

Bush election ploy: bombing for votes

US/Britain target Iraq, again

With his presidential campaign foundering on reefs of economic bad news, George Bush is looking for an instant replay of the slaughter unleashed last year against the Iraqi people in "Operation Desert Storm". After a high-level leak to the *New York Times* spiked a White House plan to pulverise Saddam Hussein's defence ministries during the Republican convention in Houston, now US fighter jets armed with air-to-air missiles are streaking over Iraq looking to shoot down anything that pops up in their cross-hairs, whether from the air or ground.

This is hyped as establishing a "no-fly zone" — meaning the Iraqis can't fly in their own country, but the Americans can. This time around, the US isn't even bothering about claiming "UN" endorsement — which was always just a cover to salve liberal consciences. The "no fly" provocation is brought to you directly by something alternately called the "coalition" or the "allies", code word for US, British and French imperialism. As fighter planes launched from Navy aircraft carriers strut their high-tech hardware, and 2400 US troops carry out "training exercises" in Kuwait, we Marxists denounce this criminal imperialist aggression.

George Bush wants to remind people of what he views as his greatest triumph, the Persian Gulf War. We don't forget — and the Iraqi people certainly won't — "Operation Desert Slaughter", that horrendous massacre that led to the destruction of a country, as American bombs left tens of thousands dead (not to mention the deadly toll from the rampant devastation in its wake). Many youth who marched in protest haven't forgotten their first bitter taste of bloody imperialist aggression. And the whole business may backfire on Bush. Washington's erstwhile Arab "allies", including the Syrians and Egyptians and even the Gulf emirates, are worried that slicing up Iraq would hand the predominantly Shi'ite southern third of the country to the Iranian ayatollahs.

Round Two of Washington's war on Iraq again highlights the criminal role of the Democratic Party. Presidential candidate Bill Clinton approved military action against Iraq in advance, saying, "Even during an election campaign, Americans are united on this issue" (*Los Angeles Times*, 24 July). Clinton and his jogging mate Gore have been criticising Bush for ending the Persian Gulf War *too soon*. The Democrats' big shtick is "Saddam-gate": attempting to nail the Bush administration for conciliating Hussein prior to August 1990. With this hawkish stance, the Democrats give George Bush carte blanche for any provocation.



Der Spiegel

"Mile of death" north of Kuwait City, February 1991, as US/British planes bombed fleeing Iraqis for 18 hellish hours.

Breathtakingly bold-faced, the plan to bomb Baghdad during Republican convention prime time was blown out of the water by the *New York Times* (16 August) the day before the confab opened. Based on a high-level leak and confirmed by White House fury and non-denial denials, the front-page story by Patrick Tyler explicitly stated the plan to "provoke a confrontation" was done with "timing [that] appeared calculated to give President Bush a boost during the Republican National Convention".

Despite its front-page exposé, the *Times* editorial supported the provocation. But complaints that such an action might "damage the credibility of the UN" and the direct link to the Republican convention sank this scenario. The "UN" inspectors were duly sent home and the fallback plan about the "no-fly zone" to "protect" Shi'ite Arabs below the 32nd parallel was put into play. Bush's junior pal Major promptly sent six Tornado jet fighter bombers to join the operation.

American blitzkrieg

Last year's Gulf War was meant to inaugurate a "New World Order" with a show of American global military supremacy as the Soviet Union under Gorbachev, heading towards the collapse of the Stalinist regime, ceased to be a factor staying the hand of US imperialism. The US dragged in as reluctant "coalition" partners the Japanese, who coughed up some yen, and the Germans, who sent D-marks. In reality, the Persian Gulf massacre was waged to establish US dominance against its rival imperialist powers. In August 1990 Iraq had invaded and

taken over the emirate of Kuwait amid festering disputes over borders, oil prices and drilling rights. The international working class had no reason to take sides in the sordid dispute between the anti-Kurd, anti-Shi'ite and anti-Communist Iraqi dictator and a nasty little oildom set up by British imperialism, where "democracy" was limited to the ruling family. But when the United States and other imperialist countries set up a blockade, a clear act of war, and dispatched a military expeditionary force to the region, working people everywhere had an urgent responsibility. While liberals in the US and the Bennite wing of the Labour Party hailed UN "sanctions" (with the Kinnockites full-bore behind the imperialist war) the ICL fought internationally to *Break the blockade of Iraq! Defeat US/British imperialism!*

President Bush spent five months cobbling together an international coalition to "liberate Kuwait", which united under UN auspices such longtime enemies as Israel and Syria, Greece and Turkey. Gorbachev brought the USSR on board as well, symbolising the course towards counterrevolution in the degenerated workers state. Half a million US and allied troops were sent to Saudi Arabia to "draw a line in the sand". Of the front-line US troops dispatched by the racist war machine, 30 per cent were black and 20 per cent Hispanic. "Be All You Can Be", says the Army's pitch to minority youth — be cannon fodder.

On 16 January 1991 Bush let loose a massive bombing campaign that for the next six weeks would average over 1000 sorties a day. Though Pentagon spokesmen bragged that their "smart bombs"

were taking out purely military targets with surgical precision, on the ground the Iraqi population was being put through hell. Nearly every bridge was destroyed, often along with the surrounding residential neighbourhood. Factories were indiscriminately targeted, like the country's only baby formula plant in Baghdad. On 13 February, US military leaders dropped a bomb with pinpoint accuracy down an air shaft of a bomb shelter in Baghdad's Amiriya neighbourhood, deliberately incinerating hundreds of women and children who were crowded there.

Posed point-blank for revolutionaries was the military defence of Iraq against the imperialist slaughter. We demanded: "Defeat British/US imperialism! Defend Iraq!" throughout the war, placing ourselves smack up against the CND, Labourites and their fake-left tails who did not hesitate to call upon the forces of the capitalist state against our contingents. In February one of our supporters was arrested for demanding the defence of Iraq; a vigorous public defence effort succeeded in getting all charges dropped.

The ground war launched on 23 February initiated four days of unparalleled slaughter. Iraqi forces showed no will to fight: most either surrendered or ran; many were simply blown to bits or buried alive in their trenches. The United States refused to accept Hussein's offer of surrender on 26 February; that night American surveillance detected a massive traffic jam just north of Kuwait City of vehicles heading towards Iraq. In a deliberate display of modern barbarism, for 18 hours US planes rained incendiary explosives on

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Exchange on Bomber Harris

To the Editor,

Comrade,

Your article on the bombing of Dresden Cologne and Iraq is stronger on invective than on sound argument. I wonder if the unacknowledged author would refer to any other old lady of 90+ as 'frumpy' and 'criminally archaic'? There surely cannot be much pleasure in

7.7.92.

shouting her down.

More importantly, claims that 'the war between the Axis imperialists and the allied imperialists was a conflict in which the working class had no side', was certainly not how they saw it at the time. The Fascists, wherever they had gained control, went first for the communists, the socialists and trade unionists; that was enough to convince most of the working class as to where their true interests lay.

I believe it still does.

That the bombing of Dresden, Hamburg and all the other major cities was obscene few now question, but that is not quite how it appeared half a century ago, when Germany by its atrocities appeared to have forfeited all claims to civilised treatment. As a soldier in the ranks throughout the war, it is difficult to recall any criticism or protest from my fellows. After all one of the favourite jokes of the most popular radio programme was a faked German voice saying 'one of our cities is missing'!

Ironically, Bomber Command was one of the most egalitarian branches of the Services and the easiest for a work[ing]-class lad to obtain promotion and a commission. Hence the working class student of the period, faces the paradox of recording the horror [of] the outcome but

perhaps displaying different sentiments towards the character and resolution of the participants.

Your etc

Jack Horn

WH replies: Jack Horn's basic assumption is that Churchill's war, the war of the British Empire and its allies against the German Third Reich, was a war for democracy against the horrors of fascism in which the working class perforce had a side. After half a century, this remains the prevailing mythology of the liberals and reformists, including not a few self-styled "communists". Typically, Horn appeals to British workers' genuine hatred of Nazism to explain—and in effect to justify—the obscenity of the fire-bombing of Dresden. While anxious to indemnify the working-class "lads" who flew with Bomber Command against

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Trotskyists on World War II



TROTSKY

In his speech commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, American Socialist Workers Party leader James P Cannon explained the Trotskyist position on the Second World War. While the war between the Allies and the Axis powers was an inter-imperialist war in which the working class should fight for the defeat of their "own" bourgeoisies, the war between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union was



LENIN

one in which the working class had a clear side. When the US imperialists entered the war, Cannon stressed "To defend the Soviet Union, in spite of Stalin and against Stalin, is to defend the nationalized property established by the October Revolution. That is a progressive war." Against the Stalinists' treacherous policy of the "People's War Against Fascism" which subordinated the struggle not only of the proletariat and oppressed within the imperialist countries but also of the colonial peoples under the heel of "democratic" imperialist rule, the Trotskyists fought courageously and internationally for the unconditional military defence of the USSR and class struggle to overthrow the imperialists from within.

The conflict between the Soviet Union and the imperialist powers is something different from and more profound than the rivalry between one imperialist power and another. Here is involved the clash, the irreconcilable conflict of two contrasting social systems. One or the other must prevail in the world; one or the other must go down. And whoever preaches trust in the Anglo-American imperialists is a traitor to the Soviet Union.

We, for our part, turn to the workers—above all, to the German workers—and to the colonial people, and we say they are the only true allies of the Soviet Union. They are the only true allies because they alone have their fundamental interest bound up with the preservation of the Soviet Union, just as the fundamental interests of the Soviet Union are indissolubly connected with the fate of the uprisings of the colonial masses and the victory of the workers in the world. And let those doubt who will. We believe in the workers. We believe in the colonial slaves awakened to new life by the Russian Revolution.

We don't doubt that in India tonight millions of the colonial insurgents are thinking, on this anniversary of the Russian Revolution. They are thinking simply but strongly, and saying to themselves: "The Russians did it; why can't we?" Once the oppressed masses of the world begin to think that way, the realization of that aspiration will be placed on the order of the day. We believe that before this bloody carnage is over, the workers, the people, will say their decisive word. And when they speak to the imperialists, they will speak Russian.

The Russian Revolution is in the greatest peril today. We do not delude ourselves about that. We do not deceive ourselves or others with any false optimism about the danger confronting the Soviet Union. We see the situation as it really is. We know that the fate of the Soviet Union hangs in the balance, that it depends now, more than ever, on the world revolution of the proletariat and the colonial masses. But we have faith in the world revolution, and because of that, we retain our hope in the ultimate regeneration of the Soviet Union. We keep undimmed our faith that the world revolution will release humanity from this terrible vise of the war and open up a new stage of progress on the way to the communist future.

—James P Cannon, *Speeches for Socialism*: "The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Russian Revolution" (8 November 1942)

editorial note

Workers must smash attacks on Gypsies!

With the collapse of Stalinism in Eastern Europe, the wake of capitalism's "New World Order" has dragged with it outpourings of the most vile forms of reaction. Witness Rostock where Nazi thugs rampaged against a refugee hostel over a period of five days. Throughout Eastern Europe, Gypsy peoples have been a prime target of murderous attacks and wholesale pogroms. Nor has this been confined to that region; in Switzerland, Italy and Britain anti-Gypsy attacks have also been escalating. Pandering to the growing hostility of capitalist landowners to travellers of any kind, the British government have moved to "solve" what it sees as the "Gypsy problem" through a new round of draconian legislation announcing there is "no longer any obligation for the tax payer to subsidise this lifestyle".

In mid-August, minister for housing and planning Sir George Young announced that in effect, Gypsies were to be eliminated as an ethnic group, their way of life criminalised. Borrowing from the plethora of methods used to hamstring the trade union movement in this country, caravans parked "illegally" are to be "confiscated" and families either left homeless or literally forced into permanent dwellings. Gypsy spokesmen have vowed to fight: Tommy Lee of the Romany Guild said "They'll never get me into a house." Peter Mercer, president of the Gypsy National Council for Education, Culture, Welfare and Civil Rights proclaimed: "We have been here for 500 years.... We will just fight back against persecution as we always have. What the Government envisages is cultural genocide" (*Independent*, 21 August).

In those 500 years, Gypsies have been rounded up and hung, deported and as recently as World War II, herded into "permanent compounds" in different parts of Britain. Most recently, Gypsies have been subjected to race-terror attacks at the hands of local fascists, they have been faced with apartheid-style repression through the prevalence of "no Travellers" bans and subjected to continuous harassment from state authorities, Tory and Labour alike. The key sectors of the labour movement have either shamefully

ignored the oppression of Gypsies or fuelled it through their own backwardness. It is precisely the vulnerability of the small Gypsy community that makes it incumbent upon the workers movement to champion the rights of Gypsies.

