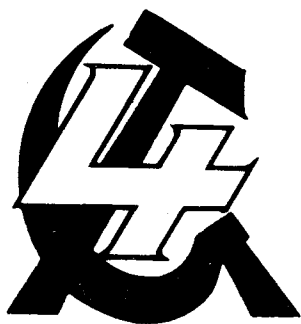


# SPARTACIST



No 37

November 1981

20p

BRITAIN

## BL workers knifed, miners in the wings Dump the bureaucrats!

# It's time to fight!

'I am backing England', was Terry Duffy's final directive to 58,000 BL car workers as they stood poised for official strike action beginning 2 November. Backing England, of course meant backing the British bosses -- and once again it meant twisting the knife into the backs of the BL workforce as they prepared for a confrontation with management. Less than 48 hours after their strike began, BL workers voted for a return to work on the basis of a settlement about which nobody could find a favourable word except the bosses.

The financial index rose 14 points at the news, an expressive sigh of relief after two weeks of ruling-class anguish. British Leyland is the white elephant in the elephants' graveyard which is British capitalism. But while the BL workers scarcely have the social power to have carried their fight through to a decisive victory alone, they stood to tap an enormous reservoir of pent-up anger and frustration with the Tory government. After three years, this government has made itself the most hated in contemporary British history. Wide sections of the population in or outside the organised labour movement have it in for Thatcher -- the arrogant butcher of Irish Republican prisoners, the vicious axe-wielder against social services, the anti-Soviet warmonger. Thatcher owes her continued tenure in Downing Street more to the crawling, conciliatory social-patriotic labour

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Friday, 16 October: BL Longbridge votes to strike.

## Spartacists protest Solidarność counterrevolution

Workers Vanguard



Spartacists demonstrate at opening of Solidarity's New York office, 24 September.

NEW YORK -- When Polish Solidarnosc opened an office in New York's United Federation of Teachers (UFT) headquarters September 24, it was a significant step in their link-up with Western imperialism. That was recognised by all sides, including capitalist propagandists who try to cover this up with their 'free world' rhetoric. But the ominous declaration of intent by pro-imperialist labour fakers was answered. Outside on the street there was a demonstration by the Spartacist League/US (SL) which proclaimed, 'Polish Solidarnosc Agents of Counterrevolution'. The 50 protesters carried placards and chanted 'No Rollback! No Capitalist Restoration in Eastern Europe!' and 'Social Democrats, AFL-CIO Front for CIA in Poland, Too!' An SL press release pointed out it was no accident the Solidarnosc office was sponsored by UFT president Albert Shanker, a leader of Social Democrats, USA, a gang of super Cold Warriors.

This was a demo with a sharp, angular message: 'Polish Solidarnosc -- Running Dog of Imperialism' and 'Reagan, Haig: Hands Off Poland!' Two slogans directed against Polish nationalism received particular attention: 'Death to Pilsudskiite Anti-Semites!' and '600,000 Red Army Soldiers Fell Liberating Poland from the German Nazis!' Walesa & Co would

have opposed that historic Soviet victory, which laid the basis for tremendous social and economic progress in post-war Poland, as anti-Communists did at the time. Polish reporters noted the sign, 'Long Live the Party of Luxemburg, Jogiches, Warski, Walecki & Wera Kostrzewa!' Luxemburg and Jogiches, Polish internationalist leaders of the Communist Party in Germany, were murdered by the Social Democratic government in the 'Spartacus uprising' of 1919; the 'three W's' were the founders of the Communist Party of Poland, later dissolved (and its leaders shot) by Stalin on charges of Trotskyism. Another placard read, 'Warynski, Not Wojtyla' -- for the father of the first Polish socialist party, Proletariat, not the present anti-Communist Polish pope. A sign in Polish said, 'Reagan Smashes PATCO American Union, Loves Solidarnosc'. Another in Russian proclaimed: 'For Military Defence of the Soviet Bloc Against Imperialism!'

At the press conference, Solidarnosc American representative Zgmunt Przetakiewicz quickly managed to alienate virtually the entire NYC press corps by refusing to answer any substantive questions. He had good reason to be cagey, it turns out. According to his statement, the

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# Fight ...

(Continued from page 1)

bureaucrats than to any other single factor.

From the trade-union bureaucrats who have derailed every potential for decisive class confrontation to the Labour politicians who spin out anti-Tory speeches while deflecting anti-Tory action into the safe chambers of Parliament, to a man, they 'back England' -- and betray the workers. The BL strike was sold out. But both the powerful miners and the Ford workers are this month pursuing claims. A joint Ford/miners strike would again raise the potential of triggering an all-out class explosion. But this latest betrayal underscores even more the urgency for a class-struggle leadership in the labour movement.

## Edwardes: Fronting for Thatcher

BL chairman Sir Michael Edwardes' threat to liquidate the entire company in the event of a strike fuelled a fighting spirit not seen among Leyland workers in years. Draconian attacks on shop-floor conditions, arbitrary victimisations and a one-third reduction in the workforce in the space of two years made BL workers itch for a fight with Edwardes. The pugnacious South African pig farmer's threat to liquidate BL -- sacrificing some 500 thousand jobs -- produced a furore, which could have led to a political explosion that blew the lid off the class struggle.

The opportunity was palpable; the miners' wage claim was due 1 November. With the industrial muscle of the miners behind them, a joint BL/miners strike could have set the stage for an all-out offensive against the Tories. And it was precisely for that reason that NUM head Joe Gormley postponed the miners negotiations to 11 November. Self-proclaimed militant (and hero of the fake-communist left) Arthur Scargill was too engrossed in his bid for NUM president to even comment.

Scargill's programme of import controls and cheap anti-Tory rhetoric in no way qualitatively distinguish him from his opponents. But communists could have considered extending him critical support if he had made a serious fight on this decisive question of initiating classwide action against the Tory attacks. Thus we said in a 26 October leaflet:

'We have no illusions in Scargill;... But if Scargill wants to give any militant miner a reason to vote for him now is the time for him to put all his talk about industrial ac-

tion against the Tories into practice by calling on the Yorkshire miners -- and every miner in the country -- to defy Gormley's backstabbing procrastination ... and come out alongside BL workers on November 1 in a joint struggle against the onslaughts of the Tory government.'

But 'King Arthur' did not lift a finger -- and he deserves not one vote.

And while Labour leader Michael Foot parlayed with Edwardes the day before the final offer was announced, and expressed hopes that a strike could be avoided, his 'left' opposition Tony Benn assiduously avoided saying anything concrete. Both Benn and Foot want the workers to wait until 1984.



Michael Edwardes

The bureaucracy at BL not only refused to spread the strike outside BL, they refused even to offer a strike perspective to workers at BL. The strike demand was rigidly restricted to a £20 wage rise, and plants threatened with closure were 'exempted' from the strike, ie told to scab. The manifest mood of anger, the solid show of strength on the first day of the strike, revealed a thirst to give Edwardes his comeuppance. With their leaders offering them no perspective for struggle, the majority of workers acquiesced to a return to work.

In leaflets (the second of which is reprinted here) distributed to thousands of BL workers and through supporters in Rover Solihull Four-by-Four, the Spartacist League (SL) fought for making no closures/no exemptions official strike policy as part of a perspective for spreading this strike to miners, Ford workers and engineering workers, 'to open up a vista of class struggle which could go right through to a general strike that could bring this hated Tory government tumbling down' (leaflet, 26 October). The receptivity to the leaflet was an indication

of the militant mood. Some workers at Cowley, having read it, came back for more to post on their notice boards. And at Rover, other workers approached SL supporters to help distribute the leaflet.

The Leyland Action Committee (LAC), a bloc between supporters of the International Marxist Group's *Socialist Challenge*, and the Socialist Organiser Alliance, claim to offer an alternative leadership for BL workers. What did they offer? *Socialist Challenge* did not even oppose the exemptions. And its supporter Pat Hickey, former deputy convenor at Rover Solihull SD1 has a record of crossing picket lines during last year's strike and of refusing to wage a fight for occupations against the threatened closure. No wonder he crossed the picket lines on the one day they were set up during this strike. And *Socialist Organiser* (29 October) made verbal appeals for an extension of the strike but its most prominent unionist is Cowley senior steward Alan Thornett, notorious for taking his plant back to work in the midst of a national engineering strike two years ago. Not a good record for spreading strikes! But for both of them, this is all secondary. The real solution they offer BL workers and all British workers is to tag along behind parliamentary 'left' Tony Benn, the man who refused to demonstrate a single measure of support for their strike.

Even as Ford workers and miners negotiate for their claims this month, Thatcher's new hardline Employment Secretary Tebbit is preparing legislation to strengthen the shackles imposed by the viciously anti-union Prior Employment Act. With every new betrayal of the working class, with every defeat that could have been a victory, with every drawing back from decisive confrontations, the union movement is set back and the ensuing demoralisation and frustration stoke the fires of fascist growth. And meanwhile Thatcher arms this 'unsinkable aircraft carrier' for her American Cold War allies to the hilt in preparation for nuclear war to restore capitalism to the Soviet bloc.

Fake-Marxists offer Bennery and peace parades as the answer to British workers. All the speeches and all the marches together would be nothing compared to an all-out miners strike that could lead to a successful class explosion. It could put workers on the road to a struggle for state power. And the only thing that stands between them and their goal is a leadership which lives off the crumbs on the capitalists' table. For a joint Ford/miners strike to take on the Tory attacks! Forward to a revolutionary leadership of the labour movement! ■

# Don't stop now! Extend the strike! Enough of Edwardes!

Leaflet distributed at BL mass meetings, Tuesday 3 November 1981

The settlement you're voting on today is a pile of shit. Everybody knows it. And the strikers lobbying the senior stewards meeting yesterday had the answer to it: Reject! Reject! Reject! It would take a slavedriver as piggish as Edwardes to have put it forward in the first place as a 'compromise'. The only 'compromise' Edwardes has made is to threaten to sack you on the third day of the strike instead of on the first day. Well, if you've had enough of Edwardes over the last three years -- enough sackings, enough closures, enough attacks on your unions, enough victimisations of your militants, enough insults, enough weeks with not enough money to keep your families fed or buy the odd pint -- this is the best chance you'll ever have to get Edwardes for good. Send him packing!

And the way to do it is by winning this strike in a big way! This is not just a fight for £20. It's a fight for life. This is the time for BL workers to turn around the attacks of the last years from Edwardes and his Tory backers. And that means shutting down all of BL, fighting every closure and redundancy and, most import-

antly, bringing out every section of workers that has a reason to join you in strike action. VICTORY TO THE BL WORKERS! EXTEND THE STRIKE!

