

No vote to Kilfoyle, Mahmood!

Labourites fall out in Liverpool

Defend the trade unions!

The Walton, Liverpool by-election held to fill the seat left by the death of Labour MP Eric Heffer will take place on 4 July. The vile Kinnockite Peter Kilfoyle is the official Labour candidate and stand-

ing against him is the Militant tendency supporter Lesley Mahmood, who identifies herself variously as the candidate of the Broad Left, as well as the Walton "real Labour" candidate. In this contest, we do not advocate even the most savagely critical support to Mahmood.

A qualitative and decisive reason for our *continued on page 10*



Liverpool, 19 June: trade unionists protest Labour Council cuts and sackings.

India: bloody end of a dynasty

The article below first appeared in *Workers Vanguard* no 528 (7 June), newspaper of the Spartacist League/US. As we go to press, Congress (I) "won" the elections on 20 June, securing fewer than half of the 543 seats contested in the Lok Sabha (India's lower house of parliament). On 21 June, the 70-year-old Congress (I) non-contestant "consensus man" PV Narasimha Rao, propped up by indications of support from the main bourgeois opposition parties and the left, was sworn in as India's ninth Prime Minister, the first from the South. Even with massive police and paramilitary forces deployed, the elections had to be staggered over three days to allow for concentration of forces. Elections in the blood-drenched Punjab were promptly "postponed" until September; no vote is slated for Kashmir. The fascist Hindu-chauvinist Bharatiya Janata Party of LK Advani increased its number of seats to nearly 120.

Late on the evening of 21 May at an election rally in the town of Sriperumbudur in India's southern state of Tamil Nadu, a young woman exploded a bomb, killing herself and 16 others. The terror bombing brought the death toll in India's tenth national election to some 400 people, the bloodiest election campaign *continued on page 4*



Rajiv Gandhi's funeral pyre. Leading figures of "democratic" India have met violent death. Above, left to right: Jawaharlal Nehru with Mohandas Gandhi; Nehru's daughter Indira; her son, Rajiv.

Nickelsberg/Time; above: UPI, Mehta/Contact, Independent

For permanent revolution in India's prison house of peoples!

Letter to Caribbean Times

Al Sharpton: FBI grass

We reprint below a letter submitted to the Caribbean Times dated 17 June 1991.

To the Editor,

Caribbean Times (7 and 14 May 1991) has devoted considerable favourable coverage to Al Sharpton, including his participation in the Thamesmead demonstration protesting the racist murder of Rolan Adams and the activities of the fascist British National Party. As militant advocates of racial equality and black liberation and as participants in the Thamesmead mobilisations, we in the Spartacist League know how false and dangerous are portrayals of Sharpton as some kind of "new civil rights leader" or a modern-day Malcolm X. Indeed, if the heroic Malcolm X were alive today, he wouldn't touch the likes of Sharpton with a bargepole. We think your readers deserve some facts.

Al Sharpton is a cynical, self-aggrandising hustler and an admitted fink for the American FBI, the agency responsible for the COINTELPRO "disruption" cam-

paigned against and physical annihilation of the leaders of the Black Panther Party and other black nationalists. In 1988, as a result of a New York *Newsday* exposé, Sharpton admitted that he began informing for the FBI in 1983, after allegedly being videotaped during a cocaine deal with an undercover narc. He let the FBI tap his phone, wore a concealed microphone at times and accompanied "wired" undercover cops to meetings with people the FBI was trying to entrap. Sharpton finked on two New York black politicians—Congressman Major Owens and state assemblyman Al Vann—when the Reagan "Justice" Department was investigating "vote tampering". At the time Sharpton was working for Owens' campaign opponent, Roy Innis. Innis was particularly notorious as a recruiter for the CIA and South African-backed UNITA terrorists in Angola.

In 1986 Sharpton tried to whip up a pogromist backlash against Arab shopkeepers in Harlem (for supposedly selling drug paraphernalia). That same year, Sharp-

ton backed Reaganite Senator Alphonse D'Amato—who described blacks living on housing estates as "animals"—for re-election. Sharpton is also an enthusiast for the US government's "war on drugs"—the storm-trooper police operations against the ghetto populations and elementary civil liberties. And the FBI may well not have been the only US government agency Sharpton did his dirty work for. Investigative journalist Warren Hinckle reported: "His past background, according to intelligence sources, is that of a CIA contract agent, who was involved in destabilizing

502, 18 May 1990).

In order to police the inner cities, the American ruling class has employed a layer of black elected officials (BEOs) to oversee the grinding poverty and misery of the ghettos. Sharpton poses as some sort of alternative to these "black faces in high places", as a "tell it like it is" street leader opposed to the bought-and-paid-for BEOs. He came to Britain where a similar vacuum of leadership exists (and where the BBC were doing a story on him).

Certainly the Labour Party, right and "left" has starkly demonstrated its nature

Thamesmead, 27 April: self-confessed FBI informer Al Sharpton represents no road to black liberation.



TROTSKY

On the betrayals of the Labour "lefts"

Following the betrayal of the 1926 General Strike and the collapse of the Anglo-Russian Committee, Trotsky re-emphasised his warning against the perfidy of the Labour "lefts" of the day. The Communist Party had in its propaganda during this period continually reinforced the "leftist" credentials of A Purcell. Today while standing as the "real" Labour Party in Liverpool



LENIN

where the Kinnockite right openly prepare to smash the trade unions, the Militant/Broad Left continues to organise for the victory of the Labour Party in the general election—ie to put Kinnock into No 10 Downing Street.

What was the significance of 'stabilization' in relation to British economy and politics, especially in the years 1926-1927? Did it signify the development of the productive forces? The improvement of the economic situation? Better hopes for the future? Not at all. The whole so-called stabilization of British capitalism is maintained only upon the conservative forces of the old labour organizations with all their currents and shadings in the face of the weakness and irresoluteness of the British Communist Party. On the field of the economic and social relations of Britain, the revolution has already fully matured. The question stands purely politically. The basic props of the stabilization are the heads of the Labour Party and the trade unions which, in Britain, constitute a single unit but which operate through a division of labour.

Given such a condition of the working masses as was revealed by the General Strike, the highest post in the mechanism of capitalist stabilization is no longer occupied by MacDonald and Thomas, but by Pugh, Purcell, Cook and Co. They do the work and Thomas adds the finishing touches. Without Purcell, Thomas would be left hanging in mid-air and along with Thomas also Baldwin. The chief brake upon the British revolution is the false, diplomatic masquerade 'Leftism' of Purcell which fraternizes sometimes in rotation, sometimes simultaneously with churchmen and Bolsheviks and which is always ready not only for retreats but also for betrayal.

—Leon Trotsky, "Strategy and tactics in the imperialist epoch", 28 June 1928

the Manley regime in Jamaica" (*San Francisco Examiner*, 6 March 1988).

The very existence of a layer of black demagogues, outright reactionaries and finks posing as "militants" reflects the profound crisis of black leadership in America. Sharpton is joined in a league of hustlers by the likes of Louis Farrakhan—a grotesque anti-Semite who said Malcolm X was "worthy of death" as well as Brooklyn's Sonny Carson, who leads crowds against Korean shop owners. As Dhoruba Moore, a former Black Panther freed after 17 years in prison on a COINTELPRO frame-up, said: "If someone told me in 1969 that an informer with processed hair could be considered a leader in the African-American community, I would have told them they were crazy. So when I stepped out and found things of that nature, I realized how desperate things have become in the black community" (*Workers Vanguard* no

through support to the imperialist war aims in the Gulf, with the "lefts" working overtime to witch hunt and set up for state repression those who advocated a defeat for the US/British imperialists. Not only official race terror—ie, the round up, detention and deportation of many Arab people—but the escalation of murderous thuggery on the streets was the organic consequence of the mass murder in the Gulf supported by all major parties. In power, the racist Labour Party has presided over reactionary anti-immigrant legislation, the Prevention of Terrorism Act and sent the Special Patrol Group thugs into Southall to protect the National Front and slaughter anti-fascist fighter Blair Peach.

While we opposed those right-wing tabloids and Tories who called for a Home Office ban on Sharpton's visit, we know he did not come here to struggle

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WORKERS HAMMER



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For a Socialist United States of Europe!

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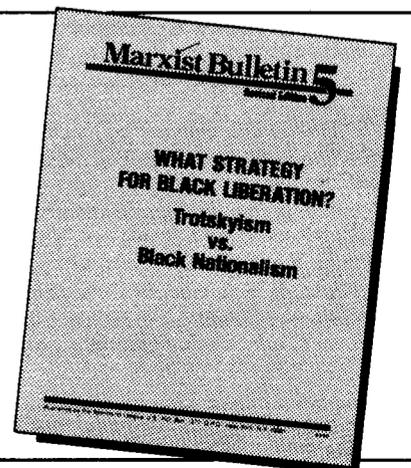
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Anti-Scargill witch hunters exposed

CIA/GCHQ dirty tricks targeted NUM

The chickens continue to come home to roost in the vile witch hunt against Arthur Scargill and the National Union of Mineworkers. On 22 May the *Guardian* printed an exposé confirming that British and American intelligence agencies were directly involved in an internationally orchestrated union-busting campaign against the NUM. It also provided further refutation of the wholesale lies employed by a massive "get Scargill" operation launched anew last summer. Channel Four's "Dispatches" programme, aired on the evening of 22 May, similarly exposed the lies and the methods of the anti-Scargill witch hunt, not least those of Robert Maxwell's *Daily Mirror* and Central TV's *Cook Report*—which served as central mouthpieces for the sinister frame-up.

As the *Guardian*'s article "Security services 'broke rules to spy on NUM'" detailed:

"Western intelligence agencies breached the security of banking transactions throughout Europe to track Soviet funds destined for the National Union of Mineworkers during and after its 1984-5 strike, intelligence sources have alleged."

Its investigation, in cooperation with "Dispatches", "also revealed that the Kremlin itself took the decision to divert its 'Moscow gold' from the NUM to an international miners' trust fund to avoid damaging its relations with the British government", thus rubbishing one of the central contentions of the smear campaign that Scargill had pocketed or otherwise manipulated the Soviet donations.

In late 1984 when the government was out to starve the striking miners and their families into submission and sequester the NUM's assets, "a Soviet bank tried to lodge \$1 million in an account controlled by the miners' union at the Swiss bank EBC (Schweiz) AG in Zurich". The account continues:

"It is alleged that the NSA [National



Battle of Orgreave, 1984: striking miners faced armies of Thatcher's boot boys (left); NUM leader Scargill under arrest (right). Today, bourgeoisie and Labour lackeys still seek to bury legacy of strike and to crucify Scargill.

Security Agency], which works closely with the CIA, had 'cracked' Soviet international banking networks and was able to keep track of transactions with the West.

