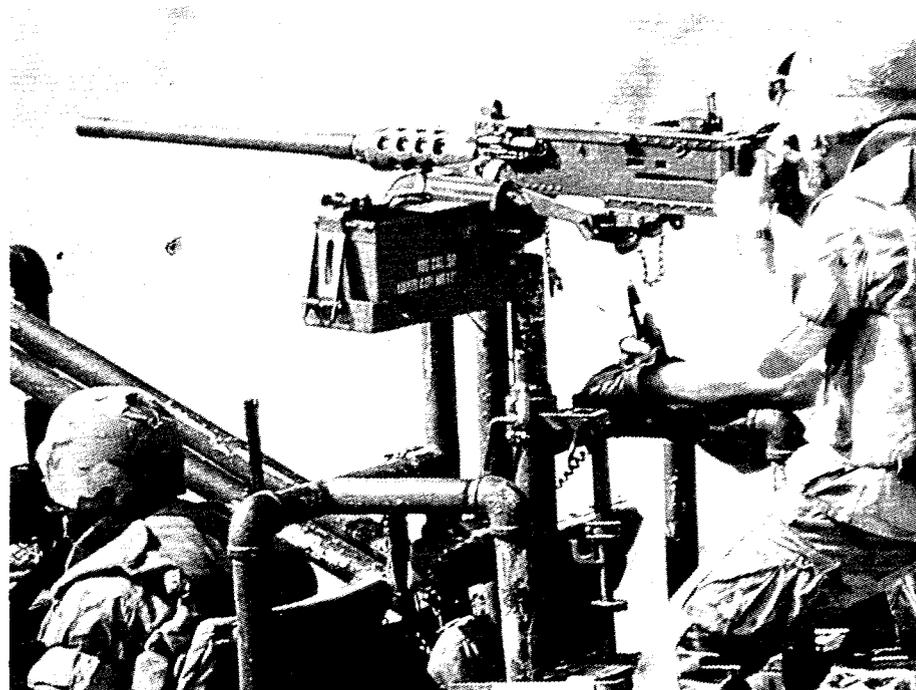


US/Britain plot mass murder in Gulf



Nabil Ismail-AFP



Yves Debay/Gamma

Pro-Saddam demonstrators (left) burn US flag in Jordan. US marines with machine guns prepare imperialist bloodbath against Iraqi people. Arab working masses can resist imperialist aggression and bring down the sheiks, colonels and dictators. US/British workers have power to defeat imperialism from within.

Defend Iraq against imperialist war threat!

As the imperialist build-up in the Gulf continues, Bush, Thatcher & Co are shifting the emphasis from diplomacy and the UN trade embargo to ever more loudly beating the drums for war. Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd reiterated that "Within a matter of a few weeks" a decision will be made on "whether the military option will have to be prepared" (*Guardian*, 12 October). And speaking at the Tory party conference in Bournemouth, Thatcher made clear that if the US strikes, the British imperialists will be shoulder to shoulder with Washington. The Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock has likewise offered servile support to war against Iraq, with Tony Benn and some assorted "lefts" insisting only that such imperialist aggression be carried out under the flag of the United Nations.

The International Communist League calls for defence of Iraq against the imperialist invasion, which spells devastation and subjugation of the Arab peoples, and for the Iraqi working people to bring down the bloody nationalist strongman Saddam Hussein. In the imperialist countries, we insist that the defeat of voracious US imperialism and its allies on the battlefield can only aid the class struggle against the racist, capitalist system at "home". Break the blockade of Iraq—US/Britain out of the Persian Gulf!

The region itself is meanwhile a seething cauldron. On 8 October, Israeli troops

fired on Palestinian demonstrators at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, massacring twenty-one and wounding over a hundred. A general strike was observed throughout East Jerusalem for at least three days and large areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip remained under army curfew. Indeed, Bush and his allies have unwittingly unlocked the Middle East Pandora's box. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians are looking to get even with Zionist Israel for driving them out of their homeland and resentful at Washington's double standard regarding "aggression". In Jordan, Palestinians form a majority and are itching to fight for Iraq as well as overthrow the mealy-mouthed King of Jordan who butchered their people in 1970. Palestinians in the West Bank have taken as good coin Saddam Hussein's statements of support, staging a pro-Iraq general strike on the West Bank in late September.

The UN—which has served as the vehicle for the imperialist war mobilisation against Iraq—dithered and prevaricated over the wording of a resolution on the bloody Zionist massacre in Jerusalem. When the question of maintaining the "alliance" against Iraq and at the same time "not isolating" the US' Israeli ally is a deep concern for the warmakers in Washington, the UN imperialist den of thieves has shown itself once again to be an enemy of the oppressed Palestinian

masses.

All is not well with the other components of the imperialist-led alliance against Iraq. In Cairo on 12 October Rifa'at al-Mahjoub, the powerful Speaker of the Egyptian parliament, was shot dead in his car in full daylight by four unknown assassins. Mahjoub was the second most important man in the government after Egypt's President Mubarak, who has sent thousands of Egyptian troops to join the US-led forces in Saudi Arabia. Although it is not known who assassinated al-Mahjoub, there is already talk of mass arrests in the aftermath. The Mubarak regime could well use the shooting as a pretext for crushing internal opposition to its wretched role on behalf of the imperialist war drive.

War plans

"If we have a pretext, a casus belli, we go", one "senior White House aide" confided to RW Apple of the *New York Times* (27 September). Meanwhile, a "senior officer" in Britain's 7th Armoured Brigade, assigned to the Gulf, "claims that if UK forces are attacked with chemical gas by Iraqi troops, they will retaliate with battlefield nuclear weapons" (*Observer*, 30 September). This is no empty threat: the 7th Armoured (the Desert Rats) is equipped with nuclear artillery shells and nuclear-tipped Lance missiles, and British Tornado strike fighters al-

ready deployed can deliver 50-kiloton nuclear bombs. The *Sunday Correspondent* of 30 September also carried a report from MI6 that war with Iraq was weeks away.

Lieutenant General Sir Peter de Labilliere, formerly a commander of the bloodthirsty hitmen of the SAS, told reporters in London on the eve of his departure for Saudi: "I suggest you keep an eye on your newspapers between November and Christmas or January." De Labilliere should know what he's talking about, as he will have "operational control over British air, land and sea forces in the region" (*The Island*, 7 October). Thus far 18,000 British troops have been committed to the Gulf.

What the imperialists are planning is premeditated mass murder. Former US Air Force Chief of Staff General Michael Dugan let the cat out of the bag, and got sacked for it, when he bragged that "downtown Baghdad" would be a prime target of the massive bombing campaign to come. This would mean something like 100,000 people killed. On a scale from the US invasion of Panama to the genocidal A-bombing of Hiroshima, the degree of mass destruction and death being planned will approach the latter (and if any hostages get in the way it's just too bad as far as Bush et al are concerned).

Bush and the Pentagon war planners
continued on page 9

Louis Sinclair: a friend and Trotsky scholar dies

A memorial meeting was held in Glasgow on 28 September to honour the life and work of Louis Sinclair. Louis Sinclair devoted the bulk of his adult life to collecting and cataloguing the writings of Leon Trotsky. His two-volume bibliography of Trotsky's writings in the English language — published by the Hoover Institute, and republished in an updated version by Gower Publishing Company in Vermont — remains a standard reference. At the time of his death he was working on an index of pre-1940 internal bulletins of the Trotskyist movement. In single-mindedly struggling to preserve Trotsky's written legacy, Louis Sinclair's pioneering archival work has greatly facilitated our access to and knowledge of vital questions of revolutionary strategy and tactics.

The tributes from members of the International Communist League, printed below, were read out at the memorial meeting. They were among several dozen testimonials received from around the world from socialists, archivists, friends—many of them long-time participants in the workers movement whose appreciation of Louis Sinclair extended over several decades. The main address was given by Charles van Gelderen, a supporter of the United Secretariat, who first met Louis when he was a member of the Revolutionary Socialist League in 1937.

I wish to pay tribute to Comrade Louis Sinclair on behalf of the International Communist League. Shortly after we set up a branch of the Spartacist League in Glasgow, I had the privilege of meeting him. We were able to assist him in his very valuable work on a couple of occasions. I last saw him in the Southern General the week before he died.

Louis was the world's foremost bibliog-

rapher of Trotsky, yet he was completely unpretentious. What a breath of fresh air compared to others who claim the title! While Louis militantly avoided getting involved in programmatic debates among those who claim the mantle of Trotskyism today, he also militantly refused to blunt the edges when dealing with Trotsky's historic polemics. Louis's latest project, an immense and extensively cross-refer-

enced index of Trotskyist internal bulletins to 1940, is invaluable. We in the ICL certainly hope that this will be published, or at least made available to scholars of the Trotskyist movement.

Louis retained a very keen interest in seeing Trotsky's works becoming available in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. I remember his delight when, on my return from East Germany in January, I told him we made a Russian edition of *Revolution Betrayed* available to Soviet soldiers there. He was even more pleased to discover that this edition was not one he knew about, so it was duly added to the Trotsky collection here at the University. We were also pleased to provide him with some Trotsky articles published recently in Hungary, which again were of interest to him.

Comrade Sinclair was indeed a reserve of Marxism, as reflected in his dedication to his work and in his worldview. He was a link to the past, a source of inspiration, and he left us a precious legacy for the future. I feel it is an honour to have known him, although for me personally and for our Glasgow branch this was over a very brief period of time. We will certainly miss him.

Eibhlin McDonald

On behalf of Louis Sinclair's friends in the Glasgow branch, and those many others in the Spartacist tendency interna-

Prometheus Research Library
New York
22 September 1990

Glasgow

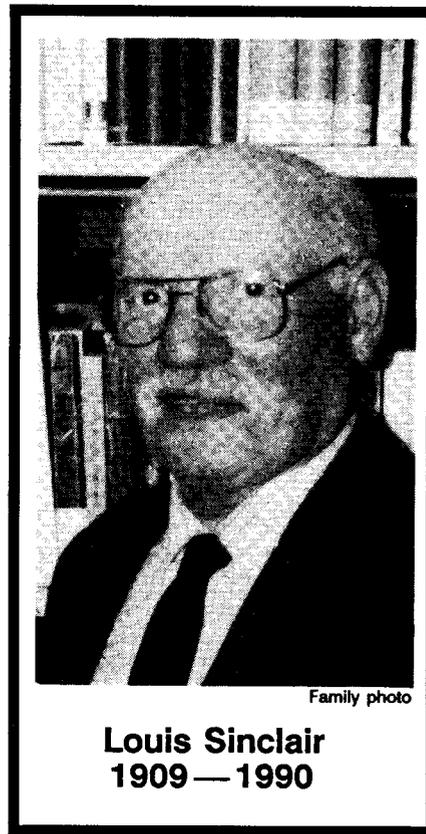
Dear Comrades,

I want to share with you my thoughts and feelings on the occasion of this memorial meeting to Louis Sinclair.

I first met comrade Sinclair in 1958 while he was visiting San Francisco, principally to work in the archives of the Hoover Institute at Stanford. At that time, he also went through my modest library, and I had the pleasure of his finding two Trotsky source items for inclusion in his definitive bibliography of Trotsky material in English.

He was a warm and genial man then and remained so in all our subsequent contacts. Over the years, our correspondence became more regular and frequent. I went to Glasgow to meet with him, and he proudly showed me some of the treasures from his Trotsky holdings.

When we set up the Prometheus Re-



Family photo

Louis Sinclair
1909 — 1990

search Library, committed in part to the same work in which he had spent his life, we regularly routed to him anything we thought might be of interest to him. In his last years comrade Sinclair, militantly not involved in current affairs of the movement, corresponded with both myself and George Breitman who was the architect of the English-language *Writings* of Trotsky and the writings and speeches of James P. Cannon. This helped bring comrade Breitman and me together on certain archival projects.

Fortunately for our Glasgow comrades, they were able to meet sometimes with Louis Sinclair and come to appreciate the immense reserve of erudite Marxism that he was.

