



“Law and order” Blair hand in hand with Tories

Criminal Justice Bill: assault on workers, minorities, youth

Over 50,000 demonstrators, the overwhelming majority of them young, marched through London streets on 27 July in protest at the government's draconian Criminal Justice Bill (CJB). When a section of the march staged an impromptu protest at the Downing Street gates they were viciously set upon by riot police armed with batons and shields. Eleven demonstrators were arrested. A press report the next day revealed that the cops were on the verge of firing lethal plastic bullets into the crowd. *All the charges against the anti-CJB protesters must be*

dropped immediately!

The 27 July demonstration highlighted the widespread opposition to the bill. Protests have occurred in major towns and cities across Britain, attracting a spectrum of groups united in opposition to the bill. Young people, predominant in the demonstrations, are fighting to defend their right to enjoy themselves when and where they want. Minority communities — blacks, Asians, Travellers and Gypsies (Roma) — are particular targets of the CJB's strengthening of police powers and the intended abolition of the right to

silence. The CJB needs to be spiked! But to achieve this means bringing the social power of the organised working class to bear through strike action and mass mobilisations. So far this has been the missing crucial ingredient in the anti-CJB protests.

The CJB is widely described as the most repressive British legislation in memory. Recession-ridden British capitalism offers sweet nothing to the exploited and oppressed of this society. Instead it doles out increasing misery and repression designed to regiment the population

and enforce capitalist rule. More particularly the CJB is designed as a piece of anti-working-class legislation to curb and if need be smash working-class resistance. It intends to illegalise such actions as flying pickets, used during the miners strike of 1984-85, by giving the cops the power to stop individuals from proceeding to any assembly on any property without the owner's prior permission. The heroic miners' battle directly challenged the government and showed the enormous potential of hard-fought working-class resistance.

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For the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of British troops!

IRA/Sinn Féin opt for imperialist “peace” fraud

Not Orange against Green but class against class!

On 31 August the IRA dramatically announced a “complete cessation of military operations”, without conditions, declaring: “We believe that an opportunity to secure a just and lasting settlement has been created.” The declaration marks the latest stage in the quest by the IRA and its political wing, Sinn Féin, for a “negotiated settlement” with British imperialism, pursued through the “good offices” of the southern Irish clericalist state and underwritten by US imperialist chief Bill Clinton.

Hoping to secure a place in the “New World Order” ordained by Washington following the destruction of the Soviet Union, the IRA/Sinn Féin are predictably claiming a victory. Yet the oppressed Catholic minority in Northern Ireland have been offered *nothing* in exchange for the cease-fire. Sinn Féin does not even demand the withdrawal of British troops from the North, but appeals only for soldiers to be confined to barracks and the situation “demilitarised” by removing the notoriously Protestant-dominated Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) from Catholic areas.

The recent move was foreshadowed by the Downing Street declaration between London and Dublin last December. As



Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams (left), Irish Taoiseach Albert Reynolds and SDLP leader John Hume, shake hands over IRA's unconditional cease-fire.

we warned then: “Any imperialist ‘deal’ will be bloody and brutal and will necessarily be at the expense of the oppressed Catholic minority. And it would not do any good for working-class Protestants either” (*Workers Hammer* no 138, November/December 1993).

The IRA declaration has provoked speculation on all sides that Britain might eventually withdraw from Northern Ireland entirely. The Irish nationalists look forward to this, while Protestant Loyalists are screaming about “sell-out” and secret deals. While lifting the broadcast ban on Sinn Féin, Major has promised a referen-

dum in the North on the outcome of negotiations. It is true that Britain has long been looking for a way to gracefully disencumber itself of the Northern Ireland albatross, whose cost to the British exchequer runs to some £4.5 billion a year, enabling Northern Ireland to have a higher disposable income per capita than Britain. But Britain is not about to put an end to Protestant supremacy, nor is withdrawal of the British Army—which continues to ride roughshod through the Catholic ghettos—an imminent possibility.

Meanwhile, the viciously sectarian RUC and Royal Irish Regiment (RIR)

are still in place, and the heavily armed fascistic Protestant Loyalist/Unionist paramilitaries, who have killed far more people than the IRA this year—mostly in random, indiscriminate attacks on the Catholic population—have refused thus far to reciprocate the IRA's cease-fire. And there will be no alleviation of the grinding poverty that afflicts working people—Catholic and Protestant—in Northern Ireland, where unemployment is substantially higher than even in Britain.

As Sinn Féin organised cease-fire celebrations in Catholic areas, crowds waved the Irish tricolour, shouting “time to go” at the troops and painting the word “Garda” (southern Ireland's police force) on RUC stations. But up to one-third of the membership of the IRA reportedly opposed the cease-fire, and among much of the Catholic population there was scepticism and anxiety. As a woman from Ardoyne—a Catholic area of north Belfast where unemployment is 47 per cent—put it: “I want peace but nothing has changed around here. The Brits and the peelers [cops] are still on the streets, young lads are still being harassed. We're terrified of a loyalist attack” (*Irish Times*, 8 September).

Only hours before the cease-fire went into effect, a Loyalist gang dragged Belfast Catholic Sean McDermott from his bed and executed him. Shortly after the IRA declaration, John O'Hanlon was shot in cold blood outside a friend's house in

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Islamic fundamentalists vow to kill her

Defend Bangladesh writer Taslima Nasrin!

The following is based on a statement prepared by Women and Revolution, an international communist journal of women's liberation. Since its publication on 1 August, Taslima Nasrin managed to escape Bangladesh for Sweden on 11 August. Remaining unrepentant, Taslima Nasrin pledged to continue her defiance of "fundamentalist insanity" (Guardian, 19 August).

The courageous Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasrin is in hiding in fear for her life. She is the target of a religious *fatwa* by Islamic clerics, and at their instigation the government of prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia has launched a police hunt threatening imprisonment and hard labour on charges of "deliberately and maliciously outraging the religious feelings of Muslims". But Taslima Nasrin's "crime" is to speak out against anti-woman bigotry and to denounce the bloody communalism of both Muslim and Hindu chauvinists in Bangladesh and India. For this, according to the clerics, she must be hanged.

On 30 June the fundamentalists raged through Dhaka, chanting "death to Taslima Nasrin", as they tried to enforce a one-day shutdown of the city in what they claimed would be a month-long campaign for Nasrin's death. In spite of this crusade and the mobilisation of some 8000 police and paramilitary troops, secular students, cultural organisations and artists carried out their own demonstration in defence of Nasrin.

The murderous witch hunt has been whipped up by clerics who formed a "Taslima Nasrin Peshan Committee" ("Committee to grind down Taslima Nasrin"). "She is worse than a prostitute", fulminated Maulana Azizul Haque, the mullah who has called for her execution. "She demands 'freedom of the vagina'.... This is against the Koran and Allah, it's blasphemy" (Guardian, 10 December 1993). These are the same forces that viciously repudiated and cast out the thousands of their own womenfolk raped by the Pakistani army during the 1971 war for independence.

Nasrin remains defiant. Before going

into hiding she told the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, "I am never going to stop writing and I am determined not to compromise with fundamentalists or a government which tolerates Islam as a state religion. I fight with a pen, yet they

communist ends. Their only concern is to stoke the fires of anti-Muslim pogroms, in particular against Muslim Bangladeshi immigrant "infiltrators" who have fled from the horrendous poverty of Bangladesh to the slums of West Bengal



Rafiqur Rahman

Dhaka: Islamic fundamentalists march in Bangladeshi capital, earlier this year, demanding that Taslima Nasrin be hanged.



TROTSKY

Trotsky on the British Labour Party

Leon Trotsky's 1925 pamphlet, *Where is Britain Going?* denounced the cringing and subservient British Labour Party leadership of Ramsay MacDonald. Trotsky's words resonate today as new Labour leader Tony Blair bids to run British capitalism on his latter-day version of racist anti-working-class austerity. Blair's "suitability" to his capitalist masters is underpinned by his commitment to law and order and reactionary Christian "family values". As Trotsky emphasised there is a crucial need to mercilessly expose these "liveried footmen of the bourgeoisie".

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LENIN

In a country where the overwhelming majority of the population consists of proletarians the governing Conservative-Liberal imperialist clique would not be able to last a single day if it were not for the fact that the means of violence in its hands are reinforced, supplemented and disguised by pseudo-socialist ideas that ensnare and break up the proletariat.

The French "enlighteners" of the 18th century saw their main enemy as Catholicism, clericalism and the priesthood, and considered that they had to strangle this reptile before they could move forward. They were right in the sense that it was this very priesthood, an organized regime of superstition, the Catholic spiritual police apparatus, that stood in the way of bourgeois society, retarding the development of science, art, political ideas and economics. Fabianism, MacDonaldism and pacifism today play the same role in relation to the historical movement of the proletariat. They are the main prop of British imperialism and of the European, if not the world bourgeoisie. Workers must at all cost be shown these self-satisfied pedants, drivelling eclectics, sentimental careerists and liveried footmen of the bourgeoisie in their true colours. To show them up for what they are means to discredit them beyond repair. To discredit them means rendering a supreme service to historical progress. The day that the British proletariat cleanses itself of the spiritual abomination of Fabianism, mankind, especially in Europe, will increase its stature by a head.

—L. Trotsky, *Where is Britain Going?*

are trying to hit me with a sword. I am expressing my thoughts and they want to kill me" (quoted in the *Vancouver Sun* [Canada], 9 July).

Noted writers such as Allen Ginsburg, Günter Grass, John Irving, Norman Mailer and Amy Tan have come out in support of Nasrin. So too has noted Bombay-born writer Salman Rushdie who is himself targeted for death since 1988 under a *fatwa* issued by the fundamentalist regime in Iran. Indian women's organisations and cultural figures have protested the government's attacks on Nasrin. Some 27 Indian writers condemned the warrant of arrest, saying "her only crime is to have spoken out boldly against religious bigotry, obscurantism and oppression as a liberated modern citizen and an emancipated woman" (*The Link* [Vancouver], 9 July). It is the duty of the international working class to rally to Nasrin's defence. The Partisan Defence Committee has registered a protest with the Bangladesh High Commission in London, demanding: Drop all the charges against Taslima Nasrin! For safe passage to the country of her choice!

Taslima Nasrin first attracted the hatred of the fundamentalists in 1991 with her essay anthology, *Selected Columns*. In it she criticises the Koran, quoting from it to prove that religion "discriminates against women and treats them like sexual commodities". The immediate focus of the mullahs' vituperative wrath is her recent novel *Lajja* (*Shame*). *Lajja* depicts a Hindu family attacked by Muslim communalists in Bangladesh, following the razing of the mosque by Hindu fascists at Ayodhya in India. By the time the Bangladeshi government banned it last July, 60,000 copies had been sold.

In India the Hindu communalists and fascists of the Bharatiya Janata Party/Vishwa Hindu Parishad (BJP/VHP) have attempted to utilise *Lajja* for their vile

and cities like Delhi. Nasrin herself says, "I am very pained at what is happening with my book in India. I condemn the politics of the BJP and the Jamaat-e-Islami equally" (*India Today*, 31 October 1993).

It takes more than just obvious, elementary decency for any individual to take a stand like Nasrin has done in situations like Bangladesh today: it takes courage, especially if you are a woman, expected—in Nasrin's words—to remain "veiled, illiterate and in the kitchen". The attacks on Nasrin are the focal point of a generalised assault on women's rights throughout Bangladesh. Since the reactionary Islamic clergy pronounced her death sentence, *fatwabazi* (issuing of *fatwas*) has spread through rural Bangladesh as women are buried, stoned, caned, set ablaze for running afoul of the local mullahs. Between January and March, 110 schools where girls are taught were burned down in a campaign orchestrated by mullahs.