"The agency traced the deposit as soon as it was made, tipping off British intelligence that Soviet money was being funnelled to the NUM. Around the same time, allegations of 'Moscow gold' being sent to aid the miners began to appear in British newspapers."

Coinciding with the 1984 "Moscow gold" Fleet Street campaign was Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to London where he was duly warned by Thatcher against Soviet assistance to the miners and duly acquiesced. (A year earlier, Fleet Street and the Labourite right wing had picked up on a similar anti-communist witch hunt against Scargill, instigated by Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party, lambasting the NUM leader for correctly

calling Polish Solidarność "anti-Socialist".) Back in the USSR, according to the *Guardian*, the Kremlin decided not to send the funds directly to the NUM but rather to an international solidarity fund in order "to avoid a diplomatic rift between Mrs Thatcher and the then rising star Mr Gorbachev if the payment was discovered by the courts or British intelligence".

Nearly a year ago, Maxwell kicked off the anti-Scargill campaign revisited with allegations of personal corruption against Scargill and Peter Heathfield, which collapsed completely even in the inquiry generally hostile to Scargill by Gavin Lightman QC. There were also rehashes of the "Libyan connection" in the press and the charge of "irregularities" around the Soviet monies. The latter were key to the campaign and bolstered by a virtual horde of "independent" Soviet trade unionists brought over to Britain to lend credence to the spurious charges.

Among these Russian "workers" were one Sergei Massalovich who complained to the Serious Fraud Office and sparked off an investigation against the NUM based on the Soviet monies and one Yuri Butchenko who appeared with arch-scab UDM head Roy Lynk in a press conference designed to further the witch hunt. Both are connected with the Russian fascist NTS—an outfit with documented links to Western intelligence. The fact that Butchenko's tour had been organised not by the UDM or NTS but grotesquely by avowed "socialists" lent an air of authenticity to Butchenko's charges. Regular readers of *Workers Hammer* will be aware that in the course of defending Scargill against the sinister ruling-class/Ramsay MacKinnock witch hunt we took out *Workers Power* and their ex-bloc partners in CSWEB (Campaign for Solidarity with Workers in the Eastern Bloc)—Socialist Organiser—for their revolting sponsorship of Yuri Butchenko. *Workers Power* knew full well that Butchenko was connected with the fascistic NTS when it

proceeded with the tour. This it kept to itself, but when Butchenko appeared with the UDM's Roy Lynk *Workers Power* was forced to issue a number of public statements. Even in these contradictory and self-serving disclaimers, *Workers Power* implied that there was a basis for the smears against Scargill, even advising the Kuzbass Workers' Union "should you wish to pursue the matter of the money sent by Soviet miners to the NUM during their strike, to do so exclusively via the NUM itself". We are not surprised, either, that the recent issue of *Workers Power* says not one word about the recent exposés of dirty tricks in the witch hunt—including the gratifying fact that Yuri Butchenko has subsequent to his trip to Britain been expelled from his trade-union organisation for "misappropriation of equipment".

In stark contrast to this grovelling before the anti-Communist witch hunters, comrades from the International Communist League (ICL—of which the Spartacist League is the British section) intervened in the Soviet miners congress in Donetsk last autumn. While trade-union bureaucrats from the US and the UDM slimed about trying to get the miners to condemn Arthur Scargill, we told the truth about the witch hunt, circulating our article in defence of the NUM leader. In a recent interview with a Soviet miner present at that congress, the SL/US newspaper *Workers Vanguard* (no 528, 7 June) asked about the fact that the imperialists' lackeys were stymied in this attempt; the miner answered:

"At the beginning it was presented that Scargill grabbed, concealed our one and a half million pounds sterling that the Soviet miners had collected for the striking English miners as a symbol of solidarity.... Only after discussions and contacts with different comrades, in particular with the American comrades from the 'Spartacist League-Internationalists,'

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Miners strike mobilised broad support from British and international working class. Women's Support Group march in London 10 August 1984.

India...

(Continued from page 1)

in the country's history. But this killing sent shock waves throughout India and the rest of the world. For among the mangle of dismembered bodies lying near the speaker's platform was that of Rajiv Gandhi, former prime minister, head of the Congress (I) party and scion of the dynasty which ruled India for all but 7 of its 44 years since gaining independence from Britain.

And, at least for the foreseeable future, Rajiv Gandhi's bloody end also means the end of that dynasty, founded by India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Gandhi met his end much in the manner of many another Congress leader. Nehru's mentor and head of the bourgeois independence movement, Mohandas Gandhi (no relation) was shot by a Hindu ultra-nationalist in 1948. Only two years after Nehru died in office of a stroke in 1964, his daughter Indira assumed the parliamentary throne. When she was assassinated by Sikh members of her bodyguard in 1984, in revenge for her brutal massacre of rebellious Sikhs at the Golden Temple in Amritsar, it was her son Rajiv who took over as head of Congress and India.



Dieter Ludwig

Hindu fascists of the paramilitary Shiva Sena target Muslim minority in terror attacks.

"Whoever killed Rajiv Gandhi yesterday struck at democracy itself." Erstwhile pseudo-Trotskyist Tariq Ali joined in the bourgeois breast-beating, lamenting "the tragedy of the Nehru-Gandhi family" and moaning: "In one foul blow the country's leading secular politician has been eliminated from the race. Who will now rescue India from the prophets of hate?"

Its "secular" and even "socialist" pre-

rection. The states of Punjab, Kashmir and Assam are under martial law aimed at suppressing regional insurgencies. Even with 1.5 million police and paramilitary forces deployed, the elections had to be staggered over three days to allow for concentration of forces to defend the balloting, with two further dates set aside for Punjab and Assam and no vote slated for Kashmir. "Booth-capturing" by gangs of rival party thugs, who shoot their way into polling places in order to stuff the ballot boxes, alone claimed the lives of dozens during the first day of balloting on 20 May.

Meanwhile, a sinister rise in anti-Muslim communalism has been registered with the dramatic growth of the Hindu-chauvinist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The spectre looms of a slaughter to match that of the Partition of India in 1947. Commenting on the assassination, the *Times of India* wrote: "At no time since it won freedom has India been as polarised along antagonistic lines as it is today. Caste has been pitted against caste and religion against religion with relentless fury." At no time has the need been clearer for a socialist revolution in India that sweeps away all the encrusted backwardness and hideous oppression that are bound up with capitalist rule.

Caste hatreds explode

Following the elections of November 1989, Gandhi's Congress (I) was replaced by a National Front government led by V P Singh's Janata Dal and supported from the outside by both the rightist BJP and the two main Stalinist parties, the Communist Party of India and CPI (Marxist). The immediate backdrop to the present crisis stems from Singh's decision last August to implement affirmative action measures for the country's lower castes based on a report issued ten years earlier. Designating more than 3700 of the country's castes and subcastes as

"other backward castes"—in contrast to high castes like Brahmins and "forward" farmer castes like the Rajputs, and to "untouchables" like the Harijans who are outside and beneath the caste structure—the Mandal Report called for reserving 27 per cent of federal government jobs for them.

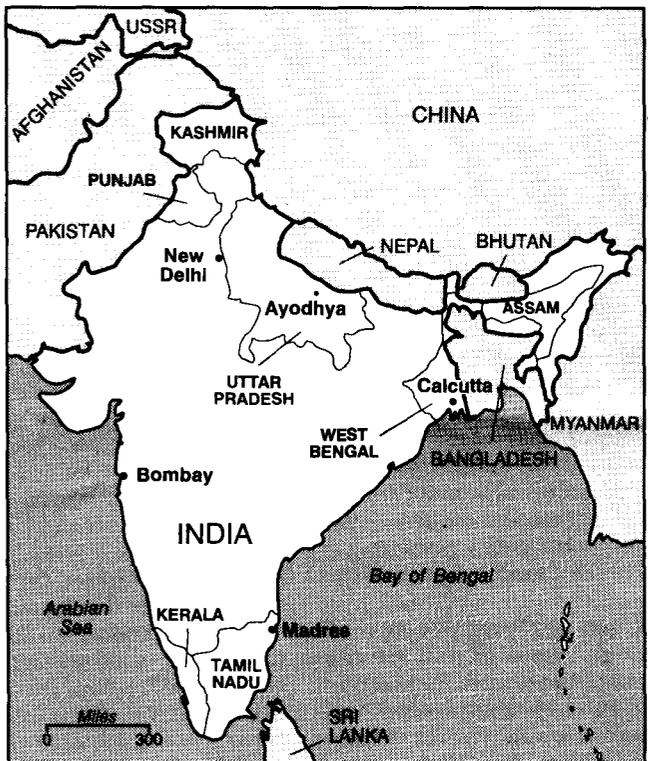
In line with an earlier 1950 provision, another 22.5 per cent of government jobs were already reserved for the lowest "scheduled castes" (untouchables) and "scheduled tribes" (so called because the constitution specifically schedules them for protection). In fact these "job reservations" are effectively meaningless in undermining pervasive caste oppression. To this day, fewer than five per cent of the elite Indian Administrative Services are from the scheduled castes and tribes, while 70 per cent are high caste. Untouchables often fill their quota in the lowliest work traditionally associated with their status—like cleaning or rubbish collection—whether or not they have a college degree. Indeed, some 600,000 untouchable families eke out an existence solely by cleaning latrines. As one student pointed out:

"I belong to the backward caste. I have been looking for a job in vain for the last five years. What good is job reservation to me? Who will give me a job? We all know that only the children of the rich and powerful will get jobs, reservation or no reservations."

—*The Hindu* (15 September 1990)

Yet in a country with over 50 million unemployed, where even a menial position in the railways or post office may be the difference between relative comfort and utter destitution, this is an explosive question. In 1989, there were more than 450,000 applicants for some 4500 jobs in the Union Public Service Commission. Moreover, even the slightest tampering with the caste system is viewed with alarm by the high castes who continue to dominate Indian society in all aspects.

Though the last census enumerating caste status was taken 60 years ago, caste prejudice and oppression remain a powerful and pernicious force, reinforced by popular culture and television epics like the Mahabharata. While the British colonialists hypocritically condemned caste discrimination, they cultivated and recruited the higher castes to their administrative and military apparatus and then tried to build up the lower castes as a counter-weight to nationalist agitation, much as they used Muslim-Hindu communalism, to divide and rule. Capitalism and urbanisation have impacted on old caste practices and adjusted the status and power of some castes, but the division between rich and poor, powerful and powerless, still broadly parallels that between high and low caste. Indicative of the depth of the problem is that some see progress in the fact that urban upper caste families now keep separate plates



Workers Vanguard map

Rajiv Gandhi's assassination highlights the deep crisis of capitalist India. The imperialists are worried at the prospect of an already turbulent India being pushed further down the road to chaos. Even before the killing, the *Economist* (4 May) wrote:

"The future of India looks more threatened than for many years. In recent months its government has been all but paralysed by political squabbling. The country is divided by violence over caste, religion and demands for regional autonomy. Economic growth is slowing, and poverty on a scale that defies the imagination seems beyond all remedy."

