

Soviet Red Army liberated Auschwitz

VE Day hoopla: imperialist jingoism



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Victorious Soviet Red Army soldiers plant the Red Flag over the Reichstag in Berlin on 30 April 1945 (left). The British and US firebombing of Dresden, Germany (right), which contained no important military or even industrial targets, resulted in butchery of hundreds of thousands of civilians.

The 8 May "Victory in Europe" (VE Day) anniversary is an *imperialist* holiday planned to commemorate the British and allied forces' victory over their German rivals. The whole charade is based on the lie, pushed by ruling class spokesmen, liberals and Labourites alike, that the Anglo-American war against the German Third Reich was a war for "democracy" against the horrors of fascism. As Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky pointed out, the "imperialist democracies are in reality the greatest aristocracies in history. England, France, Holland, Belgium rest on the enslavement of colonial peoples." Those who hail Roosevelt/Churchill's war cover up for the crimes of British and US imperialism—from the firebombings of Dresden and Tokyo, the atomic mass murder in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 to the British-engineered starvation and famine of its colonial domains like Bengal. For British and US imperialism World War II—like the first world war—was an inter-imperialist war, fought out over redividing the booty of capitalist profits.

The Trotskyists of the Fourth International upheld the Leninist programme of revolutionary defeatism towards all the imperialists while standing for the defence of the Soviet workers state. In "A Statement on the War" in 1942, the American Trotskyists explained:

"We considered the war upon the part of all the capitalist powers involved—Germany and France, Italy and Great Britain—as an *imperialist war*.

"This characterization of the war was determined for us by the character of the state powers involved in it. They were all capitalist states in the epoch of imperialism; themselves imperialist—oppressing other nations or peoples—or satellites of imperialist powers.... "This characterization of the war does not apply to the war of the Soviet Union against German imperialism. We make a fundamental distinction between the Soviet Union and its

'democratic' allies. We defend the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is a workers' state, although degenerated under the totalitarian political rule of the Kremlin bureaucracy. Only traitors can deny support to the Soviet workers' state in its war against fascist Germany. To defend the Soviet Union, in spite of Stalin and against Stalin, is to defend the nationalized property established by the October revolution. That is a *progressive war*."

In Britain the Labour Party led by Clement Attlee was a junior partner in Churchill's wartime coalition government. This government carried out atrocities to uphold British colonialism and imperialism. In response to the growing independence movement in the Indian subcontinent, British retaliation was swift and vicious: thousands were killed, entire villages were bombed by the air force, and tens of thousands were rounded up and put in concentration camps. At home the Churchill/Attlee coalition was involved in anti-working-class strikebreaking. Labour minister Ernest Bevin's Order 1305 banned strikes and established binding arbitration for the duration of the war.

In the name of the "people's war against fascism" the Stalinists in the Communist Party preached collaboration with Empire-loyalist Winston Churchill. The allied imperialists were dubbed "democratic" and "progressive" and the enormous authority of the Soviet Union (the world's first workers state) was prostituted for unity with imperialist "democracy". At its Congress in 1944 the British Communist Party (CPGB), rejected the struggle for Indian independence and instructed the Indian working masses to postpone choosing their own form of government till "after the war". The Stalinists supported the wartime persecution of Trotskyists and hailed the atomic bombing of Japanese cities.

Courageously, the Trotskyists in World War II fought against the "people's war" line. Leaders of the American Socialist Workers

Party were imprisoned under the Smith Act in 1941. In Britain, Trotskyists Ann Keen, Heaton Lee, Roy Tarse and Jock Haston were jailed for their participation in the strikes organised by the Tyne Apprentices' Guild and other struggles. In France Trotskyists bravely sought to organise German soldiers and sailors against the Nazi rulers, clandestinely publishing *Arbeiter und Soldat* (Worker and Soldier, see "Trotskyists in World War II" on page two).

The imperialist claim to have "defeated" Hitlerite fascism was a lie in 1945 and it's still a lie, trumpeted today with added vigour as a consequence of imperialist triumphalism over capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. *The Soviet Union crushed Nazi Germany*. It was soldiers of the Soviet Red Army who raised the red flag over the Reichstag on 30 April 1945. They opened the gates of the Auschwitz and Sachsenhausen concentration camps and put a stop to the horrendous extermination programme which had murdered six million Jews and five million of other minorities and nationalities, as well as Communists and leftists in the death camps.

Stalin's policies contributed to devastating Soviet losses during the war. Stalin trusted his 1939 pact with Hitler and rejected numerous warnings, from the Red Orchestra spy network under Leopold Trepper in Western Europe and from Soviet spy Richard Sorge in Japan, that a German attack was imminent. The Red Army had been robbed of its most capable and experienced officers by the Stalinist purges. Thousands were murdered, among them Marshal Tukhachevsky, in order to smother all remaining opposition to bureaucratic rule. Even the most important strategist of World War II, Zhukov, had been purged, only to be reinstated due to the lack of capable officers.

Yet, despite Stalin's policies, the Russian

workers threw back the Nazis' "Operation Barbarossa". Leningrad endured 900 days of siege: more than 800,000 people froze, starved or died in defence of the city, but the Nazis could not take it. It was the determined will of the Soviet people (27 million of whom died during the war) in defending the homeland of the October Revolution which made such obstinate and courageous struggle possible. By the end of October 1944, nearly all of Eastern Europe had been liberated by the Red Army.

D-Day was repeatedly delayed by the US and Britain in the hope that Nazi Germany would bleed Russia (and vice versa). As Senator (and later President) Harry Truman put it in June 1941, the day after Hitler invaded the Soviet Union: "If we see that Germany is winning the war we ought to help Russia, and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany and in that way let them kill as many as possible" (quoted in John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* [1982]). While consciously refusing to take out the railway lines to the Nazi death camps, the British-American imperialists butchered hundreds of thousands in the firebombing of Dresden (which was filled with refugees from the East) and the atomic mass murder in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. These actions were intended to intimidate the Soviet Union.

In France and Italy the bourgeoisie succeeded in restabilising its class rule only with the aid of the Stalinists who entered the post-war governments literally disarming the war-weary and revolutionary-minded masses. In Greece the British army smashed an incipient social revolution. Churchill's instruction to the British army was to "treat Athens like a conquered city". This policy was endorsed by the 1944 Labour Party conference.

Stalin's concessions to Churchill (eg in

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Reform v revolution

We reprint below excerpts from the remarks of NUM leader Arthur Scargill, one of the featured speakers at a "Defend Clause IV" rally in London on 24 February, and the response of SL supporter Alastair Green.

Arthur Scargill: It's ironic, is it not, that after Margaret Thatcher's famous speech in 1979 when she said it was her intention to wipe socialism off the agenda of British politics, that having failed to achieve their objective, she can now see from the sidelines a leader of the Labour Party, Tony Blair, trying to achieve what she failed to do, but also to wipe socialism off the agenda of Labour Party politics as well. Of course, it's not new. It's been tried before. Ramsay MacDonald tried it, Hugh Gaitskell tried it....

Each time it's been tried, members of the party, members of the trade union movement have rejected those attempts to remove that one clause that marks out as an article of faith the Labour Party from other major parties in British politics today....

Labour has won seven general elections—seven—with Clause IV and not in spite of Clause IV. In 1945, 47.8 per cent of the votes

went to Labour. After five years in office, with the most massive radical programme ever seen, it polled 46.1 per cent of the vote and remained in office. But in 1951, after six years in office, after pushing through the most radical programme ever seen, it polled 48.8 per cent....

But it's a vindication of Clause IV, and not a condemnation of Clause IV. So the next time people tell you Clause IV is an electoral liability, explain to them that during the course of those six years Labour actually increased support from the British people, and not the other way around....

James Connolly said these words, and never were they more apt:

*Some men, fainthearted, ever seek
Our programme to retouch,
And will insist, when'er they speak
That we demand too much.
'Tis passing strange, yet I declare
Such statements give me mirth,
For our demands most moderate are,
We only want the earth.*

Alastair Green: Well, I think the question is, who will rule Britain and who will rule the

earth? Because we've heard tonight about the virtues of socialism, and the necessity of socialism. I have no argument with that. We've heard tonight about the crimes of the right-wing Labour leaders like Tony Blair. I've got no argument with that. We have to stand 100 per cent against Blair's attack on Clause IV.

But is Clause IV, as comrade Scargill would put it, the socialist principle of the Labour Party, or does Clause IV represent a figleaf for the Labour Party? Because if you look at the history of the Labour Party in power—if you look at 1945 or any of the Labour governments—the Labour Party has never touched a hair on the head of capitalism. And in order to do that, in order to have socialism, we have to take the question of the state, because you will not get socialism through those green leather benches in Westminster. You will only have socialism through the working class in this country and every country on earth taking power in its own name on the basis of workers councils.

Comrade Scargill talked about the Labour government of 1945 as having the most radical policies in history. No, the government that had the most radical policies in history was the government of Lenin and Trotsky that came out of the 1917 Russian Revolution. That's the model that we must have. We must

stand for the defence of the principle of a centrally planned socialist economy. What's happened under capitalism in Russia, where they've got anthrax and typhoid and mass pauperisation of the population, is an illustration that if you allow the capitalists to take power out of the hands of the working class, then you will have the degradation of the working class and the oppressed of the world.

And if you leave power in the hands of the capitalists, if you don't actually destroy their state—if you want to talk about Marxism, that is the conclusion Marx drew from the Paris Commune of 1871, that we have to destroy their state machine. We can't just take it over like some ready-made instrument. We have to destroy it and construct our own workers state. And that's what this debate is about, it's about what socialism is, how you get socialism. There has to be a discussion of why parliamentary reformism will never do anything more than the last six or however many Labour governments it's been.

You need a different kind of party. You need a Marxist party, a party of class struggle, an internationalist party that will not send the troops to Northern Ireland like the Labour government did last time. And you need a party which will fight for the interests of the workers to the end, that is, to the seizure of power. ■



TROTSKY

Trotskyists on World War II

During World War II the Fourth International fought for defence of the Soviet degenerated workers state, while opposing both imperialist camps whose real war aims were for redivision of colonies and markets. Stalin, who undermined the defence of the USSR, also throttled the revolutionary upsurges in Europe at the close of the war. In the spirit of proletarian internationalism, the French Trotskyists courageously sought to organise German soldiers against the Nazi rulers, clandestinely

publishing the German-language paper Arbeiter und Soldat (Worker and Soldier). We print below an excerpt from an article published in the French Trotskyists' underground newspaper, La Vérité, on the eve of the Allied landing.

Why are these gentlemen from Wall Street and the City now in a hurry to finish the war? Their interests, the interests of the arms merchants, of the traffickers and of the reactionary politicians, were precisely to let the USSR exhaust itself in the fight, lose its wealth and its youth, so that it would come out of the war impoverished, bled white and ready, under pressure, extortion and threats by the international bourgeoisie, to abandon its socialist structure and open its markets to imperialism.

While the USSR was losing its blood, the English and American imperialists were building up gigantic stockpiles of matériel and countless arms near Europe with the hope of being able to impose their will on the USSR and Europe.

That was their plan. But instead, the Red Army resisted. It has pushed forward and driven the German imperialist armies out of the USSR. It now threatens Romania, Hungary and is driving toward Central Europe.

At the same time, the proletariat is awakening in all countries. Recently, we saw the Italian workers sweep away fascism and spontaneously set up factory councils. From Norway to Greece, from France to Poland, the working masses are gaining confidence once again and taking action. Under these conditions, the weakened German gendarme will soon be incapable of insuring police functions and holding back the rising revolutionary tide....

Despite the propaganda statements, which are as hypocritical as the Nazis', the second front is not a second front against Nazism (if that were the case, it would already have existed months ago). It is a front against the Revolution and against the USSR.

—“The Working Class and the ‘Second Front’: How to Do Away with Fascism and War” (*La Vérité*, May 1944)



LENIN

VE Day ...

(Continued from page 1)

ceding Greece to British army rule in 1944) and his services in restabilising bourgeois rule in Western Europe, did not prevent the imperialists from turning on the Soviet Union. Nazi war criminals were recruited by the capitalist West to provide their services in the bourgeoisie's anti-Soviet crusade. The West German state proclaimed itself the legal successor to the Third Reich and took over whole sections of the Nazi regime's state apparatus and launched an anti-communist campaign against the East German workers state. In Britain the post-war Labour government ran a rat line to provide a safe haven for Nazi war criminals like Antanas Gecas (Gecevicius) who was a member of the Lithuanian auxiliary police battalion serving alongside the SS, and was never brought to justice.

On the eve of World War II there was a section of the British bourgeoisie that was sympathetic to Hitler's Germany. For the British ruling class, whether to oppose or ally with Hitler was a pragmatic question largely conditioned by relations with the United States. The once-king Edward, Duke of Windsor was a big fan of Hitler and Mussolini and acted as a virtual patron of Oswald Mosley's homegrown fascists in the 1930s. The parasitic royal family obtained a boost by its identification with the “national unity” of the so-called people's war. The monarchy provides a “popular” focus for national chauvinism, for a belief in class harmony and the flamboyant assertion of “legitimate” social privileges. Abolish the monarchy! Abolish the House of Lords! Abolish the established churches! For a federation of workers republics in the British Isles! For a Socialist United States of Europe!