Louis Sinclair's life work was overwhelmingly financed by his own meager wages and then pension as a retired Scottish school teacher. Through much of his adult life, he literally singlehandedly fought to preserve the truth and therefore the integrity of Leon Trotsky and his work.

I deeply regret knowing very little of Louis Sinclair's earlier involvement in the Scottish Trotskyist movement. I believe it would illuminate and add a dimension to our understanding of the history of our movement on this island. But he left this a closed chapter.

Truly the passing of Louis Sinclair is a sad occasion. One does not easily imagine that another like him will soon arise. I regret that circumstance and geography kept us from closer collaboration.

In deepest solidarity with your meeting and regrets at my absence,

Jim Robertson



TROTSKY

The pro-imperialist Labour Party

At the outbreak of the second imperialist war Trotsky addressed the Indian workers urging them to seize the opportunities that would arise. The colonies have mostly gained independence, only to suffer an oppressed neo-colonial status, subject to imperialist domination and exploitation. Bred on a diet of imperial crumbs, the Labour Party today over Iraq strives to play



LENIN

the same role in destroying any opposition to imperialist mastery as when Westminster ruled its colonial empire.

...World imperialism is in decline. The condition of all imperialist nations daily becomes more difficult while the contradictions between them become more and more aggravated. Monstrous armaments devour an ever greater share of national incomes. The imperialists can no longer make serious concessions either to their own toiling masses or to the colonies. On the contrary, they are compelled to resort to an ever more bestial exploitation. It is precisely in this that capitalism's death agony is expressed. To retain their colonies, markets and concessions, from Germany, Italy and Japan, the London government stands ready to mow down millions of people. Is it possible, without losing one's senses, to pin any hopes that this greedy and savage financial oligarchy will voluntarily free India?

True enough, a government of the so-called Labour Party may replace the Tory government. But this will alter nothing. The Labour Party—as witness its entire past and present programme—is in no way distinguished from the Tories on the colonial question. The Labour Party in reality expresses not the interests of the working class, but only the interests of the British labour bureaucracy and labour aristocracy. It is to this stratum that the bourgeoisie can toss juicy morsels, due to the fact that they themselves ruthlessly exploit the colonies, above all India. The British labour bureaucracy—in the Labour Party as well as in the trade unions—is directly interested in the exploitation of colonies. It has not the slightest desire to think of the emancipation of India. All these gentlemen—Major Atlee, Sir Walter Citrine and Co.—are ready at any moment to brand the revolutionary movement of the Indian people as 'betrayal', as aid to Hitler and Mussolini and to resort to military measures for its suppression.

—Trotsky's *Writings on Britain*, Volume 3, "An Open Letter to the Workers of India", August-October 1939

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For a Socialist United States of Europe!

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Fake left bow to Benn's social chauvinism

Break the blockade of Iraq!

War is an acid test for all tendencies and parties within the working class movement. Today, with as many as a quarter of a million US troops stationed in the Persian Gulf region—a mobilisation on a scale not seen since the height of the Vietnam War—the stage is set for a new world war. The United States is moving to seize control of the world's oil supplies, then to dole them out to their economically more dynamic rivals. Thatcher, with the loyal Labour lackeys in tow, has come on board with the US oil pirates. Contrary to the murderous hypocrisy of Thatcher and Bush, this imperialist military build-up has nothing to do with "resisting aggression" against "poor little Kuwait". Indeed, of all the pretexts for imperialist looting used by would-be conquerors, this surely ranks among the flimsiest.

We in the Spartacist League/Britain, along with our comrades internationally, unequivocally defend Iraq against the most dangerous imperialist power in history. We demand the British, US and other imperialist forces get out now. *Break the blockade!* Against those such as CND and the Labour "left" Tony Benn who plead for the blue berets of the UN to provide the figleaf for the US-led aggression, we say the UN is now and always has been an imperialist den of thieves!

Gorbachev's policy of grovelling appeasement of imperialism has greatly emboldened the warmakers in the Pentagon. The fact is that Cuba and Vietnam would have both been turned into irradiated rubble had it not been for the rough nuclear parity of the Soviet degenerated workers state. Now, Bush & Co see no limits from that quarter on their bloody-minded drive to make the world safe for the feudalism of the oil sheiks and the profiteering of Big Oil. A massive armada and expeditionary force is less than 700 miles from the Soviet southern border: imperialism's guns are not aimed

only at Iraq but at their main target for the last 70 years—the homeland of the October Revolution. USSR: Rescind the arms embargo against Iraq!

To struggle against imperialism, it is necessary to fight against imperialism, the capitalist rulers and their Labour lackeys at "home". The working people and oppressed must be mobilised not behind but against their "own" bourgeoisie, for imperialist defeat in the event of war and the defence of Iraq. Mass, militant demonstrations, political strike action, the overthrow of bourgeois rule: these are the weapons of a class fight against a Gulf war. The task of revolutionaries is, as VI Lenin wrote in 1915, "to raise the banner of revolutionary Marxism, to tell the workers firmly and definitely how we regard imperialist wars, to issue the watchword of mass revolutionary action, i.e., transform the epoch of imperialist wars into the beginning of the epoch of civil wars" (*Socialism and War*).

This has nothing to do with trailing along behind Tony Benn—who is in the camp of imperialism. Benn's minor tactical difference with Thatcher/Kinnock et al is from his standpoint a more "rational" imperialist policy. His motion in Parliament is explicit: "whilst fully supporting the economic sanctions imposed against Iraq by the United Nations Security Council and the Resolution authorising the arrangements for enforcing these sanctions", it goes on to call "upon Her Majesty's Government to make a clear and unequivocal statement that it will not commit British forces to offensive military operations against Iraq that have not been explicitly authorised by a Resolution passed by the Security Council". Remember that it was a Labour government which sent troops to Korea to join the US in the "UN's" counterrevolutionary war against the Korean workers and peasants.

The positions of our reformist and centrist opponents on the British left include outright social chauvinism and

schemes to pressurise the Labour "left" of Benn's ilk. Not one of the various "anti-war" committees in existence take a side militarily with Iraq against imperialist attack. There is much talk of a "broad anti-war movement" including "all forces prepared to fight the imperialist war—whatever their confused, or pacifist positions on other issues" (*Socialist Action*, Autumn 1990). What this means in practice, as we shall show, is the derailing of genuine opposition to an imperialist war in the Gulf into the Labour "left's" social chauvinism.

The *Morning Star* stands out as a particularly craven mouthpiece when it says "UN control is key demand" and goes on to insist that: "At this moment, it is important to put all efforts into this demand and not to be sidetracked by calls for the withdrawal of US forces which leave out of account Saddam Hussein's forces and their potential for further aggressive acts" (*Morning Star*, 21 August).

The Labour Party residents of the Militant have, simply put, taken a dive over the question of the Gulf. They have done virtually nothing while wallowing in the worst sort of parliamentary cretinism and social patriotism. They write that "Pressure should be exerted on the Labour leaders to lead a campaign for a general election when the British working class will be called upon to say no, not just on the issue of war, but on the poll tax, the NHS and every Tory attack" (*Militant*, 28 September). As if putting Kinnock—at least as bellicose as any Tory—into No 10 Downing Street was a way to say "no" to war! Meanwhile, Militant-supported MPs Terry Fields and Dave Nellist have maintained a conspicuous quietude.

Militant's position on the Gulf, not least its refusal to call for the military defence of Iraq, is of a piece with its treacherous position on the Falklands War. The *Militant* has itself recalled its line recently: "If necessary a democratic

and socialist Britain would be prepared to wage war to overthrow the Argentine junta, not just to liberate the Falklands (!) but to assist the Argentine workers to establish a democratic and socialist Argentina" (*Militant*, 28 September). Militant in fact was to the right of Benn and the Labour "lefts" in opposing the call for the withdrawal of the British forces from the Falklands and in its advocacy that British workers black trade with Argentina. But this time it is not the squalid Falklands War—in which neither the workers of Britain nor Argentina had any stake—but a massive imperialist oil grab in which the workers of the world have a very large stake in the defeat of imperialism.

Another grouping which refuses to take a side is the eclectic Stalinoids of *Leninist* who write: "Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait and the US threat of war is a world Falklands... We are for the revolutionary defeat of both sides" (*Leninist*, 31 August). The *Leninist* has gone so far as to demand "Imperialism out of the Gulf! Iraq out of Kuwait!" From the standpoint of the working class it matters not one whit whether Kuwait—that oil-well turned into a state by British colonialism—is controlled by Saddam Hussein or the filthy rich Kuwaiti or Saudi monarchs. Kuwait itself is an artificial statelet whose working population is comprised in its overwhelming majority by migrant workers from the other Arab states, from the Palestinian population, from South Asia. These hideously exploited people have no rights; of the two million in Kuwait only 70,000 men have the right to vote for a "parliament" which is dissolved as soon as it meets.

"Liberating" Kuwait is the imperialist pretext for war in the region. In *Socialism and War* Lenin argued against pseudo-socialists that:

"If tomorrow, Morocco were to declare
continued on page 10

Spartacists protest CND/Benn's pro-UN rally

LONDON, 25 September—A spirited protest by the Spartacist League greeted a public meeting called under the slogans: "Support the United Nations! No War in the Gulf!" featuring Tony Benn and CND's Bruce Kent. Our placards and chants of "United Nations—Nothing More—Figleaf for Imperialist War!" "Tony Benn/CND—Frontmen for the Bourgeoisie!" "From Suez and Ireland to Vietnam—Labour Party: we know which side you're on!" and "Break the Blockade! Iraq Needs Soviet Aid!" were in stark contrast to the grovelling support to Benn's UN bandwagon by the British fake left.

Sales of *Workers Hammer* were brisk before and after the event with our headline calling for "US, British oil pirates out of the Persian Gulf! Break the blockade of Iraq!" The bourgeois "pacifists" of the CND physically excluded Spartacist supporters from the event, fearful of the prospect of proletarian internationalism intruding on their

objectively pro-war rally. However, this attempt to stifle the communists failed.

Following Benn's address, a Spartacist spokesman took the floor: "Anton Chekhov said when a revolver appears in the first act on stage, it will generally be used in the second. The revolver that is in the Middle East today was presented under the guise of the United Nations. The United Nations was used as a pretext for imperialist war moves in the Gulf... The United Nations has not ever been anything other, and will not ever be anything other, than an instrument for imperialist war against the oppressed and the workers of this world." This simple statement of fact brought the house down, with Benn/CND supporters shouting down the intervention from the podium and slow-clapping from the floor.

But many in the audience, fed up with the social-patriotic drivel from the podium, applauded our intervention. The meeting was closed down



minutes later after a Workers Power spokesman belatedly attempted to follow our denunciation with remarks of his own. CNDer Bruce Kent belatedly: "This meeting has now been hijacked in the most stupid possible

way." But those who want to hijack the opposition to war in the Gulf under the flag of the UN and Labour were served notice that the Spartacist League will oppose their treachery down the line.

Militant says: vote Kinnock for war leader

Ashley Ashwood-Financial Times

Pick up a copy of the *Militant* and you'll read that the main struggle of the British working class in the face of the Gulf crisis is to make the unspeakable Kinnock "lead a fight-back against Thatcher, against her poll tax and against war in the Gulf". In one brain-numbing article after the other, *Militant* retails that the Gulf crisis—which poses massive slaughter of Arab peoples and thermonuclear war—should be put in perspective behind the "far more powerful factors" of the domestic economic situation and made part of a campaign for a general election.

As we point out in the accompanying article ("Break the Blockade of Iraq!", page 3) *Militant* stands out as a particularly virulent example of Labourite chauvinism. *Militant's* call for a general election to put the warmongering Kinnock into government—as well as its refusal to defend Iraq militarily—constitute treacherous backhanded support to the imperialist war drive.

When the concrete practical task is to break the blockade of Iraq and, in the likely event of a shooting war, militarily side with Iraq, *Militant* advocates neither. Instead, it is at pains to make clear how much it is opposed to "the bloodstained Iraqi dictatorship", embracing the call for self-determination for the Kuwaiti statelet and empathising with the undifferentiated chauvinist response to the seizure of British hostages. Incredibly, *Militant* (31 August) whines of the imperialist aggressors: "And would they pass the benefits of military success on to us? Not on your life!"