Though no longer the hegemonic party it was in Nehru's day, Congress remained the main party of a fragmented all-India bourgeoisie, with pretensions of representing all caste, religious, national and ethnic groupings. And, as an editorial in the *Independent* (22 May) wrote, "Congress (I) was the Gandhi family." (The "I" stands for Indira, to distinguish it from the rump party of Congress bosses who fell afoul of her in a power fight.)

For decades, the imperialist press has hailed India as the "world's most populous democracy" and upheld it as the model of a "democratic" alternative to social revolution in the Third World. The *New York Times* (22 May) editorialised,

tensions notwithstanding, Congress ruled over India's prison house of peoples with an iron fist. Nehru presided over the grisly communalist slaughter of the 1947 Partition which created Muslim Pakistan. Indira Gandhi calculatingly played the Hindu-chauvinist card; her massacre of the Sikhs was characteristic of her long and bloody reign. And despite his "Mr Clean" image, Rajiv followed firmly in his mother's footsteps, right from the start. As thousands of Sikhs were being hunted down and lynched following his mother's assassination, Gandhi encouraged the bloodbath, intoning: "When a great tree falls, the earth shakes." Several years later, he sent Indian "peacekeeping" forces to Sri Lanka who, under the guise of protecting the country's Tamil minority from a Sinhalese chauvinist bloodbath, waged a war of annihilation against the separatist guerrilla Tamil Tigers.

Today the Tigers, who are also suspected of blowing away hawkish Sri Lankan defence chief Ranjan Wijeratne two months ago, are considered prime suspects in Gandhi's assassination. In retribution, the Congress party in Tamil Nadu is demanding the deportation of 200,000 Lankan Tamil refugees. But such is the squalid morass of Indian bourgeois politics that the assassin could have come from virtually any ethnic or political di-



AP

Muslim refugees in New Delhi after British-engineered 1947 Partition of India. As many as a million people were killed, many millions more driven from their homes in bloody communalist strife.

for their untouchable employees instead of throwing scraps from a safe distance.

Nowhere is the degradation inherent in this hierarchy of power and poverty more apparent than in the treatment of women. Untouchable and tribal women are routinely subjected to rape, while upper caste women are disinherited and secluded in the name of caste purity. The caste-related dowry system has led to a shocking decline in the ratio of women to men (now 929 to 1000). This disparity is fuelled by infanticide of female babies, deliberate maltreatment of young girls by their parents and murder of young brides by the families of husbands greedy for more or a second dowry—the fate of 690 women in the capital of New Delhi alone last year. “Bride burnings... are escalating exponentially in a modern, urban India, where a new wave of consumerism has spawned a greedy, growing middle class” (*Los Angeles Times*, 29 April).

One recent incident of caste/sex violence shocked the country. When the 16-year-old daughter of a Jat landowner in the town of Mehra near Delhi eloped with her 18-year-old outcaste Jatav lover, with the help of his Jatav friend, the higher caste Jat families in the town captured the three youth and subjected them to an inquisition. When the couple refused to renounce their relationship, the two young men were tortured for hours—beaten with clubs and burned with torches in their mouths and genitals while hung upside down. Then the Jat-dominated town council “sentenced” all three to be hanged—by their own parents. When the young men’s fathers balked, they too were clubbed until they finally acquiesced.

Communal terror escalates

Far from being the “social revolution” depicted by the Western press, Singh’s “job reservation” proposal was purely and cynically aimed at cutting into the lower-caste “vote banks” of the other bourgeois parties. But in response to Singh’s announcement, violent high-caste anti-reservation protests erupted across north India, spearheaded by students, scores of whom immolated themselves. Though none of the other parties dared to openly repudiate the scheme for fear of alienating potential voters, Singh’s opponents—including a split from his own party—seized on the uproar to move on him. On 7 November, Singh resigned and a minority government headed by a split-off led by Chandra Shekhar governed precariously with Congress (I) support.

The BJP in particular responded to this attempt to divide its base by launching an ugly Hindu-communalist campaign of anti-Muslim provocations. Screaming “Break the mosque!” and “Hail the Lord Rama!” in late October BJP-led mobs stormed a 400-year-old Muslim mosque in Ayodhya which Hindu fundamentalists claim is located on the birthplace of the Hindu god Ram. Anti-Muslim terror and Muslim reprisals escalated throughout the region, leaving over 2000 dead in a matter of weeks. The scenes evoked the horror of partition. In Hyderabad alone, 130 people were slaughtered, including 30 children stabbed or axed and burned alive. In Aligarh, the site of an old Muslim academy, Hindu thugs provocatively marched through Muslim areas and three Muslim men were dragged from a train passing through the station and butchered. A 20,000-strong paramilitary force drafted in to stop the communalist terror instead began disintegrating in the face of the Hindu mobs. By the beginning of November, some 40 cities had been placed under curfew.

The BJP’s mixture of rabid anti-Muslim communalism and mythological Hindu fundamentalism, exemplified by the title of its 1991 manifesto “Towards Ram Rajya” (the rule of Ram), has catapulted it from two seats in parliament in 1984 to



Communist Party election rally in Nepal. Stalinist mass parties in Indian subcontinent tie workers to reactionary bourgeois order.

88 five years later to now being a serious contender to form the next government. Much of its explosive support has come from the growing middle class spawned by Gandhi’s economic “liberalisation” in the 1980s, who live in terror at the prospect of sinking back into utter destitution. While advocating Thatcherite economic policies and a pro-American tilt, the BJP offers them a scapegoat for the degradation and misery of Indian capitalist society in the more than 110 million Muslims and other minorities of the country, who are denounced as “ungrateful guests”.

The BJP’s parent organisation is the fascistic RSS (it was an RSS supporter who assassinated Mohandas Gandhi). While BJP leader L K Advani—who is also a long-time member of the RSS—presents the party’s parliamentarist face, his agitators mobilise anti-Muslim pogroms on the streets. “Moslems are like a lemon dropped into cream. They turn it sour,” rants one. “What do we do with the lemon? We cut it up, squeeze out the pips and throw them away.”

And while Hindu/Muslim communalism ominously escalates, threatening to engulf the subcontinent in another India-Pakistan war, as *India Today* (15 October 1990) put it, “Punjab burns, Kashmir burns.” The war against the Punjabi Sikhs continues relentlessly, while the Muslims of Kashmir have been subjected to a “scorched-earth policy” of “terror and violence”. “Kashmir is now beyond solution,” shrugs one Indian political analyst in a *New York Times Magazine* (19 May) article by Barbara Crossette. And in February, 26,000 were arrested during a general strike in Tamil Nadu protesting against the imposition of direct rule by New Delhi.

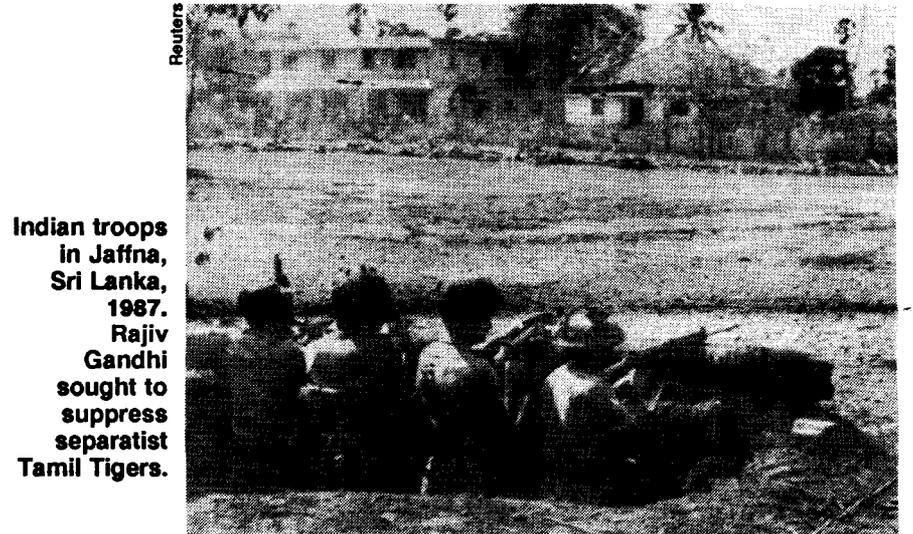
For a Trotskyist party in India!

Forty-four years after independence, the vast majority of the country’s 850 million people live in ghastly poverty, dispossessed and effectively disenfranchised, as flagrantly corrupt politicians, capitalists and landlords amass their wealth and determine election outcomes with naked brute force. For the Sikhs, Muslims and hundreds of millions of lower-caste and “outcaste” Hindus as well as women of all ethnic and caste backgrounds, India’s “secular democracy” has meant only uninterrupted and unendurable oppression. And neighbouring Pakistan is no less a prison house for its minority peoples. Already ruled as an Islamic theocracy, Pakistan’s rulers are now attempting to shove through an even stricter, fundamentalist “Shari’a Law”.

With all the gin-and-tonic arrogance that comes so easily to it, the *Economist* (4 May) sneers that India’s misery “is largely India’s own doing” and “not the fault of former colonial masters or wicked western capitalists”. Calling for

opening India up to even greater imperialist exploitation, this mouthpiece for the former colonial masters insists, “The changes India needs are not far short of a revolution.”

A revolution is precisely what India needs, not the untrammelled imperialist exploitation envisaged by the *Economist*, but thorough-going proletarian socialist revolution. The small but strategic Indian proletariat, which has historically demon-



Indian troops in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, 1987. Rajiv Gandhi sought to suppress separatist Tamil Tigers.

strated militancy and organisation, is the only social force capable of dragging the country out of the quagmire of conflicting nationalist and communalist antagonisms. The working class has a direct and immediate interest in combating communalism. Frequently drawn from local and migrant minorities, it is often particularly the working class that is the main target of communalist terror.

Likewise, drawing behind it the agrarian masses, the proletariat is the only force capable of rooting out the deeply embedded structure of caste and sexual oppression. Even the most elementary demands against caste discrimination—like an end to all discrimination in jobs and social facilities, decent housing for the poor and safe water and sewage systems—require sweeping away the capitalist system. And integral to the perpetuation of the caste system is the land question. The post-independence land reforms and the so-called “Green Revolution” of agrarian development have benefited a layer of capitalist farmers, including some of the “backward” farmer castes. But half of rural households own no land, while five per cent own well over a third of the cultivable land. Rural indebtedness is endemic, bonded labour widespread and growing.