The current wave of anti-Gypsy reaction comes mainly from the layer of capitalist farmers who typify what Marx dubbed "rural idiocy". Last year the villagers of Cleeve Prior near Evesham declared themselves an "independent republic" in response to the local council's attempt to set up a 20-pitch permanent site for Gypsies and Travellers. And over the past year, the anti-Traveller hysteria has reached a new pitch as the bourgeois media rages continually against "new age travellers" who aspire to a nomadic version of '60s hippy lifestyle, holding rave and rock confabs on the small pockets of common land still in existence.

As Joyce McMillan points out in *Scotland on Sunday* (23 August):

"the sound of the well-heeled villagers of England yelling blue murder because some transient hippy has trampled their dahlias, peed in their garden shed, or directed a long-haired leer through their cottage window, may well strike you as simply ridiculous. Yet in the backlash against such essentially trivial incidents, we are supposed to accept a draconian White Paper which might well put an end to the travelling life in Britain for good."

Clearly, the target here is the long-term Traveller, the Gypsies and similar peoples, for instance Irish and Scottish Travellers. This attempt by the government which presides over hundreds of thousands of homeless people in Recession Britain must be stopped in its tracks!

We remember that during World War II, as many as half a million Gypsies were murdered by the Nazis in the abomination of Hitler's gas chambers. As Leninists we strive to build a revolutionary party which acts at all times as the "tribune of the oppressed" in the struggle to smash the whole capitalist system with its race hatred and genocide once and for all. Smash the attacks on Gypsies and other Travellers! ■

WORKERS HAMMER



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

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ICL protests Fourth Reich witch hunt

Free Erich Honecker now!



Spartacist-initiated 4 August London picket of German Embassy demands freedom for Erich Honecker.

Chanting "Freedom for Erich Honecker! Smash the anti-communist witch hunt!" "Freiheit für Erich Honecker!" some 40 people protested outside the German Embassy in London on 4 August. A united front action, the Spartacist-called picket was also sponsored by the Korea Friendship Committee; representatives of the Indian Workers' Association (GB), the British Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation, the Association of Muslims in Britain and representatives of the Ghanaian community also participated. The protest was shown on German television and covered in the widely-circulated *Asian Times*; both the BBC World Service and China's Xinhua News Agency sent reporters as well.

The Spartacist League statement announcing the demonstration said: "After years of hounding him, the rulers of the Fourth Reich and their SPD henchmen have got Erich Honecker in their claws. The nearly 80-year-old former head of the East German deformed workers state (DDR) has been flown from Moscow to Berlin, where 150 armed cops had been waiting for days to throw him into the Moabit prison cell of the SPD's top witch hunter Jutta Limbach.... Honecker is to be 'tried' by the same judicial system that emerged intact from fascism and took over the blood-stained judges or gave them honorary pensions. We demand the immediate release of Honecker, who already spent over ten years in prison under the Nazis, including 18 months in the very same Moabit prison before being sent to Brandenburg-Görden."

Our comrades in the Spartacist Workers Party of Germany (SpAD), who have fought down the line against the anti-communist witch hunt, protested for Honecker's freedom at Berlin's Tegel

Airport upon his arrival as well as at Moabit prison. In deporting Honecker who had taken refuge in the Chilean Embassy in Moscow, the counterrevolutionary regime of "Tsar" Boris Yeltsin made a blood sacrifice to the imperialists who are competing to exploit and pillage the working people of Eastern Europe and the USSR. Spartacist spokeswoman Christine Sawyer pointed to the campaign of vengeance directed not only against the former head of state of the East German deformed workers state, but also to the outrage of former DDR state security minister Mielke standing trial on the basis of charges brought against him by the Nazis and the sentencing to life imprisonment of the heroic Gerhard Bögelein because he is said to have brought to justice a notorious Nazi judge and the campaign against Markus Wolf, former head of the DDR's highly successful espionage service. Sawyer told protesters:

"In its drive to the East the German bourgeoisie seeks above all revenge for the Red Army victory over the Nazis. The Berlin Wall represented defence of the collectivised economy of the DDR, albeit in a bureaucratic fashion. That is why the bourgeoisie hated the Wall and that is why the Trotskyists defended it in the struggle for a red soviet Germany as part of a Socialist United States of Europe. What the imperialists really want Honecker for is that he had the gall to run a state where there was no capitalism and no bourgeoisie. And we say hands off the DDR Border Guards who stood on the front lines against imperialism in the Cold War."

The rampaging Nazi bands terrorising the Vietnamese, Polish and Gypsy (Roma and Sinti) refugees of Rostock are the hard face of what *Anschluss* and capitalist unification of Germany has meant. Now

the populace of the ex-DDR has been plunged into mass unemployment and misery while the fascist scum have been emboldened by the Bonn parties with their racist anti-immigrant agitation.

Noting that North Korea offered to provide medical attention and asylum to Erich Honecker, Hugh Stephens, speaking on behalf of the Korea Friendship Committee, said:

"What a contrast there is between the reactionary German state headed by Helmut Kohl who served in the Hitler Youth during the War and the German Democratic Republic headed by Erich Honecker who at that time was a prisoner of the Nazis. The would-be Fourth Reich is now set on recolonising the Eastern European countries and the former Soviet Union as its particular contribution to the imperialist New World Order. This New World Order targets People's Korea, Cuba and other countries who want to defend their independence and refuse to bow down to imperialism."

The *Morning Star* ran a major editorial on 31 July headlined "Free Erich Honecker". Despite this, and despite the fact that a large number of Communist Party of Britain members were informed of the protest, the CPB lifted not a finger on the day. Another outfit very conspicuous by its absence was the *Leninist* (aka Provisional Central Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain). Certainly, one may read in the pages of its press that "This is a show trial directed against communism. In the dock with Honecker will be the right of the GDR to have ever existed." But when it came to picking up their banners and bullhorns, the *Leninist* leadership—the same leadership which in about 24 hours decided that the collapse of the coup meant that the Soviet Union itself must be written off—begged off. We strongly suspect that *Leninist's* refusal to protest for Honecker's freedom was motivated by just plain political cowardice combined with its increasing desire to snuggle up to the social-democratic fake-left milieu, marked for instance by *Leninist's* failure to defend Iraq in the last Gulf War and its backhanded support to the Labour Party in the April general elections.

The protesters chanted outside the Embassy: "Labour Party, SPD—Run-

ning dogs for the bourgeoisie!" Of course the plethora of Labour-loving fake-Trotskyist groups who cheered the fall of the Berlin Wall and howled for the blood of the SED-PDS (the likes of Cliff's SWP and Workers Power—the latter dealt with elsewhere in this issue) would not be caught dead at such a protest. For its part, the Revolutionary Internationalist League (RIL) which did not go *all* the way with Yeltsinite counterrevolution, reacted with deafening silence over the grotesque persecution of Erich Honecker. This says a lot and is consistent with RIL's work in the anti-fascist milieu where RIL don't manage to make the link between the rise of fascism in Europe and the destruction of the DDR, the victory of counterrevolutionary forces in Poland, the attempt by imperialist-backed forces to reverse every gain made in the wake of the Red Army's victory in the Second World War in Eastern Europe. This was striking at the protest against Nazi-lover David Irving in London on 4 July when the RIL spokesman completely omitted this link from his speech.

A genuine united front, the protest entailed both unity in action and freedom of criticism. The Spartacist spokeswoman said of events in Germany:

"As Trotskyists, internationalists, we stood firm at our posts fighting against counter-revolution.... And you couldn't look to the Stalinists for a lead to defend the workers states. Gorbachev opened the floodgates. The PDS went along with it politically; they collapsed and today they are barely discernible from the SPD, not even able to stand up against this witch hunt actually handing over a couple of their treasurers to the bloodhounds."

The International Communist League's section in Germany—the Spartacist Workers Party—were the only organisation that unambiguously opposed capitalist reunification. We fought for a proletarian political revolution, which would have settled its own score with Stalinists like Honecker. But the imperialist bour-



Der Spiegel
Honecker defiant as he is kidnapped from Moscow's Chilean Embassy.

geoisie must not lay hands on him!

Once Honecker arrived in Germany, medical evidence confirmed that he is incurably ill and has been given only months to live. The lawyers working on Honecker's behalf accused the Russian doctors of "consciously suppressing" a cancer diagnosis in an official report. As the *Guardian* (17 August) put it: "The doctors, probably under pressure not to impede extradition, had given Mr Honecker a clean bill of health." Reportedly, the Socialist Party of Chile is to be asking the government to allow Honecker to live with his wife and daughter there. *Freedom for Erich Honecker, Mielke and Bögelein! Hands off Markus Wolf! Stop the anti-communist witch hunt! Red Army smashed Nazi rule! For the communism of Lenin and Trotsky!* ■

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Workers Power: out of the fondue, into the fire

Cuckoo for counterrevolution

Workers Hammer prints below two letters —one from Workers Power and a second from its German affiliates in Arbeitermacht —sent to the Spartacist League/Britain and the Spartakist Workers Party respectively —and our reply to the same.

1 July 1992.

Dear Comrades,

Workers Hammer 129 contains the following piece of misreporting and slander typical of your newspaper:

"At a 25 April talk in Dublin on his trip to the Soviet Union, WP speaker Paul Morris said that anti-Semitism was so pervasive [in the CIS] that all British and Americans were presumed to be Jews. So this intrepid 'anti racist' told Russians he was a German speaking Swiss! We can only wonder why Morris stopped there, instead of going all the way and announcing himself 100 per cent Aryan."

At the Lutte Ouvriere Fete it is reported that your organisation made a cause celebre of claiming that, confronted with anti-Semitism whilst in the CIS, I had "denied being Jewish". At a recent Militant meeting in Lambeth I am accused in public by a member of the Spartacist League of being an "anti-Semite" and of "committing an anti-Semitic act".

The Spartacist lie machine is clearly in top gear, and it is easy to see why. Workers Power had exposed your attempts to speak on joint platforms in the CIS with the fascist Pamyat group and the fact that you hailed, and and [sic] supported with an organised contingent, Stalinist/nationalist demos where anti-Semitic slogans were prevalent.

Having been caught red handed the ICL now tries to cover up its gross adaptations to Stalinism and its anti-Semitic allies by throwing up a smokescreen of charges of anti-Semitism against the LRCI. You are too transparent comrades!

What I said at the Dublin meeting was: "I was shocked at the level of anti-Semitism amongst the Stalinist movement. German imperialism killed twenty million Russians in World War Two, yet it is easier for a foreigner to identify themselves as German in this milieu than to be English or American. For the Stalinists, Britain and the USA are 'Jewish countries'. So at one point I had to

pretend to be a German speaking Swiss."

Thus a story revealing the prevalent anti-Semitism, in the milieu to which your group has a strategic orientation, is turned into "an anti-Semitic act". Concealing my British nationality is deemed to be both "anti-Semitic and cowardly".

I do not intend to go into the precise details of the time when I had to pretend to be a German speaking Swiss journalist. It would be a security risk. Suffice to say it involved a hostile crowd of Stalinist and nationalist anti-Semites, a very heavy police/surveillance situation and I was carrying out an activity which was strictly illegal.

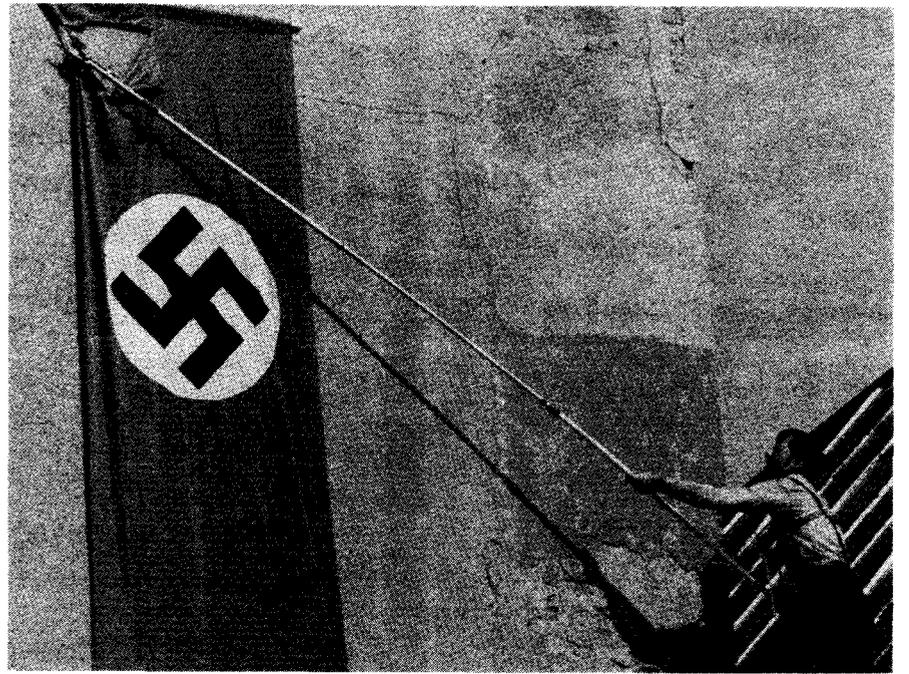
Your readers can make their own judgement about my supposed "cowardice" from the above. I would defend my action as elementary and sensible for a revolutionary operating in conditions of semi-legality, without rights of political activity or residence, and with a poor grasp of the language.