World War II was ostensibly a war to end fascism but today racist and fascist terror is on

the increase. The bourgeoisie keep the fascists in reserve, as a means of crushing proletarian revolution, when other methods fail. There is no “anti-fascist” wing of the capitalist class. Winston Churchill, lauded today as an “anti-fascist”, was in fact a notorious anti-Semite who enthused over Mussolini's fascists in 1927: “Hereafter no great nation will be unprovided with an ultimate means of protection against the cancerous growth of Bolshevism” (quoted in Robert Black, *Stalinism in Britain*). On the eve of World War II American Trotskyists waged a campaign demanding entry for Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi terror. Both Churchill and Roosevelt kept the borders closed to Jewish refugees.

The “Anti Nazi League”, (a front for Tony Cliff's SWP) panders to national chauvinism in its very name; the use of the word “Nazi” implies that fascism is a foreign import. The scourge of fascism is an organic product of decaying capitalism, whether in Germany or Britain. The BNP scum wrap themselves up in the Union Jack. The ANL spreads deadly illusions in the capitalist state, appealing for laws to ban the fascists. Such laws would not be used against the fascists but against anti-fascists, as they have been in the past. The SWP falsely preaches that voting for Tony Blair's chauvinist Labour Party will stop the growth of fascism.

In a “Joint Declaration by the Spartacist- Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands, Spartakusowska Grupa Polski and Spartacist/Moscow” (4 January), timed for the fiftieth anniversary of the Red Army's liberation of Auschwitz, our comrades pointed out that in the wake of Yeltsin's counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union, anti-Semitism in all its ugly forms is once again raising its head. The comrades noted that: “Rosa Luxemburg emphasized that humanity stands before the alternatives: socialism or barbarism.” It will take international socialist revolution to stamp out the fascist menace for good. ■

WORKERS HAMMER



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

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1984-85: what it would have taken for the miners to win



Workers Hammer



UPI

29 May 1984: riot police charge into picketing miners at Orgreave coking plant in south Yorkshire. NUM president Arthur Scargill arrested at Battle of Orgreave (right). Labour/TUC bureaucrats cannot forgive Scargill for leading this militant strike.

For twelve bitter months in 1984-85, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) fought a heroic battle that attracted working-class support from Britain and across the world. The miners strike was a pivotal event in the postwar history of British class struggle. To this day, NUM leader Arthur Scargill remains a figure of considerable importance within the workers movement, looked up to by workers and youth who recall the heroic miners struggle and respect the NUM leader for his courageous resistance to the MI5-inspired witch hunt.

Seumas Milne's book, *MI5, Maxwell and the Scargill Affair: The Enemy Within* documents the full-scale mobilisation of the forces of the capitalist state aimed at destroying the NUM. Ten years ago large areas of the country were under virtual martial law and an army of cops was mobilised to attack miners picket lines—stark evidence that the capitalist state is neither “neutral” nor reformable. The overt class treachery and sabotage of the miners strike by the Labour Party leadership of Neil Kinnock and the TUC leaders stands as a negative confirmation of the burning need to forge a revolutionary party to lead the working class and oppressed to victory.

The Spartacist League (SL) told the truth about the treachery of the Labour/TUC bureaucrats of the “left” and right, and fought for a programme to win. We fought against the illusion, held even by many miners who from the outset saw this as a chance to sweep away the despised Thatcher government, that this strike could be won as a simple trade union struggle by the miners on their own. Emphasising that the NUM had arrayed against it the full force of the capitalist state, from the very start of the strike we raised the call, “Miners must not stand alone!” We pointed to the need to draw not only other trade unions into struggle alongside the NUM, but to reach out to women and minorities. Among all of these were large numbers who understood that a victory for the miners was a victory for them, and were prepared to fight for this. What was missing was an authoritative class-struggle leadership.

While Kinnock obscenely echoed Thatcher in denouncing the miners for “violence” on the picket lines, the trade union misleaders either openly scabberded or refused to call out their members on strike alongside the NUM. At bottom the reason for this was political. The coal industry was a fundamental part of the British economy. Had steelworkers, railworkers, dockers and power workers refused to handle coal, the country would quickly

have ground to a halt. Effectively this would have amounted to a general strike, posing the question: once the country was shut down, who was going to start it up again—the working class or capitalist class? In short, which class would rule?

Had the miners strike been victorious, it would not only have brought down the Thatcher government, but it would have deeply destabilised British capitalism. Such an example of successful, deep-going class struggle would have begun to make clear to increasing numbers of workers that it is not parliamentary reformism but the mobilisation of the power of the proletariat in the factories,

among which were the Thatcher administration and the Labour leadership.” Milne points to the “comfortable relationship between sections of the Labour hierarchy and the government and security apparatus”. Even after the allegations of personal corruption against Scargill had been exposed as a lie, Kinnock personally presented the British Press Awards “Reporter of the Year” prize to the *Mirror* staff who concocted this fraud.

The Kinnocks and Tony Blairs hate Arthur Scargill with a vengeance because they hate anything that smacks of class struggle. But as Milne points out, there was another reason why Scargill was strongly disliked by the bulk

of a Korean Airlines flight by the Soviets. The incursion of KAL 007 into Soviet airspace was a deliberate provocation by the imperialists, who callously sacrificed the lives of hundreds of civilians to launch a spy mission against the USSR.

Scargill's denunciations of the likes of Solidarność ran strongly against the policies of the Labour Party leaders, who enlisted in Thatcher's anti-Soviet crusade. Those reformists who most zealously red-baited Scargill proved to be the biggest scabherders in the miners strike. Those who lined up against the Soviet Union also sabotaged workers' struggles at home. This showed that what was necessary to lead the miners to victory was not simply trade union militancy, but a revolutionary party with a conscious understanding of the historical, international interests of the proletariat.

While *The Enemy Within* does not purport to be a comprehensive history of the miners strike or the recent NUM, there are nevertheless some key omissions from the book which highlight aspects of Milne's pro-Scargill politics. For instance, Milne quite powerfully defends Scargill against his right-wing Labour critics who claim that the miners would have done better by repudiating class struggle, obeying the courts and laws and kowtowing to Thatcher. But the miners strike was not defeated simply because of the treachery of open right-wing scabherders like Kinnock and Willis. Milne is silent about the sabotage of the “left” Labourite union leaders who preached solidarity with the miners but left them to fight alone. And as we noted in an article written at the conclusion of the strike:

“The NUM leadership under Arthur Scargill took this strike about as far as it could go within a perspective of militant trade union reformism, and still it lost. Why? Because militancy alone is not enough. From day one it was clear that the NUM was up against the full power of the capitalist state. What was needed was a party of revolutionary activists rooted in the trade unions which fought tooth and nail to mobilise other unions in strike action alongside the NUM. But all Arthur Scargill had was the Labour Party, and it would rather see the NUM dead than organise to take on the bosses' state in struggle.”

—*Workers Hammer* no 67, March 1985

The miners strike in fact was a convincing refutation of the line of Benn and Scargill, showing in crystal clear fashion that the Labour Party cannot be transformed into an instrument of class struggle. What is necessary is the forging of a revolutionary party

Review of Seumas Milne's *The Enemy Within*

mines and on the streets which is the key to smashing capitalism. And it is exactly this perspective that the reformist labour bureaucrats hate and fear above all. Even the most “left” Labour leaders, including Scargill and Tony Benn, were and are wedded to the idea that “socialism” will come through electing a Labour government.

Seumas Milne writes eloquently about the complicity of the right-wing Labour leaders with the capitalist state, both during and after the strike. He meticulously details the attempt by the intelligence agencies and those who colluded with them to smear Scargill. These charges were aired in 1990 by Central Television's *Cook Report* and the *Daily Mirror*, which was owned by the corrupt, pro-Labour business tycoon, Robert Maxwell. The central allegations, totally fabricated, were that Scargill pilfered hardship donations from Libya to pay off his home mortgage during the year-long strike and that he diverted money donated by Soviet miners to a secret trust fund to further his personal political ambitions. The main source for these allegations was Roger Windsor, former chief executive of the NUM. Windsor was later named by Labour MP Tam Dalyell and others as an MI5 agent in a parliamentary motion in July 1993.

Milne describes how the *Mirror* story was embraced by the right-wing Labour Party leadership under Neil Kinnock: “The Scargill Affair depended on a coincidence of purpose between an exotic array of interests, foremost

of the labour bureaucracy. The miners strike took place in the middle of Cold War II, a period which began at the end of the 1970s. The imperialists intensified their drive to destroy the Soviet workers state, and the deformed workers states established in Eastern Europe, China, Vietnam and Cuba in the postwar period. The Soviet workers state was hideously deformed by the Stalinist bureaucracy, which destroyed the Bolshevik Party and usurped the rule of the working class, but the fundamental gains of the 1917 Russian Revolution, ie, the overthrow of capitalist rule, remained. The destruction of these gains was a unifying goal for all the imperialist powers internationally. The CIA armed to the hilt the Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin* in their reactionary war against the Soviet Red Army in Afghanistan, while literally millions were funnelled by Western governments and their social-democratic lackeys (such as the German SPD) to pro-capitalist forces like Polish Solidarność.

The imperialist anti-Soviet crusade was also reflected in a bitter Cold War divide within the Labour Party and TUC of the early 1980s, between a CIA-connected right wing and “little England” reformists like Tony Benn. On the eve of the miners strike, Scargill was viciously witch hunted by the TUC misleaders for simply telling the truth about Solidarność' anti-socialism. The 1983 TUC conference also sided with Thatcher in the hysteria whipped up over the shooting down

Miners ...

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party, by splitting the working-class base of the Labour Party from the pro-capitalist misleaders.

Picket lines and ballots

Milne correctly notes that "The 1984-5 coal dispute was the most serious frontal assault on organized labour and the sharpest political and industrial confrontation with the state in Britain since the General Strike of 1926." The ruling class sought to put an end to the stalemate with the trade unions that had existed for over a decade. There had been national miners strikes in 1972 and 1974. In 1972 the government had to release the Pentonville dockers from prison under threat of a general strike. The Callaghan Labour government sought—successfully for a time—to discipline the unions with wage controls (the Social Contract), but that was

courageously defied the bosses' laws. As many militant miners recognised, "The only illegal strike is one that loses."

Following the strike, as part of its arsenal of anti-union laws, the Tories instituted provisions for mandatory secret ballots before any strike, while outlawing secondary picketing. The bosses' support for mandatory secret ballots is predicated on the lie that workers are "duped" or "coerced" into strike action by communists and militants. Accordingly, workers are supposed to reject strike action if given the chance—a self-serving bourgeois myth that belies reality.

In the context of the miners strike the call for a ballot was a naked attempt to break a strike that had already been spread on the ground through flying pickets. This was the means through which the 1972 strike was won: Scargill and the Yorkshire NUM organised 30,000 engineering, building workers and miners to shut down the Saltley coke depot in Birmingham.

Milne notes that in a 1977 national ballot the union rejected an incentive scheme fa-

vourable interview with a miner who had been crossing picket lines, ten weeks into the strike. Meanwhile, the SWP actually boasted of crossing miners' picket lines. When confronted by Spartacist supporters at a public meeting in London in August 1984, SWP honcho Tony Cliff admitted:

"On the question of our steelworkers crossing picket lines. We have steelworkers in Redcar who cross picket lines. We have three steelworkers in Scunthorpe, they cross picket lines. We have a steelworker in Ravenscraig who crosses picket lines. We have a steelworker in Llanwern who crosses picket lines...."
—*Workers Hammer* no 61, September 1984

At the time the SWP absurdly claimed that the miners strike was an "extreme example" of a "downturn" in class struggle; their scab position sharply reflected this defeatism.

The bosses' courts and cops—enemies of the workers movement

From the very beginning of the strike, the undercover role of MI5 was commonly sus-

the bureaucrats' line that you can't take on the government and win is self-serving defeatism that ultimately leads to the dead end of seeking to reform the capitalist state. This is also the methodology of the fake left. Thus most of the reviews of Milne's book draw as their key conclusion the need to get rid of particularly noxious agencies of capitalist state repression. *Socialist Organiser's* (2 December 1994) review of Milne's book is entitled "Abolish MI5!" Its conclusion is the same as that in the *Workers Power* (December 1994) review, which stated: "Above all workers should use these revelations to demand that one of the first things a future Labour government must do is clear out Rimington and her 2,000 strong crew of strikebreakers by abolishing MI5 and all secret state services."

To posit that Tony "law and order" Blair would abolish MI5 is particularly hilarious! Moreover, as Milne points out, the Labour hierarchy has a history of "unhealthy entanglements" with the intelligence services:

"In the early 1960s, a group of Labour leaders—including Hugh Gaitskell, a former SOE officer, and George Brown—made a direct approach to MI5 for records of tapped telephone conversations, bank-account records of payments from Soviet bloc organizations, or names of East European contacts which could be used to smear their left-wing opponents in the internal party factional war. Informal flows of information back and forth were more common, and over the years MI5 recruited freely in Labour's headquarters and among the parliamentary party."

Every bourgeois government—including parliamentary Labour governments—routinely lies to the masses and carries out endless conspiracies, often in violation of its own laws and "democratic" principles. To get rid of the blood-drenched MI5 and MI6 for good will take workers revolution.