Even the Mandal Report linked land reform to the question of countering entrenched caste privilege, but none of the bourgeois parties dare draw that connection. As the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 in Russia demonstrated, the road

to agrarian revolution in the countryside lies through the seizure of power by the proletariat in the cities. Only then will it be possible to nationalise the land and expropriate large landlords and capitalist farmers. And the call for land to the poor peasants and a programme of government loans and provision for modern farming equipment can win the peasants and agricultural workers to the side of the proletariat.

The key is forging a Trotskyist party to lead the Indian working masses to power. The thoroughly reformist Stalinist CPI and CPI(M) are both mass parties, holding governmental power in several states. They have gained a certain amount of authority for steering clear of the manipulative communalism which marks all the bourgeois parties. Sikh CPI militants in the Punjab, for example, risked their lives to defend their Hindu neighbours against pogroms by Sikh fundamentalists. And the CPI(M) has been able to retain control over Calcutta and West Bengal for 13 years, largely because of its ability thus far to avert communal clashes. Even in the neighbouring Himalayan kingdom of Nepal, the Communists recently scored resounding successes in the first election in 30 years.

But both the CPI and CPI(M) are wedded to the politics of coalitionism, tying the proletariat to the wheels of one or another bourgeois party in the name of democracy, and both uphold capitalist

India’s “unity” against “secessionists”. The CPI(M)-led government of West Bengal is aggressively encouraging capitalist businessmen, including the chief minister’s son. India more than perhaps any other country on the face of the earth is proof positive of Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution, an object lesson in the futility of seeking to fulfil the tasks of the democratic revolution in a backward country under capitalism. There has been capitalist development: the “Green Revolution” of applying science to agriculture virtually eliminated India’s import of grain; the country has built up large-scale heavy industry. Yet this is combined with truly horrendous social conditions, the bride burning, caste oppression, national subjugation, hunger and grinding poverty on a mind-boggling scale—the list is endless.

As we wrote seven years ago, after the Golden Temple massacre (*Spartacist Britain* no 60, August 1984):

“If India is not to be wracked by another convulsion of communalist slaughter in the interests of imperialism, what is needed is a mass proletarian party rallying behind the banner of Permanent Revolution the myriad minorities, the agrarian masses and the multitudinous victims of caste and sex oppression....

“The problems of South Asia are interrelated and will not be solved separately. Only the working class can guarantee the right of self-determination to the oppressed nations from the Baluchis in Pakistan to the Tamils in Lanka, the liberation of women from bondage and backwardness, and land to the tiller.” ■

Connolly's legacy

We print below the second and concluding part of an edited version of the 14 March presentation given in Dublin by comrade Tom Crean of the Dublin Spartacist Youth Group. Part I was published in *Workers Hammer* no 123 (May/June 1991). An accompanying piece entitled "In honour of the 1916 Easter Rising" addressed the importance for Marxists of this anti-imperialist rebellion in which Connolly made the last political intervention of his life.

Part I, which contained the bulk of the main presentation, described Connolly's work up to 1914 and his attempt to

in Belfast between 1911 and 1914.

Part II takes up the many differences between our analysis and programme and those of our opponents on the left. The discussion period at the Dublin meeting was in fact dominated by a debate between Emmett Farrell of the Militant tendency and the DSYG. Militant is known for its loyalty to Labourism in Ireland as well as in Britain, combined with a tepid economism which it claims has something to do with Trotskyism. To understand Militant's position on Ireland, it is important to remember that it was the Labour Party which sent the troops to

socialism in Britain through an Enabling Act in the British Parliament. That is the policy of the left-wing social democrats, going back to the 1930s....

"And I tell you one newspaper where you will certainly never read about British troops out of Ireland, that is the newspaper of the *British Militant*. In fact, if there is a responsibility it is for *British* revolutionaries above all to fight against the presence of British troops in the North....

"For example the Irish Militant called at one point to defend Iraq in the recent war, whereas the British Militant would



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election of Mary Robinson as the Irish President. He says there are basically (the way he put it) two souls of Irish socialism, one of which is the Republican tradition and the other the social democratic standpoint which capitulates to British imperialism and Unionism in the North. And in fact one of the most important things about Mary Robinson's election (which the Militant hails as some kind of famous advance and forming a critical turning point apparently), is her pro-imperialism. The fact that she wants to see the continuation of the British role in the North, that she is very strongly pro-NATO. That represents the real sort of politics of Irish social democracy which is a capitulation to British imperialism and to Unionism...."

Farrell retorted that:

"In 1971 we did change our position in terms of our public material addressed to a particular area of the working class.... In 1970 and 1971 and 1972, when we first published the paper as a regular monthly paper, on our masthead we had 'for a united socialist Ireland'.... That was a time when you could get an echo for that even in Protestant working-class areas, when you had ten thousand people approaching the Official IRA and the Provisional IRA to become members after the killings in Derry and after internment.... Three years later, in 1975, there was mass killings in the North on a daily basis of Catholics by Protestants and of Protestants by Catholics and the idea that you would get into East Belfast where there were Protestant thugs from the UDA at the entrances to all the parts of East Belfast with clubs and masks on and sell the paper saying that you were for a socialist united Ireland was just a joke, you just wouldn't do it, you wouldn't get in and that remains the case in parts of East Belfast today. And the comrades would say you must preserve your programme. Of course you must preserve your programme.... On the other hand, the [Spartacist] comrades will want to...have in their paper a headline saying 'troops out' and say that the Militant should be held in contempt because we don't have it."

Clearly, Militant's "change of position" was motivated by an opportunist adaptation. But we must also point out that the call for a "united socialist Ireland" can be a left-sounding version of the nationalist programme for the forcible unification of Ireland, ignoring at best the question of the Protestants. Our demand for an Irish workers republic as part of a socialist federation of the British Isles leaves open the question of where the Protestants fall. It is counterposed to the Militant's (now defunct) call and to its replacement, "For a Socialist Federation of Ireland and Britain". With their old slogan Militant leaned towards Green nationalism; their current slogan walks both southern and northern sides of the street, leaving the door open to the Unionist notion of an indivisible "United Kingdom" (particularly given the failure to call for British troops out of the North). Unlike our call for a "federation of workers republics in the British Isles", it suggests both islands are fixed national entities, without internal and unresolved national questions which must be addressed by revolutionaries. (The need



National Library of Ireland

James Connolly with a contingent of the Irish Citizen Army marshal in front of the headquarters of the Transport and General Workers Union in Dublin. The Citizen Army emerged out of the great strike/lockout of 1913.

address Irish history from a Marxist standpoint, particularly in *Labour in Irish History*. Connolly was eventually led to equate the fight for national independence with the fight for socialism. As a result, Connolly—while fighting tooth and nail against the bourgeois nationalists of John Redmond's Irish Parliamentary Party—also made various political concessions to the Fenian Republican tradition in the belief that consistent Republicanism would lead to socialism. Connolly was trying to grapple with the national question in the context of the Second International which was characterised in the main by rotten, pro-imperialist chauvinism (as confirmed in August 1914). He was unaware of Lenin's debates with Rosa Luxemburg on the question of self-determination; executed after the 1916 Rising, Connolly did not live to see the Comintern deal with these issues.

For us, as for Lenin, Marxism and nationalism are fundamentally counterposed. As we wrote in *Theses on Ireland* (*Spartacist* no 24):

"Thus, while revolutionists struggle against all forms of national oppression, they are also opposed to all forms of nationalist ideology. It is a revision of Leninism to claim that the 'nationalism of the oppressed' is progressive and can be supported by communist internationalists."

Whatever weaknesses there were in Connolly's theoretical understanding of the national question, his unquestionable strength was his determined, lifelong battle for the interests of the working class. In Part I, we dealt with his attempts to unite Protestant and Catholic workers

Northern Ireland in 1969. Militant calls for a trade-union militia in the North as a precondition for the withdrawal of the British troops. While its position is sometimes confused with our call for programmatically-based anti-sectarian workers militias to combat Orange and Green terror and imperialist rampage, Militant fails the acid test of demanding the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland. To take just one example: in a recent editorial (*Militant*, 24 May) and accompanying article on the Brooke talks, they not only don't raise the call for "troops out" but don't even mention the presence of the British occupying forces!

Militant's Farrell tried to argue on the basis that we were small and "sectarian". Militant "is sold in both East Belfast and West Belfast, something which I think is unlikely to be the fate of the *Workers Hammer*". But, back to programme, a DSYG comrade responded:

"Militant as an organisation failed to raise the demand on virtually every occasion for the British troops to leave immediately and unconditionally.... Another example of Militant's 'anti-imperialism' was their call during the 1982 Falklands War for a democratic socialist Labour Government to pursue the same war with a socialist face...."

Another Spartacist spokesman from the SL/B explained:

"When we are talking about building a revolutionary party and a revolutionary movement, then we are not talking about building a party like the British Militant tendency which has said explicitly ever since 1975 that you can get

never have said that, because of course the British Militant was up against one of the governments that was highly supportive of that war, was actually prosecuting that war. So it is a lot easier to say that here than it is to say it in London....

"The point I want to finish on is that there is a guy in Britain called Sean Matgamna who is a leader of a group called Socialist Organiser. And he had made this observation at the time of the



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Lessons of Lenin's Bolshevik Party which led the October Revolution key to forging revolutionary vanguard in Ireland.

and the struggle for a revolutionary party

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for the abolition of the monarchy is neatly avoided, too.) And this leaves out completely the question of the democratic right of self-determination for Scotland and Wales. We by contrast advocate these national rights, though not currently their exercise. We make it clear that victorious workers revolution will in no way be committed to the current state boundaries that contain or divide the nations and peoples of this archipelago.

From the Militant's failure to raise the elementary demand for unconditional withdrawal of the British troops from Northern Ireland, to its social chauvinism over the Falklands war to its abject failure to work for the defeat of US/British imperialism in the Gulf War, this Labourite tendency overtly capitulates to the British imperialists and their Labour lackeys.

We print below the final part of Crean's presentation and his summary following the discussion period and debate and believe that this material will prove educational for those who seek, as Connolly did, revolutionary answers to the miserable, decaying capitalism of these islands.

Now I want to raise some points that are made by our political opponents, because there have been a couple of books published in the last year, purporting to deal with Connolly from a Marxist standpoint. The first was by the Irish Workers Group and the second was by Kieran Allen of the SWM. These books do contribute to our understanding of Connolly and a number of things have

continuous underestimation of Loyalism but at the same time if you are thinking back to that period it was very hard to see that this was going to be the inevitable outcome. It was very easy to think that Home Rule was an inevitability.

In the entire chapter that the IWG devoted to Connolly's work and to Connolly's understanding of the Protestants they do not at any point mention the actual attempts that were made between 1911 and 1914 to bring Catholic and Protestant workers together, some of them partially successful. Nor do they mention 1907, nor do they mention the 1919 engineering strike. So basically what they criticise Connolly for doing is having some sort of utopian perspective that he could possibly expect to really unite the working class at this point against the bosses.