More importantly, what in the above constitutes an "anti-Semitic act"?

I did not at any time "deny being Jewish". In fact at every opportunity in discussion with those from the left and Stalinist milieu I raised the fact that I had a Jewish grandparent to see how they reacted. And at no time have I or any comrade of the LRCI in the CIS made concessions to anti-Semitism.

While you were hailing the Red-Brown demos as "90,000 for Lenin" we were clear from the start that no socialist could give support to such demonstrations where the organisers tolerated and even encouraged the presence of fascist and anti-Semitic contingents on the demonstrations. It was necessary for socialists, as far as they were allowed, to try and win workers away from these demos and their organisers through argument, leaflets, selling papers etc, without for one moment supporting them.

In your own words the Revolution Day 1991 parade was organised by "a rump of the so called patriotic wing of the Stalinist movement" (WH126). In your own words on this demo "Pamyat salesmen were peddling their filth. The organisers of the rally appealed to great Russian chauvinism". Yet, alongside all this, and pictures of Josef Stalin "there was also the red banner of the ICL, emblazoned with the insignia of Trotsky's Fourth International". That is you gave



Spartakist

SpAD comrades rip swastika flag off wall near Berlin's Brandenburg Gate on 23 June.

organised support to this demonstration, marched alongside this reactionary filth and even by your own admission tried to join the platform!

British leftists will have seen how carefully you stand aside from demos you do not support, like the CND marches of the 1980s, your denunciations of the left for going anywhere near "pacifists", "cold war Labour lefts" etc. They will also remember your rage at anyone supporting "Solidarnosc" cross kissing demonstrations. They will contrast this to your unconcealed participation alongside "patriotic" Stalinists, fascists and, yes, cross kissing orthodox priests!

In November 1991 you lambasted the Moscow left for daring to organise a Revolution Day demo separate from the Jew baiters in Red and Brown. Later the ICL suddenly changed its line. It did not of course admit it. Rather it proceeded with a cover up. Suddenly you concluded you had "never supported" the Stalinist/nationalist demos. Later the excuse appeared that "the character of the movement changed"—but the precise date of that change and what evidence there is for this assertion always eludes your comrades and your paper.

In May 1992 (WV552) you had the temerity to write that seeing the red flag flying alongside anti-Semitic signs and fascist banners "should turn the stomach of any communist". Do you expect your readers to forget that in November you were the ones flying the flags! To cover your tracks you spew forth lies and slander against genuine Trotskyists.

The LRCI helped organise an independent demo against Yeltsin in February. Your claim that this demonstration, organised on the basis of "No to Chauvinism", was "a concession to anti-Semitism" was greeted with justified ridicule at the LO Fete. Your claim that we suppressed the leaflet for the demo can be judged against its publication, in translation, in *Trotskyist Bulletin* No 1.

It was in fact the first demonstration against capitalist restoration to be organised after Yeltsin's big bang which specifically excluded chauvinists and anti-Semites. Your comrades, of course, did not attend. If they had they would have seen an anti-Semitic heckler physically

removed from the crowd. They would have heard speeches against nationalism and anti-Semitism, not just from the organisers but from ordinary workers in the crowd who thanked us for raising an anti-capitalist platform cleansed of bigotry and chauvinism.

If you choose to carry on the slander that I and my organisation are "anti-Semitic", proletarian morality demands that you print this reply. We challenge you to do just that.

Paul Morris
Workers Power

[ICL translation]

29 July 1992
Berlin

SpAD Before a Workers Tribunal?

In the house of the hanged man you don't speak of the noose, runs the old saying. In the "Spartakist" sect the mere mention of the word "workers tribunal" is already causing fear and rage. Rightly, since political bandits of this type know only too well that they would be condemned by one.

Thus the "Spartakist" capo Jan Andrew feels himself called on to rake his German sub-comrades over the coals from far-off Moscow—they had actually dared to publish in their newspaperlet a letter to the editor calling for a workers tribunal for Mielke & Co. And the "Spartakist" editorial board of course promptly grovels at this whistle from their former top commissar from their Berlin days: "Dear comrade Jan, we can only express our full agreement with you that the slogan 'Bourgeoisie: Hands off Honecker! Stalinist Bureaucrats before a Workers Tribunal,' as suggested by E.P. in his letter to the editor in Spartakist No. 94, only constitutes 'left' cover for the witch hunt." A reaction that is not surprising with such servile cretins as the "Spartakist" editorial board, who fill up 80 per cent of their paper with literal translations from the North American central organ of their sect and prior to every step

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Hate Trotskyism, Hate the Spartacists

—a bulletin series of opponent material

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of their own first have to phone up top guru Robertson for permission.

But what is concealed behind this fear of workers tribunals on the crimes of Stalinist hangmen like Mielke (who, incidentally, consistently refuses a political defence before the bourgeois court, instead preferring to appeal to the mental decrepitude of old age)? Perhaps the fact that the SpAD let itself be supported in grand style still under the Modrow government with state electoral funds and two donated Ladas as the ideological bodyguards of the collapsing SED? This may be one of the reasons, if not the decisive one. While the dozen big-mouths of the SpAD demand freedom for their bosom-buddy Mielke and hail the overthrown Honecker, these "heroes" don't lift a finger in defence of the DDR border guards [now] being prosecuted, while PDSers hit by blacklisting [Berufsverbote] are additionally attacked by them as betrayers of the workers. Here then lies the meaning of their action: to render impossible a campaign in defence of the victims of the bourgeois state, to discredit Trotskyism in the eyes of the populace. It is a *modus agendi* of conscious and deliberate provocation; politics that have become the brand name of this sect since its founding.

But the SpAD and their international cohorts have other more serious reasons to start in terror at the word "workers tribunal": their open collaboration with all ultrareactionary, fascist forces in Moscow itself. While in Berlin the SpAD grouplet is putting on its "anti-fascist" display and without any danger burn the Nazi flag that some confused action-artist had hung out from a gallery, the "Spartakist" raiding party parachuted into Moscow from the U.S. has been marching arm in arm with the Pamyat fascists beneath anti-Semitic slogans, beneath the tsarist flag of the monarchists. There these "Trotskyists" stand in peaceful coexistence with the ultrarightist, Great Russian demagogues of "Nashi," on one tribunal with hard-core Stalinists of the likes of Anpilov, who calls for a new "show trial like in 1937." Full of contempt for the working class and filled with brutal chauvinism towards any sort of efforts at independence by the nations suppressed by the Stalinist bureaucracy, these dung-cleaner-uppers of the bureaucracy have celebrated each of its massacres, each of its measure of suppression — from Poland to Afghanistan!

Now, where it is shown that hardly anything is left of the entire old-Stalinist bureaucracy but the nationalist, profascist "Butenko faction," the "Spartakists" are finding congenial allies in "defence of the USSR" in the rising Great-Russian fascism of Pamyat and "Nashi." It is a frightful irony of history: for decades Stalinism hammered into the workers that the Trotskyists were "agents of fascism." Robertson's "Spartakists" are now trying with all their might to prove in their own way that this slander is true.... Here, too, it should by now have become clear even to the dumbest person whose interests these "Trotskyists" are acting in. It is in the interest of imperialism to preserve the old *nomenklatura* as undamaged as possible as guarantor of an "orderly transition" to capitalism and simultaneously, through charlatans and provocateurs like the "Spartakists," to immunise the working populace against any thought of a revolutionary alternative. No matter how loathsome and revolting the role accorded them is, the "Spartakists" play it with devotion and enthusiasm.

The working class will — once it has seized power itself — carry out a merciless accounting with the Stalinist hangmen and tyrants. And in doing so it will just as little spare their informers, eulogists and lackeys. With a kick it will convey crud like the "Spartakists" to what

is in any case their natural home: the dung-heap of history!

Fabio Gessler
ARBEITERMACHT

WH reply

Workers Power has and does capitulate to anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic forces. That was the significance of the propaganda Workers Power produced for the February 1992 anti-Yeltsin protest in Moscow — a leaflet which failed to even mention the words Pamyat, anti-Semitism, Jewish person or fascist — and that was the significance of Paul Morris' action reported in *Workers Hammer* no 129 ("Workers Power: more from the Yuri



Spartacist

Above: Trotskyists of ICL raise banner of Fourth International at 7 November Revolution Day demonstration in Moscow; Workers Power slandered demo on behalf of counterrevolutionary Yeltsinism. Right: Russian-language *Spartacist Bulletin* devoted to fight against special oppression entitled: "The Leninist Party—Tribune of the People".

Butchenko Brigade", May/June 1992). Morris has simply confirmed what we reported, to wit, in his own words:

"I was shocked at the level of anti-Semitism amongst the Stalinist movement.... For the Stalinists, Britain and the USA are 'Jewish countries'. So at one point I had to pretend to be a German speaking Swiss."

We are more than willing to publish Morris' letter proving that our article was 100 per cent accurate.

The rest of Morris' letter consists of the old "sand-in-the-eyes" method of attempting to obscure the indefensible acts of Workers Power with a cocktail of falsifications and pathetic whingeing. The last time we received such "polemical" attention from LRCI/Workers Power was in the wake of our exposure of your grotesque role in the Yuri Butchenko affair. Under the name of the Irish Workers Group, you devoted a ten-page pamphlet ("The Spartacists: A Poisoned Well") to defending Workers Power's knowing sponsorship of the fascist NTS-connected Butchenko's tour in Britain. Then as now, in the course of its string of denials, non-denials and conflicting disclaimers which in sum only confirmed its criminal complicity in this affair, Workers Power couldn't keep its "facts" straight. (See the collection of material printed in "Hate Trotskyism, Hate the Spartacists", SL/B and DSYG bulletin Number 1 on Workers Power and the Irish Workers Group).

Outraged by Workers Power's support

to the forces of capitalist restoration, your stand on the barricades of Yeltsinite counterrevolution in August 1991 and then your cynical capitulation to the anti-Semitism prevalent within the "patriot" milieu, one of our comrades did accuse Morris of an "anti-Semitic act". That is overstating the case somewhat — the act was "merely" a capitulation to anti-Semitism. But Morris doth protest too much.

Behind his smokescreen of feigned indignation, Morris completely ducks the central charge we have made against Workers Power, of which his behaviour was a minor illustration, ie, that their propaganda putatively aimed at opposing chauvinism and anti-Semitism in fact avoided these central questions entirely.



Wisely, Morris does not contest our characterisation of the leaflet.

Morris' howls about "security" (in a letter he is demanding be printed in our public press, no less) ring entirely hollow; is that the "explanation" for the non-mention in WP's propaganda of the anti-Semitism which so "shocked" Morris? Political gutlessness and slander in the service of a wretched third camp line is more to the point.

We have apper'led to Morris' letter another missive received by our comrades in the Spartakist-Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands (SpAD) from Workers Power's German affiliates. This grotesque document takes on the full and provocative proportions of Workers Power's little "Big Lie" machine clearly in top gear against the ICL. These *Österreicher* [Austrians] who to this day have not repudiated their amnesty of Nazi war criminal Kurt Waldheim and who now alibi the "confused action-artist" who hung the Swastika flag at the Brandenburg Gate, descend so low as to Nazi-bait our comrades in the SpAD — the only organisation that saw fit to remove this emblem of the Nazi Holocaust. The demented nature of this letter from Workers Power's Arbeitermacht cohorts — beneath contempt and beneath reply — speaks volumes about Workers Power's "socialist morality", stripped of the snide and whingeing British parliamentary "niceties". With its foam-flecked "anti-Stalinism" Workers Power can't tell the difference between Adolf Hitler and

Erich Honecker.