The deadly campaign directed at Taslima Nasrin highlights the fact that the struggle for women's liberation on the subcontinent is inseparably tied to the fight against religious obscurantism, caste-based bigotry and bloody communalism which could plunge the masses into horrors surpassing those of the 1947-49 Partition, which was a direct product of British imperialism's divide-and-rule policies. The emancipation of women will only succeed through a struggle for permanent revolution—the revolutionary seizure of power and overthrow of capitalism by the working class, at the head of the peasantry, the masses of down-trodden women and all the oppressed, and led by a genuinely communist (Leninist-Trotskyist) party. Defend Taslima Nasrin! For women's liberation through socialist revolution! For a socialist federation of South Asia! ■

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).

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Ireland:

Fianna Fáil/Labour coalition assault on the unions

DUBLIN—For the past two months, workers at TEAM Aer Lingus, the maintenance subsidiary of the Irish state-owned airline, have been subjected to an escalating series of layoffs as management seeks to impose wage cuts, job losses and a draconian rollback in working conditions. Today less than a third of the 1900 workers remain in work. This assault on a stronghold of trade unionism has been carried out by the coalition government of Fianna Fáil (the main bourgeois party in the Republic of Ireland) and the Labour Party, led by deputy prime minister (Tánaiste) Dick Spring.

The TEAM dispute has dominated the front pages of the Irish press for weeks. The assault on TEAM workers is a crucial showdown between the bourgeoisie and the whole of the labour movement. Along with the Labour-backed Programme for Competitiveness and Work (PCW) austerity pact, it is a step in preparing other publicly owned industries like the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) and CIE (bus and rail transport) for privatisation through the imposition of thousands of redundancies.

Yet from the outset, the trade union leaders at TEAM have preached reliance on so-called “neutral” arbitrators like the government’s Labour Relations Commission (LRC) and the Labour Courts, while the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) works overtime to “mediate” the dispute. Meanwhile, the workers’ anger is channeled into ineffective marches around the airport access roads, occasionally augmented by worktime union meetings which have led to delays in flights. TEAM workers’ anger boiled over early on in the dispute when they surrounded Labour traitor Spring’s car and gave it a working over as he drove away from a workers’ protest.

We demand that Labour get out of the coalition government! Obscenely, Dick Spring now moots a break with Fianna Fáil prime minister Albert Reynolds *from the right*, over the question of holding talks with the Sinn Féin/IRA Republicans, a demonstration of Labour’s craven fealty to British imperialism. The union bureaucrats refuse to even countenance class struggle, fearful of disrupting the Labour Party’s coalition with the bourgeoisie. We reprint below the 10 July Dublin Spartacist Group leaflet, over 4000 copies of which have been distributed to air transport and other semi-state industry workers. It emphasises that what is needed is effective strike action to *shut down the airports*.

* * * * *



Informations Ouvrières

Combative Air France strikers beat back Balladur government’s cutback/privatisation plans by occupying the runways, October 1993.



Alan Betson

**TEAM Aer Lingus: An attack on the whole labour movement
Shut down the airports! All-out strike by air transport unions!
Build mass picket lines: Nobody and nothing should pass!**

The gloves are off on the government side. In the wake of the sell-out Cahill deal [an earlier “rationalisation” scheme proposed by Aer Lingus’ chief manager], the ruling class is back for more. The outrageous demands made on TEAM Aer Lingus workers—hundreds of redundancies, 48-hour working week in the winters, ripping up hard-won union conditions—are an attack on the whole union movement.

Everyone knows that the rest of the semi-state companies are threatened, like a line of dominoes: Telecom Eireann, ESB, CIE and B&I. The threatened closure of Irish Steel makes it perfectly clear. This is class war! And so far it’s all happening from one side—the bosses and their Labour Party friends in the Dáil are on the offensive.

But the union leadership is stalling and talking, drawing up phoney “alternative strategies” for TEAM management, and trying to put a word in the ear of the LRC and the Labour Party ministers in the coalition. Militant Labour sums up this whole losing perspective when it calls for exerting “maximum pressure” on the government. This is a recipe for defeat. The government is out to cripple the unions throughout the semi-state sector, it will have to be *beaten* by real trade union action. The government figures it can shut down Irish Steel—but it can’t run this country without air transport. The fight back has to start at the airports. The only way to save the jobs and

conditions, and defend union organisation is to strike now, and strike hard! Aer Lingus and Servisair workers are already in dispute: all the air transport unions should be out, with the shop stewards reporting to regular joint mass meetings. Shut down the airports! Put up mass picket lines that nobody and nothing will pass! Other sections of the workers will then be able to act in solidarity by joining the pickets. An airport strike would open the way for solidarity strikes by ESB and other workers.

There is talk now from the trade union councils in Dublin and elsewhere of a national half-day stoppage in support of TEAM. All well and good—but a one-off protest action is not enough. (And if we wait for the ICTU to organise a stoppage as the Socialist Workers Movement recommends, we’ll be waiting till Christmas!) The heart of this fight must be strike action and picketing to shut down the airports. The Irish Workers Group calls for occupying the TEAM workshops, but that would leave the airport itself open and the other airport workers on the sidelines. Shut down the airports, full stop!

Stop the government-employer offensive in its tracks! Follow the lead of the militant Air France workers last October: they reminded Europe what class struggle looks like, and showed that *class struggle is the only way to win!*

**Smash the PCW! No to privatisation!
For a shorter working week, with no loss of pay!**

This is a political dispute from the beginning. The Maastricht Treaty “convergence targets” mean vicious austerity for workers in every member country: fewer services, fewer jobs, higher taxes, lower wages.

With the victory of capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet bloc, the idea of the “welfare state” is being thrown out the window, and the European governments are gearing up for trade war with the US and Japan (when they’re not falling out among themselves). Dog-eat-dog competition threatens to take the world into a third inter-imperialist war. Protectionist poison like [general workers union] SIPTU’s campaign to “save Irish jobs” doesn’t save a single job. Instead it fuels racism and anti-immigrant hatred and helps the capitalist rulers to spread national chauvinism which only serves to split the working class.

That is why it is vital to fight against the position in a TEAM union leaflet against so-called “Eastern European/Third World cheap labour”. This sounds

Dublin airport, 20 August: TEAM Aer Lingus workers and their families protest cutbacks.

like some right-wing British union leader sounding off about “cheap Irish labour” in the building trades, as a job-trusting excuse for failing to unionise and fight for the interests of *all workers*. We are for *organising the unorganised*, whatever country they come from or work in, on the basis of international workers’ solidarity and common struggle. The capitalist class wants the workers to pay for bigger profits: that means breaking the unions, and there is no better weapon for splitting and weakening the working class than racism.

The Reynolds/Spring capitalist government want to get the kind of victory that Margaret Thatcher won over the British miners ten years ago. Since then the British unions have been badly weakened, losing hundreds of thousands of members. The bosses have got away with murder in every department: slashing jobs, imposing draconian anti-strike laws, derecognising unions, freezing public-sector pay. The British miners lost because their strike was attacked by the TUC/Labour right wing, and the so-called “left” leaders were content to leave the miners to fight alone, despite their verbal “support”. These weak-kneed reformists were terrified of a general strike, which would have posed the question, “who rules: the capitalists or the working class?” Instead they advised the workers to put their faith in a future Labour government.

The official leadership tied the British miners’ hands behind their backs. Don’t let Labour and ICTU do this to the TEAM workers. Now is the time to *put an end to class collaboration!* There is nothing “neutral” about the Labour Relations Commission’s “arbitration”, or the bosses’ courts or the entire capitalist state for that matter. They are there to ensure the domination of the bosses. The only language the ruling class will understand is *class struggle!* Smash the PCW austerity pact: the government and the employers aren’t “social partners”—they’re social vultures. They cream off a fat living, while the unemployed see their lives wasted year by year, and workers and their families face a future ruined by sackings, speed up and grinding wage control. No to union-busting privatisations! Fight for jobs for all: for a sliding scale of hours to divide the available work among workers (including the unemployed) at full union rates.

Labour Party: Which side are you on? Get out of the coalition! Down with Labour Party class collaboration!

TEAM workers and their supporters

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Ireland:

Youth Defence Blueshirt mob attack abortion rights demonstrators

Reprinted below is a 7 July Dublin Spartacist Group (DSG) leaflet. The 9 July demonstration referred to in the leaflet attracted over 100 people including a disciplined DSG contingent. The Youth Defence anti-woman bigots did not show.

Youth Defence [YD], an organisation of extreme anti-abortion bigots, harbours a violent, clerical-fascist core. Forty of these latter-day Blueshirts launched an organised attack, ready-equipped with hurley sticks, on abortion rights protesters outside the Dáil on Wednesday this week (6 July). The police did what you'd expect — they arrested a socialist protester, and let Youth Defence keep their weapons and go free. This bloody assault shows that the Youth Defence thugs are a permanent threat to women, the left and the labour movement. They must be stopped!

The fascist core of Youth Defence are out for blood. After trying to drown out the speeches at the Dublin Abortion Information Campaign [DAIC] picket they launched their attack. Inside Buswell's hotel a ranting raving "Pro-life" woman smashed crockery off the walls, screaming "British bastards" at any campaigner for abortion rights she could see. One YD thug came off a bit the worse for wear as a result of these provocations. Meanwhile out in the street the fascists were marauding with hurleys. Truncheon-wielding cops arrested a Socialist Workers Movement [SWM] supporter as he was being pummeled to the ground by fascists. The scene was reminiscent of the violent attack in October 1992, when YD laid into Democratic Left supporters with snooker cues outside the Pipers Inn in Dublin. Make no mistake, these scum mean business: it is vitally important that this Saturday's demonstration should stop



Dublin Spartacist Group photo

Dublin, 9 July: Dublin Spartacist Group contingent at DAIC demonstration.

Youth Defence on the streets.

We in the DSG have insisted for some time now that YD harbours a fascist core that hark back to the Blueshirts, idolise Franco and they must be stopped in their tracks now when they are small. The rest of the left, especially the SWM, Militant and Democratic Left went out of their way to pretend this wasn't the case. Last March, while YD were demonstrating outside the Four Courts, the SWM decided to leaflet (!) against YD a mile away in Great Earl St. instead of mobilising to stop them. Who can deny that there is a fascist core now? Enough is enough. Turning a blind eye and hoping the fascists will go away is a dangerous

game, it only emboldens them. The right to abortion is an explosive question in Irish society; it's no accident that clerical reactionary outfits like SPUC provide a fertile culture medium for Irish fascism.

The latter-day Blueshirts have other targets in their sights too—they are a threat to gays, Travellers and the organised working class. Last year, they tried to stage a provocation at the May Day workers demo but supporters of the Dublin Spartacist Group, Workers Solidarity Movement, Red Action and Class War spiked their efforts. "Pro-lifers" want to drive women out of the workforce and they smell a real opportunity with the FF [Fianna Fáil]/Labour govern-

ment's attacks on workers. TEAM and Irish Steel are the test cases in this union-bashing drive by the government and the bosses. The air transport unions should strike and shut down the airports, with mass pickets nobody will pass! We have always said that the FF/Labour coalition is anti-abortion, anti-working class and pro-imperialist. But the sentiment to change this rotten society, to establish the right to abortion and to defeat the attacks on the workers is palpable. Dick Spring got a well-deserved taste of workers' anger at Bonnybrook Centre in Coolock last week when TEAM workers surrounded his car and rearranged its design. Trade unionists from all the airport unions, ESB, An Post, Telecom should join the demonstration on Saturday.

The cops showed again on Wednesday that they are far from "neutral", neither are they "workers in uniform" as Militant and the SWM would have it. The capitalist state, its cops and courts know which side they're on when it comes to workers and women. The draconian Public Order Act was brought in mainly in response to demonstrations around the first X case; it will be used against striking workers, leftists, Republicans. The clericalist state cannot be pressurised into acting progressively; the decisive battles for even the most elementary rights for women will not be won in the courts or the polling booths. What is needed is the mobilisation of the social power of the working class to struggle for *free abortion on demand* as part of a revolutionary programme to smash the whole rotting system of capitalist rule.

This Saturday's demo, initiated by DAIC, has become more than an important protest against the new X case outrage. Now is the time to put an end to Youth Defence's provocations and attacks. Now is the time for trade unionists, socialists and women's groups to mobilise. Get out on Saturday and stop the Youth Defence Blueshirts in their tracks!