While one would not want to underestimate the dangers, our point of view is that in fact even in these small struggles, and in fact in some of the larger ones, while economic struggles by themselves are not going to lead in some linear fashion to socialism, at the same time the intervention of a revolutionary party no matter how small has potential to gain the kind of cadre that can lead a revolution at a later point. So for us these struggles are enormously important and these points of unity are of enormous importance and the necessity is to intervene into them. For the IWG this is basically dismissed.

In this country in the wake of partition you have two analyses on the left. The first analysis which is held by a number of groups is that there is one nation and



ITGWU

Dublin, 31 August 1913: police baton charge strikers in O'Connell Street.

and therefore there is no need particularly to raise slogans or to put forward the perspective of fighting imperialism as it exists in Northern Ireland.

You either have capitulation to Green nationalism in some form or another or capitulation to Orangeism. Now that of course goes from the Militant all the way to even more egregious forms such as the Workers Party or the British and Irish Communist Organisation. Our programme sees Northern Ireland as a classic situation of interpenetrated peoples. As I laid it out here we think that Connolly was absolutely right to fight against partition as it was being posed, as it was being posed first of all within the working class. For partition to be actually carried through it first of all meant that the working class had to be split asunder. Catholic and leftist workers had to be driven out of the shipyards in 1912 and out of the engineering plants in 1919. It required a bloody partition of the working class first of all. So of course it was absolutely correct to fight against that.

There is no just resolution to the national question under capitalism. The forcible reunification of Ireland which as you probably saw in the leaflet, we stand opposed to, under the hegemony of the Irish Catholic nation could simply mean the reversal of the terms of oppression. And in fact if history teaches anything probably that is what it would mean, the reversal of the terms of oppression. So we say clearly that the British troops should get out. We say no to forcible reunification and we say what's needed is a federation of workers republics in the British Isles. We also call for an anti-sectarian and programmatically-based workers militia to combat Orange and Green terror and imperialist rampage in the North. This is a perspective which doesn't underestimate the difficulties but sees the way forward as the intervention even of a small number of revolutionaries into the actual points of class unity in the

North that can lay the basis for building a Bolshevik party. And that is the only way out.

There are various bad solutions and the current status quo is certainly rotten to the core. The only way out is by building that kind of a Bolshevik party. And in saying these things what we are looking to are the traditions of Lenin's Comintern which put forward an internationalist perspective and which unlike the Second International did not see the national question simply in chauvinist terms. In fact in large part the Second International even had pro-imperialist politics and this became clearly expressed in 1914 when the German social democracy, the French, the British Labour Party all supported their own bourgeoisie in the war. So in counterposition to this the Third International was built for internationalism. It was built in support of the right of the oppressed nations to self-determination. And it was built in the understanding that only through building revolutionary parties could the working class move forward.

I concentrated a good deal on the North in describing Connolly's work there but before World War I there was also an enormous struggle in Dublin and that was in 1913 when 25,000 workers were locked out by William Martin Murphy and the bosses of Dublin. Connolly and Larkin in that struggle spent more of their time in Britain seeking solidarity strikes by British workers of which there were actually a fair number. In fact there was so much pressure from the rank and file in Britain that the Trade Union Congress officialdom felt compelled to call a special conference which was simply their way of putting a safety valve on the thing. So it was notable that £150,000 was raised in Britain, a pretty enormous sum at the time, in solidarity with Dublin workers. This was a conjuncture which posed in a way that the British miners strike of

continued on page 8



no credit

Bodenstown, 1934: contingent from Belfast's Protestant Shankill Road march on Wolfe Tone Commemoration. Anti-capitalist struggle can transcend sectarian divide.

been raised in these books which are certainly useful and helpful for Marxists. At the same time particularly over this question of partition and Connolly's work in the North, I would take real issue with what the Irish Workers Group has to say. They criticise Connolly for underestimating Orangeism. On the one hand it is certainly true that Connolly, in the same way as Irish nationalists in general, had a

the solution is simply the removal of the external factor, that is the British troops in Northern Ireland and that will then lead to a peaceful and just resolution or maybe a bloody but just resolution. The other point of view which is put forward for example by Militant is that the class must come together on economic issues and that will lead to the national question disappearing relatively of its own accord

Connolly...

(Continued from page 7)

a year before also had; which posed the possibility again of united class action throughout these islands. Connolly and Larkin certainly had the right perspective which was to bring British workers out in solidarity.

World War I broke out not long after the defeat of the workers in Dublin in early 1914 in spite of enormous heroism. Connolly's initial response to war was not very different in many ways from Lenin's or Liebknecht's. He said, talking about the measures that were necessary in Ireland by the labour movement:

"Starting thus, Ireland may yet set the torch to a European conflagration that will not burn out until the last throne and the last capitalist bond and debenture will be shrivelled on the funeral pyre of the last war lord."

—*Irish Worker* 8 August 1914,
Collected Works, Vol 1, p196

Not a bad way of putting it. A year later in the context of his increasing bitterness at the spectacle of Irish workers being sent out by Redmond, by the Irish Parliamentary Party to die in Europe for the cause of the Empire, he said, (now he is back in Belfast at this point and referring to a man who is known as Wee Joe Devlin, the leader of the Parliamentary Party in Belfast): "The present writer cannot ride up the Falls Road in his own motor car, the penny tram has to do him. But thank God there are no fresh-made graves in Flanders or the Dardanelles built by the mangled corpses of men whom he coaxed or bullied into leaving their homes and families" (*Workers Republic* 28 August 1915, *Collected Works*, Vol I, p365).

There was a shift in Connolly's position from the internationalist position I quoted. The context of this has to be understood because on the one hand you had the defeat of the strike in 1913-14 in Dublin, the defeat of the working class. Then you had the collapse of the Second International in front of the war, the

Belfast: Harland & Wolff shipyard, early 1900s. 1919 shipyard and engineering strike united Protestant and Catholic workers; in 1920 Catholics and socialists from both communities were driven out by Unionist-led violence.



general secretary of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union and Connolly did fairly stalwart work in bringing that union back into financial solvency in that period. Certainly it was his perspective that that union should see itself through to another day. What he didn't have was Lenin's understanding that war is the mother of revolution. As Lenin said it, not knowing Connolly's politics and what Connolly was about, the tragedy of the Irish was that they went too soon. If we were there we would have argued with Connolly about the perspective that he was taking and fought against it. But we would certainly agree with Lenin in defending the Easter Rising and defending all the rebellions that came subsequently against the colonial and imperialist rulers.

So on that note I will conclude. Our perspective is internationalist and we think that James Connolly and his life work was basically that of a fighter for the international working class. In spite of all the flaws and all the problems, we think that his work is really the starting point for revolutionaries in this country

wasn't answered, a question about what was the actual form that bourgeois nationalism took in Connolly's time and I think also the corollary to that was if there was such a thing as bourgeois nationalism how could Connolly be for nationalism? Essentially what you are talking about is the Irish Parliamentary Party and Connolly's view didn't deny the existence of an Irish bourgeoisie, but he said that their nationalism was false. That was his own way of addressing it. And that class is beholden to England completely and thoroughly and therefore would never seek independence in any fundamental way.

Now, I think Connolly was at his best when he spoke in 1897 of what an independent capitalist Ireland might look like. He said: "If you remove the English army tomorrow and hoist the green flag over Dublin Castle, unless you set about the organisation of the Socialist Republic, your efforts would be in vain. England would still rule you. She would rule you through her capitalists, through her landlords, through her financiers" (*Shan Van Vocht* January 1897, *Collected Works*, Vol 1, p307). And in another passage in *Socialism Made Easy* he says:

"After Ireland is free, says the patriot who won't touch Socialism, we will protect all classes, and if you won't pay your rent you will be evicted same as now. But the evicting party, under the command of the sheriff, will wear green uniforms and the Harp without the Crown, and the warrant turning you out on the roadside will be stamped with the arms of the Irish Republic.

"Now isn't that worth fighting for?"

"And when you cannot find employment, and giving up the struggle of life in despair, enter the Poorhouse, the band of the nearest regiment of the Irish army will escort you to the Poorhouse door to the tune of 'St Patrick's Day'.

"Oh, it will be nice to live in those days! 'With the Green Flag floating o'er us' and an ever-increasing army of unemployed workers walking about under the Green Flag, wishing they had something to eat. Same as now.

"Whoop it up for liberty!" (*Socialism Made Easy*, p32)

I think he managed to capture a lot of what has happened, what the reality of life in the so-called Irish Republic is today.

So our perspective in relation to the national question is not to ignore it, is not to say that in Ireland it's going to be easily resolved, nor is it to say that there is any just resolution under capitalism. We take our starting point from Lenin and he was very clear in stating that the right of self-determination means nothing except the right of existence as a separate state. He actually quotes Kautsky who in his earlier days was capable of saying very intelligent things. "The national state is the form *most suited* to present-day con-

ditions [i.e., capitalist, civilised, economically progressive conditions, as distinguished from medieval, pre-capitalist, etc.]; it is the form in which the state can best fulfill its tasks" (VI Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination", p9). So for Lenin and Kautsky the *advocacy* by socialists of the use of the right of self-determination as opposed to the right in general in any particular situation was conditional on whether this would advance the development of the forces of production and the class struggle. Solving the national question in any particular situation clears an obstacle on the path of forging a class-conscious proletariat. As Lenin put it: "While recognising equality and equal rights to a national state, it [the proletariat] values above all and places foremost the alliance of the proletarians of all nations, and assesses any national demand, any national separation, from the angle of the workers' class struggle" (VI Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination", p23). So for Lenin the proletariat while fighting resolutely for the right of small nations against imperialism must not in any way champion nationalism. Lenin's position is in fact a consistent extension of Marx's dictum that the workers have no country.

That's our starting point. The starting point of the Militant tendency as an international which is based in Britain—and the point that Emmett did not bother to respond to—is that it very explicitly sees socialism as being brought by an Enabling Clause in a peaceful transformation of society; it is a tendency which has basically made its peace with the British Labour Party. Kinnock's party in turn clearly expresses the interest, as has been self-evident in the most recent period, of one wing of British imperialism, and went along gladly and enthusiastically with the slaughter of the Iraqi masses. Our position is rather different and our tendency has stood out in the last 25 years of its existence against the popular front, for the defence of the gains of the October Revolution, against all counterrevolutionary movements, as today perhaps most clearly exemplified by Sajudis in the Soviet Union, though I dare say that the various wings of the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union share in common their complete preparation to betray the working class to the imperialists as they have done numerous times in the recent past.