The fight to spread the strike

As we pointed out at the time: "In the final analysis, it was not the cops and courts that defeated the NUM; it was the fifth column in labour's ranks" (*Workers Hammer* [WH] no 67, March 1985). The Labourite bureaucrats, including the "left" union leaders like Ron Todd of the TGWU and Ray Buckton and Jimmy Knapp of the rail unions ASLEF and NUR, prevented the extension of the strike to broader sections of the trade unions that was the key to victory.

Milne refers to the NUM's "near-breakthrough" with the threatened strike by National Association of Colliery Overseers Deputies and Shotfirers (NACODS) in October 1984. Although this did alarm the government, coalfield militants were hardly surprised when the conservative pit deputies, who had been crossing picket lines in the scab areas, backed down. Milne barely mentions the substantial acts of solidarity by workers outside the coalfields. He implicitly accepts the framework that militant trade union struggle, restricted to one industry, was sufficient rather than understanding that what was needed was a classwide confrontation with the bourgeoisie.

From the very beginning the SL said the strike could only be won by spreading it to other key sections of the working class. Two national dock strikes were called against the use of scab labour to unload imported scab coal. The government was reeling and the pound shot to a record low in July, at the time of the first strike. But as John Connolly, head of the T&G docks section, admitted: "There was no coordinated action between ourselves and the miners" (*Spartacist Britain* no 60, August 1984). A couple of years later, Thatcher launched a union-busting assault on the dockers, which drove the union out of many ports.

In the transport and rail unions the active sympathy of the ranks for the miners compelled the "left" bureaucrats to issue instructions to black all coal shipments. But when militant members did exactly that, they were left in the lurch. At strategic rail depots hundreds of railworkers were being sent home every day because they refused to move coal trains, which were operated by a minority of

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22 June 1984, Pontefract, Yorkshire: miners' memorial for union martyr Joe Green, crushed to death by a scab lorry while picketing Ferrybridge power station.

buried by strike action during the 1978-79 "Winter of Discontent". The ruling class was determined to break the power of the unions and to wreak vengeance on the miners—the most militant and class-conscious section of the proletariat. Even while still in opposition in the 1970s the Tories—eager to revenge the downfall of the Heath government as a result of the 1974 NUM strike—drew up an elaborate plan to destroy the miners union, authored by Nicholas Ridley.

The 1984-85 strike was triggered by the announcement of the shutting of Cortonwood colliery in south Yorkshire. Scottish miners were already on strike over the threat to shut Polmaise colliery. Flying pickets quickly spread the strike beyond Yorkshire and Scotland, effectively presenting the NUM leadership with the accomplished fact of a national strike.

On 15 March, in the first weeks of the strike, the union had its first martyr, a young Yorkshire miner, Davy Jones, murdered while picketing Ollerton colliery. On 15 June, Joe Green, a 55-year-old miner from Yorkshire, was crushed to death by a scab lorry while on picket duty at Ferrybridge power station. By the end of the strike, something like 10,000 strikers had been arrested and several other miners and members of their families had been killed. The anti-working-class savagery of the capitalists was underlined by the vicious jail sentences handed out to strikers like Welsh miners Dean Hancock and Russell Shankland.

The Thatcher government, echoed by Kinnock, set up a hue and cry because the strike was not sanctioned by a national ballot. While the government shed crocodile tears about supposed denials of workers' "democratic rights", it had established virtual martial law in Nottinghamshire and other coalfields. The issue here was clear: this was naked union-busting by the state. The NUM

vouring miners at more productive pits, for example in Nottinghamshire. "At that time, the old Nottinghamshire NUM, which in 1984-5 cried foul at the absence of a ballot and went on to form the core of the Union of Democratic Mineworkers [UDM], ignored both the union conference and the ballot result and went away to negotiate its own incentive scheme." During the 1984-85 strike the UDM was organised and financed by the notorious anti-union multi-millionaire and Thatcher confidant, David Hart. While capturing the hypocrisy of the scabs, Milne neglects to mention one thing: the authors of the 1977 incentive plan, which introduced big pay differentials dividing area from area within the NUM, were the Labour government and specifically its Energy Minister, Tony Benn!

But it wasn't just Thatcher, the scabs and their apologists like Neil Kinnock who howled for this *strikebreaking* ballot. As was often the case, the position of the miners' leadership was to the left of many ostensible Marxist organisations. Both the Leninist (today the Communist Party of Great Britain) and *Workers Power* (WP) denounced Scargill for not calling a ballot. In defence of its "workers ballot", *Workers Power* (2 May 1984) claimed:

"In refusing point blank to call for any form of national vote for or against a national strike, Scargill, Taylor and Co have left themselves without any weapon for winning over Nottingham miners except mass picketing and demonstrations."

In the tradition of parliamentarist Labourism, WP portray the picket line—the basic weapon of class struggle—as a weaker instrument than a ballot!

Throughout the miners strike much of the left did not even pay elementary respect to picket lines. Thus, *Socialist Action* (1 June 1984), published by Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat organisation in Britain, ran a

pected in the coalfields. But it wasn't until the winter of 1990-91, when a group of disaffected employees of the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) approached the *Guardian*, that the full extent of the secret war against Britain's miners started to become clear. Milne reports that according to these GCHQ workers, the government's "secret war" included the following:

"Our informants provided details of the large-scale misuse of GCHQ and its outstations in Britain, co-sponsored and co-financed by the US National Security Agency, to track the activities of NUM officials and the movement of the miners' funds around the European banking system. Action by the security service to discredit Scargill had, they said, led to abortive attempts to implicate him in the theft of phoney cash deposits of hundreds of thousands of pounds."

After the government tracked down union funds that had been placed in banks throughout Europe as a precautionary measure against seizure by the courts, the NUM conducted its financial transactions with cash, in an operation that was highly centralised by the union's general secretary Peter Heathfield, Scargill and his personal assistant Nell Myers.

Milne notes that in the post-strike period the "continuing large-scale electronic surveillance of the European banking system—as the intelligence agencies attempted to follow the NUM leaders' ongoing financial manoeuvres—caused increasing alarm". Apparently fear that the banks might blow the whistle was one reason why the government's Fraud Squad dropped its investigation into Scargill. In other words, the naked class manipulations of the legal system were so grotesque the bourgeoisie felt compelled to curtail this operation in the interests of "normal" bourgeois order.

The miners strike vividly demonstrated the lengths to which a bourgeois state power will go to crush its perceived enemies. However,

Abolish the racist death penalty!

Mobilise to save Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Black political prisoner on death row in USA



We reprint below an edited version of the appeal issued by the Partisan Defence Committee in February. Since its first printing, about 10,000 copies of this appeal have been circulated in Britain and Ireland, generating widespread support for Mumia Abu-Jamal's fight. Many people recoiled in horror reading the wide press coverage of the long torture of Nicholas Ingram, which ended on 8 April with his legal murder by the state of Georgia. The fight for Jamal has been fuelled by the horror many feel about the death penalty.

The Partisan Defence Committee is a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defence organisation which champions cases and causes in the interest of the whole of the working people. This purpose is in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League.

We are in a race against time to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal, a courageous black journalist, fighter for social justice, and a political prisoner on death row in Pennsylvania. Mumia Abu-Jamal is the victim of a racist frame-up. As a former Black Panther Party member, a MOVE supporter, and an award-winning black journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless", Jamal has lived a vibrant life of struggle on behalf of the poor, the black and the dispossessed in America. Even from the hideous conditions of death row, Jamal continues to speak out for the oppressed in commentaries which appear regularly in newspapers all over the US and internationally. It is precisely because he is a beacon of hope and strength in the fight against racist injustice that the forces of reaction and repression want to silence Jamal forever by execution. *This racist legal lynching must be stopped!*

The threatened execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal is not only inherently racist and barbaric, it is also the first explicitly political execution attempted in the US since the government murdered Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in 1953. Just as the Rosenbergs were murdered in the McCarthyite climate of Cold War anti-Communism, the persecution of Mumia Abu-Jamal takes place in a context of a right-wing Congress pushing a devastating rollback of the gains made by blacks, women, gays and the labour movement through hard-fought struggles. The death penalty is the centrepiece of the right-wing backlash for racist "law and order". Clinton's new Crime Bill, passed just before the midterm elections, mandates the death penalty for 60 more federal offences, effectively making the death penalty the law of the land even in states that abolished it.

In Pennsylvania, Republican Tom Ridge won the state house on a pro-death penalty platform and he has now signed five death warrants, with the first execution due this April. In mid-March Ridge signed a law ordering a 90-day time limit for signing death warrants after the state Supreme Court upholds sentencing and mandating execution 30 days thereafter. Foremost among the over 170 men and women on Pennsylvania's death row is Mumia Abu-Jamal, who was framed up in 1982 on charges of killing a Philadelphia police officer. The Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) openly boasts of its campaign to kill Mumia, rallying outside the state house and bombarding the television and radio talk shows with bloodcurdling calls to "get on with it".

The campaign to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal is at a critical stage. Jamal's attorneys, led by Leonard Weinglass, are currently preparing to file an application for a new trial in Pennsylvania state court. While availing ourselves of every legal resource at our disposal to save Jamal's life, death penalty abolitionists cannot expect justice through the capitalist courts. We must rely on and organise the tremendous power of social protest to save Mumia. The power and exposure of international protest may well have prevented South Africa's white racist rulers

from killing Nelson Mandela while he was in prison as they killed Steve Biko and countless other anti-apartheid militants. Were it not for mass mobilisations in the early thirties against Jim Crow "justice", the Scottsboro Boys would have died in prison for a crime they did not commit.

The cops and their friends in high places know that Jamal symbolises capital punishment in America—you'd better know it too. Join the campaign to save Mumia Abu-Jamal!

The frame-up of Mumia Abu-Jamal

In the early morning hours of 9 December 1981, Jamal was working as a cab driver and saw his brother Billy being beaten by police officer Daniel Faulkner. Jamal got out of his cab and took a near-fatal bullet in the stomach. Jamal was found sitting on the kerb and bleeding nearly to death. Faulkner was dead. Jamal was sent to death row in a classic Southern-style racist frame-up on charges of killing a police officer. While critically wounded, Jamal was beaten, kicked, rammed into a pole and dumped on a hospital floor by police, where he was beaten again. Jamal has always maintained his innocence, but was presumed guilty by the hanging judge and prevented from presenting a defence in a

frame-up trial fraught with violations of Jamal's constitutional rights, from jury selection to closing arguments.

THE JUDGE: Albert Sabo—the "King of Death Row"—has sentenced more men and women to death than any other sitting judge in the US. A former under-sheriff for 16 years and member of the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police, Sabo is known by defence attorneys as "a prosecutor in robes". Sabo limited cross-examination of prosecution witnesses, saying at one point, you "don't have to prove that every witness is a liar on the stand".

THE PROSECUTOR: Joseph McGill—no stranger to frame-up prosecutions. One of his victims, Matthew Connor, spent 12 years in prison before his release in 1989, when McGill's illegal concealment of evidence was exposed. In Jamal's case, to relieve jurors of any responsibility for the legal lynching, prosecutor McGill told the jury, "You are not asked to kill anybody. You are asked to follow the law... the same law that will provide for him appeal after appeal after appeal." In earlier cases tried by McGill, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that this same argument required automatic reversal of the death sentence.

THE DEFENCE: Jamal was denied the right to represent himself or have the attorney of his choice. He was allocated a mere \$150 for pre-trial investigation in a case in which the police had already interviewed 125 people. Jamal was removed from the courtroom and missed most of the prosecution's case. His court-appointed lawyer was unprepared for trial and repeatedly asked to be relieved. He was later disbarred.

THE JURY: In a city which is over 40 per cent black, all blacks except two were excluded from the jury. One black juror was dismissed by the judge himself and replaced with a white juror who stated that he was not sure he could be unbiased in this case. Another juror's best friend was a Philadelphia cop.

THE EVIDENCE: Critical evidence demonstrates Jamal's innocence. The prosecution's case claimed that only Jamal and his brother came anywhere near Faulkner until the back-up cops arrived. But four witnesses stated they saw a third man shoot Faulkner and then run from the scene. McGill & Co produced as a witness a hospital security guard who claimed to hear Jamal confess to the shooting. But the officer who took Jamal into custody and stayed with him reported that Jamal remained silent the entire time. His



Jessica Huntley (Bogle L'Ouverture Press) speaking at London rally.

Workers Hammer

continued on page 6

Mobilise to save Mumia ...

(Continued from page 5)

testimony was not produced at trial. The defence was told he was "on vacation" and unavailable. Testimony of other eyewitnesses was not produced at trial.

THE SENTENCING: Mumia Abu-Jamal was sentenced to die for his political activities and beliefs. McGill secured the death sentence by telling the nearly all-white jury that Jamal's membership in the Black Panther Party and use of the slogan, "power to the people" and the old Maoist dictum, "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun" 12 years earlier "proved" he was a "cop-killer"!

THE APPEALS: The Pennsylvania Supreme Court ignored its own precedent to reverse the forbidden "appeal after appeal" argument and affirmed the sentence of death against Jamal. Months later, in another case, Pennsylvania's highest court re-established its earlier precedent. In 1990 the US Supreme Court refused to hear Jamal's appeals, which emphasised that he was sentenced to death because of his Black Panther Party membership. Yet two years later the same court reversed the death sentence of David Dawson, ruling that evidence of his membership in the white supremacist Aryan Brotherhood prejudiced the jury.