Trade unionists, socialists, women:
All out to stop Youth Defence thugs: Join the Dublin Abortion Information Campaign demo at 2pm on Saturday 9 July at the GPO.

No more X cases: For free abortion on demand!

Stop the Youth Defence Blueshirts!
All out on Saturday! ■

Lithuania, Bosnia ...

Rwanda: "Workers Power, I presume"

The years of supporting imperialist-backed nationalist capitalist restoration movements against the Soviet Union and Eastern European deformed workers states have left their mark on Workers Power (WP). They joined Margaret Thatcher et al in backing reactionary Solidarność in Poland. In 1990, they called on the Tory government to aid "poor little Lithuania" as the Sajudis bourgeois nationalists fought for capitalist separation. More recently WP has guarded the left flank of the "Workers Aid to Bosnia", siding with the Bosnian Muslims in the all-sided pogromist bloodbath. They huff and puff, calling for all UN troops out of the Balkans, and then whine about how the UN has not lifted a finger "to stop ethnic cleansing" and creep off to pickets at the UN offices in London to plead for the opening of Tuzla airport. Mix in a dose of the liberal Methodist lesser evil moralising so familiar in their favoured Labourite milieu, and you end up with their position on

Rwanda: a "left" cover for their own British imperialism.

The horrendous slaughter in Rwanda is a legacy of colonialism. Since April most of the killing has been directed at the Tutsi minority by the Hutu-dominated army and death squads. The imperialists and their media portray the conflict in racist terms as "age-old", "endemic" and "tribal". But the Hutu and Tutsi people have a common language, culture and territory. In pre-colonial time there existed a permeable hierarchical, occupational division between cattle-owning Tutsi and subordinate Hutu cultivators. Despite the best efforts of racist imperialist ethnographers, it was and still is often impossible to tell Hutu and Tutsi apart. The German and Belgian colonial rulers transformed this pre-capitalist system into a rigid "ethnic" division in which the Tutsi were preferred as overseers and ascribed as "superior" and "Caucasoid Hamitic". Colonialist "divide-and-rule", post-independence political

conflict, spliced with inter-communal violence, desperate land pressure, rural poverty, and continuing neo-colonial exploitation, have compacted distinct Hutu and Tutsi communities with murderous antipathy towards each other.

Having done all they could to turn Rwanda into a living hellhole, the imperialists now pose as "humanitarians". The French imperialists sent troops to back the murderous regime in 1990-1993, and intervened this time only after their chosen killers in the Hutu-dominated regime started to lose. Workers Power demanded "No UN troops in Rwanda—no imperialist intervention" and called for opposition to the French intervention, while "at the same time" demanding: "Every worker in Britain should call on the government to provide unconditional emergency aid" (*Workers Power*, June 1994). In other words they can't stomach the *French* Foreign Legion but *British* imperialist "humanitarian" intervention is okay.

To appeal to the imperialists for

"humanitarian" aid is to give ideological justification to colonialist pillage and slaughter. It was under the pretext of "humanitarian" aid that the imperialists carried out their butchery in Somalia. While claiming to combat famine and disease in Africa, Clinton is gearing up to occupy Haiti and seeking to strangle the Cuban deformed workers state by tightening his vicious blockade. Not content to have killed tens of thousands of Iraqis during their 1991 "Desert Slaughter", the US, Britain and their allies have murdered well over 300,000 more with a brutal embargo that has brought the country to the brink of famine. Nor is the use of "humanitarianism" as a cover for imperialist and colonialist pillage anything new. A century ago, in his notorious poem "The White Man's Burden", Rudyard Kipling was singing the praises of "the savage wars of peace" waged by the government, supposedly to bring "civilisation" to the peoples of India and other parts of the British Empire.

The YRE in Bavaria: Strange happenings at the Willy Brandt lager

We reprint below an abbreviated report made by a comrade from the Dublin Spartacist Group who attended the YRE's "Anti Nazi" camp in Reinwarzhofen, Bavaria on 13-20 August. On the second day, Damien Elliott, the leader of the French Gauche révolutionnaire/Jeunesses communistes révolutionnaires physically assaulted one of our French comrades. Elliott was evidently enraged that we were selling our new pamphlet "Militant Labour's touching faith in the capitalist state" which exposes their gross anti-Marxist positions on the state and its cops. Social democrats and Stalinists resort to cowardly suppression of revolutionary criticism when they have no political answers. This attack brought a lot of problems for the YRE organisers, because many of their own supporters were appalled by it, but in line with their chosen role as political policemen within the workers movement they alibied and excused it.

In total there were about 1400 in attendance, that's about 600 down on what the YRE expected. The bulk were from Germany. From these islands there were about 180 people. The French JCR I'd say had about 50. The camp was almost exclusively white, with less than 50 minority youth. There were more skinheads probably than minority youth.

The first attack on us was on Sunday, unprovoked. Damien Elliott, the JCR leader, just went up to one of our French comrades, hit him, grabbed the paper. There were four or five other incidents where we were giving out literature and they attacked us. Throughout the week, they threatened to burn down our tents, everywhere we went they were saying, "We're going to kill you", they promised to send the French comrades back in

body bags, they promised to bury us all.

The whole camp was threatened by fascists, and on the anniversary of Rudolph Hess' death, over 100 shots were fired around the outskirts. Nobody quite knew what was happening.

In general the camp was a disaster for the YRE. By the end of the week or by the time we left, the camp had practically emptied. At the start there were three meetings going on simultaneously. By Tuesday there was no more than 100 people going to those three meetings combined. The camp was depoliticised extremely quickly.

The stewards at the camp basically acted like little cops, telling people what to do; the meetings were staged; ourselves and other opponents of Militant found it very difficult to intervene because they refused to let us speak. And our intervention over the questions of the cops and the state, combined with the attack, had the effect of completely polarising the camp. You defended the Spartacists or you didn't defend the Spartacists. And if you defended the Sparts you probably didn't like the cops either.

On Thursday they were blaring Oi music out all day. Comrades reported seeing people shaving off their heads—rather shaving off their hair—JCR were trying to shave off our heads! They might as well have shaved off their heads... I wish! Undercover police were seen as were fascists in the camp. But it was very difficult to tell the difference between who wasn't a fascist and who was.

The Militant, from what I saw of them, mainly their Scottish people, were quite right-wing. A lot of them were sexist, homophobic. Their Irish people at four o'clock in the morning woke up the camp

with chants of "olé olé olé Ireland, Ireland". The English had a football match with the Germans. After the first chants of "England, England!" you didn't want to hear the rest. This football match was just before the Oi concert and this was going on at the same time as shots were being fired. Quite a zoo.

In terms of other opponents, there was the Revolutionary Internationalist League (RIL). They had as far as I know mostly all their London comrades, and their new German group. They very much attempted to be the left wing of the YRE, and most of their criticisms centred on organisational points—the YRE is not democratic enough, we need a more democratic YRE, this camp is not defended well enough. So in terms of politics, their political interventions were quite limited. They wanted to be seen as the communists, but by the end of the week we were the ones who were known as the communists; we weren't the ones who were running around trying to reform the YRE. They organised a black caucus, which was mostly their members, and only blacks and Asians were allowed to go to it. We thought it was very ironic that their second motion at this black caucus was to fight for an integrated YRE. On the last day we were there, there was another meeting of the black caucus which Militant loaded with their people and they voted that motion again. The Militant majority there voted against.

On the other hand in terms of defending us, all I can say is RIL were excellent. All you had to do was shout "RIL" and they'd come storming down the hill to where we were. Their German group is, we found, quite right-wing. They explained to our comrades that you "have to discuss" with Nazis! They are active in Mönchengladbach YRE, where the leader is an ex-fascist. He was voted in to be the head of the YRE because as an ex-fascist,

he knew how fascists thought and how they operated. RIL had meetings every evening and we tried to attend two of them—they were cancelled. So in general they ran away from us, apart from when they were defending us.

The LRCI [League for a Revolutionary Communist International, of which Workers Power is the British section] played a real scummy role when we were first attacked. The first meeting after we were attacked, their Austrian leader got up and said: the only sad thing at the camp... was the provocative role of the Spartacists. That evening, they actually sent that same Austrian leader to come and tell us that in fact they would defend us. And he gave us a statement but he also included that he had been attacked himself by the YRE. I know, it sounds like the Twilight Zone—it kind of felt like the Twilight Zone.

In general our sales were good, over 100 pamphlets, mostly in German. We sold between 25 and 30 of the pamphlet in English. We also sold about 15 subs and we got out more than 500 of the leaflet "What is the JCR's Damien Elliott Afraid of?" protesting Damien Elliott's gangsterism, which was like a red rag to a bull; it didn't go down well with the JCR.

We polarised that camp. We polarised it so much that their Camp News had to blame us for everything under the sun. Their Camp News blamed us for the food shortages. They had a love story, which the punchline was, they would fall in love unless the Spartacists get in the way. And the lie campaign was really going—we attacked their comrades in France, we attacked the LO Fête, we called them fascists, so they were really setting us up. On the other hand we met a clot of west German CP youth, who came to defend our camp one evening.

Importantly, we left when we wanted to. We were not forced out, we were not intimidated out. The pamphlet "Militant Labour's touching faith in the capitalist state" is an excellent piece of propaganda and we found that the question of the cops and the state was the issue on everybody's lips. Militant had a meeting on the cops where they basically dragged up every example in history where a bobby helped an old woman across the road, to justify their stance on the question. And I think we had a really good team there, comrades from Ireland, France, Italy and Germany. Everybody was very disciplined and everybody did very well. ■

Proclaiming that "socialists cannot be neutral", Workers Power called for a "military bloc" and "critical support" to the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Popular Front (RPF). The Militant group's French co-thinkers, the Gauche révolutionnaire/Jeunesses communistes révolutionnaires proclaimed "all power to the RPF" (*l'Egalité*, July-August 1994). The RPF is closely linked to the IMF dictatorship of Yoweri Museveni in Uganda, which is particularly backed by British and US imperialism. Its military forces overlap with the Ugandan army. The Tutsi-dominated regime in neighbouring Burundi, where the army massacred 100,000 Hutus last October, backs the RPF. WP apologises for the RPF with a regretful and limited acknowledgment that there is "an element of ethnic conflict" and that "recent reports suggest" that the RPF has carried out "retaliatory" massacres.

It ought to be no surprise to find the BBC reflecting British imperialist interests, but WP eagerly cites "BBC youth journalist Andy Kershaw" to bolster the RPF as representing "at least in principle, just and organised resistance". Just as the Bosnian regime downplays its Muslim nationalism to cater to imperialist "democratic" opinion, the RPF's propaganda is cynically self-serving, designed for the same audience. Their playing down of

ethnic division is intended to promote the interests of a relatively wealthy and well-educated Tutsi minority and masks the communalist arrogance of many RPF leaders. By apologising for and supporting the RPF, WP have not only let their pith helmets fall over their ears and eyes, they provide a left cover for the RPF and their British imperialist backers. To liberate the working masses of Rwanda from the bloody cycle of imperialist exploitation and communal killings requires the international struggle of the working class—notably, in black Africa, the South African proletariat—for socialist revolution. ■

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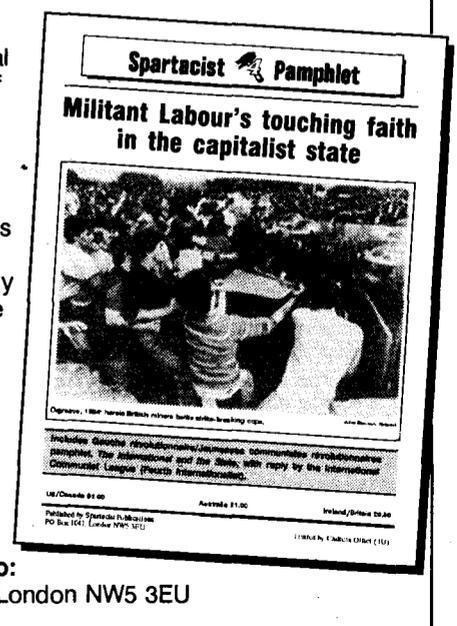
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SOUTH AFRICA POWDER KEG



Jon Jones



AP

Nelson Mandela's "power-sharing" coalition with apartheid capitalists presides over brutal police repression of militant strike wave by black workers.