We are not pretending that we are in fact a group of a hundred people with a sizable contingent in the working class movement. We are a group of students, but we seek to become more than that. We seek, on the basis of a programme which opposes nationalism clearly and opposes imperialism, to gain the cadre to build a revolutionary party which can see the day when Connolly's vision of a socialist federation can actually be achieved. ■



Dublin's O'Connell St: leader of ITGWU James Larkin (in disguise) arrested on Bloody Sunday, 31 August 1913.

support of all these parties for their own ruling class. So Connolly suddenly felt himself quite isolated, and in that isolation he turned away or began to turn away from an internationalist perspective. Which isn't to say that he had adopted a nationalist perspective in any definitive way. Nevertheless this nationalist bent obviously came to inform his thinking leading up to the Easter Rising. I would also point out though that while in itself with the signing of the Proclamation you had the dipping of the red banner in front of the green, that at the very end of his life he was not simply the commander of the Irish Citizens Army but also the

but not the sole starting point by any means. It is the politics of Lenin and Trotsky, the politics of the early Communist International and the Fourth International which really provides the way forward in the current context. So far from, as many groups do, seeking to use Connolly to justify one form or another of opportunism or capitulation in this society, we look to the most advanced conceptions of modern scientific socialism as the way forward for workers revolution. Thank you.

Summary

I'll come back to the question that

CIA/GCHQ...

(Continued from page 3)

who explained the real, genuine substance of Arthur Scargill's activity to us, and the substance of the activity of the trade union [the UDM] that was attacking Scargill...did we understand that that union was a scab union."

Finally, in addition to the Western intelligence agencies, Russian fascists and the scab UDM, the Labour Party and TUC leadership had every interest in eagerly assisting the anti-Scargill operation. Just as they knifed the heroic miners strike, so the traitors Kinnock, Willis et al want to bury the memory of that class battle and preferably Scargill personally under a mountain of character assassination and lurid smears. (As we pointed out in our previous article, despite the "Red Arthur" view of Scargill by his enemies in the Labour Party, he in fact has never broken from Labourism and loyally supported Kinnock in the last general election.) Ken Loach, who directed the "Dispatches" programme, was himself critical that this had been played down: "a lot of things said about the



Spartacist

Miners conference in Donetsk (October 1990) where ICL representatives countered imperialist-orchestrated campaign against Scargill; NTS/UDM tool Yuri Butchenko (right).



Socialist Organiser

Labour Party's role in the affair, especially the actions of NUM MPs Kim Howells and Kevin Barron, were cut out by the Channel Four lawyers" (*Socialist Outlook*, 8 June). For our part we are committed to fight to break the working class from the stranglehold of the vile pro-capitalist Labour leadership and build an authentic Leninist vanguard party. As we were

going to press, Scargill and Heathfield were still being hounded by a Sheffield magistrates' court in a case being brought by the trade union Certification Officer (government-appointed watch-dog on union affairs) over "improper" accounts kept in 1989; this case too collapsed on 19 June after the prosecution offered no evidence. And on 20 June news broke

that 39 former striking miners had been paid £425,000 compensation and costs by South Yorkshire police after proceedings charging the cops with assault, wrongful arrest, malicious prosecution and false imprisonment at the Battle of Orgreave. But the bourgeoisie and their running dogs have not given up yet. Hands off Arthur Scargill! Hands off the NUM! ■

BNP...

(Continued from page 12)

"The ANL succeeded in mobilising hundreds of thousands, at two big carnivals, and in sizeable counter demonstrations wherever the fascists marched." (!)

After the ANL days were over, the SWP adopted an explicit line for ignoring the fascists. Its August 1984 *Discussion Bulletin* told the SWP membership: "We are not saying 'ignore the nazis, and they will necessarily go away'. We are saying, at present, 'organise specifically against the nazis and we'll build their organisation'. The practical conclusions are few, but important. If the nazis start paper sales we should not pay them any special attention. If they attack a SW sale, make a tactical retreat and start again the following week."

The Spartacist contingent marching in the 25 May demonstration raised, among others, the slogan: "Major, Kinnock, different name, same game, fight for a workers government", a sentiment well received by militant anti-fascists, if not the fake-lefts already gearing up for a Labour victory in the next general election. We also called for workers defence guards to smash the BNP, warning against appeals to the state. "The Red Army smashed Nazi rule, defend the Soviet Union!" was among our placards and chants, recalling that over 20 million Soviet people died defending the gains of the October Revolution against Hitlerite fascism.

The misnamed Militant tendency was out selling their so-called *Panther* paper, a cynical attempt to dupe unsuspecting people into believing it is something other than a publication of lily-livered Labourites dedicated to Kinnock's election to No 10 Downing Street. Not to be out-done, the opportunist Workers Power group distributed an inept fake-agitational leaflet which refused to criticise the leadership for appealing to the cops to ban the fascists. After the fact, when it was obvious that militants were angry at the National Black Caucus, *Workers Power* (June 1991) mildly rebuked the leadership and "the existing limits of the campaign". At the same time its coverage prettified the outcome, mendaciously claiming that "the fascists' plans were substantially disrupted". Furthermore, *Workers Power's* call for "black self-defence" translates into leaving the struggle against the racist thugs in the hands of community misleaders while eschewing the necessary struggle within the workers movement to mobilise the power of the trade unions in alliance with the oppressed to smash the fascist threat. (Of course *Workers Power* is also calling for a vote to the Labour Party in the coming elections, so as to "test" and "expose" the arch-scab, racist, anti-immigrant swine and warmonger Neil Kinnock.)

The fight against fascist terror and the struggle for proletarian revolution are integrally linked. Against those like the SWP and Militant who have made their peace with the Labour lackeys of decaying British capitalism, we seek to forge a racially integrated revolutionary party, a

party that acts as an uncompromising tribune of all the oppressed. Massive mobilisations of the organised working

class and the oppressed whose aim is to crush the fascists is a crucial task on the road to victorious workers revolution! ■



Radio Hulton Picture Library

Battle of Cable Street, London 4 October 1936: workers mobilisation constructs barricades, confronts cops protecting Mosley's fascists.

Sharpton...

(Continued from page 2)

for the liberation of the black and Asian working people. His own vile record of collaboration with the racist state in the US in fact mirrors the treachery of the Labourites here. His phoney "black separatist" rhetoric is likewise a strategy based on despair. In the face of resurgent fascist and racist terror, it is necessary to fight to mobilise the social power of the organised working class in alliance with minority communities to sweep the likes of the BNP off the streets! Appeals to the courts, cops and councils who oversee this rotting racist system are suicidal.

Our comrades in the Spartacist League/US have successfully mobilised

thousands of black and white workers and youth in trade-union-centred demonstrations to stop the Nazis and Ku Klux Klan from race-hate provocations in Detroit, San Francisco, Philadelphia and Washington D.C. Such a strategy here today would soon put an end to the BNP thugs marauding in Thamesmead: a show of force from the heavily integrated workers of London Underground, for instance, could send these rat packs scurrying into their holes. We fight for the perspective of integrated class struggle on the road to the only real solution: socialist revolution. The likes of FBI fink Al Sharpton are obstacles to this road, cynical parasites on the just outrage of the oppressed.

Keith Douglas
for the Spartacist League

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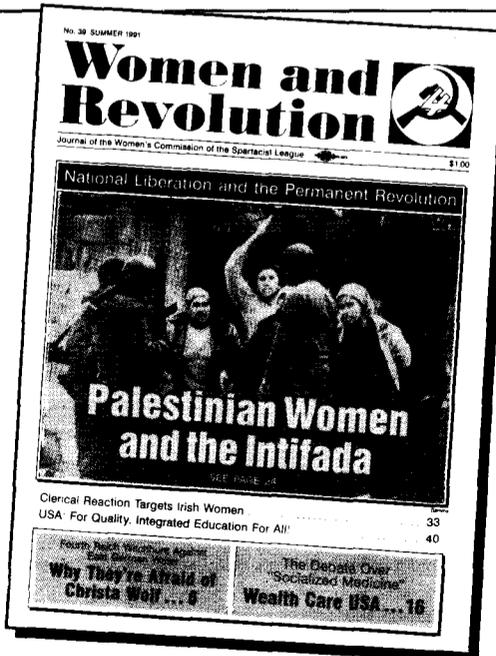
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Lessons of the American Civil Rights movement

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Liverpool...

(Continued from page 1)

position of non-support is that, while claiming to oppose Kinnock's "yes-man" on issues such as cuts, redundancies and the poll tax, the Broad Left and Militant have made clear their advocacy of a Labour Party victory in the general election, ie support for a Kinnock government. This pledge has been made explicit by *Militant* in its 7 June editorial "A socialist fighter must follow Heffer":

"But, while *Militant* will support a socialist candidate in Walton, we will not ease up for one minute in our campaign to defeat the Tory enemy and get a majority Labour government elected at the earliest opportunity. "Indeed, with the Tories behind in the opinion polls and with the poll tax and NHS disasters hanging round their necks, we demand that Labour mounts a campaign to force an immediate general election."

Thus, while claiming to challenge Kinnock's puppet in Liverpool, the Militant/Broad Left have not broken in any

to assure the bourgeoisie that they will be even more reliable enforcers of capitalist austerity than Major's faction-riddled Tory party. With the evident disarray of Major's Tory government—lacking the self-confidence of the Iron Lady's brutal rule—the stranglehold of the Labour traitors and trade union bureaucrats has been key to keeping the lid on social struggle. In Liverpool, as elsewhere, many are looking for a chance to give Kinnock and his gang a resounding "fuck you".

While opposing Kinnock's witch hunting purges against Militant and other "lefts", we do not give any political support to Militant's tame opposition confined to Liverpool which simply seeks to pressure the Kinnock leadership. As the official Labour Party pushed the redundancies through, Militant/Broad Left blocked with the Liberal Democrats to "win" the withdrawal of 94 out of 274 compulsory redundancies among council workers—ie, accepting the bulk of the sackings. This is indicative of the tail-between-the-legs defeatism of the "left" trade union and Labour bureaucrats, who have confined themselves to pressure tactics, overtime bans and strike action by marginal sections of the workforce.



Workers Hammer

London, 2 February: police sought to suppress slogans of Spartacist contingent on anti-war march.