From Philadelphia, PA to Washington, DC, the courts have adopted special rules for Jamal and racked up a mountain of constitutional violations. The men in black robes want black men's blood.

The Philadelphia Story—Rizzo Town

From the vicious 1871 riot by white gangs which left four blacks dead to the bombing of the MOVE commune on 13 May 1985, Philadelphia has always been a racist hellhole. Blacks ghettoised in dilapidated, overcrowded housing; segregated rundown schools; black unemployment and infant mortality nearly twice that of whites; the status quo brutally enforced by racist, trigger-happy cops led by Frank Rizzo—this is the Philadelphia in which Jamal was born and raised. The record of former mayor Frank Rizzo's campaign against the black population of Philly is a tale of state-sponsored terror—and at every turn, Jamal was there to expose and protest the injustice.

In 1966 Rizzo led a unit of 80 cops in raids against meetings of the militant civil rights group SNCC. In 1967 Rizzo led busloads of baton-wielding cops in an attack on students protesting the dismal education in Philadelphia's antiquated and segregated schools. Fifty-seven students were arrested and 22 seriously injured. Among those students fighting to rename Benjamin Franklin High School for Malcolm X was the 13-year-old Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Jamal was beaten and arrested by Rizzo's plainclothes cops for protesting a 1968 presidential rally for George "Segregation Forever" Wallace. In September 1969, Rizzo's cops raided Black Panther Party headquarters and tore apart the office. Fifteen-year-old Minister of Information Mumia Abu-Jamal was among those arrested. Later that year, armed cops surrounded the Church of the Advocate on 14 December, as 1000 people inside paid their respects to slain Panther leader Fred Hampton, who was murdered in his bed by the Chicago cops and FBI ten days earlier. Mumia Abu-Jamal was the first speaker at the event, which was widely covered in Philadelphia newspapers. Three weeks later, in January 1970, Jamal was featured in a front-page article about the Panthers in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

In coordination with the FBI and its deadly COINTELPRO operation against the black movement which left 38 Black Panther Party members dead, Rizzo and the Philly police compiled files on 18,000 people and 600



Ligato/Philadelphia Bulletin

Rizzo's killer cops strip search Philadelphia Black Panthers in 1970 raid.

organisations. This campaign of police terror culminated in the infamous August 1970 raid on the Philly Panther office in which Black Panther Party members were lined up against the wall and forced to strip naked while the press looked on. Rizzo became an icon to the racist "law and order" crowd.

Jamal, the young student activist, co-founder of the local Black Panther Party chapter and renowned journalist, could not have—and did not—evade Rizzo's deadly eye. Jamal was among the journalists covering Rizzo's press conference following the 8 August 1978 siege of the MOVE commune's Powelton Village home by hundreds of heavily armed cops. Rizzo blamed the "new breed of journalism" for the death of one cop and threatened, "They believe what you write, what you say. And it's got to stop. And one day, and I hope it's in my career, that you're going to be held responsible and accountable for what you do."

The state's opportunity for "settling accounts" came three years later, on 9 December 1981 when Jamal was shot in the chest by a cop and railroaded to death row.

Stop racist legal lynchings!

To the brutal reality of rampant joblessness, impoverishment and the epidemic of homelessness, the rulers of American society have no solution but increased repression. Schools crumble—build more prisons. Factories shut down—gut welfare and hire more cops. Sixty per cent unemployment for black male youth—throw them in boot camps. Housing shortage—declare a "war on drugs" and raid public housing, throwing whole families out on the streets.

With 1.5 million people behind bars, the US is far and away the world's biggest jailer, imprisoning blacks at a rate far higher than South Africa's apartheid rulers ever dreamed of. Over 25 per cent of young black men are under the "supervision" of the very criminal "injustice" system.

Capital punishment is institutionalised racist murder. It represents the legacy of slavery—legal lynching—a continuation of the ideology that proclaims that black people are not human and can be killed with impunity. State executions are a social act meant to intimidate and brutalise a whole people. The death penalty shackles the ancient tradition of torture to the ruthless machinery of the modern capitalist state.

Texas rang in the New Year by executing Jesse Dwayne Jacobs, a man they knew was innocent of the crime he was sentenced to die for! This grotesque murder exposes the symbolic value of the death penalty to the ruling class: the all-powerful state will decide who lives and who dies. Truly in the death penalty we see the impulse to genocide.

As Jamal wrote in the prestigious *Yale Law Journal*, "You will find a blacker world on Death Row. African Americans, a mere twelve percent of the national population,

compose about forty percent of the Death Row population." Over 80 per cent of those sent to death row from Jamal's Philadelphia are black, some one-third of those on the row from Philadelphia sent there by... Judge Sabo.

In the 1987 case of *McCleskey v Georgia*, the US Supreme Court acknowledged the overwhelming racial bias in the application of the death penalty but argued that *this didn't matter because*, "taken to its logical conclusion [this] throws into serious question the principles that underlie our criminal justice system". Thus Chief Justice Rehnquist & Co reaffirm the principle set forth by Justice Roger Taney in the infamous 1857 Dred Scott case, that blacks "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect".

The racist death penalty goes hand in hand with the extralegal terror of the KKK and summary executions by cops on the street to keep black people "in their place". The fight to abolish the death penalty is part of the historic struggle for black equality in America.

In Britain and Ireland, blacks and Asians, Irish Republicans, miners who struck in 1984-85, know all too well the racist and repressive fist of the capitalist state. Winston Silcott, in his tenth year behind bars, is the racist rulers' "example" for those who would struggle against state terror. Those who have fought for Silcott must also fight for Mumia Abu-Jamal. Free Winston Silcott!

A message from Paul Hill, one of the Guildford Four, to a July 1990 Partisan Defence Committee rally in London for Jamal read in part:

"I cannot forget that the judge at my trial said that he regretted that he could not sentence me to death. If he had then last October's admission of my innocence by the British Home Secretary would have meant nothing. Nothing could be a greater indictment of the barbaric death penalty."

Save Mumia Abu-Jamal!

The forces of racist "law and order" have been mobilising to push through Jamal's execution. After announcing its plans to air a series of commentaries by Jamal, National Public Radio (NPR) caved in to pressure by the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) to cancel the broadcasts. Senate Republican leader Robert Dole threatened on the Senate floor to cut off NPR's federal funding. Evidently NPR's prestigious "All Things Considered" programme could not "consider" letting a black man falsely convicted of killing a cop speak from death row. Yet on 8 November, NPR found it acceptable to broadcast the murderous ravings of an anti-abortion bigot who threatened that if Florida gives the death penalty to the murderer of a heroic Pensacola abortion doctor, "blood will run in the streets like nobody has ever seen"!

More recently the Philadelphia FOP stepped up its vendetta against Jamal with a

frenzied media blitz to try to stop publication of his book *Live from Death Row*. They want to seize a \$30,000 advance promised the author whom they brand the "Donald Trump of death row". This is literally a life-and-death question of free speech. The FOP, the capitalist politicians and media want to silence Jamal to make it easier to kill him. Pennsylvania State Representative Michael McGeehan, author of a bill to speed up executions, said he's "specifically interested in [Jamal's] case. We're going to see him die." *In fighting the legal lynching of Jamal we will strike a blow against the entire apparatus of racist, capitalist repression.*

Mumia Abu-Jamal does not stand alone. Over 40,000 people have signed petitions or sent letters to the governor demanding Jamal not be executed. Harry Belafonte, Congressman Ron Dellums, Danny Glover, Whoopi Goldberg, Angela Davis, the Workers Organization of South Africa, the Palmares Cultural Foundation in Brasilia are just some of the individuals and organisations who have joined tens of thousands who say: "Mumia Abu-Jamal Must Not Die." Unions representing millions of workers—including the French General Confederation of Labour (CGT); the Metro Toronto Labour Council and Vancouver Public Employees in Canada; Section 10 of the Mexican Teachers Union SNTE; the IG Medien print and media workers of Berlin; dockers' union locals in San Francisco; transport workers ATU Local 308 in Chicago, and more, have taken up Jamal's cause. In the British Isles they are joined by the National Union of Journalists, the Fire Brigades Union, the GPMU, the Southern & Eastern Region TUC, and branches of the RMT and NATFHE, among others. An Early Day Motion put in the House of Commons in March and signed by 51 MPs calls on the governor not to execute Jamal. MPs Tony Benn, Bernie Grant and Alan Simpson have written in protest to Governor Ridge, as has Bill Morris on behalf of the General Executive Council of the one-million-strong Transport and General Workers Union, and John Monks, General Secretary of the TUC.

During February and March the Partisan Defence Committee and its sister organisations held protest rallies and meetings across the globe, from Sydney to Tokyo to Paris to Mexico City and major cities in the United States. At some of the US rallies, members of Jamal's family provided their own heart-rending testimony. In Toronto, Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, a former contender for the middleweight boxing championship, who was framed up for murder and jailed for two decades, was a featured speaker at the rally. In Berlin on 7 February, 300 people demonstrated outside the US Embassy. The demonstration was endorsed by the PDS and addressed by representatives of Jewish and Kurdish groups. At the Paris rally, protests were read from the Confederation of Kurdish Associations in Europe and Serge Klarsfeld on behalf of the "Sons and Daughters of Deported French Jews".

Make the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the voice of the voiceless that the police want to silence, a rallying cry against the racist death penalty. Raise *your* voice and *organise*, in your unions, youth and community groups, to demand that Jamal must not die. Save Mumia Abu-Jamal! Abolish the death penalty! ■

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COC Productions

From death row, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal

High-tech hell

The following statement from Jamal for the international campaign of protest was read to the 29 March London rally.

Over many long years, over mountains of fears, through rivers of repression, from the depths of the valley of the shadow of death, I survive to greet you, in the continuing spirit of rebellion. ONA MOVE!

My words come to you from Pennsylvania's new, bright, shining hell. This state's supermax is a wholly political construction, erected solely to ease the fears of those who have feasted for years on the blood and misery

of the weak and the poor. It is correction's newest, latest fashion craze; but I ask you, those who labor under the illusion of their own so-called freedom, do you feel safer now?

As America's ruling classes rush backwards into a new Dark Age, the weight of repression comes easier with each passing hour. But as repression increases, so too must resistance. Prayer vigils are not enough. Midnight strolls in candlelight are not enough. Prestigious appeals for government piety are not enough.

It is time for direct action. For mass action.

For concerted action of the silent many whose silence through timidity is perceived as the silence of acquiescence. Like our forefathers, our foremothers, our kith and kin, we must fight for every inch of ground gained. The repressive wave sweeping this country will not stop by good wishes, but only by a counterwave of committed people firm in their focus. I hope you will be among them.

From death row, you have my thanks and my salute. ONA MOVE! **LONG LIVE JOHN AFRICA!**

— 9 February 1995

Rally ...

(Continued from page 8)

we should also think of those other death row prisoners, we should think also of those single mothers that are going to face the draconian measures that Newt Gingrich wants to pass through and we should support the need and the demand for an American party of labour to give voice, to represent, fight and give voice to those people.

George Silcott (Chairman, Winston Silcott Defence Campaign):

Well I am honoured to be here tonight because like the chairman just said I feel it. What happened to Mumia is a clear case of racism...I feel it. Because back in 1985 my brother could have been in the same predicament, not only waiting to go to a chair, he would have been dead. Just because of the racism in this country and the way the whole system stands.

For those who don't know about Winston Silcott, Winston Silcott is portrayed by the comic press of this country as a black murdering thug. For no apparent reason he was made a scapegoat of a killing of a police officer back in 1985 on the Broadwater Farm estate in North London.

Winston is not in a situation where his life is going to be taken by a chair or needle or whatever, but if they get their way he ain't coming out of prison, he will rot in prison for the rest of his life. So to me, if you feel about injustice and you care about what is happening, get involved in this campaign. I know it is primarily about Mumia but there are other people suffering as well and it is because of racism and injustice in this country so please help in any way you can. It is not just about Winston Silcott, it is not just about black people, injustice can hit anybody, anybody!

Derek Wall (Green Party):

It hurts when I think of Mumia and all that has happened to him and I just think of a man who has been put in solitary for five years for growing his hair naturally. It hurts when I think about the firebombing of the MOVE community. It hurts when I think of MOVE brothers and sisters on 30 to 100-year jail sentences for crimes they did not and could not have committed.

The UK Green Party at its last conference unanimously, without a single delegate voting against, unanimously voted to support Mumia's campaign. Unanimously, decided to mobilise Greens right across the world. We must defend Mumia, we need Mumia, he is a very, very important man.

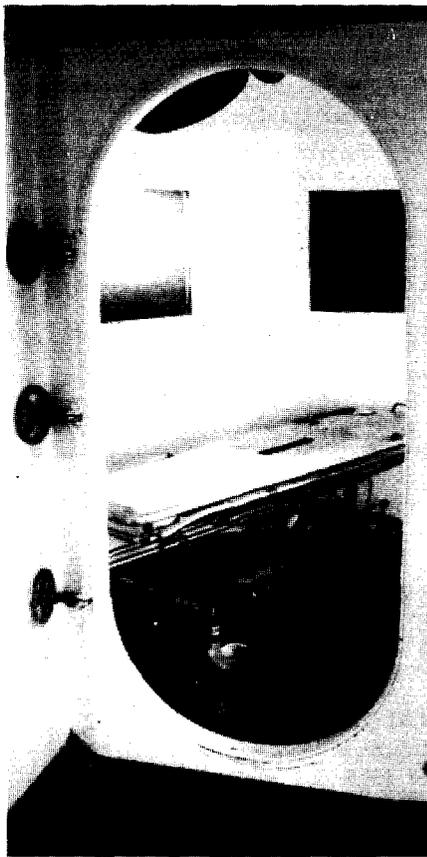
Andrew Gatsos (Spartacist League):

The first thing I would like to say to comrades here who have joined in the fight to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal, is that we can stand on a proud working-class tradition that motivated British workers last century to strike a crucial blow against slavery during the American Civil War. They were mobilised by Karl Marx and the International Workingmen's Association—the First International; they organised meetings across the country against their own ruling class and its threatened intervention on the side of the slave owners of the Confederacy.

The very same ruling class are the ones who today spawn the growth of fascists, the murderous BNP. There is a need to fight to organise the power of the trade unions alongside blacks, Asians, gays, Jews, all the oppressed to crush the fascists. Not with pleas to the state to make bans against the fascists. The capitalist state will defend the fascist scum. And the cops and the prison guards, far from workers in uniform, are the armed enforcers of capitalist rule. Voting Labour will not, has not stopped the fascists. We need

trade union power drawing in all the oppressed, mobilised independently in mass actions to stop fascist attacks.

In this country we get the Criminal Justice Act, drawn up by the Tories, supported by Tony Blair's Labour Party. The right of silence is to be abolished; the police have increased powers to carry out their racist



Der Spiegel

Lethal injection chambers: machinery of legal state murder.

victimisation against blacks and Asians. Moreover the Criminal Justice Act aims to crack down and, if need be, crush working-class resistance.

Today, particularly with the success of counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, capitalism has a sense of triumphalism. Supposedly "communism is dead". History has supposedly ended, they tell us. We have now reached the zenith of humanity—the free market! Even the spectre of social revolutions that happened in the past, the English Revolution of the seventeenth century, the French Revolution of 1789, and the 1917 Russian Revolution, they want to exorcise them. They want to obscure what they represented. Because they want to obscure the racial and social oppression that's evident in today's world.

The death penalty was suspended in Britain in 1965 for most crimes. It can still be used for the crime of treason or for touching a hair on the head of the monarch. So when the English monarch, Elizabeth II, visits Russia,

its meaning is twofold: the institution of the monarchy is both a guarantee of rigid social hierarchy (ie our place in society is marked, there is no change), and it's also a rallying point for reaction. Which is precisely why we call for the abolition of the monarchy, the House of Lords and the established churches! We stand for a federation of workers republics in the British Isles and for a Socialist United States of Europe!

We stood in defence of the deformed workers states against capitalist counterrevolution. We recognised that it would bring wholesale devastation for working people in those countries. Their destruction has heightened the rise of fascism across Europe and the intensification of "New World Order" capitalist aggression, of the sort that we see today in the imperialist-backed Turkish military massacre against the Kurdish people.

In 1984-85, the heroic miners fought a long and bitter battle. Their struggle galvanised widespread support, amongst workers, amongst youth, amongst blacks and Asians. We need to recognise the lessons of that struggle, they resound today. Because the miners were betrayed by Labour and trade union misleaders of both the right, who openly sabotaged that strike and the so-called "left" who refused to mobilise their unions in strike action.

Our model is the 1917 Russian Revolution. Because it was here that the working class seized power in its own name and on behalf of the world's working class. The critical factor to the success of the Russian Revolution was the Bolshevik Party led by Lenin and Trotsky, the tribune of all the people. And we, of the Spartacist League, are dedicated to forging such a revolutionary party, that will mobilise the power of the working class to expropriate the capitalist class and build a workers government based on workers councils. ■

WORKERS HAMMER

Marxist newspaper of the Spartacist League

- 1-year subscription to *Workers Hammer* for £3.00 includes *Spartacist*, organ of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist); and *Women and Revolution* (Overseas subscriptions: Airmail £7.00; Europe outside Britain & Ireland £4.00)
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Benefit concert for Mumia Abu-Jamal

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London rally for death row political prisoner

We reprint below extracts from the remarks made by the speakers at the PDC rally in London, 29 March 1995.

Kate Klein (Partisan Defence Committee):

We're here tonight as death penalty abolitionists, an appropriate term, since the roots of today's death penalty in America really go back to the institution of chattel slavery. And the fight to save Mumia and abolish the death penalty is really part of the fight to finish the American Civil War, which abolished slavery but which was unfinished because the promise it held of racial equality was repudiated and it will take a third American revolution to finish that Civil War and to lay the basis for the elimination of racism, in a socialist society.

Why this current stampede to kill on the part of the official torturers and executioners? Well they don't have the "red menace" anymore, so they ever more viciously play the race card, to keep us divided along race lines, and sex and ethnic lines as well. And with the race card comes the gamut of official terror let loose on the black population.

The British death penalty of course had its political applications: Sir Roger Casement, the Irish nationalist, was executed in 1916 just up the road at Pentonville Prison. Around the same time the great Irish revolutionary James Connolly and the other leaders of the Easter uprising were summarily executed. The history of the death penalty is naturally linked to the history of bloody British imperialism. During the national independence struggle in Kenya in the '50s, which incidentally was one inspiration for the Civil Rights movement in the US, over 11,000 rebels were slaughtered, including 1000 judicial executions.

There is a death penalty in several territories formerly part of the Empire, where the stench of colonialism remains: in Barbados; in Jamaica where there are over 150 people on death row; in Trinidad and Tobago where

there are over 60 people on death row and where the first executions in 15 years were carried out last summer. And the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, that appendage of the British monarchy, sits as the court of final appeal in death penalty cases in these Caribbean countries.

While we avail ourselves of every judicial process possible, we recognise that the whole machinery of the capitalist state, the courts and the prisons and the cops, exist to maintain the exploitive rule of the bourgeoisie. So we place our faith in the power of the working class.

The history of class-struggle defence work is that of James Cannon, the founder of American Trotskyism. Cannon came from the tradition of militant trade unionism of the IWW, better known as the Wobblies, who had a slogan they lived by: an injury to one is an injury to all! It is our watchword today.

The fight for Mumia speaks to people where they live, to their own struggles against racist brutality and exploitation. And many people feel this: that if we win, if we can save Mumia and defeat the death sentence, that's a beginning.

Dawn Marks (London Guildhall University Students Union executive member):

I wish to remind everybody of the death of Joy Gardner in Britain, which I believe is important in the case of trying to stop racist murders in America. Was not the death of Joy Gardner, a state murder of her? She was a student at our university. Our students union has got a plaque outside to remember her death and the deaths of Bangladeshi boys in the East End of London, which the police did nothing about.

Where will it stop in Britain? That is why our union believes it is so important to prevent this racist murder of an innocent man in America because it could lead to our sphere of influence, the East End of London and to

me everything must be done, our union is in full support, to stop this terrible happening.

Alfred Banya (General Secretary, African Liberation Support Campaign):

As Mumia Abu-Jamal puts across himself, his treatment at the hands of the capitalist system is a wider issue than him as a person.



300 demonstrate outside US embassy office in Berlin, 9 February, part of international campaign of protest to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

The campaign to save Mumia must therefore be seen within the context of revolutionary action of the masses for a non-racial society. It is impossible to separate race relations from the capitalist class relationships in which they have their roots. A non-racial society cannot therefore come as a gift from the minority ruling class. We must fight for it.

As a recognition of the role that Mumia has played in exposing agents of imperialism, the Congress of Pan African Anti-Imperialist Democratic Forces, a member organisation of African Liberation Support Campaign, has asked me to announce to this meeting that it has agreed to adopt Mumia Abu-Jamal as its honorary general secretary and will publicise his case throughout Africa and worldwide through its contacts.

Steve Hedley (Harlesden branch of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport workers):

I am here to express solidarity with a political activist but I am also here out of self interest. The stitch-up and the attempted murder of Mumia Abu-Jamal has parallels here. Anybody that thinks that there is not a death sentence, albeit an unofficial one, operating in Britain is sadly deluded. You look at the shoot-to-kill policy in Northern Ireland. Of course the state doesn't lightly resort to that sort of thing, they like to have a legal veneer. Unfortunately they haven't got it in this country, so they shoot people down in the street. British justice: it doesn't exist for black people, for Irish people, for working-class people. You see the Birmingham 6, the Guildford 4, Winston Silcott, all blatantly innocent; the only thing they have done is oppose the state. We heard Mumia say that power comes from the barrel of a gun, well our rulers know this. The ruling class in this country, they are well aware of that, they just don't like anybody else copping on. The ruling class is organised worldwide in its exploitation of us, the working class, and it doesn't matter what colour we are, we are all workers. And I'd like to say to any African people here, any black people, we are behind you. No, we know we're workers, we are not taken in, in

this racist mythology. We don't think we are superior, we are just the same as you and we want to fight alongside you.

I am glad to see an international campaign is getting launched because we have got to organise internationally. The ruling class, they only concede anything when the workers start to push forward but as long as that class remains intact, as long as we don't actually destroy the system, any gains that we make are temporary. We only get rid of this oppression and we can only really get justice for everybody, regardless of the colour of their skin or the class, when the actual system is gone.

Finally, I'd like to just pledge the support of the Harlesden branch and the London Midland District Council. We want the abolition of this death penalty and will continue to campaign until Mumia is free.

Jacob Ecclestone (Deputy General Secretary, National Union of Journalists):

I find it particularly poignant, this campaign, because my parents were very much involved in the campaign to try and save the Rosenbergs in '53. And indeed one of my early memories as a child was being involved in the emotional stress of trying to save people from the electric chair and it has never gone away.

What would have happened to the Guildford 4 and Birmingham 6 and Winston Silcott, if we'd had the death penalty? Because the argument is unanswerable. I am here because the NUJ supports the campaign to end the death penalty and we support your campaign to save the life of this man.

Jessica Huntley (Bogle L'Ouverture Press): [Speaking of her meeting with Mumia in 1981]:

We spent about two hours in a restaurant and I listened to Mumia as I listened to him on the video here this evening, sharing his concerns about life facing Africans, the Hispanics, the poor and the dispossessed. Mumia struck me as a very level-headed person without anger nor hostility. I could still hear his gentle and soft voice speaking to me during those hours we spent together. He spoke to me about his family and his vision for a new America. To my pleasant surprise Mumia was conversant not only with the situation in his native America, he was also aware of the struggles of black people in Britain and he expressed great interest in the arts and culture of the people here. Mumia spoke with clarity, there is no doubt when we listened to that video, passion and knowledge and clearly as a very professional person. He struck me as someone with an old head on a young shoulder. We soon realised that we were kindred spirits, sharing the similar hopes and aspirations for the future.

Gail Cameron (Alliance for Workers Liberty):

When we think of Mumia and when we support Mumia by building that campaign of support in our own British labour movement,

continued on page 7

Prepare for emergency demos!

THE CAMPAIGN IS AT A CRITICAL POINT—YOU CAN HELP!

At any moment, Pennsylvania's pro-death penalty governor, Tom Ridge, could sign Mumia Abu-Jamal's death warrant. Ridge has already signed warrants for five death row inmates, and the state's first execution in 30 years is set to take place before the end of April. Jamal is in imminent danger—if a warrant is signed, emergency demonstrations will be held here and internationally. Join the Partisan Defence Committee's phone chain and help organise to make these urgent demonstrations the loudest possible outcry against the racist death penalty!

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN: take petitions; ask your friends, neighbours and co-workers to sign and get involved. Organise a showing in your union, community group, Labour Party branch or student union of the PDC video, *From Death Row, This Is Mumia Abu-Jamal*. Send letters and get Jamal's powerful columns into your local newspapers, college or union newsletters; raise motions in your trade union or college to send a letter to Governor Ridge demanding "Mumia Abu-Jamal must not die!" Contact the Partisan Defence Committee,

BCM Box 4986, London WC1N 3XX, or call 0171 485 1396 for London; 0141 332 0788 for Glasgow. In Dublin contact the Dublin Spartacist Group at 830 4230.

SEND PROTEST LETTERS TO: Governor Tom Ridge, Main Capitol Building, Room 225, Harrisburg, PA 17120, US.

WRITE TO JAMAL to express your solidarity: Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM8335, SCI Greene, 1040 E Roy Furman Highway, Waynesburg, PA 15370-8090, US. **SEND MONEY FOR JAMAL LEGAL DEFENCE NOW!** Funds are urgently needed to wage the fight to save Mumia Abu-Jamal's life. All money being raised through rallies and forums organised by the Partisan Defence Committee goes directly to Jamal's legal defence. Since 9 February, nearly \$15,000 has been collected or pledged. More is needed now! Jamal's legal team initiated the Committee to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal, co-chaired by actors Ossie Davis and Mike Farrell, to help raise funds. Send your financial contribution to the Partisan Defence Committee and write "Jamal Legal Defence" on the back of the cheque.

Miners ...

(Continued from page 4)

scabs. As Coalville NUR branch secretary Roy Butlin complained: "We've been patient and waited for our leaders to do something, but all we've had is assurances that they'd talk to British Rail.... We want industrial action" (*Socialist Worker*, 5 January 1985, quoted in *Workers Hammer* no 65, January 1985).

Another example of the treachery of the "lefts" took place in the car plants in Birmingham. A Spartacist League supporter in Rover Solihull initiated a fight within the union to stop the handling and use of all coal. At Longbridge the convenor, Jack Adams, a CP member, sought to cover up the fact that coal was being brought into the plant. But the SL's exposure of this scabberding attracted considerable attention in the labour movement. Miners and transport workers picketed the plant. Later, in January, the Rover management fired SL supporter Patrick Sliney for distributing a leaflet advocating that Rover workers strike alongside the miners. Although TGWU officials sabotaged his defence, Sliney won widespread support from coal miners, and NUM members from two pits demonstrated at the car plant gates to demand that Sliney get his job back.

Scargill's appeals for "industrial action" to back the miners were limited to pressuring the "left" bureaucrats, and he ended up amnestying their betrayals. Thus, shortly after the rail union leadership left the miners in the lurch by signing a separate pay deal, Scargill claimed: "We have witnessed tremendous solidarity from other unions, and in particular the transport unions, which have been absolutely magnificent." In many instances the miners' leaders tacitly accepted scabbing, setting up only token picket lines in front of steel or car plants. Early in the strike, Scottish miners leader and prominent CPer Mick McGahey approved a deal with steel union bureaucrats to permit coal being transported into the Ravenscraig plant.

At every step of the way, the fight to spread the strike meant a struggle against the sabotage of the trade union bureaucrats. Ludicrously, much of the fake left appealed to the TUC to call a general strike, when it had by that time become evident to any thinking militant that the TUC were a pack of proven class traitors. In fact, although he was later to change his tune, at the beginning of the strike Scargill demanded that the TUC stay out of the miners strike, on the correct grounds that they would only sabotage it.

It is of course appropriate at times to place demands on the official leadership of the unions. In December 1983 we demanded that the TUC live up to its pledge of the previous

year to defend any union victimised by the government's laws, by calling a general strike in response to attacks on the printers' union, the NGA. However, the TUC betrayed the printers, and likewise refused to lift a finger in early 1984 when Thatcher announced that unions were banned at GCHQ. These overt betrayals, combined with the TUC's red-baiting of Scargill over Solidarność, meant that by the time of the miners strike, a call on the TUC was not only fatuous but positively dangerous.

Demanding a general strike from the TUC was suicidal, since the majority of its leaders were openly opposed to the miners strike and would have simply voted down any solidarity action. Such a demand let the rail and T&G leaders off the hook. These "lefts" preached solidarity with the miners, but hid behind the TUC's treachery as an excuse for their own inaction. When the dockers went out, we called for a *fighting Triple Alliance to shut down the country*, through joint strike action of miners, rail, dock and other transport workers and raising demands in the interests of the whole trade union movement. We called for victory to the miners; smash the attack on the dockers; amnesty to all strikers; no more redundancies and denationalisations; and for a 10 per cent wage rise linked to full cost-of-living indexing. This would have amounted to a general strike, posing the question of a struggle for power.

The real "enemy within"

Towards the end of his book, Milne cites the following: "As David Lloyd George, Prime Minister of the day, told a delegation from the Triple Alliance of miners, railway and transport workers on the point of a united strike in 1919: 'If a force arises in the state which is stronger than the state itself, then it must be ready to take on the functions of the state, or it must withdraw and accept the authority of the state.'" *Spartacist Britain* (no 56, April 1984) ran a longer version of this citation taken from Aneurin Bevan's autobiography, *In Place of Fear*. Milne leaves out the response of the union leaders to Lloyd George: "'From that moment on', said [miners leader] Robert Smillie, 'we were beaten and we knew we were.'" In 1919 as in 1984-85, the Labourite bureaucrats were "beaten" because they had no perspective of leading the working class to power—rather they work within the framework and the rules of the preservation of the capitalist order.

Notwithstanding his militancy, Scargill made it clear that his idea of "power" did not transcend a parliamentary Labour government. Thus, at a rally in Mansfield on 14 May 1984 he declared:

"We will turn the tide and turn unemployment into employment. We will turn economic ruin into economic recovery. Above all, we will

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INCORPORATING THE DAILY WORKER—FOR PEACE AND SOCIALISM

THURSDAY APRIL 19 1984

Thatcher gave 'no alternative' to action at pits

Kinnock gives complete backing to miners' fight

Aberdeen
LABOUR'S leader Neil Kinnock yesterday completely identified himself with the miners' fight for jobs and against pit closures, drawing repeated applause and a standing ovation from Scottish TUC delegates here.



Prominent members of Eurocommunist wing of CPGB opposed Scargill from the right in NUM, became key advisers to Kinnock/Blair Labour leadership. While denouncing Euros, pro-Kremlin wing of British CP covered up Kinnock's betrayals, as in this article from *Morning Star*.

pave the way for a general election to elect a Labour government."

This gets to the core of the difference between Marxism and even the most "militant" versions of Labourism. (See exchange in this issue, "Reform v revolution".) Capitalism and its ills cannot be eliminated through parliamentarian means, by shuffling ministerial portfolios while keeping the bourgeois state intact. Genuine workers rule requires the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois order, as was achieved by the October Revolution of 1917. In *The State and Revolution*, Lenin laid out the fundamental Marxist understanding of the state. The state consists of "special bodies of armed men" and "is an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another".

In his *Left Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, Lenin makes it clear that mass reformist parties cannot be simply written off as "irrelevant" but must be engaged through intelligent tactics to destroy them politically and win their working-class base to a revolutionary perspective. Had there existed even a modest-sized revolutionary party, rooted in the trade unions, it could have won a sizable chunk of Labour's working-class base away from the reformist misleaders in the course of waging a class-struggle fight during the miners strike. As the Bennites Richard Heffernan and Mike Marqusee note in *Defeat from the Jaws of Victory*: "In its response to the miners' strike the Labour Party was split by a chasm, not between left and right... but between the entire base of the movement on the one hand and a small leadership clique on the other." Milne notes that at the annual Durham Miners' Gala in July 1984 Kinnock was publicly humiliated when three brass bands and most of a 100,000-strong crowd "voted with their feet" as Kinnock began to speak. Several NUM branch secretaries resigned from the Labour Party in disgust at the leadership's betrayals.

Moreover, in addition to striking miners and other class-conscious trade unionists, there were the heroic women of the coalfields. In many instances it was they who put backbone into the miners and ensured that they remained at their post. The minorities—the black and Asian communities—proved to be the best allies of the strikers, enthusiastically making financial sacrifices for the strike. The Republican population in Belfast welcomed British miners with a huge sign saying "Victory to the miners!" The miners' class struggle served to break down the barriers of sexism, racism and bigotry promoted by capital as a means to divide working people. Large contingents of miners participated in marches for gay rights.

What existed here in support of the miners was the potential core of a revolutionary party, which would act as a Leninist tribune of the people, championing the struggles of all the oppressed.

While the reformists falsely preach that the Labour Party is a "broad church" embracing the entire workers movement, they actively foment *disunity* in struggle, dividing workers along craft, race, sex and national lines. Instead, we communists fight for the broadest

unity of the trade unions, the defensive economic organisations of the working class, while seeking clear political demarcation on the basis of our revolutionary programme. As long ago as 1848, when they wrote the *Communist Manifesto*, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels stressed that every class struggle is a political struggle, and that the Communists are distinguished from other working-class parties because they "everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole". The Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky fought tooth and nail against the social democrats, who sought to create an organisational split in the trade unions in order to shield workers from communist influence. The "Theses on Comintern Tactics" (1922) stressed that:

"At present the reformists need a split, while the Communists are interested in uniting all the forces of the working class against capital. Using the united front tactic means that the Communist vanguard is at the forefront of the day to day struggle of the broad masses for their most vital interests."

At the same time, the theses stipulated:

"The existence of independent Communist Parties and their complete freedom of action in relation to the bourgeoisie and counter-revolutionary social democracy is the most important historical achievement of the proletariat, and one which the Communists will in no circumstances renounce. Only the Communist Parties stand for the overall interests of the whole proletariat."

Above all, the fight for unity in struggle against the class enemy does *not* mean a political non-aggression pact with the reformist traitors. That will only reinforce the political stranglehold of the reformists over the masses. And rather than working-class unity against the capitalist rulers you get backstabbing betrayals as in the miners strike.

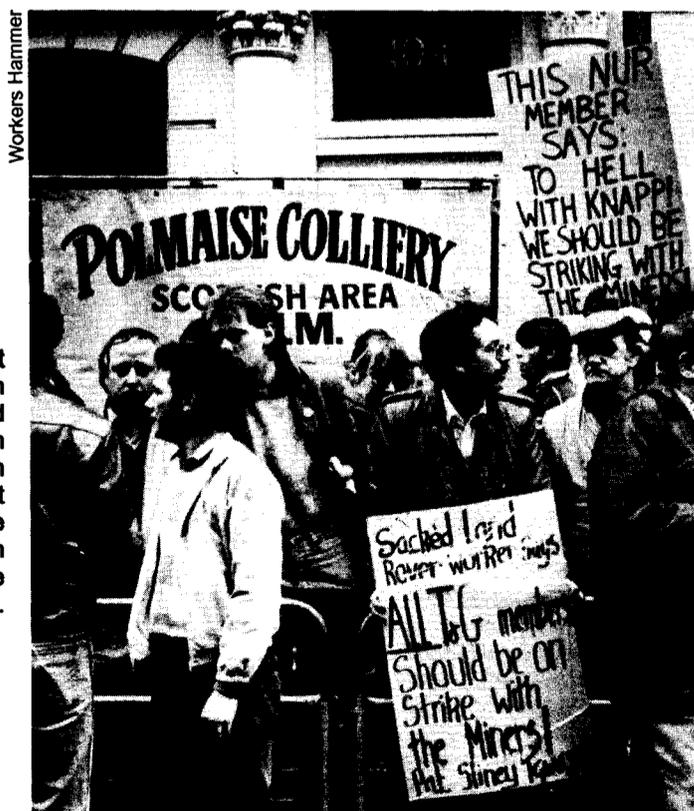
During the miners strike the Labour "lefts" like Tony Benn, Dennis Skinner and Scargill consciously refused to wage a serious political struggle against the Labour/TUC leadership, deliberately *covering up* for the betrayals of Kinnock & Co. In a diary entry of 9 September 1984, Tony Benn describes seeing Kinnock on *Face the Press*:

"Neil was full of smiles, but he made no reference whatsoever to police brutality, which is now a major feature of the strike. Still, he's going to be there until the next Election, and we have to see him as a key to the door of Number 10; that will give us an opportunity to do what has to be done. But there was general pessimism around the room that nothing would be done. It is hard to know whether the left should go on covering for the right of the Party, which is covering up for capitalism, particularly if, at the same time, the leadership is making attacks upon the basic tenets of the Party and throwing doubt on their relevance."

—Tony Benn, *The End of an Era, Diaries 1980-90*, p 375

The following month at the Labour Party Conference the Kinnock-Hattersley leadership was re-elected unanimously. Tony Benn later baldly defended his refusal to attack Kinnock: "Nothing would give greater pleasure to the government if they thought we were falling

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Workers Hammer

Spartacist supporters in TGWU and National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) fought for joint strike action alongside miners.

Miners ...

(Continued from page 9)

out among ourselves..." (WH no 63, November 1984). Fearing above all a split in Labour's "broad church", Benn and Scargill offered no opposition to Kinnock, the TUC & Co, thereby aiding them in splitting the trade union movement and keeping the miners isolated. This experience, albeit in a negative sense, is a powerful argument for the separate organisation of a Leninist vanguard party consciously counterposed to Labourism.

The Russian Question point-blank

During the miners strike, the Spartacist League was virtually unique in pointing to the connection between the attacks on the NUM and the anti-Soviet hysteria being whipped up by Reagan and Thatcher, and supported by the social democrats. Milne in fact documents many of the same instances, ranging from the red-baiting of Scargill by the TUC, to the utilisation by MI6 of reactionary and fascist elements in the Soviet Union in the attempted smear job of Scargill.

Milne notes that "Scargill had attracted widespread condemnation in 1983 for his description of the Polish Solidarność union as an 'anti-socialist organization'"—remarks that "were treated as verging on the treasonable". And not just by the right-wing TUC leadership, either. The witch hunt of Scargill was set up on the eve of the September 1983 TUC Congress by Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP), which deliberately released Scargill's letter (solicited months earlier) denouncing Solidarność, carefully timing this to feed into the TUC's Cold War frenzy. Not a single delegate rose to defend Scargill, not even the "lefts". While Gerry Healy is no more, his former accomplices are still kicking, including his theoretic-

International Communist League) documented Solidarność' financial and political dependence on Western imperialism. During the miners strike, Lech Walesa enthusiastically spoke out on behalf of his imperialist patrons. In an interview that appeared, not surprisingly, in Maxwell's *Sunday Mirror* under the headline "Why Scargill is wrong—by Lech", Walesa praised Thatcher as a "wise and brave woman". Solidarność also had close ties to the UDM.

The *Mirror/Cook Report* falsely charged that Scargill diverted hard currency from the Soviet trade unions. Among the key players trotted out to "prove" this claim were Russian fascists working in cahoots with MI6 and the CIA. In July 1990, at a press conference in London, one Yuri Butchenko appeared alongside scab UDM leader Roy Lynk to lend his voice to charges that Scargill had salted away up to £10 million of donations made by Soviet miners. Butchenko had just spent nine days speaking at meetings in Britain, sponsored by the Campaign for Solidarity with Workers in the Eastern Bloc (CSWEB), a bloc between Workers Power and *Socialist Organiser*. As we said at the time:

"This was just what union-hating prime minister Thatcher and her lieutenants in the Labour right wing needed: a Russian worker, legitimised by speaking before trade-union audiences, taking their side against the most militant union in Britain."

—"Workers Power caught with Russian fascists, Thatcher's scabs", *WH* no 116, September 1990

Milne's account echoes what we wrote:

"At which point, enter on cue, stage right, anti-communist Soviet miners demanding their money back.... Butchenko's visit, it soon transpired, was organized and paid for by an anti-Soviet Russian émigré newsletter, *Soviet Labour Review*. So was the timely press conference on the 'missing' Soviet money. Since 1983, the 'review' had been lavishly financed by the US government's National Endowment for Democracy (NED)."



Photo taken from the book with kind permission of the publishers

December 1984: Gorbachev with Thatcher at Chequers, assuring her that Soviets were not providing funds to striking NUM.

Soviet proletariat. Milne notes that the US and German embassies were "well represented" at this congress.

In our fight to bring Trotskyism back to the Soviet Union, the International Communist League sought to reach sections of the Soviet working class like the miners whose strike in 1989 had sent reverberations across the country. At the 1990 Donetsk conference our comrades intervened to oppose the anti-Scargill witch hunt. As an account in *Workers Vanguard* (30 November 1990) reported:

"After the UDM representative was allowed to appeal from the podium for the Soviet miners to demand that monies contributed by them to the heroic 1984-85 miners strike be handed over to the UDM, an ICL representative addressed conference presidium members, presenting them with a copy of *Workers Vanguard* (No. 508, 10 August) with the article, 'Sinister Frame-Up of British Miners Leader—Scargill Witch-hunted.' In the upshot, the conference resolved not to pursue the UDM's appeal to join in denouncing Scargill."

Most of the anti-Soviet British fake left, in their reviews of *The Enemy Within*, simply avoid dealing with the issue of Cold War II. The one exception is the SWP who in *Socialist Review* (January 1995) denounce Scargill from the right for dealing with "stooges of Russian bureaucracy" in setting up the International Miners' Organization. The connection between anti-Sovietism, which these groups were immersed in, and the union-busting attacks on the NUM was simply too hot for them to handle. Neither Workers Power nor *Socialist Organiser* mention the Butchenko affair and their own shameful role in it.

Soviet mining unions raised 2.24 million roubles for the NUM, which was spent to provide tours and holidays to the USSR for miners' families, and to arrange two shipments of food and clothing to relieve hardship. (These were refused entry by British customs.) But, when Scargill approached the Soviets for direct hard currency contributions to the NUM, it provoked an internal debate within the Soviet bureaucracy. According to Milne, Gorbachev (then number two to the ailing Chernenko) was "privately opposed to both the Soviet trade-union coal and fuel embargo and to providing cash support, particularly once he had made a private commitment to Thatcher at their Chequers meeting in December 1984". Gorbachev was opposed by the then Soviet foreign minister, Andrei Gromyko. The NUM never received any hard currency from the Soviets; it was the Kremlin, not Scargill, who "diverted" contributions from going to the NUM and instead put it in an international miners' solidarity fund in Dublin. The strike ended before the NUM received money from this fund.

It is impossible to contemplate any Western capitalist regime even discussing the possibility of aiding the British miners. This gives the lie to anti-Marxist theories (such as those peddled by Tony Cliff's SWP) that the Soviet Union was a regime of state capitalism or some other "new exploiting class". At the same time, Scargill—who stuck his neck out for the Stalinists by making no secret of his international sympathies—was stabbed in the back by Stalinist nationalists in return. The most vile role was played by the Jaruzelski

bureaucracy in Poland, which throughout the strike exported coal to Britain. The conflicts within the Soviet leadership during the miners strike demonstrate that it was part of a contradictory *bureaucratic caste*, reflecting the fact that it sat on top of the Soviet workers state, while simultaneously acting as a transmission belt for the pressures of world imperialism.

While the outcome of the miners strike did not *per se* hinge on financial assistance from the Soviet trade unions, the fact that direct funding of the NUM was abandoned because "not only could such funding damage developing state-to-state relations with the Thatcher government, but it also risked undermining the electoral prospects of the Labour Party" is a stunning indictment of the Soviet bureaucracy. The defence of the Soviet Union ultimately depended on the spread of proletarian revolution internationally. The defeat of this sweeping and deep-going class battle reinforced the position not only of Thatcher, but of all the Cold War gang who sought relentlessly to destroy the gains of the October Revolution.

Milne documents the enthusiasm in the Soviet working class for the striking British miners in 1984. This showed the potential of class struggle in the West to rekindle proletarian internationalism among Soviet workers, which had been strangled by the ascendancy of the narrow, nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy. In 1923-24 political power was usurped from the Soviet proletariat by a bureaucratic caste, which promulgated the lie of building "socialism in one country". One of the first manifestations of this was the disastrous Comintern policy during the 1926 general strike. While Milne notes that Soviet workers then collected relief for striking British miners, he does not mention the criminal role of Stalin and Bukharin's Comintern in covering up for the TUC—then dominated by "lefts"—even after the TUC had betrayed the general strike.

While calling for the defence of the Soviet degenerated workers state against international counterrevolution and imperialist attack, we stood for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy that was the gravedigger of the October Revolution. Thanks to the Stalinist sabotage of countless revolutionary opportunities internationally, the imperialists were ultimately capable of sapping and destroying the Soviet workers state. Milne, perhaps unwittingly, captures a sense of the terminal disintegration of the Stalinist bureaucracy during the Gorbachev years. He notes that while in 1985 many Soviet officials were suspicious of Scargill because he was a member of the Labour Party and thus an "unreliable social democrat", five years later these same individuals wouldn't touch Scargill with a barge pole because "they say he's a Marxist".

The aftermath of the 1990 witch hunt

When the miners returned to work in March 1985, we said that the "strike has been defeated, but the NUM has not been broken" (*WH* no 67, March 1985). Milne likewise notes that the NUM was still a substantial force even after the defeat of the strike. In their continuing desire to destroy the NUM,



Photo taken from the book with kind permission of the publishers

June 1991: Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock (left) obscenely presents British Press Awards "reporter of the year" award to *Daily Mirror* team for anti-Scargill smear.

cian Cliff Slaughter (leader of the current British WRP) and his US satellite, David North, head of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

The Cold War division within the labour movement was reflected internationally as well. While the miners strike attracted considerable support internationally, ranging from French workers in the Communist Party-led CGT union to impoverished South African miners, the social-democratic DGB trade union federation in West Germany refused to give money to the British miners, as did the virulently anti-communist AFL-CIO. To help counter such sabotage, the Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle legal and social defence organisation linked to the Spartacist League/US, undertook a campaign of Aid to Striking British Miners' Families, raising over \$23,000 worldwide.

During the 1980s, while much of the ostensible left enthused over Solidarność, the international Spartacist tendency (now the

Workers Power quit CSWEB only after Butchenko's appearance on behalf of the anti-Scargill rat pack. Yet Butchenko's connections to *Russian fascists* were well-known to WP before he ever set foot in this country. Thus, WP admitted that "in a telephone call with Butchenko he informed us that his official invite papers to this country had been signed by George Miller, British representative of the right wing Russian organisation, the NTS" (*Workers Power*, October 1990). Milne notes that the NTS collaborated enthusiastically with the Nazis during World War II and was a playground for Western intelligence organisations for more than half a century.

In October 1990, NTS leader Miller travelled to the Ukraine, along with scab UDM leaders, to attend a conference of Soviet miners. Their aim was to enlist miners in the international anti-communist witch hunt of Scargill and, in so doing, to politically corrupt elements of the most combative section of the

Thatcher and MI5 unleashed a smear campaign against Scargill, on the eve of a renewed drive to shut down most of the mining industry.

Milne describes the naked desire to break the NUM which underlay the Tories' policies towards the mining industry. The scale of the pit closures was massive: from 190,000 coal miners at the time of the strike, there were only 8000 miners left by autumn 1994. In the same period massive numbers of jobs in heavy engineering, shipbuilding, steelmaking, etc were also cut. Industrial areas, particularly in the North, Scotland and South Wales, were largely devastated. However, the bosses were doubly motivated to attack the jobs of miners, because of their role as the most conscious element of the British proletariat.

The Tory privatisation drive was an attack on the jobs and living standards of the working class, and all Marxists would support trade union resistance to this. But the Labour Party is equally dedicated to defending the capitalist profit system at the expense of the workers, albeit sometimes through different means. It was the Wilson-Callaghan government, with its Social Contract (wage controls), that paved the way for Thatcher in 1979. And it should not be forgotten that Labour governments closed plenty of pits. Scargill's "plan for British coal" was premised on the supposed superior "competitive" position of British coal, buttressed by import bans. The same economic nationalism is pushed by German union leaders who claim that German steel is "more competitive" or French CGT union leaders who say "produce French". If carried out, such protectionist policies mean trade wars, which ultimately will lead to shooting wars. In marked distinction were the acts of international workers solidarity during the miners strike, such as when French workers destroyed coal shipments intended for Britain.

The destructive logic of protectionism came home to roost during the protests over pit closures that erupted in October 1992. While these demonstrations had popular support as Milne notes, they were popular-front parades where NUM leaders were rubbing shoulders with reactionary racist politicians like Winston Churchill Jr. The common denominator of these flag-waving protests was "produce British coal". Scargill himself even began to sound like his anti-communist allies, hailing the capitalist restorationist movements in Eastern Europe: "If people power can bring down governments in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the former Soviet Union, it can turn back a government who's lost all credibility here in Britain" (*WH* no 132, November/December 1992). The opportunities for joint class



Lech Walesa of counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarność hails Thatcher, denounces Scargill during strike.

struggle, with rail workers and others threatened by privatisation, were buried by this nationalist popular front.

The crisis of leadership

Today both Scargill and Seumas Milne are prominent defenders of Clause IV. The SL opposes Blair's attacks on Clause IV, which are motivated by a desire to demonstrate anew to the bourgeoisie Labour's respectability. However, Clause IV is not the socialist soul of the Labour Party, as Scargill claims, but part of its facade. The Labour "left" are part of a necessary division of labour. While the right wing carries out the dirty work, the "lefts" provide the socialist rhetoric to keep everything safely within the confines of capitalism. And as the miners strike showed, it is precisely when major events in the class struggle are posed, that the subordination of the Labour "lefts" to the right wing is so pronounced.

Milne's book provides a valuable service to a new generation of revolutionaries who need to learn about the 1984-85 miners strike. But at bottom Milne is caught within the framework of Scargill's politics. Scargill's blend of militancy and syndicalism consciously resembles the politics of his hero, 1920s miners' leader AJ Cook. And like his famous predecessor, Scargill does not have an alternative to Labour Party and TUC treachery. At bottom he holds out the same false perspective of transforming the Labour Party into an instrument to carry out "socialism".

On the eve of the 1926 strike, Leon Trot-

sky accurately nailed the Labour "lefts":

"It should be thoroughly understood that leftism of this kind remains left only so long as it has no practical obligations. But as soon as the question of action arises, the left wingers respectfully cede the leadership to the rights."

—"Problems of the British Labor Movement", 12 January 1926

While the Labour "lefts" covered for the rights, the fake Marxist organisations in Britain tailed after the "lefts". Such organisations as Workers Power, who at all times advocate putting Labour into office, no matter what the circumstances, take their political cues from their Labourite big brothers. At best they presented a programme of "left Labourism" with a thin varnish of "revolutionary" rhetoric. In many instances they were to the right of Scargill, as with their advocacy of a scab ballot. It's really not that surprising that they could view the open class traitors of the TUC as potential allies who could lead a general strike, inasmuch as they themselves were infected with the same virulent strain of anti-Sovietism. (It is worth noting that one of these Labour-loyal groups, Workers Power, could not bring itself to call for a general strike during the 1979 Winter of Discontent under a Labour government.)

Like every convulsive class battle, the miners strike demonstrated that the immediate economic demands of the working class cannot be separated from a broader revolutionary programme. Most decisively, the NUM and the coalfield struggle were affected throughout by the imperialist drive to destroy

the Soviet Union. We declared that those who refused to defend the remaining gains of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, since swept away by Yeltsin's capitalist counterrevolution, could not defend the trade unions against capitalist attack.

This was borne out in the heat of bitter class battle by the various self-styled "revolutionary alternatives" to Labour, from the "Neither Washington nor Moscow" Socialist Workers Party to centrist groups like Workers Power. To take one example: the strike eroded widespread illusions among working people in the neutrality of the state, and created a broad and lasting distrust and for many, hatred, of the police, particularly in the mining communities. But this critical lesson has never penetrated the skulls of fake leftists typified by the Militant or the SWP who to this day peddle the lie that the cops are "workers in uniform"—rather than the armed thugs of capital.

The miners strike was an acid test for anyone who aspires to lead the workers movement, and its lessons must be understood by a new generation of workers and youth. The questions the fake left cannot answer are answered by Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, whose positions the Spartacist League and the ICL uphold. Guided by the understanding of the need to defend the gains of the October Revolution, we spoke out against the anti-communist witch hunts of Scargill from the beginning. We recognised that the miners strike was a fundamental class confrontation; we said that the "miners must not stand alone" even when many miners still believed the strike could be won through militancy in one industry. We pointed out from the outset that the Labour "lefts" as well as the rights would betray. Above all we said that what was necessary was the forging of a revolutionary party.

We base our principles on the experiences of the Russian Revolution and the first four congresses of Lenin and Trotsky's Communist International. The Russian Revolution showed in real life that the capitalist state can be defeated and a workers state established on the basis of workers councils. There were plenty of Labour "left" types in Russia in 1917—they were called Mensheviks—who argued for going slow, for working through established capitalist channels, for heeding the workers' struggles. But there was also a Bolshevik Party, led by Lenin and Trotsky, which organised the workers and all the oppressed, providing them with a strategy for victory. As Trotsky reiterated many times: "Without a party, independently of the party, skipping over the party, through a substitute for the party, the proletarian revolution can never triumph." ■

MOSCOW ...

(Continued from page 12)

will still be in existence at that future time seems to us to be the flimsiest speculation. We are Marxists, not putschists; we rely on the forces of the working class and we will fight against these malicious and provocative attempts to distort and defame our politics.

This harassment and intimidation is intended to prevent workers and others from joining with our presently small number of supporters in the lands of the former Soviet Union. But the agents of the Ukrainian and Russian governments have no need to spy on us or people interested in our ideas in order to find out what we really stand for politically. We are exactly what we say we are and all of it can be found in the published and publicly disseminated issues of our *Biulleten Spartakovtsev*. Four issues of the *Biulleten* and eleven supplements have been published and widely distributed in the former Soviet Union since autumn 1990. In November 1993, we also published for the first time in Russian the book, *The Communist International After Lenin*, Trotsky's critique of the 1928 draft Program at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, which presents further information on the political views and aims which we openly espouse.

The broadcast made much of the "approximately 50 kilograms of propagandistic literature" allegedly seized by the authorities. A set of the Collected Works of Marx and Engels weighs some 47 kilos depending on language and binding. A set of the Collected Works of V.I. Lenin weighs 32 kilos. One does not usually think this way but it gives some insight into the minds of the security organs.

Far from hiding our views, we have sought to disseminate them widely. Thus, in July 1992, our comrade Victor Granovsky was interviewed on the half-hour television program *Mister/Comrade*. This program was broadcast repeatedly to a mass audience throughout the former Soviet Union. Our comrade stated clearly what we stand for: "We're for full workers democracy, for a multi-party system within the framework of the dictatorship of the proletariat." That is in the tradition of Lenin's Bolsheviks, who fought to forge a hard vanguard party united on a programmatic basis, in counterposition to the conception of a "party of the whole class" advanced by the Mensheviks, who ultimately ended up supporting counterrevolution. Our comrade explained: "All genuine communists, that is, Trotskyists, around the world have always felt a sense of duty toward the Soviet working class, toward the heroes of the October Revolution, of the Civil War and the war against German fascism."

Throughout our propagandistic work in the former Soviet Union, we have openly proclaimed the need for the working people of Russia and the near abroad to return to the path of Lenin and Trotsky. We have emphasized the need for all the working people to join together in struggle against capitalist exploitation and all manifestations of oppression and tyranny, against national subjugation and anti-Semitism and against the oppression of women and homosexuals. In short, we have sought to act, in Lenin's words, as a "tribune

of the people." Today, in our quest for the democratic rights of the working people and all nationalities to be asserted and defended, we believe that a plebiscite on national affiliation is in order in the Crimea and Chechnya.

We demand full access to the television news programs to respond to the absurd and sinister accusations which have been made against us.

— International Communist League
(Fourth Internationalist)
Moscow, 3 April 1995

Transcript of *Vremya* News Programme, 1 April 1995

"...Dealing with the Crimea, [the Ukrainian government] was obliged at the same time to defend their own supreme power.

"The overthrow of the government in the Ukraine was planned by four ideological Trotskyists representing the International Communist League.

"They passed themselves off as scholars wishing to study archives. At one of the apartments of the visitors in Kiev, the Struggle Against Terrorism Division of the Ukrainian Security Service seized approximately 50 kilograms of propagandistic literature of the revolutionary Trotskyists.

"According to operatives' information,

four foreign-citizens—two from Germany, one from France and one from America, attempted to organize in Ukraine a section of the International Communist League whose headquarters are located in New York, and whose closest affiliate is in Moscow.

"Furthermore, they openly called for the overthrow of the constitutional order in the Ukraine and the seizure of power, as was confirmed by our fellow countrymen, who the Trotskyists tried to recruit.

"As a result, travel into the Ukraine for the four revolutionary leaders from abroad is officially closed." ■

WORKERS HAMMER

Reviving Stalin's smears in the service of impoverishing the working people

Protest outrageous slanders against Trotskyists in Moscow!

In response to the ominous slanders by Ukrainian authorities against our Trotskyist organization aired on Russian TV, the International Communist League held protests outside Ukrainian government offices, in New York, Chicago, Berlin, London, Toronto, Melbourne and Paris.

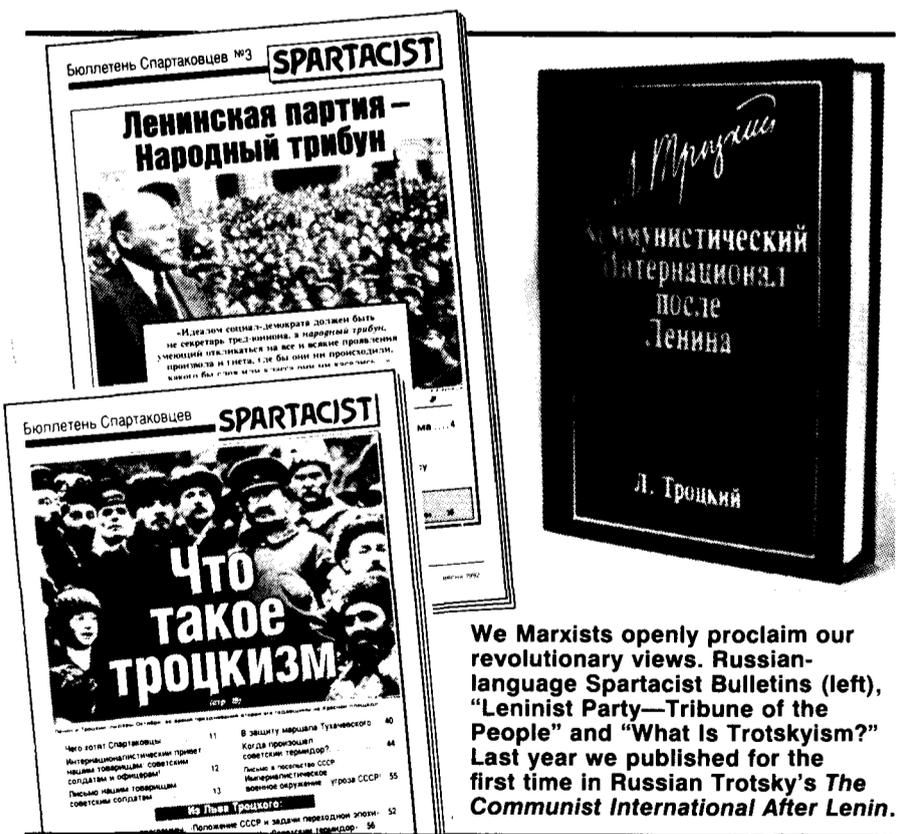
The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) in Moscow vigorously protests the outrageous slanders against our Trotskyist organization. On Saturday evening, April 1, a broadcast was aired on the *Vremya* news program with the lurid opening, "The overthrow of the government in the Ukraine was planned by four ideological Trotskyists representing the International Communist League." The broadcast claimed that supporters of the ICL had been banned from visiting the Ukraine. A two-year-old photograph of some of our supporters, taken at a birthday party in Moscow, was shown on the air. This photograph was somehow secured by the authorities, surreptitiously and unlawfully. Also shown was an array of our literature, openly published and distributed to working people throughout the former Soviet Union for several years now. This, then, is supposed to be the evidence of a secretive conspiracy for the overthrow of the Ukrainian government, by *four people*, no less, none of whom even resides in the Ukraine!

We are not surprised by the recourse to such revolting techniques. To get an idea of these crude methods, we urge those who have doubts to read the 1925 book by Victor Serge (Viktor Lvovich Kibalchich), *What Every Revolutionist Should Know About State Repression*. Marxists, who rely on the open and conscious mobilization of the workers and oppressed, are again accused of "conspiratorial terrorism" and "violence" by the very regimes which practice real conspiracies, terrorism and violence in the service of the gangs of new exploiters in power. In the guise of even-handed combat against all "extremism," the current authorities are in fact preparing to crack down on all working-class militancy and leftist dissent. That is the meaning of the current vile campaign against the International Communist League.

We have for some time clearly been subjected to the most invasive surveillance and police attention. Those Russian and Ukrainian youth who have expressed interest in our literature and political views have been subjected to harassment, interrogation and threats. Three years ago, on 9 February 1992 our beloved comrade Martha Phillips was murdered in Moscow in the prime of her life in sinister and mysterious circumstances. Despite repeated and vigorous appeals and demands by ourselves and others on various police agencies in Moscow to pursue an investigation into this heinous crime, the



London, 6 April: one of seven demonstrations internationally protesting slanders by Ukrainian authorities against International Communist League.



We Marxists openly proclaim our revolutionary views. Russian-language Spartacist Bulletins (left), "Leninist Party—Tribune of the People" and "What Is Trotskyism?" Last year we published for the first time in Russian Trotsky's *The Communist International After Lenin*.

authorities responded with indifferent sloth and crude arrogance. We demand the reopening of the investigation into the murder of Martha Phillips, with particular emphasis on the role of the security agencies. In this regard, we recall the recent assassination of a journalist who was investigating charges of corruption within the Russian military.

What is behind the *Vremya* broadcast? And what is behind the intricate, time-consuming and unlawful attention which the security services both in Russia and in the Ukraine, undoubtedly in collusion, devote to tiny handfuls of internationalist fighters for the cause of the working class? What is behind such spurious and outlandish smears, even as

thousands of innocent people are killed and sent to their deaths in an unwanted and criminal war in Chechnya? And even as disease, hunger and poverty claim the lives of uncounted numbers of children and elderly throughout the land? Apparently, the capitalist authorities are haunted by the spectre of our Trotskyist program, which corresponds to the real interests of the overwhelming masses of dispossessed and impoverished working people. Our aim is the reconstitution of the working class as a class capable of taking power through struggle and organization throughout the former Soviet regions.

The urgent social and political discontents of the peoples of the former Soviet Union are being falsely converted into a monumentally microscopic conspiracy. This smells of security organs that have decomposed to the point of dementia. Let us all recall that the people, unnamed and unknown, who manufacture and publicize such slanders were trained in the Stalin school of falsification. Let us all recall that a hallmark of the notorious purge "trials" of the 1930s—which led to the deaths of millions—was outlandish and utterly unfounded accusations against the closest comrades in arms of V.I. Lenin. To the day of his death, L.D. Trotsky stood for the unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union against all imperialist powers and all the internal "fifth columns" seeking to foment counter-revolution. Yet in those dark years Trotsky, founder of the Soviet Army and a cofounder of the Soviet state, a man who was a lifelong revolutionist of international renown and proven integrity, was vilely slandered as an agent of the Japanese Mikado, the Nazi Gestapo and the French Deuxième Bureau. Let us all recall that the smears against Trotsky were a prelude to his murder at the hands of Stalin's assassins.

We have also been told that, in a similar fashion, the authorities of the capitalist Ukrainian state are today circulating allegations that ICL supporters are "CIA agents." We view these lying charges with complete contempt. If the Kiev authorities entertained the slightest belief that our comrades were CIA agents, they would have given us the keys to the city and bestowed on us all the favors at their command, in the hope of reciprocal largesse from those they look to in Washington and Wall Street. Those who only recently were Stalin's political and bureaucratic heirs presided over the collapse of the Soviet Union, and many of them now hope to be greedy capitalist exploiters in the new capitalist order. We Trotskyists, in contrast, openly called on the working class to resist Yeltsin's pro-imperialist coup in August 1991, which led to the restoration of capitalism.

We are compelled, but also eager, to reply to the slanderous and ludicrous notion that four Marxists were plotting the overthrow of the government of the Ukraine; only a fool or a madman could entertain such ridiculous fantasies. The sense of reality revealed in this report is about on a par with the UFO spotters who see a flash of light in the sky and posit a Martian invasion which will destroy the earth. It is our opinion that, unfortunately, before the downtrodden and embittered Ukrainian working masses come to power, the present Ukrainian government and likely several of its successors will have been long gone. They will disappear as a consequence of their own weaknesses and incapacities and through repercussions of their disastrous capitalist policies and demented nationalist arrogance in numerous vital fields. In fact, the historical probability is that in a revolutionary situation there may well be little government to "overthrow"—we recall the way the Kerensky government fell to pieces. The assumption that the current government of the Ukraine

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