Genuine Trotskyists insist on the difference between political support and military defence. Thus, while standing forthrightly against the imperialist embargo and military build-up in the region, we have consistently pointed out that the Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein has been the purveyor of anti-Communist, anti-worker, anti-Kurdish terror, much assisted by Western imperialism. *Militant* in contrast employs its denunciations of Hussein as a means to evade the duty of military defence of Iraq against imperialism.

Not accidentally, *Militant* has evoked its wretched Falklands war position—a flagrant demonstration of its fundamental servility to British imperialism which had nothing to do with the revolutionary defeatist attitude called for in that squalid diversionary war. Taking "into account the outlook of the mass of British workers" (*Militant*, 28 September) in favour of the Falklands adventure, *Militant* not only denounced the call for the withdrawal of the British forces as "pacifist" but labelled as the "most monstrous absurdity" the call for the defeat of the Task Force (*Militant International Review*, June 1982).

Now the *Militant* (28 September) recalls:

"At the same time we pointed out that Marxists are not pacifists. If necessary a democratic and socialist Britain would be prepared to wage war to overthrow the Argentine junta, not just to liberate the Falklands but to assist the Argentine workers to establish a democratic and socialist Argentina."

Since these reformists think you can get "socialism" with a couple of enabling acts in parliament, the meaning here is clear. It is too embarrassing to support Thatcher's war, but with a little bit of "democratic and socialist" tinkering, they think it would be fine for Britain to "liberate" Kuwait and "assist" in Iraq. That's what calling for a general election to put Labour in office is all about. This fits neatly with the *Militant's* talk about the capitalist state's armed bodies of men, and in particular the British volunteer army, as



Jonathon Ellis Rex features



(Left) RAF Jaguar ground-attack jets; (right) Neil Kinnock strives to outdo "Butcher of the Belgrano" Thatcher as war leader.

"workers in uniform". Give the 7th Armoured (once part of what Ted Grant affectionately called "Our Eighth Army") a red rose emblem and teach the brigade band to play the Red Flag and *Militant* will be happy.

The *Militant* editorial board appears to have noted that there is not the same wave of chauvinist xenophobia as at the time of the Falklands/Malvinas war, and that consequently a few adjustments are required. However, sections among its supporters are so steeped in Labourite social patriotism that they worry that "Say no to Thatcher's Gulf War" comes perilously close to get out of the Gulf! *Militant* (28 September) explains why it is now permissible to demand "the complete withdrawal of imperialist troops from the area".

In Grant's oh-so-polite editorial on the role of the UN (*Militant*, 14 September) we read that "unfortunately" Tony Benn supports UN sanctions. "But," Grant writes, "effective, united sanctions are extremely unlikely. Other countries will break them surreptitiously..." Presumably the problem with this "capitalist solution" is that it is not "effective" (especially as "other countries" cannot be relied upon to play cricket!)

This smarmy, sterile pretence to Marxism in the service of Labourite social chauvinism is nothing new for *Militant*. It opposes the elementary demand for the withdrawal of the British army from Northern Ireland. In Scotland any expression of the legitimate national grievances of the Scottish people is dismissed as bourgeois nationalism, all in the service of marshalling votes for the British chauvinist Labour Party. A speech (reprinted recently in *Militant*, 21 September) about the British and French invasion of Egypt

in 1956, by Ted Grant, *Militant's* answer to HM Hyndman and Karl Kautsky, assiduously omits any reference to defending Egypt against the imperialists.

Ted Grant v the Communist International

Lest there is anyone who believes the *Militant* tendency of the Labour Party's preposterous claim to be Marxist and Trotskyist, a brief examination of Lenin and Trotsky's position ought to disabuse any serious revolutionary. In the inter-imperialist carnage of the First World War (in which the social democrats' class collaboration hit rock bottom) Lenin fought irreconcilably for revolutionary defeatism and to expose the leaders of the Second International and their camp-followers as social chauvinist traitors. In contrast, *Militant's* policy on the Gulf is akin to calling for the German Social Democrats Noske and Scheidemann to be elected to lead German imperialism during World War I.

The Third Communist International was founded on the basis of a clear and decisive break with the reformist social-democratic Second International, not least on the colonial and national questions. Lenin himself was the main reporter in the discussion at the Second Congress in 1920. "Imperialism", he noted, "is characterized by the fact that the whole world is now divided into a large number of oppressed nations and a very small number of oppressor nations that are enormously rich and strong in the military sense" (*The Second Congress of the Communist International*, Volume 1).

Responding to remarks made by a British delegate, Quelch, that British workers would regard it as treachery to

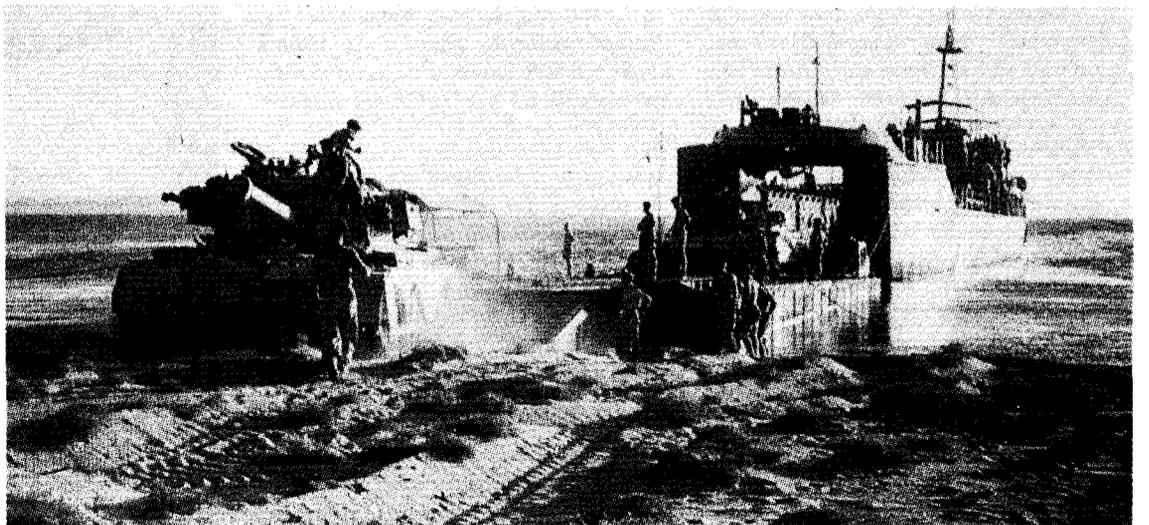
help the colonial and oppressed peoples rebel against English domination, another Bolshevik delegate, Radek, took up the danger that Quelch's statements were meant to justify "a passive posture towards a colonial revolt":

"The Labour Conference at Scarborough passed an important resolution in which it demanded the independence of India and Egypt. Not a single Communist stood up to tell the Conference that the MacDonalds support the British bourgeoisie fooling British workers when they talk about the independence of India, Ireland and Egypt. It is simple hypocrisy and swindling that these same people, who could not even rise to the level of characterizing General Dwyer as a common murderer in Parliament on the occasion of the Amritsar bloodbath, pretend to be the defenders of colonial independence. We greatly regret that our party comrades who are in the Labour Party did not tear the mask off these swindlers' faces. The International will not judge the British comrades by the articles that they write in the *Call* and the *Workers Dreadnought*, but by the number of comrades who are thrown into gaol for agitating in the colonial countries" (*ibid*).

This is completely counterposed to the *Militant's* practice of pleading to Kinnock and the "lefts" to dress up imperialist war moves in Labourite colours. The founding document of the Fourth International, the *Transitional Programme* written by Trotsky, reiterated "the duty of the international proletariat to aid the oppressed countries in their war against the oppressors". In respect to Ethiopia and China, Trotsky polemicised against those who refused to take the side of these countries against imperialist attack. In 1937 Trotsky described the slogan "Prepare the war

continued on page 11

Kuwait 1961: British troops land, after Iraq threatened to annex the "divide and rule" statelet.



Spooner Frank/Gamma

Germany: Trotskyist class-struggle election campaign

For workers resistance East and West!

The following article is translated from Spartakist no 76 (25 September), newspaper of the Spartakist Workers Party of Germany, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

On 3 October, the German bourgeoisie will formally proclaim its *Anschluss* (annexation) of the former German Democratic Republic (DDR). After the Deutsche Bank, with some powerful help from the Social Democrats, took over the collectivised economy, now the Bundestag (West German parliament) and Volkskammer (DDR parliament) will declare national unity under the rule of capital. The Archbishop of Munich has called for church bells to be rung "für Volk und Vaterland" (for people and fatherland), as they were at the beginning of World War II. West German chancellor Helmut Kohl will proclaim a great day for Germany, to choruses of the *Deutschlandlied*. But for German working people, East and West, for women, for the foreign-born workers, for those of us who fight for a socialist world, capitalist reunification represents a serious defeat. That is the bitter truth, and we Spartakists are the ones who tell it to you straight.

We also say to you that the capitalist rulers fear a backlash, a hot autumn of the workers, who are embittered by the tremendous swindle that has been foisted on them. On 18 March, they voted for the "quick D-mark". Two months later, as the state treaty was signed in Bonn, Kohl's stooge Lothar de Maizière (DDR prime minister) declared that "no one will be worse off than before". But look around you today in the ex-DDR and what do you see? Mass unemployment, two million on short workweek or fired, with the number expected to double by year's end. Mounting fascist attacks against foreign workers and Soviet soldiers. Women driven out of social labour back to home and hearth. A Greater Germany that proclaims (in the 2 + 4 treaty) that henceforth only peace will come from German soil while it prepares to remove constitutional limits on military action abroad.



Glaser/Süddeutsche Zeitung

East German uranium miners on strike last month over threatened shutdown.

The Spartakist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD) is presenting a slate of candidates in the 2 December Bundestag elections to call for workers resistance against the devastating consequences of the *Anschluss* that is leading to a Fourth Reich of German imperialism. Many of you know the SpAD as the one party that fought, on the streets and in the March DDR elections, against capitalist reunification. Others who call themselves "lefts" bowed before the D-mark onslaught, at most seeking to improve the terms of the sellout. Leon Trotsky warned decades ago that the Stalinist dogma of "building socialism in one country" was a dangerous myth that threatened the conquests of the Bolshevik October Revolution of 1917. Today we see the proof of this before our eyes. And today we Trotskyists call on you to join us in a class-struggle election campaign: not black-red-gold social democracy or green eco-capitalism, but genuine communism with its red banner of revolutionary internationalism.

The Spartakist candidates are Renate Dahlhaus, who at the 3 January anti-fascist mobilisation at the Soviet war memorial in Treptow was the spokesman for the Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands (the TLD together with the Spartakist-Gruppen formed the SpAD); Toralf Endrueit, the lead candidate of the

SpAD in the March DDR elections and speaker for the Spartakist-Gruppen at the Treptow demonstration; and Jana Strauchfuss, a worker at Stern Radio who is known for her struggle to defend the rights of the foreign workers at her workplace.

Workers in the DDR have begun to show their power in strikes and demonstrations. At the same time the capitalists are attacking the rights of the West German workers which have been won through struggle, and seek to use the "low-wage country DDR" to put pressure on their wages. Only through class unity of the workers in East and West can we beat back the attacks of the capitalists. This means the workers must take up the struggle for full citizenship rights for immigrant workers and their families. The SpAD will use its election campaign as a platform for struggle, to give voice to those who fight for equal wages for equal work, for a sliding scale of wages and hours, to share the work among all, at full pay, for men, women, youth, immigrants. As former bureaucrats turn themselves into bosses, and the *Treuhandanstalt* (Trusteeship Agency) hands over some factories to the capitalists while closing down many more, we call for elected strike committees, for plant occupations and workers control against

shutdowns and mass layoffs.

