildford case raking up more of the dirt, the British state has decided to cut its losses and release the Guildford Four. In a transparent attempt at "damage limitation" the capitalist politicians and their media hirelings are anxious to portray the frame-up of the Guildford Four as the work of a handful of corrupt cops in the Surrey constabulary. As Sarah Helm wrote in the *Independent* (14 November) "watching the Crown in all its guises, preparing to save its skin, shedding the blame on its minions, is not a very edifying sight".

That, in order to sweeten strained relations with Dublin, the British state admitted its grotesque injustice in this case has been portrayed in the media as a vindication of the innate "fairness" of this rotten system. Thus the *Guardian* (19 October) pontificated:

"That the Four should have wasted 15 years of their lives in prison because of sentences now officially acknowledged as unsustainable is a grievous matter, and many of those who have condemned it as a blight on the reputation of British justice have every right to do so. But that right does not belong to the Provisional IRA or to those who condone, defend and sustain them. The British system of justice, defective though it has been here, does at least leave open the prospect of wrongs being righted."

The British system of "justice" was

Paul Hill celebrates his release with his daughter after 15 years in British prisons for a crime he did not commit.



aptly summarised in a Cormac cartoon in *An Phoblacht/Republican News*—"innocent until proved Irish". While sections of the bourgeoisie (including Thatcher and her new Home Secretary Waddington) bay for the reintroduction of the death penalty, the Guildford case has become a *cause célèbre* among those who oppose it. Certainly had the death penalty existed in 1975 the Guildford Four would have been murdered by the state. It is necessary to oppose any attempts to reinstate that barbarity. But the capitalist state does not require the death penalty to carry out executions such as the SAS murder of Sean Savage, Mairead Farrell and Daniel McCann in Gibraltar in March 1988. Nor for the murder of Bobby Sands and nine other hunger strikers.

Of course the British state has always known that the Guildford Four could not possibly have planted the bombs that killed six people in two Surrey pubs in 1974. Like the Birmingham pub bombings, the Guildford bombings were a crime against the working class, acts of indiscriminate terror which Marxists condemn. Unlike attacks against military targets and representatives of British imperialism, these nationalist outrages are indefensible crimes from the standpoint of the working class. But the Irish people locked away were innocent victims, vulnerable people living on the fringes of society and selected for sacrifice in a cold, calculating fashion.

All four were convicted on the sole evidence of their own "confessions" extracted under torture and later retracted in court. Gerry Conlon was told that an "accident" would be arranged for his mother and sister if he did not co-operate. The testimony of Charles Burke, who

saw Conlon in his hostel in Kilburn on the night of the bombings, was withheld from the defence by the Surrey cops. Carole Richardson also had a perfect alibi. She had spent the evening at a rock concert with her friend Lisa Astin and a Newcastle man she had just met—Frank Johnson. When Frank Johnson walked into a police station to give a statement he was himself immediately arrested and charged with murder until he was willing to admit that he was lying! The IRA unit which claimed responsibility for the Guildford bombings was actually arrested in December 1975 following a siege at a house in Balcombe Street, London. The Balcombe Street unit gave meticulous details of the bombing of the Horse and Groom and Seven Stars pubs in Guildford and swore that the four people convicted were completely innocent.

On his release, a defiant Paul Hill noted that "The police knew from day one they had arrested innocent people. It was a method of terrorising the Irish community." Speaking to ITN, Gerard Conlon said "I feel bitterness towards the judiciary, towards the police who framed me, who fabricated evidence, but I have nothing but time and respect for all the English people who helped and there have been so, so many of them" (*Guardian*, 20 October).

In the Irish Republic, news of the four's release was greeted with widespread enthusiasm. The Irish prime minister Charles Haughey is now calling for a review of the Birmingham Six convictions. But despite such occasional gestures of "concern", the utterly venal Irish bourgeoisie refused for years to offer any support to the Guildford Four. Today the

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Monique Blanchet (Report)

Winston Silcott's father protesting the frame-up trial of the Broadwater Farm Three.

Free the Birmingham Six, Broadwater Farm Three!