The first thing to do is to vote No to this insulting package. These meetings should not be taking place at all to discuss a settlement like this. A militant union leadership would have shoved Edwardes' proposals down his throat and walked out of the room. But the TGWU top leadership has said nothing, and AUEW president Terry Duffy's recommendation to accept the settlement is a shame and a scandal. That's why workers at the national stewards meeting were chanting: 'Sack Duffy! Sack Duffy!' If Duffy and Co won't run this strike to win, elect strike committees that will. And that's why they wanted to get into the meeting room to hear what was going on. It's the workers jobs and livelihoods that are being negotiated -- they must know what's being done. No closed meetings -- all negotiations in front of the membership.

Don't let the unions be divided -- strike together, fight together! Every single Leyland worker should be out on strike right now. The workers threatened with closure must be given a reason to join this strike -- and they have one. It's their jobs. Now is the time to fight to reverse the closures. Exemption from this strike means exemption only from a struggle to save your job. No closures/No exemptions has got to be made official strike policy. And the white-collar workers who are members of ASTMS have got to be in on it. Edwardes has worked them over too. There are no free rides and no free lunches under this rotten capitalist system. ALL OUT RIGHT NOW!

Every plant in the BL combine should have mass pickets outside those gates as soon as these meetings are over -- and nobody and nothing should get through those picket lines in or out! Make the picket lines solid! And if Edwardes keeps talking about closure, the best answer is to move all the mass picket lines inside

the plants and let him know that you're in control of what happens to those factories until this strike is won. That means plant occupations!

It's no secret that behind Edwardes' threats to liquidate all of BL stands a company that hasn't made a profit in years and a vicious Tory government that couldn't care less if you all starved to death. That's why it is absolutely key to winning this strike to spread it outside Leyland.

Start with the workers who are waiting for a fight right now. The Ford workers have been offered a settlement which is almost as insulting as the one Edwardes threw at you. And every engineering worker in the West Midlands whose job is on the line right now has a good reason to be out on strike with you. The miners have a claim in -- and a lot of industrial muscle. Gormley postponed their claim to wait until you go down. Don't let it happen. Miners and BL workers fought side-by-side at Saltley Gates. Do it now! The steel strike was a lesson of what happens when one set of workers is allowed to be picked off one at a time -- they all lose. Bring them all out and turn this into the biggest strike this country has seen in years. The unions should be hiring coaches right now to send mass delegations of militant BL workers to call on the miners, Ford workers, engineering workers at their workplaces and asking them to join you. Send out the flying pickets! It's been done before and it can be done now. Michael Foot and Tony Benn do a lot of talking against the Tories. Now is the time for action. Demand the Labour Party back this strike with all its resources. This union-hating, anti-Soviet warmongering government has a lot of enemies who know it's out to get them too -- and they want to see this strike win! Get their support -- use it. THE WAY TO BEAT EDWARDES AND WIN IS THROUGH TURNING THIS STRIKE INTO AN ALL-OUT CONFRONTATION WITH THE HATED TORY GOVERNMENT THAT STANDS BEHIND HIM! ■

**Spartacist League public meeting**  
**LIVERPOOL**  
**Afghanistan, Poland, Angola**  
**THE COLD WAR CONNECTION**  
Speaker: Lawrie Harney, Spartacist League Central Committee; Formerly Communist Faction, International Marxist Group  
Tuesday November 10 8.00pm  
Stanley House  
Upper Parliament Street  
Liverpool 8  
for more information phone 01-278 2232



# After the hunger strike

'A cold, callous, brutal, sub-human thing... These people are just criminals without regard for human life and limb. I shall never, never give them political status, never.' So spoke Margaret Thatcher after the recent Chelsea barracks bombing -- the woman who more than any other individual bears responsibility for the cold, callous, brutal murder of Bobby Sands and the nine other Irish Republican martyrs in the H Blocks of Long Kesh.

The Thatcher government barely suppressed a sigh of relief when the 217-day-long H Block hunger strike was called off early last month. But it quickly turned into a crescendo of imperialist calumny as a series of Irish Republican Army bombs exploded in London. First came the nail bomb attack on a coachload of Irish

ing where twelve innocent Protestants died, pale in comparison to the crimes of British imperialism. We say: Down with the Prevention of Terrorism Act! Smash H Block! British troops out of Ireland now!

## IMG: Cowardice and opportunism

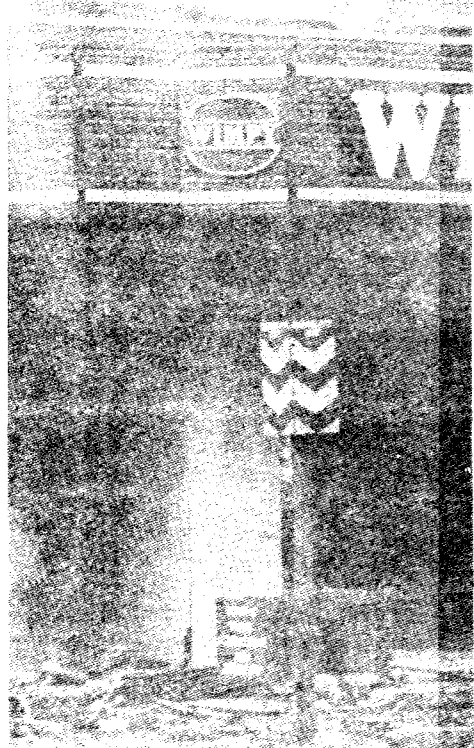
The hunger strike campaign ended after ten deaths and huge international publicity and pressure failed to shift the arrogant Thatcher. While the immediate pressure to end the protest came from the prisoners' relatives, the Republican leadership was clearly seeking a way out after the early massive mobilisations in defence of the hunger strikers began to tail off badly. The IRA/IRSP went out of their way to limit

cruitment and financial support, and British imperialism was given black eyes by the election of prisoners to Westminster and the *Irish Daily*. But imperialist repression still stalks the streets and prisons of Northern Ireland. And even within the petty-bourgeois nationalist framework of Republican politics (vicariously championed by the IMG) the deaths of ten brave men and failure to win even their five demands can hardly be called a 'victory'. Moreover, now that the Republicans have predictably shifted their tactics from 'humanitarian' liberalism to a new bombing campaign, the gutless IMG is scurrying for cover behind the political coattails of Labour left Greater London Council leader Ken Livingstone (see box).

As for the IMG's political co-thinkers in Ireland, People's Democracy (PD), they 'welcome[d] the end of the hunger strike', adding 'we could not call this a victory for the prisoners' (*Socialist Challenge*, 29 October). But they are even more cringingly legalist than the IMG. PD argues that 'the way forward' now is 'uniting around an anti-imperialist programme' for elections, defending arrested militants and 'unity against partition, organise to fight for a united Ireland'. 'Relying on military activity will squander our gains', they add, in a gross parody of 'ballots not bombs' reformism -- and all around a political programme that differs not a jot from Republicanism.

A revolutionary proletarian perspective for Ireland must start from the understanding that the obscene imperialist presence is only part of the problem. The answer is manifestly not to fight for 'unity against partition' and a 'united Ireland', which is a formula for driving the large and powerful Protestant working class deeper into the arms of the Paisleyite reactionaries. Instead a strategy is needed for forging Catholic/Protestant working class unity against imperialism and the Green and Orange bourgeoisies.

Against sectarian violence both by Protestant terror squads like the UFF and UDA (which has lately been heavily stepped up) and by Republican nationalists, communists fight for the formation of integrated workers militias. We oppose the Green nationalist perspective of forced unification of the North and South, fighting instead for an Irish workers republic in a socialist federation of the British Isles. The Spartacist League fought for such a perspective throughout the hunger strike while campaigning in defence of the prisoners and for immediate withdrawal of the troops. And we will continue to fight for this as the only road to liberation for the working people of Ireland and the avenging of the H Block martyrs. ■



London's Oxford Street after IRA bombing; Republican honour guard salutes dead hunger striker Joe Macdonnell.

Guardsmen in Chelsea on 10 October, injuring several soldiers and killing two passing civilians. A week later Lieutenant General Sir Stuart Pringle's car was blown apart as he drove away from his South London home. He had a leg amputated, while his dog escaped unscathed (and Fleet Street was far more concerned about the dog than about Catholic children shot down by British army plastic bullets in Belfast).

Nine days after that Reuters news agency received a telephone call warning that three bombs had been planted in Oxford Street, then packed with school holiday shoppers. One exploded inside a Wimpy Bar, killing a police bomb disposal expert.

The 'troubles' are back on the streets of Britain -- and the propaganda barrage intensifies. Police and radio and TV broadcasts 'warn' us to watch out for 'suspicious' Irishmen renting flats, buying vans or just talking in a pub. The Prevention of Terrorism Act, introduced by the Labour government after the Birmingham pub bombings of November 1974, is used to round up suspected IRA/Irish National Liberation Army 'sympathisers'. No doubt the 'anti-terrorist' witchhunt will intensify, particularly with more bombs expected as the Republicans step up their new mainland campaign.

As proletarian revolutionists, we believe the Republican bombings are a self-defeating tactic in the service of a dead-end nationalist political programme. They do nothing to mobilise the working class, Irish or British, against imperialist rule, and indeed often reinforce reactionary chauvinism among British workers. Moreover bombs planted in public places with no military/political significance, like the Oxford Street bombs which could easily have killed scores of innocent civilians, are simply criminal and indefensible. The fact that in the Wimpy Bar explosion only a police expert was hurt is entirely secondary.

But a coachload of Irish Guardsmen and a British Lieutenant General are not a West End Wimpy Bar. Despite the unfortunate and tragic deaths of innocent passers-by at the Chelsea Barracks explosion, these were attacks on imperialist military/political targets. We therefore defend their perpetrators against state repression. And we do not give an inch to the vile, hypocritical outcry against IRA terror from the imperialist butchers of Downing Street and Westminster. Even the worst IRA sectarian/random crimes, like the 1978 La Mon House bomb-

ing where twelve innocent Protestants died, pale in comparison to the crimes of British imperialism. We say: Down with the Prevention of Terrorism Act! Smash H Block! British troops out of Ireland now!

However this didn't stop the fake-Trotskyist International Marxist Group (IMG) from hailing the hunger strike result as a 'victory'. The Republican movement did record gains out of the H Block campaign, notably sharply increased re-

## Livingstone on the run

In all the many months of the hunger strike campaign, when the question of Britain's imperialist presence in Ireland was sharply and brutally posed, the fake-Trotskyist International Marxist Group (IMG) never once managed to raise as a central slogan an unambiguous call for 'British Troops Out!' Finally, in the wake of the defensible Chelsea Barracks bombing, it appeared as a front-page headline in *Socialist Challenge* (15 October). 'Ken Livingstone is right', it added and quoted his statement that: 'We are in a colonial power holding down a colonial people. Violence will recur time and time again as long as we are in Northern Ireland.'