As Spartakist candidate Renate Dahlhaus said: "The workers movement must be mobilised in struggle against mass layoffs, anti-Semitism, racist attacks and women being sent back to home and hearth, and also against the attacks on Soviet soldiers and their families, and the anti-Communist witchhunt." The Spartakist candidates sharply denounced the party expropriation law, which initially aimed at criminalising the PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism, successor to the former Stalinist ruling party SED) and is now directed against the trade unions. The SpAD has refused to turn it finances over to the agents of the Deutsche Bank, especially since we refused on principle to accept state subsidies while the other parties are financed by Bonn. The SpAD says no to this campaign of expropriation and political repression, calling on all working-class and left organisations to likewise reject this expropriation law through united action.

The PDS of Gysi and Modrow prepared the way for the capitalist reunification of Germany and has strangled all resistance. Gysi crawls after Social Democratic leader Lafontaine and the SPD witchhunters, while various "radical leftists" crawl after Gysi. Against the popular-front policy of sellout which they learned on Stalin's lap, we Trotskyists fight for the class independence of the workers organisations. We fight for workers united-front actions against fascist terror bands. The Spartakists initiated such a united front (taken up by the SED-PDS) which on 3 January brought out 250,000 in Treptow in the largest anti-fascist demonstration ever held in Germany.

As the German bourgeoisie has reached the Oder-Neisse border with its *Drang nach Osten* (drive to the East), the Polish working class has begun to fight against the starvation and poverty that the capitalist measures of their *Solidarność* rulers have brought. Now that counterrevolution stands before the door of the USSR, the SpAD calls for defence of the homeland of the October Revolution through the revolutionary unity of the German, Polish and Russian workers. ■

We reprint (at right) *Workers Power's* statement entitled "Yuri Butchenko" which appeared in its October issue. It is not possible to reprint here the lengthy and hysterical statement on this same question recently issued by *Workers Power's* Irish co-thinkers in the Irish Workers Group (IWG); stay tuned.

In the previous issue of *Workers Hammer* we published an article—which first appeared in the newspaper of our American comrades, *Workers Vanguard*—entitled "The Butchenko affair: anti-Sovietism comes home to roost/Workers Power caught with Russian fascists, Thatcher's scabs" in which we nailed *Workers Power* for its scandalous contribution to the witchhunt against NUM leader Arthur Scargill. To briefly recapitulate: *Workers Power* had organised a tour of one Yuri Butchenko along with Socialist Organiser, its erstwhile partners in the "Campaign for Solidarity with Workers in the Eastern Bloc" (CSWEB). Butchenko's links in Britain were not restricted to the hapless CSWEB and he emerged as a key player in the anti-Scargill witchhunt with his appearance at a 5 July press conference with the UDM's

The Workers Power school of "re-elaboration"

Turning on the Butchenko spit

—no 135, October 1990

workers
power

Yuri Butchenko

ON 11 JULY *Workers Power* issued a statement on the Yuri Butchenko affair in which we stated that in a telephone call with Butchenko he informed us that his official invite papers to this country had been signed by George Miller, British representative of the right wing Russian organisation, the NTS. This was true. In the August issue of our newspaper we said that we only learnt that the official invite came from Miller when Butchenko actu-

ally arrived in Britain. This was a mistake.

It arose whilst attempting to put together an honest account of the Butchenko affair relying on the memories of translators and intermediaries.

Considerable confusion surrounds the bureaucratic procedures needed to get people from the USSR into this country. CSWEB itself had sought to get Labour MPs to issue such invitations to the independent

Soviet miners' organisations.

We are only too happy to correct this simple mistake in our account. A variety of pro-Stalinist organisations, such as the Spartacists, have suggested that the discrepancy between our two versions of the "invite" means we were involved in some nefarious plot aimed at smearing Arthur Scargill and collaborating with imperialism's spy agencies. Having corrected the factual error we can only ask our accusers, what does this prove?

We stand by the political reasons for organising and then terminating the CSWEB tour. ■

Roy Lynk, picked up by virtually all the bourgeois media.

It turned out that Butchenko had been

officially invited by George Miller, the British representative of the NTS. The NTS is a Russian fascist organisation

which actively supported the Nazis before and during the 1941 invasion of Russia and which has been used and backed by Western intelligence. (*Workers Power* itself acknowledged in July that the NTS "collaborated with and fought alongside the Nazis".) *Workers Power's* own statements hastily issued following Butchenko's press conference confirmed that they knew about Miller's sponsorship of Butchenko and indeed had met with the NTS rep where Miller and Butchenko "agreed simply that once the tour was over they would, separately from CSWEB, meet the TUC's international department" (*Workers Power* "Statement on Yuri Butchenko and CSWEB", 11 July).

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Soviet workers: Smash Yeltsin/Gorbachev 500-day plan!

Simultaneously with the biggest wheat harvest in Soviet history, bread has disappeared from Moscow's state shops. Smokers riot for cigarettes. Now the traditional celebration of the Bolshevik Revolution on 7 November is to be cancelled. George Bush envisions the Soviet Union becoming a junior partner in the imperialist "new world order". But this would spell the death of the Soviet Union as a workers state, albeit ruled by a corrupt and nationalistic bureaucracy. And indeed, the dominant political forces in Russia are openly driving towards the restoration of capitalism—which means the prospect of civil war, sooner rather than later. The social gains of the Bolshevik Revolution—the greatest victory for the international working class in history—are in mortal danger!

In late August it was announced that the president of the Russian republic, Boris Yeltsin, and Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev had agreed on a programme to establish a full-fledged market economy in 500 days. Housing would be privatised, agricultural land sold to peasant smallholders and at least 70 per cent of industrial enterprises denationalised. Real power of economic decision-making would be transferred from the central government to the governments of the various republics. This means the effective break-up of the Soviet Union. Yeltsin—a former Gorbachev lieutenant turned pseudo-populist demagogue—wants to drop "Socialist" from the USSR and rename the country the Union of Sovereign Soviet Republics.

The main author of the 500-day plan is Gorbachev economic adviser Stanislav Shatalin, who, when asked if his plan would lead to higher living standards and an efficient economy, replied, "In God we trust." Gorbachev himself waffled, proposing to combine the Shatalin plan with a more "moderate" programme devised by Soviet prime minister Nikolai Ryzhkov. Ryzhkov was the main figure behind the aborted move to triple the price of bread this summer and double consumer prices by New Year 1991. But this was not enough for the extreme "free marketeers", who have been screaming for Ryzhkov's political head.

To put pressure on Gorbachev, the Yeltsin-dominated parliament of the Russian republic endorsed the "500 days to capitalism" programme. And now the Soviet president has more or less come out for it, while calling for a popular referendum on the sale of land. Fighting for his political life, Ryzhkov went on television and denounced the Shatalin plan as leading to "chaos" and mass unemployment. This situation is fast polarising. In the middle of September, 50,000 right-wingers demonstrated in Moscow calling for the resignation not only of Ryzhkov but also Gorbachev. Yet workers



Boris Yeltsin and Mikhail Gorbachev plan for restoration of capitalism, as perestroika fuels economic chaos, growing inequality. Below, angry crowd surrounds empty cigarette-vendor stand in Moscow.



are resisting the effects of perestroika. The official trade unions have organised strikes against the "free market" city government of Moscow.

The terminal crisis of Soviet Stalinism

The all-sided crisis besetting the Soviet Union has its roots in the bureaucratic degeneration under JV Stalin during the 1920s. Under the nationalist slogan of "socialism in one country", the Kremlin bureaucracy renounced and opposed the Leninist programme of world proletarian revolution. In the 1930s Trotsky predicted that unless the Soviet working class ousted the Stalinist bureaucracy, the latter, far from building socialism, would create the conditions for capitalist counterrevolution.

The "liberal" Stalinist Gorbachev and

his apologists claimed that perestroika (restructuring) meant the renewal and modernisation of socialism. From the outset we warned that these market-oriented "reforms" were designed to increase the privileges of the petty-bourgeois bureaucrats and intellectuals at the expense of the working class and would lay the basis for capitalist restoration. Now it is no longer a question of laying the basis but of posing capitalist restoration outright.

In a broadcast interview on 10 September with Pacifica Radio's KPFA news commentator James Cleve, Spartacist League spokesman Joseph Seymour pointed out: "The programme of what you call the radical 'free marketeers' like Yeltsin, who among other things praised Reagan in his autobiography for supposedly restoring the health of the American economy, will lead to the massive immis-

eration of the Soviet working people for the benefit of what is hoped to be a new class of capitalists and their Soviet yuppie hangers-on."

It is clear that the mass of Soviet working people are hostile to a capitalist market economy *as such*. "Free market" ideologue Gavril Popov, currently mayor of Moscow, states that the "masses long for fairness and economic equality". He worries about the rise of "left-wing populism" provoked by "the policies leading to denationalization, privatization and inequality". The most despised class of people in the Soviet Union are the petty capitalist entrepreneurs, the so-called "cooperativists". Even the *Wall Street Journal* (10 August) admits: "The reputation of the cooperatives plummeted, and today they are widely criticized as speculators out to make a fast buck at the expense of the nation."

Yet it is also incontestable that Yeltsin is very popular among Russian working people. Polls show he is now far more highly regarded than Gorbachev. How does one account for this contradiction? Yeltsin has *masked* his support for "free market" economics with demagogic attacks on the privileges of the bureaucracy and calls for increasing consumer goods by cutting back military spending and industrial investment. But now the mask has fallen as Yeltsin's slippery demagoguery has been tacked onto a programme of open capitalist restoration.

Advocates for the 500-day plan claim the sale of housing, land and factories will soak up much of the excess rubles that have been pumped into the Soviet economy for years. Therefore price increases for consumer goods will be less than would otherwise be the case. This is a lie! Once enterprises are in private hands, they will charge all that the market can bear. Soviet working people will lose all possibility of controlling the cost of living. Furthermore, millions of Soviet workers will be thrown onto the street as unprofitable and unsalable enterprises close down while others radically slash their labour force. This is exactly what's already happening in Poland.

The privatisation of housing is intended to bring an immediate windfall to those members of the elite who have nice apartments. But it will be disastrous for Soviet working people especially with the acute shortage of available housing in the USSR. Soviet army officers and their families, scheduled to be withdrawn from East Germany, recently demonstrated against the move to settle them in a *tent city* in the northern Caucasus! Under privatisation, rents for the small number of vacant housing units will be out of sight. Young working-class families could never afford their own apartment or house. These will become the exclusive property of the new class of moneyed capitalists

and the managerial elite.

The 500-day plan promises Soviet citizens a kind of "people's capitalism", stating that "property in the hands of each individual is a guarantee of the stability of society" (*Financial Times*, 6 September). But property is *not* going to be in the hands of each individual. Far from it. You can't have capitalists without capital. Even Russia's petty entrepreneurs with their fruit stands and TV repair shops don't have the money to buy up steel mills and coal mines. Who does? Insofar as they are Russians, Armenians, etc, the new owners will come from the ranks of the bureaucratic elite who have access to state loans and Western banks.

Many of the most profitable enterprises will be sold in whole or in part to Western multinationals. Gorbachev economic adviser Nikolai Petrakov, a principal author of the 500-day plan, wants to "create a situation in which our Western partners can bypass the system of rationing and centralized allocations, buy the raw material and equipment they need in our internal market, and transfer their part of the profits to the West" (*Problems of Economics*, March 1990). If Gorbachev and Yeltsin have their way, the wealth produced over decades by Soviet workers will be sold off at fire-sale prices to Wall Street raiders, Frankfurt bankers and the Japanese *zaibatsu*.

The mounting economic chaos and collapse of the authority of the Gorbachev regime and central government has created a *political vacuum*. Into this vacuum have poured all kinds of right-wing forces from Russian Reaganites to tsarists to fascists and other reactionary nationalists. Anti-Semitism is on the rise, and Soviet Jews live in fear of pogroms. There is talk of a military coup to restore order. Everyone knows the Soviet Union cannot continue to exist as before.