The following article is reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 605 (2 September 1994), the bi-weekly newspaper of the *Spartacist League/US*. It is part three in a series. The first two parts can be ordered by writing to *Spartacist Publications*.

The election this April of Nelson Mandela as South Africa's first black president was hailed by Western bourgeois politicians and the media as a miraculous triumph of democracy. And this line was echoed by most of the left, with the reformist South African Communist Party (SACP) playing a key role in the new government. Even left groups, both in South Africa and internationally, who condemn or are critical of the "power-sharing" deal between the African National Congress (ANC) and the main white ruling party, FW De Klerk's National Party, assume that the present conditions of political openness, a quasi-parliamentary system and a strong trade union movement have become permanent features of the South African landscape.

Neville Alexander's Workers Organisation for Socialist Action (WOSA) is campaigning for a "mass workers party" to fight for a series of democratic and economic reforms, such as incorporating the "right to work" into the new constitution. The British-centred Workers Power group calls on the black unions to form a workers party, that is, a party structurally similar to the British Labour Party, albeit on a "revolutionary programme". The centrists of WOSA and Workers Power project gradually winning the black working class away from trade union consciousness and political support to the bourgeois-nationalist ANC and over to socialist consciousness.

With such a perspective, whatever their criticisms of the ANC, these groups assume a period of relatively stable "post-apartheid" bourgeois "democracy". They do not even consider as possibilities the rise of a black bonapartist regime capable of crushing the workers movement, an outbreak of racial and tribal warfare, and/or managerial sabotage and capital flight leading to economic chaos and collapse. Yet if the black working class, under the leadership of a genuinely communist party, does not take state power,

ANC's nationalist popular front unravelling

the "new" South Africa will find itself heading in the direction of the rest of post-colonial sub-Saharan Africa.

South Africa is not Western Europe. It is not a relatively wealthy, highly industrialised society capable of sustaining a mass social-democratic party backed by a strong union movement. The South African economy, as in many Third World countries, is dependent on the extraction of gold and other minerals. A privileged white caste—making up 13 per cent of the population—sits atop the mass of superexploited black African toilers, with the coloured (mixed-race) population and Indians occupying an intermediate place.

In the past a shared hatred for the white rulers, especially the Afrikaner Nationalist regime, tended to suppress class and ethnic divisions within the black African and more generally non-white population. And after Mandela was released from prison and adopted an extremely "moderate" line, many whites came to believe that an ANC-led government would restore social peace without seriously attacking their material privileges. But the notion that the Mandela presidency would usher in an era of good will among South Africans of all classes, races and ethnic groups was exploded almost instantly.

The new government was greeted with a wave of strikes as black workers believed it was "payback time". "We want something now", exclaimed a steel worker, Mtutuzeli Mpondo, "not tomorrow or next year. We voted for change, but nothing seems to be changing, in our lives, work places, homes, and in all spheres of life." Mandela responded to the strikes by denouncing "some" unions for continuing to pursue a course of resistance rather than switching over to "reconstruction". This line was also taken by ANC general secretary and parliamentary leader Cyril Ramaphosa (former head of the National Union of Mineworkers).

Even the Communist Party, intimately allied with the ANC for over half a cen-

tury, criticised Mandela's remarks as "disturbing". Internally, the SACP has become a seething mass of contradictions. For example, the secretary of the Cape Town branch last year threatened to resign from the party to protest its "gradual abandonment of Marxist-Leninist principles".

At the same time, De Klerk's National Party is talking about pulling out of the coalition government and going into opposition. This would signal the beginning of open conflict between the ANC leadership and the white generals, police commandants and senior civilian bureaucrats still entrenched in the neo-apartheid state apparatus. However, the immediate challenge to Mandela, Ramaphosa & Co is coming not from the white capitalist class but the black working class.

Black labour struggles rock the "new" South Africa

Mandela told the London *Financial Times* (18 July): "The harmony that exists between ourselves in the ANC and big business is striking." Thus the conditions, both political and economic, which over the past two decades gave rise to one of the most powerful trade union movements in the Third World, cannot long survive under this *black bourgeois-nationalist government*. Partly due to the strength of the unions and partly to the country's economic structure, industrial wages in South Africa have been pushed considerably above Third World norms. Factory workers in Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth now earn twice as much as those in Mexico City and São Paulo, Brazil and several times as much as in Thailand and the Philippines.

The same factors have produced sharp inequalities within the black African population. In 1990 it was estimated that the predominantly unionised, industrial workers averaged R12,000 (rand)—about US\$3500—a year, compared to R4800 for those working in the "informal sector" of the segregated townships.

Agricultural labourers earned R2400 and those living on the desolate bantustans a mere R1400 (Stephen John Stedman, ed, *South Africa: The Political Economy of Transformation* [1994]). These figures are somewhat misleading, since a good part of the wages received by black industrial workers go to support their poorer relatives unemployed in the townships or trapped on the bantustans. Nonetheless, the unions are vulnerable to demagogic nationalist attack by ANC politicians, who now claim the unions are defending the interests of a labour aristocracy, not the black African populace as a whole.

The unions are chained by the political logic of nationalist popular-frontism. In 1986 the leadership of the newly formed Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) issued a joint statement with the ANC proclaiming the latter as head of the "national liberation movement". In turn, COSATU was declared to be "an important and integral part" of the "democratic forces of our country". In subsequent years, the unions acted as the main mass combat organisations in undermining the apartheid system. Strikes, even around narrow economic issues, were seen as weakening the white power structure, as indeed they did. It would have been unthinkable for the large numbers of unemployed black youth, however economically desperate, to scab on COSATU strikes. They would have been reviled—or worse—as collaborators with the hated apartheid state.

But now Mandela & Co, having become political front men for the Randlords, are trying to mobilise black sentiment against the unions, claiming that the relatively high wages in the industrial sector are responsible for mass unemployment in the townships and abject poverty in the countryside. Since Mandela's appeals for labour peace in the name of "reconstruction" have had no effect, the next logical step would be breaking these strikes utilising black lumpen scabs protected by white police. The unions are thus facing a political attack of a very different order than the decreasingly effective police-state measures employed by the white-supremacist regime in its last years.

The black industrial unions were able



Farrell/AP



Silva/AP

New ANC rulers send "reformed" apartheid army (right) to keep lid on murderous conflict between Inkatha-led Zulu hostel dwellers (left) and ANC-derived "Self-Defence Units" in Tokoza. For ethnically integrated, union-based workers militias to suppress right-wing terrorism and communalist violence!

to push wages up sharply over the past 20 years only because the structure of the South African economy could accommodate this. South Africa is an extreme example of a Third World dual economy, what Trotsky called combined and uneven development. The workers who assemble Volkswagens (not to mention Mercedes and BMWs) cannot afford to buy the cars they build. A powerful industrial union movement was built under conditions in which half the black African labour force was unemployed.

The explanation for these apparent contradictions lies in the fact that the economy is based on the extraction of mineral wealth. Gold is still king, although as the richest veins are played out, the companies are increasingly exploring elsewhere on the continent. Mining accounts for ten per cent of South Africa's gross national product and 60 per cent of its exports. The profits from the Rand gold fields, along with the platinum, diamond and other mines, support a large, parasitic white petty bourgeoisie—government and corporate bureaucrats, proprietors of retail outlets, real estate brokers, etc—who enjoy "First World" living standards.

Base metals account for over half of South Africa's industrial exports. It's cheaper to smelt iron and aluminum ore in South Africa and ship slabs and ingots than to ship the ore for smelting in Western Europe, North America and Japan. Primary metallurgy is by its technical nature highly capital-intensive, employing less than ten per cent of the industrial labour force.

The Afrikaner Nationalist regime consistently pursued a programme of *import substitution* in manufacturing, seeking to maximise production in South Africa of both strategic goods (eg, armaments) and consumer durables purchased by the affluent white community. Seven international car makers, including Mercedes, BMW and Nissan, have plants in South Africa—plants which might not have been built there in a more "free trade" environment. Charles Meth, an economist at the University of Natal, pointed out:

"Much investment has been for strategic rather than for 'purely economic reasons,' many enterprises being either unprofitable or having their 'profits' underwritten by the state. Private sector investment in manufacturing has been cushioned by the state against some of the harsh realities of capitalist competition on an international scale."

— Nicolai Nattrass and Elisabeth Ardington, eds, *The Political Economy of South Africa* (1990)

The particular structure of the South African economy, closely bound up with the apartheid system, necessarily shaped the black industrial union movement which developed over the past two dec-

ades. The country's largest, most militant, and most left-wing union is the National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA). NUMSA's members are characteristically employed in metal foundries whose profits are based on access to cheap mineral ores, in weapons factories subsidised by the military, and in car plants geared to the purchasing power of the privileged white community. Thus the core of the unionised industrial labour force has heretofore been relatively insulated from the competitive pressures of the world market.

The masters of the Jo'burg stock exchange and their partners in Wall Street and the City of London believed that by co-opting Mandela, Ramaphosa & Co as their political agents they would be able to both dampen labour militancy and promote low-wage, labour-intensive industries (eg, textiles and apparel) capable of competing with the Far East and Latin America. In a recent report, the

current massive strike wave with anger and dismay. One can expect large-scale capital flight.

The impact of intensifying labour conflict on multinational firms and banks is even more immediate. Since the April elections, foreign money men have been *divesting* themselves of their holdings in South African companies. Robert Irwin, the head of a Wall Street securities firm who recently visited South Africa, commented: "I cannot figure out what South Africa offers to the outside investor in the way of an opportunity to create jobs" (*New York Times*, 3 August). Black labour militancy in South Africa will be answered and is already being answered by a *strike of capital*, both domestic and international.

In short, the black union movement faces a political attack by the bourgeois-nationalist ANC government and economic sabotage by those who own the means of production. This underscores

struction will necessarily require a democratic solution to the many and complex national questions inherited from the apartheid state and will have to counter the inevitable offensive of world imperialism against a black-centred workers government in southern Africa. In the absence of a *proletarian internationalist solution* to the deep-going political and social crisis signalled by the Mandela/De Klerk "government of national unity", the "new" South Africa will tend to polarise along racial and ethnic lines.

The danger of racial and tribal warfare

Many whites believed that the "power-sharing" deal with the ANC would lead to a lower level of black social struggle and an easing of racial tension. A commonly voiced sentiment was: "With Mandela as president, my children will no longer have to live in a state of siege ever fearful of a black insurrection and random racial violence." But there can be no racial amity in South Africa as long as such vast and stark inequalities separate white and black. The ordinary workings of capitalism will tend to maintain or even increase the impoverishment of the black masses. Only a workers government could utilise the valuable technical skills of those whites willing to live under black majority rule while working to overcome the economic gulf separating them from the mass of black toilers.

Far from reducing the level of black social struggle, the displacement of the openly white-supremacist regime by the ANC-led "government of national unity" is already intensifying it in all ways—big strikes and plant occupations, land seizures in the countryside and squatter movements in the cities, clashes with the hated police force. South African whites will react to a breakdown of "law and order" with panic, fear and rage. Many, especially English speakers, will doubtless choose to emigrate to Britain, North America, Australia, etc. But the ranks of the Afrikaner diehards will also swell, raising the prospect of a fascist white revolt.

Along with fighting between white right-wing paramilitary forces and ANC supporters, there could well be communalist violence between black Africans on the one side and coloureds and Indians on the other. In the classic divide-and-rule manner, the white-supremacist regime deliberately favoured the coloureds and Indians. In the 1980s these two groups were given a vote in impotent "parliaments", while black Africans were still officially relegated to being "citizens" of the "tribal homelands" (bantustans). In the late 1980s, the government was spending R2500 annually per capita for education for whites, R1900 for Indians,

continued on page 8



Matlala/Shopsteward

Postal workers march in downtown Johannesburg last year. Combative black unions attracted multi-ethnic support, key to overcoming tribal/racial divisions through class struggle.