The bourgeois press of course reacted to Livingstone's statement with its usual hypocritical howl of rage and anti-Labour left-bashing; and a virtual witchhunt against this leftest of Labour politicians culminated in a Tory censure motion in the GLC. They tried to make Livingstone out as actually having defended the IRA.

Not so, said Livingstone. 'What has appeared in the press is a lie.' He expressed 'total and utter despair that we faced a return to violence on our streets' and brooded at the 'terrifying prospect' that in the wake of the hunger strike 'the IRA is now stronger than it has been in years'. He then introduced an amendment unanimously backed by the Labour caucus which dismissed the censure and 'reaffirms our abhorrence and detestation of the bombing'.

It comes as no surprise to communists that Labourite Livingstone would refuse to defend the

IRA in an attack on the British imperialist army -- however futile -- an elementary reflex for any genuine representative of the British working class. Nor are we surprised that the IMG, moving ever nearer to Labour's bosom, also refused to make an unambiguous statement of defence. In that sense, for the IMG, Ken Livingstone is right. But not for Trotskyists! ■

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## SPARTACIST BRITAIN

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# CND pacifists welcome NATO militarists

# Anti-missile protests sweep Europe

**Down with NATO!  
Defend the Soviet Union!**



SL contingent: Taking a side in the Cold War

They came to London in droves to 'march against the missiles' -- thirty special trains, a thousand coaches hired by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). It took five hours before the last of the marchers finally entered the Hyde Park rally site. Even the rabid Cold Warriors in the White House had to take notice of this one. 'Anything that gets 150,000 on the march has to be taken seriously', commented US Secretary of Defence Caspar Weinberger, 'but it doesn't change the policies of the government'. The figure was probably more like 250,000 and they were joined by 300,000 in Rome, 200,000 in Brussels, 50,000 in Paris, 7000 in Oslo. The week before, another 300,000 had rallied in Bonn.

The week before the protests the European press prominently featured Reagan's notorious 'gaffe' about the possibility of a nuclear exchange limited to Europe. Reagan administration spokesmen tried to explain it away as an incoherent slip of the tongue; and Weinberger, touring the US' European NATO allies, took umbrage at the suggestion that American imperialism would consider sacrificing the 500,000 Americans, GIs and their families, stationed in Europe simply to get a first strike advantage over the Soviet Union. The cover-up was less than convincing. Incoherent though Reagan's statement was, this nuclear cowboy's anti-communist dream of annihilating Russia while keeping the US free of mushroom clouds is the worst-kept secret in the Cold War.

## 'Euroshima'

These were protests not against the anti-Soviet war drive, but against an anti-Soviet war which sacrificed Europe. 'Euroshima' they called it. The headline in the *Financial Times* (26

October) summed it up: 'Anti-nuclear marches challenge Reagan's strategy'. The march organisers made it a challenge to Reagan's war strategy, certainly not to his war aims -- rolling back the historic gains of the 1917 Russian Revolution -- and not to his war alliance, the anti-Soviet NATO pact. The speeches that droned forth in Hyde Park were almost as vitriolically anti-Soviet as they were anti-American. And the pervasive theme, even more than pacifism, was European-centred nationalism. And the usual array of Labour Party luminaries, pacifists and unilateral disarmers on the speakers platform was this time augmented by the president of the Liberal Party and an assortment of former NATO military officers, including a recently retired German general (who does not even oppose 'nuclear deterrence') and a Dutch army captain. It was a popular front for imperialist 'peace'.

## 'No annihilation without representation?'

European Nuclear Disarmament (END) spokesman E P Thompson took pains to stress his even-handed opposition to the Soviets, demanding an unconditional halt to the deployment of the Soviet SS-20. Another END speaker declared this to be a movement 'for human rights in Eastern and Western Europe'. Michael Foot doddered up to present nuclear disarmament as the way to 'defend our people' and promised vague 'practical action' from the next Labour Government. But it was Tony Benn who brought the house down. Hitting a nadir of impotent 'little England' chauvinism, Benn demanded 'no annihilation without representation' and denounced 'domination of our country by anyone -- not by Russian generals, or by American generals or British generals'.

Spartakist

'The Poles have had the courage to stand up to the Kremlin' roared Benn. 'The British people must now have the courage to stand up to the Pentagon and close all nuclear bases here.'

With such stirring appeals to insurrection against the Kremlin and disarmament 'East and West' -- unchallenged by the myriad of fake Trotskyists, Stalinists and 'state capitalist' anti-Stalinists who have assiduously built and boosted CND -- it was not at all surprising that the bourgeois press conspicuously singled out for attention in this crowd of a quarter million the relatively tiny contingent of the Spartacist League (SL). With our banners reading 'Smash NATO -- Defend the Soviet Union' and 'Stop Solidarity's counter-revolution' we rep-

resented the Leninist alternative to the pervasive nationalist pacifism and pro-NATO 'neutrality'. A lot of the marchers noticed that alternative as well. And when we chanted, 'Thatcher hates the British workers, Thatcher hates the Russian workers -- Defend the workers unions, defend the workers states!', they had to listen.

Nor was it surprising that there were to be found NATO generals who felt quite at home with these CND anti-Soviet 'pacifists'. Indeed, as part of the build-up to the 24 October 'peace'-fest, the CND sponsored a speaking tour which included representatives from the so-called Committee for East-West Accord, a think-tank for Cold War liberal ideologues like George Kennan, author of the 'containment' policy, and other retired officials from the US military, State Department and CIA. When this travelling road show for a 'saner' imperialist alternative to Reagan's provocative nuclear sabre-rattling arrived in Sheffield and Coventry, the SL set up spirited protest pickets. An SL leaflet in Sheffield pointed out that it was no accident that CND -- from the Communist Party (CP) to the fake-Trotskyist International Marxist Group (IMG) -- promoted a platform for 'this collection of CIA men, Vietnam war criminals, admirals'. To seal their popular front with NATO 'disidents', the CP at Sheffield sent out a goon squad of its trade unionists (enthusiastically backed by a gaggle of IMGers) in a futile attempt to intimidate our comrades. Meanwhile inside, when Rear-Admiral Lee, a former NATO commander decorated by the Brazilian and Chilean gorillas, was graciously presented with a birthday cake at the beginning of the meeting, an SL supporter stood up to protest that 'a lot of workers would not be celebrating their birthdays because of Lee and his friends. Our comrades were briskly manhandled out of the hall. Our protest and exposure was picked up in a half-page spread in the *Sheffield Free Press* (November 1981). At an anti-Weinberger protest in London a week later, a friendly chat between police and CND representatives was followed by the cops moving in to cordon off our contingent from the main body of demonstrators, while supporters of the CP, IMG and Workers Power stood smugly on the other side of this cordon sanitaire.

## Slandorous accusations

On the morning of the march, the *Times* devoted fully one-third of an article to slanderous accusations by CND general secretary Mgr Bruce Kent that we were 'usually extremely disruptive' and liable to cause a 'breach of the peace'. 'This is a peace march' the *Times* quotes Kent, 'the Spartacists are no part of CND'. In its 'understated' way this main mouthpiece for British imperialism is warning in unmistakable terms that Soviet-defencists are not acceptable in demonstrations against the war drive. If you want to 'Smash NATO -- Defend the Soviet Union', you are thereby 'disruptive'. And if you want to 'Stop Solidarity's counterrevolution', you are thereby liable to cause 'a breach of the peace ... for the police to deal with' and 'calling for a Soviet invasion'. We do not 'call' for a Soviet 'invasion', though were a Soviet inter-



Bonn 'peace' march, 10 October. Seventy-strong contingent from the Troztkistische Liga Deutschlands marched under banner, 'Defend the Soviet Union! Down with NATO!'



vention to suppress Solidarity's pro-imperialist counterrevolutionary course, we would support this. The aim of the *Times* piece is clear and insidious: to assert that we Trotskyists who defend the Soviet Union are a 'source of trouble'.

In the event, however, the provocative misrepresentations of Bruce Kent and the *Times* stirred little reaction amongst the demonstrators. The only harassment from CND marshalls came when we chanted 'Troops Out of Ireland!' Indeed, the impact of our line, particularly against the background of total liquidation by our opponents, was impressive. One non-aligned leftist told a *Spartacist Britain* paper-seller he had the impression of a Spartacist 'take-over bid -- there must be hundreds of them'. Tony Cliff's 'third camp' Socialist Workers Party (SWP) dropped any pretence of independence from CND. The IMG was virtually invisible, both politically and physically. Neither in the *Socialist Challenge* sold that day -- which included a full-page article on 'SALT and Disarmament' -- nor in its ecstatic follow-up coverage on the march did the IMG once mention defence of the USSR against the war drive.

And the Stalinists? 'Defend Britain -- Ban the Bomb' blared forth the headline of the CP's *Morning Star* and the Kremlin-toadying New Communist Party's *New Worker* demanded 'Detente not Destruction'. But many supporters of both parties seemed much happier with our headline: 'Stop Solidarity's counterrevolution!'

### Stalinist betrayal

Our hard Trotskyist line on Poland, where the counterrevolutionary fruits of Stalinist betrayal are being brought home sharply, had a particularly visible impact on Stalinists. CPers trailed after our salesmen and sought out our banner at the rally site to purchase our paper and the new Poland pamphlet. Some even bought extra copies, to be used as 'ammunition', they said in internal discussions on Poland.

But it was not just Stalinists. There was a marked receptivity to our line on Poland and the Russian question to be found among the Cliffites. Many purchased our paper; some listened intently; others agreed that Washington and Moscow were indeed not the same, that there was something to be defended against imperialism in the Soviet degenerated workers state and that Solidarity's programme and allies were indeed cause for suspicion from working-class militants. Even a Polish supporter of Solidarity present at the rally, though expressing horror at our headline, admitted that a wing of Solidarity, including its leadership, 'wants a system like in the West' and agreed that a soviet democracy like 'Russia 1917-23' was an alternative, but there was nobody putting it forward in Poland!



While pacifists plead for disarmament East and West, *Times*/CND claim Soviet-defencist SL is 'possible source of trouble'.

## THE TIMES Hope for rally on 50s scale

By Robin Young

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament is hoping that its peace march in central London today will be on a scale reminiscent of the great 1950s.

Though the organizers refuse to estimate the numbers they think will march, they

One possible source of trouble is the inter-Party Group, which has called for a Soviet invasion of Poland to suppress the Solidarity movement. The Spartacists intend to march under banners saying: "Smash Nato - Defend the Soviet Union" and "Stop Solidarity's Counter Revolution."