Today, Trotskyism—the continuators of the Bolshevik Revolution—is the only political tendency with a programme which can preserve the Soviet Union as a collectivised economy and multinational state. Soviet workers must sweep away the Gorbachevs, Yeltsins and Popovs, and establish a government of democratically elected workers soviets (councils) such as took power in October 1917.

Many Soviet workers now identify centralised planning and management as such with Stalinism and bureaucratic commandism. This is false. The central direction of the economy by a government of soviets is the *only way* that the working class can *democratically* determine the allocation of society's resources and ensure the fair and egalitarian distribution of wealth that is produced. At the same time, central planning can be effective in stimulating dedicated and creative effort only when the mass of workers *govern* society in order to build a socialist future for themselves and their children.

Behind the bread shortages

When the Gorbachev/Ryzhkov regime proposed to triple the price of bread last



Gamma



Ogonyok

Striking miners in Siberia last year elected strike committees that established dual power in coal regions. Worker protests continue as signs say: "We demand social justice!" "We demand raising miners' standard of living!"

summer, a delegate to the Supreme Soviet from Tadzhikistan angrily declared: "Bread is socialism." The sudden disappearance of bread from Moscow's state-run "Gastronom" shops is the most striking proof of the economic collapse. Yet Soviet officials have been predicting a record harvest. What happened?

Unlike the United States, the Soviet Union does not have a large pool of impoverished, migrant farm workers. To bring in the harvest it is therefore neces-

But this is only part of the cause of the bread shortage and not the most important part. After all, the grain harvest is estimated at about the same level as last year. But the farmers are not delivering as much to the state procurement agencies. Even Gorbachev complained: "Many state and collective farms are unjustifiably curtailing sales to the state, violating contract discipline." Instead they are using the grain as fodder for livestock whose sale is much more profitable. A

prices will have to rise sharply. However, with the regime unwilling to pass on higher cost of grain to Soviet households, food subsidies will have to rise well beyond what was originally contemplated for 1990...."

—*PlanEcon Report*, 21 April

But now the Gorbachev/Yeltsin 500-day programme calls for slashing food subsidies and allowing an explosion in the price of bread and other foodstuffs.

The bread shortage today is hauntingly reminiscent of the peasants' grain strike of 1928 which marked the terminal crisis of the New Economic Policy (NEP). The ideologues of perestroika, or at least those who do not call for the outright restoration of capitalism, have held up NEP as their economic model. As early as 1923 Trotsky pointed to the fundamental contradiction and instability of NEP. Unless Soviet industry expanded fast enough to provide the peasants with cheaper and abundant manufactured goods, Trotsky predicted the peasants would cut back the supply of grain to state procurement agencies in order to extract higher prices. This is precisely what happened in 1928. On the brink of economic disaster, Stalin reacted by pushing through the collectivisation of agriculture in a brutal and bureaucratic way.

During the 1920s, the main internal social force for capitalist counterrevolution was the wealthier peasants (kulaks). Today, this role falls to sections of the bureaucracy and intelligentsia, in many cases the privileged children of Stalin's apparatchiks. Thus the grain strike is but one aspect of the general sabotage of the collectivised economy by self-seeking managers and officials.

Only proletarian political revolution can save the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union today is threatened with bloody fratricidal strife amid economic disintegration. Practically every national republic has proclaimed its independence or economic sovereignty. The government of the Ukraine—the second largest republic—wants to issue its own currency as well as raise its own army. Officials in the oil-producing regions of Siberia are demanding the lion's share of export earnings from the sale of oil. The *Independent* (31 August) wrote of the "danger that the Soviet Union will disintegrate into a set of competing republics separated by customs barriers, by Mickey Mouse currencies and by ethnic animosities, waging trade wars against each other".

Only the Soviet working class has the social power and interest to preserve and reconstruct the Soviet Union on a socialist basis with justice and equality for all nationalities. To achieve this it is neces-

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Der Spiegel

Despite record grain harvest bread has disappeared from state shops as farmers withhold wheat to force up procurement prices.

sary to mobilise urban workers temporarily released from their factory and office jobs. But with the dismantling of centralised management under perestroika, enterprise managers no longer release their workers for this purpose. The manager of a collective farm in the "Virgin Lands" of Kazakhstan, Zhazit Kudaikulov, exclaimed:

"During the period of stagnation [the Brezhnev era] we gathered the wheat well. The townspeople helped us, the government and the regional Communist Party people helped us, and now they don't. I don't know why. It's *perestroika*."

—*Philadelphia Inquirer*, 7 September

kilo of beef in Moscow's central (private) market costs 20 rubles, 50 per cent higher than a year and a half ago and equivalent to a day's pay for the average industrial worker!

Soviet farmers are withholding grain to force up the procurement price. Last spring an American newsletter specialising in the Eastern European economies wrote:

"The withholding by Soviet farmers of large amounts of grain means that the regime is forced to import more Western grain and strain its external finances instead of utilizing what is already available within the country. To induce the farmers to sell the grain, procurement

Novoye Russkoye Slovo

Ogonyok

AFP



Threat of counterrevolution: demonstrators in Leningrad, 3 September, with signs saying "Enough experiments—it's time for capitalism." "Free market" mayors Anatoly Sobchak of Leningrad and Gavril Popov of Moscow.

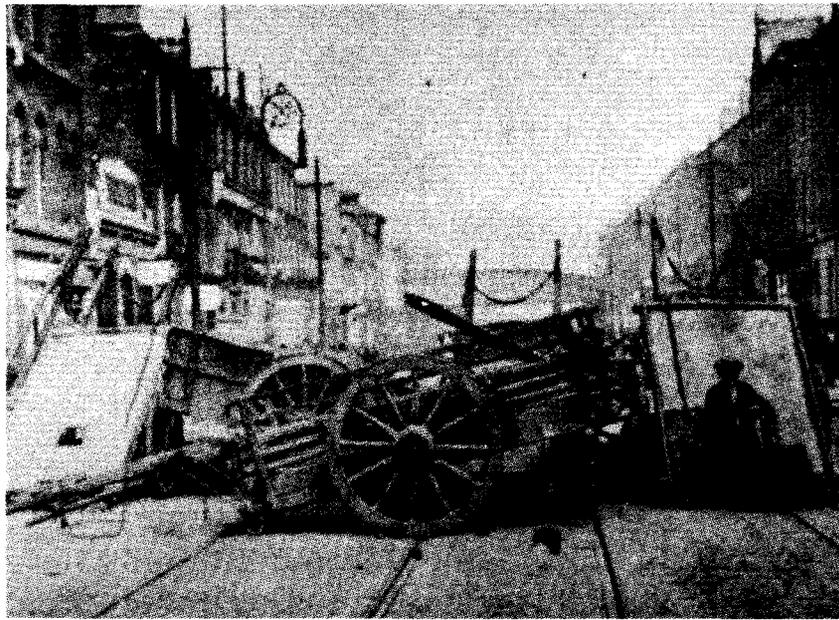
Dublin Spartacist...

(Continued from page 12)

propaganda group also include fighting against the Third Campists of the Socialist Workers Movement (SWM) and the wretched reformists of the Militant. The perspective of revolutionary regroupment is essential to the DSYG's founding.

The newly-formed group discussed the need to participate actively in social struggles, for example the fight to distribute abortion information and to defend the student union leaders facing vast legal costs for their stand on this question (see article, page 12). As strikes break out in reaction to three years of "Social Contract"-style austerity enforced by the class-collaborationist trade union leaders and backed by the reformist Labour Party and Workers Party under the "Programme for National Recovery" (PNR) agreement with the capitalist Fianna Fail government, the DSYG looks forward to organising student support for the workers' battles.

At the same time resolutions passed at the founding meeting emphasised the need to deepen our theoretical and historical understanding of Irish society and to further elaborate the programmatic bases already firmly established by the key Spartacist document "Theses on Ireland", which has stood well the test of time since its adoption in 1977. Against Labourite chauvinism and Green nationalism, the DSYG is committed to raising the banner of proletarian internationalism, not least in the context of Northern Ireland. As stated in the "Theses" the key components of a revolutionary working-class perspective include: For the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the British Army! Smash the RUC and the UDR! Down with the Prevention of Terrorism Act and all other special powers acts in Britain and Ireland! Full democratic rights for the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland! No discrimination in



(Left) Barricades in Dublin, Easter 1916; (right) James Connolly. Lenin argued to join the national and colonial revolts in order for the "real anti-imperialist force, the socialist proletariat, to make its appearance on the scene".



hiring and housing! For a sliding scale of wages and hours! For a programmatically based anti-sectarian workers militia to combat Orange and Green terror and imperialist rampage! For a British Isles-wide trade union federation! Forward to the Irish section of the reborn Fourth International! No forcible reunification! For an Irish workers republic within a socialist federation of the British Isles!

The DSYG adopted positions on several key questions of special oppression in Ireland. The fraternal greetings of the ICL's German section, the Spartakist Arbeiter Partei Deutschlands (SpAD) underlined the vital need for the DSYG to reach out to and recruit those whom James Connolly referred to as "the slaves of slaves"—Irish women. There was much discussion at the foundation meeting of the centrality of the fight for women's liberation to the struggle for socialist revolution in a country where social policy and education basically remain in the grip of the Catholic church hierarchy. It was also noted that, as we wrote in *Wo-*

men and Revolution (Spring 1990): "Northern Ireland is far from a bastion of social liberalism: until recently homosexuality was illegal; abortion is still severely restricted. Protestant fundamentalists in Northern Ireland joined the Catholic church in opposing the extension of the 1967 abortion reform."

The denial of legal rights to abortion and divorce, and the severe restrictions on the availability of contraception hugely exacerbate the double oppression of working-class women. In this context the demand for free abortion on demand, which much of the Irish left shrinks from raising, has great importance. The hundreds of pounds required to obtain an abortion in England are simply out of reach for low-paid women workers and housewives lacking any financial independence whatsoever. The DSYG points out that this demand, coupled with the call for a free quality health service and 24-hour child care to permit the full integration of women into social production are both mandatory to obtain genuine social

equality for women and unachievable without the overthrow of capitalism. An Irish workers republic, part of the socialist federation of the British Isles and the Socialist United States of Europe would benefit from internationally coordinated planning to end the poverty and backwardness which have forced millions to migrate, and driven many into the ranks of the most downtrodden sections of labour in Britain itself.

The fight for full democratic rights for gays and lesbians is also integral to the fight against the main instrument of the oppression of women under capitalism, the nuclear family. As what Lenin described as "the tribune of the people" it is the duty of a Marxist revolutionary party to combat all oppression and inequality produced by capitalist society.

The DSYG also adopted a resolution underlining the defence of the horribly oppressed Travellers' community as an acid test of Irish revolutionaries. The Travellers are a minority grouping treated similarly to Gypsies in Britain. Their

Butchenko...

(Continued from page 5)

In addition to being caught with Russian fascists and Thatcher's scabs, *Workers Power* suffered from a "credibility gap" after it denied in its August issue what it had already confessed in its July statements: namely that it knew of the Miller link before Butchenko's tour ever got underway. Now, *Workers Power* has been forced to concede this "mistake" which occurred, according to the statement here reprinted, "whilst attempting to put together an honest account of the Butchenko affair relying on the memories of translators and intermediaries" or according to the IWG's document because the "author of the August article believed wrongly". The latter document makes clear just how "wrong" the *Workers Power* article was.

In fact, as early as January, *Workers Power* knew that Miller was a contact for Butchenko in Britain. Butchenko was faxing via Miller's office to CSWEB about the tour. *Workers Power* was worried enough to "initiate enquiries as to Miller's political character". "All we discovered", according to the IWG's document, "was that he had links to the right wing in the unions, that he [w]as a 'shady character', and that his magazine was very well informed." Later, Miller "confessed that he was a member of the NTS but denied that the NTS was a fascist organisation". Thus assured, *Workers Power* forged ahead with Butchenko's tour. "Although Miller's involvement was worrying we felt it was no reason to

refuse to organise the tour since there was no evidence of any political link between Butchenko, Miller and the NTS." "No evidence"?—Butchenko was simply faxing messages to CSWEB via Miller who had signed the official invitation papers and acknowledged he was in the NTS.

