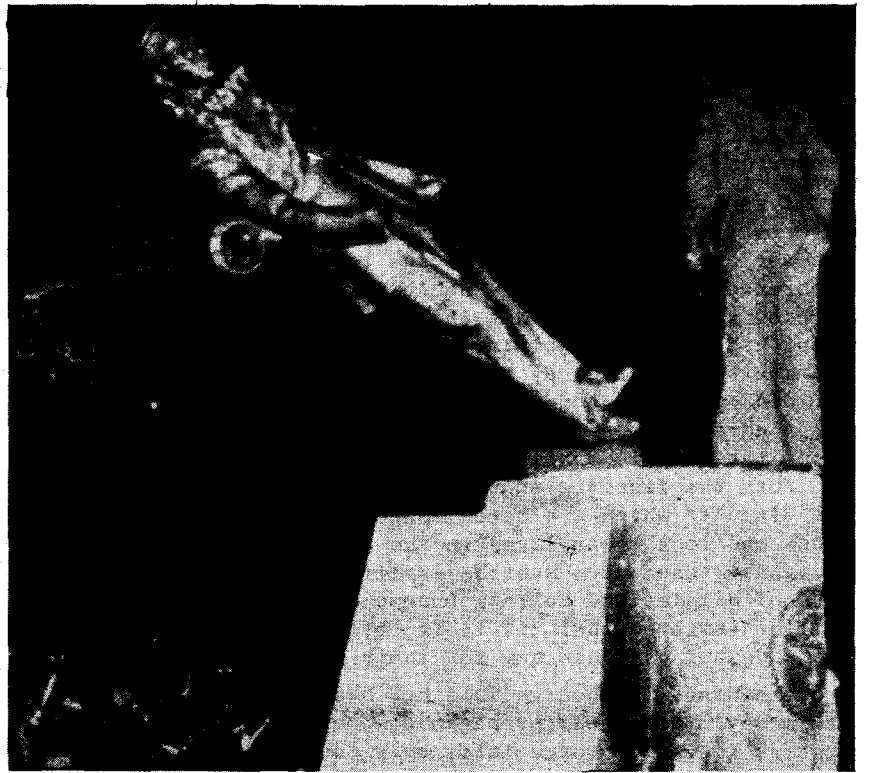


Peacock Throne totters in Iran

Class war, not holy war!



The Shah's statue falls in Teheran

Exiled Islamic religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini's *ji'had* (holy war) against the Shah of Iran has officially begun. On the morning of November 30, religious oppositionists distributed leaflets in the streets of Teheran calling for the Shi'ite Muslim masses to 'sacrifice your blood to protect Islam and overthrow the tyrant' during the holy month of Moharram. Over the next few days tens of thousands of protesters took to the streets, chanting 'Down with the Shah', 'Long live Khomeini', 'We want an Islamic nation' and 'Allah Akhbar' ('Allah is great').

In now familiar fashion, the Shah's troops gunned down hundreds for defying the martial law curfew and the military government's ban on street processions during Moharram. But hardly anyone now believes that even wholesale slaughter will save the wobbling Peacock Throne: on the contrary, each bloody massacre seems only to increase the masses' determination to put an end to the Shah's brutal rule. What they get in his place, however, may prove to be no less brutal and bloody.

Since the onset of the current crisis, the Spartacist League has uniquely insisted on the deeply reactionary nature of the religious leaders who head the mass opposition to the Shah. We have consistently drawn attention to the fact that the social programme of the mullahs and ayatollahs, far from being even mildly democratic, is drawn straight from the book of Islam -- as is most graphically revealed in Khomeini's fervent opposition to the unveiling of women.

In response, our mullah-loving opponents -- Muslims, Maoists and fake-Trotskyists alike -- have portrayed the holymen as progressive, decried the SL as 'reactionary' and even called on James Callaghan's cops to exclude us from an anti-Shah demonstration (see accompanying articles this issue). But as the crisis continues in Iran it is *our* analysis and programme which are being confirmed by events, not those of the 'socialist' monkeys who see no evil, hear no evil and certainly speak no evil about their darling mullahs.

As a cover for the homage they pay Khomeini, the number one leader of the powerful Shi'ite sect, these revisionists have taken to dressing him up in the vestments of Father Gapon, leader of the mass demonstration to the Winter Palace which ushered in the 1905 Russian Revolution. But whereas Gapon's programme and that of the Bolsheviks overlapped significantly -- eg both called for a constituent assembly, the separation of church and state and the eight-hour day -- the programme of Khomeini is completely *antithetical* to that of Marxists. Even basic demands of the bourgeois revolution -- for the right of self-determination for minority nationalities, an end to all ties between religion and the

state and full legal rights for women -- are flatly counterposed to everything the mullahs stand for.

Lenin did not seek to block with any and every movement opposed to the Tsar; on the contrary, he scrutinised carefully the basis of the anti-Tsarist opposition, grounding his policy at every point on the independent interests of the working class. But our self-professed 'Leninist' opponents forget to apply the same proletarian considerations to Iran today -- they merely go on drumming up support for those calling for 'victory to the just rule of Islam'.

Such apologetics for the advocates of a holy war against the Shah are truly criminal. Khomeini implies many things when he advances this slogan: a war to topple the Shah and place a Muslim fundamentalist government in his place;

a reactionary xenophobic campaign to drive out the 'infidels' who drink alcohol and Coca Cola and eat 'junk food'; an anti-communist crusade against that bastion of 'godlessness' on Iran's northern frontier, the Soviet Union; and a possible Shi'ite-based communalist war against Iran's non-Shi'ite religious groups and national minorities, including the Sunni Muslims (mainly Kurds), Armenian Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians and Bahais.

Already there have been examples of what Khomeini's followers understand by 'holy war', notably the burning down of cinemas and warnings to foreigners (a category which can obviously include the many migrant Arab and Asian labourers, not just wealthy American technical experts) to quit the country. According to an

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Exclusion at Birmingham anti-Shah demo

CARI calls cops on SL

The Committee Against Repression in Iran (CARI), terrified lest it be identified with the Spartacist League's proletarian revolutionary programme for Iran, has now obtained the help of Britain's forces of repression in its mounting campaign to suppress SL politics. At an anti-Shah demonstration in Birmingham on December 2 CARI organisers *called on the police* to enforce the exclusion of an SL contingent which refused to take down a placard reading 'No to Islamic reaction -- away with the veil!' This shameless appeal to the British capitalist state was carried out with the open complicity of the International Marxist Group (IMG), fake-Trotskyists who are a significant force within CARI.

CARI issued a leaflet in Farsi and English to the anti-Shah protesters which announced that the SL slogan 'Down with the Shah, Down with the mullahs' was 'incompatible with participation in this demonstration'. This position is the low point thus far of CARI's prostration before the reactionary Islamic leaders of the Iranian opposition. Demonstrators who were allowed to march sported a number of signs calling for an 'Islamic government' and even a large banner reading 'Koran is against Monarchy and Imperial-

ism'. Evidently CARI prefers the law of the Koran to the principles of democracy in the workers movement -- and certainly to the programme of Bolshevism.

The CARI leaflet documented the blatant political basis for the exclusion. Written to counter the unlikely impression that it has anything to do with a working-class fight against the reactionary obscurantist clerics and landlords, CARI stated:

'... the slogan "Down with the Shah, Down with the Mullahs", which has been raised by the Spartacist League, is incompatible with participation in this demonstration.

'We feel that those who support this slogan should *not* participate in this demonstration because: a) This slogan contradicts our aim to solidarise with all those fighting the Shah's regime b) This slogan equates the leaders of the religious opposition, many of whom have suffered brutal repression at the hands of the regime, with the Shah himself.