Mgr Bruce Kent, general secretary of CND said yesterday: "Ours is a peace march, and the Sparacists are no part of CND, indeed they are usually extremely disruptive. We are not capable physically of excluding anyone, but if they come anywhere near a breach of the peace this will be for the police to deal with."

Mgr Kent said that police had cordoned the Spartacists off from a CND demonstration outside Chatham House earlier this week. He said that in another sense "out of control". He said that in the past 18 months national membership

Indeed the hysterical response from many of our centrist and reformist opponents to a clear Leninist line contrasted sharply to the openness and interest to be found among wide sections of the demonstration. As our contingent began to march one worker rushed up to express his agreement with our banners and ask if he could march in our contingent. A woman, who joined our comrades in a heated argument with an anti-communist and later purchased a subscription to our paper, declared emotionally: 'If not for the Soviet Union I would have been killed by the Nazis.' Three older workers purchased the paper because of the article on the 'Hands off Russia' campaign in 1919-21 -- they had been involved in the strike of the *Jolly George* against the shipment of British arms for use against the Bolsheviks. By the end of the day, we left the rally site with hardly a single piece of literature left. All in all, with an aggressive sales effort on the part of our comrades and sympathisers eager to get out a Trotskyist line on Poland and the anti-Soviet war drive, we sold 1210 of the latest *Spartacist Britain* and 75 Poland pamphlets. The CP and SWP -- organisations orders of magnitude larger than the SL -- boasted of selling 2000 and 3000 papers respectively in visibly massive sales

pushes. At the rallies in Paris, Rome and Bonn our comrades found similar receptivity in sales of their press.

It is little wonder that ours was the only socialist organisation whose presence was noted in the bourgeois press coverage. The *Sunday Telegraph* referred in sinister tones to the 'American-founded pro-Soviet Spartacist group' who 'attached themselves to the column' in order 'to promote their campaigns'. A similar account was found in the following day's *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. We were not some 'disruptive' outside outfit as these anti-Soviet hacks for British (and German) imperialism try to suggest. Like the *Times*, they seek to play us up as Soviet surrogates -- and indeed we are proud to have a reputation as staunch defenders of the USSR, the world's first workers state however bureaucratically degenerated. Our programme represents the only hope for those hundreds of thousands who don't want to die in a nuclear holocaust to promote imperialist capitalism's lust for profits. Against the nationalist 'peace movements' of pacifists, generals and Stalinists, we say unambiguously: The only way to smash the imperialist anti-Soviet war drive is through workers revolution to overthrow capitalism! ■

# SUB DRIVE SUCCESS!

Again this year, our *Spartacist Britain* subscription drive has gone over the top! This year we achieved 123 per cent of our goal, and altogether sold 41 per cent more sub points than last year. More than three-quarters of subscriptions sold were for a full year, and roughly one half were combined subscriptions to *Spartacist Britain* and *Workers Vanguard*, fortnightly paper of the Spartacist League/US. And comrades sold another 23 subscriptions to *Women & Revolution*, women's journal of the SL/US. We used the subscription drive, which was the focus of political activity for all our branches in October, to help kick off the new term on various universities and polys, to visit old contacts and make new ones, and to get our press around in areas where we have no regular organised presence. We put our politics to the fore: Poland, Russia, Ireland, the fight against pro-capitalist Labourism. About half the subs sold were to students, but comrades also sold a lot at demonstrations, SL events and at work. One supporter in British Leyland sold three full-year subs to workmates on his section.

Members of opponent organisations bought subscriptions too; it was particularly notable that Communist Party supporters bought subs on the recent national CND demo when they saw our Poland headline, 'Stop Solidarity's Counterrevolution!' We did particularly well out of three of our regional trips this year: more than 20 points were sold in each of Liverpool and Colchester, and more than 30 in Stoke-on-Trent.

The individual top sub seller in a close race was Comrade Cheryl D of Birmingham with 25 points. Honourable mentions go to Comrades Cathy F and Denise S from Birmingham, Andrew H and Eibhlin O from Sheffield, and Mark H and Ed K from London; and special congratulations to the whole Birmingham branch who were the backbone of the drive, surpassing their target in only two weeks. If we missed you during this year's subscription drive, and if you want to read the only genuine Marxist papers in Britain without missing an issue, then you too should Subscribe Now!

	Quota	Points	Percentage
Birmingham	110	149	135%
London	160	182	114%
Sheffield	80	81.5	102%
Other		19.5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>123%</b>



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At its first national conference this September Polish Solidarnosc crossed the Rubicon. Taken together, its provocative call for 'free trade unions' throughout the Soviet bloc, the demand for 'free elections' to a sovereign parliament and the proposal for Poland to join the world bankers' cartel the International Monetary Fund (IMF), along with the invitations to hard-line Cold Warrior AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland and to longtime CIA 'labour' operative Irving Brown indicated that Solidarnosc had consolidated around a counterrevolutionary programme. It has become a pro-imperialist Trojan horse within the Soviet bloc degenerated/deformed workers states. And unlike the Homeric original the danger it represents is quite obvious. A victory for Solidarnosc will be a victory for Wall Street and the Pentagon, for the Common Market and NATO. As Trotskyists we unconditionally defend revolutionary conquests against the threat of capitalist restoration. Thus last month we wrote:

'Solidarity's counterrevolutionary course must be stopped! If the Kremlin bureaucrats, in their necessarily brutal, stupid way, intervene militarily to stop it, we will support this. And we take responsibility in advance for this: whatever the idiocies and atrocities they will commit, we do not flinch from defending the crushing of Solidarity's counterrevolution.' ('Stop Solidarity's Counterrevolution!' *Spartacist Britain* no 36, October 1981)

We naturally expected an outraged response from our opponents who have enlisted in the forces of pro-NATO social democracy. As the Cold War has progressively heated up the myriad of British fake-Trotskyist groups have sunk ever deeper into Labourism, where they vie with each other in enthusiastic cheerleading for Tony Benn. For them support to Solidarnosc has become as much an instinctive political reflex as it is for Reagan or Mitterrand. Habituated to the NATO social-democratic milieu Sean Matgamna, Alan Thornett, the International Marxist Group et al support any and every opposition within the Soviet bloc, no matter how reactionary. In their mouths 'anti-Stalinism' becomes social-democratic anti-Sovietism or anti-communism.

Matgamna's *Socialist Organiser* (8 October) quotes lengthy excerpts from our article without polemical reply, and then concludes: 'These sectarians end up on the side of the Stalinist counterrevolution against the developing workers political revolution'. In their youth press they go further: 'Even if the demands of the Polish workers were "right wing", revolutionary socialists would still stand with such a real workers movement, however misguided, against the Russian army's bloodletting' (*Class Fighter*, July/August 1981).

The small centrist Workers Power (WP) group is squeezed between the various Labourite pseudo-Trotskyists on their right and the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) on their left. Where Matgamna/Thornett think communist opposition to Solidarnosc can be dismissed with a nervous giggle, Workers Power attempts their typical confused polemic against our position ('Spartacists -- cheerleaders for the Kremlin', *Workers Power*, October 1981). True to form WP is critical of the central leadership of Solidarnosc. But what WP really has against Lech Walesa is not that he is a clerical nationalist and anti-communist, not that he calls for American

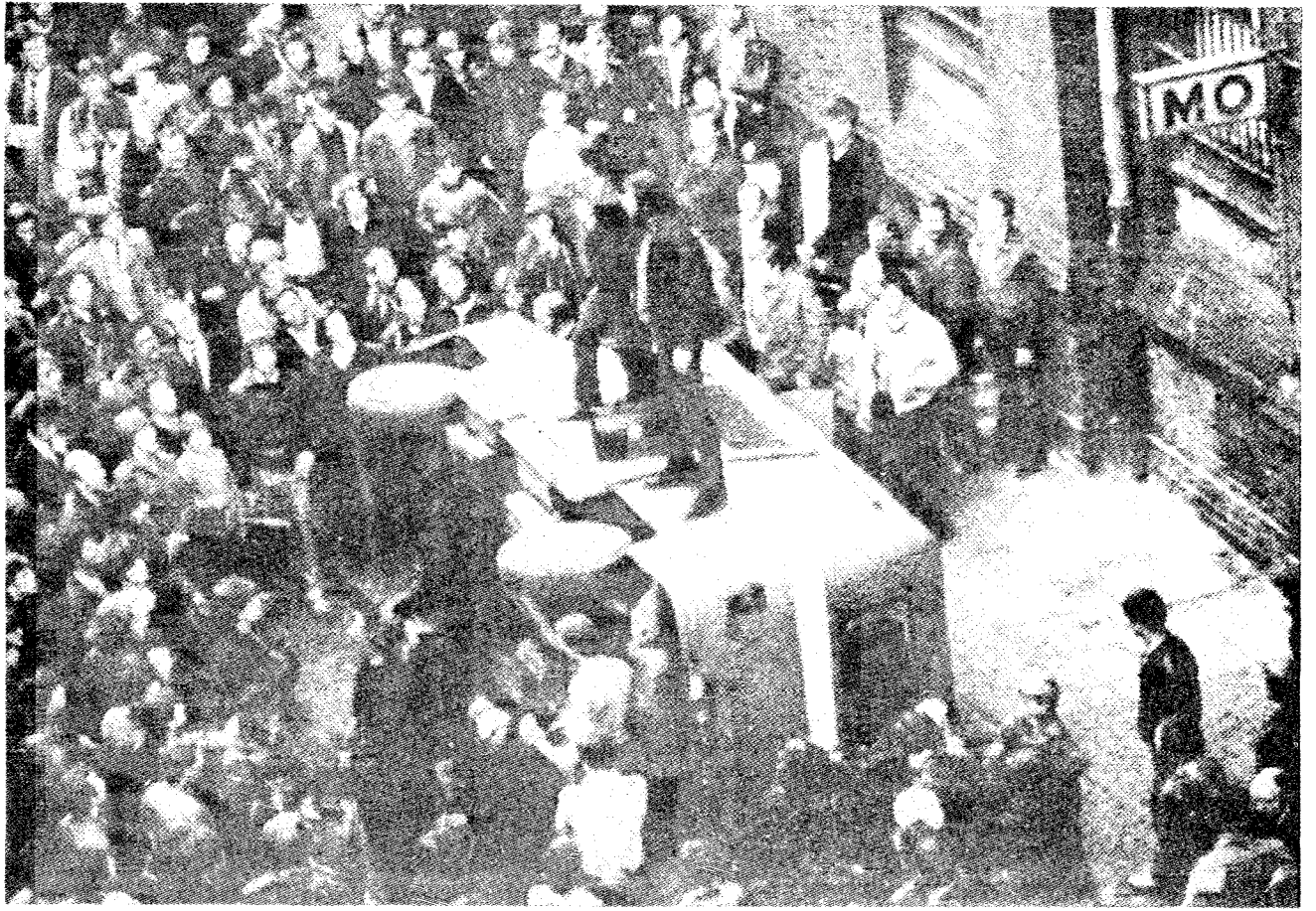


V I Lenin, *Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*:

'... as long as there are exploiters who rule the majority, the exploited, the democratic state must inevitably be a democracy for the exploiters. A state of the exploited must fundamentally differ from such a state; it must be a democracy for the exploited, and a means of suppressing the exploiters; and the suppression of a class means inequality for that class, its exclusion from 'democracy'. (1918, emphasis in original)

## Poland and the left

# On the barricades for counterrevolution



Katowice, 21 October: Solidarnosc officials address crowd following police attempt to stop protest.

capital to penetrate Poland, not that he wants the IMF to monitor the Polish economy. No, WP attacks Walesa for being too conciliatory towards the Stalinist regime:

'What matter to the Spartacists that he [Walesa] fought the elections at the second part of the Solidarity Congress on a clear platform of conciliation with and respect for the Stalinist authorities, that he has an explicit programme for and record of collaboration with the authorities.'