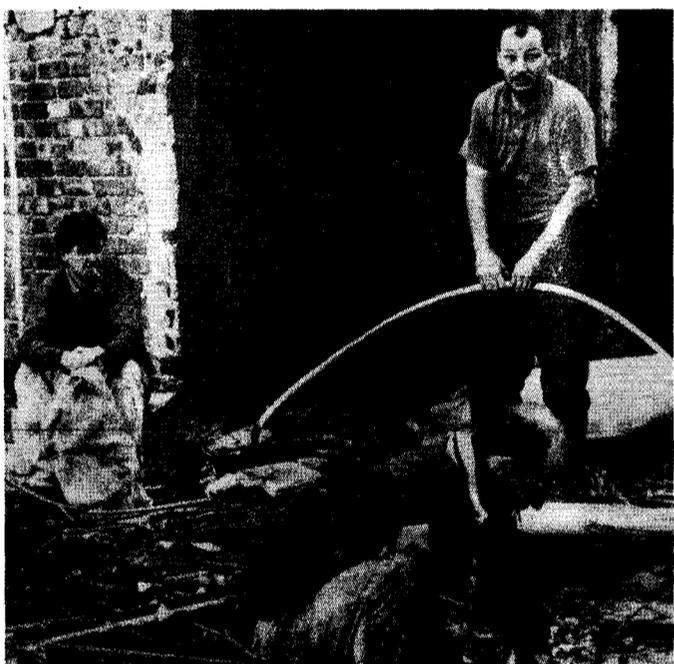
the use of bailiffs against rates debtors in 1984-85 by Liverpool Council, to the threat to shop anti-poll tax demonstrators after the police riot in Trafalgar Square a year ago. And Militant's "colour-blindness" on the race question in Liverpool—in heavily black Toxteth unemployment ranges up to 80 per cent—is also despicable. Thus, although non-whites make up eight per cent of the city population, a 1986 *Open Letter to the Militant Tendency* by the Labour Party Black Section National Committee (*The Racial Politics of Militant in Liverpool*, Liverpool Black Caucus) noted that there had never been a black city councillor and less than one per cent of city employees were black.

A revolutionary workers party must be a tribune of the people, championing the victims of all forms of special oppression, while seeking to politicise and instil the workers movement with the best traditions of proletarian internationalism. The Mahmood campaign is consciously economist, ignoring these questions. The Militant tendency very recently demonstrated its virulent Labourite social chauvinism over the massive imperialist slaughter of the Gulf War. Even the Labour-loyal *Socialist Organiser*, which criticises Militant from the right over the question of standing against official Labour candidates, correctly characterised Militant: "It sat out the Gulf war on its backside" (*Socialist Organiser*, 17 May). As the Anglo-American led "allies" rained death and destruction on the Iraqi people, no one more vociferously supported the carnage than Neil Kinnock. Militant's response was to demand a general election to put the warmongering

Kinnock into government! To the extent that it did participate in anti-war demos, Militant offered itself up to the witch hunting Labourite/CND crowd, as it did in Glasgow, fingering to the cops those who called for a defeat of the US/British forces (see "Spartacists call for defence of Iraq, Militant/CND call the cops", *Workers Hammer*, no 120, February 1991). This is of a piece with Militant's not-so-backhanded support to Thatcher and the Labour chauvinists during the dirty Malvinas/Falklands war when it demanded "workers sanctions" against Argentina.

Hatred towards the proletarian and heavily Irish Liverpool particularly fuels the vindictiveness of the British bourgeoisie. There is a large Irish Catholic population in Liverpool; up until the 1920s the main opposition to the Conservatives was the Irish Nationalists, who had a Liverpool MP. (After the partition in 1921, the Irish went over in the main to the Labour Party.) The militancy of Irish workers has certainly impacted on the history of the labour and trade union movement in the city. Expressing the special hostility of the ruling class to the Liverpool workers movement, the *Guardian* (20 June), while revelling in the possibility that Labour "could score a high-profile victory over a stubborn tapeworm of a foe" and a "Winter of Discontent... with a happy ending" lamented that "none of that, alas, will be the end of the story. Liverpool itself will go on. It will continue to be the most Irish of English cities, with a tradition of political bosses and tight-knit machines."

Liverpool, whose decline reflects that of a sagging imperialist country which



Dave Sinclair

The economic devastation of Liverpool: unemployed men pick through scrap metal, stripping wire and lead, to make a few pounds.

fashion from support to the puppeteer Kinnock. So much for their "independent" campaign—the tooth bites down on nothing.

Far from counterposing the need for a class-struggle workers party, Mahmood's leaflets, in Labour's red and yellow colours, describe her as the "real Labour" candidate. This is of a piece with Militant's insistence that it is seeking to return Labour to its "socialist roots". Clearly they want to appear before the voters as loyal Labourites. But the "real" Labour Party they swear fealty to is the party of class betrayal, from Labour's support to the imperialist war in the Gulf to its scabherding on the heroic 1984-85 miners strike.

The current by-election takes place in the context of the local Kilfoyle/Kinnock Labourites' attempt to impose over 1000 redundancies and threatened strike action against this by the unions. The Kilfoylites are in an open bloc with the Liberal Democrats in attacking the trade unions. Thus over half the city's workforce of bin men will be fired through the decision to contract out rubbish collection to Onyx, a private firm which "wants its binmen to work twice as hard for 15 per cent less pay" and will refuse union recognition to its employees (*Independent*, 21 June). Grotesquely, "soft-left" Labour NEC member David Blunkett wrote to Environment Secretary Michael Heseltine, calling on the government to "accept your responsibilities" to smash the Liverpool strikers (*Guardian*, 19 June). Clearly in Liverpool, as in Lambeth and other "trouble spots", the Kinnockites are eager

Defend the unions—for an all-out citywide strike! Council workers should be linking up in joint strike action with Ford Halewood workers and other strategic sections of the proletariat to fight against the redundancies, pay cuts and attacks on working conditions.

The Militant tendency has been an organic part of the Labour Party in Liverpool for decades, particularly in Walton. It should be remembered that, "At one point Walton chose [Militant leader] Ted Grant as its candidate to fight the 1959 election, but the NEC refused to accept him. Later Peter Taaffe [current editor of *Militant*] was a member of Walton Young Socialists" (*Militant*, Michael Crick). The Militant campaign claims to follow in the "socialist" traditions of the long-time Walton MP, Eric Heffer. In fact, they have quite a bit in common. Thus, Militant shares the Stalinophobia of Heffer, notorious for his rabid support to counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarność—Thatcher's favourite "trade union"—whose policies of capitalist restoration are today ravaging the Polish working class.

Mahmood also enthuses over the days when Derek Hatton & Co ran Liverpool Council. At that time it struck a deal with the Tory government in which rates were put up by 17 per cent in the city in the middle of the Great Miners Strike of 1984-85 rather than countenance strike action by Liverpool workers. A year later came the infamous "tactic" of distributing 31,000 redundancy notices to city workers. Indeed, Militant's spinelessness before the bourgeois state is well known, from

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Marxist newspaper of the Spartacist League

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was once an industrial and trading centre, continues to represent a potential linkage for proletarian revolution throughout the British Isles. The refusal of the Mahmood campaign to address the question of Northern Ireland no doubt also reflects the desire not to "rock the boat" in a city with a history of Catholic/Protestant sectarianism. Capitulating to imperialism and its Labour lackeys, Militant in fact rejects the elementary demand for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland (see "Connolly's legacy and the struggle for a revolutionary party", pp6-7).

British left: "real" and actual Labour loyalists

Among the reformist and centrist groups who have jumped on the Militant/Broad Left bandwagon are the SWP and Workers Power. In an open letter to the left entitled "It's time to take sides", the SWP claims the by-election "can be used in every locality to explain to workers the need for a socialist alternative independent of Labour" (*Socialist Worker*, 15 June). But these impostors are no more "independent" of Labour than Militant—the SWP line is to vote for a Labour government. Ditto for Workers Power, which in its "Walton by-election special" (18 June) titled simply "Support Mahmood!" predictably asserts: "We say: put Labour to the test of office and organise to fight every attack Labour carries out on behalf of the bosses."

A number of Labour-loyal left outfits have opposed the Mahmood candidacy from the right. The grovelling Gorbachevite *Morning Star* condemns the "decision to contest against the official candidate.... There are no short-cuts to left victory within the Labour Party and the

against Labour in a General Election in safe Labour seats.... Dead-end sectarians who don't care about the result of a General Election won't be worried about this. Socialists who live in the real world will be. Mahmood must not only be defeated, but be decisively so." Our "real world" *SO* notes that the "last big attempt to split a sizeable left wing from the Labour Party was in 1932, when the Independent Labour Party broke away.... Yet its breakaway was a fiasco" (*Socialist Organiser*, 17 May). In fact, the ILP split was quite different from the sterile squabble over who is the "real" Labour Party in Liverpool.

At the time of the ILP split, Trotsky noted that the social democracy was "everywhere experiencing an acute crisis. In a number of countries more or less important left wings have already separated themselves from the Social Democratic parties" ("The Left Socialist Organizations and Our Tasks", *Writings*, 1932-33). These left splits reflected the radicalisation of a section of workers who, under the impact of the Depression and the alarming rise of fascism, began to recognise the impotency of parliamentary reformism.

Trotsky viewed political intervention in such centrist groupings as the ILP—seeking to polarise them along programmatic lines—as an important opportunity to win over revolutionary cadre, whose consolidation in turn would enable the vanguard to approach the broader masses who remained loyal to the Labour Party. As Trotsky wrote: "The ILP broke away from the Labour Party. That was correct. If the ILP wanted to become the revolutionary lever, it was impossible for the handle of this lever to be left in the hands of the thoroughly opportunist and



Dave Sinclair

Walton REAL Labour

LESLEY MAHMOOD is the REAL Labour candidate democratically selected by Walton Labour Party members.

There are two Labour choices in this election:

People's Choice
LESLEY MAHMOOD
She will continue the tradition of ERIC HEFFER

LESLEY MAHMOOD will campaign on socialist policies. As a councillor she has said:

- ✗ NO to the 1,000 compulsory redundancies.
- ✗ NO to using bailiffs against poll tax non-payers.
- ✗ NO to rent increases.

The other candidate is Kinnock's 'yes' man endorsed by party officials in London.

A candidate who said:

- ✓ YES to the 1,000 compulsory council redundancies.
- ✓ YES to using bailiffs against poll tax non-payers.
- ✓ YES to rent increases.

Lesley Mahmood (above left) poses no real alternative to Kneel Kinnoch (above right). Militant's so-called "independent" "real Labour Party" campaign calls to put this vile scabherder, race-hater, warmonger in power.

the Trotskyists argued for the building of a Fourth International based on the revolutionary politics of the first four congresses of the Comintern.

At the time of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, the ILP was significantly to the left of both the Labour Party leaders and the by-then popular-frontist CP. Its condemnation of League of Nations sanctions against Italy went very much against the grain of the reformists. The latter, reflecting the interests of British imperialism, viewed Mussolini as an imperialist rival. When ILP leader Maxton sought to ram through a resolution that the war was a "conflict between two rival dictators", thereby refusing to take a side in defence of Ethiopia against Italy, he was initially voted down. Here was a contradiction—highlighting the centrist character of the organisation—between the ILP's phraseology which attracted revolutionary-minded workers—and the refusal of the ILP to break from reformism in practice.