'It is therefore the opinion of Birmingham CARI that the slogan "Down with the mullahs" is a *reactionary* slogan which should not be permitted on this demonstration, and from which CARI completely dissociates itself....

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'Anti-fascists' commemorate Poppy Day

ANL behind the butcher's apron

Marxists, it should not need to be said, do not celebrate Remembrance Day. This imperialist holiday records no victory for the working class, only the victory of British imperialism and its allies over their German rivals in the two world wars, victories achieved through the slaughter of countless workers of many countries.

It should come as no surprise, however, that an organisation whose programme seeks to embrace all classes should decide to claim Remembrance Day as its own. The Anti Nazi League, shocked and resentful that the fascist National Front had laid prior claim to the day by organising a Remembrance Day parade to the Cenotaph, decided to hold a counter-picket. Naturally, the ANL's advertisements for the protest talked not about the need to mobilise the working masses to crush the fascists in the streets, but about the 'insult' which the march represented 'to those who lost their lives in the war'. In an indignant tone which must be familiar to all fans of Biggles and Bulldog Drummond, one ANL leaflet insisted that 'it is important that the Front do not use this day for their propaganda'.

Of course, the bourgeoisie has been using 'this day' for 'their propaganda' for 60 years; just as the same bourgeoisie, only too happy to use 'its' proletariat as cannon fodder in war against rival capitalists, hypocritically dug up an anonymous infantryman from the common grave where war had strewn him and erected the Cenotaph on top of him. The ANL never mentions *this*; after all, in its shaky project of all-class 'anti-Nazi unity' some truths are best forgotten.

The several hundred ANL supporters who gathered near the Cenotaph on November 12 to picket the NF were effectively cut off from one another by upwards of 2000 police. So they stood, chanting and singing clownish adaptations of popular songs in little, widely-separated bands. When the Front finally marched past -- more than a thousand of them -- the counterdemonstrators were unable to do more than register their frustration by loud heckling. After the NF had passed and the police lines remained, the leaders of the demonstration had to ask permission to disperse. It was all something of a fiasco.

Many of the ANL supporters were sporting poppies -- a fact more significant than it may at first seem. The innocent-looking paper

flowers which are sold on street corners for weeks before Remembrance Day are highly symbolic: their red colour, and the fact that they grow wild in French graveyards, were garlanded together by a number of World War I poets like Siegfried Sassoon to glamorise the unprecedented carnage left by inter-imperialist war.

Today the poppies are sold in aid of the Haig Fund, set up in memory of General Sir

The Trotskyists of the wartime Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) understood exactly what 'democratic, anti-fascist' British imperialism stood for in the Second World War. With members imprisoned in 1944 for organising apprentice strikes which 'disrupted' the war effort, and witch-hunted by 'His Majesty's Communist Party' as fascist agents who should be thrown out of the labour movement, the British section of the Fourth International took a firm stand against its 'own' bourgeoisie, exposing British imperialist war aims. The box we reprint here was included in an article denouncing imperialist war in Burma, published in the RCP's paper *Socialist Appeal* in June 1945:

British Atrocity in Burma



16 Burmese patriots beheaded by British in Tharrawady in 1881, and publicly exhibited to terrify the rest of the population. This atrocity was raised in the House of Commons and was not denied. We see from this that it is not only the Nazi gangsters who engage in systematic terror for the purpose of cowering the workers and oppressed peoples into submission, but the British imperialist gangsters as well.

Now the British imperialists are going to "liberate" the Burmese people from the domination of the Japanese. It is clear why the Burmese and colonial peoples are indifferent as to whether it is Japanese or British imperialism which is plundering and oppressing them.

rather too common practice of excluding people from demonstrations must be ended.'

But CARI's disgusting use of the police against a workers movement organisation took place in front of a large IMG contingent. The IMG participates in CARI, and it did not repudiate the Birmingham leaflet -- far from it. An IMG National Committee member was present while CARI organisers complained to the police about the SL presence, and these ardent lovers of democracy uttered not a word in defence of the SL's right to march. Indeed, they were quite content that the cops were employed to do CARI's dirty work.

The IMG blows very hard about its opposition to 'Dr Death', Foreign Secretary David Owen who is a fulsome admirer of the Shah. It calls for Owen's removal from the Labour cabinet -- but it is quite happy to see the government's cops used against communists on an anti-Shah demonstration. These are the same cops which, earlier in November, busted up a CARI demonstration outside the Foreign Office, arresting one protester.

Every labour movement organisation must oppose CARI's criminal alliance with the police and the IMG's complicity. Serious militants must recognise that belly-crawling before the mullahs' protagonists has found its true expression in CARI's criminal act.

Stop the exclusions! For workers democracy! ■

Douglas Haig, the arrogant fool who commanded British forces in World War I. Haig's professional competence was such that he spent the first half of the war insisting that the power of bullets to stop horses was greatly overestimated; and his concern for the common soldier was such that, in the aftermath of the disastrous British assault on the Somme which cost 60,000 lives in half a day, he issued his famous 'Orders of the Day', telling the forces that 'with our backs to the wall and believing in the justice of our cause, each one must fight on to the end'.

It is with such 'friends' of the working class that the ANL -- wielding its poppies and its patriotic 'anti-Nazi' propaganda -- identifies itself. The police and the National Front were all, of course, wearing the red flowers as well.

And what about World War II, the particular focus of the ANL's patriotic fervour? Contrary to the lies of bourgeois, social-democratic and Stalinist historians peddled by the ANL, the Allies were at no time waging a 'war against fascism': they were sending millions to their deaths in an inter-imperialist blood-bath. The Nazi concentration camps were unspeakably barbarous -- but these atrocities in no way dignify the wanton firebombings of Hamburg and Dresden by 'democratic' imperialism (far worse than the German bombing of Coventry, forever cited by ANL leaders), to say nothing of the Americans' nuclear genocide of the populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And try to tell the colonial masses of India, Burma and Ceylon that Britain was fighting for democracy during World War II! In Bengal alone, many hundreds of thousands starved to death as a result of deliberate British scorched-earth policies against the Japanese.

Remembrance Day is not a memorial service for the millions who died in Nazi concentration camps, nor even those who died under German occupation or in the horrendous slaughter on the Eastern Front. It is a patriotic celebration of the 'noble sacrifice' for 'King and country'. Certainly, Marxists must point out the horrific results of the Nazi victory in Germany and expose the identification of NF leaders with Hitler and German Nazism. But to talk indiscriminately of 'the victims of Nazi Germany', as the ANL does, and to describe the NF as planning to 'goosestep' (a ceremonial march used by the German army and today by some armies of the deformed workers states, but *not* the National Front) to the Cenotaph, is nothing but a sordid attempt to conjure up 'anti-Nazi' sentiment by appealing to the virulently anti-German imagery of wartime British imperialism.

The truth for Marxists in all imperialist countries is that *the main enemy is at home*. The German revolutionary Karl Liebknecht said so in World War I, the Trotskyists throughout Europe and in America repeated the message in World War II and it remains absolutely true today. The NF may be led by closet Hitler-worshippers and doubtless attracts a lunatic fringe which cherishes Third Reich regalia above all else -- but its fundamental appeal is to *British* patriotism and chauvinism. 'Britons first', the NF shouts, 'Repatriate the immigrants', 'Restore our past glory'. And -- whether or not John Tyndall himself gets to play führer for tens and hundreds of thousands -- the fact remains that the tattered state of British capitalism, visibly decaying by the day, is dangerously rotten-ripe for the growth of a fascist movement.

If the horrors of Auschwitz and Buchenwald, and of Dresden and Nagasaki, are not to be repeated but avenged by the international working class, a revolutionary proletarian party must be forged -- a party which can lead the fight for the only real alternative to capitalism's death agony, a workers government. The Anti Nazi League, standing behind the Union Jack, the bloody butcher's apron, is nothing but a road-block in that struggle. ■

CARI...