In this particular criticism of Walesa Workers Power has a lot of company -- all of it bad. A large minority of Solidarnosc, quite vocal at the congress, also criticised Walesa as too conciliatory to the authorities. The so-called 'radical' wing of Solidarnosc consists of extreme clerical nationalists, some of whom would welcome the chance to throw molotov cocktails and shoot Russian soldiers. The *Wall Street Journal* (26 October), a great champion of Polish Solidarnosc incidentally, estimated that about a hundred of the 800-plus delegates were supporters of Leszek Moczulski's Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN). The KPN is an openly anti-communist, Pilsudskite nationalist organisation which even the *Wall Street Journal* admits is 'tainted by a history of anti-semitism'. If this is not a counterrevolutionary organisation, what is? Reportedly it was KPN supporters who pushed through the resolution for 'free elections' to the Sejm -- not exactly a conciliatory gesture to the Stalinist regime (*Le Monde Diplomatique*, October 1981).

Since WP opposes Walesa mainly because he is conciliatory to the Stalinists they would logically line up with the 'radicals' of the KPN. If they had a delegate at the Solidarnosc congress he would presumably give critical support to Walesa's most vitriolic 'radical' opponent Jan Rulewski, who denounced the 'imperialist policy of the Soviet Union' and declared 'this union was not created to make compromises but to smash the totalitarian system of our country' (*Time*, 12 October). Or perhaps they favour the 'radical' head of the Szczecin branch, Marian Jurczyk, who reportedly said 'a couple of gallons would come in handy' for Communist officials who are 'traitors to Polish society'. Basically WP evades the question of revolution or counterrevolution by denying there exists any fundamental conflict between Solidarnosc and the Stalinist bureaucracy and generally minimising

the Polish crisis. WP informs us that:

'the Solidarity Congress showed clearly that the tendency towards a working class anti-bureaucratic political revolution is at present far outweighed by a tendency -- articulated in nationalist and Trade Union colours -- towards accommodation with the Stalinist bureaucracy.' (our emphasis)

In this fairytale Solidarnosc, the Catholic church and the Stalinist regime are all one big happy (well, not so happy) family. According to WP the programme of Poland's most prominent pro-Western social democrat Jacek Kuron 'has been embraced as a lifeline and positively advocated by supposedly pro-Kremlin maverick Politburo member Olszowski'.

We can safely say that not a single political person in Poland would take seriously Workers Power's rosy picture of Solidarnosc/Stalinist relations. Not a single political person in Poland thinks that the pro-imperialist social democrat Kuron and the hard-line Stalinist Olszowski share a common programme for governmental reform. When Olszowski talks about bringing Solidarnosc and the Church into some kind of 'national front' he is talking about window dressing, similar to the appointment of a Catholic deputy premier last autumn. Kuron is actually calling for a new government in which 'moderate' Communist officials would be in a minority. 'The moment the council is formed', he said, 'it would suspend operation of all authorities including the government.'

But WP's wild distortion of the reality of Poland today doesn't end there. The Spartacists say Walesa is for capitalist restoration -- but, WP protests, he's never openly said this. The Spartacists say that Solidarnosc is making an open bid for political power -- again, asks WP, where have they said that? And when we point to Solidarnosc's fulsome (and heartily accepted) support from imperialist Cold Warriors and rabidly anti-Communist social democrats, WP protests that we are using a 'traditional Stalinist amalgam ... to find the Polish workers guilty by association'. The 'traditional Stalinist amalgam' was used to link Trotsky with Hitler because both opposed Stalin -- not because he readily accepted funds from Hitler, looked to him for ideological inspiration and material support and condoned his policies! The imperialists are today financing a drive towards bloody counterrevolution in Poland and WP objects that



we have not placed a sufficiently documented brief before the judge. When Solidarnosc finances its extensive printing network through American 'AFL-CIA' funds and conspicuously refuses to denounce Ronald Reagan's strikebreaking, it is choosing sides.

WP sees neither developing political revolution nor developing social counterrevolution in Poland today ... just conciliation with the Stalinists. Where the question of political power is posed, they see a glorified trade union struggle, pointing to 'the potential that still exists in the ongoing struggles over hiring and firing, over access to the media, against privilege and secrecy'. They are against any idea of stopping Solidarnosc's mobilisation; instead they want some sort of peaceful 'living combat [?!] with the forces of nationalism and counterrevolution'. But Solidarnosc is not a debating society. The posters which have been appearing in Warsaw over the past month bearing the crowned eagle, the emblem of Pilsudski, are not the pranks of art students.

Poland is now descending into utter economic chaos with conditions becoming desperate. There are mass protest strikes throughout the country. The regime is deploying troops for the purpose of 'suppressing street provocations and enforcing respect for the rule of law'. The secretary of Solidarnosc's Warsaw region has threatened, 'If the party continues confrontation it will be worse than anyone can imagine. It will simply mean something like civil war in the future' (*Wall Street Journal*, 29 October).

Where would Workers Power stand in a civil war between clerical-nationalist Solidarnosc and the bureaucratic regime? Their polemic seems like an elaborate attempt to avoid this question. But at a Spartacist League meeting in Coventry on 9 October a leading Workers Power spokesman admitted they would stand with the Pilsudskite nationalists and clerical-fascists against the Soviet army:

'In the case of a military intervention by the Soviet Stalinists into Poland to crush Solidarity, we would say, openly, clearly state that we would be for a military united front, we would be for the arming of the workers -- that is, against the invasion. And that would mean that if Solidarity is armed

under its present leadership we will be for a military united front with that leadership against the Soviet invasion. Let us be quite clear on that point, because we will be on the opposite side of the barricades from the Spartacists.'

These are barricades for counterrevolution.

And let us be quite clear: for WP this is not a conjunctural position based on an incorrect appraisal of the character of Solidarnosc. A year ago WP was calling on Solidarnosc to hold out to take power. Eight months ago, even as it finally grudgingly recognised for the first time that it could 'be the imperialists, the private farmers and the Catholic hierarchy who will benefit from the heroic struggles of the Polish workers', WP decreed in the same breath that 'any Soviet invasion of Poland provoked by this threat can only have, in the final analysis, a reactionary content' (*Workers Power*, February 1981, our emphasis). Likewise two months ago, it warned that in the event of a Soviet intervention 'Polish nationalism ... would send the workers to their deaths clutching emblems of Pilsudski and pictures of the Pope'; but still, 'Should the [Soviet] invasion take place, the call from revolutionaries must be to fight the bureaucracy with a direct struggle for working class power' (*Workers Power*, September 1981). Excellent idea; but we are reminded of Trotsky's reply to a similar idyllic prescription for a 'third camp' from Max Shachtman and James Burnham of the American Socialist Workers Party in 1940:

'A simultaneous insurrection against Hitler and Stalin in a country occupied by troops might perhaps be arranged very conveniently from the Bronx; but, here, locally it is more difficult.' (*In Defence of Marxism*)

WP's real programme is for a 'military united front' with they-don't-care-who against the Stalinists -- even Pilsudskite capitalist restorationists. Their opposition in principle to a Soviet intervention against counterrevolutionary forces is in fact a denial of the Trotskyist programme for political revolution, falsely raising the struggle against the bureaucracy above defence of the collectivised property forms. Again arguing against Shachtman, Trotsky emphasised:

## Solidarność: A man's world



The Black Virgin of Czestochowa.

A CGT woman worker asks Lech Walesa in Paris why he tells women to stay at home and not struggle for their rights. Walesa replies that he has been misinterpreted -- he was only speaking for Polish women!

Heaven help the Polish women Walesa speaks for. Since the time of the utopian socialist Fourier, socialists have accepted as an axiom that the status of women in society is a determining measure of how progressive that society is. And the attitude to women of the reactionary Catholic-nationalists who run Solidarnosc provides a good measure of what sort of 'democracy' they have in mind. A recent article in the *Times* (21 October) by Rachel Cullen -- who expresses general sympathy with the counterrevolutionary Solidarnosc -- is quite revealing on that count.

Entitled 'Solidarity: what a pity it does not include the women of Poland', the article points out that the top leadership of Solidarnosc consists of one president, two deputy presidents, a presidium of ten and a council of 100 -- and not one woman is to be found among them. Anna Walentynowicz, the Gdansk welder whose sacking spark-

ed the August 1980 strike was once a leading member of the council. Then a union-convened court accused her of being 'too radical'. Walentynowicz was certainly a rabidly anti-communist Catholic nationalist, but that hardly distinguished her from the rest of the Solidarnosc leadership. What did distinguish her was that she was a woman. 'She was still to be found working for the union', writes Cullen, 'though now in the kitchens.... The story is the same in other sections of the union: women who had been active in the underground movements began with a voice in the new union but almost all have now lost their positions of power.' The only woman in a position of power in Solidarnosc is the Black Virgin of Czestochowa!

Even at the base sexual chauvinism is endemic. In one Roclaw factory which is three-quarters women, only six out of 66 candidates for Solidarnosc's plant delegation were women.