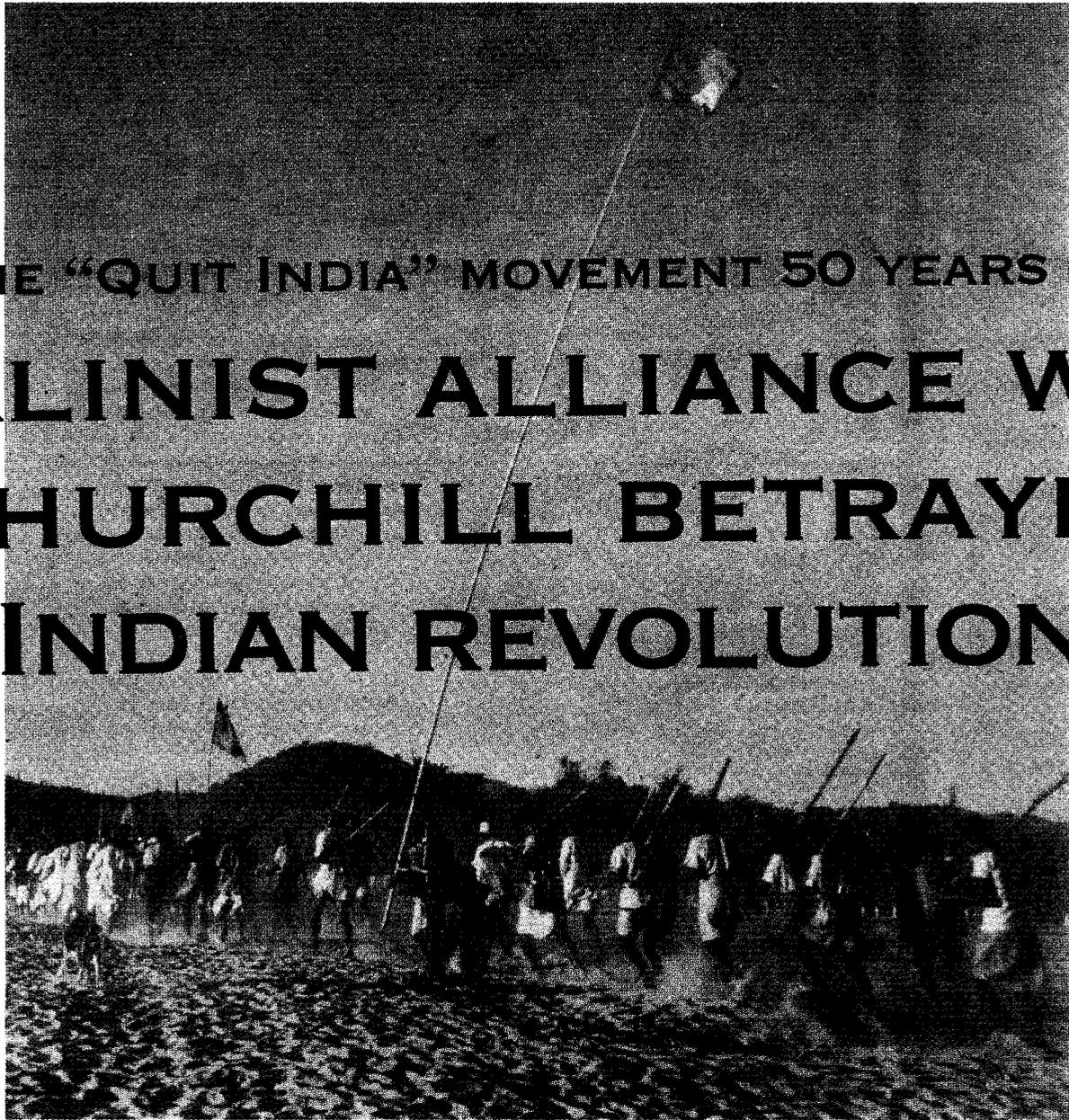
Back in the USSR, Workers Power concocted the absurd lie that we in the ICL "share[d] a platform with the Stalinists and Pamyat" at the 90,000-strong 7 November anti-Yeltsin demonstration called to commemorate the anniversary of the October Revolution in which you refused to participate. Workers Power's sorry slanders are in the service of whitewashing your own double-barrelled opportunism. And there's plenty to whitewash: in addition to your cosy relations with the NTS during Butchenko's infamous "tour", Workers Power was so besotted with the virulently anti-Communist, Nazi-infested Baltic nationalists that you even called on Margaret Thatcher's government to provide the Lithuanian Sajudis with aid against the USSR's blockade! As for Pamyat, Workers Power didn't see fit to mention this Black Hundreds outfit more than twice in as many years. It takes plenty of chutzpah for Workers Power — which has joined with unspeakable counterrevolutionary elements "against Stalinism" — to try its cynical "fascist smear" against us.

While we're at it, we might as well demolish Morris' gratuitous lie that we stood aside from the "CND marches of the 1980s". Certainly our intervention in these marches under banners reading "Smash NATO — Defend the Soviet Union" didn't escape the notice of CND general secretary Bruce Kent whose slanderous accusations against our organisation took up fully one-third of the *Times* article which came out on the morning of the 24 October 1981 250,000-strong CND march. Presumably, the 1210 issues of *Spartacist Britain* and 75 Spartacist pamphlets entitled "Solidarność: Polish Company Union for CIA and Bankers" sold at this demo did not get there by themselves. For Workers Power, which had its nose firmly planted in the posterior of Kent's "mass movement", the fact that we waged a political fight against the Cold Warrior, pro-imperialist "pacifists" of the CND constitutes "standing aside".

Morris mentions the recent Lutte Ouvrière (LO) fête several times. This is handy because what he *doesn't* mention is the main "event" at this fête: the disgusting exclusion by LO of the gay activists of Act-Up France. Workers Power stood very much aside while we organised a protest and exposure of LO's exclusion. This is documented in the last issue of *Workers Hammer* and it's worth underlining the fact that Workers Power "fights" anti-homosexual exclusionism of AIDS activists within the left like it "fights" anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union: it doesn't. Thus, its own snivelling account of LO's exclusion in the July issue of *Workers Power* "disappears" the protest against the exclusion — organised by ourselves and joined by the centrist Revolutionary Internationalist League (RIL) — "neglects" to note that we in the ICL have been banned for protesting the anti-homosexual exclusion or that the Courant Communiste Internationale was banned as well.

Just as in the "exchange" with Workers Power over the Yuri Butchenko scandal, *political programme and appetites* are at the root of the Paul Morris scandal and the even less savoury documents emanating from LRCI's Austrian/German quarters. The ICL's struggle to build an authentic Leninist-Trotskyist party in the homeland of the October Revolution has centred on our opposition to the Yeltsinite forces of capitalist counter-revolution and to all forms of anti-Semitism, Great Russian chauvinism and reactionary nationalism. Workers Power has done just the reverse, we have nailed you at every point in your hard rightward lunge, and it's only justice that you're squealing like stuck pigs. ■

THE "QUIT INDIA" MOVEMENT 50 YEARS ON STALINIST ALLIANCE WITH CHURCHILL BETRAYED INDIAN REVOLUTION



Militant peasant rally, north Bengal 1944. Support for Churchill meant Stalinists held back rural struggle.

"The Indian scene [in 1947] was heavy with menace, but one thing at least gave [British Labour prime minister Major Clement] Attlee great satisfaction. How gratifying it was, he noted, that an old Haileybury School boy like himself [Sir Cyril Radcliffe] was being sent out to take on the task of drawing a line through the [Punjabi] homelands of eighty-eight million human beings."

"In India, Sikhs and Hindus prowled the cars of ambushed trains slaughtering every circumcised male they found. In Pakistan, Moslems raced along the trains they had stopped, murdering every male who was not circumcised."

— Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, *Freedom at Midnight*

Fifty years ago India's struggle for independence from Britain entered its final, decisive phase. Commonly known as the "Quit India", movement after the main slogan put out by Mohandas Karamchand ("Mahatma" or "great soul") Gandhi's bourgeois Indian National Congress in August 1942, this phase swelled to a crescendo between 1945 and 1946. Soon after this, the subcontinent was arbitrarily partitioned into an 80 per cent Hindu-dominated India and an Islamic-confessional Pakistan; a horrendous communal blood-bath was unleashed. The movement's denouement in February 1948 presented an appropriately bizarre neo-colonial spectacle: Britain's last troops in India, the Somerset Light Infantry, disappeared marching westward through Bombay's arched Gateway of India (where the "King Emperor" George V had landed in 1911) to the strains of "God Save the King" and "Auld Lang Syne", played in parting salute by an Indian Navy honour guard band of Sikhs and Gurkhas.

Yet, at its tumultuous peak the mass upheaval, for a few crucial historic

moments far outstripping the planned limits of its self-appointed minders and misleaders, had rocked the entire subcontinent, lifting it on to the very precipice of revolution. Millions of workers, soldiers, peasants, students and women, many flying Communist red flags alongside the Congress tricolour and the Muslim League's green flag, defying British tank and machine-gun fire and even naval and aerial bombardment, jammed the streets and fields from Karachi to Calcutta. Cries of "*Inquilab Zindabad!*" [Long live the revolution!] filled the air. Armed peasants started forcibly seizing land and setting up "soviets". And in February 1946 a powerful strike by ratings (enlisted men) of the Royal Indian Navy in Bombay touched off an armed uprising by hundreds of thousands, including Royal Indian Air Force men, in that port and across the whole, electrified country, bringing it to a virtual standstill.

Britain had lost control. Posed point-blank was not only India's political independence from two hundred and fifty years of the British jackboot; the social liberation of India's toiling masses from millennia of indigenous caste, gender, communal and class oppression was also now suddenly within grasp. What was needed was a revolutionary vanguard party of India's small but strategic and modern, urbanised industrial working class which could rally and draw behind it the millions of peasant poor and other oppressed, oust the British, and put the native capitalist-landlord alliance out of business, launching a direct offensive for both national and social liberation

Part one of two

through capturing proletarian state power.

This policy, that of the Permanent Revolution, had been the programme of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks in the victorious October Revolution, thirty years earlier. That revolution had brought



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Stalin: gravedigger of revolution

national and social liberation to the masses of backward Tsarist Russia, whose Tadjik, Uzbek and other Central Asian peoples (just on the other side of the Himalayan Pamirs from northern Kashmir) had been catapulted from the seventh century into the twentieth as a result. In India the toiling masses had seen the Russian Revolution as a beacon of hope.

Yet by midnight of 14 August 1947,

when Congress prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru rose to address "free" India's parliament of capitalists, landlords and princes, the spectacular upsurge had been derailed. Instead, a pro-imperialist alliance of the Congress bourgeoisie and the Muslim League landlords had successfully diverted the revolutionary momentum into British imperialism's waiting trap, the nightmare of communalist Partition. India's working masses had paid with their lives — and were now about to pay even more — for the absence of a revolutionary party to lead its millions in an independent struggle for workers power.

The new Muslim theocratic state of Pakistan (whose Punjabi-dominated west wing and Bengali east wing looked at each other across 1000 miles of hostile Hindu Indian territory) was carved out of the living bodies of thoroughly interpenetrated peoples, precipitating the biggest forced population transfers and one of the ghastliest communal slaughters in history. And in this crime, the Labour government of imperialist Britain and their bourgeois-landlord alliance of lackeys in the Congress and Muslim League were fully aided and abetted by the treacherous Stalinist trinity of the Kremlin, the Communist Party of Great Britain and the Communist Party of India. For in this historic betrayal, Stalin was the mover, the CPGB the enforcer and the CPI the executor on the spot.

Lessons of the Chinese Revolution

The developing militant wave and the advent of World War II could have signalled the opening of great possibilities for a revolutionary party the size of the CPI. Instead the second imperialist war

was to bring the nadir of Stalinist betrayal in India. To understand the CPI's treachery on behalf of Churchill's war effort it is necessary to take up the positions adopted by the Stalinised Comintern as against the Leninist tradition upheld by Trotsky and the Left Opposition.

The Russian Revolution in 1917 fully confirmed Trotsky's prognosis that "the complete victory of the democratic revolution in Russia is conceivable only in the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, leaning on the peasantry. The dictatorship of the proletariat, which would inevitably place on the order of the day not only democratic but socialistic tasks as well, would at the same time give a powerful impetus to the international socialist revolution. Only the victory of the proletariat in the West could protect Russia from bourgeois restoration and assure it the possibility of rounding out the establishment of socialism" ("Three Concepts of the Russian Revolution").

Under the slogan of "socialism in one country" embraced by the conservative, nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy which had risen in the context of the isolated, war-weary and encircled Soviet workers state, the struggle for the extension of the revolution internationally was shelved in favour of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. This translated into defeat after defeat for the world proletariat and eventually transformed—after ruthless purges in most cases—the parties of the (Third) Communist International into tools of class-collaboration with their "own" bourgeoisies. In the colonial and neo-colonial world it meant rejecting the lessons of October and resuscitating the old Menshevik formula of "two-stage" revolution. As in China earlier, this was to have a devastating effect on the revolutionary proletariat of India.

The tragedy of the Chinese Revolution of 1927-28 was a powerful negative confirmation of the permanent revolution, and it was over China that Trotsky extended his correct prognosis in Russia to all of the backward, colonial countries. The debate on China was whether or not to subordinate the Chinese workers and peasants to the native bourgeoisie in the form of Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang in which the CP was operating. When the Chinese CP proposed to leave the Kuomintang the plan was vetoed by the Comintern Executive on Stalin's instruction. They were directed to hold down the class struggle against the "anti-imperialist" bourgeoisie in the cities and contain the peasant movement in the countryside. In early 1926 the Kuomintang itself was admitted to the International as an associate party. Only a few weeks later, on 20 March, Chiang carried out his first anti-communist coup, barring CP members from all leadership posts and demanding a list of all CP members in the Kuomintang. Under orders, the CP complied! After a challenge from the Left Opposition leaders Trotsky and Zinoviev and during the crucial days of the Shanghai insurrection which began in March 1927, Stalin stuck to the policy. The main task in China for the Communists was "the further development of the Kuomintang". On 12 April the Kuomintang army carried out a massacre which cost the lives of tens of thousands of Communists and militant workers who had laid down their arms at Stalin's orders. This was "socialism in one country" in practice!