The IWG writes: "it was Miller's invitation which worked with the British Embassy, no doubt because of Miller's connections and the fact that he is a known anti-communist". No doubt! And maybe this had something to do with the TUC international department's eagerness to meet Butchenko, too. But the question is what worked with *Workers Power*.

Workers Power wants to trivialise the whole affair and pass itself off as the most pathetically naive group of dupes who ever lived and who make "mistakes" in their public accounts. But *politics* are at the bottom of both the scandal and the subsequent cover up. *WP* writes: "We do not believe that a precondition for undertaking these links must be that the Soviet workers' organisations pledge themselves in advance to the defence of the planned economy in the USSR." Which is exactly how they ended up with scum like Butchenko.

The ground for *Workers Power's* blatantly anti-Trotskyist statement of purpose has been well-prepared. Thus, the IWG grotesquely demanded that the Chinese ambassador be expelled by the Irish bourgeoisie after the criminal massacre at Tiananmen Square. When *Workers Power* made its hard right turn over events in East Germany, they tried to

resolve the contradiction between their paper call to "Smash Capitalist Restoration" and the fact that they sided with capitalist counterrevolution at every crucial stage by raving on about Spartacist "Stalinophilia". Soon thereafter, pure and simple "Third Campism" took over and *Workers Power* demanded that the government of Margaret Thatcher send "goods requested" "without conditions" to the counterrevolutionary Sajudis nationalists in Lithuania. Then the consequences of their bloc with the rabidly anti-Soviet Socialist Organiser for "solidarity" work in Eastern Europe blew sky high with the Butchenko affair.

We have documented *Workers Power's* sharp right turn in a series of polemics,

currently available in our "Workers Power Truth Kit" (see ad, below). For its part, *Workers Power* has descended to the method of "polemics" used by JV Stalin—who, as the story goes, is the source of the statement that paper will take anything that's written on it. *Workers Power* says we are a "pro-Stalinist organisation"—this is a shameless and very cynical lie. But it is mainly an indication of how accelerated *Workers Power's* departure from any pretence to authentic Trotskyism has become. No amount of lying attacks on the Spartacists and whingeing apologies for their treachery can cover up *WP's* hard drive back into the Third Camp of the running dogs of capitalist counterrevolution. ■

Get yours now!

The "Workers Power Truth Kit" contains the following articles from *Workers Hammer*:

- "Workers Power caught with Russian fascists, Thatcher's scabs"
- "Workers Power to Thatcher: hands on Lithuania"
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- "Why they supported Islamic reaction Socialist Britain no 11 (May 1979)"

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Workers Power truth kit

Workers Power in the Third Camp: shoulder-to-shoulder with Socialist Quarterly in anti-communist picket calling for "Hands off Baltic States" at Soviet consulate, London, 18 May

Spartacist Publications, PO Box 1041, London NW5 3EU

treatment echoes the vile British chauvinism directed against the Irish. They are subjected to periodic evictions and reactionary hate campaigns, denied decent sites and forced onto waste land in dangerous locations (eg railway embankments) without elementary sanitation or other facilities. They fill Irish jails in disproportionate numbers, and are the butt of derision and contempt, displayed often without even a figleaf of liberal public hypocrisy. The DSYG committed itself to finding ways of publicly making a stand in their defence, determined to expose the idyllic myth of "tolerant" and "racism-free" Ireland.

Unlike much of the rest of the Irish left, the DSYG does not see anything inevitable about voting for the Labour Party. The Irish Labour Party (ILP) is a particularly miserable specimen of parliamentary reformism, whose basic loyalties were established in the period of the fight for Irish independence, when they refused to stand candidates against the bourgeois-nationalist Sinn Fein in 1918 and 1921. Since then the ILP has usually been a rag-tag and bobtail of some of the most right-wing forces in Irish politics, finding its customary home in coalition cabinets with Fine Gael. Not surprisingly therefore it receives only about ten per cent of votes at general elections. Thus, the ILP has nothing resembling the hegemonic position in the working class that the British Labour Party has had.

Despite its nominal rejection of coalitionism over recent years (which is widely understood will last exactly the time it takes until someone offers Dick Spring the Tanaiste's [Deputy Prime Minister] seat in a future cabinet), the Labour Party's support for the PNR has been a major prop of the Charles Haughey government. This backing for an openly capitalist administration and for imposing austerity on the whole working class means that a vote for Labour and Workers Party-backed candidate Mary Robinson in the current presidential elections would in no way draw even a distorted class line against the capitalist parties. Robinson's refusal at the first breath of criticism to stand by her claim that she would open an illegal contraceptive stall in Dublin's Virgin Megastore is one indicator of this. Likewise, the disappearance from her campaign literature of all mention of divorce, contraception and abortion information, or the fact that she was a lawyer for the Well Woman Clinic and the USI leaders in their fight against SPUC. Robinson even went so far as to say, "But I don't support abortion... I'm against abortion" (*Sunday Tribune*, 14 October).

A major question facing revolutionaries throughout the world today is the imperialist war build-up in the Persian Gulf. Although Ireland is a very small, weak capitalist country, nevertheless its position at the western Atlantic approaches to Britain and continental Europe gives it strategic military significance. For this reason the US and British bourgeoisies have long sought to work their way around the sham "neutrality" of the Republic. The Anglo-Irish accord was not just an attempt to join hands against the IRA, but was also seen in Whitehall as a bridge to closer Irish involvement with NATO. For years NATO forces have used Irish airspace for military operations; today the Irish ruling class is happily giving refuelling facilities

to US military transport planes at the Shannon International Airport in the west of the country.

This very concrete aid to the Gulf war drive has to be broken by the mobilisation of the Irish workers movement, who perhaps better than many others should appreciate what it means to fight a war against capitalist colonialism and imperialism. The DSYG adopted two slogans on this question: "Stop the refuelling of US warplanes at Shannon! Trade unions must block imperialist war preparations!" which cut against the illusory notion of forcing the southern bourgeoisie "to make neutrality real". Instead the DSYG emphasises the need for working-class political strikes to block the imperialist war effort, alongside the basic anti-imperialist demands of Britain, the US and other imperialist forces out of the Gulf, and for breaking the blockade of Iraq.

Of course blacking action at Shannon would almost certainly lead to the Irish army being brought in to break the action. Such a move could only be countered by a country-wide trade-union mobilisation to support strike or occupation action at Shannon itself, and would pose the need for forming workers defence guards. One participant in the foundation meeting noted the recent statement of the Fianna Fail defence minister to the effect that the role of the Irish Army is twofold: to "aid the civil power" and participate in the United Nations military forces—a timely reminder of Ireland's very concrete support in the Middle East for the UN imperialist den of thieves which was a lever for the disarmament of the PLO in Lebanon in 1982 (thereby exposing the Palestinian refugees to the Zionist/Phalange massacre of Sabra and Shatila). And today the UN is the vehicle for imperialist war mobilisation in the Gulf.

After the DSYG's foundation meeting the comrades organised a short ceremony at the grave of James Connolly in Arbour Hill cemetery. Connolly was executed by the British after the failed Easter Rising in 1916. As the greetings sent by the SL/US Political Bureau noted: "James Connolly and John MacLean were not finished Bolsheviks but their spirit of working class intransigence had better march along side of us." In his address honouring the memory of Connolly, the DSYG speaker pointed out: "Though we have modest beginnings, our hopes are great that we will be the nucleus of a Trotskyist party, Irish section of a reformed Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution—a party that can make the dream of Connolly's life a reality, in an international brotherhood of peoples, in a world without hunger, want and war." The comrade also recalled the legacy of Connolly's work for working-class unity across and transcending the sectarian divide in Northern Ireland as part of the tradition upon which we will build. The ceremony was concluded with a spirited rendering of the Internationale.

As the comrades from the Grupo Espartaquista de Mexico wrote: "Today our international needs young people in all countries who want to fight for the program of Lenin and Trotsky, against the bourgeoisie's lies about the 'death of communism' and for a socialist future." We warmly welcome the Dublin Spartacist Youth Group to the ranks of the International Communist League. ■

War threat...

(Continued from page 1)

quickly hauled out their war plans, replacing "Soviet Union" temporarily with "Iraq". Thus "Plan 90-1002", originally designed to counter a theorised Soviet "takeover" of the Persian Gulf oil-fields, has been revised and is the basis for the current US build-up in Saudi Arabia. The plans for massive deep strikes in the enemy's rear echelons and staging areas, the *Independent* (20 September) notes, are taken from the official NATO doctrine of "AirLand Battle". The goal of this "forward strategy" was a nuclear first strike against the Soviet Union.

Now the Pentagon wants to make use of the "emerging technologies" to clobber the enemy with "smart" weapons in a push-button war. There are a variety of high-tech missiles, tanks and other hardware which the Pentagon thinks means obliterating Iraq without filling a lot of American body bags. And in the words of two officers who helped rewrite the Army's FM 100-5 field manual to incorporate the new doctrine, it "calls for Army units to conduct their operations so that nuclear fire support can be added or deleted as necessary".

But in the event of war, the body bags will be coming back in very large numbers. As one Saudi Arabian officer told the *Wall Street Journal* (19 September): "The Iraqis are real fighters, not like the Americans... They fought through eight years of heat and dust and blood, and they're tough." In an interview aired on New York's WBAI radio last month, Dr Paul Rogers of Bradford University outlined the impending attack, noting that "because of the support which the Saddam Hussein regime has in Iraq", the country could not be forced to surrender unless "economic assets" were also attacked. This would mean *wide-scale bombing throughout the country*:

"If you are trying to cripple an economy of a country such as Iraq, you're essen-

tially targeting three kinds of targets. The energy resources of the country; the transport interchanges, and central resources of the country; and certain major industries... The attacks on industry would be centred primarily on the Baghdad area but not entirely. Also the industrial base down on the Gulf coast round and near Basra, and certain important plants in western and northern Iraq, principally truck, bus, tractor assembly plants, fertiliser plants, chemical plants, steel works and the rest."

He went on to say that the US would expect to bring Iraq to heel in "10, 15, maybe even 20 days or more". But the plan could easily go awry, because Iraq is not Panama or Grenada:

"In such a plan of operation, one has to recognise that Iraq is not a country with limited military resources. It itself has many means by which it could counter and blunt this kind of United States attack. Iraq does have Soviet and French air defences which are really quite sophisticated... It has large quantities of modern artillery which could interdict a Marine landing in Kuwait. It has medium range ballistic missiles, aircraft equipped with cluster bombs, stand-off missiles such as the French Exocet, and the Soviet AS-14 laser-guided missiles. It has of course chemical weapons. It has above all a war-hardened army."

As our American comrades wrote in *Workers Vanguard* (5 October): "The Persian Gulf will be the bloody end of the Reagan/Bush 'strategy' of 'splendid little wars'." And if Washington tries to hold on to their new imperialist bridgehead in the Middle East, it will set off a conflagration throughout the region.

The imperialists are also exploiting the capitulation and collapse of the Kremlin Stalinist bureaucracy to tighten the military encirclement of the Soviet Union, from eastern Germany to the Persian Gulf. Gorbachev's apparently limitless capitulation to Western imperialism and the accelerating disintegration of the Soviet degenerated workers state has only *emboldened* the US imperialists in reas-

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Fake left on Iraq...

(Continued from page 3)

war on France, or India on Britain, or Persia or China on Russia, and so on, these would be 'just,' and 'defensive' wars, *irrespective* of who would be the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressor, slave-holding and predatory 'Great' Powers."

When Lenin wrote this, Morocco was ruled by the sultan Mulai Yusuf, Persia by the military dictator Ephraim Khan and China by the warlord Yuan Shih-kai—rulers just as bloody and reactionary as Iraq's Saddam Hussein.