Abortion on medical and social grounds was legalised in Poland in 1947. The Family Rights Act of 1949 gave women the right for the first time to divorce and to take a job without their husbands' consent. Inevitably the Catholic Church bitterly attacked these gains and the Stalinist bureaucracy undermined them by capitulating to reaction with the old crap about 'the socialist family', a vital prop of 'socialism in one country'. But these gains still exist and must be defended against Solidarnosc's programme of 'kinder, kuche, kirche'. Only socialised property relations can lay the basis for women's liberation and a proletarian political revolution would stand foursquare on defending and extending those gains into the full social and political liberation of women that Stalinism prevents. Solidarnosc, behind the banners of the Black Virgin of Czestochowa, the crowned eagle of Pilsudski and with the blessing of the pope, has set its face on reversing them. ■



L D Trotsky, *In Defence of Marxism*:

'We must not lose sight for a single moment of the fact that the question of overthrowing the Soviet bureaucracy is for us subordinate to the question of preserving state property in the means of production in the USSR; that the question of preserving state property in the means of production in the USSR is subordinate for us to the question of the world proletarian revolution.' (*The USSR in War*, 25 September 1939)

'We must not lose sight for a single moment of the fact that the question of overthrowing the Soviet bureaucracy is for us subordinate to the question of preserving state property in the means of production in the USSR; that the question of preserving state property in the means of production in the USSR is subordinate for us to the question of the world proletarian revolution.' (ibid)

To the extent that it is consistent, WP's contorted position on Poland is compatible not with a Trotskyist but a 'bureaucratic collectivist' analysis, which sees the bureaucracy as a new class with coherent class interests. Nowhere does WP give any indication that it sees the Stalinist bureaucracy as anything other than a stable monolithic social formation. Nowhere does WP acknowledge that in the midst of political revolution the bureaucracy will split. It is brutal and undemocratic precisely because it is brittle, resting upon collectivised property forms while seeking to maintain its privileges through a counterrevolutionary policy of conciliating imperialism under the guise of building 'socialism in one country'. To defend the collectivised property forms upon which it rests the Stalinist caste is at times impelled to carry out progressive/revolutionary measures albeit through bureaucratic/reactionary methods. But for WP, in practice, the bureaucracy is counterrevolutionary through and through and political revolution is reduced to a struggle of slave against slavemaster.

This is not the first time that Workers Power has come out for a 'military united front' with counterrevolutionary forces. Like the rest of the opportunist left Workers Power supported the Khomeinist opposition against the shah in Iran, albeit with the proviso that 'the bazaar and Shi'ite clergy are and can be only temporary military allies of the Iranian working class' (*Workers Power*, February 1979). Khomeini certainly saw to that. Significantly, Workers Power now links our position on Poland to the ist's 'refusing to support the mass movement which overthrew the shah in Iran'.

Under the slogan 'Down with the shah! Down with the mullahs! For workers revolution in Iran!', we warned that if the Khomeinist Islamic fanatics took power they would be just as reactionary and just as bloody as was the Pahlavi monarchy. Who today will deny this? The Khomeinists are executing a hundred of their left opponents a day, far more than the shah did. In fact the September 1981 *Workers Power* has a front page article 'Defend Iranian left', which concludes, 'Solidarity with those fighting the Khomeini dictatorship's repression!' Well, we don't want to see a *Workers Power* article two years from now saying, 'Defend Polish left -- Solidarity with those fighting the Walesa/Moczulski dictatorship's repression!'

In Workers Power we see opportunists who maintain in both Iran and Poland that counterrevolutionaries can lead workers revolutions, at least in their initial stages: 'It is not the responsibility of the Polish workers that the brutal Stalinist regimes have handed to the forces of reaction the possibility to initiate struggle for elementary working-class demands' (*Workers Power*, October 1981). Their line is to tail masses in motion, even under the most reactionary leadership and programme: support the most militant opponents of the status quo, even

continued on page 11

# Protest...

(continued from page 1)

NYC office will be a 'wholly independent' 'self-governing' non-profit corporation called 'The Friends of Poland's Independent Trade Union, "Solidarity", Inc' with Przetakiewicz as president. On its board are Bayard Rustin, chairman of the A Philip Randolph Institute, and Tadeusz Waldendowski of the Poland Watch Center in Washington, DC. Rustin has long been a spokesman for Freedom House, a CIA-associated propaganda outlet for anti-Soviet liberals. As for the shadowy 'Poland Watch', nobody seems to know which nest of 'captive nations' Polish emigres it is associated with. To repeated questions about where the money for his office was coming from, Przetakiewicz talked of the cheap \$290-a-month rent from the UFT, made vague references to 'student contributions' and spoke of a 'start-up loan' from the AFL-CIO. But as Peter Kihss noted in the *New York Times* (25 September), the Solidarnosc operation in NYC will cost about \$15,000 to \$18,000 a month just for the telex communications. All from 'subscriptions'?

As reporters streamed out of the non-conference there was commotion on the sidewalk. Here was something to report about: socialists, in fact Trotskyists, protesting Polish 'Solidarity'. But from all this, virtually nothing about the demonstration came out in print or on the air. Outside the US it was news: the *Toronto Globe and Mail* printed two paragraphs; the *London Daily Mail* also carried it.

US imperialism has gone all out to build up Solidarnosc as a 'democratic' opposition to Stalinism. With the 'press' offices, its US dollars funnelled through the AFL-CIO, its echoing of Cold War propaganda, Polish 'Solidarity' has become an instrument of the capitalists' crusade, more than six decades old, to overturn the social and economic achievements won by the Russian October Revolution. And they don't want any Western socialists fouling up the works by exposing the counterrevolutionary danger for what it is. Newsmen reported that, on more than one occasion, references to the Spartacist demonstration in stories on the opening of the NYC Solidarnosc office were cut out by the editors. This was a blackout. That is, until five days later, when the *Wall Street Journal* published its threatening editorial, 'Communists and the AFL-CIO'. They made it clear who the American friends of Polish Solidarnosc are.

PARIS -- Polish Solidarnosc leader Lech Walesa arrived in Paris three weeks later with something for everyone. For Christians he had a madonna lapel pin and praise for the Virgin Mary. For trade unionists, talk of 'self-management' of the factories. For the Stalinists, empty assurances that Warsaw will not leave the Warsaw Pact. And most important, for the bourgeoisie a promise of a free hand in the Polish economy. Already upon his arrival at Charles de Gaulle airport, Walesa declared that Solidarnosc would act as a 'guarantor' of 'foreign credit' -- that is, for capitalist encroachment and austerity measures demanded by the imperialist bankers. The Mitterrand government, meanwhile, 'Socialist' Cold Warriors *par excellence*, is angling to become a privileged intermediary for

## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1981

### Communists and the AFL-CIO

Poland's Solidarity movement is holding the second stage of its national convention in Gdansk without the presence of one of its best known invited guests: Lane Kirkland, president of the AFL-CIO. Mr. Kirkland had prepared a speech to deliver to the Solidarity meeting, but at the last minute the Communist government of Poland refused to grant visas to him and his AFL-CIO delegation. This is no big surprise, really; American labor's support for Solidarity has gravely embarrassed Warsaw, and the Polish government keeps trying to discredit the effort. It is also sadly unsurprising that the Polish Communists are getting help here in the U.S.

You can get an idea of how the anti-AFL campaign is working by taking a look at a recent issue of *Counterspy*, a Washington-based magazine that proclaims itself devoted to exposing the nefarious work of the CIA and its agents of American imperialism wherever they roam in the world. An article in the magazine is straightforwardly titled "AFL-CIO: Trojan Horse in Polish Unions." A special editorial introduction to the article put the thesis just as straightforwardly: In country after country, "AFL-CIO aid has invariably had the ulterior motive of establishing, securing and expanding U.S. corporate and strategic interests."

How do we know this is true? For one thing, says *Counterspy*, we have before us the record of American labor's reactionary efforts in Latin America. In Guatemala, George Meany worked with CIA-connected organizations to undermine the properly

progressive, truly "labor-oriented" forces in the country. In the Dominican Republic, the AFL-CIO set up an organization that "ran propaganda units as well as goon squads against the legitimate unions."

And, comrades, this is no accident. *Counterspy* tells us that AFL-CIO officials have always denied working with the CIA or taking CIA money for their activities, but these denials "ring hollow." After all, do we not have the testimony of a former CIA official who says he actually handed over bucks to an AFL representative? Do we not know that the CIA read the mail of high labor personnel "in order to monitor their handling of CIA money"?

So when we see American labor at work in Poland, we should know that we're not viewing anything like an expression of genuine solidarity among the working classes. Instead, what we've got is just another variation on a decades-old American capitalist plot.

*Counterspy* was not the last source to strike this theme. Just a little while ago, broadcasts from the Soviet Union could be heard denouncing Solidarity's American connection and cutely referring to Lane Kirkland as among the "chief stockholders" in the Polish dissident movement. Over on this side of the ocean, when Solidarity recently opened an office in New York, a respectably-sized group of demonstrators was organized to picket the opening in protest against the American imperialism it allegedly represented.

American labor is indeed aiding the Solidarity movement, openly and unashamedly. It has a long history of

fighting Communist domination of labor movements. It learned early in the game that Communist parties and free unions are natural mortal enemies, more violently so because free unions, more than any other free institution, threaten Communist claims to legitimacy. When American labor goes head to head with Communists, the obvious counterattack for the Communists is to claim that American labor is an arm of the American government, manipulated by the CIA. How easy it is to make lists of the CIA connections: the parallel aims, the instances of collaboration, the communications and shared acquaintanceships. How easy to use the list to try to discredit the AFL-CIO enterprise in Poland, and more important, to try to expunge the colossal embarrassment Solidarity represents to world-wide communism.

This is a very dirty business we are dealing with. American labor has been active on the international scene in order to further its own perfectly legitimate purposes. One result of its activities has been to expose, time after time, the gulf between Communist interests and worker interests. This exposure has often worked to the benefit of an activist U.S. foreign policy, and opponents of such a policy have reason to want to tarnish the whole connection.

But they should not be allowed to do so easily. While the American labor movement has at times in recent years identified itself too closely with political parties and administrations for our liking, on the whole it remains a free and independent force pitting its weight against state power both in the U.S. and abroad. Its efforts on behalf of political freedom are thus significant. Anyone seeking to delegitimize its performance in this realm should be aware of just how serious an attack he is launching.

Solidarnosc. Foreign minister Cheysson is just back from consultations in Warsaw and Walesa is scheduled to meet here with Prime Minister Mauroy.

On October 14, over 200 journalists crowded into the press office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ask Walesa fawning questions and build his image as a globetrotting superstar. Outside, the Ligue Trotskyste de France (LTF -- sympathising section of the international Spartacist tendency) was present to protest Polish Solidarity's role as a company union for the CIA and the bankers. But within seconds, even before all our signs were out, French police swooped down to disperse the demonstration. Inside, a reporter for *Le Bolshhevik*, newspaper of the LTF, asked what Walesa thought of the attempted demonstration by socialists who say that Solidarnosc is threatening Poland with a capitalist counterrevolution. Walesa's response was, 'I have my opinion, an opinion of love, of course.'