Congress—the Indian "Kuomintang"—and the CPI

"India", Trotsky had noted in May 1930, "is the classic colonial country as Britain is the classic metropolis. All the viciousness of the ruling classes and every form of oppression that capitalism has



(Above) Sir Stafford Cripps with Gandhi, 1942. Even Gandhi's Congress had to reject British imperialism's paltry divide and rule "concessions". British machinations led to communal slaughter during Partition (below).



used against the backward people of the East is most completely and frightfully summed up in the history of the gigantic colony on which the British imperialists have settled themselves like leeches for the past century and a half" ("The Revolution in India, Its Tasks and Dangers", *Writings of Leon Trotsky [1930]*). Like pre-revolutionary Russia and China, the road to national liberation, agrarian reform, social equality and advancement lay in the programme of proletarian revolution, requiring a vanguard party defending the political independence of the working class. The weak national bourgeoisie, tied by a thousand threads to imperialism, could in no way carry out even the "democratic" tasks posed.

The Indian industrial bourgeoisie, which started growing towards the very end of the 19th century and expanded considerably during World War I, was still no match for British industrial and finance capital. The Bolsheviki-Leninist Party of India (BLPI—Indian section of the Trotskyist Fourth International) pointed out:

"Despite the advance of Indian capital, British capital remains in effective monopolist domination in banking, commerce, exchange, insurance, shipping, in the tea, coffee and rubber plantations, and in the jute industry. In iron and steel, Indian capital has been forced to come to terms with British capital, and even in the cotton industry, the home of Indian capital,

the control of British capital through the managing agency system is very great."
—BLPI Draft Programme

Indian reality emphatically underlined the revolutionary correctness of the perspective of permanent revolution. The Indian Trotskyists drew the correct conclusion that "the Indian bourgeoisie, shackled as it is to Imperialism, cannot play the historical role of the West-European bourgeoisie in liberating and developing the productive forces. The industrial advance of India demands absolutely the overthrow of Imperialism, with which Indian bourgeois interests are indissolubly bound, and the overthrow of which they are bound to resist" (ibid).

Faced with British imperialist intransigence, the weak and dependent Indian bourgeoisie sought methods of struggle that could pressure the colonial masters to make concessions without disturbing the social order by unleashing struggles of the masses that would threaten not just the British but also the Indian capitalists and their landlord brothers. The origins of Congress are instructive in this regard.

An English ex-civil servant of the Empire, AO Hume, was a founder of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Its stated third aim was "THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE UNION BETWEEN ENGLAND AND INDIA, BY SECURING THE MODIFICATION OF SUCH OF ITS CONDITIONS AS MAY BE UNJUST OR INJURIOUS TO THE LATTER COUNTRY" (*The Indian National-*

ist Movement, 1885-1947: Select documents, ed BN Pandey). As its first president, WC Bonnerjee explained:

"Lord Dufferin... said there was no body of persons in this country who performed the functions which Her Majesty's Opposition did in England... and as the English were necessarily ignorant of what was thought of them and their policy in native circles, it would be very desirable in the interests as well of the rulers as of the ruled that Indian politicians should meet yearly and point out to the Government in what respects the administration was defective and how it could be improved" (ibid).

Enter Gandhi. At the time he arrived on the nationalist political scene at the start of World War I, Gandhi could be found enthusiastically urging London's Indians to "think imperialist" and organising a Field Ambulance Training Corps as his personal contribution to the inter-imperialist war "effort". Gandhi's job was to extract as much as possible from the British, in the common interests of saving capitalism, while keeping the burgeoning and now increasingly militant struggles of the workers and peasants at bay. The textile magnate Ambalal Sarabhai put it succinctly when he said Gandhi "was the best guarantee against communism which India possessed" (DA Low, *Congress and the Raj*).

It was only after World War I that India's modern proletariat, numbering five million by the second imperialist world war, emerged as a distinct force. The first great wave of strikes (1918-21) was triggered by mass immiseration under war conditions, a flu epidemic that killed 14 million, the Amritsar massacre in the wake of the draconian Rowlatt Act, and the impact of the 1917 Revolution. And it was the backdrop to Gandhi's 1920-21 mass civil disobedience campaign for minimal constitutional reforms. The first six months of 1920 saw 200 strikes involving half a million workers, along with growing peasant struggles. Gandhi got cold feet, declaring that he had committed a "blunder of Himalayan proportions which had enabled ill-disposed persons, not true passive resisters at all, to perpetrate disorders". In February 1922, on the eve of another passive resistance crawl, when 22 policemen were killed in the course of a peasant anti-rent agitation, Gandhi called off the entire non-cooperation movement, essentially going into *purdah* over the next decade. And the Congress told its supporters that withholding rent to the *zemindars* [landlords] was contrary to its policies and "the best interests of the country". Gandhi re-emerged in the thirties when new waves of militant struggles broke out. He reiterated his opposition to "class war" and called for the "harmonious cooperation of labour and capital, the landlord and tenant".

The situation in India not only cried out for a revolutionary solution but provided great opportunities for building a communist-led movement against colonial oppression and to overthrow capitalism. The prestige of the October Revolution was immense among the toiling masses. Founded among other places in revolutionary Tashkent in 1920, the CPI had early succumbed to the global anti-revolutionary policies emanating from Stalin's Comintern after 1924; Stalin's search for "peaceful coexistence" did not help the Indian Communists. In the late twenties they employed themselves with generally rightist plans for front organisations and multi-class parties. Then the "Third Period" had them pursuing sterile sectarian policies which condemned the Indian nationalists equally with the British imperialists.

In the popular front period (1935-39) they accepted the leadership of the Con-

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India...

(Continued from page 7)

gress and "Gandhiji" as necessary for the first "democratic" stage of the revolution. And moreover, because Stalin was pursuing an alliance with "democratic" imperialist Britain, the CPI soft-pedalled the struggle against British imperialism, placing the emphasis on reforms and gradualist change. At the Seventh Congress of the Third International in Moscow in July-August 1935, the CPI was denounced for long-standing "left" sectarian errors and for using slogans such as "an Indian Workers' and Peasants' Soviet Republic", and "confiscation of lands belonging to the zamindars (landlords) without compensation". Even as late as March 1936 the Congress was characterised as "definitely a class organisation of the Indian bourgeoisie" in a CPI publication, but the new class-collaborationist line laid down by "India experts" for the CPGB, R Palme Dutt and Ben Bradley was:

"The National Congress can play a great part and a foremost part in the work of realising the anti-imperialist People's Front. It is even possible that the National Congress by the further transformation of its organisation and programme may become the form of realisation of the anti-imperialist People's Front" (quoted in S Tagore, *Against the Stream*).

The CPI supported the Congress in the provincial elections of 1937. In 1936 a miserable and tokenistic Congress proposal for agricultural reform was lauded. In fact the Congress ministries of this period did next to nothing to alleviate the condition of the peasantry. Indicatively the only places where Congress ministries even talked about land reform were in areas where the landlords were to a large

extent Muslims and the peasants Hindus, such as the United Provinces, Bihar and Madras.

At the same time the inception of Congress ministries in some parts of India gave the CPI more room to organise, and with growing mass disillusionment with Congress the CPI began to grow significantly. It developed strong roots in the working class in major industrial cities like Bombay, and considerable influence in student and peasant organisations. But it held the struggles back in the interests of the alliance with Congress. In November 1938, after the shootings of workers protesting anti-trade-union legislation introduced by the Congress ministry in Bombay, one "Congress Communist" (CPI entrust in Congress) told a protest rally: "Anger and sorrow have been kindled in our minds by the oppression that has been perpetrated on the workers of Bombay. Still, we are proceeding with restraint with our eyes fixed on national solidarity and unity."

The CPI in World War II

During the period of the Stalin-Hitler pact the CPI as all the other parties of the Comintern (which would be formally liquidated by Stalin in 1943) denounced the "democratic" facade of the British imperialists in their war against Germany. Indeed in contrast to the Stalinists of His Majesty's CPGB who displayed visible discomfort at Stalin's about face (with its pro-German tilt), many militants of the CPI appear to have relished the opportunity to take a full-blooded stance against their hated main enemy. In the context of mounting anti-imperialist militancy, this line would have come increasingly into contradiction with the CPI's continuing adherence to the

Stalinist policy of a "first" "democratic" stage in alliance with the bourgeois Congress, provoking splits and opportunities for revolutionary regroupment. But when Hitler's "Operation Barbarossa" was launched against the Soviet Union in June 1941 and the wartime alliance between Britain and the USSR was sealed, the Comintern instructed another sharp turn to the "People's War Against Fascism" and all-out support for the war effort in the imperialist countries and their colonies. As late as July 1941 the CPI, lacking precise instructions from Stalin via the CPGB, however, had adopted a line which distinguished between the inter-imperialist war between the Allied and Axis powers and the need to defend the Soviet Union. A CPI manifesto issued at the time read in part:

"The Communist Party declares that the only way in which the Indian people can help in the just war which the Soviet is waging, is by fighting all the more vigorously for their own emancipation from the imperialist yoke. Our attitude towards the British Government and the imperialist war remains what it was.... We can render really effective aid to the Soviet Union, only as a free people. That is why our campaign for the demonstration of our support and solidarity with the Soviet Union, must be coupled with the exposure of the imperialist hypocrisy of the Churchills and Roosevelts with the demand for the intensification of our struggle for independence" (quoted in David N Druhe, *Soviet Russia and Indian Communism*).

But the CPI leadership, after the years of its popular front treachery, were not going to oppose Stalin's dictates. They soon embraced the Allied war effort. In the "Guidelines of the History of the Communist Party of India", by the Central Party Education Department, the CPI noted the July position, adding: "Then a document proposing change of line was sent by the comrades in Deoli camp in December 1941. In February 1942 the PB said in a resolution: 'Make the Indian people play a people's role in the people's war.' In July 1942 the ban on the CPI was lifted and releases started. The main slogans were correct: 'National government for national defence'. 'National unity for national government'."

Let's be clear. The emissaries from the Comintern responsible for dealing with the CPI—the Communist Party of Great Britain—broke the news to their Indian comrades that they were out of line. Harry Pollitt's letter announcing this was even deliberately permitted by the British authorities to be passed to the Communists incarcerated in Deoli prison. Debate ensued and there were those who broke with the CPI rather than scab on the struggle against British imperialism for the sake of the "People's War" but the CPI leaders accepted the new line. Their support to the war would now be "unqualified, wholehearted and full-throated".

For its part Congress' formal position was that its support to the war was conditional on being granted independence from Britain. What this boiled down to was "demanding" some concessions in exchange for producing cannon fodder for the imperialist war effort. Then, emboldened by Britain's difficulties as Japan advanced through the Pacific and into Burma and cognisant that they might soon need to deal with another imperialist overlord, Congress went from conditional support to open opposition, seeking to force a settlement with British imperialism. Even arch-reactionary Churchill was compelled to recognise that concessions were needed to shore up the shaky Raj. Sir Stafford Cripps, a "left" Labourite reputed to be sympathetic to the Indian national cause was despatched to offer some meagre and insulting divide-and-rule concessions. Even Gandhi called them "a post dated cheque on a bank

that was failing". Then as Charles Wesley Ervin related in his "Trotskyism in India: Origins through World War Two (1935-1945)": "On 8 August 1942 Congress called for mass civil disobedience to pressurise the British to 'quit India'. The British panicked. Within twelve hours every important Congress leader was in jail or on his way. News of the arrests brought thousands onto the streets of Bombay.... The August Struggle had begun" (*Revolutionary History* Vol 1, No 4, Winter 1988-89).

Arguing that Congress should form a temporary national government in collaboration with the Muslim League, the CPI bitterly opposed the "Quit India" resolution and in the ensuing struggles denounced Congress for its "sabotage". Even in its mendacious retrospective, the CPI's "Guidelines" admit: "It adopted an anti-struggle anti-strike line. A line of avoiding [!] mass struggles was worked out on the plea that they would damage the war effort or help profascist elements to sabotage it, eg. CC plenum reports, articles in weekly *People's War*. Quit India movement was opposed on the same basis [as] the Forward Bloc [Subhas Chandra Bose's split] and socialists who attacked communists as 'British agents' were denounced in retaliation as fifth column and fascist agents."