There are many groups who claim to be for the defence of Iraq and opposed to the Benn/CND appeals to the UN. However, these sentiments are relegated to the pages of their newspapers while *in practice* they tail the Labour "lefts". The state capitalists of the Socialist Workers Party are a prime example. On the one hand, *Socialist Worker* (15 September) declares the duty of every socialist "to oppose unequivocally and absolutely this war drive and everything to do with it including the UN blockade" and to side militarily with Iraq. But in the next breath, the SWP warns that to agitate for Iraq's victory in the event of war would "be a sectarian error erecting a barrier between ourselves and many of those who are genuinely opposed to the war drive".



Battle-hardened Iraqi troops

It would certainly erect a barrier to Benn and the CND. And, indeed, the SWP supported the CND/Benn-called demonstration in London ("an excellent beginning") and issued a leaflet "welcoming" the public meeting called under the slogan: "Support the United Nations!" Our response was a protest outside the pro-UN meeting and a sharp denunciation of these social-patriotic Labourites from the floor of the meeting. The SWP's real position is further made clear when it writes: "Even now Britain could be forced to withdraw if Labour threw its weight behind the anti-war movement".

What reformist claptrap! Any genuine mobilisation of the working people, youth, students and the oppressed against the Gulf war will necessarily find itself up against the *opposition* of the Labour officialdom, right and "left". When US imperialism was waging its dirty losing war against the Vietnamese people, the Labour government was all the way with LBJ. When the miners fought the most important class battle in decades, Labour leaders ensured the defeat of that strike. When hundreds of thousands protested against the vile Tory poll tax, it was Labour that condemned the outraged population as "violent" and defended the rioting cops. Now Kinnock marches in lockstep with Thatcher over the Gulf.

But the SWP's own record in opposing

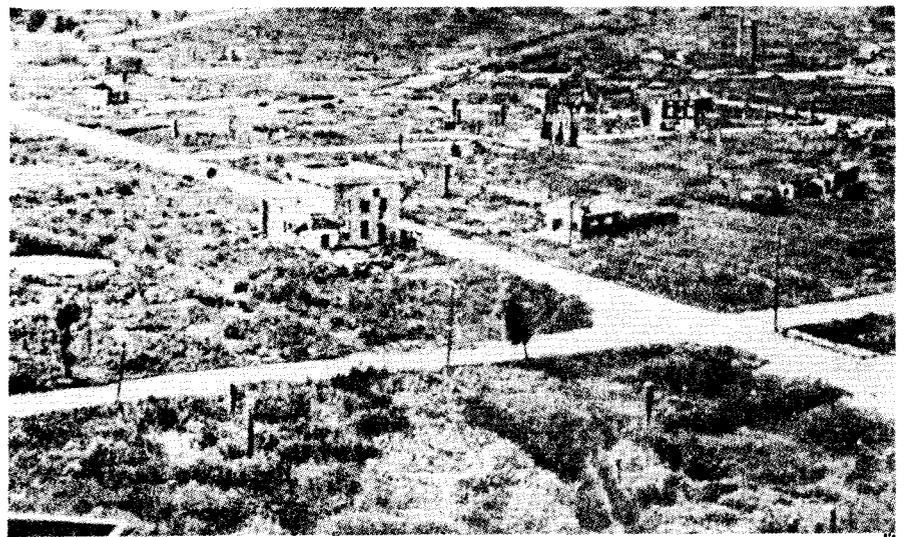
imperialism is shameful. It refused to stand for the defence of North Korea against imperialism in the Korean War. When in 1969 the Labour government sent the troops into Northern Ireland, the SWP supported this on the grounds that it would give a "breathing space" (*Socialist Worker*, 11 September 1969). In Afghanistan, the SWP supported the drug-peddling CIA cutthroats who enslave women and skin teachers alive for teaching little girls how to read and write against the Red Army which had the possibility of bringing social progress. *Socialist Worker* (4 February 1989) enthused: "Mojahedin victory will encourage the opponents of Russian rule everywhere in the USSR and Eastern Europe." George Bush or Margaret Thatcher could not have put it better. It is indeed obscene that the likes of the SWP posture as "anti-imperialists" after its unstinting efforts on behalf of the imperialists in their drive to "roll back" the Soviet workers state.

The combination of orthodox-sounding words on paper and opportunist manoeuvring for "unity" with the Labour "left" is characteristic of much of the fake-revolutionary left. *Socialist Action* has already signed on the dotted line with Benn, the CND and CP. The "Campaign against War in the Gulf" which includes groups such as Socialist Organiser, Socialist Outlook and the ever-involved Workers Power have sought to affiliate with the Bennites as well (thus far they have been rebuffed). Then there is the "Ad Hoc Hands Off the Middle East Committee"

which refuses to take a side in Iraq's defence. Left groups such as the RCP, the RCG and, of course, Workers Power belong to this committee with the latter avidly pursuing unity with the "campaign" group.

Refusing to take a side in the Gulf conflict, the fake lefts leave open the possibility to cut a deal with Benn. Under certain conditions Benn and even some of those to his right would be perfectly happy to embrace a version of "bring the boys home". During the Vietnam War, when it began to be clear that the US imperialists were losing, a section of the Democratic Party began calling for withdrawal of the US troops in order to cut their losses. The crucial division in the anti-war movement was between those who tailed the bourgeois defeatists, simply demanding "Out Now" and those who took a *side* for *military* victory to the NLF and struggled to orient the working class to struggle against the war at "home".

Workers Power in its September "Hands off Iraq" leaflet denotes the demand for the "immediate withdrawal of the US, British and other imperialist forces in the Gulf" as the minimum basis for any movement against the war drive. So if Benn dropped his opposition to "troops out", Workers Power could sign on with the rest. It is also worth noting that these rightward-lunging centrists in a major "international" statement on the



City of Wonsan at end of Korean War. Imperialists aim to give Baghdad the same treatment.

Gulf crisis decried the "invasion and annexation of Kuwait" and shed crocodile tears for the "self-determination" for those who "live and work" in Kuwait (*WP*, September 1990). This is a capitulation to the imperialists' propaganda and absurd to boot. The same piece contained the anti-Marxist statement that "If war with imperialism breaks out then for Iraqi revolutionaries insurrection against Saddam Hussein's regime must be subordinated to the tasks of defeating the imperialist onslaught", thus obliterating the crucial distinction between military defence and political support. (Workers Power now says in flat contradiction to itself: "Indeed, the overthrow of Saddam may well prove necessary if Iraq is to successfully resist any imperialist onslaught.")

War is the mother of revolution. The masses of the Middle East not only despise the imperialists but their "own" brutal regimes. We say: Mobilise to defeat imperialist aggression! Down with the oil sheiks, emirs, colonels and kings! Egypt's rulers, lackeys of US imperialism, must go! Insurgent workers must send Saddam Hussein and the Syrian Ba'athists to the dung heap! Israeli workers: throw off your genocidal Zionist rulers! Defend the Palestinian masses in struggle for their national rights! Working people to power throughout the Middle East!

The working people of these islands—not least the embattled North Sea oil workers—have every interest in seeing the *defeat* of the US' British junior partners in the Gulf. As we wrote in *Workers Hammer* no 116 (September 1990): "There would be particular justice in the British workers aiding the defeat of their

'own' bourgeoisie in the Gulf. It was the British imperialists who carved up the Middle East and imposed the present artificial boundaries, whose 'divide and conquer' schemes are responsible for the last 40 years of bloodletting in the region."

The social democracy has a blood-stained record of support to the imperialists in wartime going back to the First World War. Lenin and the internationalists of his generation fought irreconcilably not only against the Hendersons, Noskes and Scheidemanns who, like Kinnock today, bluntly supported their own imperialist ruling class but especially against the Kautskys and Ramsay MacDonalds who like Tony Benn tried to occupy a "centre" position between the open social imperialists and the revolutionaries. Just as the disagreements between Kautsky and the Scheidemanns were "not on fundamentals" so too Benn is fundamentally no less a defender of the interests of British imperialism than Kinnock and the Labour right wing.

A "broad united anti-war movement" on the basis of unity with the Benns, Heffers and CND can only be an obstacle to the necessary class fight against imperialist war. For hard class struggle against the warmakers and strikebreakers! Principled struggle against imperialist war is integrally linked to the fight to forge a Leninist vanguard through *splitting* the working class base from the pro-capitalist tops of the Labour Party. Break with the Labour traitors—right and "left"! Build a Bolshevik party! Down with the UN! Break the blockade! The enemy is at home—for proletarian revolution to bring down the rotting capitalist system once and for all! ■

Tony Benn peddled imperialist United Nations solution during Falklands War, 1982. We said "The main enemy is at home".



War threat...

(Continued from page 9)

serting their role as cops of the world. The Bush White House is in plenty of domestic trouble these days; their aim in the Gulf is to regain by force the world dominance the US held—briefly—at the end of World War II. Having fallen behind Germany and Japan in the economic race, the US is trying to bully them back into line with its huge military apparatus by seizing the world's main oil region and blackmailing its former enemies for billions in donations.

While Gorbachev has criminally come forward as a hard cop for the imperialists against Iraq, some elements of the Soviet leadership, especially in the military high command, are clearly worried. The chief of the Soviet general staff, General Mikhail Moiseyev, warned: "In case of some military actions, Iran will join the Iraqi side. This would not be simply some kind of conflict; this would be a world war" (*Washington Post*, 28 September). Yet Moiseyev criminally handed the US Army

detailed technical summaries of Iraq's Soviet military equipment as he prepared for a tour of the US and the Pentagon. Today, the homeland of the October Revolution is in deadly danger. The Soviet working class must link the defence and regeneration of the collectivised economy, through the restoration of workers democracy within the USSR, to the struggle against imperialist militarism on a worldwide scale.

For hard class struggle to defeat imperialism from within!

Since the outbreak of the Gulf conflict, there has been a strong undercurrent of opposition in the United States, especially among blacks and Hispanics. German seamen refused to transport fuel for the US military in Hamburg. On 10 October our comrades in the SpAD sent a message to the seamen hailing their action as: "an example for all the working people of how workers' resistance against NATO war preparations can be organised." Here in Britain it is necessary to mobilise the organised working class and its allies against the war machine: for political

strikes against the impending war! The main obstacle to a class-struggle fight against the war moves in Britain is the grovelling social chauvinism of the Labour Party leaders, right and "left". As we explain in the accompanying article ("Break the blockade of Iraq!" page 3) political strike action and mass, militant mobilisations in the streets against a war in the Gulf will run straight up against the *opposition* of Labour. The Spartacist League's forthright military defence of Iraq and denunciation of the Labour traitors is in sharp contrast to the miserable spectacle of the reformist and centrist left now bowing in varying degrees to Benn's social chauvinism.

Only months passed between the triumphant announcements of the "death of Communism" from the imperialist centres and the present situation which so clearly proves Lenin's famous statement that imperialism breeds war. The imperialists will soon be haunted by another well known spectre, namely the revolutions which are born of war. The outbreak of war will ignite tremendous social explosions around the world, not least in

the belly of the American imperialist beast. Across the Middle East—in Jerusalem as well as Cairo, Damascus, Amman and Baghdad—the petty tyrants can and must be swept away by the enraged masses. And the workers and oppressed of Britain have a special historical responsibility to fight for the defeat of "their" imperialist rulers in the Middle East. It was the British who drew the frontiers and designated rulers throughout the region installing loyal tribal leaders as monarchs and lording it over the Arab masses for decades.

An international revolutionary party must unite the workers of the world in struggle to sweep away the imperialist system once and for all. As the First International Conference for the Fourth International put it in 1936: "The Fourth International declares...that its sections in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America will all conduct their struggle against their own imperialism, in time of war as in time of peace, and will *fight side by side with all the colonial peoples for the overthrow of their common enemy: world capitalism.*" ■

Militant...

(Continued from page 4)

against Japan" as "the most important slogan of our Chinese section in the previous period", and argued:

"In participating in the *military* struggle under the orders of Chiang Kai-shek... that is the only revolutionary policy. The Eiffelites counterpose the policy of 'class struggle' to this 'nationalist and social patriotic' policy. Lenin fought this abstract and sterile opposition all his life. To him, the interests of the world proletariat dictated the duty of aiding oppressed peoples in their national and

patriotic struggle against imperialism. Those who have not yet understood that, almost a quarter of a century after the World War and twenty years after the October Revolution, must be pitilessly rejected as the worst enemies on the inside by the revolutionary vanguard" ("On the Sino-Japanese War", 1937, *Leon Trotsky on China*).