Asked again by our reporter about reports in the German magazine *Der Spiegel* (5 October) that Soviet leaders had proposed in secret talks with the Polish church and Solidarnosc that the Kremlin could be satisfied with a political status for Poland 'very close to that of Finland' in return for 'internal stability and upholding Poland's alliances', Walesa denied knowledge of such proposals. The third question put by the journalist from *Le Bolshhevik* concerned the call by the Solidarnosc congress for Poland to join the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which imposes draconian austerity conditions, as in Chile. Walesa replied vaguely that Solidarnosc 'accepts everything that could be useful'. Another member of the Solidarnosc delegation was more explicit: 'What seems most important to us is control by an international organism. In any case, we are aware that to escape from the crisis, given the current situation in Poland, will mean major sacrifices.' Not by the imperialist banks, though.

The Parisian daily press was rather perturbed at the sharp questioning of Walesa by the LTF. *Le Monde* commented the next day that 'some of our colleagues seemed determined to make them [Solidarnosc] admit a secret penchant for capitalism' (bringing in the IMF is a secret?!). But the 'far-left' *Liberation* was the most acerbic:

'Meanwhile, outside a little squad of the Ligue Trotskyste de France (international Spartacist tendency) demonstrated against "Solidarity", terming it "an instrument of imperialism" and, without cracking a smile, denouncing its "Cold War programme" of "free elections" and "free unions" before calling just as seriously for "Trotskyist parties" to come to power. May Walesa's god save us from them.'

Don't count on it.

Perhaps most revealing was the Solidarnosc leader's response to a question about democracy. Walesa proclaimed repeatedly that 'We are 36 years late in establishing a real democracy.' Presumably, then, he would have preferred to have Poland liberated in 1945 not by the Red Army, but by Eisenhower, so that Solidarnosc could enjoy the 'free trade union' status which Reagan accords the American air controllers! Or does Walesa perhaps think that the Polish working class was better off under Nazi occupation or the Pilsudski dictatorship than today?

While in France, Lech Walesa has also been visiting the various trade union federations. For the Social-democratic CFDT, 'self-management' fans from way back, the Solidarnosc leader is a hero. However, an incident at a CFDT rally for Walesa caused them considerable embarrassment. According to *Liberation*, which the day before had appealed to Walesa's god, at the end of the meeting when the audience began singing the 'Internationale', the Polish union delegation objected. A CFDT official hurried over to explain that this was traditional, but to no avail. So in the middle of the international workers anthem, the Solidarnosc invitees stalked off the platform to general astonishment!

Walesa's visit put the CGT federation, led by the Communist Party (PCF), in a quandary. They well know of the sinister activities of one Irving Brown, for instance, the 'AFL-CIO European representative' invited to the Solidarnosc congress, who after World War II used CIA money to split the then-unitary French labour movement. But now the PCF is part of Mitterrand's popular-front cabinet and the CGT has to toe the line. It was interesting, therefore, to observe their reaction to an LTF leaflet entitled 'Stop Solidarity's Counterrevolution!' distributed at a CGT reception for Walesa. A Stalinist goon squad was given instructions to drive away the Trotskyists, 'gently, don't rough them up'. When the goon squad approached the LTF comrades, they got involved in a political discussion, which ended with the leader saying, 'Well, I might even agree with you about Poland, but I've got my orders.' And so the leafletters were removed, but not before each of the goons took one of our leaflets. ■

### Correction

Through an error in composition in our haste to get the last issue out, three lines in the article 'Dangerous anti-Soviet provocations' were misplaced. The passage should read:

'But Reagan promises every white middle- and upper-class American that they will not only survive his war against "godless Russia", but actually prosper through it. Not surprisingly his fantasy meets with increasing scepticism and outright hostility. ■'

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# O'Mahony as historian Scraping the barrel for Benn

Tony Benn's narrow defeat in the deputy leadership contest at Brighton has resolved nothing in the Labour Party's current round of internal warfare. But Benn's strong showing predictably produced hosannahs from the fake-Trotskyists who have been tripping over one another in the rush to embrace his reformist Little England 'socialist alternative'. *Socialist Challenge* (8 October) cheered, and scratched its head over what to do next: 'Eventually Michael Foot must be removed as leader. Whether Benn should challenge him next year is a complex tactical question which cannot be answered now...' The question whether Benn should be 'challenged', either now or next year, is of course never asked. From outside the Labour Party, *Socialist Worker* (3 October) chimed in. Paul Foot began a front-page analysis with 'congratulations to Tony Benn and his campaign managers for their magnificent showing'.

But the organisation most deeply involved with the rise of Bennism is undoubtedly the Socialist Organiser Alliance (SOA). After all the SOA actually had a representative on Benn's campaign committee. They provided the initial impetus (and the money) for the Rank and File Mobilising Committee, which brought together big chunks of the Labour left around Benn's campaign. And they have gone so far as to elaborate a strategy for 'renovating' and 'transforming' the Labour Party into an 'adequate' instrument for socialism via the Bennite left's accession to leadership. To fight for what? Import controls? More 'refined' imperialist terror in Ireland? A 'non-nuclear defence strategy' against the Soviet 'threat'?

## 'A dangerous nationalist/populist knot'

In an 'Open Letter to Tony Benn', SOA leader John O'Mahony sums up the organisation's attitude:

'All sorts of people who have only a hazy idea about your politics, or who disagree with them, consider themselves "Bennites". We, supporters of Socialist Organiser -- and we do not wish to play down our serious political differences with you -- consider ourselves in the latter category....' (*Socialist Organiser*, 10 September)

So it's O'Mahony the self-proclaimed Bennite! But as a seasoned opportunist he must try to concoct some pseudo-Marxist justification for this rubbish. Thus in the 3 September *Socialist Organiser* O'Mahony dusts off his *Selected Works* of Marx and Engels for a review of Benn's recent article 'Britain as a Colony'.

O'Mahony admits that Benn's strategy for British 'national liberation' is tied together in a 'dangerous nationalist/populist knot' and that his 'politics are strangely at odds with

his reputation' as a 'wild-eyed incendiary, the fomenter of revolution'. But rather than draw the conclusion that the task of revolutionists must be to strive to break misled workers from this 'nationalist/populist' enemy of revolution, Matgama justifies politically identifying with him by means of a far-fetched historical analogy with ... the German Workers Party of 1875! He cites Marx and Engels' withering critique of the 'Gotha programme' around which the previously divided German socialist movement united that year, quoting a letter from Engels to German communist August Bebel of 12 October 1875:

'The whole thing is untidy, confused, disconnected, illogical and discreditable.... [But] the asinine bourgeois papers took the programme quite seriously, read into it what it does not contain, and interpreted it communistically. The workers seem to be doing the same. It is *this circumstance alone* that made it possible for Marx and me not to dissociate ourselves from such a programme. So long as our opponents and likewise the workers view this programme as embodying our intentions we can afford to keep quiet about it.' (emphasis in original)

O'Mahony's conclusion? 'Tony Benn is today very like the German Workers Party and its programme then in his relationship to the bourgeoisie and to the working class.' And thus, by O'Mahony's twisted logic, Marxists should throw themselves into the Labour Party and identify themselves as Bennites!

Charlatanry is too good a word for this. Marx lambasted German communists like Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht for unprincipled concessions to the opportunist Lassallean wing of the German party whose politics he called 'muddle-headed' and even 'reactionary'. But to compare Tony Benn and his chauvinist Little England panaceas with these comrades is the most vile insult to their memory. Despite their errors, they were revolutionists; even the pre-Marxist utopian Lassalleans were in their time far to the left of the open, unashamed reformist Tony Benn today.

Moreover, unlike O'Mahony the 'Bennite', Marx and Engels never made diplomatic non-aggression pacts or programmatic concessions to either the Lassalleans or the 'Eisenacher' wing of the party that stood closer to them. They engaged in ruthless political struggle before and after the Gotha congress; they never called themselves Eisenachers, let alone Lassalleans!

## Lenin: A Bennite too?

And finally our learned friend wilfully ignores the fact that something has changed in the intervening century -- namely the advent of

the epoch of imperialism and with it Lenin's understanding that the development of a privileged labour aristocracy within the workers movement of the advanced capitalist countries impelled a break with the Kautskyan conception (shared by Marx and Engels) of the 'party of the whole class'. Lenin's fight for a programmatically-based vanguard party meant that a political split inside the working class movement, separating the revolutionists from the labour reformists, was a prerequisite to socialist revolution.

But not content with prostituting Marx and Engels (not to speak of Bebel, Wilhelm Liebknecht and even poor Lassalle) in the service of Bennery, our erudite historian manages to drag Lenin in as well. In an article entitled 'Brighton -- A Balance Sheet' O'Mahony attacks Tribune Neil Kinnock for disparaging the current debate inside the party as only playing into the hands of the Tories, and comments:

'To people who said similar things about the political battles that often convulsed the Russian labour movement, Lenin used a telling story which he took from Leo Tolstoy.

'Going along a road, a man saw a figure in the distance, crouched, swaying and moving his body seemingly without sense: a "madman". When he came nearer, he saw he was sharpening a knife.

'The Labour movement now is trying to hammer out a democratic structure and socialist policies so that we can have a real alternative to the Tories. We are sharpening a knife for Thatcher, and maybe [?] for capitalism.' (*Socialist Organiser*, 8 October)

So now Lenin was a premature Bennite too! Lenin's sharpening of the knife was the Bolsheviks' fight to cohere a vanguard party against the conciliatory and reformist Mensheviks. Matgama tries to graft this onto the squabbles between left and right wings of the Tribune Group, turning Benn into Lenin (and Kinnock, presumably, into Jules Martov)!

In the absence of a mass revolutionary alternative, Bennism today has received a resonance among wide layers of the working class fed up with the Tories and the betrayals of the Labour right wing, and Marxists must take this into account in formulating their tactics for forging a revolutionary vanguard. But militant workers will not be won to a revolutionary programme by conciliating and uniting with the social-chauvinist reformists; by becoming Bennites; and manifestly not by pretending that Marx, Engels and Lenin were really sort of like the wretched SOA. Maybe it's time John O'Mahony went back to his library to concoct some new arguments -- or, better yet, stop pretending he's a Trotskyist. ■

## Defend Dogan Tarkan!

Since it came to power fourteen months ago the NATO military junta in Turkey has arrested tens of thousands of leftists and trade unionists, banned strikes and political parties and tortured thousands of prisoners. Leaders of the trade union federation DISK have been arrested and face charges which could lead to their execution with Turkey's penal code based on Mussolini's laws.

The British Home Office is attempting to deport a Turkish militant to almost certain death at the hands of the Evren regime. Dogan Tarkan, a socialist newspaper editor and former official of the metal workers union Maden-Is, has every right to political asylum under the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees. The Home Office accepted the evidence proving this but refused Dogan's application for political asylum last August. He now faces possible deportation at any time.