The newly formed BLPI plunged into the August events. Key cadre came from exiled Ceylonese Trotskyists who had escaped arrest and imprisonment in Ceylon, after the British crackdown on their party for its revolutionary defeatist stance on the imperialist war and their organising of militant struggles among the strategic Tamil plantation workers. As the heroic Trotskyists argued in their Bombay leaflet the very day the historic "August Action" began:

"The slogans of 'Abolition of Landlordism without Compensation' and 'Cancellation of Peasant Debt' must be leading slogans of the struggle. Not only no-tax campaigns against the government, but also no-rent campaigns against all landlords, must be commenced on the widest possible scale, leading to the seizure of land by the peasants through Peasants' Committees.

"Manning the nerve centres of the economy, the workers are in the position to deal the most devastating blows against imperialism.... A mass general political strike against British imperialism will paralyse and bring to a stop the whole carefully built up machinery of imperialist administration.

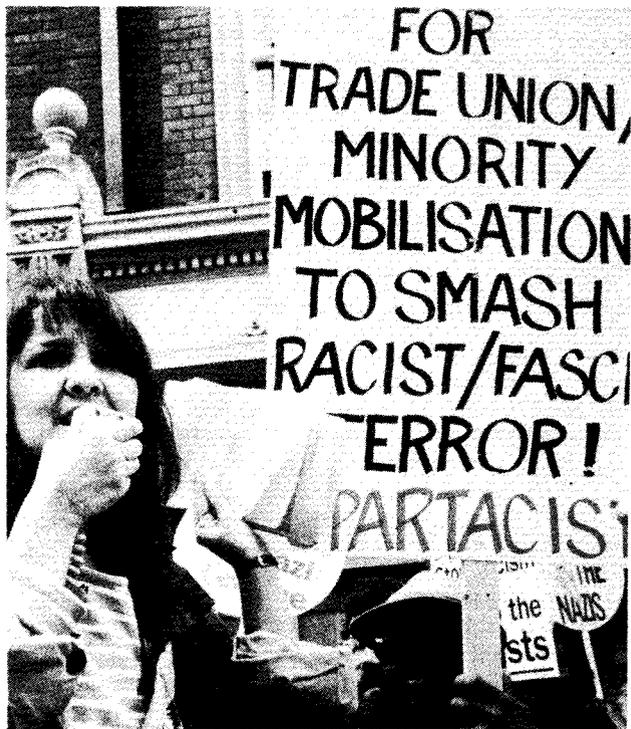
"The Indian soldiers, who are peasants in uniform, cannot fail to be affected by the agrarian struggle against landlordism and imperialism."

Many BLPI militants were imprisoned in the immediate aftermath. The British were not the only ones out to crush them, either; the CPI press "viciously slandered the Trotskyists as 'criminals and gangsters who help the Fascists' by allegedly calling for 'strikes, sabotage, food riots and all forms of anarchy' and 'attempting to stir up trouble in all war industries'.... Stalinists from Ceylon were brought over to India to hunt for Samasamajists [Ceylonese Trotskyists], and CPI stool-pigeons fingered militants to the police during the war" (Ervin, *ibid*).

The BLPI's draft programme made an eloquent exposition of Leninist tactics in the second imperialist war:

"With the mass slaughter, the unparalleled destruction and untold sufferings entailed by the war, the international proletariat and the oppressed masses of the colonies are being driven to the point where they will see in revolution the only way out. 'The chief enemy of the people is in its own country'. The prime task of proletarian revolutionaries in the present imperialist conflict is to follow the policy of revolutionary defeatism in relation to their 'own' government and to help develop the class struggle to the point of civil war regardless of the possibility of such a

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The Partisan Defence Committee demands the immediate release of the Cardiff Three—Steven Miller, Yusuf Abdullahi and Tony Paris. These three men join the long list of victims of the now internationally notorious travesty of racist “British Justice”. The catalogue of well known cases goes on and on: the Birmingham Six, Tottenham Three, Guildford Four, Maguire Seven, Judith Ward. And there are many more wrongfully convicted victims languishing in the filthy, overcrowded prisons in which scores have been driven to suicide.

The Cardiff Three is a truly amazing case by any standards. Lynette White, a prostitute, was brutally murdered on St Valentines Day in 1988. Evidence at the murder scene included 145 sets of fingerprints, hair, semen, a footprint, lots of blood from the victim and a very rare blood type as well as a palm print in blood spattered on the wall. Immediately after the murder, police released a photofit of a white man who had been seen outside the flat around the time of the murder in a distressed state with blood on him and an injured hand. The investigation seemingly went nowhere until ten months later the cops suddenly came up with five suspects; all of them black. What followed was the longest murder trial in British history. The Three were convicted and the other two acquitted.

Not one iota of the abundance of forensic evidence could be matched with any of the Cardiff Three. The palm print remains unmatched and the white man seen by witnesses has never been found. The whole “case” against

Grotesque racist frame-up

Free the Cardiff Three!

the Three rests on one retracted confession and the say-so of confirmed liars and police informers who gave contradictory statements, changing their stories. One Ian Massey was also a witness in the trial of Ged Corley, the Manchester policeman jailed in 1989 for 17 years for supplying weapons to criminals. Tony Paris allegedly “confessed” in prison to Massey. As *Private Eye* (31 July) observed: “But Corley was later released when it was shown that he had been convicted on the testimony of unreliable ‘supergrass’ witnesses, including Massey. Strange that when Massey claims Paris admitted Lynette White’s murder to him he is touted as a reliable police witness.” Another of the “eyewitnesses” was a prostitute, a paid police informant whose friends, interviewed on the BBC “Panorama” programme, consider to be a real liar.

All three men have alibis, two of them so incontrovertible that this alone should have thrown the case out of court. Tony Paris was seen by no less than *thirty to fifty* witnesses as he worked at the Casablanca club during the night of the murder; even after the club closed Paris stayed on with other workers. Yusuf Abdullahi was working on a ship, the *Coral Sea*, docked at Barry, eight miles from Butetown where the murder happened. As the

Cardiff Three Campaign leaflet states: “Thirteen independent witnesses who did not know him before they worked with him on the ship stated that he was working with them at the time the murder took place. It has never been established how he got off the ship, into Cardiff, murdered Lynette, washed, changed clothes and returned to ship without his absence being noticed!” Steven Miller was in the company of a friend for the entire evening. The Panorama programme played segments of the police tapes of the interviews with Miller whose retracted “confession” was used to convict the Three. Miller—who has a low mental age and is highly suggestible—“confessed” after six days in custody during his 16th interview. The tapes play like a text book of extracting a confession under extreme duress. Miller immediately retracted his confession. As well the police had already arrested and released him the day after the murder. (Miller was the boyfriend and pimp of the dead woman.) At that point he tested negative against the evidence, wearing the same clothes he was wearing the night before!

Butetown, an old docks area of Cardiff has been hit hard by the economic devastation of decaying British capitalism. It is also an area known historically for being integrated. The yuppies and

property financiers had put a wall down the middle of Butetown behind which they were constructing the “Bay Development”—a multi-million pound complex for the “upwardly mobile”. The murder of Lynette White apparently “stalled” work on the development for a while. This could be a factor in the railroading of the Cardiff Three—ie, somebody, as long as they are black—had to be thrown in jail for it.

The Cardiff Three have been framed. They must be freed immediately before any more of their young lives is stolen from them by this wretched system. Integral to racist British capitalism—whether administered by Tories or Labour—is state repression, police violence, and judicial frame-up. What is needed is to fight for workers revolution to rid society of the real criminals who now hold state power and put an end once and for all to their cruel hypocritical “justice”. Free the Cardiff Three now! Send donations to: Cardiff Three Campaign, 56 Alice Street, Butetown, Cardiff.

The PDC is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defence organisation which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League. Contribute £5.00 or more and you will receive a subscription to *Class-Struggle Defense Notes*. For a single copy send 75p to: Partisan Defence Committee, BCM Box 4986, London WC1N 3XX.

course leading to the defeat of one’s ‘own’ government....

“International developments are governed by two main contradictions. The first is the contradiction of the existence of a workers’ state (the Soviet Union) in a capitalist world. The second is the inter-imperialist rivalry which has now broken out openly into war.... But the supersession of the capitalist-workers’ state antagonism by the inter-imperialist antagonism and the temporary postponement of a united capitalist war of intervention against the Soviet Union by no means removed the danger of an attack on the Soviet Union by one of the parties in the inter-imperialist embroilment....

“But the parties of the Fourth International, while defending the Soviet Union

from imperialist attack, do not for a single moment give up the struggle against the Stalinist apparatus. Incapable of carrying out the real defence of the Soviet Union, the Stalinist bureaucracy seeks the aid not of the international proletariat, but exclusively of Anglo-American Imperialism.... The workers’ state will be able to emerge victorious from the holocaust of war only under one condition, and that is, if it is assisted by the revolution in the West or in the East.”

Thus the BLPI stood out as a revolutionary pole during the Second World War. Despite its exemplary work, programmatic soundness and significant local successes, the small and overwhelmingly

clandestine forces of the BLPI were insufficient to take advantage of the revolutionary crisis. The Congress leaders feared the unleashing of the workers and peasants against the capitalists and landlords many times more than they desired to enforce the demand to “Quit India” on the British imperialists; the Stalinists with their grovelling before Churchill had made themselves for a key period of time “the most universally detested political organisation in India”. The intervention of a revolutionary Trotskyist party with some real weight in the proletariat was at this juncture the decisive element in whether the question of India was solved along the October model or left after post-war

“independence” to the bloody partition designed by the British imperialists.

During this period of subordination to Churchill and in line with the British divide-and-rule strategems, the CPI flirted with the feudalist, British-backed Muslim League. It even decided there was a Muslim “nation” and adopted for some time the project of Pakistan. Later, they would shift back to fawning blandishments to Gandhi’s Congress. We will take up in greater detail these and other concrete examples of their perfidy and how Stalinist betrayal helped pave the way for the “solution” of the Churchills, Mountbattens and Cripps in the second and concluding part of this article. ■

Dublin Spartacist Group: a step forward

DUBLIN—At a meeting during the summer the comrades of the Dublin Spartacist Youth Group met to make a critical evaluation of the work we have been doing since our founding almost two years ago and to discuss our future tasks and perspectives. Present also was a fraternal representative from the Central Committee of the Spartacist League/Britain. Among the decisions made was to rename the group the Dublin Spartacist Group.

The decision to drop the “youth” was not mere semantics, although some group members are certainly more youthful than others. It was taken in recognition of both the political maturation and increased political homogeneity of the group. The DSYG began as something of an anomaly in the ICL. Founded by a small group of revolutionary students at Trinity College Dublin (TCD) in 1990, the DSYG was in its formative stages a campus-based youth group functioning in a country where there was no adult party to direct its work. But over the recent period the DSYG had become more than

a TCD Spartacist fraction.

The International Communist League’s intervention in Germany following the collapse of the Honecker regime in the former DDR—our implacable fight against capitalist reunification—was instrumental in winning the young comrades who formed the DSYG. They were particularly convinced of the correctness and urgency of our Trotskyist politics in counterposition to the rightward-moving centrists of Workers Power’s Irish Workers Group. The programmatic basis of this recruitment was affirmed at the time of Yeltsin’s counterrevolutionary “counter-coup” in the Soviet Union last summer. The reflexive response of self-proclaimed “Trotskyists” in the British Isles was to cheer on the Yeltsinites. Having drawn historically pessimistic conclusions from the defeat in East Germany, the most senior youth member and one of the principal initiators of the DSYG resigned shortly after the August events in the USSR. Through a process of internal discussion and debate in the SL/B and Ireland the comrades demonstrated a real

political cohesion in opposition to the pressures of Irish social democracy and British Labourism on our organisations. In addition to signalling a new level of political maturity, this also enhanced our cutting edge against our reformist, centrist and Labourite opponents.

Since its founding the DSYG has intervened beyond the confines of the elitist TCD campus. Uniquely, comrades of the DSYG have always and from the beginning fought for *free abortion on demand* within the student movement and the broader social struggles unleashed by the infamous case of the 14-year-old alleged rape victim initially enjoined from travelling abroad for an abortion. Similarly, our continuing opposition to the Mary Robinson popular front as a trap for workers and women is a key dividing line between authentic communism and all manner of fake leftism. At the heart of this popular front is the anti-working-class PNR/PESP austerity “agreement” shackling the trade unions.

And, on the Irish left, it is only the DSG which unequivocally demand the

immediate unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland and recognise the situation as one of interpenetrated peoples, opposing forced reunification and sectarian terror, Orange and Green, in the struggle for a revolutionary proletarian solution. We say: *British troops out of Northern Ireland now! Not Orange against Green but class against class!*

The DSG aspires to consistent intervention into the political life of the left and labour movement in Dublin—including on the campuses—as well as to expand our readership and political work regionally. As against the Green nationalists of various hues in Ireland—and those reformists like Militant and the former de Rossaites of the Workers Party who capitulate to British imperialism—we recognise that the only future for the working people throughout these isles is under the banner of proletarian internationalism embodied in Leninist vanguard parties. Forward to an Irish workers republic as part of a socialist federation in the British Isles!. Reforge the Fourth International! ■

Nazi pogrom...