Washington-based World Bank estimates that union activity has raised the wages of black labour 15 per cent above what they otherwise would have been and argues that "higher wages have led to lower demand for labour" (*Reducing Poverty in South Africa* [June 1994]). This key agency of international finance demands an end to "conflict-ridden industrial relations" so that foreign investors will open sweatshops in South Africa instead of Taiwan or Mexico.

But unionised black workers are not buying the line that it is they who have to make sacrifices so that multinational firms and banks will provide sweatshop jobs for their younger brothers in the townships and sisters on the bantustans. Business circles have responded to the

utter inadequacy of the combination of quasi-syndicalism and left social democracy espoused by the "workerist" elements in COSATU exemplified by former Metalworkers leader, now ANC/SACP parliamentarian, Moses Mayekiso. The Workers Organisation for Socialist Action, which has recently been presenting itself as the left wing of the COSATU "workerist" current, is agitating for a mass workers party "to defend and promote the interests of workers politically and at other levels".

However, in the present conjuncture, the workers can defend and promote their interests only by undertaking a struggle leading toward taking state power and reconstructing South African society on a socialist basis. Such a recon-

South Africa...

(Continued from page 7)

R1000 for coloureds and less than R500 for blacks.

Nonetheless, despite these relative advantages, the coloured and Indian communities viewed themselves as oppressed victims of the apartheid system and generally appeared to support the programme of "non-racial democracy" promised by the ANC. But the actual prospect of a black nationalist government, however liberal its ideological stance, opened up clearly visible fissures within the non-white population. A letter to the Western Cape newspaper *Rapport Metro* in early 1993 expressed the changing concerns of the coloured community:

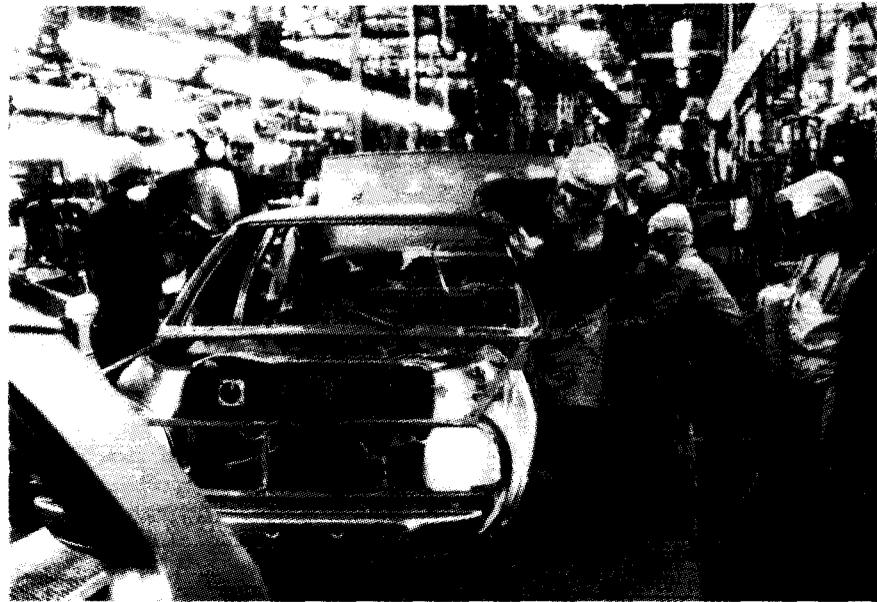
"I believe I am right when I say that the ANC's first priority lies with its own people—the blacks.... Where do uneducated brown people fit in? We must think carefully where our future welfare lies before election day dawns."

— quoted in *African Communist*, 2nd Quarter 1993

When election day dawned, a majority of the coloureds in the Western Cape, where they constitute slightly over half the population, felt sufficiently apprehensive about their future in the "new" South Africa to vote for the National Party. Similarly, on the eve of the elections a majority of Indian voters in Natal were reportedly supporting De Klerk's Nats (*New York Times*, 22 April).

Since the Mandela/De Klerk "government of national unity" cannot and will not begin to satisfy the desperate need for housing by black Africans—millions of whom live in backyard shacks and shantytowns made of cardboard and plastic—their anger and frustration could easily turn against the better-off coloured and Indian communities.

As the black African masses find that they continue to live in poverty and degradation despite the promises of "non-racial democracy" and "national unity", some ANC leaders will doubtless resort to nationalist demagoguery and even tribalist appeals. Even if Mandela and his lieutenants continue to claim to stand for "non-racialism", the whole situation points to increasing tribal/ethnic tensions and clashes. While the ANC currently draws support from all sections of the non-white population as well as liberal and leftist whites, its strongest base of support is among the Xhosas (South Africa's sec-



Der Spiegel

Black workers at Volkswagen (above) and six other car makers in South Africa produce cars for protected market of affluent whites.

ond-largest tribe) of the Eastern Cape. Xhosas are prevalent in the ANC leadership, with Mandela himself being the son of a minor Xhosa chieftain from the Transkei. The ANC has long had friendly relations with Transkei bantustan chief Kaiser Matanzima, in violent contrast to KwaZulu Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

Right-wing whites depict the murderous conflict between Buthelezi's Inkatha movement and the ANC in purely tribal terms, as Zulu v Xhosa. ANC apologists and most leftists argue that Inkatha is simply an artificial creature of the apartheid regime, and they point to the ANC's sizable following in Zululand despite terrorist attacks by Buthelezi's *impis* (fighting squads). The reality is more complex. Certainly, without the massive financial support and encouragement of the Afrikaner Nationalist regime—especially senior military and police cadre—Inkatha would be far weaker than it is. However, Buthelezi has been able to exploit the fears of traditional-minded Zulu villagers and backward Zulu workers that an ANC government would be a disguised form of Xhosa domination.

In the past some (though by no means all) elements in the white ruling circles promoted Zulu tribalism in order to undercut the ANC/SACP. However, South African along with American and British capital has made a major political investment in the Mandela presidency.

Hence bourgeois opinion now regards Inkatha militants as troublemakers in the "new" South Africa (even though Buthelezi is for the moment a minister in the coalition government).

Symptomatically, the mine bosses recently fired 300 Zulu workers for clashing with ANC supporters. Significantly, the National Union of Mineworkers, whose former leader Ramaphosa is now ANC general secretary, *refused to oppose or protest* this political victimisation of Zulu miners by the Randlords. Such policies can only convince Zulu workers that the ANC government is in fact anti-Zulu (despite its "non-racialist" protestations) and bring about the fracturing of the union movement along tribalist lines.

In recent years, fighting between Inkatha and the ANC has been extended from Natal to the townships of the Transvaal, where Zulu migrant workers living in hostels confront pro-ANC community "self-defence units" (SDUs) overwhelmingly composed of Xhosas, Tswanas and other non-Zulus. In the name of combating Inkatha terrorist actions, these SDUs have tended to become carriers of anti-Zulu communalism. For example, in July the ANC premier of the PWV region (Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging), Tokyo Sexwale, visited the township of Tokoza, near Johannesburg, which has been the site of bitter fighting. While Sexwale argued for the "peace process", one SDU commander declared: "If the ANC government does not want to destroy the

hostels we will do it ourselves."

Nonetheless, most of the groups in South Africa taking a stance to the left of the ANC/SACP treat the SDUs as if they were some kind of workers militias or could easily become so. Thus the "Marxist Workers Tendency of the ANC", which is aligned with the British-based Militant Labour tendency, states: "we have long campaigned for the creation of disciplined community self-defence units, bearing arms" (*Congress Militant*, July-August 1992). Workers Power likewise calls to: "Transform the local Self Defence Units into real workers' and people's militias" (*Workers Power*, April 1994).

Qina Msebenzi (April 1994), published by the "Comrades for a Workers Government", who are associated with the tiny London-based Workers International League, while talking of the need for factory-based defence units, calls to "remove the hostels". (*QM* initially called for a workers party, but supported the ANC in the elections.) In contrast, we call for ethnically integrated, union-based militias, as counterposed to the communalist SDUs. Four years ago, as thousands were being killed in the "Reef war" between Inkatha and ANC supporters, we wrote:

"What is needed is the formation of union-based workers defense guards, linking the factory to the townships, and made up of class-conscious workers including Zulus, Xhosas and members of other tribal groupings, as well as coloured, Asian and anti-racist white workers, to suppress both the right-wing terrorists and the fomenters of bloody communalist war."

— "South Africa and Permanent Revolution: Part I", *Workers Vanguard* no 515, 30 November 1990

Today, COSATU is the only mass institution in South Africa embracing members of all racial and ethnic groups on a class basis. Black unions have even made inroads into the white labour aristocracy with 3500 whites among the members of the COSATU-affiliated transport union. Thus the unions can be a crucial bulwark against South Africa's sliding into a vortex of racial and tribal strife. But one cannot expect the reformist-led unions to play such a role spontaneously, especially given the still strong ANC loyalty among COSATU top and middle-level officials. Only a Leninist vanguard party, committed to an internationalist perspective, can effectively mobilise the workers movement against the forces of murderous nationalism. ■

TEAM...

(Continued from page 3)

have a right to know: which side is the Labour Party on? The Labour Party claims to defend the interests of the working class. But its participation in the coalition government is a *betrayal!* That's why we (unlike most of the rest of the left) refused to call for a vote to Labour in November 1992: on principle we will not support a coalition with the bosses' parties. Back then our leaflet (entitled "No vote to Labour, Workers Party, Democratic Left!") pointed out:

"For years the trade union and labour misleaders have tied the hands of the working class by brokering class-collaborationist deals with the bosses. First it was the PNR [Programme for National Recovery] and the PESP [Programme for Economic and Social Progress], both explicitly designed to prevent class-struggle opposition to capitalist austerity. Then it was the Labour Party/Workers Party orchestrated deal with Fine Gael to put Mary Robinson in Aras an Uachtaráin [the presidential palace] to head off the growing pressure for change. Now it

is the 'Rainbow coalition' where Spring is just waiting to see if he will have enough TDs [MPs] to trade off for the Tanaiste's chair."

Today we say that the Labour Party should *get out of the coalition!* What we've had so far is worse than useless—whining complaints about the government being "unreasonable", applying a bit of pressure to the LRC, or a parliamentary vote here or there by TDs who just want to save their own electoral skin and let off steam. It's time to demand that Labour break with Fianna Fáil and get out of this government, now!

The Labour Party, from top to bottom, has a choice. Labour Party supporters have a choice. Either you back Dick Spring, with his precious cabinet posts, sucking up to the bosses and enforcing their anti-working-class rule, or you're with the working class, in struggle, on the picket lines and fighting for the strike action that's needed, right now. And to make a real, united fight against the government means having no truck with Labour traitors: repudiate every single misleader who knifes the TEAM and semi-state workers (whether they be open right wingers or one-time lefts who've swallowed the coalition line). Lenin called

parties like the Labour Party "bourgeois workers parties": what's needed is a real working-class party that *fights* the capitalists, not on a reformist platform, but on a *revolutionary* programme. In other words, a party in the working-class struggle traditions of Connolly, Larkin and Lenin.

**Repudiate the Labour traitors!
For a class-struggle workers party!
For an Irish workers republic,
within a Socialist Federation of the British Isles!**

Labour and Democratic Left both put the lie that the working class and women and all the poor and oppressed can find justice and satisfaction through elections to the Dáil, through negotiating for a few crumbs from the capitalist table.

No: A *genuine workers government* will be based on workers councils (soviets), like the Bolshevik government of Lenin and Trotsky in Russia 1917.

An *Irish workers republic* will not give concessions to boost the bosses' profits: it will expropriate the Smurfits and O'Reillys [leading Irish capitalists] and Intels without a penny of compensation,

and build towards a socialist economy, using a central plan to produce for human need, and not for profit.

An *Irish workers republic* will stand foursquare for the rights of the oppressed and especially for the interests of women. Defend Travellers against persecution! Defend the rights of gays and lesbians! For the right of divorce, and for free abortion and contraception on demand. We are for the separation of church and state: nationalise the schools and hospitals owned by the Church. For free, high-quality health care for all! For women's liberation through socialist revolution!

The struggle of workers in the Republic cannot be separated from the fight to overthrow British imperialism, hand in hand with the workers of England, Scotland and Wales and of Northern Ireland. Not least among Dick Spring's betrayals is his attempt to broker a deal with British imperialism at the expense of the oppressed Catholic minority in the North. *British troops out of Northern Ireland! Not Orange against Green but class against class! No to forced reunification—for a Socialist Federation of the British Isles!*

Dublin Spartacist Group
10 July 1994

IRA/Sinn Féin . . .

(Continued from page 1)

Belfast. On 5 September the Protestant paramilitary Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) set off a large car bomb outside Sinn Féin's headquarters in Belfast, following up five days later with an assassination attempt against a Sinn Féin activist. On 12 September two women were injured when the detonator of a UVF-planted bomb exploded at Connolly Street railway station in Dublin. Meanwhile, the British media and Tory and Labour politicians have whipped up a frenzy against "terrorism", which for them applies to the actions of the IRA but never to the blood-soaked British Army or the RUC, which regularly leaks "security files" on Republicans to Loyalist death squads.

We are for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland. But unlike the Green nationalists and their cheerleaders on the British and Irish left, we Marxists recognise that the Protestant community is not simply an extension of British imperialist rule. Northern Ireland is an example of *interpenetrated peoples*. The Protestant majority are deeply hostile to—and a significant number of Northern Catholics are wary of—the nationalist project of reunifying the North with the even more poverty-stricken and virulently anti-woman southern clericalist state. The fact that divorce as well as abortion is illegal in itself gives the lie to Sinn Féin leader Martin McGuinness' claim that the south is "an open and liberal society" (*Irish News*, 14 September).

Only workers rule, forged through the revolutionary unity of the working class, Catholic and Protestant, can bring about a just and democratic solution. In the context of an Irish workers republic in a socialist federation of the British Isles, the Protestants may yet be voluntarily incorporated into a common Irish nation, which they would at present vehemently reject; they may develop a more distinct national identity, or they may find a democratic accommodation with the Catholics outside the framework of strictly national solutions.

Imperialist-brokered "peace" deals

Sinn Féin leaders consciously look to the example of recent imperialist-brokered deals in South Africa and the Middle East. It would be fatal for working people to have illusions in such "settlements". In South Africa the newly installed Mandela/De Klerk regime has already moved to break strikes of black workers and squelch the expectations of the impoverished black masses. The Palestinian PLO now has its own cops to keep down the Palestinian masses in Gaza and Jericho. And while conditions in Northern Ireland are not identical, Ruari O Bradaigh, the leader of the dissident nationalist group Republican Sinn Féin, has warned that behind Gerry Adams' call for "new policing arrangements" is a veiled appeal for recruiting Republican militants to serve in a "police service" to be run in parallel with the RUC" to do "England's dirty work in Ireland" (*Irish News*, 6 September).

The imperialist-brokered "solutions" in the Middle East and South Africa are at bottom a product of the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state. The existence of the Soviet Union provided a certain room for manoeuvre for petty-bourgeois nationalists. But with its demise, the ANC and PLO increasingly turned hat in hand to beg crumbs from Washington. Similarly, Sinn Féin appeals to US imperialist chief Clinton, falsely portraying him as an ally



Hulton Deutsch

Derry, 1969: British troops enforcing the bloody occupation of Northern Ireland.

of the oppressed Northern Catholics.

Washington has been a prime mover in the Northern Ireland "peace process". Last February Clinton granted Adams an unprecedented visa for a 48-hour visit to New York over the opposition of the British government. Now Adams has been granted another visa for a longer trip to the US later this month. Following the IRA cease-fire, Clinton made a point of inviting Irish deputy prime minister Dick Spring to his vacation resort and promising a "peace dividend" of increased US aid to the southern republic and Northern Ireland. Vice President Gore visited Ireland to confer with Prime Minister Albert Reynolds.

Numerous commentators have noted wryly that the IRA's cease-fire announcement neatly dovetails with the US political calendar. Some 44 million Americans claim Irish descent, and with mid-term elections imminent, Clinton and other Democratic Party politicians, like Ted Kennedy, are desperate to shore up their flagging popularity. But while Clinton made a show of offering a visa to IRA veteran Joe Cahill—for the purpose of persuading American IRA supporters to back the cease-fire—much less publicised are his efforts to maintain contact with the Protestant Loyalists. Thus, five months ago Gore held secret talks with James Molyneux, the leader of the largest Protestant party, the Ulster Unionists (UUP), and next month a UUP delegation is expected in Washington.

While Molyneux backs John Major, Protestant fundamentalist demagogue Ian Paisley has denounced the possibility of any negotiations with the IRA as a "sell-out". In scenes reminiscent of the Loyalist protests against the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement, albeit on a smaller scale, riots broke out in Protestant areas of Belfast on the night of 13 September. This time shots were fired at RUC patrols and nine vehicles were set ablaze. Major does not lightly dismiss Paisley's threats that disgruntled hardline Protestants are capable of unleashing a "civil war". The British imperialists do not always see eye to eye with the fractious Loyalists, but for now they have no intention of abandoning their old allies.

Labour lackeys of British imperialism

The IRA's cease-fire came 25 years to the month after British troops were dispatched to Northern Ireland by a Labour Party government. And when Labour "left" Tony Benn invited Gerry Adams—in violation of a government ban on the Sinn Féin leader visiting Britain—to address a meeting at the upcoming Labour Party conference, newly anointed party leader Tony Blair went into an anti-Republican frenzy. Nor is the Irish Labour Party in Dublin any less hostile to the interests of the oppressed Catholic minority in the North. Labour Party head Dick Spring—a strong backer of conciliating the Paisleyite bigots

—initially threatened to quit the coalition government over the prospect of official talks with Sinn Féin, while not batting an eyelid as the government implemented plans to slash two-thirds of the TEAM Aer Lingus maintenance workers.

Taking their cue from their reformist big brothers, fake-left outfits like Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party or Peter Taaffe's Militant Labour capitulate to British imperialism. When the British Labour government sent in the troops in 1969, *Socialist Worker* hailed this as providing a welcome "breathing space". Today Eamonn McCann, a prominent spokesman for the Irish Socialist Workers Movement, exults: "Two cheers for the ceasefire. The third can wait until we can see more clearly where we're headed" (*Hot Press*, 21 September).

Militant Labour, which spent decades ensconced in the Labour Party, to this day refuses to call for the withdrawal of imperialist troops from the North. A recent statement in its Northern Irish press despicably seeks to blame the IRA for the crimes of British imperialism, claiming that the IRA provided the state with an "excuse to introduce an array of repressive legislation and repressive methods" (*Militant Labour*, September 1994). We recall Lenin's statement that for English socialists not to oppose British imperialist rule in Ireland would be "the worst sort of opportunism, a neglect of their duties as democrats and socialists, and a concession to *English* reaction and the *English* bourgeoisie" ("The Right of Nations to Self-Determination", February-May 1914).

Such despicable softness on British imperialism in the workers movement only reinforces the attractions of Green nationalism. Many working-class Catholic youth join the IRA because they mistakenly see it as the only force opposing the British Army. Yet the IRA's "armed struggle" was never really aimed at—or capable of—driving the massive British imperialist military presence out of Northern Ireland, but rather at pressuring Britain to the conference table. When the IRA does strike a blow at the imperialist oppressor, we defend it against state repression, and we call for the immediate release of Republican prisoners. However, a central component of the IRA's nationalist strategy involves reprehensible indiscriminate terror against Northern Protestants, as well as against civilian targets in Britain, aimed at exacerbating the communal divide between Catholics and Protestants and at galvanising the oppressed Catholic minority behind the banner of Green nationalism.

Workers Power (WP) criticises the cease-fire, but from the standpoint of Green nationalism. In a recent editorial statement (*Workers Power*, September 1994), they demand "Irish independence [!] and national unity", effectively calling for the forcible incorporation of the Protestant community in a reunified Ireland. Significantly, their statement

contains no criticisms of any acts of indiscriminate sectarian terror carried out by the IRA. At the same time, Workers Power and the Irish Workers Group (IWG) currently call for votes to the British Labour Party and the Irish social democracy, both of which endorse the imperialist "peace" fraud. Absurdly, WP/IWG have raised the demand that the anti-Republican government of southern Ireland provide armaments and aid to Northern Catholics.

We call for the formation of integrated workers militias to combat both imperialist/Loyalist rampage and sectarian terror from any quarter. But forging such militias is integrally linked to the construction of a revolutionary proletarian leadership that has the confidence of both Protestant and Catholic workers. The prevalence of sectarianism in the North is not the proof of some unbridgeable religious divide, but is fostered by the desperate and hellish conditions of capitalist existence. While the Catholics are an oppressed minority, the situation of working-class Protestants is little better. In the Protestant Shankill area of Belfast, unemployment ranges up to 50 per cent. Significantly, the Loyalist paramilitaries recruit heavily from unemployed and lumpenised youth whose fathers once worked in now decimated shipyards and engineering plants.

The Loyalist stranglehold over the Protestant workers will only be reinforced by liberal bourgeois "solutions" that promise to spread the endemic poverty more evenly. In a situation of increasing economic desperation, fighting over a shrinking slice of pie only stokes up the fires of sectarianism. Thus, while we fight relentlessly against all forms of anti-Catholic discrimination, we demand jobs for all through work sharing on full pay, which can only be realised through a struggle which smashes the capitalist order. Contrary to nationalist lies, the working masses have at times been able to achieve unity in struggle, such as the Belfast shipyard and engineering strike of 1919 and the unemployment battles of the 1930s. Recently, Protestant workers in key plants have struck in outrage over the murder of Catholic workmates by Loyalist thugs. But in the absence of a revolutionary leadership, such class unity cannot be other than transient.

In Northern Ireland the 600,000 Catholics and 900,000 Protestants co-exist in a common territory, while across the border there is an overwhelming majority of Catholics. Any attempt to forcibly incorporate the relatively well-armed Protestants into the Irish clerical state could only precipitate a wholesale communal conflict. While Irish Republicans usually present their struggle as fundamentally directed against British imperialism, the more hard-headed IRA nationalists acknowledge that the Protestant Loyalists are the ultimate obstacle to their programme of reunification with the south. As one Belfast IRA commander told an American journalist:

"This is not about peace. This is about getting the referees off the playing field, about finding a way for the British to leave with some semblance of dignity. The real war has always been between us and the Loyalists. That has not changed, and that's what we're getting ready for."
—*New York Times*, 2 September

The bloody logic of this nationalist line is currently being played out in the former Yugoslavia.

The current IRA cease-fire settles nothing in Northern Ireland. The "troubles" will not end short of a workers revolution which wrests power from the blood-drenched British bourgeoisie and its lackeys in Dublin and Belfast. What is critically necessary is the forging of Leninist parties on both sides of the Irish Sea, rooted in the proletariat of all the peoples of these isles. ■

CJB...

(Continued from page 1)

class struggle, but was knifed by the treacherous Labour Party and TUC bureaucracy.

The CJB introduces over a hundred new clauses aimed at shoring up everything from the sacred bourgeois property right to the "right" to exploit the propertyless and dispossessed. The CJB's new "crime" of "aggravated trespass" with "intent" to "disrupt" is formulated intentionally to target anything from anti-hunt protests to student sit-ins to workers strike pickets. Taken together with the Public Order Act, police will now have the option of preventing any demonstration, of any kind, anywhere!

The Labour and trade union misleaders are an obstacle to a concerted working-class fightback. The last thing they want to see is struggle by the working class, aimed at enforcing its own power and interests. This is because the likes of Labour leader Blair, TUC head Monk and Co pursue the reformist goal of administering capitalism—the very system which exploits and oppresses workers, youth and minorities. What we need is a revolutionary party, forged through a political struggle against the treacherous Labour and trade union bureaucracy—a party that will be a tribune of the people, fighting for *all* the oppressed and leading the working class to power through socialist revolution and the establishment of a workers state.

Decrepit capitalist rule: no hope, no future!

At the 27 July London demonstration, organisers of the Coalition Against the Criminal Justice Bill, which consists of an array of organisations, including the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the Advance Party and the Hunt Saboteurs Association, specifically kept their platform open for a Labour Party spokesman. None showed up! This is because Tony Blair's Labour Party is engaged in smoothing the CJB's passage through parliament. In fact Blair even boasts that many of the bill's provisions are his own! Blair's bid for occupancy at 10 Downing Street is based on his "impeccable" pro-capitalist credentials, including his commitment to the bosses' "law and order". Is it any wonder many anti-CJB youth have taken to calling the Labour leader, Mr Blah?

Many people and especially youth are being driven to protest by the increasingly desperate plight they are forced into under capitalism. Today almost one in three children lives below the poverty line, and some 25 per cent of the population barely scratch out a living on an income below the half-average level. And while Blair joins with the Tories in targeting single parents for society's malaise, official figures show that nearly 75 per cent of lone parents (a disproportionate

number of whom are black women) are living below this half-average income level (*Guardian*, 15 July).

For these sectors of society there is little to no way out. The last few years of capitalist austerity have seen more and more cutbacks in the "welfare state" safety net. Social provisions in housing, education and welfare are now increasingly a thing of the past. Throughout Cold War II, in the 80s, social democrats glorified the "welfare state" as part of imperialism's anti-Soviet campaign. But now, with capitalist counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the welfare state is under attack by a bourgeoisie for which it has outlived its historical usefulness. In the place of "welfare" the bourgeoisie is substituting increased state powers to break and regiment the working class and oppressed.

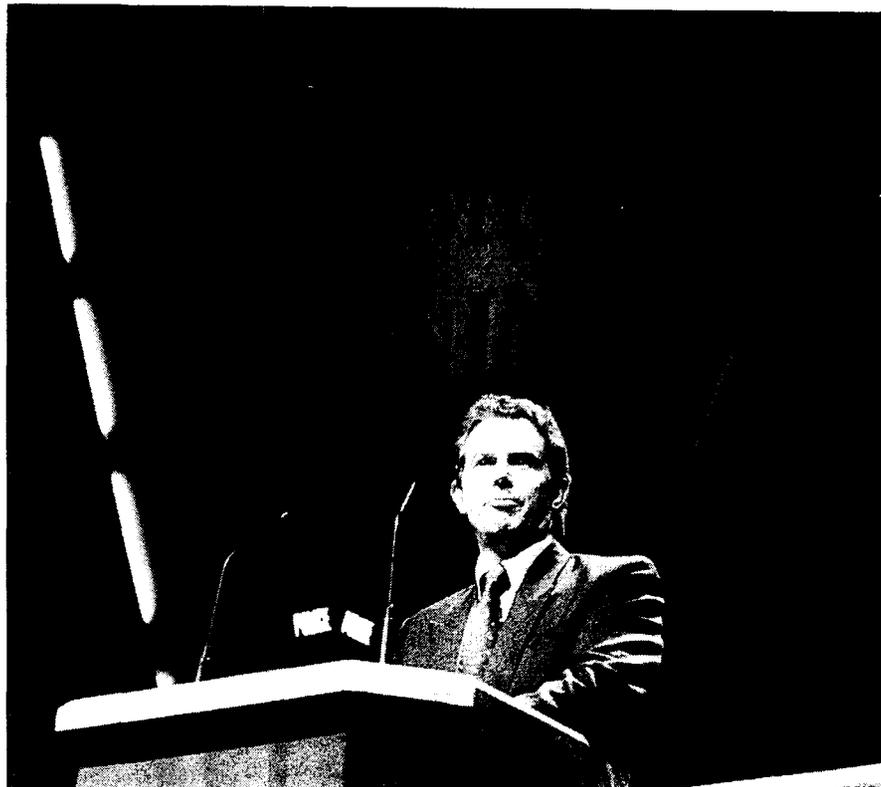
In the 1930s, "mass trespass" organisers were imprisoned with hard labour for fighting for rights of access for working people to the private shooting moors of the stinking rich. Today, simply walking across a field could constitute "criminal damage" under the CJB. This will mean heightened racist persecution of Travellers and Gypsies, making it a criminal offence to "camp unauthorised" and refuse to leave when ordered by police. With the granting of an "interim possession order" to landlords in court hearings, squatters and even tenants would face summary and violent eviction from their homes at just 24 hours notice. Any resistance is automatically a criminal offence.

For the first time in English history, squatting will become a criminal offence and the legal protection against violence by landlords, first granted in the Forcible Entry Act of 1381 (the year of the great Peasants Revolt), will be overturned. Fifty-one thousand people are presently squatting in England and 148,000 households are homeless. Meanwhile, 864,000 properties stand empty. The authentic voice of the ruling class speaks thus: "If you've nowhere to live then you don't live here." Your allotted part is to die anonymously under some evil-smelling railway arch. And as if to supplement the message, the CJB will impose longer custodial sentences and more rigid training orders for young offenders.

Racist justice—British style

The frame-up of the Birmingham 6 and Guildford 4 scandalised the British ruling-class justice system. The CJB aims to ensure that next time the victims of ruling-class vengeance and frame-up do not get let off. Long-held legal rights will be eliminated. No longer will there be a "right to silence". Silence before police interrogation could now constitute admission of guilt. And the right to a jury trial will also be abolished in cases of "criminal damage" amounting to less than £5000.

By empowering police to stop and search people or vehicles (the old "sus"



Alan Walker

"Law and order" Blair wins fans at Police Federation meeting.

laws reintroduced) and, if need be, cordoned off entire areas and communities, the CJB sets its sights squarely on the black and Asian communities, always the primary victims of cop harassment and intimidation. It adds fuel to the racist anti-immigration campaign sweeping Britain and Europe and emboldens the fascist thugs of the BNP to mount murderous assaults against minorities. In France today there is a sinister state campaign of harassment against Northern African minorities under the Mitterrand/Balladur government. And in Britain up to 700 asylum seekers languish in prisons and detention centres, denied any legal representation.

Even the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA), originally implemented by a Labour government in 1974, will be augmented by the CJB. Each year an average of 55,000 people, predominantly Irish, are detained for up to an hour at British ports under the existing PTA (*An Phoblacht*, 27 January 1994). The CJB will enhance the powers of the Special Branch and MI5. According to the civil rights organisation Liberty, "acts of terrorism" will now include anything: possession of standard household items like empty jam jars, rubber gloves or even weighing scales!

Fake left peddle Labour-loyalism

Much of the Labour-loyal fake left has responded to the anti-CJB protests with calls to increase "mass action" and to "fight the Tories". The Coalition Against the Criminal Justice Bill, sponsored by the SWP, announced in a 17 June leaflet that "The experience of the anti-Poll Tax

campaign and the massive show of anger over pit closures shows that ordinary people have the potential to make the government back down." But the pit closure protests of 1992 were channelled by the Labour/TUC leadership into a nationalist popular-front campaign with the likes of racist Tory MP Winston Churchill. The Labourite misleaders opposed calling for strike action, which would have been massively popular, in favour of impotent protest marches which eventually let the sentiment to fight dwindle away. And then the Tories went ahead with the closures. During the anti-Poll Tax campaign the Militant leadership of the Anti-Poll Tax Federation offered to turn over names of demonstrators who defended themselves against mounted police charges in the huge march at Trafalgar Square in 1990. The eternal pro-Labourism of all these outfits always leads into the straightjacket of Blair & Co.

Last year, when police protested the Sheehy recommendations, the SWP and Militant came out in support of union rights for cops, while Workers Power defended their "right" to strike. But the cop protests coincided with the Police Federation's campaign for "law and order". They demanded and got new riot gear. Ominously this campaign has now crystallised in the CJB, which will dramatically increase police powers of harassment and repression.

Speaking at an anti-CJB protest organised at Loughborough on 10 September, a Spartacist supporter nailed the SWP and the fake left's Labour-loyalism and advanced a fighting revolutionary perspective:

"Beware of left groups like the Socialist Workers Party who talk about 'killing the bill' through mass protests while they tell you to vote Labour every time. That's called reformism, and it's the road to nowhere for the working class. What's needed in Britain and across Europe, where workers, women, immigrants and minorities are being brutally repressed by the capitalists, is a revolutionary workers party. Not a party of social democrats like the fascist-loving Mitterrand of France and Mr Law and Order Blair, but a Bolshevik Party like the party of Lenin and Trotsky that led the October 1917 Revolution. The Criminal Justice Bill must be smashed through hard class struggle and that's what's needed to crush the fascist gangs before they grow any larger. It's what's needed to get the boot off the neck of the trade unions. We need that kind of revolutionary party to lead a socialist revolution. That is the party the Spartacist League is fighting to build."■

Spartacist public meetings

London

Save the life of black American journalist, Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the racist US death penalty!
7.30pm, 29 September, Room 553, LSE, Houghton Street

Black workers' strikes shake Mandela/De Klerk "power sharing" deal. For a black-centred workers government in South Africa!
7.30pm, 13 October, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square

Dublin

British troops out of Northern Ireland now! Not Orange against Green but class against class! Middle East, South Africa, Northern Ireland—imperialist-brokered "peace" frauds
8pm, 2 November, Ha'penny Bridge Inn, Wellington Quay, Dublin 2

London and Glasgow dayschools

- The Marxist attitude to the capitalist state
- Northern Ireland: IRA/Sinn Féin opt for imperialist "peace" fraud. British troops out now! Not Orange against Green but class against class!

Plus in London:

- "New World Order": The rise of religious fundamentalism and attacks on women

London
Saturday, 29 October
11.00am - 6.00pm
Room 3A, University of
London Union, Malet Street

Glasgow
Saturday, 5 November
1.30pm
City Halls, Candleriggs
(Albion Street entrance)

Tickets: £1 (in advance) £1.50 (at the door)

Free Winston Silcott!

Seven years after being framed up and jailed for life for the killing of PC Blakelock, and three years after being cleared of the charge, Winston Silcott still languishes in prison. He is the victim of a racist frame-up, intended as an example to all those who would fight against police terror. We demand his immediate release. The power of the integrated working class must be mobilised to fight for his freedom.

What was supposed to be a trial of the two policemen accused of framing him was turned into a venomous re-trial of Silcott himself. His brother George Silcott described how the media "conducted a kangaroo court which attempted to illegally convict Winston for the killing of PC Keith Blakelock all over again" (*Caribbean Times*, 13 August). Typical of the "justice" meted out by the racist British state, the court found the cops Melvin and Dingle not guilty of fabricating the Silcott interrogation notes, despite the fact that the convictions of Silcott, Engin Raghup and Mark Braithwaite (the Tottenham 3) had been quashed in 1991 after proof that these same notes had been fabricated. As in the cases of the Guildford 4 and the Birmingham 6, where the policemen involved in forging confessions walked free, the ruling class looks after its own.

On a roll after the defeat of the miners strike, Thatcher targeted the "enemy

within". In autumn 1985, the cops ram-paged through the streets of Handsworth and Brixton. One week after the near-fatal police shooting of Cherry Groce in Brixton, the police murdered Cynthia Jarrett in her own home. They then staged a racist and violent invasion of Broadwater Farm following community demonstrations protesting her murder. This time however, the cops came up one short.

In April 1987 we wrote: "Three young men have been sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of Blakelock — the cop who expired during the 1985 police riot. There is no evidence whatsoever; the convictions were made because the state will have its vengeance... the government's intention from the outset was to crucify the Broadwater Farm defenders as an 'example' to all those who would struggle against racist state terror" (*Workers Hammer* no 87, April 1987).

Currently serving a life sentence for the killing of a gang leader, Anthony Smith, which he maintains he committed in self-defence, Silcott is fighting for an appeal against the conviction. He is adamant that the Blakelock and Smith cases cannot be separated, pointing out that "any fool can see I am not in jail for the Smith case" (*Independent*, 3 August). Mobilise the working class to put an end to this racist police vendetta! *Freedom now for Winston Silcott!* ■

Rail...

(Continued from page 12)

could win plenty of public support by demanding that the intended fare increases and service cuts be scrapped!

A real strike could deliver a "short, sharp shock" to Major's plans to further butcher the woefully underfinanced railways through privatisation. Don't let the signal workers fight in isolation. Their fight will not be won by fundraising and words of sympathy. Air France workers last November showed that genuine class struggle is the only way to win.

The government is well aware that a victory for signal workers could spark further strikes in the public sector, blowing away the "permanent" pay freeze announced on 14 September by the chancellor, Kenneth Clarke. And as company profits go through the roof, the bosses fear a resurgence of union militancy.

A recent survey published in the *Financial Times* confirms that "unrest" and union activity has risen sharply in the top 500 unionised workplaces. The anti-union laws did not stop successful unofficial strikes breaking out among postal workers this summer. In Merseyside, over 1000 UNISON members employed by the Labour-dominated Sefton council took "illegal" strike action against contracting out. When two of their leaders were prosecuted, hundreds of trade unionists from all over the country turned up at court hearings in Manchester, to the

consternation of the judge. Outrageously, national UNISON leaders condemned the Sefton strike, and are threatening disciplinary action against local leaders. Defend the Sefton 2! Don't pay the fines: for strike action to stop the sequestrators and bailiffs!

The Major government is utterly discredited, and despised by the vast majority of the population. The key obstacle to a working-class counter-offensive is the class-collaborationist leaders of the labour movement. Union bureaucrats like Knapp and the UNISON leadership preach cowardly submission to the bosses' laws. But as militant miners put it ten years ago: the only "illegal" strike is the one that loses! Jimmy Knapp was among those who helped engineer the defeat of that key battle, with his criminal refusal to call out railworkers to strike alongside the miners.

With Major's "stock" devalued among much of the British bourgeoisie, Tony Blair is doing everything in his power to assure the bosses and the bankers that he will make a reliable administrator of capitalist austerity. While some of the union leaders are uneasy with the yuppie Blair, the trade union bureaucracy is solidly wedded to the rotten, reformist Labour Party. Above all what is necessary is the forging of a revolutionary workers party, which can serve as a true "general staff" for the struggles of the workers and oppressed. Such a party would aim at nothing less than the establishment of workers rule, through the revolutionary overthrow of the old capitalist order. ■

Anti-racists...

(Continued from page 12)

Hamlets branch of the union was passed condemning Dunne, an amendment was rammed through—with the support of Socialist Workers Party (SWP) members—that approved Dunne using union funds to pursue his legal vendetta against the RIL. The amendment also limited support to defence efforts on behalf of the Langdon Park 4 to particular organisations, excluding RIL/Community Defence (*Workers Power*, July 1994). As elementary measures, the union should expel the cops' informant Dunne, and must demand that the council drop its legal actions against RIL and all other anti-fascists.

To some youth, the centrist RIL's left-sounding calls for "worker/community defence" may sound refreshing, given the abject reformism of the SWP and Militant. In fact, the word "worker" is simply window dressing to what amounts to a proposal for anti-racist youth patrols. It was notable that at a 30 August meeting called to defend the Langdon Park 4

there was no perspective for appealing to the unions, although many in the audience undoubtedly were union members.

We support the right of any minority community under threat from the fascists or the police to organise in its own defence. However, as even RIL's own press admits, minority youth are rightly concerned that "youth patrols" would be quickly victimised by the cops. The embattled minority youth do not in themselves have the social power to crush the fascists and stop racist cop attacks. What is necessary is to bring to bear the decisive weight of the integrated trade unions, out of which genuine workers defence guards can be forged, that together with the militant youth would provide a disciplined force to teach the fascists some very practical lessons. But such a perspective requires a political break with the Labourite trade union bureaucracy that the fake left crawls before.

While correctly criticising Militant for its reformist line that the cops can be "made accountable", in its "community work" the RIL panders to the same illusions. Thus, an article detailing the racist brutality of the Kentish Town (London)

cops concludes with demands for an "independent and open inquiry into Kentish Town police", along with calls to "Dismiss guilty police officers" and to "Close down Kentish Town police station." But what is this if not pretending that the cops can be reformed and the "bad apples" weeded out? And which police stations does the RIL want to keep open? Forsaking a strategy of relying on the independent mobilisation of the working class, the RIL ends up through the back door capitulating to the capitalist state.

At the time of the local elections, RIL labelled us a "tiny crazed sect" because we refused to call for a vote to Labour. Now it is necessary to defend the embattled Langdon Park 4 (and the RIL itself) against the Labour council and its cops and courts. But serious militants should also draw a political lesson from these events, and reject the suicidal policies of the Labourite left, in favour of revolutionary Trotskyism.

Contribute to Langdon Park 4 Defence Campaign, c/o TUSU, The Colin Roach Centre, 10a Bradbury Street, London N16. ■

Defend Drew McEwan!

SEPTEMBER 5—Socialist Workers Party supporter Drew McEwan faces up to six months in jail after being convicted of "inciting public disorder" for his role in supporting the seven-month-long militant Timex strike in Dundee, which ended in defeat earlier this year.

Around 80 demonstrators protested this show trial, which was a blatant attempt by the capitalist state to intimidate trade unionists and leftists in the context of the hated Criminal Justice Bill and widespread (though not from the Labour Party leadership) sympathy for the continuing strike by RMT signal workers.

Drew returns to court for sentencing on 26 September. Trade unionists and leftists must mobilise heavily in his defence. Hard class struggle against Major and in opposition to the Labour Party/TUC traitors can smash the arsenal of anti-working-class laws and prevent the state from incarcerating strikers and their supporters like Drew McEwan. ■

Workers Hammer 1994 subscription drive

The 1994 subscription drive inaugurates a new subscription policy. **Women and Revolution** will no longer be offered as a separate subscription journal. Instead it will now be included with all subscriptions.

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WORKERS HAMMER 4

Mr Tory Blair tells signalworkers to get lost

Rail unions: shut down BR!

Week after week for the past three months RMT signal workers have been out on strike for one or two days at a time, in favour of their pay claim against Railtrack. The signalling staff average 50 to 60 hours a week in order to make a miserable £14,000 a year. Back in June the union was ready to agree to Railtrack's offer of a 5.7 per cent "productivity" increase (only half the original claim). But even this piffling deal was promptly squashed by the Tory government, who have set up a special cabinet committee, dedicated to breaking the strike and emasculating the rail unions, as a prelude to privatisation.

Key signal boxes are kept open by incompetent, inexperienced and superannuated managerial types, and scab supervisors. The near-disaster near Bromley in Kent on 8 September, when a train partly derailed after reversing away from another train on the same section of track, shows that the government and the rail bosses are totally prepared to gamble

the lives of passengers and railworkers in order to destroy the strength of the unions. Widespread flouting of safety considerations by management has led to numerous rail disasters in the past, such as the failure of signalling equipment which claimed the lives of 35 people at Clapham Junction in 1988.

The arrogance of the British bosses matches that of the operators of an underground line in New York City earlier this century. When the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers called a strike in November 1918 to reinstate workers fired for union activity, the company (BRT) enlisted untrained scabs as drivers. On the first day of the strike, a scab lost control of his train, crashing it into a tunnel wall and instantly killing scores of passengers. More were killed when company officials, unaware of the crash, restored power to the rails, assuming it had been interrupted by trade unionists. By most counts, 92 people died in the accident, the worst in New York public

transport history (Joshua Freeman, *In Transit, The Transport Workers Union in New York City, 1933-1966*).

Today it is the failure of the RMT (led by Jimmy Knapp) to call a real strike which allows the Tory/BR/Railtrack criminals to put on a dance with death every "strike day". The union has never attempted to go beyond the one/two-day strike strategy. It has bowed to anti-union laws by refusing to call out its other members across the rail industry. The drivers union ASLEF and the white-collar TSSA have also had their members work on during the signalling strikes.

But even Knapp's one-day strikes are too much for the Labour Party leadership. Labour's new leader "Tory Blair" visited the Blackpool TUC Congress in September in order to tell the unions there was no way he was going to support the strikers. Instead he called for binding arbitration, ie for the union to knuckle under to the government. Like his disavowal of the promised minimum wage,

this was music to the ears of Rupert Murdoch and the Marks & Spencer bosses, who are warming to the idea that Blair is their man for No 10.

The government have thrown down the gauntlet in the signals dispute—the unions had better pick it up and throw it back in their face. Despite the determination shown by signal workers, the union bureaucrats are courting disaster. Workers throughout the rail industry, outraged at being pitted against the signalmen, know full well that they're next in line if this battle loses. RMT, ASLEF and TSSA must set up mass pickets and shut down the railways through solid *joint* strike action to fight for the needs of all railworkers: For a big pay rise! Reverse the cuts in manning scales! Bring out the London Underground workers! For the unions' right to shut down unsafe operations! Railworkers need to build an industrial union, which can be forged through unity in struggle. And strikers

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Tower Hamlets: Defend Langdon Park 4 against Labour council/police persecution!

Four Bengali students from London's East End—Samad Hussain, Abdul Kobir, Shazed Miah and Rony Rahman—face serious charges of grievous bodily harm, carrying the possibility of long prison sentences. After a notorious local racist suffered a cut on his head in a scuffle at the Langdon Park School on 11 May, the cops mounted a dragnet aimed at Asian youth in the area. On 14 June they raided the homes of eight Asian families in the early morning, arresting eight 16-year-old Bengalis. The indiscriminate raids and arrests are designed to intimidate and terrorise Asian youth, in an area where racist attacks are rampant. We demand: drop all charges against the Langdon Park 4!

When Community Defence, which includes supporters of the Revolutionary Internationalist League (RIL), sought to protest these victimisations, they were immediately threatened by the head teacher, Dunne, with an injunction to prevent them from leafleting. Dunne, who is widely detested by many Asian students, had earlier collaborated with the cops in turning over photographs of Bengali youth. An account in the RIL's *Revolutionary Fighter* (Summer 1994) notes that "what was most disgraceful" about the application for an injunction and later a writ for libel was that they were issued by the Labour Party-run Tower Hamlets local authority. "Such a scandal is as bad as anything the previous Liberal Demo-



Revolutionary Fighter

Langdon Park 4: victims of police and Labour council racist persecution. Drop all the charges now!

crat regime was involved in."

Indeed it is! But it should be no big surprise that the Labour council is collaborating with the racist cops against Asian youth and leftists. Labour's election campaign in Tower Hamlets last May "to stop the BNP" was explicitly predicated on placating "soft-core" racists. While the Labourite left—including RIL—went all out to get Labour elected, we warned

that "Electing Labour has not, will not stop the fascists!" (See *Workers Hammer* no 141, May/June 1994). We pointed out that "as they have done in the past, the cops and courts will seek to protect the fascist scum against the just outrage of their intended victims. In breeding illusions in the chauvinist Labourites who run the council, the fake left has in fact assisted in the demobilisation of anti-

fascist struggle." And indeed the newly elected Labour council wasted no time at all showing whose side they're on!

Although the fascist Derek Beackon lost his seat in the May elections, the BNP actually increased its vote total in Tower Hamlets, as well as nearby Newham. They have just provocatively run in a council by-election in Shadwell, an area with a 50 per cent minority population. More fundamentally, the fascists are not an electoralist organisation; they are an extra-parliamentary gang of race terrorists, kept in reserve by the capitalist class. The bourgeois state protects these scum, in the expectation that it might need them to drown the workers organisations in blood. In fact, "Racial attacks have risen dramatically across London after the resounding defeat of the British National Party (BNP) in the May local elections" (*The Big Issue*, August 1994). And the Tower Hamlets Labour council and the cops are determined to make an example out of anyone who seeks to defend himself against race terror.

The reformist left's version of "fighting racism" boils down to craven appeals to the Labour council. Militant Labour even calls on the council, ie the bourgeois state, to organise defence patrols. Supporters of the SWP in the teachers union (NUT) made a political bloc with the head teacher Dunne and the council against anti-racists. Although a motion by the Tower

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