We call on our readers to urgently demand that the Home Office grant political asylum to Dogan Tarkan. The life of this left-wing militant must be saved! And as an elementary duty of international solidarity, the labour movement must campaign for the freeing of all left-wing prisoners in Turkey.

## Stop anti-communist exclusions!

The 'new' Workers Socialist League (WSL) celebrated the anti-Soviet, pro-Labour fusion between Alan Thornett's old WSL and Sean Matgama's self-proclaimed 'Bennite' outfit with a rally in Birmingham. 'Welcome to the WSL rally', the blurb said, 'We have tried to make the event as informal as possible, to encourage maximum participation'. By everyone but the Spartacists. When one comrade protested at this blatant political exclusion, Thornett 'welcomed' her by telling her to 'fuck off'. Our comrades mounted a spirited picket outside the meeting to protest against the exclusion. When WSL leader Alan Clinton arrived he attempted a rugby charge at one of our comrades on the picket, missed and hit the wall.

What drove these rightward-moving centrists into a frenzy was the SL's forthright defence of the Polish deformed workers state against Solidarity's counterrevolutionary bid for power. Since their fusion is based on long term entry into the Labour Party and deep-going adaptation to Labourism, the last thing Matgama and Thornett wanted was to be reminded of what Trotskyists mean by defence of the Soviet Union.

It is not the first time that Trotskyists



Birmingham, 10 October: 'New' WSL loves Labour, hates Russia, excludes communists.

have been labelled 'Stalinist' for insisting on the defence of the gains of the workers states against imperialism and counterrevolution. Nor is it the first time that people who defend counterrevolutionaries in the name of 'socialist democracy' have found themselves suppressing workers democracy to avoid Trotskyist criticism.

# IMG conference: Deepening the turn towards Cold War Labourism

The following leaflet was distributed outside the recent conference of the International Marxist Group (IMG) by Spartacist League members, including several former members of the Communist Faction, the left opposition expelled from the IMG last spring which went on to fuse with the SL in September. Today the IMG's headlong rightward plunge into Cold War Labourism is most evident on Poland, as they hail Solidarity's march towards social counterrevolution in the name of a fight for 'socialist democracy'.

While the IMG squabbles over just how deeply to liquidate into the social democracy, the CF and SL have come together around a fight for key elements of the Bolshevik programme in the present period -- summed up in the founding platform of the IMG oppositionists printed below. Forward to a British Trotskyist party and the rebirth of the Fourth International!

At its last national conference, the International Marxist Group (IMG) elected a leadership which promised to take it into the big time (yet again) through a fusion with Tony Cliff's 'state capitalist' Socialist Workers Party. At the same time, nearly twenty per cent of the delegates voted for a document demanding a clear position on defence of the Soviet Union in the face of the imperialist war drive and welcoming the Red Army intervention in Afghanistan against reactionary CIA-backed mullahs who wanted to preserve the bride price and illiteracy against the encroachments of 'godless Communism'. The fusion with the SWP fell through -- Cliff wouldn't have it, thinking among other things there might be too many 'sectarian Trotskyists' (ie Soviet-defencists) still in the IMG. Then the leadership took a 'turn' to CND; then came Tony Benn and the 'turn' to Labourism.

Around the fight initiated at that conference there coalesced a grouping of comrades who went on to form the Communist Faction (CF). Against the IMG's capitulation to Cold War anti-Sovietism, to Khomeini's Islamic 'anti-imperialism', to neutralist disarmament-mongering, to Bennism, the CF fought for Trotskyist politics (as encapsulated in their seven-point platform).

The CF intended to be at this conference -- where they would have fought for a Trotskyist perspective towards the Labour Party and industrial implantation, towards the Cuban revolution and the Iranian events. As you know they were expelled. But politics is ruthless, Afghanistan ushered in full-scale anti-Soviet Cold War (whether or not the IMG is prepared to recognise it) and, with every new turn the pressure of Cold War has pushed the IMG ever further to the right. Today it lists three 'basic conflicts of our age', which includes (like any good Cold War 'socialist') that 'between working people and the bureaucratic regimes of Eastern Europe' but does not include the one that has figured centrally in world politics since 1917, between imperialism and the workers states. The recent material in *Socialist Challenge* on CND does not even have a perfunctory call for defence of the USSR! And the central debate in this conference

is not whether but *how* to deepen its turn to Cold War Labourism and become even more irrelevant to the class struggle.

\* From the standpoint of building a revolutionary party, it makes no difference whether all, or simply most, *Socialist Challenge* supporters find themselves inside the Labour Party rubbing elbows with a half dozen other types of pseudo-Trotskyists. When the IMG first decided to go all the way with Benn, the CF warned that the leadership was really proposing 'an entry which aims at staying in over the long term in order to build a left wing based on an "action programme" which dovetails almost perfectly with Benn's left rhetoric'. If a mass centrist current does develop in the Labour Party out of the Bennite phenomenon, it will quickly leave the IMG 'alternative' of unilateralism and tame anti-Toryism behind. The Trotskyist perspective is for splitting the Labour Party on hard programmatic lines, including proletarian defence of the Soviet Union.

\* And for those of you who see the 'turn to industry' as an answer, remember what the CF said: 'Implantation in industry -- yes! But for the purpose of winning the trade unions to the revolutionary programme'. Why should any Leyland worker look to the IMG when it's hardly to the left of Moss Evans and Terry Duffy. Pat 'I hope you enjoy life on the dole' Hickey may well be one of the more despised leftists among BL workers. And for good reason: he sold them out on closure by refusing to wage a fight for occupations. Now *Socialist Challenge* doesn't even make a pretence of fighting the closures -- accepting the bureaucracy's scheme to exempt the threatened plants from the proposed strike. In fact it doesn't even make a stand on the full wage claim, calling only for a 'substantial improvement' on the 3.8 per cent!

\* Today the American SWP and its co-thinkers in Iran are about the only people left (outside the regime itself and the contemptible Tudeh party) who still embrace the Iranian 'revolution' and defend the regime against its opponents. But while the IMG finally recognises something 'went wrong', it has learned nothing. In tailing the masses behind Khomeini, the IMG closed the door to the only progressive outcome to the anti-shah mobilisations -- leading the workers to power in counterposition to Islamic reaction. And as they tailed the mullahs against the shah then, today they look to tail Bani-Sadr and the Mujahedeen against the mullahs.

\* Three years ago the IMG said 'god is great' was really an anti-imperialist slogan. Today it says that Catholic anti-communism is the road to political revolution in Poland. In fact it's the road to social counterrevolution. Do you want a Poland in which the Vatican runs social policy, the IMF runs the economy and CIA social democrats run foreign relations? That's what a victory by Solidarnosc promises!

\* That the United Secretariat is debating the character of Castro's Cuba 22 years after the Cuban revolution is a product of the increasing rapprochement between the centrist Mandelites and the reformist American SWP. For the social-democratic American SWP support to Stalinist Castro is a cheap way of retaining some sort of identification with 'Leninism'. They certainly don't go with Castro when for his own Stalinist reasons he supports the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the suppression of Solidarnosc. Nothing has happened in Cuba in the last 20 years to change by one jot the analysis developed by the precursor of the Spartacist tendency in opposition to the American SWP's capitulation to Castroism: Cuba is a deformed workers state.

But the Cuba discussion is relevant today for supporters of the United Secretariat. It was a key test for Pabloism -- the liquidationist thesis that denies the need for Trotskyist vanguard parties to lead the workers to power. This is the thesis under which the IMG goes from one liquidationist 'turn' to another, disorienting subjectively revolutionary militants into demoralisation, cynicism and despair. The IMG's turns are a revolving door out of revolutionary

politics. In the meantime the Spartacist League has gained some authority and prominence for fighting to turn the steel strike into a general strike, for giving Leyland workers honest revolutionary answers, for being the Soviet-defencists in the country and for refusing to drop the demand for troops out of Ireland.

So if you want to leave the IMG to the left and not to the right, there is an alternative. It's called Trotskyism. It won't get you an invitation to visit Castro, chat with Tony Benn or hobnob with Mgr Bruce Kent. But it may get you an opportunity to lead a successful workers revolution before imperialism blows us all up. And that's about the only thing the Spartacist League can offer you. ■

## Founding positions of the Communist Tendency

1. For the defence of the workers states against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. Victory to the Red Army in Afghanistan. Secure and extend the gains of the Afghan masses through sovietisation.
2. For political revolution to overthrow the ruling bureaucratic castes in all the degenerated and deformed workers states, led by Trotskyist revolutionary parties. For a fight to break the influence of Catholic nationalism on the Polish working class. Against any blocs with capitalist restorationist forces.
3. Down with Khomeini -- no support to clerical reaction. For a Leninist policy in the Iran/Iraq war. Turn the war between the oppressors into civil wars against the oppressors. Unconditional support to the right of the Kurds to self-determination. For workers republics in Iran and Iraq.
4. Support the military struggle of petty bourgeois nationalist movements (like the FSLN in Nicaragua, the FMLN in El Salvador) against the US-backed dictatorships in Latin America, but give them no political support. For independent Trotskyist parties to fight for genuine workers and peasants governments: the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.
5. Troops out of Ireland now. Defend republicans against British imperialism. For an uncompromising working class perspective in opposition not only to Loyalist sectarianism and all expressions of British imperialism including Liberalism, but also republican nationalism.
6. No political support to 'left' reformism in the Labour Party.
7. Down with disarmament slogans -- debilitating and narcotic illusions that only serve to dupe the masses. End all political support to CND. Disarming the bourgeoisie requires that the workers be armed.

## Mullahs...

(continued from page 12)

on his promises to liberate women, generously quoting from Khomeini's references to Koranic law (*Kar International*, September 1981).

Behind this posture of naivete about the traditional status of women under Islam was the suicidal Stalinist theory of 'stages', which demanded liquidating even the programme of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in order to ally with the mullahs. Likewise, they argue today that, 'it is not possible to call for the overthrow of the regime directly.... Therefore, our slogan is: "Death to the Islamic Republican Party". This is not a premature slogan because the masses are now adopting it.' Indeed, just as 'the masses' under Khomeini 'adopted' the slogan of 'Death or the Veil!', this slogan is tailored to a bloc with Bani-Sadr. Thus despite its present verbal denunciations, when it comes to action the Fedayeen Minority supports Bani-Sadr. They took part in the mass rallies called by the Mujahedeen in Tehran last June, whose main slogan was 'Muslims arise, Bani-Sadr we support you'. In Europe and the US, Minority supporters

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have co-sponsored numerous anti-Khomeini protests together with the Mujahedeen and against other demonstrations which also opposed Bani-Sadr. