

## State murder of Joy Gardner “Fortress Europe”— racist and ugly

On 28 July in the early hours of the morning, two local Hornsey cops, along with officers from the sinister Scotland Yard deportation squad SO1 (3) and an immigration official, stormed into the flat of 40-year-old Jamaican-born Joy Gardner. Using a “restraining harness” (a medieval-type device used to restrict movement), the cops stuffed her mouth with a ball of soft material and then sealed it with tape. While Joy Gardner struggled desperately for oxygen, her screams were muffled—her final desperate moments witnessed by her five-year-old son. The cop murder of Joy Gardner spotlighted the racist and murderous “Fortress Europe” frenzy that is sweeping Britain and Western Europe. On 8 September 17-year-old Bangladeshi Quaddus Ali was punched and beaten by a gang of skinheads in east London. As we go to press he is struggling for his life in hospital.

Immigrant communities are increasingly the targets of triumphalist nationalism heightened by NATO imperialism’s victory in the Cold War. In Germany, after months of officially inspired and tolerated

**For trade union/minority mobilisations to crush racist terror!**

racist terror and pogroms, the Bundestag has recently revoked the constitutional right of political asylum. Earlier this year in France, the new right-wing government of Prime Minister Balladur declared the goal of “zero immigration” whilst reviving Vichy-era images of Jews being loaded into boxcars, as its police terrorise Arab and black African youth in the ghettos. Anti-immigrant racism has become the cutting edge of social reaction.

The much-trumpeted “New World Order” has brought a post-Cold War reality of severe economic dislocation and recession amidst heightened inter-imperialist rivalries. The notion of a united, capitalist Europe, which was premised on

the strength of the German D-Mark, has now been shattered. With capitalist reunification, the German bourgeoisie has got itself overextended, and has sought to shift the burden to its less powerful neighbours through recession. Last autumn the remains of the European Monetary System (EMS), which fixed exchange rates among European currencies, was formally buried.

In Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, capitalist counterrevolution has meant widespread capitalist immiseration amidst murderous nationalist fratricide. In the West the capitalist rulers have cynically scrapped any pretence of a liberal posture on immigration. European capital no longer needs cheap, imported labour on the previous scale. To save the costs of unemployment benefits, socialised health care and other social programmes, the bosses want to ship “surplus” workers back to the hideous poverty of their Third World neocolonies. The social welfare measures instituted in Western Europe after WWII were very much a response to the threat of revolution and to the existence of the Soviet

bloc. Now with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the bosses don’t feel the need for these palliatives and they are attacking education, health and welfare services with a vengeance.

But in the past period there has been a dramatic upsurge of workers strikes and protests, from the Mediterranean to the Baltics. In Eastern Germany a few months ago, warning strikes by metal and steel workers signalled resistance to the Kohl government’s austerity plans. Italian workers earlier this year struck railways and airports, while in Britain the Timex strike garnered working-class support from across Britain.

These working-class struggles are part of mounting social unrest in post-Cold War Europe. Many of the capitalist governments in Europe are neither strong nor stable. A recent *Financial Times* (3 September) article entitled “Unsavory recipe for recovery” agonises that the German Chancellor Kohl will not be able to push through austerity measures despite his Thatcherite rhetoric. In France the Balladur rightist government coexists with Socialist president Mitterrand, and has not been able yet to slam through all its desired anti-immigrant laws, while the French bourgeoisie is divided over European unity. Here in Britain, John Major and his government are widely despised as incompetent fools, and John Smith’s Labour Party scarcely inspires greater confidence.

Capitalist democracy does not guarantee the rights of minorities. The bourgeoisie does not need bonapartism or fascism to conduct a savage racist assault on immigrants, aimed at driving them out. But the barrage of anti-immigrant attacks has impelled a whole layer of newly radicalised youth into the streets, not just in hypocritical “love-thy-neighbor”

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## Zionist troops, settlers out of the Occupied Territories!

# Israel-PLO deal for Palestinian ghetto

SEPTEMBER 7—What does the “Gaza-Jericho first” accord between the Israeli “Labour” government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Yasir Arafat’s Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) mean? It means PLO cops, armed and paid by Israel, shooting down young Palestinian rebels on behalf of the Zionist state terrorists. If this ignominious deal goes through, the tens of thousands of unarmed Palestinian youth who have day after day risked their lives to defy the “Iron Fist” of Zionist repression since the outbreak of the heroic *Intifada* uprising in December 1987 will now confront not only Israeli stormtroopers but the organisation which has long claimed to be “the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people”.

Spokesmen on both sides hail the agreement as a “historic achievement”, a “breakthrough” and “the start of a new era”. But while the Tel Aviv stock exchange shot up, Arab youth continue to be shot down, including a 16-year-old blown away in Gaza by undercover Israeli cops for protesting against the deal. Arafat crows: “The Palestinian state is within our grasp. Soon the Palestinian

flag will fly on the walls, the minarets and the cathedrals of Jerusalem.” This is cynical hogwash, aimed at selling this sell-out to disgruntled PLO supporters. Israel immediately reaffirmed that it is “opposed to the creation of an independent Palestinian state” and “will make no compromise on the status of Jerusalem”.

When in the early 1970s the PLO first came out with its “mini-state solution”, calling for an independent state in the West Bank and Gaza, we noted that this “would be only a very partial and deformed expression of the Palestinian Arabs’ right to self-determination” (*Workers Vanguard* no 57, 22 November 1974). But the “Gaza-Jericho first” deal does not offer even the most deformed expression of self-determination. In the guise of granting “autonomy” to the Gaza Strip and Jericho, it would place the PLO’s seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses. At the same time, both Jordan and Syria are reportedly on the verge of signing their own “peace” treaties with Israel.

In effect, what Israel proposes to grant is “community control” over a couple of

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Zionist “peace” plan in action: Israel invaded southern Lebanon in July, driving half a million Arabs from their homes, to get Syria to clamp down on Hezbollah guerrillas.



## “Workers Aid for Bosnia” –

# In the baggage train of imperialism

While Baroness Thatcher has been screaming about “poor little Bosnia”, the Labour Party has been attacking the Tory government from the right for not making a more aggressive military intervention on the side of the Bosnian government. The Labourite *New Statesman & Society* (3 September) is now sponsoring “The Alliance to Save Bosnia-Herzegovina”, which calls for swift and appropriate action by Britain and the UN. As usual, taking their cue from the pro-imperialist social democracy, various pseudo-leftists and fake-Trotskyists, have leapt in to promote themselves as the best defenders of Bosnia. Their chosen instrument is the “Workers Aid for Bosnia” campaign. Originally set up as “Red Aid”, that title was quickly ditched. This is hardly surprising, given that this outfit caters to a collection of virulent anti-communists. After all, the term “red” might be a wee bit inconvenient in doing business with Bosnian soldiers who include *mujahedin* veterans of the war in Afghanistan—the type who had no qualms about skinning Red Army soldiers alive. And among the sponsors of “Workers Aid for Bosnia” are unabashed admirers of British militarism. Thus, at the June “Workers Aid” conference,

Indjana Harper of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Information Centre praised “the efforts of the aid organisation headed by Lady Knott [sic], the wife of the former Tory defence minister John Knott [sic]” (*Workers Press*, 12 June). Nott was Thatcher’s defence minister during the dirty Falklands/Malvinas war.

On paper “Workers Aid for Bosnia” claims to be “for imperialist hands off the Balkans”. In fact, its main criticism of the UN is not that it’s intervening in the Balkans but that it does not do enough to arm the Bosnian Muslim side. Thus, it calls for “the immediate lifting of the British-backed United Nations arms embargo against Bosnia”—simply a mealy-mouthed way of calling on the imperialists to arm the bourgeois nationalist Bosnian Muslim leadership, while policing the embargo against Serbia. According to Ernest Mandel’s *International Viewpoint* (no 248, September 1993): “In Geneva there will be a *joint press conference with the Bosnian government on September 18*” (our emphasis). The long and short of it is that “Workers Aid for Bosnia”, which retails the imperialist propaganda campaign for “poor little Bosnia”, is simply a stalking horse for NATO intervention. This was dra-



“Workers Aid for Bosnia” pro-imperialist roadshow hits Trafalgar Square on 5 September.

matically underlined by an article in *Workers Press* (31 July) by Lee Bryant of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Centre, who calls on the imperialists to open up a military airport close to Tuzla and demands that the imperialists should make “clear warnings” to the Bosnian Serbs that any “interference with the airlift would be met with retaliation from NATO aircraft”.

In *Workers Hammer* no 136 (July/August 1993) we stated that “As Marxists and proletarian internationalists, we take no side in the squalid nationalist blood-bath that has ripped up the former Yugoslavia, establishing capitalist rule over the corpses of the workers and peasants of all nationalities. But we oppose all forms of imperialist intervention in the Balkans, from the economic boycott of Serbia to ‘peace-keeping’ troops, whether or not they wear UN blue helmets.” We defend Serbia if it becomes the target of an imperialist military onslaught.

Pride of place in this “Workers Aid for Bosnia” goes to the Slaughterite Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) and its paper *Workers Press*. The WRP’s Central Committee decided back in June to make the convoy “the centre of its political work”. Also endorsing are *Socialist Outlook*, *Socialist Organiser* and *Workers Power*. All of these groups backed the nationalist capitalist restorationists in Slovenia and Croatia against the then Yugoslav deformed workers state. *Workers Power* in fact has jumped into bed with just about every reactionary nationalist in the former Yugoslavia. We do wonder how their Austrian comrades would explain their support to “Workers Aid for Bosnia” and “the Muslims’ struggle” to their erstwhile Serbian nationalist and Chetnik fascist bloc-partners (see *Workers Hammer* no 132, November/December 1992).

Tuzla is the intended destination of the “Workers Aid for Bosnia” convoy. As part of their attempt to portray the Bosnian side as fighting for a “multi-ethnic state” *Workers Press* et al play up the multi-ethnic character of Tuzla as a mining community, which sent aid to British miners in 1984-85. Indeed, one of the tragedies of the counterrevolutionary break-up of Yugoslavia, which *Workers Press* and the other supporters of “Workers Aid for Bosnia” did their best to abet, is the tearing apart of heavily integrated communities. The residual cross-communal unity and secularism that may still exist in cities like Tuzla and Sarajevo are being swamped by and have been subordinated to nationalist and communalist forces on all sides, including those of the Bosnian government. The plight of the Tuzla mining community is being used to promote political support to the “Bosnian” side.

*Workers Press* would have people

believe that “ethnic cleansing” and communal slaughter is only done by Serbian nationalists and lately by Croatians. All sides practice “ethnic cleansing”. Whenever the Croatian and Muslim forces have succeeded in reversing the generally dominant Serb military position, they do their own “cleansing” against the Serbs or each other. Bosnian leader Izetbegovic is for an “Islamic state” and the Bosnian government would like to reconquer all of the former Yugoslav federal state of Bosnia-Herzegovina, irrespective of the wishes of the sizable Serbian and Croatian populations who do not want to live in a unitary state. With the influx of Muslim refugees into Tuzla, one woman, a child of a mixed marriage, tells how “I can’t wear a mini-skirt in the street without them swearing at me. They say I should be ashamed of myself” (*Guardian*, 23 August). One Bosnian military commander who identifies himself with the Afghani CIA cut-throat Hekmatyar proclaims “Bosnia must be a Muslim country” (*Sunday Times*, 27 June).

Just as the Serbian and Croatian militias model themselves after the fascist Chetniks and Ustashi, the Bosnian Muslims have incorporated “volunteers” who fought with the CIA-backed *mujahedin* in Afghanistan. The growth of bloody communalist forces on all sides is the product of capitalist counterrevolution. We Trotskyists fought consistently against capitalist restoration in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. When the Soviet armed forces intervened in Afghanistan we said “Hail Red Army”. When the troops were withdrawn by Gorbachev, we denounced this as an act of betrayal. We offered to organise an international brigade to fight against the counterrevolutionaries and when this was declined by the Afghan government, we organised an international fund-raising campaign for the people of besieged Jalalabad—a real example of red aid in the tradition of the early Communist International. The victory of the counterrevolutionaries in Afghanistan has led to the re-enslavement of women and a blood-bath in which more people have been killed in the last two years than were killed in the preceding decade.

As for the assorted fake-left constituents of “Workers Aid for Bosnia”, they all opposed the entry of the Red Army into Afghanistan. Signing on in the anti-Soviet war drive, the WRP, *Workers Power*, Ernest Mandel’s followers in *Socialist Outlook*—they all bought the imperialist hype about “poor little Afghanistan”. Today these fake leftists have enthusiastically imbibed the campaign of the imperialists and social democrats for “poor little Bosnia”. Once running dogs for imperialism, still running dogs for imperialism. ■



TROTSKY

### Their cops, their state

From Karl Kautsky to Tony Cliff’s SWP and the Militant group, revisionists have obfuscated the Marxist understanding that in capitalist society the state apparatus—army, police, courts, prisons—is an instrument for the suppression of the working class by the bourgeoisie. In his classic polemic against social-democratic reformism, *The State and Revolution*,



LENIN

Lenin reaffirmed that the emancipation of the proletariat requires the smashing of the bourgeois state.

“Theoretically”, it is not denied that the state is an organ of class rule, or that class antagonisms are irreconcilable. But what is overlooked or glossed over is this: if the state is the product of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms, if it is a power standing above society and “alienating itself more and more from it”, it is obvious that the liberation of the oppressed class is impossible not only without a violent revolution, but also without the destruction of the apparatus of state power which was created by the ruling class and which is the embodiment of this “alienation”....

Like all great revolutionary thinkers, Engels tries to draw the attention of the class-conscious workers to what prevailing philistinism regards as least worthy of attention, as the most habitual thing, hallowed by prejudices that are not only deep-rooted but, one might say, petrified. A standing army and police are the chief instruments of state power....

A state arises, a special power is created, special bodies of armed men, and every revolution, by destroying the state apparatus, clearly shows us how the ruling class strives to restore the special bodies of armed men which serve it, and how the oppressed class strives to create a new organisation of this kind, capable of serving the exploited instead of the exploiters.

—VI Lenin, *The State and Revolution* (1917)

## WORKERS HAMMER



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

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

EDITORIAL BOARD: Bonnie Bradley (Editor), Jon Branche, Ralf Eades, Alec Gilchrist, Eibhlin McDonald, Alan Mason, Len Michelson, Ellen Rawlings, David Strachan

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Lorraine Richards

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Suzy Driscoll

Published by Spartacist Publications, PO Box 1041, London NW5 3EU

Subscriptions: £2.00 for 1 year, overseas airmail £6.00

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

Printed by Amersham Offset (TU). ISSN 0267-8721

# Spartacist League/WIL debate on the Russian Question

## WIL alibis capitalist counterrevolution

Over 70 people turned up to a debate held in London's Conway Hall on 14 August between the Spartacist League (SL), section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) (ICL) and the Workers International League (WIL). Entitled "The collapse of Stalinism in the ex-Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the tasks of revolutionaries today", the debate also attracted a bevy of fake-Trotskyist groups including *Socialist Organiser* (SO), Workers Power (WP) and even a few followers of the hysterically anti-Spartacist Bolshevik Tendency (BT), who all came to make common cause against the SL's Trotskyist programme.

Trotsky had warned of the "tragic possibility" that the Soviet workers state "will fall under the joint blows of its internal and external enemies". He insisted that: "Not the slightest taint of guilt must fall upon the revolutionary internationalists. In the hour of mortal danger, they must remain on the last barricade." The "Russian question" remains important today, even after the destruction of the Soviet workers state, not least because the collapse of Stalinism provided an acid test for all would-be revolutionaries. As Trotsky emphasised, "Those who are incapable of defending conquests already gained can never fight for new ones."

Presenting for the SL, Eibhlin McDonald opened up her remarks with the words of founding American Trotskyist leader James P Cannon. In a speech in 1939 during the faction fight with the Shachtmanites, who abandoned the defence of the Soviet Union under imperialist pressure at the time of the Hitler-Stalin pact, Cannon had explained that the Russian question is nothing less than the question of revolution. For Cannon as for us, "We are, in fact, the party of the Russian revolution." Throughout the debate comrade McDonald and SL



Workers Hammer

London, 14 August: Eibhlin McDonald speaking on behalf of the Spartacist League.

speakers from the floor rammed home that the main issue in the debate—unconditional defence of the Soviet Union against imperialism and internal counterrevolution—was the same one that Trotsky and Cannon had fought out against Shachtman.

WIL leader Richard Price confessed that he didn't much care for Cannon or his maxim that "We are the party of the Russian revolution". Likewise, Price accused the SL of "invert[ing] the relationship between the Russian question and the world revolution". He complained that where the SL goes wrong is in our "maximalist propagandism" and "militaristic solutions to what were political problems". Price's "advice" was that the SL:

"shouldn't have advocated military repression against the mass of the working class.... They shouldn't have set themselves against the legitimate demands of oppressed nations and masses for independence. They shouldn't have acted as border guards for the unitary states of the Stalinists. And they shouldn't have opposed the creation of independent trade unions".

In short order, under the guise of "trade union independence" and "right to self-determination" Price and the WIL supported every pro-imperialist force for capitalist restoration, from Polish Solidarność to Nazi-infested bourgeois nationalists in the Baltics and the Ukraine.

In 1991 the WIL were counted amongst the "Trotskyists" who took their stand on Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary barricades (in some cases literally). On this question they are unrepentant. Even though the WIL's paper *Workers News* (no 46, August 1993) now admits that the consequences of Yeltsin's victory was "to greatly strengthen the drive towards capitalist restoration" they add that:

"Those who say that the main enemy was Yeltsin are arguing with the benefit of hindsight. This only became clear after the collapse of the coup. *During the three days of the coup, the main threat was the coup.*" (emphasis in original)

Eibhlin McDonald had some apt comments to make on the question of WIL's "hindsight":

"You didn't need hindsight to know who Yeltsin was talking to on the telephone during the time that he was in the White House, all you needed to know was who was on the other end of the phone line. It was George Bush, comrades."

In August 1991 the ICL proclaimed "Smash Yeltsin/Bush counterrevolution". We said that what was needed was workers mobilisations to disperse the Yeltsinite forces.

By denying in practice Trotsky's understanding of the "dual role" and the contradictory character of the bureaucracy, WIL found reason to side with every counterrevolutionary and imperialist-backed force aimed squarely at crushing the gains of the October Revolution. Not having the WIL's Labourite blinkers, we followed Trotsky's advice that "We must keep our eyes open to discern the progressive acts of the Stalinists, support them independently, foresee in time the danger, the betrayals, warn the masses and gain their confidence." (Trotsky, "Letter on India", *Writings 1939-40*)

### The fake left: Hate the Soviet Union, love the Labour Party

The WIL's origins go back to Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party. But one thing about the WIL's history that they have always studiously ignored is the WRP's role in the bourgeoisie's witch hunt of Arthur Scargill on the eve of the 1984 miners strike. When SL speaker Eibhlin McDonald mentioned this, it attracted the ire of WIL supporters complaining that "the debate is about Eastern Europe not mining in Britain", to which she replied:

"Well I am very glad you raised that point because the question of Scargill and Solidarność and the NUM illustrates exactly the connection between anti-Sovietism and anti-working-class policies at home. And it lives in the form of the trade union bureaucracy and the Labour Party in Britain. Because it was exactly

the case that when the WRP published this letter that Scargill said Solidarność was anti-socialist he was witch hunted in the TUC conference by Frank Chapple, Terry Duffy and all the Cold Warrior, right wing of the TUC at the time. They turned out to be the very people who openly knifed the miners strike in the back, proving in practice that hostility to the workers states means hostility to class struggle at home. The Labour Party and the Second International were always anti-Soviet. You can find that in Trotsky's writings going back to the time of the Russian Revolution itself."

### WIL's capitulation to nationalism and counterrevolution

SL speakers noted the similarities between the anti-Spartacist positions advanced by WIL with those put forward by the Shachtmanite petty-bourgeois opposition during the 1939 US Socialist Workers Party faction fight. Like the Shachtmanite opposition, the WIL justify their support for every imperialist-backed nationalist movement in the Soviet Union on the basis of "unconditional support for the right to self-determination". Trotsky was clear and unambiguous in his position that the safeguarding of the workers state comes before formal democratic principles. In his presentation WILer Ian Harrison tried to dismiss Trotsky's polemics against the social-democratic clamour for the independence of Georgia during the Civil War after the 1917 Revolution. After further, and frequently muddled attempts by WIL speakers to deny the Leninist and Trotskyist position, an SL speaker from the floor began her contribution by paraphrasing a telegram from Lenin and Trotsky to the Ukrainian Rada in 1917:

"We recognise the right of self-determination of the Ukrainian people, which is henceforth free to exercise that right", that was the first part of the telegram. The second part of the telegram was 'If you continue aiding the White Armies we invade tomorrow'. [Applause] "Now, you know, I am sitting in this room listening to all this stuff about the Red Army and you'd think that the Second World War had never happened. You'd think the Holocaust did not occur."

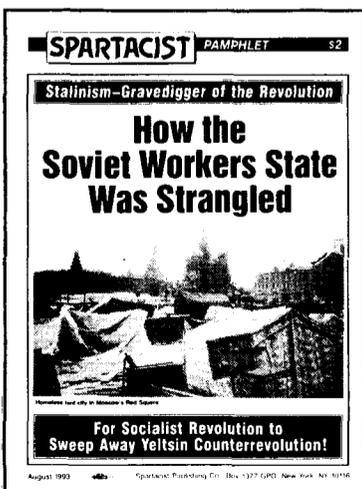
And another Spartacist supporter noted that in fact the WIL's support to the right of nations to self-determination was "only unconditional when they are breaking from a workers state". She noted that proclaiming support to self-determination is meaningless if, like the WIL's friends in Sri Lanka, the *Workers Voice* group, you capitulate to Sinhala-chauvinist class-collaborationist fronts and in your Sinhala-language publications do not give military support to the actual struggle of the oppressed Tamils for self-determination led by the petty-bourgeois nationalist LTTE or demand that the Sri Lankan army leave the Tamil areas.

### The family of the Stalinophobic left

In his opening remarks, Richard Price, fresh from a reading of our international

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# Support *Socialist Organiser* call for a labour movement inquiry

## Down with violence in the workers movement!

We reprint below a statement issued by the Spartacist League on 9 September 1993.

The Alliance for Workers Liberty/*Socialist Organiser* (SO) has reported that its supporters were twice physically assaulted by SWP members at its "Marxism '93" "week of discussion and debate" this July. The SWP has refused to deal with these accusations in its press. A *Socialist Organiser* (5 August) account of a phone conversation with Tony Cliff quotes the SWP leader as denying that the attacks happened, while claiming to oppose the use of violence in the course of political debate on the left. And meanwhile, in the time since SO made its charges, the SWP has in public maintained absolute silence on this.

We support *Socialist Organiser's* call for a labour movement inquiry into the events at "Marxism '93". If the charges are not true, then what does Cliff have to hide? And if SO's accounts are true, as we are strongly inclined to believe, then the workers movement must condemn the attacks and the political exclusionism. Disputes between left groups must not be settled through means of violence nor through appeals to the bourgeois state. Today the need for open political debate, as a vehicle for forging a Leninist party through revolutionary regroupment, is particularly vital in the context of counterrevolution in the Soviet bloc and the resulting turmoil on the ostensibly revolutionary left.

Despite the reported attempt by Cliff to brush these allegations aside as incredible and "stupid", we find it wholly credible that the SWP would engage in such violence. Nor is this symptomatic of recent "degeneration", as SO leader Matgamna implies. The Cliffites have never given a toss about workers democracy, as Matgamna—who was bureaucratically expelled from Cliff's IS a couple of decades ago—ought to know. Our organisation was excluded in 1980 from "Marxism into the '80s"; then when we set up a picket to protest this exclusion, we were physically attacked by SWPers. Following this the SL waged a campaign exposing the SWP's thuggery, that won substantial support among trade unionists, leftists and others in the workers movement.

The political context then was the period shortly after the Soviet Red Army had entered Afghanistan. The virulently anti-Soviet SWP, in a political bloc with the imperialists and their Labourite running dogs, was driven into a frenzy by our line of "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan". Indeed, at that time SWPer Paul Foot was writing columns in the *Daily Mirror*, attacking the Thatcher government from the right on the grounds that it was shipping beef to Soviet troops in Kabul. Ever since then, the Spartacist League/Britain has been excluded from SWP forums and other "public" events. And only a year ago, the Canadian Cliffite International Socialists (IS) assaulted our comrades after denying them admission to a meeting. One woman comrade was spread-eagled, dragged and bashed crotch-first against a divider between a double set of doors. The IS then summoned three carloads of cops to "protect" their meet-

ing from the reds.

Programmatically speaking, the Socialist Workers Party and *Socialist Organiser* have far more in common with each other than either does with us. The disputes that exist between them are disputes between social-democratic tendencies. Thus, on the issue of Marxist policy towards the Middle East, both SO and the SWP reject a proletarian interna-

withstanding our massive political differences, we would note that the Matgamna tendency has a fairly decent track record in its refusal to resort to political exclusions and violence against other left tendencies. At a time when most of the rest of the left remained silent, *Socialist Organiser* in 1980 ran an article exposing Gerry Healy's WRP as a violent and corrupt organisation which was heavily

ly tries to draw a parallel between the Cliffites and Gerry Healy's outfit in the late 1960s. In point of fact, it's not only Stalinists or corrupt political bandits like Gerry Healy who drag workers democracy through the mud. Blinded by his own Labourism, Matgamna amnesties social democracy. The purges and witch hunts carried out by the Labour Party tops are simply soft-core political violence. The German social-democratic bloodhounds after World War I worked to drown the German workers revolution in blood, organising the killing of Communist leaders Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. The virulent anti-communist Mensheviks of the SWP take their cue from their social-democratic big brothers.

Following its victory in the Healy libel suit, *Socialist Organiser* held a public meeting in which it invited other left groups to participate. The spokesman from the Spartacist League—the only other organisation to participate—concluded his speech by noting:

"At bottom the defence of workers democracy and resistance to the intervention of the bourgeois state into the affairs of the workers movement depends on a revolutionary programme: this is, political independence from the bourgeoisie. The Labour Party which is much venerated and tailed by pseudo-Trotskyism in this country—besides being a graveyard for subjective revolutionaries—routinely prosecutes vicious red-baiting witchhunts against leftist dissidents in consonance with its role as the chief guardian of the class interests of the capitalist class within the workers movement. The Stalinists adopted violence, exclusionism and alliance with alien class forces as methods of struggle with a particular vigour that befits gravediggers of revolution. The Healyites aped these methods in the service of opportunist and organisational appetites that ultimately put them on the payroll of bourgeois regimes. There is a lesson in that for all those who wish to fight for the victory of communism: the defence of workers democracy (which includes resisting the exclusion of inconvenient leftist opponents from public meetings as practiced, for example, by the Socialist Workers Party or Workers Power) is a necessary part of the struggle for the Leninist programme and party." (See "*Socialist Organiser* victory in Healy libel suit", *Workers Hammer* no 99, July/August 1988.) ■

**Spartacist League protest against SWP thuggery at "Marxism into the '80s" drew broad support from the workers movement.**

We the undersigned support the principles of workers democracy which demand that all tendencies of the left and labour movement be allowed to participate in meetings and events advertised as 'public'. On the basis of reports which have come to our attention that supporters of the Spartacist League were physically excluded and subsequently violently attacked at the 'Marxism into the '80s' debate between Monty Johnstone and John Molyneux at North London Polytechnic on 6 July 1980 by SWP members, and that other supporters of the Spartacist League and of the Revolutionary Communist Tendency protesting against these exclusions were also excluded, we register our outrage and condemnation.

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Association of Kurdish Students Abroad (International Relationship)  
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(Partial listing of signatories up to 24 July 1980)

\*Signed in a personal capacity. Organisation and/or position listed for identification purposes only.

nationalist framework. *Socialist Organiser* refuses to condemn Zionism *per se*. Indeed its methodology is very much that of the Zionists themselves, who equate anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism. SO serve as apologists for liberal/"left" Zionist elements like Peace Now in Israel. A few years ago SO smeared as "anti-Semitic" Jim Allen's play *Perdition*, which documented the collaboration between Nazis and Hungarian Zionists. For its part, the SWP capitulates to Arab nationalism. For example, in the Middle East wars of '67 and '73, where a policy of revolutionary defeatism was called for, the Cliffites supported the Arab side.

This apparently is the basis for SO's accusation that the SWP, whose leader is of Palestinian Jewish origin, pursues an "anti-Semitic" policy. In fact both SO and the SWP, who tail after their own imperialist bourgeoisie, have been in bed with the forces of anti-Semitism and bourgeois reaction. Blinded by anti-Sovietism, they supported each and every counterrevolutionary movement in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, from Nazi-infested bourgeois nationalist movements in the Baltics and Ukraine, to the anti-Semitic, anti-woman clerical nationalists of Polish Solidarność. The destruction of the USSR and the deformed workers states in Eastern Europe, which was hailed by both *Socialist Organiser* and the SWP, unleashed sinister forces of fascism, racism and communalism. And as for the SWP's line on the Middle East, we recall how quickly during the Gulf War it junked its ostensible "anti-imperialism" in order to side up to the CND and Tony Benn.

Deeply ensconced in the Labour Party, *Socialist Organiser* are anti-communists who tail imperialism from Russia to Hong Kong to Ireland to Palestine. Not-

subsidised materially by various Arab bourgeois governments. When Vanessa Redgrave of the WRP sued *Socialist Organiser* for libel, the SL vigorously defended SO. We noted that we were "compelled by basic class principle... to assist in the defense of this case, including fund-raising and publicity, not least internationally" (*Spartacist* no 31-32, Summer 1981). Influenced by then bloc partner and virulent anti-Spartacist Alan Thornett, Matgamna returned the cheque which we had written as a donation to their defence fund.

Today, in his open letter to Cliff, Matgamna asserts that there are "two streams of this sort of poisonous violence in the history of the labour movement", by which he means Stalinism and Healyism. Given that the Cliffites are manifestly not Stalinists, Matgamna inappropriate-

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NUMBER 8

The Bolshevik Tendency:  
**From the Snake Pit of Anti-Spartacism**

Introduction

The Communist Workers Group:  
"Bureaucratic Centralism in the IBT and the Intervention of the Working Committee"

Spartacist Publications Company  
Box 1041, London NW5 3EU

July 1993

# Combative Timex strikers shafted

GLASGOW—On Sunday, 23 August the Timex Corporation shut its Dundee plant, four months ahead of schedule. For seven months over 300 sacked Timex workers, mainly women, fought a bitter battle against cops, scabs and a vicious, union-busting management. They angrily threw out scabby back-to-work proposals presented by AEEU sell-out artists like Jimmy Airlie. They were threatened with expulsion from their union and violence-baited by the treacherous STUC for trying to stop scabs on the picket lines. The struggle at Timex was lost through playing by the bosses' rules, the bitter price of the strike committee's subordination to the Labour Party/STUC "lieutenants of capital". This betrayal points sharply to the need for a revolutionary leadership of the working class.

The battle at Timex was part of a surge of workers struggles across post-Cold War Europe and was a source of inspiration to wide sections of the working class in Britain. Widespread anger over the pit closures was defused and derailed into an obscene popular front centred on the nationalist slogan of "save British coal", embracing everyone from Scargill to the CBI to even raving racists like Winston Churchill junior. With union misleaders preaching reliance on government inquiries and the courts, pit closures proceeded apace. At Timex, however, the workers fought on picket lines, which is where strikes are won or lost. Precisely because it offered a beacon of class struggle to massive numbers of workers, the Labourite bureaucracy worked overtime to strangle the Timex strike.

The Timex strikers could not have won this strike on their own. As we noted last issue: "The Dundee Timex plant is small and marginalised. For the bosses it is expendable, particularly when in the context of deepening economic recession they can easily prey off internationalised mass unemployment" (*Workers Hammer* no 136, July/August 1993). The multinational corporation has packed up in Dundee and shifted its production to the Philippines, and partly to its French Besançon plant. And particularly in the context of the growth of inter-imperialist rivalries, nationally limited trade union reformism was a dead end. We argued: "Timex workers from France, Hong Kong, the Philippines and the US need to strike together now in joint international struggle against the profit-gouging Timex bosses." And we called for extending the Timex strike to key sections of the working class—not through token one-day "sympathy" actions but by mobilising rail, oil, power and coal workers in *joint strike action* alongside Timex workers.

Our calls for international class struggle were sharply counterposed to the bureaucracy's gutless bowing and scraping to the courts and their injunctions, and to its consumer boycott campaign. Consumer boycotts are always the kiss of death to union struggle, denying the need to mobilise the organised power of the working class and appealing instead to consumers, public opinion and the bosses. They are always used by bureaucrats to sugarcoat betrayals and defeats. Sure enough, union officials like John Kydd (Senior) are denying that there was a

defeat and claiming that the "boycott campaign will move into a new phase".

The fake left consistently tailed after the sell-out policies of the treacherous STUC. The Communist Party of Great Britain had their noses firmly in the trough of the boycott brigade early on, even picketing the US embassy to plead with Bill Clinton to support Timex workers. These bogus "communists" acted as main distributors for *Boycott Timex News*, which proudly launched a National Timex Boycott Campaign headed by three Labour MPs—Tony Benn, John McAllion and Ernie Ross. Ross is particularly detested by the strikers for telling them on 9 August to "re-think", ie, give up on their struggle.

Scottish Militant Labour (SML) toadied to the STUC, imploring them to organise a one-day general strike. SML claimed that the Timex closing was a "victory" because the scabs are on the street (*Scottish Militant*, 20 August). But so are the strikers, without guarantee of any redundancy payment! SML also pushed the consumer boycott, leafletting shoppers at H Samuels and Argos not to buy Timex watches. Scottish Militant absurdly demanded that the "government should step in and nationalise Timex". At bottom, this is simply the bankrupt programme of left Labourism to bail out decrepit British capitalism. Such state intervention is protectionist in character—workers in different countries are pitted against each other in order to "save jobs" by imploring their own governments to keep out foreign imports and

subsidise capitalist losers. This is counterposed to the fight for internationalist workers struggle.

Nationalism and protectionism are twins that go together. We uphold the right of self-determination for the Scottish nation. But because the necessity and possibility of joint class struggle across Britain are real, we have never advocated separation. Should the nationalists achieve their end, the result would be venal, virulently anti-working-class rule. What's necessary instead is a federation of workers republics in these isles, part of a Socialist United States of Europe.

During the Timex strike, several leftists were arrested and two SWP supporters had their homes raided and face serious charges. We demand the dropping of all charges against all Timex strike supporters. Notwithstanding its occasional criticisms of the bureaucrats, the SWP distributed STUC leaflets for a boycott, and throughout the strike absurdly begged the STUC and TUC tops and other open class traitors to "act" on behalf of the strikers. This is of a piece with its "open letter" to scabherd Norman Willis to defend the miners.

The crucial lesson of Timex is the need for revolutionary leadership. Seeking to pressurise the chauvinist Labourite traitors is a dead end. Such is the perspective of SML and the SWP, who both campaigned for the election of a Labour government. Instead what is necessary is the forging of a Bolshevik party, by splitting the working-class base from the pro-capitalist tops of the Labour Party. ■

## WIL...

(Continued from page 3)

conference document with its frank assessment of the ICL's strengths and weaknesses, claimed to have detected signs of "demoralisation" in our ranks. But as the debate and the discussion period proceeded, the WIL found trouble finding speakers from amongst their membership to defend their line. Even the editor of WIL's paper, Phil Marchant, repeatedly refused his comrades' prompts to respond to the "demoralised" Spartacists. But not to worry, the WIL was able to make common cause with the various fake-left outfits who attended, taking advantage of our strict enforcement of the principles of workers democracy—a point that ought not to have been lost on WP, who exclude the SL from their "public" meetings. (And at the end of the meeting the Spartacist co-chairman of the debate particularly drew their attention to the fact that both organisations had a literature table in the room.)

WIL squawked in chorus with an *SO* speaker who baldly advocated the stringing up of the secret police of the former workers states. Never mind that the purpose of the anti-communist witch hunt against people like Erich Honecker, Marcus Wolf, Mielke and Bögelein is to intimidate the workers and to strangle their resistance to the consequences of capitalist reunification—to mass unemployment and racist terror.

Complimenting the WIL for their support to Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary barricades, WP speaker Richard Brenner explained that it was important to act "in common" with Yeltsin as a means of defending workers' rights to organise! Otherwise there "was absolutely no way that the working class were going to be able to effect a political revolution". Embittered anti-Spartacist and BT convert Ian Dudley jumped on the band-

wagon to accuse us of failing to answer the WP's polemic entitled "Sectarians abandon the gains of October". But as Eibhlin McDonald neatly summarised:

"It should be called 'Workers Power discovers the gains of October' that they have been denying for the past ten years. Soon as they discovered that there was

Group. The meeting's attention was drawn to the recent article in *Workers Vanguard* (no 582, 13 August), entitled "From the Snake Pit of Anti-Spartacism", which exposes a recent split in the BT where both sides of the split accurately accuse each other of being liars, thieves, bureaucrats and bullies.



Friends of Afghanistan Society

**Afghan women took up arms against reactionary CIA-funded cut-throats, who killed people for teaching little girls how to read and write.**

counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, up they get to defend it, right? Guess why? Because there is nationalised property."

As for the BT and their position of support for the coup, the point was made that the BT's condition for having "supported" the coup was that the Stalinists didn't lift a finger against counterrevolution. Because "when they did, like Jaruzelski's army in Poland, or the Soviet army in Afghanistan, the BT wouldn't touch it". Other BT supporters present did not seek to speak, perhaps because they were still recovering from one of Bill Logan's sick psychodrama sessions in the New Zealand Permanent Revolution

But if the WIL were finding it hard trying to square their anti-Soviet positions with their pretence at some sort of Trotskyist orthodoxy, others like *Socialist Organiser* had no such qualms. Announcing agreement with the WIL that "Stalinism is counterrevolutionary through and through", an *SO* speaker openly proclaimed that there was nothing to defend in the deformed workers states because "Stalinism is a new horrific form of class oppression of the working class". As an SL speaker pointed out to the WIL:

"I appreciate the comment from the guy from *Socialist Organiser*, he is not a Trotskyist. He believes in Shachtman's

bureaucratic collectivism. But the simple fact of the matter comrades, is that he has exactly your position. He is against the Soviet Army in Afghanistan, he was for Solidarność in 1981 and he was for Yeltsin in 1991. So what is the point of calling yourself a Trotskyist if you have exactly the same position as an open renegade from Trotskyism?" [Applause]

At the end of the discussion, WIL spokesman Richard Price blustered about his "disappointment" with the debate. Filled with schoolmasterly pedantry and sophistries, the summary was pretty wretched. During the discussion period one Spartacist supporter had said:

"For me, Afghanistan was very important, especially as an Asian working-class woman. One side was supported by the CIA, imperialists and social democracy. They wanted to keep the power of the landlords, moneylenders and religious reactionaries. They opposed letting girls learn to read and write. They forced women to wear the veil. The other side, with the strength of the Red Army, gave women an opportunity to live as human beings. Women's liberation in the East is not a question of selecting a few more women MPs but a question of life or death. When you opposed the Red Army in Afghanistan you took the side of counterrevolution. You were helping to keep women as slaves."

Price's pathetic retort to this was to claim that we had changed our position on the veil as *Women and Revolution* in the '70s had reported how Bolshevik women had at times worn the veil as they fought the grip of Islamic reactionaries amidst women of Soviet Central Asia?! That the WIL was reduced to such silliness just illustrates how difficult it was for the WIL to maintain any pretence to Trotskyism in the face of our hard Bolshevism. We enjoyed the political debate. But to be fair to the WIL there was one thing we found we could agree with them on. No one would ever dare call them the "party of the Russian revolution". ■

# “Free market” misery fuels exodus

## Explosion builds in China

The dramatic sight of a ship jammed with Chinese emigrants disgorging its human cargo as the *Golden Venture* ran aground off New York City in June highlighted the plight of the many thousands fleeing the effects of capitalist market “reforms” in the People’s Republic of China. The smuggler ship’s name aptly captures the aspirations of the new Chinese millionaires and foreign investors who see a clear field for exploitation in the country’s burgeoning “free market”. But the cracking of the “iron rice bowl” — the guarantee of lifetime employment and social welfare ushered in by the 1949 Revolution — has meant untold misery for hundreds of millions of workers and peasants in the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state.

A couple of months ago, it seemed as if every major US newspaper featured a “special report” on China’s booming economy. Long gone are Western recriminations over the bloody suppression of the Tiananmen uprising four years ago. Hailing “China: The Emerging Economic Powerhouse of the 21st Century”, *Business Week* (17 May) gushed that “The Chinese are rushing toward prosperity — and there seems no stopping their momentum,” and urged the Clinton administration to embark on “A New China Policy for a New China”. The *New York Times* (23 July) headlined: “China, Barreling Along the Capitalist Road, Now Posts Strict Speed Limits.” And the mouthpiece of the Swiss bankers, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (23 March) asked, “China’s Economy as a Model of Reform?”

By dismantling central economic planning, loosening monetary controls and opening huge swaths of coastal China for foreign exploitation over the past 14 years, Deng Xiaoping’s “socialism with Chinese characteristics” had seemingly created a fifth “Asian tiger”, potentially dwarfing Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and the Philippines. To keep population growth down, the bureaucracy imposed mandatory birth control and sterilisation policies, restricting families to one child each. The International Monetary Fund and the CIA now rank Deng’s China as the world’s third largest economy, trailing only the US and Japan. Disgruntled ex-bureaucrats in the former Soviet Union and imperialist spokesmen alike see in the “Chinese road” of creeping capitalist restoration tightly controlled by the ruling Communist Party apparatus a positive model in contrast to the chaos of Yeltsin’s Russia.

The *Independent* (30 November 1992) remarked last year: “As Russia’s economy sinks deeper into crisis, many are now looking with envy at Peking’s successful reforms.” But eight months later, the same paper wrote, “As Russia stumbles to its feet, the ‘Chinese model’ is collapsing” (*Independent*, 22 July). What is behind this shift?

The steady accumulation of enormous contradictions in China’s economy and society has turned the country into a pressure cooker waiting to explode. Deng’s injunction that “to get rich is glorious” has fuelled the rise of a layer of greedy speculators and entrepreneurs, most of them drawn from the *taizidang* — the “prince’s party” of privileged offspring of top bureaucrats who are well-

situated to rake in pay-offs for their *guanxi* (connections) in the apparatus. Deng’s “open door” policy, grotesquely recalling the imperialist encroachment at the turn of the century, has turned much of the coastal region into “special economic zones” rife with corruption and exploitation. This in turn has exacerbated skyrocketing disparities between town and

tigation teams” throughout the country to whip local bureaucrats into line. But the party’s authority, almost nil among the working people after the 1989 crackdown, is rapidly diminishing among regional officials, who chafe at new restrictions on spending and investment while attempting to lure foreign capital into joint ventures. As an *Independent*

### For workers political revolution!



John Gittings

Impoverished peasants leave the countryside, lining up for railway tickets to Beijing, as pro-capitalist economic policies widen gulf between rich and poor.

country and from area to area, leading to the growth of regional “warlordism”.

Seething unrest among the peasantry has erupted in more than 200 disturbances in the past year alone, including a virtual revolt by 10,000 farmers in Renshou county last June. Laid-off workers have taken to attacking and even killing their factory directors. At the same time, frustration is growing among small-time speculators scrambling to get on the gravy train. In one incident last August, 50,000 would-be investors rampaged through the southern city of Shenzhen near Hong Kong when they were cut out of an advertised release of new stocks. Capital flight surpassed \$30 billion last year, up two-thirds from the year before, while the trade deficit doubled over two months this spring. Inflation is running at 21 per cent in the cities, and a cash shortage in the countryside means that workers’ remittances to their hard-pressed peasant families are being “paid” with worthless chits.

Worried bureaucrats in Beijing are now scrambling to halt the *guo ri* (overheating) of the economy which could make the boom go bust in short order. At the beginning of July, Communist Party head Jiang Zemin announced a new effort to slow down the runaway economy and fight corruption among state officials. Liberal deputy prime minister Zhu Rongji, who some call “China’s Gorbachev”, took over direct control of the People’s Bank. Zhu threatened to “cut off the heads” of bureaucrats who withheld cash from the peasants, and dispatched “invest-

(2 July) columnist noted:

“Fear of widespread social unrest may be growing in the corridors of power. The 1989 democracy movement won support from people furious with inflation and corruption. This time both problems are accompanied by far bigger regional disparities in wealth and much broader dissatisfaction among the peasants. Added to that, poorly paid state industry workers are losing the old life-long benefits of the ‘iron rice bowl’ system and becoming more strident.”

The fate of the Chinese Revolution hangs in the balance, and the situation is moving very quickly. Since a burgeoning workers revolt was headed off by bloody repression in June 1989, the situation in China has only worsened. Today more than ever, only the overthrow of the sell-out nationalist bureaucracy through political revolution by China’s powerful proletariat — uniting behind it the hundreds of millions of poor and displaced peasants and linking up with proletarian struggle in Korea and Japan — can halt the march towards capitalist restoration and anarchy. The task for revolutionary intellectuals and militant workers who want to fight for a socialist future in China is the building of an authentically Leninist vanguard party, part of a reborn Trotskyist Fourth International.

### Chinese Stalinism at a dead end

The looming crisis in China is the direct result of more than a decade of “market socialist” reforms. Following the anarchy of Mao Tse-tung’s “Cultural

Revolution” and the subsequent purge of the “Gang of Four”, the Deng Xiaoping regime sought to achieve the “Four Modernisations” (in agriculture, industry, technology and the military) by discarding central economic planning for a hybrid mix of state industries and privately owned plants dominated by foreign capital. State industries were subjected to “profit” accountability with the aim of increasing efficiency. Agricultural communes were liquidated and private commerce encouraged in the countryside. Millions of dislocated peasants flocked to the new “special economic zones” (SEZ), reminiscent of the foreign concessions held by colonial powers in prerevolutionary China, to slave up to 16 hours a day with no union protection and at wages well below those in Hong Kong and Taiwan. In a highly publicised January 1992 tour of the booming SEZs of Guangdong province, Deng voiced his approval by calling on “reformers” to “do it faster”.

As China’s economy continues to expand by more than ten per cent annually, the Stalinists in their Zhongnanhai compound have become the envy of former Soviet bureaucrats (and are seen as a model by the beleaguered Stalinist regimes in Hanoi and Havana). Unlike Yeltsin’s Russia, Deng’s China is attractive to investors, especially Chinese capital in Hong Kong and Taiwan, who seized on the country’s literate but low-paid workforce to turn coastal China into a “production platform” for the “little tigers” of Southeast Asia. To the Chinese Stalinists, a steadily booming economy meant they could buy off the population with rising incomes, hoping to avoid the fate of their Soviet counterparts. Right-wing American journalist Robert Novak enthuses about the “new China”: “Somber old Shanghai is returning to its prewar splendor as the Paris of the Orient. The people, dressed in a riot of color, endlessly pursue the profit motive” (*Washington Post*, 19 July).

But the “miracle” of Deng’s “socialist market economy” is an illusion waiting to be shattered. The outdated physical plant and machinery of China’s state industries simply cannot compete head to head with new plants built by Taiwanese or Japanese capital, which moreover don’t have to pay the same social overhead expenses like pensions and schools for workers’ children. The result is that state industries are faced with massive “restructuring” — ie, lay-offs and cutbacks in social programmes — while foreign investment is skyrocketing. Japanese investment grew by 250 per cent in 1992 alone, and American firms from the Big Three automakers to AT&T have been piling into the Chinese market.

Today, centrally controlled state-run industries account for no more than 50 per cent of all economic activity, and their share is shrinking fast. Regionally and locally run enterprises make up one-third of output; the rest comes from privately held capitalist concerns. The “socialist market economy” has been enshrined in the constitution, and government spokesmen now talk of moving to a full-fledged market economy by the year 2000 (when Beijing hopes to host the Olympic Games). The old Chinese bour-

geoisie, their mainland holdings expropriated in the wake of the 1949 Revolution but allowed to move operations to Taiwan and elsewhere, is returning with a vengeance. This year, Beijing held its first official talks with representatives of the offshore Nationalist regime. Symbolising the new rapprochement, the general who commanded Chiang Kai-shek's last stand in Shanghai in 1949 was recently welcomed back to oversee a Taiwanese investment project.

Despite the fact that its rate of privatisation of industry is far higher than that of Russia, China remains a deformed workers state. The Stalinist bureaucracy and the Communist Party remain firmly entrenched in power, while the People's Liberation Army remains intact and has embarked on a modernisation drive centred on massive arms purchases of sophisticated weaponry from Russia. However, it is clear that the abandonment of central economic planning, the selling of large chunks of coastal China to the imperialists, and other market measures generating vast disparities in wealth have enormously strengthened the forces for capitalist counterrevolution. The contradictions of the "socialist market economy" will be resolved either by the intervention of the working class to stop capitalist restoration and extend socialist revolution to the rest of Asia, or by the destruction of the workers state and the transformation of China into a superexploited neocolony completely subordinated to world imperialism.

### The masses raise their heads

Following Deng's 1992 Guangdong tour, authorities called on state factories to "crack the three irons"—inflexible wages, permanent jobs for officials and lifetime jobs for ordinary labourers. A leading official in the Labour Ministry recently called for dismantling the "traditional labour employment system" in favour of "market-oriented employment mechanisms". The National Coal Corporation has already laid off 100,000 workers and plans to get rid of another 300,000 in the next two years. The giant Wuhan Iron and Steel works has announced plans to lay off two-thirds of its 120,000 employees.

Adding insult to injury, millions of workers recently had up to a month's wages docked to "buy" government bonds whose interest rate was too low to attract investors. A new burden on the working class is the destruction of the *dang wei* (work units) in the factories, schools and countryside. A worker who is laid off now loses not only his job but the health care, housing and other social benefits that came with it. Women workers, who have made tremendous gains since 1949, are being especially targeted for dismissal by managers who don't want to pay for maternity leave.

Politically atomised, the working class is lashing back in any way it can. In late March, 300 workers at the Canon copier plant in the Zhuhai SEZ in Guangdong struck for three days to win pay increases, though the company finally granted a raise far below the inflation rate. When a state ball-bearing plant in Harbin was turned into a joint venture with a Hong Kong firm, workers demanded early retirement by getting certificates of mental illness! Since the State Council authorised state enterprises to decide their own wages and work rules last July, there has been a steady stream of strikes, sit-ins, protests, disruptions of production, and attacks by dismissed workers against managers and equipment. One Wuhan factory manager was killed by laid-off employees, another at a Liaoning province oil refinery was stabbed by a worker, the head of a Shanxi province factory was shot, etc.

The workers' outrage has reportedly led the authorities to stop promoting the slogan of "cracking the three irons". Cities like Shanghai are now implementing special funds to help offset inflation, and a new regulation orders state factories to place laid-off workers in new jobs. As the deputy secretary general of the Wuhan municipal government remarked, "We can't just throw people into the streets.... If they can't move from one iron rice bowl to another, we have to at least give them a rice bowl made of mud" (*New York Times*, 11 May). At the same time, the bureaucracy has reportedly made "secret plans to quell worker unrest", issuing a directive that "security work should be strengthened at factories, oilfields, mines and other key state projects to prevent people with ulterior motives from stirring up workers to riot" (*Chicago Tribune*, 15 October 1992).

Reported widespread peasant unrest adds a powerful mix to the seething anger in the working class. Even Deng has warned that the peasants' "burden has already surpassed the limits of their endurance". Due to government investment policy, which since the mid-1980s has been directed away from rural areas and towards the cities to develop industries attractive to foreign capital, as many as 80 million peasants have flooded into the cities to get jobs as low-paid day labourers.

Peasant incomes average half of urban incomes and continue to drop. While most city residents pay no taxes, peasants are subject to arbitrary levies by local officials to finance pet projects or simply to add to their personal wealth. So now tax collectors are being attacked throughout the country. The Renshou county riots erupted after the local government tried to collect taxes to finance a road construction project. Peasants in central

article on "The Great Boom of China" noted:

"Corruption is at levels inconceivable in the days when true believers in communism and socialism dominated the country, and it is spreading wildly. So are financial and real estate speculation, prostitution and begging in the streets."

Also tearing at the fabric of the Chinese deformed workers state is the regionalism spawned by a decentralised economy. It was the "market socialism" introduced by Tito in multinational Yugoslavia that spurred secessionist appetites in the economically more advanced regions of Slovenia and Croatia, touching off the nationalist bloodletting which destroyed the deformed workers state. In China, the main threat may be from regional "economic warlords" who couldn't care less what directives Beijing issues. Local officials take part in joint ventures with foreign capitalists, and some are building up their fiefdoms by selling state property outright. Cantonese-speaking Guangdong, home to 50 per cent of foreign capital investment in China, is economically and culturally bound to capitalist Hong Kong. To the north, Fujian province is dominated by Taiwanese capital. At the same time, the old clans have been making a comeback. A political crisis in Beijing could tear these areas away from the centre.

The lure of private enterprise has also infected the People's Liberation Army (PLA), which "now amounts to a highly diversified corporate conglomerate with ventures ranging from hotels to motor works to herbal medicines" (*Boston Globe*, 17 May). A recent article in Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post* (7 July) pointed to the growing rift between army commanders busily enriching themselves and demoralised rank-and-file soldiers who are on the outside looking in. On the

North of Tibet, the Muslim Uighurs of Xinkiang are closely related to the peoples of the former Soviet Central Asian republics, now facing rising Islamic fundamentalist forces.

There is yet time for an aroused proletariat to enter the political field and pose a socialist alternative to the chaos that lies ahead. A revolutionary workers and peasants government would expropriate foreign capital and reverse the disintegrating effects of the decentralised economy by establishing genuine workers democracy as the basis for reviving the planned economy. It would grant full rights of self-determination to the country's national minorities and would come to the aid of beleaguered Vietnam, making amends for the criminal invasion launched by China in 1979 as a cat's paw for US imperialism.

Most importantly, it would promote the struggle for socialist revolution throughout the region, from the capitalist statelets of Hong Kong and Taiwan to Russia, South Korea and the imperialist industrial powerhouse of Japan. Only through integration into a socialist Asia can real modernisation for both the cities and the countryside be achieved, and living standards raised to the highest level.

### Lessons of the Tiananmen upheaval

China's working class showed its capacity for militant struggle during the 1989 Tiananmen events. As we noted at the time, it was the entry of the workers into the student democracy protests that threw the Stalinist regime into crisis, opening up the possibility of proletarian political revolution. This was despite the hostility of student leaders who sought to bar workers' delegations from the main pro-



De Maria/NY Times

Chinese immigrants, whose ship ran aground off New York, arrested by immigration cops. Spartacist League and Partisan Defense Committee protested at federal building in Manhattan, 8 June.



Workers Vanguard

Henan disrupted traffic on a new rail line to protest building costs, while in Guangdong several thousand peasants blocked a highway with their trucks in June to demand more compensation for land taken from them along the road.

Along with unemployment and a growing gap between haves and have-nots, "market reforms" have brought a whole range of social scourges which had been wiped out after the 1949 Revolution. Corruption has become a way of life particularly among the despised *taizidang* children of the bureaucracy. Crime is booming in coastal areas, where police get their take from smuggling consumer items. The suicide rate is on the rise, while the number of mental patients has doubled in the last decade. The slave trade in women has been revived, as 19,000 young women were reportedly kidnapped last year and sold to peasants as "wives". A *Boston Globe* (16 May)

occasion of the PLA's 66th anniversary in late July, its two top commanders warned in a major article in the *People's Daily* of "a growing tide of corruption, money worshipping and hedonism". While the PLA may be the last centralised component of the Chinese state, its command structure is divided regionally. The headline in the 3 July *Liberation Army Daily*, "Strictly Control the Army", shows Beijing's fear of these centrifugal forces.

There are also genuine national questions among the Mongol, Tibetan, Turkic and other minorities, whose rights to autonomy are acknowledged by the constitution but have never been fully honoured. In May, Tibet was wracked by protests against inflation that quickly took on political demands against the central government, as 4000 Tibetans attacked police and Han Chinese businessmen who have flocked to this remote mountain area in search of quick riches.

test area in Tiananmen Square. We noted that the repression following the suppression of the protests, including the meting out of dozens of death sentences, was aimed particularly at worker militants:

"The Western media usually describes the oppositional forces in China as 'the student movement for democracy.' But it was the beginnings of a working-class revolt against Deng's programme of 'building socialism with capitalist methods' which gave the protests their mass and potentially revolutionary nature. Organised workers' contingents started to participate in the marches, and it was the threat of a general strike which led Li Peng to order martial law in mid-May."

—"Defend Chinese workers!",  
*Workers Hammer* no 108,  
July/August 1989

Now a new book confirms that it was the mobilisation of the proletariat which

continued on page 8

# China...

(Continued from page 7)

drove the regime into a frenzy and led to the crackdown:

"There was no massacre in Tiananmen Square on the night of June 3. But on the western approach roads... there was a bloodbath that claimed hundreds of lives when the People's Liberation Army found its path blocked by a popular uprising that was being fueled by despair and rage.... What took place was the slaughter not of students but of ordinary workers and residents—precisely the target that the Chinese government had intended."

—George Black and Robin Munro,  
*Black Hands of Beijing* (John Wiley & Sons, 1993)

Pro-socialist workers often carried placards with portraits of Mao Tse-tung. The meaning was clear: while things got pretty crazy in Mao's time, at least they had jobs, rice and housing, and everybody wasn't out to get rich by screwing the next guy. Even today, a Beijing resident viewing an exhibit honouring the 100th anniversary of Mao's birth commented: "Mao is still revered by the ordinary people. But most of his ideas have been abandoned—class struggle, egalitarianism and a collective life and economic and diplomatic self-reliance."

Actually, Mao's policy was always based on class collaboration and nationalist autarky. But just as the Russian yuppies who flocked to Yeltsin's counter-revolution were the heirs to Brezhnev, so too Mao's China led to Deng's "open door" to imperialism, spawning the *taizidang* would-be exploiters of the Chinese masses. Despite the enormous gains of the 1949 Revolution, the Chinese workers state was deformed from its inception, ruled by a nationalist bureaucracy that prevented the worker and peasant masses from exercising political power. After it took power, the CCP initially banned strikes and for several years maintained a "coalition government of four classes" including representatives of the bourgeoisie.

For many years, "Communist China" was the bête noire of American imperialism. Pentagon hardliners urged nuking the "Chicom" during the Korean War. During the 1960s, as nationalist antagonisms between the Stalinist regimes in Moscow and Beijing grew, Khrushchev's Kremlin sought to ingratiate itself with Washington in the name of "peaceful coexistence", while Mao struck a more militant posture. But as we noted then, Maoism was "Khrushchevism under the gun", and in the historic long run, the Soviet Union was the fundamental obstacle to imperialist designs to reconquer all the deformed workers states.

Based on the Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country", Mao's rule blocked the socialist development of China by aligning with so-called "progressive" capitalist regimes, ultimately embracing an alliance with US imperialism. Even as American B-52s rained death on the Vietnamese people, Mao toasted war criminal Nixon in the Great Hall of the People. In this criminal alliance with the US, Mao allowed the CIA to establish "listening posts" along the Soviet border. Deng was simply following in Mao's footsteps when China invaded Vietnam in 1979, only to be ignominiously defeated. Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Beijing played a key supporting role in the biggest CIA operation in history, supporting the reactionary *mujahedin* cut-throats against the Soviet-backed Kabul government.

On the economic front, Mao's attempt to achieve rapid industrialisation of this backward peasant country on its own through the "Great Leap Forward" led



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In 1922 Communists launched seamen's strike against British colonial rulers of Hong Kong. In contrast, after taking power in 1949, Mao-Stalinist regime maintained Hong Kong as capitalist enclave.

directly to economic collapse and the starvation of millions of peasants in the early 1960s. The misnamed "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution"—in reality a faction fight by Mao and the PLA leadership under Lin Biao to regain supremacy in the party—wreaked havoc from 1966 to 1976, shutting down high schools and universities and greatly depoliticising the population. Today foreign corporations are setting up special programmes to train technicians and managers among the "lost generation" of barely educated people in their mid-30s to mid-40s.

A truly revolutionary communist party will look nothing like Mao's party. Socialist militants can look instead to the early years of the Chinese CP, founded in 1921 by revolutionary intellectuals and workers inspired by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. From a handful of militants, the party grew by tens of thousands as class struggle broke out, for example the 1922 Hong Kong seamen's strike and general strike, the first labour strikes against imperialist exploitation in China. In 1925, a strike against the foreign concessions in Canton immediately spread to Hong Kong, shutting down the finance centre and signalling the beginning of the Second Chinese Revolution. In contrast, today the CCP acts as compradors for British, US and Japanese capital, promising to maintain capitalism after Britain's lease on the Hong Kong colony runs out in 1997.

Mao's party was the product of the defeat of the Chinese proletariat in 1927, prepared by Stalin's policy of subordinating the CCP to the bourgeois Kuomintang of Chiang Kai-shek, who turned on the Communist workers and butchered tens of thousands in Shanghai. Its proletarian base shattered, the CCP under Mao was rebuilt in the countryside as a peasant-nationalist party and guerrilla army. But some dozens of party cadres, including former CCP general secretary Chen Tu-hsiu, were won to the Left Opposition of Leon Trotsky, which alone fought Stalin's disastrous policies. In 1952, the Mao regime rounded up the Chinese Trotskyists, many of whom had led strikes against capitalist employers in defiance of the Stalinists' policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie (see Wang Fan-hsi, *Chinese Revolutionary* [1957]).

**For an internationalist communist vanguard!**

During the Tiananmen events, student protesters erected a "goddess of democracy" and showed evidence of consider-

able illusions in the West. Today many of these privileged student veterans of Tiananmen have made their peace with the Deng regime. As one told the *Washington Post* (23 June): "My friends and I don't even talk about politics anymore. There's no use. Money, that's what we want." Like their earlier Russian counterparts, these would-be yuppie ex-"dissidents" entertain illusions that full integration into the imperialist world market will provide them a life of luxury and turn their country into an advanced economic power. But as the fate of the ex-USSR demonstrates, what the imperialists have in mind in fomenting counterrevolution is not the development of new capitalist competitors but the creation of low-wage neocolonies to expand their own arenas for exploitation.

Now that the former Soviet Union has been destroyed, the imperialists have begun shifting away from their earlier benign and supportive attitude to China's regional "great power" ambitions. At the height of Mao and Deng's despicable anti-Soviet alliance with US imperialism, we warned that Washington would quickly go after the far weaker Chinese

Reuters



Beijing, May 1989: Chinese workers defended student protesters and opposed Deng's pro-capitalist "reforms".

deformed workers state if the Soviet Union was defeated. That is now happening. The ASEAN countries, Southeast Asia's analogue to NATO's European Community, have been clamouring about an increased military threat posed by China. Japan's foreign minister recently mooted the possibility of developing a nuclear arsenal.

Now sections of the US bourgeoisie, like the *New York Times*, scream for punitive measures against China, putatively in the guise of "humanitarian" concern over its use of prison labour for producing exports. The provocative sale of advanced F-16 fighter jets to Taiwan last year "reflected the Pentagon's belief that the United States needs to do something to confront and rein in China's growing military power. U.S. defense sources say that over the past two years, since the breakup of the Soviet Union, there has been a growing tendency among some Pentagon officials to treat China as a potential enemy" (*Los Angeles Times*, 15 June).

The only road forward for China lies in internationalist revolutionary struggle. A workers political revolution really would send peals of thunder out of China. It would electrify the massive Japanese working class, which for the first time in post-war history is confronted with the threat of serious unemployment, and provide a beacon to the proletarian masses throughout capitalist Southeast Asia and the Pacific Rim, who chafe under the stranglehold of robber-baron police-state regimes. For years, the Stalinist regime tolerated Hong Kong—which controls 60 per cent of China's foreign trade—as a capitalist enclave on its periphery, a staging ground for the revanchist ambitions of the Chinese bourgeoisie. But this gateway for imperialist expansion into China can also be an avenue for bringing revolutionary propaganda to the Chinese working class.

While the Chinese proletariat suffered a defeat at Tiananmen, it was not crushed. What the International Communist League said in June 1989 holds every bit as true today: "The central lesson of the Beijing spring and the urgent task which stands before the Chinese workers is the forging of an authentic communist party, an internationalist vanguard."

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 582, 13 August 1993.

# Israel...

(Continued from page 1)

impoverished slums. The Gaza Strip, barely larger in area than the New York City borough of Queens, is a giant concentration camp for close to a million Palestinian refugees. Jericho is a desolate village with less than 20,000 inhabitants, no industry and 50 per cent unemployment. The elected Palestinian council which is to implement "self-rule" in these areas would have control over little more than garbage collection. Like the South African "bantustans", which were intended to be militarised reservations to hold black labourers and "surplus" (unemployed) population under the control of black flunkies of the apartheid regime, even the structure and composition of this bogus "self-rule" will be determined by the Israeli occupiers.

The hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who have languished in squalid refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon since they were driven from their homes by Zionist terror in 1947-48 would be abandoned entirely. The two million Palestinians who live in the West Bank and Gaza, forced to subsist on little more than United Nations relief packages since Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin sealed off the Occupied Territories more than five months ago, would remain a destitute reservoir of superexploited labour for Israeli construction and agriculture.

The supposed "withdrawal" of Israeli troops will involve nothing more than a redeployment away from population centres, while maintaining control over all entry points and assuring the "security" of 150,000 Zionist "settlers" whose network of settlements is a key prop of the military occupation. Armed to the teeth and led by fascist zealots, they will remain in place—including in the Gaza and Jericho areas—to continue their racist provocations against Arabs. The accord does not even rule out the construction of new settlements. We say: *All* Israeli troops and settlers out of *all* of the Occupied Territories now!

The draft agreement is filled with empty "empowerment" rhetoric and lawyers' language designed to assuage critics on both sides. But its essence is that in exchange for formal Israeli recognition of its existence, and promises of imperialist/oil money, the PLO will take over the job of policing the Palestinian masses. Joseph Alpher, director of Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, a think tank for the Mossad spy agency, spelled it out in an interview in the *Canadian Jewish News* (2 September): "Israeli security forces would work closely with their Palestinian counterparts to keep order, said Alpher. 'The agreement will involve an overt liaison between them and us on security matters.'" And in case there was any doubt: "The imposition of order in the Gaza Strip by a PLO-linked security force is likely to be brutal and violent, but effective, he said, adding, 'Amnesty International will have to take a vacation for a while.'"

But Arafat and Rabin still have to push this deal through. The *Guardian* (1 September) observes that Arafat has made "a retreat so far-reaching and so contested that the real problem will be whether, having concluded such an agreement, he can enforce it or stay in office at all". "Radical" PLO groups like George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Nayef Hawatmeh's Democratic Front (DFLP) have come out against the accord. And Islamic fundamentalist groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad, as well as the Syrian-sponsored PFLP-General Command, have warned Arafat of "the fate of Sadat", the Egyptian president who was

assassinated after he signed a US-orchestrated peace treaty with Israel in 1978.

Meanwhile Zionist right-wingers crying "traitor!" mobbed Rabin's cabinet as it voted on the proposal last Monday. Likud opposition leader Binyamin Netanyahu led a delegation to Jericho after the accord was announced, demonstratively planting Israeli flags outside the house which is supposed to become Arafat's new headquarters.

Whatever happens, this grotesque bargain over the subjugated Palestinian people marks a watershed in the Near East. By its act, the PLO has invited fundamentalist reactionaries like Hamas to pose as the only fighters against the Zionist occupation. Petty-bourgeois Arab nationalism has been shown to be the bankrupt and impotent dead end that it always was. The only just resolution to the interminable and bloody nationalist conflicts in the region remains joint revolutionary struggle of the Hebrew-speaking and Arab toilers to sweep away all the exploiters and oppressors and forge a socialist federation of the Near East.

## Pax Americana in the Near East

What stands behind the American-orchestrated "peace" in the Near East, just like the neo-apartheid rapprochement between Nelson Mandela's African National Congress and the racist South African regime, is the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union. Under the headline, "As Much as Anything, Cold War's End Fostered Israel-PLO Deal", the *Washington Post* (1 September) noted:

"The collapse of the Soviet Union, and with it the political and military backing of Moscow and the East Bloc, robbed the PLO of virtually all its outside means of support. The Persian Gulf War deprived the PLO of a potentially powerful Arab ally in Iraq...and made it fashionable for Arab governments to turn their backs on the PLO."

So long as the Soviet degenerated workers state existed as a counterweight to US imperialism, this allowed petty-bourgeois nationalists like the PLO and ANC and the bourgeoisies of the semi-colonial countries to jockey for position between the two "superpowers". Ironically, former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev's last act on behalf of imperialism before being turfed out and replaced by Boris Yeltsin was to give a green light for the invasion of Iraq. Now faced with a "one superpower" world, the various nationalist movements see no option but to go begging hat in hand for any crumbs the US is willing to dispense.

Seizing on Arafat's verbal opposition to the US-led invasion of Iraq, the oil-rich Gulf feudal regimes cut the PLO off without a penny, causing its revenues to plunge from nearly \$500 million a year to less than a tenth that. Added to the PLO's loss of support on the ground to "rejectionist" groups—notably the Islamic fundamentalists of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, with whom the "Marxist" PFLP has formed an ignominious alliance—this was leading to a virtual mutiny against Arafat. Last month the PLO negotiating team in the Washington "peace" talks demonstratively offered their resignations as a statement of opposition to Arafat, and the PLO military commander in Lebanon openly called for Arafat's ouster.

The immediate precursor to the agreement is the Israeli *blitzkrieg* invasion of Lebanon two months ago. Ostensibly aimed at silencing a handful of Hezbollah guerrilla mortar units, Israeli tank columns and warplanes virtually depopulated the southern third of Lebanon, forcing close to *half a million* people to leave bombed-out homes and flee to Beirut.

While Syrian president Hafez al-Assad stood by and watched his Lebanese clients take a beating, Clinton orchestrated a cease-fire based on Syrian assurances that it would police the Hezbollah. This was a statement to the PLO, if any were needed, that it could not rely on Syria's backing in pushing for a better deal with the Zionist state.

Despite grouching by Syria and Jordan that they were left out in the cold by the PLO's secret talks with Israel, both countries have been busily negotiating their own agreements with the Zionist regime. Jordan claims to have an accord which is simply waiting to be signed. Assad has reportedly reached a deal with Israel which will acknowledge Syrian "sovereignty" over the Golan Heights in exchange for recognition of the Zionist state (ie, an end to even the most lukewarm support to Palestinian resistance groups). This would leave "hardline" groups who look to Damascus, like the PFLP and DFLP, out in the cold.

## PLO: from "people's war" to Palestinian "Judenrat"

This deal carries to a conclusion the impotent logic of the PLO's petty-bourgeois nationalism, which counselled reliance first on the Arab bourgeoisies of the region and then on the "good offices" of US imperialism. Despite the PLO's talk of "people's war" in the late '60s and early '70s, the Palestinians have never had either the social weight or the military strength to take on the nuclear-armed Zionist Goliath.

For all the talk of "pan-Arab unity", the bourgeois Arab rulers are no less hostile to the national aspirations of the Palestinians than are the Zionists. In the 1936-39 Palestinian uprising against the British colonial rulers and their (then) Zionist lackeys, the Mufti of Jerusalem, head of one of the leading Palestinian clans, betrayed the struggle in collusion with the neighbouring neocolonial Arab rulers. And in 1948, the Jordanian Hashemite rulers struck a deal with the Zionists to carve up Palestine at the expense of the Palestinians.

This nationalist backstabbing was brutally demonstrated in the 1970 "Black September" massacre, as Jordan's King Hussein (with the acquiescence of then Egyptian president and "pan-Arabist" idol Nasser) unleashed a blood-bath against the Palestinian resistance forces, forcing them to move their headquarters to Lebanon and seek protection from so-called "rejectionist" regimes like Iraq and Syria. During the Lebanese civil war of 1975-76, Assad dealt with the Palestinian forces there no less ruthlessly than had Hussein in Jordan. And when Israel launched its massive invasion of Lebanon in 1982, culminating in the horrendous massacre of 1300 Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps, *all* the Arab regimes turned a blind eye. Arafat, in turn, appealed for protection to the American and French imperialists, who disarmed his fighters and laid the basis for the massacre.

Intent on conciliating its feudal and bonapartist paymasters, Arafat's PLO progressively lowered its sights. Having in 1971 affirmed its opposition "to the establishment of a Palestinian state on any part of the Palestinian Homeland", three years later the PLO came out for a West Bank "mini-state" (see "From the 'Arab Revolution' to Pax Americana", *Workers Vanguard* no 335, 29 July 1983). At the time, this was posed as a transitional step towards a "democratic, secular Palestine". But by 1988, the PLO formally abandoned this pretence and accepted the existence of the Zionist state. Now Arafat has agreed to become a tool of the Zionist oppressors. It is indicative of his new status that the Israel-

is have promised to guarantee his "security" if the PLO leader moves to Jericho.

The role Arafat has chosen recalls the *Judenräte* ("Councils of Jewish Elders") who administered the Jewish ghettos in Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe during the Holocaust. It was the hated Jewish ghetto police who were the overseers who rounded up Jews to be shipped to the extermination camps. The PLO now intends to become a Palestinian *Judenrat* in the Occupied Territories. And it is bitterly ironic that among the oppressors it will serve are Jewish survivors of the Nazi Holocaust.

## For Trotskyist parties in the Near East!

Genuine self-determination for the Palestinian people is impossible without the dismantling of both the Zionist state of Israel, whose very existence is premised on the oppression of the Palestinian people, and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, whose population is over 60 per cent Palestinian. But unlike various "leftist" enthusiasts for Arab nationalism, we have always insisted that national emancipation for the Palestinians could not come at the expense of the right to national existence of the Hebrew-speaking people. Given the *interpenetration* of the Hebrew-speaking and Palestinian Arab populations—two peoples laying claim to the same territory—the only just resolution to the national question lies in the revolutionary overthrow of all the bourgeois regimes in the region. Only through the creation of a planned economy in a socialist federation of the Near East can conflicting claims over land and water be equitably resolved and all languages, religions and cultures be placed on an equal footing.

As elsewhere, Stalinism bears direct responsibility for the horrific situation in the Near East today. Tailing alternately (and sometimes simultaneously!) after Zionism and Arab nationalism, the Stalinists subordinated the proletariat's class struggle to the dictates of one or another bourgeois ruler. Today, the Palestinian Communists, who historically have had a sizable base among the working people of the West Bank, are an integral part of Arafat's PLO, while the Israeli CP (whose membership is overwhelmingly composed of Arabs) is a loyal supporter of the Rabin government.

Largely because of their forced diaspora, the Palestinian working people and intelligentsia are among the most cosmopolitan in the region. It is a crime indeed that they are increasingly being driven into the arms of fundamentalist reactionaries like Hamas who preach religious obscurantism, anti-Jewish racism and enslavement of women. If a section of Palestinian militants can be won to a Trotskyist party on the basis of a Marxist understanding that *all* the bourgeoisies and would-be bourgeois are their enemies, that the working class—be it Arabic, Coptic, Kurdish or Hebrew—is the only agency for social and national liberation, then they can genuinely be the vanguard of the liberation not only of the oppressed Palestinians but of all the toilers of the region.

The only road forward is that of permanent revolution—that in the semi-colonial countries in the imperialist epoch only the proletariat in power can carry through the tasks historically associated with the bourgeois-democratic revolution, assuring national emancipation for all the myriad oppressed minorities throughout the Near East, by ending the exploitation of the working masses and opening the road to socialist development. The key lies in the forging of genuinely Leninist, *internationalist* revolutionary parties. Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 583, 10 September 1993.

# SWP rallies behind racist, union-busting cop thugs

As brutal racist and fascist attacks escalate, the fake left has preached reliance on the racist capitalist state. In response to the murders of Rolan Adams and later Stephen Lawrence, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and its Anti Nazi League (ANL) have circulated petitions "calling for the police to act" against the fascists, while lobbying Bexley Council and the Home Office with futile appeals to ban the BNP. Ditto for Militant, Youth Against Racism in Europe, and Panther; thus, the demonstration they initiated last May in Welling was explicitly organised to "bring pressure to bear on the authorities to close down the headquarters of the British National Party and to curb their activities". In contrast to the reformists, we of the Spartacist League have pointed out that the state is not neutral, and any illusions in it will prove suicidal. As we noted in our leaflet "Not wretched appeals to the capitalist state—For trade union/minority mobilisations to smash the fascists!" (reprinted in *Workers Hammer* no. 136, July/August 1993), "The repressive apparatus of the capitalist state beats and jails militant workers, leftists, minorities and anti-fascists, while protecting the race terrorists."

On the morning of 28 July the cops brutally murdered black Jamaican-born Joy Gardner. This underlined once again—in blood—the political obscenity of appealing to the bloody killer cops to "fight racism". In point of fact, any minority youth could testify to the daily brutality experienced by blacks and Asians at the hands of the thugs in blue. Or how about the case of Blair Peach, anti-fascist militant and SWP supporter, murdered by the cops in Southall in 1979? Or the countless Irish Republicans, minorities or leftists who have been the victims of police frame-ups—the Birmingham Six, Guildford Four, Tottenham Three. And there were plenty of striking coal miners who were on the receiving ends of police batons and worse, such as at Orgreave. We remember those like Davey Jones who were murdered on the picket lines defending their union.

In July some 23,000 cop thugs assembled in Wembley Arena to protest the Sheehy report recommendations on police pay and conditions. The cops were wearing T-shirts emblazoned with the emblem of Polish Solidarność—the counterrevolutionary scab "union" supported by the CIA, the Vatican, Thatcher and fake leftists like the SWP. An initial article in *Socialist Worker* (24 July), referring to the "fall[ing] out" between the government and the cops, asserted "that does not make the police any less the bosses' thugs". However, two weeks later the SWP was running an article hailing cop strikes in 1918-19 and concluding "When coppers strike, they stop behaving like police and rejoin their class".

The Police Federation—one of whose leading spokesmen is Tony Judge, a former GLC Labour councillor under Ken Livingstone—has become a cause célèbre in Labour Party circles. A half-page Police Federation advertisement appears in the latest *New Times*, published by the Democratic Left (ex-CPGB), apparently aimed at the upcoming TUC conference. Similar advertisements are meant to appear in a variety of papers including the Labourite *New Statesman*, *Tribune* and pro-Tory *Spectator*. *New Times* editor Mike Power

revealed that: "Some of us on the left are also changing and becoming more open and pluralistic."

In tune with the Labourite milieu, the SWP has not only been boosting cop unions in their press, but actually seeking to recruit prison guards to their organisation. A letter writer from Blundeston prison bragged that "About a year ago

class as a whole". This he claims was the case in Britain in the period following WWI. In fact, at the high point of proletarian insurgency, at the battle of George Square in "Red Clydeside", cops were employed to viciously attack the workers' rally. Molyneux also claims that in 1974-75 the Portuguese military police, the COPCON, "became one of the driving

"Hence Marxism is in favour of universal conscription for military training.... A soldier or a policeman who is a comrade must work hard, so that when he talks his fellow members will listen and he will get unity to paralyse the whole system."

This apparently has aroused discontent even in Militant's own ranks. In favour of universal conscription into the apartheid army? A policeman of the South African state who is a "comrade"? One who should "work hard"—ie, beat more viciously or shoot straighter? Better conditions and better pay for De Klerk's butchers? There is truly no limit to the opportunism of this tendency!

Militant's sympathy for "workers in uniform" reflects its ingrained Labourite belief that the bourgeois state—whose kernel is the armed forces—need not be smashed but can in fact be taken over holus-bolus by a "Labour government pledged to socialist policies". Militant took this chauvinist line to grotesque lengths. Thus, during the summer of 1981, when Thatcher's cops were rioting in the ghettos, an article appeared in *Militant* (17 July 1981) entitled "Police applaud class appeal", bragging of Militant's warm reception by the racist cops when they said: "Our quarrel is with the Tory government, not you!" The article goes on to note: "We also appealed for trade union rights for the police. When we had finished making our statement—the police applauded!"

It's worth noting that support for the cops is not new for the SWP either: in 1977 in a series of articles they enthused that through joining the TUC and fighting for the right to strike the cops would have their "eyes opened". These social democrats even ran photos of cops beating up demonstrators with the caption: "Call it incitement to disaffection if you like. But we want these people on our side" (see *Workers Vanguard* no 154, 22 April 1977).

What unites the "socialists" of the SWP and Militant is their touching faith in the capitalist state, as reflected in their enthusing over "organising" the cops, as well as their prostration before British imperialism. Thus, the SWP welcomed the Labour government's dispatch of troops to Northern Ireland in 1969, while Militant still can't get it up to demand their immediate withdrawal—and they both supported the running dogs of imperialism like Boris Yeltsin and Solidarność. The police, the prison system and the military are not class-neutral but the armed core of the capitalist state. And as Lenin emphasised, the question of the state is the touchstone which separates genuine Marxists from reformist charlatans. The grotesque spectacle of SWP/Militant licking the cops' boots ought to disabuse anyone genuinely desiring socialism of the notion that these characters have anything to do with revolution. ■

Cops mass at Wembley Arena, London. What do cop thugs and fake left have in common? They all love counter-revolutionary Polish Solidarność.



Police Review

we had a number of prison officers who were in sympathy with our objectives and would read *Socialist Worker*." The writer went on to boast that the SWP had substantial influence among the screws (*Socialist Worker*, 26 June). What's next for the SWP—a recruitment drive among prison guards at H-block? Prison officers, like cops, have no place in the workers movement, and the Prison Officers Association should be expelled from the union movement.

When a reader wrote in to *Socialist Worker* to protest that "police are not workers in uniform", SWP honcho John Molyneux took up the cudgels to defend their pro-cop line. In his misnamed "Teach yourself Marxism" column (*Socialist Worker*, 28 August), Molyneux obscenely concludes that "part of the struggle to smash the state may involve supporting the rebellion of sections of the police against their officers and employers".

Police "militancy" and cop strikes over pay and "conditions" inevitably have a bonapartist thrust, reinforcing the cops in their view that they are a "law unto themselves". Better "working conditions" for cops means fewer restrictions on their ability to brutalise minorities, attack picket lines and carry out provocations against leftists.

Enthusing over the potential for organising cops into unions, Molyneux argues that the police "work for a wage" and that "most ordinary police are drawn from working class backgrounds". The German Social Democrats (SPD) used to make similar arguments, claiming that the Prussian police would prevent Hitler's Nazis from taking power. Leon Trotsky demolished this drivel, pointing out: "The fact that the police was originally recruited in large numbers from among Social Democratic workers is absolutely meaningless.... The worker who becomes a policeman in the service of the capitalist state, is a bourgeois cop, not a worker." (*What Next?*, January 1932).

Idiotically, Molyneux contends that in a period of mass radicalisation, the police "will start to come under political and ideological pressure from the working

forces on the left of the revolution". Oh yeah? In 1974 the elite COPCON strike force headed by the then darling of the SWP, General Carvalho, was used against the TAP airline workers and striking employees of the *Jornal do Comercio* while cracking down on the Maoist MRPP (see *Workers Vanguard* no 77, 19 September 1975).

In *The History of the Russian Revolution*, Trotsky describes the enormous hatred towards the cops in particular that welled up among the proletarian masses in Russia in February 1917: "Toward the police the crowd showed ferocious hatred. They routed the mounted police with whistles, stones and pieces of ice. In a totally different way the workers approached the soldiers.... The police are fierce, implacable, hated and hating foes. To win them over is out of the question."

Nor are the SWP the only "leftists" who enthuse over the thugs in blue. The pathetic CPGB writes: "Police should have the right to organise in trade unions, and the right to strike" (*Weekly Worker*, 24 July). For years, the Militant tendency, notorious for its chauvinist subservience to British imperialism and Labourite philistinism, was the foremost champion of organising these racist strikebreakers—whom Militant labelled "workers in uniform". Militant Labour calls for "democratic" "community control" of the police, preaching illusions that the cops can be neutral. Most grotesquely of all, Peter Taaffe's South African co-thinkers write in *Congress Militant* (April 1993):

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PO Box 2944  
Dublin 1  
01-304230

# State murder . . .

(Continued from page 1)

bour" "chains of light" sponsored by bourgeois and reformist politicians, but in mass, militant anti-racist mobilisations.

Throughout Europe, the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) has intervened with a proletarian perspective into the developing movements of radical anti-racist youth, seeking to bring the big battalions of the industrial proletariat into battle against the forces of anti-immigrant racism. In France, following a call by the CGT trade union federation for a 12 June protest against deportations, our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyste de France (LTF) mass-distributed a leaflet headlined "Down with Mitterrand-Balladur's racist war! No expulsions! Railway workers have the power: Stop the expulsion/deportation trains!"

In January of this year, in the face of threatened Nazi rampages on the 60th anniversary of Hitler's taking power, the Spartakist Workers Party (SpAD) issued an urgent appeal, "Workers, immigrants, anti-fascists: Defend the hostels!", that was endorsed by an array of union organisations, socialist groups and immigrants. On the night of 30 January, the SpAD organised an exemplary united-front action in defence of a large immigrant hostel in Berlin.

## British capitalism's war on workers and minorities

Myrna Simpson, mother of Joy Gardner bitterly noted, "My daughter was treated worse than a beast. Not even animals have that done to them; they have rights. My daughter did not have any rights" (*Independent*, 26 August). Indeed under British capitalism's racist Nationality Act and immigration laws, Joy Gardner and thousands of others like her

are regarded as virtual non-people, prey to a vicious and increasingly repressive state. Myrna Simpson has resided in Britain for over 30 years. But since arriving here in 1987 her daughter was hounded by immigration officials even while she battled to gain an education, studying at London's Guildhall University. *We demand full citizenship rights for all foreign-born workers and their families!*

The murder of Joy Gardner is no isolated case. Only a week before Joy Gardner's murder a black 28-year-old man, John Pellew was crushed to death by a police car on 18 July. His "crime" was that he happened to be riding a motorcycle near the scene of a burglary. Then on 26 July a coroner's report revealed that Omasase Lumumba (the nephew of murdered nationalist leader Patrice Lumumba) had been killed by prison officers in Pentonville Jail. Lumumba had been a political detainee in Zaire, a victim of torture. But when he fled to Britain he was stripped, restrained and killed whilst awaiting deportation.

Recently the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice proposed new legislation to abolish the automatic right of trial by jury and the right to remain silent. Originally set up to investigate the injustices of the Guildford Four and Birmingham Six frame-ups, the Commission's recommendations aim to ensure that, next time, victims of British capitalist legality don't get off. Moreover if you are born of Irish parents, like John Matthews, it doesn't matter if you are innocent of a "terrorist bombing" or not. Under the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act, Matthews was extradited from Britain, the place of his birth, to Belfast *after* being acquitted of all charges in July. Currently the police "anti-terrorist" "ring of steel" security roadblock system around the City of London allows cops to randomly stop and harass motorists.

But in Britain and throughout Western



Joy Gardner, killed by cops in state-orchestrated anti-immigrant campaign.

Europe foreign-born workers and immigrant communities occupy positions in key and strategically powerful industries — Kurds and Turks in the strategic heavy industry of the Ruhr basin, Maghreb and black African workers in France, Asians and West Indian blacks in car factories and transport services in Britain. The struggle against anti-immigrant racism is therefore intertwined with the mobilisation of the working class against the decaying capitalist system. Above all it requires a revolutionary leadership to lead the working class in struggle for power.

## Fake-left reformists preach reliance on the state

Immediately news of Joy Gardner's death became known, anger amongst blacks and Asians in London reached boiling point. For days the cops had cynically tried to cover up the fact that Joy Gardner had died at home long before she arrived in hospital. Scotland Yard feared a repeat of the explosive community anger in 1985 over the death of Cynthia Jarrett during a cop invasion of her home. When the cops invaded a housing estate in Tottenham they got more than they bargained for — and came up one short. To this day Tottenham Three frame-up victim Winston Silcott languishes behind bars. *We say: Freedom for Winston Silcott!*

The government's "crisis management" operation was put under the supervision of chief cop Paul Condon, lauded for his "adroitness". Condon is notorious for his role in supervising the crackdown on black youth in Notting Hill in 1984 and administering the vicious "Operation Trident" that singled out Frank Crichlow, owner of the popular Mangrove restaurant. This time around, Condon's "deftness" involved soliciting the assistance of black "left" Labour MP Bernie Grant, whose role was to maintain the "peace" by channelling justified anger into pleas for a "public inquiry". The press now tout Grant as "The man the Met can do business with" (*Independent on Sunday*, 15 August). And as for the reformist SWP, who dutifully built their "protest" meetings featuring Grant whilst not uttering a word of criticism of the treacherous Labourites, Grant explained that the SWP needed to be brought in in order to "envelop and control them as part of the campaign" (*Sunday Times*, 15 August).

The current government-fuelled anti-immigrant frenzy starkly reveals the bankruptcy of all reformist "strategies" aimed at pressuring the state to "fight racism" or "ban fascists". While sometimes at odds with each other, what unites the

various campaigns mounted by organisations like the SWP's Anti Nazi League (ANL) and the Militant group's Youth Against Racism in Europe (YRE) is their craven capitulation to the bourgeois state. While claiming to want to "close down the BNP", their 16 October "unity" march — similar to the ones held last May — is intended as a tactic to pressure the state to ban the fascists. The state is not neutral, and any illusions in it will prove suicidal. (See "SWP rallies behind racist, union-busting cop thugs", this issue.)

But then the SWP and Militant's reformist pandering to the racist capitalist state goes hand in hand with their perpetual calls for voting in a Labour government. And in contrast to the Trotskyist programme of unconditional defence of the Soviet Union against imperialism and internal counterrevolution, both the SWP and Militant supported every counterrevolutionary movement in the degenerated and deformed workers states — from Solidarność in Poland in 1981 to Boris Yeltsin in August 1991. The destruction of the former Soviet bloc has given a major impetus to the sprouting of fascist gangs, from Pamyat in Russia to Nazi-infested nationalists in the Baltics, as well as their West European counterparts. Yesterday's running dogs for imperialism's drive to restore capitalism in the USSR, the SWP and Militant today are just as much in the grip of their own bourgeoisie, preaching reliance on the state to clean up the fascist filth.

## Revolutionary leadership is key!

The 1984-85 miners strike graphically demonstrated the key link between anti-Sovietism and the war on the unions at home. Aided and abetted by Gerry Healy's WRP, the capitalist press, as well as the Labour Party and TUC tops, viciously red-baited Arthur Scargill on the eve of the miners strike for his correct statement that Solidarność was "anti-socialist". Throughout the strike and afterwards, the bosses continued their vendetta against Scargill. Bogus charges made by Roger Windsor, once an employee of the NUM, were aired by the Cook Report and Robert Maxwell, claiming that Scargill had pocketed funds sent in solidarity to the striking miners by Soviet trade unions. In October 1990 supporters of our International Communist League (ICL) intervened in a miners' conference in the Ukraine against a similar slander campaign against Scargill. Western intelligence agencies fully participated in the anti-Scargill vendetta (see "CIA/GCHQ dirty tricks targeted NUM", *WH* no 124, July/August 1991). More recently, Roger Windsor was named in a Commons motion submitted by Labour MPs as an *agent provocateur* employed by MI5 head Stella Rimington (*Independent*, 23 July).

During the miners strike all sections of the oppressed — blacks, Asians, lesbian and gay groups — understood that the victory of the miners strike would be their victory, and its defeat would be their defeat. Black and Asian communities were amongst the most steadfast supporters of the strikers, which had a real impact on the consciousness of the miners themselves. Notwithstanding the fact that Scargill retains his loyalty to the Labour Party, it was the Labourite bureaucracy which betrayed the miners strike.

What is desperately needed today is a communist leadership forged through breaking the working class from the treacherous Labourite misleaders. Such a party will be a champion of all the oppressed. It is only through socialist revolution that the working people of Britain and the whole of Europe can avenge the deaths of Joy Gardner and countless other victims of this vicious capitalist system. ■

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## Fianna Fail/Labour government targets workers, women, Republicans!

DUBLIN—Against a background of heightening social instability, massive job cuts and the drying up of Deutschmark subsidies, the Irish ruling class, with their Labour Party lackeys in tow, are pushing new austerity down the throats of workers and women in this country. Encouraged by the triumph of capitalist counterrevolution in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the European ruling classes are seeking improved ways of exploiting their own working classes, and no longer feel the same pressure to maintain social welfare provisions. With the collapse of the EMS, the “European Community” doesn’t look so stable any more, least of all the fabled £8 billion D-Mark assistance to Ireland. German imperialism is more interested in ploughing what little surplus capital it has left after reunification into Poland, Hungary and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. The Irish ruling class know that their already vulnerable economy is up against it.

It was under these conditions that the bourgeoisie wanted the Labour Party in a coalition government, in the hope that these class traitors could keep a lid on working-class anger whilst new austerity was doled out. As well the question of women’s rights and abortion are the focus of deep popular anger, while the murderous activities of Loyalist paramilitary gangs against the oppressed Catholic population in Northern Ireland reverberates in the South. Knowing that their glib bombast about a new era in Irish politics heralded by the election of Mary Robinson is increasingly exposed as a fraud and that workers, women, Republicans and their other intended victims are not ready to go as lambs to the slaughter, the coalition government is preparing new legislation, the draconian Public Order Bill, to reinforce the repressive powers of the capitalist state.

Unlike the fake lefts of the Socialist Workers Movement (SWM), Militant and the Irish Workers Group, we opposed any electoral support to Spring’s Labour Party, De Rossa’s Democratic Left or the Workers Party. We told the truth that both the Labour Party and the Democratic Left were intent on entering a coalition government with openly capitalist parties, had supported and brokered the PESP (Programme for Economic and Social Progress), were clearly resolute in their desire to sell out the oppressed Catholic minority in the North and offered more of the same capitalist austerity to workers and women in the South. We warned that “the coming general election offers nothing to the working class, women or youth! No vote to the Labour Party, Workers Party or Democratic Left!” (*Workers Hammer*, no 132, November/December 1992). Now ten months in office and the Labour Party hasn’t stopped for a moment in its devotion to administering capitalist austerity and to clerical reaction.

This summer the Labour/Fianna Fail coalition got a taste of the growing anger among working people when the government announced its support to the infamous Cahill Plan to axe 1500 jobs at national airline Aer Lingus, provoking huge job losses in the region around

Shannon airport with the shutdown of the hitherto obligatory but now anachronistic stop-over there, and force the remaining workers to accept a ten per cent wage cut. On one demonstration outside the Dail on 7 July, 400 workers, held behind a double police cordon, jeered Labour TDs as they went in to vote in favour of job cuts. Rauri Quinn, Minister for [Un]employment and Enterprise was greeted with calls of “Rauri, you’re a shit”, whilst Dick Spring sneaked in through a back entrance.

Since then, the SIPTU bureaucrats have worked overtime to avoid a strike of Aer Lingus workers, who voted overwhelmingly for strike action at the airports. Similarly the ICTU tops knifed the six-week strike by Dublin Bus craftworkers in July, forcing them to accept heavy redundancies. During the six-month-long strikes by workers at Pat the Baker in Dublin and Nolan Transport in New Ross, workers have been attacked by scabs, hounded by management, and left hanging by the trade union tops.

**Fianna Fail’s Albert Reynolds (right) confers with coalition partner, Labour’s Dick Spring (left). Labour polices the working class and doles out austerity measures on behalf of the ruling class.**



The Labour Party has historically been a party of class-collaborationist coalitions. When they were last in office in 1982-86, in a popular front with Fine Gael, they presided over the mammoth health cuts. Such popular fronts, the alliance of reformist workers parties with bourgeois formations, serve to prevent the independent mobilisation of the working class against its class enemy. Even when they were beaten in the following two elections they were able to make a coalition by the back door, through brokering successive wage restraint deals. The first was in 1987, the PNR (Programme for National Recovery), which essentially forced workers to accept a no-strike deal in return for minimal pay increases. The bosses did so well out of it, they went for another in 1990, the PESP. The wretched deal is up for renegotiation in October, with the ruling class baying for more sacrifices and the Labour ministers and their trade union cronies willing to oblige.

What is needed is real strike action to shut down all air traffic in this country, and to link up with workers from An Post, Bus Eireann and Waterford Crystal who also face the axe. The strikers from Pat the Baker and Nolans need to be supported by militant secondary picketing across the country, not limp consumer boycotts as put forward by the fake lefts of the SWM and Militant. For picket

lines that mean don’t cross! For class struggle to smash the PESP and any new sell-out deals!

The ruling class wants greater police powers to prevent strikes and demonstrations, break up political meetings, and anything else they deem a danger to their social order. Ever willing to oblige, the Labour Party will try to ram the new Criminal Justice (Public Order) Bill down the throats of Irish working people this October.

The Public Order Bill, apart from generally increasing the penalties for a whole range of “crimes”, creates an array of new offences. Gone is the right to trial by jury if you are accused of “assaulting” a cop. In future any assembly of more than twelve people in a public or private place, where a cop or anyone else deems that they plan to use violent behaviour, or such “common purpose may be inferred from conduct”, shall be deemed a riot, and anyone involved will face ten years inside and an unlimited fine. The same legislation applies to groups of more than

access to such information. Furthermore the courts are sustaining SPUC’s (Society for the Protection of Unborn Children) efforts to sequester from the Irish Student Union its legal fees for their 1988 action to stop students from distributing details about abortion clinics in England. In spite of all the referendums, the election of so-called “seculariser” Mary Robinson as president in 1990, and the Labour Party in government, the fact remains that you still cannot get an abortion in Ireland, or a divorce or adequate availability of contraception. The old maxim of the bishop saying “jump” remains, even if the government may quibble more today about “how high”. Youth Defence, activated against abortion rights and generating a fascist core of stormtroopers for social reaction, continue their war against women.

When reactionary bigots staged a provocation at Dublin’s May Day rally, the Dublin Spartacist Group initiated the action to drive these scum from the workers demonstration. Only the mobilisation of the working class and the fight for socialist revolution will garner real gains for women in this country. Such a fight would link up with women in the North, where they too are effectively banned from any abortion services and now face the destruction of their health services. For free, quality health care for all! For free abortion on demand! For the separation of church and state! For women’s liberation through socialist revolution!

Dick Spring hopes to earn a few brownie points with the American and British imperialists by sending Irish troops to Somalia to support the US-led colonial invasion force. And he is busy discussing with Mayhew, the British Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how to broker a pro-imperialist deal in the North. Mary Robinson sips tea with Queen Elizabeth, while Loyalist death squads expand their deadly activities against Catholics. The attempt to find capitalist “peace” in Northern Ireland is not only at the expense of the Catholics in the North but means greater state repression directed at Republicans in the South. The Loyalist death squads, aided and abetted by the RUC and the British Army, are responsible for most of the killings in Northern Ireland today, but the petty-bourgeois nationalists of the IRA also carry out indefensible sectarian killings and bombings against Protestants and non-military/state targets.

What is needed are programmatically based anti-sectarian workers militias to combat Orange and Green indiscriminate terror and imperialist rampage. Against those nationalists who think that the decrepit southern economy and gutted northern industry can together provide anything resembling a decent standard of living for the peoples of this island, we say workers must rule. As revolutionary Marxists we demand the immediate unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland! Not Orange against Green, but class against class! No to forcible reunification! For an Irish workers republic as part of a socialist federation in the British Isles! For the Socialist United States of Europe! ■

three (“violent disorder”), or two individuals (“affray”). Section 8 of the bill creates the offence of disorderly conduct at a public meeting, with penalties of up to three months in prison and/or a fine of £500. As one solicitor wrote in the *Irish Times* (23 August):

“This section will make it unlawful to make any demonstration or protest which is not of the silent variety, or which does not end rapidly. For example, if the far-right French leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen, were to address a meeting in Ireland and Irish students decided to have a sit-in or argue and shout with him, they would clearly commit the offence.”

Also to become an offence is the use of “insulting words” in public, or carrying signs, posters or placards which the cops consider “threatening, abusive, insulting or obscene”. Along with a plethora of already existing laws, this bill will give the Irish police force more powers than virtually any other force in Europe. We say: No to the Public Order Bill! Smash the Emergency Powers Act!

The fight for women’s rights and over abortion strikes at the heart of the clericalist nature of the Irish state. The Supreme Court had announced its decision to maintain the injunction stopping the Well Woman and Open Lines centres from distributing information about abortion services in Britain, even after last November’s referendum in favour of free