(Continued from page 1)

'It is the policy of CARI to defend all political prisoners in Iran...'

This analysis of the slogan 'Down with the Shah, Down with the mullahs', despite its absurd and ironic conclusion that opposition to the seventh-century ideology of the mullahs is 'reactionary', reflects fairly well the differences between the SL and CARI. No, the SL does not wish to 'solidarise with all those fighting the Shah regime' -- we aim to *split* the opposition to the Shah, fighting to replace his bloody rule with the rule of the workers. We do not believe that the landowning Shi'ite fanatics are a progressive alternative to the Peacock Throne, and we do not want to defend the Shah's ex-ministers and Savak officials, now among his political prisoners. And we claim the right to raise these differences on a protest against the Shah and the Labour government's support for the Pahlavi dynasty.

The IMG and the cops

The IMG claims to stand for the building of a 'broad-based non-exclusive solidarity movement' with the struggle in Iran. *Socialist Challenge* (30 November) bleats: 'To do this the

USec bows to Khomeini

The following is a reprint of a leaflet distributed by the Spartacist League to a 'Fourth International rally' sponsored by the International Marxist Group in London on November 23.

United Secretariat (USec) superstar Ernest Mandel and Nan Bailey of the US Socialist Workers Party (SWP) have come here this evening to speak in celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Fourth International. But nobody should be taken in by the centrist chameleon Mandel or his on-again, off-again bloc partners in the crassly reformist SWP: these people are revisionist fakers who have again and again betrayed the programme of Trotsky's Fourth International. Today we are witnessing this once again, in response to the mass uprising in Iran.

The Iranian masses have taken to the streets in opposition to the terror of the blood-drenched Pahlavi monarchy. The Shah's absolutist regime, facing an enraged population, is now reduced to its two essential bases of support, the army and international imperialism. But rather than a working-class-centred plebeian mobilisation against the Shah, or even a bourgeois-led 'democratic' movement, the current opposition is an amorphous movement led by the organised Islamic clergy, the mullahs and ayatollahs.

The mullahs' control over the recent mass protests has forced fake-leftists around the world into all sorts of political contortions. For Stalinists, well experienced at hailing everyone from Chiang Kai-shek to Nasser to Idi Amin, portraying the revered religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini as 'progressive' is second nature. But the ostensible Trotskyists and staunch feminists of the USec should have more of a problem dealing with Khomeini, whose openly reactionary social programme is based on the Koran and includes the enforced veiling of women. However -- as usual -- the great god of popularity decides all for the USec, which cites the 'dynamic of the mass movement' to buttress a claim that 'everything is possible' in Iran. Who knows, the ulema may prove to be yet another 'blunted instrument' for socialist revolution!

Thus the paper of the International Marxist Group (local USec representative) prints uncritical interviews with Khomeini and hails



Ernest Mandel

his 'radical anti-Shah and anti-monarchist stand'. And the American SWP (which until recently denounced the slogan 'Down with the Shah' as 'ultimatumist' and 'ultraleft') joins the chorus of praise for the holyman:

'Although Khomeini subscribes to a religious ideology, the basis of his appeal is not religious reaction. On the contrary, he has won broad support among the Iranian masses because his firm opposition to the Shah and the Shah's "modernization" is progressive.' (*Militant* [US], 17 November)

But who is this 'progressive' ayatollah who is supposed to guide the Iranian masses out from under the darkness of the Shah, self-proclaimed 'shadow of God'? *MERIP Reports* no 40 (p 18) describes his history:

'The leading figure in this event [the March 1963 revolt in Qum] was Ayatollah Khomeini, a highly influential Shi'a mullah at the theologi-

cal center at Qum. He had first come to public attention in 1961, when he issued public statements opposing the enfranchisement of women because it violated their station in Islam. During January 1963, prior to the national referendum on the Shah's six-point White Revolution, "he was arrested for allegedly issuing pamphlets asserting that land reform was contrary to Islam, which guaranteed the sanctity of private property".'

In March of this year Khomeini criticised the regime for unveiling women and stated that communism was a 'social opiate' (see 'Proclamations', *Khabarnameh* no 12, cited in *MERIP Reports* no 69). In a May 6 interview with *Le Monde*, the ayatollah stated the conditions under which he would back down from overthrowing the Shah:

'... we shall not cooperate with the Marxists, not even to topple the Shah. We are opposed to their ideas, and we know they are stabbing us in the back. If they won power, they would set up a dictatorial regime contrary to the spirit of Islam.'

Khomeini and his fellows have good reason to be for the 'sanctity of private property' and against Marxism: One leading ayatollah was interviewed recently in Qum by a reporter for the *Sunday Times Magazine* (12 November):

'It is said that more money is donated for religious charity than the State receives in income tax from this nation of shopkeepers.... Shariatmadari told me that the religious establishment he controls -- a 10,000 strong theological seminary, hospitals, libraries, a printing press -- cost three million tomans (over £200,000) a month to run.'

And what do these powerful ayatollahs want to replace the Shah with? According to Khomeini, 'To get out of this situation this regime should be replaced by a regime appointed by the Muslim nation' (Agence France Presse interview, 25 October). The religious leaders want an 'Islamic republic': the 1906 Constitution which gives control over all laws to the ayatollahs, would do as a starting point. A similar Muslim mass movement in Indonesia, whose slogan was 'Long Live the Revolution', carried out its programme in 1965 by drowning in blood 500,000 leftists, workers and peasants.

Why does the USec bow to Mecca?

Only a few weeks ago, the USec was still willing to make a few criticisms of the religious leaders. Thus in an October 12 *Socialist Challenge* interview with 'Iranian Trotskyists' we find:

'Apart from the more obvious dangers arising from the religious nature of the leadership and its ideology, the populist type of ideas which the Moslems have propagated have done considerable damage by confusing and blurring the class nature of the Shah's regime and of the struggle against it....'

'The attitude of the Moslems towards women will also be a serious problem for women's liberation in Iran.'

Now, however, we read only about the 'democratic' (albeit 'vague') programme of the 'progressive' Khomeini.

The United Secretariat continually looks to every 'popular' leadership that comes along, hoping it will show another new road to socialist revolution. Over the years, Mandel & Co have

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The religious opposition and the red flag

The following are extracts from an interview with Ali Ahmadi, described as 'a campus leader in Tehran', which appeared in the November 27 issue of the American SWP's *Intercontinental Press*. Ahmadi's remarks give, perhaps inadvertently, a clear picture of the dangerous capitulation of the Iranian left before the religious opponents of the Shah -- who 'reciprocate' by demonstrating their complete repudiation of and hostility to the left! While the SWP and its United Secretariat allies merely endorse this capitulation, serious would-be Iranian revolutionaries should be able to see that there is something drastically wrong here: that the road of Khomeini is a road of disaster for the left and the working class.

* * * * *

'On the first day all the groups, religious and leftist, came to listen to the opening speech. The leftist students had put up red banners and their slogans around the football stadium, where the speech was to be given. All the religious students and professors walked out, saying they were not going to sit under red flags.'

'We wanted a solidarity week, but right at the beginning we faced a possible split, the exact opposite of our aim. So the leftist students were urged to take down the red banners.'

'It was also suggested that the religious students could put their banners up too, that there would be nothing wrong with having both. But the religious students wouldn't buy that.'

'Finally, the leftist students agreed to take their banners down, all the students joined together on the same field, and the speeches began....'

'In the afternoon after lunch, we had two groups again, separated. Other leftist students joined the leftist students from our school in a march around the football stadium with red banners and placards. One of their slogans was really good. It was, "Greetings to militant Khomeini", to show the sympathy and support of the leftist students for Khomeini. But the religious students did not like even that.'