(Continued from page 12)

the local paper. Police arrived early on but just stood by and watched; they organised the removal of the asylum seekers under the supervision of federal interior minister Seiters, and then withdrew so the arsonists could carry out their deadly work (with the Vietnamese immigrant workers still inside). Chancellor Kohl grotesquely sought to blame it all on "Stasi agents", whereas in fact fascists came in from Berlin and Hamburg, openly organising their terror over CB radios. But the main "instigators" are the parliamentary parties who have all been pushing to "crack down" on immigration. The racist front stretches from the bourgeois Christian Democrats (CDU) and Free Democrats (FDP) to the Social Democrats (SPD), with the Greens calling for "quotas" and the ex-Stalinist would-be social democrats of the PDS demanding more cops.

A year ago, fascist thugs staged a pogrom in the lignite mining town of Hoyerswerda. The bourgeois media (and not a few "leftists") are portraying the entire population of the DDR, the former East German workers state, as a pack of racists. But while the Nazis have been feeding off the desperation produced by mass unemployment, the fascists are still a small minority. As the Spartakist Workers Party (SpAD) wrote in a 24 August leaflet, "other residents expressed their outrage" to our comrades over the fascist terror against the immigrants:

"Rostock is a workers city! Only a short while ago the shipyard workers demonstrated through plant occupations their willingness to fight the scorched earth policies of the Treuhand [the state agency set up to liquidate the DDR economy]. We Spartakists say: *Energetic actions by the Rostock metal and shipyard workers and their anti-fascist allies can prevent the Nazi pogrom!*"

Thousands of copies of this leaflet were distributed in Rostock.

On Saturday, 29 August, some 20,000 anti-fascists marched through the streets of the Lichtenhagen district. This in itself was an achievement, as they were surrounded and continuously harassed by a huge police mobilisation for civil war. Some 28 police "centuria" (hundred-man squads) of riot cops and federal "border police" were sent in, along with hundreds of other cops and more than a dozen helicopters which menacingly buzzed the crowd. Cars and buses

were stopped and searched on the Autobahn, and a 1500-strong contingent from Hamburg was blocked for hours from joining the protest.

The SpAD leaflet noted, "While the pogromists were rampaging in Rostock, an SPD internal leadership meeting was giving a green light for dismantling the right to asylum." At the same time, the SPD approved the use of Bundeswehr troops for imperialist interventions around the world, of course only in UN "blue helmets". SPD chief Engholm is now rabidly demanding speeded-up deportations. Already the Social Democrats have been pushing for "collection camps" for refugees requesting asylum, and setting them up in states the SPD governs.

The escalation of racist terror has accompanied the rise of aggressive German nationalism set off by the capitalist reunification of the Fourth Reich. In the

prospect of proletarian political revolution and civil war. With the strength of the West German economy, symbolised by the D-mark, the partisans of "Germany—one fatherland" won out.

Afterwards came the bitter reckoning. The mass unemployment and social misery produced by the systematic destruction of East German industry has brought desperation and lumpenisation. The sense of hopelessness is widespread in areas like Rostock's Lichtenhagen, home of thousands of former workers in the shipyards which built boats primarily for the Soviet Union. Youth without any perspective of a job or any future at all are susceptible to fascist demagogues. But if the power of the working class were mobilised it would be a very different story. The public workers strike last spring dramatically showed this, spreading from West to East in wildcat action, to the consternation of the

November last year, the Spartakists fought for a united-front union-based action to stop the racist terrorists. We found considerable support among the workers in this concentrated industrial region. But after first endorsing, at the last minute the DGB bureaucrats withdrew and demobilised the unions. If instead of this shameful betrayal the Nazis had been stopped by a powerful workers action, they wouldn't have been so bold in showing their bloody face in Rostock, in the traditionally "red" (socialist) north.

The 29 August demonstration was dominated by the Autonomen, many of whom participated in courageous actions to defend the Rostock immigrant dormitories. Over the course of the week, almost a hundred were arrested by the same cops who made the Nazi pogrom possible, and who then threw anti-fascists into the same cells with skinheads. The Spartakist Workers Party demands: Drop the charges—Immediately end all prosecution of anti-fascists! Rather than indecisive street fighting with Nazi/skinheads, and guerrilla (theatre) "war" with the far more heavily armed cops, it is necessary to bring to bear the social power of the workers and immigrants in order to beat down fascist terror. The Autonomen who yelled "Shame on you" at the apartment buildings in Lichtenhagen thereby equate the workers with the sell-out DGB tops.

The Spartakists fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants, for all who have made it into the country to have the same rights as everyone else. The liberal demand for a "right to remain", which is also raised by Autonomen youth, means keeping immigrants and asylum seekers in a second-class status.

The Party of Democratic Socialism scandalously called for "understanding" of the racists. A commentary in the PDS' *Neues Deutschland* (24 August) asked, referring to the residents who clapped and chanted "Sieg Heil!": "Are they therefore extremists, even fascists, on the warpath? Nonsense, they are neighbours—nice people like the Müllers, the Meiners, the Schulzes who live next to me and you.... There was noise and filth and strange people." The Rostock PDS chairwoman expressed solidarity with the "months-long discontent and protests of the Lichtenhagen residents". Earlier, *ND* was pushing a racist campaign against immigrants running gambling games in shopping districts. Now they're worrying about supposed "criminal activity" by the organisation of Roma and Cinti! For these arch-reformists who yearn to be "respectable" social democrats, it is the refugees who are "the problem", not the Nazi murderers.

Gregor Gysi, Hans Modrow and the entire PDS parliamentary group marched prominently in the 29 August protest. But this had the character of an alibi. Until then, there had been no organised PDS presence in the various demos against the Rostock pogroms. And on the day of the national demo they held a meeting of the "Committee for Justice", the so-called "East Committee" in which the PDS sits side by side with far-rightist Diestel, in Berlin. But quite a few PDSers have been shocked by their leadership's disgusting apologies for the racists.

The Rostock pogroms have even sent a shock wave through sections of the social democracy. SPD vice chairman Thierse wants to use the anti-"foreigner" uproar to push the racist demand for "lower quotas" of immigrants in East Germany, while grotesquely blaming xenophobia on the DDR's "state events for friendship of the peoples"! But at the 26 August Berlin protest,



German cops prepare to target anti-fascist demonstrators at 29 August protest in Rostock.

drive to *Anschluss* (annexation) of the DDR workers state, the SPD was the "Trojan horse of counterrevolution", as we Trotskyists declared. When Nazis defaced the Soviet war memorial in Treptow (East Berlin), the Spartakists initiated a united-front workers mobilisation in January 1990, which was taken up by the SED/PDS and brought out 250,000 people seeking to oppose the drive to reunification and defend the DDR. But the bourgeoisie and their SPD agents upped the voltage of their destabilisation campaign, pumping millions into hastily called DDR elections, and the bankrupt Stalinists took fright at

social-democratic ÖTV union bureaucrats and the Kohl regime.

As earlier in Eberswalde, where the cops stood by as the Angolan worker Amadeu Antonio was murdered by skinheads, and where later the cops beat up a memorial march, in Rostock the police prepared the way for the Nazis and then assaulted the anti-fascists. The week-long pogrom began on Saturday, 22 August, and escalated day by day until the police carried out the racists' demands for "foreigners out". Several thousand bystanders in part egged on the "brown mob". But the workers in Rostock are not a racist mass, as the anti-Communist propaganda campaign would have one believe. Decisive action by organised working people would have dispersed the couple of hundred skinheads, shut up "eager onlookers" in a flash, and won the support of the many decent Rostockers.

Workers in the harbour and at the Warnow works particularly wanted to do something against the Nazis. But the SPD-led union bureaucrats, the same ones who had throttled the struggle of the waterfront workers against mass layoffs, prevented the mobilisation of Rostock workers against the Nazis. On 25 August, the local DGB union federation called for a protest that same day, but distributed a leaflet announcing it after finishing time, so that only a few hundred showed up. The DGB then refused to call for the big anti-fascist demonstration on 29 August, and the IG Metall union closed their offices for two days beforehand.

The SpAD has repeatedly called for workers mobilisation against the mounting Nazi/skinhead attacks. When the NPD fascists announced they would "celebrate" the Kristallnacht pogrom in Halle on 9

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Iraq...

(Continued from page 1)

the "mile of death", killing or wounding thousands of people who were fleeing for their lives.

For the Iraqi people the war didn't end when Bush finally ordered a cease-fire the next day. Led to believe they would receive US backing, Shi'ite rebels in the south and Kurds in the north rose up against the Iraqi regime only to be brutally suppressed by Saddam's Republican Guards. Meanwhile the UN slapped a total trade embargo on Iraq, which is still in effect. Every major electrical generating plant in the country had been destroyed in the bombing. Water pumping stations and sewage treatment plants were deliberately targeted, and the population was forced to drink contaminated water hauled from streams and rivers. This was not "collateral damage" but a deliberate attempt to terrorise the population. And what really got Bush's goat were recent reports from Iraq that much of the country has already been rebuilt.

The "Saddam syndrome"

"By God, we've kicked this Vietnam syndrome", crowed George Bush over his victims. In March 1991 the American president was at the height of his (short-lived) popularity, cheered by Republicans

and Democrats alike. Within the United States, the central casualty of this imperialist walkover was indeed the American population's gut-level reluctance to go to war, a lesson "taught" by the Vietnamese workers and peasants who defeated the Pentagon and its puppets in 1975. Moreover, the American capitalist class achieved its prime objective in the Gulf War, which was not the "liberation" of Kuwait nor the "punishment" of Saddam Hussein, but reasserting global hegemony by demonstrating to its imperialist rivals Germany and Japan who has the whip hand (and its hand on the Persian Gulf oil spigot). This "victory" moved the world a big step closer to inter-imperialist war, beginning with trade war.

The Persian Gulf today is one of several trip-wires for such an inter-imperialist conflagration. Capitalist counterrevolution in Eastern Europe has wrought the nationalist/communal blood-bath ravaging Yugoslavia, which threatens to widen, particularly with the spectre of direct imperialist military intervention. As we noted in *Workers Vanguard* no 553 (12 June):

"Hungary's right-wing nationalist president claims to be the protector of Yugoslavia's 400,000 ethnic Magyars. Albania takes a similar stance toward the 1.4 million ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and Macedonia. Bulgaria claims Macedonia with its mainly ethnic Bulgarian population; Greece, which has massed troops on the Macedonian border, claims it as

'Greece's stolen jewels' and raves that the name 'Macedonia' is an exclusive Greek trademark. Turkey, which is seeking to reassert the claims of the Ottoman Caliphate, has threatened to send troops in to protect the Muslim Slavs of Bosnia while contemplating another front against Armenia and engaging in an ongoing genocidal war against its Kurdish population (including most recently on its Armenian border). While hypocritically and one-sidedly denouncing Serbian atrocities, Germany and its Common Market allies have responded to the largest movement of refugees in Europe since World War II by inciting racist attacks on immigrants and pulling up the drawbridges of 'Fortress Europe'."

We resolutely oppose any imperialist intervention into the Balkans and would side with the Yugoslav army and Serbia against the imperialist-backed forces in the event of such an adventure. If Yugoslavia is the true face of the "new free Europe" of the "New World Order" a consolidated victory of Yeltsinite counterrevolution in the Soviet Union could unleash further internecine slaughter engulfing all the former Soviet republics. Meanwhile the imperialist rivals of "Fortress Europe", the Americans and their North American Free Trade Area and the Japanese present-day version of the Greater East Asia Co-Prospereity Sphere of the late 1930s, are busily tooling their own "fortress" blocs.

Bush/Major's Persian Gulf slaughter

was supposed to inaugurate the New World Order. In fact it inaugurated nothing. Yesterday's yellow ribbons lie in tatters among the mountain of pink slips [redundancy notices], as the capitalist economy flounders on its contradictions. One popular bumper sticker in the US asks: "Saddam still has a job—do you?" Indeed, Bush's "Saddam syndrome" might well cost him *his* job—or drive him to a new military adventure.

Hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated against the Anglo-American Gulf slaughter. We in the ICL fought on a hard *class* line, demanding the defeat of the imperialists and calling for strike action against the war. One solid strike by workers in the imperialist centres would have done more good than a thousand "peace crawls" in Washington or London. But carrying out such class-struggle action requires the construction of a revolutionary party with solid roots in the working class. Whether or not Bush manages to set off Gulf War II in the coming months, the imperialist drive towards war continues. Workers and student youth seeking to struggle against this murderous system must look to the programme of revolutionary Trotskyism embodied in the Spartacist League. Iraq may not have been the "mother of all wars", but as Lenin taught, imperialist war is the mother of socialist revolution. Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 558, 4 September 1992.

Bomber Harris...