Militant's Liverpool contest is anything but an ILP-style split. Nor do there seem to be other decisive criteria presently operative in the by-election; for example, a referendum posing a decisive issue in the class struggle. But those such as Socialist Organiser who in practice regard any break from the Labour Party as "scabbing" on the "unity" of the workers movement simply doom the proletariat to endless domination by the Labourite class traitors. Those such as the SWP and Workers Power, who indiscriminately tail the more "left" versions of Labourism, are scarcely better. Indeed, in the current instance all of them have the same funda-

mental conclusion—putting in office scabherder Kinnoch.

We understand that as a bourgeois workers party, the Labour Party indeed rests on a vastly different social base than the Tories whose fundamental policies they make no pretence of opposing today. Under other circumstances, as have existed in the past and will be the case in the future, one can consider such tactics as critical support. The contradiction between the working-class base and pro-capitalist tops means there will be splits in the Labour Party—however jagged and uneven—that will pose genuine *programmatic differentiation* from the class-collaborationist policies of the Labour bureaucrats on decisive questions. Such breakaways from the Labour Party are for Trotskyists a strategic necessity for building a revolutionary party in Britain.

Under the impact of class battles to come, we can expect as well differentiation among the reformist and centrist left who eddy in the waters of the Labour "left". Among Militant's membership many have become restless with the decades-long entrism and liquidation within the Labour Party. From the fresh experience of the Gulf War to the long-standing Militant cretinist assertion that an Enabling Act in Parliament will bring about "socialism", there are many questions Militant members should be asking. As Leninists, we seek to assemble the cadre of a vanguard party through splits and fusions within the workers movement on the basis of revolutionary programme, which will bring leftists and militant workers beyond gut hatred for the Ramsay MacKinnocks to the fight for proletarian revolution. ■



Evening Standard

The way they were: Derek Hatton, former Militant turned petty entrepreneur creep with Tony Mulhearn (above right) awaits a "disciplinary" hearing outside Labour Party HQ five years ago. Witch-finder General Kinnock still targets even tepid pink Militant tendency.

labour movement as a whole" (7 June). *Socialist Outlook* (22 June) claims that the "responsibility for there being two 'Labour' candidates in Walton lies entirely with the Kinnock camp" and argues that "we do not regard it as a matter of principle to always support 'official' Labour candidates". But at the end of the day it argues that "we think this candidacy [Mahmood] is a mistake" and that by "backing the Party against the Tories, we create better conditions to take the fight for a socialist alternative into the official labour movement...." While obviously waffling on the issue, the logic of the argument of these British supporters of Ernest Mandel would be to call for a vote to Kilfoyle.

Socialist Organiser opposes even more emphatically Militant's decision to run against Labour. Its 20 June issue contains a craven, brown-nosing bleat to: "Vote Labour in Walton!" "If Mahmood does well, it will only encourage silly people elsewhere to run independent candidates

bourgeois careerists. *Complete and unconditional political and organisational independence of a revolutionary party is the first prerequisite for its success*" (*Trotsky's Writings on Britain* Vol 3, p94, emphasis in original).

After its split with the Labour Party, Trotsky characterised the ILP as a left-centrist party, consisting of a "number of factions and shadings that are indicative of the different stages of evolution from reformism to communism" (p87). In its public propaganda the ILP addressed itself—albeit in a confused and contradictory fashion—to the need for workers councils and for proletarian action against imperialist war. The plane of the polemics in which Trotsky engaged the leaders of the ILP indicates that this was a very different organisation from the economist "Broad Left" operation in Liverpool. Thus, against the ILP's affiliation to the programmatically shapeless London Bureau and its earlier attempt to create a lash-up with Stalin's Comintern,

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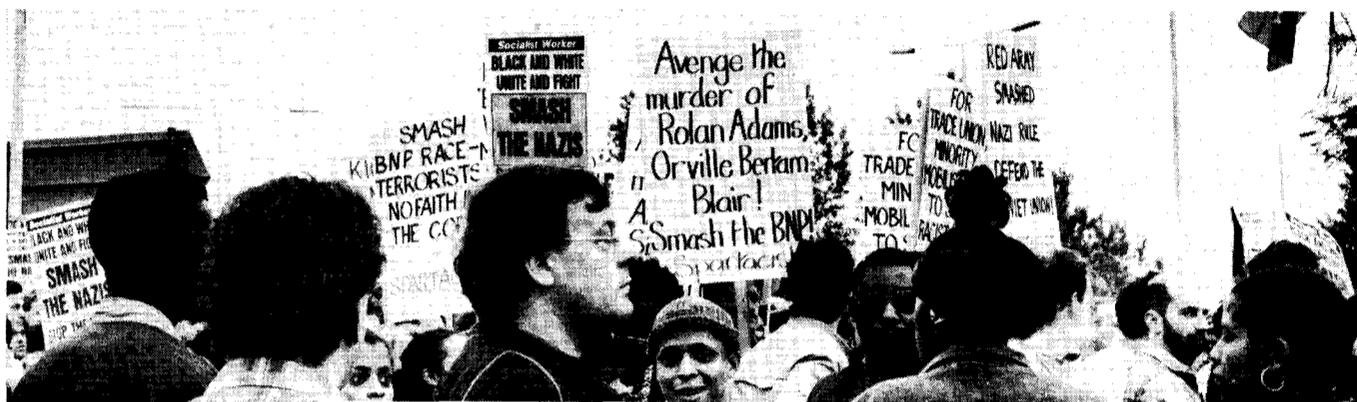
Thamesmead: BNP march under police protection

Trade unions/minorities must crush fascists in the egg!

On 25 May, some 120 supporters of the fascist British National Party, in full regalia with Union Jack flags, paraded in Thamesmead. A counter-demonstration in Thamesmead by some 1500 black and white anti-racist protesters brought out many ready and willing to stop these race-hate scum in their tracks. But despite the favourable relationship of forces, the anti-fascists were stymied by the police and the official leadership of the protest. They never got near the BNP.

The BNP had called the race-hate "white power" march in Greenwich, south-east London, just hours after the murder of Orville Blair on 11 May, the second murder within three months of a young black man by white racists in Thamesmead. Like Rolan Adams, murdered on 21 February, Orville Blair died of multiple stab wounds. Outraged by the growing menace of fascist terror and the flagrant provocation by the BNP, anti-racist protesters from throughout the city, including militant workers from several trade unions, turned out ready to put a stop to the BNP march. But the organisers of the demonstration, Greenwich Action Committee Against Racist Attacks (GACARA), Rolan Adams Family Campaign and the National Black Caucus of the Labour Party, orchestrated an empty "moral witness" marchathon. In fact, a leaflet issued by the organisers before the demonstration admonished participants *not* to "respond to fascists". Demonstrators spent frustrating hours being led hither and yon, penned in at various points by the police, watching the "organisers" wrangle, without ever getting close to the BNP.

There is a political reason for this: the programme of the organisers (echoed by their fake-left tails) has been from the outset one of appealing to the police in particular and the state in general to "protect" the black and minority population. Meanwhile, the cops have just published a report admitting that, even for them, racist attacks in the Greenwich area have reached "unacceptable" levels. And the police are seeking further powers to be able to ban demonstrations they deem a threat to "law and order" in the aftermath of the Thamesmead BNP march and counter-demo. It is not rampaging fascists that the cops have in mind—such "bans" can and will be used against the *anti-fascist* demonstrations. Even though the BNP was protected on the day, the cops sense that further fascist provocations of this sort could be met by countermobilisations going over the heads of the likes of the misleadership at the 25 May demo. And Thamesmead is but the tip of the iceberg. We say: not appeals to the courts, cops, councils—but mass trade



Workers Hammer photos

Spartacist contingent (above) at 25 May counter-demo (right) against fascist BNP provocation in Thamesmead calls for trade union/minority mobilisations to smash these murderous racist scum.

union/minority mobilisations to crush the BNP!

At one point demonstrators broke through police lines to get at a cornered skinhead. But he turned out, despite appearances, not to be a BNPer but reportedly a member of the Socialist Workers Party; his "socialist credentials" were established only after he had suffered a few injuries. This might be a lesson for those leftists who sport the fascistic skinhead look. The evening TV news later that day showed a small number of marchers organised by Anti-Fascist Action demonstrating within stone-throwing distance of the BNP scum. If the AFA had publicly agitated for an alternative route, a substantial number of demonstrators would have gone with them. In the event, some six AFA protesters were arrested: drop all charges against the anti-racist protesters!

The *Weekend Guardian* (25-26 May) ran a despicable article on Thamesmead the day of the BNP march which tried to explain away the racist murders of two young black men and the BNP's provocations as the result of "gangland" warfare among poverty-stricken Thamesmead youth and "outside agitation" by "extremists", right and left. The article did however provide a glimpse of the grim

social reality of Thamesmead, noting: "There is no launderette in Thamesmead, no bank, no cinema and no train station.... There is one bus route, and it's half an hour and £1.20 return to Woolwich which is where Thamesmead's 10,000 unemployed must go to sign on." In 1988 a chip shop was opened: "There are three tables inside. Nowhere else on Thamesmead can a cup of tea be bought or a meal eaten." The town has a population of 30,000. It is in such conditions that the scum of the BNP will spawn and it is urgently necessary to crush them in the egg.

For its part, in an article titled "Demo forces Nazis out" the reformists of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) hailed the march as a success because it "forced the police to keep the Nazi march out of the housing estate" (*Socialist Worker*, 1 June). The ban simply changed the BNP line of march; under police protection, the BNP carried out their deadly race-hate rally through different parts of Thamesmead. The SWP's cretinism here is of a piece with its circulating a petition to "pressure" the police to act against the fascists. *Socialist Worker* (23 March) announced: "local socialists and anti-racists have collected several hundred signatures to a petition calling for the police to act and

for the BNP HQ to be closed". For Marxists, as opposed to the SWP, it is elementary that no faith can be placed in the armed fist of capitalist rule—the bourgeois state.

To crush the fascist scourge, it is necessary to mobilise large, combative and racially integrated defence guards, drawn from the ranks of the organised working class. But this is *not* what the SWP is about. The SWP's Anti Nazi League in the seventies was built on the basis of a class-collaborationist alliance with Labour Party politicians, bishops, rock musicians and football managers. While fascists were rampaging through the streets of the heavily Asian neighbourhood of Brick Lane in 1978, the SWP organised tens of thousands to sit it out at a rock concert organised on the same day by the ANL miles away in Brixton. Now the SWP attempts to cover up the treacherous record of the ANL with a pack of lies so shameless it could even make a Cliffite blush. The current issue of *Socialist Worker Review* (June 1991) tells us:

"Seeking the widest possible unity and involvement, the ANL set out to do two things: to physically confront the Front whenever it tried to march, and to expose the true nature of its politics.

continued on page 9