'They are influenced by what Khomeini has been telling them -- that the left has betrayed us and that Russia and China are as imperialist as the United States....'

* * * * *

'Q. What is the relationship of forces between the leftist students and professors and the religious ones?'

'A. Well, on my campus, I think there are four times as many religious students as leftists....'

SPARTACIST BRITAIN

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Last October marked the tenth anniversary of the first Civil Rights march in the city of Derry, Northern Ireland. In the following article PAUL LANNIGAN, who participated in the 1968 struggles as a member of the Healyite Socialist Labour League in Derry and is today a member of the Spartacist League Central Committee, discusses the events and analyses the failure of the left to put forward a programme of proletarian class struggle. The article is based on a presentation given by Comrade Lannigan to a Spartacist League public meeting in London on October 27.

Anyone familiar with the left-wing press in Britain and Ireland can hardly have missed the dutiful marking of the end of a decade of upheaval in the Six Counties by almost all of the ostensibly revolutionary groups. Articles entitled '10 Years in the North of Ireland' or 'Derry: Ten Years After' have proliferated. Some of the authors have tried to rewrite history; others, notably prominent participants in the Derry events like Eamonn McCann, have sought to apologise for not doing what they know should have been done; while still others have merely gone through the motions, giving perfunctory nods to acknowledge the existence of this troublesome island off the west coast of the Isle of Man.

The Spartacist League has a different reason for addressing the events of 1968 in Ireland and their aftermath. We believe that our tendency has a programme which can be applied to unravel the tangled knot of national/communal, social and religious conflict that is the stuff of Irish politics. Our programme, summed up in the slogan 'Troops out now -- not Orange against Green, but class against class', points to the crucial need for a proletarian struggle against both imperialism and all forms of nationalism as the key to the resolution of the democratic and socialist tasks in Ireland.

Working-class unity in Ireland, considered a grotesque and utopian pipe-dream by the 'socialists' of the British left, cannot be regarded as merely desirable for an effective fight to defeat imperialism and establish a workers state in Ireland. Particularly in the twentieth century, the attempt to create any kind of governmental regime in Ireland has necessitated the consent of the Protestant community. The attempt by the British Liberals to impose a neo-colonial 'Home Rule' solution on Ireland in 1912 foundered on the rocks of northern Unionist opposition. As recently as 1974, the social power of the subjectively pro-imperialist Loyalist bloc was again demonstrated in the Ulster Workers Council strike, which defeated the Sunningdale proposals for a 'power-sharing' executive and a federal Council of Ireland.

Our considerations are thus fundamentally practical. Without the splitting of the Protestant community along class lines, the possibilities for a successful indigenous proletarian revolution in Ireland are virtually nil.

We are not blind to the difficulties of achieving this goal of working-class unity. However we are not of that school of petty-bourgeois pessimists who see only the problems. The history of the working class in Ireland is not merely one of sectarian divisions. There is also a fine tradition of united working-class struggle established by the 1907 Belfast shipyard strike wave, or the 1919 engineering strike. Even since partition, which significantly hardened the communal divisions, there have been important instances of united working-class action; the most important was the Belfast Outdoor Relief Workers strike in 1932. In this major struggle, Protestant and Catholic workers not only struck together but fought together in riots against the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). It took an eight-day curfew to quell these street battles.

Derry 1968 was not another Belfast 1932. The Protestant and Catholic workers were not engaging in joint mass struggles. However it is clear that in 1968 it was possible for revolutionaries to penetrate both sections of the working class and, by drawing on and transcending the different traditions of struggle, to create the basis for a party which could provide a way out of the impasse in Ireland.

Origins of the Civil Rights movement

Firstly it is important to examine the origins of the Civil Rights movement. The sharpness of the upheaval in Derry came out of the deep sense of grievance felt by its majority Catholic

Derry 1968: how the left failed



RUC charges into the Bogside, 12 August 1969

population over various acts by the Unionist government during the 1960s. The permanent economic depression which hung over Derry (unemployment was 16 per cent, and for males 25 per cent) was exacerbated by the consciously discriminatory policy of the Unionist government in favour of the predominantly Protestant areas of the Six Counties. An example was the siting of Northern Ireland's second university in the small Protestant town of Coleraine, although Derry was a natural choice because of its size and because there had been a University College in the city since 1865.

Measures like this served to increase the resentment of the Catholics in Derry. The nature of the political structure added to this resentment: a majority of the electorate voted anti-Unionist and yet a Unionist Corporation was consistently elected. This was accomplished by the gerrymander: an electoral ward of 14,000 voters elected 8 councillors, while two wards containing a total of 8000 voters elected 12 councillors. This effective disenfranchisement of the 70 per cent Catholic population was maintained by the refusal of the Corporation to house Catholics, particularly outside their own ward. Housing was politically very important since non-householders were not allowed to vote in local elections. This housing policy reached a low in 1967, when no houses at all were built in the city.

Housing was in fact the spark which set light to the situation. The first Civil Rights demonstration, in Dungannon in August 1968, came after the allocation to a 19-year-old Protestant girl of a house in which a Catholic family had been squatting. This was quickly followed in October by a demonstration in Derry, organised by left-wing activists in the Derry Housing Action Committee.

Everyone expected that the march would pass off peacefully, like the Dungannon one. But October 5, 1968 was to be the occasion of the most violent shake-up in Ireland since partition and

the civil war. The Minister of Home Affairs banned the demonstration. People were thus quite tense; but the atmosphere was more festive than martial as we marched along Duke Street. Even when we came to the RUC tenders which blocked our path to the Craigavon Bridge, most people sat down in the road and sang civil rights songs. Then the sky fell in.

The police baton-charged. A cordon of police along the back of the demonstration blocked the path of fleeing demonstrators. This experience changed people's worldview more than 10,000 lectures on the state ever could. From then on street corners, fish shops and bookies' shops were all arenas of the hottest political debate. It was an incredibly fertile period for the development of a socialist organisation.

However as soon as the 'lefts' like Eamonn McCann, who had played a key part in organising the October 5 demonstration, realised the extent of the explosive discontent they had inadvertently tapped, they immediately abdicated their position of leadership in favour of a group of 'responsible' Catholic businessmen. The latter intervened virtually unopposed to form the Citizens Action Committee (CAC) at a meeting in the City Hall on October 9. These gentlemen immediately proceeded to remove all the latent class content of the movement. The CAC leaders pushed a line of pacifism and respectable anti-Unionist unity, calling off a planned march and substituting a mass sit-down protest in Guildhall Square.

'One man, one job'

The original demands of the Civil Rights protests were 'One man, one job', 'One man, one vote' and 'One man, one house'. These demands clearly had a democratic edge against the anti-Catholic discrimination of the Northern Ireland state. Moreover, in the early stage of the struggle the 'jobs' demand was generally understood to mean the need for *more* jobs, not for

throwing Protestants out of work and giving their jobs to Catholics. Similarly with housing. The demands, while vague, were thus potential focusses for a class-wide fight for social equality against the capitalists.

There was a widespread recognition among the protesters that many Protestants lived in even worse conditions than some working-class Catholics. For instance, on the Protestant Shankill Road in Belfast in 1969, 97 per cent of houses had no indoor toilets and almost as many had no hot water.

For those sages who regard the Protestants as a labour aristocracy or as a 'white settler caste' it appears that the difference between outside toilets and swimming pools is academic. Their hygiene must be on a par with their political insight. What these people do not understand is that the system of discrimination also involves political patronage.

Thus in order to get good jobs and houses, Protestant workers had to vote Unionist, restrain any militancy over wages, job conditions etc. The disparity in wage levels between Northern Ireland and Britain for the same job in the same firm shows the effect that this system has had on the possibilities for working-class action of any kind. And this has not been completely lost on Protestant trade unionists. A meeting of predominantly Protestant shop stewards in Belfast in 1965 called for an end to discrimination on religious grounds. The various splits in the Unionist monolith over the last few years reflect in a distorted way these class tensions.

However, in 1968 any possibility of intersecting this feeling and organising a united working-class struggle was wasted by the 'lefts' in Derry. The formation of the CAC gave the mass movement a liberal democratic pan-Catholic colouration, with demands like 'One man, one job' fading rapidly into the background or taking on an anti-Protestant connotation. When one of the two Protestants on the CAC, Claude Wilton, stood for election in 1969, the popular slogan was 'vote for Claude, the Catholic Prod', identifying him with the Catholic side *against* the Protestants.

Class struggle or pan-Catholicism?

I was then a member of the Socialist Labour League (SLL -- later League for a Workers Vanguard) in Derry, and this group, while small, had some possibility of fighting for class unity in this period. The SLL's social base in Derry was mainly Catholic, while in Belfast it consisted mainly of Protestant trade unionists. Our attack on the Civil Rights movement was not, however, centred on its supra-class, anti-Protestant character but on its limitations as a protest movement.

There was one concrete case which opened up particularly good possibilities for raising the class question: a busmen's strike in Derry in 1969, in which we were strategic in leading a largely Protestant workforce out on strike against the introduction of one-man buses. Here was a perfect issue for raising the call to defend and win jobs for *all* workers through an end to discrimination and work-sharing at full pay. Moreover, this was an issue which the CAC would never have touched. However our calls for class unity were so formal and abstract that we did not see the CAC as the key obstacle to it. Thus we did not use this strike action as a way of splitting the pan-Catholic alliance.

The SLL, except in one case when it led a strike of dockers and shirt factory workers against RUC repression in Derry, was generally peripheral and too small to make a strong impact, particularly given its flawed and abstract programme. However, Eamonn McCann and his co-thinkers in People's Democracy (PD -- originally a loose student organisation in Queen's University, Belfast) have a much greater responsibility for what happened to the civil rights struggle. In his well-known book about the Derry events, *War and an Irish Town*, McCann himself expresses rather well what he did wrong, albeit with a reformist perspective:

'If any group had fought consistently -- from within or without the civil rights movement -- or both -- for such a programme, the all-class Catholic alliance, which is what the civil rights movement became, could not have held together. And such a programme, hardly the normal stuff of Northern Irish politics, would not have attracted immediate mass support; but it might have enabled those of us in Derry at least to go on *talking* to Protestants in the Fountain in 1969. At any rate the matter was never put to the test. No such group existed or emerged.'

Despite the fact that the programme McCann refers to does not transcend social-democratic reformism, he does seem to have learned *something*. But not so. After ten years of annually beating his breast over his sins, McCann still doesn't recognise that broad supra-class movements are roadblocks in the fight to win even democratic demands. Today, writing in the pages of *Socialist Review*, he supports the Anti Nazi League Carnival. Perhaps in ten years' time McCann will be apologising for his mistakes on the ANL. Like the ANL, the CAC was a means for the liberal bourgeoisie to defuse, divert and prevent any real action by the working class in defence of its interests.

McCann describes the craven capitulation of the left rather well:

'By the middle of 1969 "the left" was established as those who were most impatient and most willing to run risks, who wanted to go along the same road as the moderates, but further, faster. It was not at all established that the left wanted to go along a different road.' (*War and an Irish Town*)

Burntoll and the Bogside

In January 1969 People's Democracy organised a march from Belfast to Derry which maintained the spirit and programme of pan-Catholic pacifism. This march was a complete adventure, organised with a conception of self-martyrdom. PD took a group of students through the most backward Orange country areas of the north, with an explicit policy of non-violence. They went to what McCann proudly called the 'lunatic extreme' of allowing the marchers to be beaten to a pulp by Protestant followers of the fanatical reactionary Reverend Ian Paisley, without so much as an attempt at self-defence.

At this stage Protestant *workers* were not generally being mobilised against the Civil Rights protesters; it was mainly rural and lumpen elements who stood behind Paisley. But PD's pacifist antics were completely self-defeating: they were no way to win respect -- let alone support -- among the Protestant working class.

The rally in Derry at the end of the march dissolved into riots sparked off by the news of Paisley's attacks. The riots were the occasion for the most violent RUC rampage to date. Vigilante squads were set up to defend the Catholic *Bogside* after this display of Orange state repression, and barricades went up for the first time -- soon to be dismantled at the instigation of the CAC. The riots continued up through July, both against provocative Loyalist parades and against the RUC. They peaked with intense battles against the RUC on the occasion of the Loyalist Apprentice Boys march on August 12, which as an 'annual parade' was exempt from a ban on marches. These battles led directly to the introduction of British troops.

But with a radically different perspective



Catholic resident of the Bogside turns a fire hose on the RUC in August 1969

from the prevailing pan-Catholic liberalism and pacifism, it would have been possible to build an organisation which could cut across the communal divide. One of the first deaths from sectarian violence was that of a Protestant worker named King who was killed in the Protestant Fountain area of Derry in early 1969. He had a heart attack after a Catholic crowd beat him up at the entrance to the Fountain.

In those circumstances it would have been crucial to say to the people who were defending the Bogside against the RUC: 'We're for a working-class defence force, we're for defending *every* section of the workers against the police and against sectarian attack. We think that those who attack the Fountain are against the working class, that we should defend the Fountain against these kinds of attacks.' That approach could have begun very early on to still the communal side of the Catholic protest movement and to keep open the possibility of united class action with the Protestant workers.

Troops and the left

But the Irish left had a very different perspective. People's Democracy's pacifism and liberalism very quickly revealed its natural corollary of reliance on the bourgeois state. When the Belfast-to-Derry march finally hobbled, battered and bruised, into Derry's Guildhall Square, PD leader Michael Farrell called for the intervention of a United Nations peacekeeping force to protect the Catholics!

Eight months after Farrell made his call, an imperialist 'peacekeeping' force was indeed sent to Ireland: the British army. The Catholic population was intensely relieved when it arrived, as they'd been facing three continuous days of police and B-Special riots. And the gentlemen of the left in Ireland naturally couldn't find it in themselves to call for the immediate withdrawal of British troops -- though they were very outspoken against imperialist intervention in Aden.

In Britain the International Socialists, in their usual 'principled' fashion, reacted to the proximity of the issue and to the consciousness of the Catholic masses by supporting the sending of imperialism's armed thugs. They said that troops would give a valuable 'breathing space' (an unfortunate turn of phrase) to the Catholics. And they cut out the regular slogan in the 'Where We Stand' box in *Socialist Worker* which called 'For the withdrawal of British troops from abroad', changing it to 'Support for all national liberation movements' without explaining the switch at all.

The International Marxist Group refused to call outright for the withdrawal of the troops, simply advising sagely that 'The Bogside will learn that the British army will not protect them from the B-Specials.' To its credit the SLL, both in Ireland and in Britain, put out a call for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. It has to be understood that imperialist intervention can never create a solution in the interests of the working class or the oppressed, in Northern Ireland or anywhere else. After a brief honeymoon when cups of tea were brewed for the troops the illusions of the Catholic masses were completely smashed, particularly by the Falls Road curfew in July 1970, when people were forced to stay in their houses for three days.

The national question and the class question

McCann drew the obvious lesson from the installation of the troops that one major problem with the Civil Rights movement was that it didn't raise the question of the border, of partition. But, lacking a working-class perspective, he simply moved from tailing bourgeois liberalism to tailing the petty-bourgeois nationalism of the Provisional IRA. That's a development which typifies much of the guilt-ridden British/Irish left.

For us, neither the southern state nor the northern Orange statelet can in any sense be seen as an ally of the working class. Both states deny a whole series of democratic rights: one guided by pro-imperialist Protestant communalism, the other by Catholic bigotry. Vorster in South Africa once said 'I would give up all my legislation for one article of the Special Powers Act in Northern Ireland.' But the southern state has an equally vicious Offences Against the State Act.

So when in August 1969 southern troops were moved to the border we would have opposed their intervention, just as we vehemently opposed Britain's intervention. We reject the programme

continued on page 6

Derry 1968...

(Continued from page 5)

of a united capitalist Ireland, either as a 'progressive step' or as a satisfactory goal, because that could offer nothing to the Protestant workers but a reversal of the terms of oppression -- at best making them second-class citizens in a united Republic. To advance such a programme in 1969 and 1970, just like today, was to guarantee that Protestant workers would be pushed away from any possibility of unity with the Catholic masses and back into the arms of their 'own' bourgeoisie.

But without confronting the national question and defending the right of *both* communities to exist, calls for class unity can only be abstract and empty incantation. This was precisely the problem with the SLL at that time. The national question was a distant part of the maximum programme which was not allowed to interfere with the daily economic questions; and when the SLL finally addressed it they came down on the side of Green nationalism.

The lack of an organisation fighting for an anti-nationalist working-class programme has been dearly paid for since 1968. Thus, rather than being split along class lines, the Civil Rights movement eventually fragmented along predictable, but not predetermined, lines. Karl Marx wrote in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* that:

'The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seemed engaged in revolutionising themselves and things, in creating something that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle cries and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language.'

So the streetfighters of 1969 became Republicans, exchanging the stone and petrol bomb for the gun. The Catholic working-class youth of the North, potential cadres of a proletarian vanguard party, saw no alternative in their struggle against imperialism than the petty-bourgeois nationalist Provisional IRA.

When you look at the number of personally courageous militants who have died in the service of this historically defunct cause, you realise that there has been a tremendous waste. Republicanism contains a backward-looking romanticism -- the idea that each generation must give up some of its sons 'to die for their country'. And this warped, deformed tradition leads the working masses *nowhere*.

In Ireland, even more than most semi-colonial countries, the struggle for a bourgeois nationalist solution to the national question is an entirely futile one. The partial and deformed completion of the national revolution in 1921 undercut the social base that a nationalist organisation would need to defeat imperialism in the North, and partition hardened the division between the Catholics and a million-strong, heavily-armed Protestant majority in the North which had no desire for unity with the new Free State.

The underlying truth that there can be no democratic solution to the Irish question without the consent of the Protestants helps explain the craven approach of the Provisionals, who fight not so much to *defeat* imperialism as to bring it to the negotiating table. Hence they

refuse to call for the immediate withdrawal of the troops, preferring to ask for a 'declaration of intent' to withdraw by Britain. In addition, the Provos continually seek negotiations with reactionary Unionist leaders, seeing them and not the Protestant workers as potential allies.

1838 and 1938

Various left groups tell us that the programme of 1938, the Transitional Programme of Leon Trotsky, is out of date. I would say that the programme of 1838, the bourgeois programme of Daniel O'Connell's Repeal Movement, along with all its later cousins, is out of date.

Before 1972, the programme of the Provisional IRA and of People's Democracy -- the programme that many Republican militants laid down their lives for -- was nothing more than the abolition of Stormont. So Stormont was abolished -- but, with nothing to replace it, that simply meant direct Westminster rule in the North. And today the only significant movement in the Catholic ghettos is around the demand for political status for Republican prisoners, pending a general amnesty. That's a minimum programme which, to say the least, comes nowhere near addressing the overall needs of the working class.

Against the bankrupt 'tradition of the dead generations' which is Republicanism, we have a different tradition. Our programme is based on the need for the kind of united class struggles against the bourgeoisie that occurred in Belfast in 1932. That means a fight for a conscious leadership which can address the question of sectarian violence alongside the fight to get the British troops out, by building anti-imperialist, anti-sectarian workers defence squads.

That means a leadership which will fight for a socialist solution to unemployment, bad housing and the poverty-level standard of living in Northern Ireland, through raising transitional demands like a sliding scale of wages and hours, an end to all discrimination in housing and employment and a programme of socially-useful public works. A leadership which will break down the communal barriers, tearing Protestant workers from their reactionary Orange masters just as it breaks Catholic workers away from their rulers and misleaders, north and south, the Green bourgeoisie and the nationalists.

The struggle to build an organisation fighting for such a programme will not be easy. However, unlike the Republicans and their acolytes, our politics will enable us to take advantage of future Derry 1968s in the fight for an Irish workers republic as part of a socialist federation of the British Isles.■

Ford workers...

(Continued from page 8)

Callaghan government. Thus the Ford workers were criminally left to stand alone.

T&GWU chief negotiator Ron Todd palmed the final offer off to the workers by claiming that it was 'the best we can achieve'. But the settlement contained the same 9.75 per cent basic rise which had been rejected three weeks before -- and an increase even smaller than that won by Ford workers last year. The only 'concession' supposedly won since the last offer was a 'softening' of the provisions concerning the 'attendance allowance' which knocked the total maximum package up to 16.5 per cent. This 'allowance' was really nothing more than the re-introduction of penalty clauses thrown out in 1969 -- a combination of a speed-up productivity deal and a no-strike 'bonus' designed to stop 'unofficial' strikes on the line.

Absolutely no one really believed that there were any substantial differences between the two offers. For the bureaucrats, the key issue at stake was the need to bring to an end a strike which posed a serious threat to the Labour government, in that it provided a potential rallying point for the tens of thousands of workers seeking to break the 5 per cent limit. Demoralised, broke (strike pay was a mere £6 a week) and having no alternative leadership, the ranks voted to return to work, but there was no enthusiasm for the settlement -- as one striker put it: '...we have the companies blacked out right through Europe. It's the best position we have ever got them in, and we could have got more' (*Guardian*, 23 November).

For the past few weeks Callaghan has been attempting to salvage his credentials as the

bourgeoisie's best bet for keeping the working class in line. He has imposed government sanctions on Ford, primarily as a warning to other companies which may be considering large wage offers. And, in the teeth of all odds, he is maintaining the Phase Four hard line -- no wage rises above the 5 per cent -- despite failure to secure a new 'social contract'-type deal with the Trades Union Congress leadership.

However, there are still large sections of the organised union movement which are pursuing wage claims far beyond the 5 per cent limit. In November, the miners union reaffirmed that it would continue its fight for a 40 per cent pay increase. It is therefore critical that the lessons of the bureaucratic sellout at Ford be hammered home.

In order for the working class even to recoup the losses in its living standards sustained in four years of Labour's wage controls, it is necessary for all sections of workers who have wage claims pending -- especially the miners, the Leyland workers and local government employees -- to come out *together* in strike action. But the Ford sellout has shown, once again, that the cowardly pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucrats have not the slightest intention of leading such a struggle against the Labour government.

What is needed is a class-struggle leadership of the labour movement, capable of championing united working-class strike action as the way forward for smashing wage controls. Such a leadership would fight for a programme to provide a *proletarian* alternative to the endemic crisis of British capitalism: a struggle for the smashing of the capitalist state and the creation of a workers government.■

Press strike...

(Continued from page 8)

capitalist advertising, could rally print workers throughout the country and the rest of the working population behind the *Times* workers' cause.

And how should the *Times* workers be supported? All of Fleet Street should be brought out on strike, and the walkout must be spread throughout the press industry to shut down northern editions of the national newspapers. The National Publishers Association is standing firm by the Labour government's five per cent pay ceiling, rejecting the Fleet Street printers' claim for a 15 per cent wage rise. At the same time the National Union of Journalists has called a strike to shut down 1200 provincial papers throughout England and Wales.

Here is a perfect opportunity to tie the struggle against the *Times* bosses to a general struggle against the five per cent and for higher wages and better working conditions throughout the newspaper industry. The bosses' attempts to pit one region of press workers against another should be countered by demanding FLEET STREET RATES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. And MASS PICKETS and FLYING PICKETS must be employed whenever necessary to stop scabbing and any possible attempts by the *Times* to print outside London.

The lockout comes after a series of shutdown threats going back to April of this year. Union leaders have already accepted redundancies in principle, and, apart from the NGA leaders, have agreed to a 'revised disputes procedure' which is a drastic attack on the chapels' control over working conditions. UNION CONTROL of the shop floor must be maintained and extended, and 'voluntary redundancies' rejected for what they are -- a reduction in manning levels which will lead to longer dole queues. Instead there must be RETRAINING AT FULL PAY for all those whose jobs are slated for automation.

For the bosses, modernisation has always been synonymous with reducing the number of workers, while the rest are worked just as hard or harder. Instead automation must be made to serve the workers, through WORK SHARING AT FULL PAY.

This is a strategy which can smash the *Times*' offensive and lay the basis for a single militant industrial union encompassing the whole of the printing trades. If, however, the bureaucrats are allowed to get their way, print workers will face disaster -- like the *Washington Post* pressmen who were stabbed in the back by union leaders and defeated in a major battle against a job-cutting automation scheme two years ago. Don't let it happen here -- fight for a class-struggle strategy and a new class-struggle leadership of the printing workers to open the road to victory!■

SPARTACIST BRITAIN

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Free Astrid Proll!

Astrid Proll, an alleged former member of the New Left terrorist German Red Army Faction (RAF -- commonly referred to in the bourgeois press as the 'Baader-Meinhof Gang') was arrested under an Aliens Order on September 15 at a North London vehicle repair workshop where she was employed as an instructor. The West German government has since demanded her extradition on the basis of her alleged complicity in two attempted murders and robberies in the early 1970s. However the extradition hearing has been postponed for several weeks because the prosecutor's office in Frankfurt has had difficulty producing sufficient evidence to document its charges.

Proll first came into contact with members of the RAF while a student in Frankfurt in the late 1960s. In May 1971, she was arrested in Hamburg and charged with the attempted murders of two policemen during an earlier incident in Frankfurt in which the RAF was allegedly involved. For two years prior to her trial, she was placed in solitary confinement and was subjected for long periods of time to sensory deprivation in the 'silent wing' of the Köln-Ossendorf prison. She was held for months at a time in an entirely white, sound-proofed room, where the lights were left on 24 hours a day. Despite this barbaric treatment, Proll refused to give the police any information about the RAF or to 'make a confession'.

Due to her treatment in prison, by the time her trial began in late 1973 she was suffering from extreme low blood pressure and circulatory collapse. After four months she was found medically unfit to stand trial. Her trial was postponed and she was let out on bail for recuperation. She then fled to England where she has been living for the past four years.

Astrid Proll's political activities in Britain have been limited to engaging in social welfare work and participating in the women's movement. And it is solely on the basis of this

recent, far more 'respectable', activity that most of the British left has been prepared to defend her. The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) goes so far as to argue: 'She now has no connection with the Red Army Faction. She should be given another chance' (*Socialist Worker*, 30 September).

Unlike the SWP or the International Marxist Group, whose counterpart in Germany (the Gruppe Internationale Marxisten) shrank from even token defence of RAF members during the anti-terrorist witchhunt around the Schleyer kidnapping last year, the Spartacist League defends the *entire* left against the attacks of the capitalist state. We unequivocally reject the strategy of individual terror engaged in by the RAF -- a political strategy of despair which is both substitutionist and counterproductive. But we recognise that it is a gut-level hatred for the oppression that capitalism engenders which led groups like the RAF to desperate acts against representatives of the class enemy, such as the kidnapping of former SS officer and business magnate Hans-Martin Schleyer. As Leninists, we make an elementary class distinction between the terror of the West German capitalist state -- the butchers of Stammheim prison -- and the misguided acts of the RAF.

Astrid Proll's case is now scheduled to be heard on December 11. Her extradition to Germany would leave her open once again to the hideous terror to which the bourgeoisie subjects alleged members of the RAF and would serve only to fuel the German state's 'anti-terror' campaign. The 'fight against terrorism' is the ground upon which the German state is busily strengthening its repressive apparatus which, in the final analysis, will be aimed against the struggles of the proletariat. We demand: Stop the extradition hearings -- free Astrid Proll now! For the immediate release of all members of the RAF in West German prisons! Freedom for all left prisoners!

War II and at the time of the CIA-engineered overthrow of the bourgeois democrat Mossadegh in 1953. But on the other hand, anti-Tudeh sentiment can easily be utilised by the religious leaders for a general anti-communist crusade both against domestic leftists and against the Soviet Union.

The Russian question is no small matter for Iranian would-be revolutionaries, given Iran's long northern border with the Soviet state. For years the Shah has been working hand-in-glove with imperialism to build up Iran as a military bulwark against the USSR. Military defence of the Soviet degenerated workers state against imperialism must thus be a key demand for revolutionaries in Iran today -- not only because of the importance of defending the gains of the 1917 October Revolution, but also because this is a touchstone in the necessary struggle against great Persian chauvinism.

Such a position would bring revolutionaries into direct conflict with a religious movement which, to prove its distance from Marxism, attacks representatives of the deformed workers states. According to the 'Report of the Patriotic Muslim Students of Tabriz on the Tabriz Uprising':

'The attacks on the Shah-Abbas Hotel (where experts from Rumania and Czechoslovakia's automobile factories reside) and the attacks on the offices of the joint Irano-Russian Company for Transportation in Tabriz show that nobody would accept such labels [Islamic-Marxist] as being true.' (*RIPEH*, June 1978)

The road forward in Iran lies not in chasing after the mass movements led by the mullahs. Authentic Trotskyists would seek to split the anti-Shah mobilisations, winning the working class, at the head of the oppressed masses, to a programme which combines democratic demands with a series of transitional demands culminating in a workers and peasants government.

Where Khomeini wants to increase the amount of *waqf* lands controlled by the Islamic clergy, we say: Land to the tiller! *Expropriate* the religious *waqf* lands, as the Bolsheviks did in Central Asia! Where the mullahs demand that women don the *chador* or face stoning, we say: Away with the veil! Full legal rights for women! In reply to Khomeini's theocratic communalist hostility to non-Shi'ite religious groups and national minorities, we proclaim with Lenin: Break the state's links with the established church -- religion must become exclusively a matter of private conscience! For the right of self-determination for the oppressed nationalities! And against religious anti-communism, we say: For the unconditional military defence of the Soviet Union! Mobilise the working class to topple the Shah through proletarian revolution!

Down with the Shah, and down with the mullahs! For class war not holy war in Iran!

USec...

(Continued from page 3)

urged would-be revolutionaries to follow all sorts of misleaders down the yellow brick road to disaster: Fidel Castro, Ben Bella, Mao Tse-tung, Ho Chi-minh, the Portuguese MFA, the Eurocommunists, etc, etc. And now we are given the Koran-waving mullahs who want to turn the clock back to the seventh century and force women to wear the veil!

In order to gloss over the reactionary clerical character of the Khomeini-led religious opposition, the USec tries to pass off the recent mass strike wave as a mere part of the 'movement' against the Shah. But, in fact, prior to the last month the working class was not at all a driving force in the demonstrations. Instead the protests centred on shopkeepers, merchants and semi-peasant seasonal labourers who rallied behind Khomeini's banner. When the workers' strike wave mushroomed in October, these petty-bourgeois elements actually *re-opened* the Teheran bazaar which had been shut by a religious-led protest.

The intervention into the political arena of a massive proletarian strike movement spearheaded by the oil workers demonstrated a potential way forward from the reactionary alternatives of the monarchy and the mosque. By raising a programme of democratic and proletarian demands -- including land to the tiller, full legal rights for women, the right of self-deter-

mination for minority nationalities, the complete separation of mosque and state and a democratically-elected constituent assembly -- the powerful Iranian working class can rally the masses against *both* the Shah's reign of terror and the reactionary ulema. Proletarian revolution for a workers and peasants government is the only way to lift Iran out of its centuries-long legacy of backwardness, oppression, poverty and obscurantism. But that task requires the building of a Trotskyist vanguard party, section of an authentic reformed Fourth International -- not the bankrupt opportunist sham which is Ernest Mandel's United Secretariat.

DOWN WITH THE SHAH! DOWN WITH THE MULLAHS!
BREAK WITH USEC REVISIONISM -- REFORGE THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL!

Iran...

(Continued from page 1)

Iranian militant interviewed in *Workers Action* (November 24), the recent bank-burning campaign, far from being an example of 'progressive anti-imperialism', 'started off with a campaign by the Muslim hierarchy against one bank in which a Bahai capitalist had a stake'. If the Muslim leaders now focus on Bahai entrepreneurs, they can just as easily turn on workers from this and other religious and national minorities.

In addition to their desire for undisputed religious hegemony in Iran, the mullahs have also been carefully nurturing opposition to all their possible secular competitors for leadership of the masses -- particularly the pro-Moscow Stalinist Tudeh Party, which has historically had a significant base among the working population. The Tudeh Party's sordid history of selling out the struggles of the Iranian working class and the Kremlin's current refusal to call for the overthrow of the Shah give some credence to the religious leaders' constant refrain to the masses, 'they always stab us in the back'.

But in Iran mass sentiment against the Stalinists is a dangerous double-edged sword. On the one hand, the Tudeh Party did betray significant mass struggles, both following World



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SPARTACIST BRITAIN

Stop union-busting at the Times!

For a national press strike!

It has caused quite a stir in the international bourgeois media: the *Times*, one of the last vestiges of a long-gone period when Britain symbolised to the world the stability and apparent permanence of the capitalist order, has ceased publication. Moreover, the decision to bring the presses to a halt on November 30 was taken in the *colonies*: in Toronto, where millionaire owner Lord Thompson resides and manages his wide-ranging business affairs.

In fact, however, the paper is far from having gone under for good -- and the thoughts of *Times* Newspapers employees are hardly in line with the bourgeoisie's poetic visions of the sun finally setting on a once mighty Empire. Management has proclaimed that the suspension of publication of the *Times*, *Sunday Times* and three supplements is 'temporary' -- intended to last just long enough to push through a job-slashing automation scheme and emasculate the powerful Fleet Street printing unions. *Times* Newspapers, spearheading an offensive on behalf of all the press barons, has launched an old-fashioned union-busting campaign.

The Fleet Street unions' shop-floor organisation and control over working conditions is almost unparalleled in British industry. They have won wage rates far above the British average, a closed shop and effective control over hiring and firing. The fathers of the chapels (shop stewards) are able to call mandatory union meetings on company time and shut production down immediately over health and safety violations on the shop floor.

Management wants to destroy these important union gains in order to reassert its control over production and implement a massive automation programme. The programme threatens to bring with it speed-up, compulsory overtime and manning cuts of up to 63 per cent in some departments. The introduction of single-stroke keyboarding would lay the basis for the elimination of hundreds of compositors' jobs.

The ominous thing is that the top print union leaders are overtly sympathetic to management's needs. They are not even going through the motions of solidifying a common front for the 54 separate bargaining units which exist at the *Times*, let alone uniting all the Fleet Street unions in a counter-offensive to smash the union-busters. They too would prefer a docile workforce; and they are prepared to accept much of the *Times*' package to get one. Several months ago, while in the process of organising scabbing on an *Observer* machine minders strike, National Graphical Association (NGA) General Secretary Joe Wade said that he is 'determined, along with other printing unions, to bring the anarchy in Fleet Street to an end wherever and whenever it arises' (*Times*, 22 May 1978).

Bill Keys, general secretary of the Society of Graphical and Allied Trades joined with the general secretaries of the other main print unions in 1975 to help author the joint management-union 'Programme for Action' -- a plan for mass redundancies. The plan was instantly thrown out by the chapels; but it now serves as the basis for the *Times*' demands. And the bureaucrats have also maintained their stance. Says Keys, 'management must start to manage... Managing is something they have not done in a long while' (*Sunday Times*, 26 November).

Occupy the *Times*!

The union leaders have made no effort to put forward a strategy to counter the lockout and defeat the bosses. The *Times* has been moving in new machines for months prior to the suspension of publication, and could well try at some point to re-open elsewhere with an open shop. The arrogant union-busters must be answered with an OCCUPATION, the necessary cornerstone of any successful counter-strategy.

ELECTED ACTION COMMITTEES must be built to counter the bosses' united assaults. These com-



Print workers demonstrate in Fleet Street, November 28

mittees, directly responsible to and recallable by the membership, must be linked in a COMMON FRONT of print unions to cut across the parochial craft divisions which the bosses and bureaucrats have always used to their own advantage.

The printing presses at the *Times* should be turned over to the production of a UNION DAILY NEWSPAPER -- a paper to counter the bosses' lies. Such a newspaper, sponsored, financed and manned by the union movement and allowing no

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17% with a no-strike penalty

Ford strikers sold short

Fifty-seven thousand workers at Ford plants returned to work on November 24 after a nine-week strike won them a 9.7 per cent increase on basic wages. The size of the pay rise, while not even enough to keep up with the rate of inflation, was not good news for Prime Minister James Callaghan and his Labour cabinet -- it is nearly double the 5 per cent limit set under Phase Four of the government's wage control programme. Paying no heed to Callaghan's pleas for yet more 'austerity' sacrifices, the Ford workers showed that workers can beat the Labour government's wage controls through determined strike action, whereas without a strike they would have gained nothing more than the government-approved 5 per cent which management originally offered.

However, at bottom the strike result was not a victory but a defeat for the Ford workers -- they could have won much, much more, had it not

been for the treachery of the union bureaucrats 'leading' the strike. Saddled with a strike which had been forced upon them by spontaneous mass walkouts from the plants on September 21, the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers and Transport and General Workers Union (T&GWU) bureaucrats throughout adopted a strategy of 'containment'. They managed both to prevent the strike from spreading to other workers and to sell out both of the key demands in the original claim. The first -- a 25 per cent pay rise, which would merely have brought workers' real wages back to where they were four years ago -- was nowhere near attained; while the second, a call for a 35-hour working week, was completely ignored by the union negotiators after the first week of the strike.

The workers showed great militancy in the early days of the strike -- militancy fuelled by four years of vicious assaults on the standard

of living of the working class by the Labour government. But in the end Callaghan's cronies in the bureaucracy, having led the workforce to demoralisation, accepted an agreement virtually identical to the one they had already rejected three weeks before.

This sellout need not have happened. The road to victory was clear from the start. Section after section of the organised union movement -- from local government workers to tanker drivers, power workers, British Leyland car workers and the miners -- had slapped down wage claims, scornfully rejecting Callaghan's 5 per cent limit. Had they been brought out on strike alongside the Ford workers, Phase Four would have been smashed to pieces. But the bureaucrats feared above all else a wave of militant strikes which would have been a head-on challenge to the

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