Trotsky's words apply exactly to Militant today. And no one should take as good coin their references to supporting the workers and "a socialist federation of the Middle East", their left-sounding cover for social imperialism. We know from Pakistan and Sri Lanka that the Militant will happily join parties in gov-

ernments presiding over the bloody suppression of the workers and oppressed masses' struggles. It supported staying in the Lanka Sama Samaja Party long after that party had joined Mrs Bandaranaike's popular front coalition government and taken part in the suppression of the 1971 youth uprising led by the then-leftist JVP. In Pakistan, Militant's chosen vehicle is the bourgeois Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) of the late Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and his daughter Benazir. Bhutto senior was a central instigator of the bloody attempt to suppress the Bangladeshi uprising. Benazir Bhutto heads up a corrupt and communalist party that in

government presided over the CIA drug-peddling Mujahedin cutthroat counter-revolutionaries in Afghanistan.

Militant belongs less to some perversion of "Trotskyist entryism" than to the organic traditions of Labourite treachery. This is the "left" tradition which rejected struggling for Indian independence on the grounds that Congress was led by capitalists. Today, Grant offers his services to the Labour Party which has vowed to crush Iraq on behalf of imperialism. Despite the Labour leadership's and the capitalist press's attempts to portray them as rabid Trotskyist pariah dogs, Militant is really a social-chauvinist lap-dog. ■

Soviet Union...

(Continued from page 7)

sary to organise the working class behind a genuinely all-Soviet, internationalist communist party modelled on the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky.

Today, however, the Soviet working class is being politically exploited by contending groups within the bureaucracy and petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. Out of hatred for the old-line Stalinist apparatchiks—oppressive, parasitic, corrupt—many worker activists support the advocates of Western-style "democracy" and a "regulated market economy". Other workers, who blame perestroika for everything that has gone wrong, rally behind the conservative Stalinist apparatchiks who have made common cause with reactionary Russian nationalists. At a meeting of the Russian Communist Party, an oil worker from Tyumen, Siberia exclaimed, "No matter what slogans are used, a policy resulting in falling living standards and bloodshed is against popular interests", and he called for "returning the nation to 1985", the year Gorbachev came to power.

But the Soviet Union cannot be returned to the condition of 1985, nor would this be desirable. In its last years the Brezhnev regime tried to create the *illusion* of rising living standards by increasing money wages faster than output while freezing prices in state shops. Some of the excess rubles spilled into the growing underground, private markets. Most of it went into savings accounts or was stuffed into mattresses. In 1985, it was estimated that Soviet households had unspendable rubles equal to 80 per cent of their annual income. Thus the present condition of suppressed hyperinflation, made worse by perestroika, is rooted in the sclerotic Stalinism of the Brezhnev

regime.

The fundamental cause of the political and economic disintegration of the Soviet Union is the powerful and unrelenting pressure of world imperialism. To match the US military build-up under Carter and then Reagan without cutting living standards, the Brezhnev regime reduced investment in new plant and equipment. As a result, labour productivity steadily declined in the country's ever more aged and technically obsolete factories. In an important sense Gorbachev's perestroika was a reactionary response to the *objective* crisis of the Soviet economy after decades of bureaucratic mismanagement in the name of building "socialism in one country". But these half measures only made things worse.

Now the parasitic Kremlin bureaucracy is capitulating to Western imperialism at all levels. Gorbachev and Yeltsin want to sell off the Soviet Union's industrial and mineral wealth to Wall Street and Frankfurt while supporting US imperialism in waging war against the Arab peoples of the Near East. The Soviet working class must link the defence and regeneration of the collectivised economy within the USSR to the perspective of socialist revolutions worldwide.

Capitalist development itself has brought into being an international division of labour. Thus the struggle to secure for the Soviet masses the good things of life—both material and cultural—presupposes participation in the world economy. And this means the replacement of the imperialist-dominated world market—deformed by monopolies and national protectionism—by an international socialist economy, through proletarian revolution throughout the capitalist world.

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 510, 21 September 1990.

Abortion...

(Continued from page 12)

The Supreme Court has also awarded all costs to SPUC in a previous case dating from 1988 against that year's UCD Student Union officers for distributing abortion information (*Irish Times*, 21 March). Thus a total of 17 students will be forced to pay over £60,000. This even after they successfully appealed for a reduction of the costs!

In Ireland today it is illegal to publish a telephone number if this would lead a woman to find out how to obtain an abortion. *USI News* is now being published in Northern Ireland. *Cosmopolitan* magazine was forced to drop such phone numbers from the pages of its Irish edition. Similarly, Irish distributors refused to touch copies of a *Company* magazine with an article on abortion in Ireland by Ann Bradley, a member of the editorial staff of the RCP's *Living Marxism*. As Mary Gordon of the Women's Information Network correctly pointed out at a meeting held in Dublin in March, when Irish women become pregnant they lose their rights and are treated as subhuman by the church and state.

While students have taken a courageous stand in defiance of clericalist reaction, only the power of the working class can see this fight through to a successful conclusion. As we wrote in *Workers Hammer* no 112 ("Irish students fight anti-abortion reaction", January/February 1990): "What this latest round of battle has underlined is the need for a mass, militant mobilisation centred on the working class to break the chains of clerical reaction and win, among others, the elementary right of *free abortion on demand.*"

The possibilities for linking the student-centred fight to the labour move-

ment has been made more palpable recently by the beginnings of working class resistance to the class-collaborationist wages pact, the Programme for National Recovery. This was reflected in the bitter strike at Waterford Glass, a significant industrial enterprise in southern Ireland, and at the Gateaux bakery in Dublin. Gateaux workers faced cop attacks on their picket lines and occupied their plant at one point in an unsuccessful 14-week fight to stop the closure of the bakery.

Currently a number of student unions around the country are defying the interlocutory injunction and continuing to distribute abortion information. These include Dublin City University and regional technical colleges in Cork and Waterford (*Irish Times*, 2 October). At Trinity, while the union is not officially giving out information, a number of students, including supporters of the newly-formed Dublin Spartacist Youth Group, are continuing to do so. Stop the SPUC bigots' offensive! Defend the victimised students! For free abortion on demand!

USI has organised a "Student Defence Fund" to raise the money for the ruinous court costs. Sponsors of this fund include a number of members of the Oireachtas (the Irish parliament), including the prominent gay activist Senator David Norris, Nell McCafferty, Dr Noel Browne, the National Union of Students in Britain and MP Tony Benn. The Partisan Defence Committee in Britain—a class-struggle legal and social defence organisation whose purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League—has contributed to the defence fund.

Cheques towards the court costs should be made payable to: USI Student Legal Fund, c/o Students Union, Trinity College, Dublin 2, or sent directly to Bank of Ireland, Rotunda Branch, Dublin 1. Account No 15967150 and Branch no 90-00-68. ■

Dublin Spartacist Youth Group launched

DUBLIN, 10 October—The Dublin Spartacist Youth Group (DSYG) was founded this past weekend by a small group of students at Trinity College. The adherence of young Irish revolutionaries to the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) is a modest but significant extension of our international tendency. Messages of greetings were sent to the DSYG's foundation meeting from ICL sections, including the groups in Japan and Mexico. A recurrent theme in these greetings was the connection of working-class struggle and revolutionary perspectives within the nations and peoples of the whole British Isles. In the fight against the predominant power of the London-centred British imperialists, the opening of a "new front" in Ireland is a strengthening, above and beyond the need to combat the southern Irish rulers and their bourgeois clerical state.

The comrades of the DSYG have been active in college groups such as the Socialist Society and the Labour Society over past years, participating for example in the 500-strong united-front protest which stopped British fascist "historian" David Irving from speaking at Trinity in 1988. (This month the group organised the painting-out of fascistic anti-Semitic graffiti by students at Trinity.) They were also part of the ongoing struggle to distribute abortion information last year, including distributing with others a leaflet calling for free abortion on demand and women's liberation through socialist revolution.

The work of the ICL in Germany was instrumental in convincing the comrades who formed the DSYG of the correctness and urgency of Spartacist politics, particularly in counterposition to the rightward-moving centrists of the Irish



Bodenstown, 1934: Shankill Road, Belfast contingent at Wolfe Tone Commemoration. Anti-capitalist struggle can transcend sectarian divide.

Workers Group/Workers Power. Last February, the IWG put out an 18-page pamphlet: "Sectarianism and Stalinophilia: The Politics of the Spartacists". This was largely a response to our exposure of the IWG's grotesque call on the Irish bourgeois government to expel the Chinese ambassador after the criminal mas-

sacre at Tiananmen Square. The introduction to this diatribe contained the shameful lie that in East Germany "Spartacists Tail the Stalinists". Where we fought tooth and nail against imperialist reunification, the IWG/WP were soft-core capitalist restorationists, tailing social democracy, calling for Soviet troops

out and hailing anti-Stasi riots in which skinhead fascists were prominent. Their Stalinophobia led them to side, albeit from the "left", with counterrevolution.

Much water has passed under the bridge since the IWG/WP's marked right turn over German events. Only months after the IWG was forced to admit that the call on the Irish bourgeois state to expel the Chinese ambassador was "wrong", Workers Power in England (echoed by the IWG) called on the government of Margaret Thatcher to aid the counterrevolutionary Sajudis secessionists in Lithuania. Recently, WP's Stalinophobia came home to roost and Workers Power found itself deeply compromised as "unwitting" contributors to the witch-hunt against NUM president Arthur Scargill. WP sponsored the tour in Britain of one Yuri Butchenko—a key player in the witch-hunt (see "Turning on the Butchenko spit", page 5). Not only did Butchenko end up sharing a platform with the scab UDM leader Roy Lynk at the infamous July press conference devoted to denouncing Scargill, but his official invitation to the country had come via the British representative of the Russian fascist NTS, George Miller.

Close on the heels of the Butchenko scandal and confronted with the formation of the DSYG, the IWG has issued another pamphlet titled "The Spartacists: A Poisoned Well", largely devoted to a "defence" of WP over the Butchenko affair. Among the key tasks confronting the newly-formed DSYG is the on-going political struggle against the centrists of the IWG who seek to masquerade (with decreasing credibility) as Trotskyists. In forging the nucleus of a revolutionary party in Ireland, our tasks as a fighting *continued on page 8*

Defend Irish students fighting anti-abortion reaction!

DUBLIN—Third-level students in the Republic of Ireland earlier this year achieved a partial victory against the anti-woman, anti-sex campaign orchestrated by the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC)—winning the bulk of a series of campus referenda on whether student unions should distribute "abortion information". But the Supreme Court, reflecting the priorities of this deeply reactionary, clericalist state, has come down against those defending even the most minimal rights for women, victimising the student activists.

In October 1989, the High Court in Dublin had rejected an attempt by SPUC to secure injunctions against 14 named student leaders to stop the distribution of phone numbers and other information on how women may obtain abortions in Britain. Justice Carroll referred the case to the European Court in Luxembourg whose judgement is not expected for



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Dublin, 9 October 1989: students protest SPUC's reactionary anti-abortion campaign outside court. The struggle against the oppression of women in Ireland is integral to the perspective of workers revolution.

another year. But SPUC managed to appeal the High Court decision to the Irish Supreme Court which ruled in December that "interlocutory" or temporary injunctions could be obtained in the meantime against individuals deemed to be "assisting" or "facilitating" a woman in "the destruction of the life of her unborn child" (*Irish Times*, 20 December 1989). The legal basis for this hideous ruling is the 1861 Offences Against the Persons Act and the 1983 national referendum which enshrined the "right of life of every unborn child" in the constitution.

The Supreme Court has since awarded all costs of the December 1989 appeal to SPUC. The students who will be forced to pay the costs include the officers of the national Union of Students in Ireland (USI) and the sabbatical officers of the students' unions at Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin (UCD). *continued on page 11*