(Continued from page 2)

the taint of Winston Churchill and his infamous Butcher Harris, Horn argues that "Germany by its atrocities appeared to have forfeited all claims to civilised treatment", thus condemning all Germans, including and especially the predominantly working-class victims of Allied "strategic bombing" with responsibility for Hitler and Goering.

This cuts to the bone of the matter: the "people's war against fascism" necessarily meant strike-breaking at home, crushing colonial revolt abroad and poisoning the proletariat with anti-German (and anti-Japanese) hatred to fight the bosses' war. And if the "war against fascism" enabled the "democratic" bourgeoisie to extirpate in part the senseless capitalist slaughter of the First World War from the memory of the working class it is not least because the Stalinists criminally prostituted the enormous authority of the Soviet Union, the first workers state, to unity with imperialist

"democracy" (at the very same time that Churchill and Roosevelt in a cold-blooded and calculated fashion left the USSR to face unaided the full might of the Nazi war machine).

The "people's war" is a lie predicated on the denial of class struggle against the imperialists: according to this "logic", collaboration with Churchill was necessary because the German workers were all Hitler-lovers. Labour (ably abetted by the CPGB's Harry Pollitt & Co) did its bit to save moribund British capitalism with social-patriotic appeals to the "war against fascism". And in the service of its bourgeois masters in the post-war Cold War, Labour ran the rat line for Nazi war criminals so that they might "serve" the winners of the inter-imperialist conflict. (As for the Queen Mother, the "old lady of 90+" who unveiled the statue to Harris and for whom Horn evidently has a soft spot, the parasites of the monarchy are scarcely bulwarks of democracy and they are certainly not veteran "anti-fascists", either; the pro-Nazi proclivities of the once-king Edward, Duke of Windsor, are common knowledge.)

Courageously, the Trotskyists in World War II fought against the "people's war"

line. They recognised that the real war against fascism was that of the Red Army, Soviet peoples, Communist and Jewish partisans. On the Western front, Trotsky's Fourth International upheld the Leninist programme of revolutionary defeatism against all imperialisms—the *main enemy is at home!* It was for this principled, Soviet-defensist, class-struggle opposition to the imperialist war that the leadership of the American Socialist Workers Party was imprisoned under the Smith Act in 1941. In Britain Trotskyists Ann Keen, Heaton Lee, Roy Tearse and Jock Haston were jailed. Not only did Bevin's Labour Party join the lynch mob, but a *Daily Worker* editorial grotesquely proclaimed of these activists within the strikes organised by the Tyne Apprentices' Guild and other struggles: "Let the Government deal with these saboteurs with a strong hand" (see *The War and the International*, Sam Bornstein and Al Richardson, 1986). While the policy of the Stalinist-run resistance movement in France was to attack lone German privates—a typical "tactic" being to cut off their genitals and stuff them in their mouths—the French Trotskyists sought to appeal to the class consciousness of

the German soldiers, carrying out at a great cost a policy of fraternisation. Around the publication of *Arbeiter und Soldat* ("Worker and Soldier") they formed a Trotskyist secret cell within the German navy at Brest.

We draw the attention of Horn and our readers to the article in this issue entitled "Stalinist alliance with Churchill betrayed Indian revolution" for a view of the "people's war" policy outside the Anglo-American axis. In India, as in Vietnam, such a policy meant nothing less than wholesale betrayal of the just struggles of the workers and oppressed against the jackboot of "democratic" imperialism.

Finally, the lessons of the Second World War are crucial today as the "New World Order" presents humankind with the spectre of yet a third global inter-imperialist war, this time with thermo-nuclear weaponry. More than a hundred senior European and Asian Trotskyist cadres were killed in the period from 1937-1946 at the hands of the fascists and the Stalinists. As we fight to reforge the Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution, we dedicate ourselves to their struggle. ■

members of the Jusos (Young Socialists) carried a banner: "*Rassismus auf Raten, Sozialdemokraten?*" (Racism On the Installment Plan, Social Democrats?). Many listened attentively to bullhounding by the Spartakists. At Rostock on the 29th there were banners of the Jusos and the Falken (the SPD high school student group).

The SPD is trying to show itself "capable of governing" by being the main force behind the anti-Communist witch hunt in reunified capitalist greater Germany. Thus it is the SPD "justice" minister of Berlin who has jailed former DDR chief of state Erich Honecker (who is now confirmed to be suffering from cancer) and former DDR security chief Erich Mielke. The SpAD has repeatedly denounced this persecution, calling for freedom for Honecker, Mielke and others, such as anti-fascist hero Gerhard Bögelein. *Der Spiegel* (31 August) printed an interview with Mielke from his cell in

Moabit prison, in which, among other things, he notes that "If we were still there, there would not have been such incidents as the uproar against the asylum seekers centre in Rostock."

That is certainly true. The East German deformed workers state was built upon the ruins of the Hitler-fascist regime that was smashed by the Soviet Red Army. For years, Vietnamese workers worked with and lived among their German co-workers in Lichtenhagen without fear of fascist attacks, as did DDR contract workers from Cuba, Mozambique and Poland. One survivor of the Rostock pogrom, Thinh Nguyen Do, expressed the hope "that we could again live together with the German population as we did earlier at the time of the DDR". The DDR bureaucracy made much of international solidarity, and gave praiseworthy support to Chilean refugees, ANC and SWAPO fighters from southern Africa. But because Stalinism is fundamentally a

nationalist doctrine, claiming to build "socialism in one country" (or in the DDR, in half a country), it was *unable to root out nationalist, anti-foreigner attitudes deeply inculcated by the bourgeoisie.*

The stark fact is that after 45 years of Stalinist rule, German nationalism exploded in the space of a few weeks and months of counterrevolution, and has continued to escalate since. And the deadly threat is not just potential. It is close to miraculous that no one was killed in the Rostock pogrom, but already in the first eight months of 1992 at least ten people have been killed in assaults by fascist thugs and mobs in Germany. In fighting for proletarian political revolution in the DDR, the Spartakists emphasised the need for an *internationalist* programme by publishing greetings in Vietnamese, Polish, Portuguese and Spanish to workers in East Germany, as well in Russian to Soviet troops stationed there. We also de-

nounced the dangerous consequences of the Stalinist bureaucracy's policy of housing "foreigners" in separate areas.

The ÖTV strike showed the possibility of common working-class struggle in Germany, East and West, as did the national mobilisation to protest the pogroms in Rostock. But the decisive element is the forging of a workers vanguard party on a revolutionary programme. The fascists cannot be rooted out without a fight for jobs for all, which requires a frontal assault on the capitalist system that is ruthlessly annihilating jobs and industry in the ex-DDR, condemning older workers to the scrap heap and offering no promise to the young, except to be used as cannon fodder for the Fourth Reich. The Spartacist Workers Party, section of the International Communist League, seeks to build this revolutionary party. Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 558, 4 September 1992.

WORKERS HAMMER

Mobilise labour to defend immigrants!

Smash Nazi pogroms in Germany!

BERLIN, 31 August—Horror scenes of racist terror from the northern seaport and shipbuilding centre of Rostock have shocked the world. Culminating nights of pogrom assaults, the fascist killers set the immigrant dormitory in the working-class satellite city of Lichtenhagen aflame. Some 115 Vietnamese workers and their families barely escaped death by clambering onto the roof. As in the 1938 Kristallnacht pogrom against Jews, the Nazis wanted to burn the immigrants alive. Earlier, hundreds of rampaging fascist skinheads had beset the building housing refugees seeking asylum, particularly targeting Roma and Cinti (Gypsies). Several thousand local residents cheered them on, many yelling "Foreigners out!" and some chanting "Sieg heil!" and giving the stiff-arm Hitler salute.

In the aftermath of the capitalist reunification of Germany which destroyed the DDR deformed workers state, mass unemployment has surpassed that of the depths of the Great Depression. With almost half of the workforce—more than four million people—thrown out of work, the climate of desperation has created a fertile breeding ground for fascism. Immigrant workers are being used as scapegoats not just by the Nazis but by the rulers of the Fourth Reich. Bitterness which could and should be turned against the mas-



Rostock, 29 August: 20,000 march against anti-immigrant terror. Spartakist contingent called for mass worker/immigrant mobilisations to stop the fascists.

ters of German imperialism instead fuels the flames of fascism, as all the major parties push anti-immigrant hysteria and racism. Our comrades of the Spartakist Workers Party (SpAD) have fought to mobilise the working class in defence of the besieged immigrant communities, as we continue to fight capitalist counterrevolution down the line, from Rostock to Moscow.

The Rostock pogrom unleashed a wave of terror against refugees around Germany. From Augsburg in Bavaria to Greifswald on the Baltic, at least 20 refugee centres have been attacked in the last week; a tent camp for asylum seekers in Leipzig was burned to the ground. In Berlin a bomb was set off at the monument for Jewish deportees. The capitalist state wants to use the

outburst of Nazi terror to assault democratic rights. They are seeking to push through bonapartist measures—the use of police shock troops against demonstrators, and expedited trials to be used against leftists, immigrants and workers. And an all-party coalition in Bonn has whipped up hysteria about a "flood of foreigners", instigating the pogromist wave, in order to gut the right of asylum.

For months Nazis have tried to whip up hostility among the residents of Rostock/Lichtenhagen against the refugees. Since June more than 1300 asylum seekers have been jammed into the building which has space for only a quarter of that number. Many families had to spend the night on the lawn outside for lack of beds, without even tents over their heads, forced to eat and relieve themselves there for lack of toilets and cooking facilities. It recalled conditions in the infamous Nazi concentration camp in Marzahn (Berlin) set up to hold Roma and Cinti, hundreds of thousands of whom were murdered by the Third Reich. Local, state and federal officials were squabbling over the situation, but did nothing, perhaps in a cynical attempt to stir up mass resentment. For this was a *state-authorized terrorist attack*.

The threats to go after the refugees had been known for days, published in *continued on page 10*

Stop SPUC reaction! Defend the victimised students!

DUBLIN—After three years of legal wrangling SPUC and the Catholic Church have finally been able to get a permanent injunction from the High Court to stop students from distributing information about abortion services available in Britain. The 14 student leaders now face court costs from earlier High Court, Supreme Court and European Court proceedings (see "Defend Irish students fighting anti-abortion reaction!" *Workers Hammer* no 117, for earlier details). This comes at a time when the Irish government of Albert Reynolds, reeling from the public anger over its draconian actions in the case of the 14-year-old alleged rape victim seeking an abortion, had "promised" no more injunctions.

SPUC's drive to enforce Catholic "morality" and the subjugation of women has taken on a new offensive thrust with the formation of Youth Defence—a sinister group of reactionary thugs. And SPUC & Co are trying to pressure the government to bring forward another anti-abortion referendum to ensure that abortions remain absolutely *verboten* as well as prohibit the distribution of information about

Free abortion on demand!

abortion clinics in Britain. The Catholic Church is also on the offensive as well, having reconfirmed its support to discrimination against gays and lesbians. The bishops' loyal allies in the ruling Fianna Fail party continue to refuse to decriminalise homosexuality in Ireland. As for Mary "I'm against abortion" Robinson, the so-called "liberal" face of Irish capitalism, she has shown herself to be a virtuoso in speaking endlessly and saying nothing about the abortion battle, the victimised student activists, the plight of homosexuals. Conversely, she is very clear on bettering Dublin's relations with reactionary Unionists in the North. This confirms fully the position we took at her election: that the Mary Robinson popular front was a trap for women and workers and would act merely as a liberal veneer on the continued enslavement of women in this deeply clericalist state.

We in the DSG have fought from the outset for what is needed: free abortion on demand. The fake left such as the Socialist Workers Movement and Irish Workers Group in contrast have buried themselves in the "Repeal the 8th Amendment Campaign" which as we have said could more accurately be called the "Keep Abortion Illegal Campaign" as it seeks simply to remove the amendment which enshrines the "right to life of the unborn" while keeping intact other legislation which firmly prohibits abortion, ie the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act. And unlike in Britain, this piece of Victorian legislation is still in force in Northern Ireland, forcing thousands of women from the North to join the thousands from the South seeking abortion services across the Irish Sea. What is needed is joint class struggle north and south. Only with the perspective of working class revolution to overthrow the capitalist

system can basic rights for women such as free abortion on demand be wrested. It is to such a revolutionary programme and struggle that the DSG seeks to win women, workers and youth.

The student activists who are now facing mammoth legal costs have declared that they will continue to hand out information in defiance of the injunctions. SPUC has announced in turn that they will bring contempt proceedings against them if they do—which means jail for the students—and seek to sequester the assets of the Student Unions involved (Trinity College, University College Dublin and the Union of Students in Ireland). We say: Smash SPUC reaction! Defend the victimised students! Break the injunction! For the complete separation of church and state! For free quality health care! For free 24-hour childcare! Free abortion on demand! Women will not be free until the working class rules!

Cheques towards the court costs should be made payable to: USI Student Legal Fund, c/o Union of Students in Ireland, 16 North Gt Georges St, Dublin 1.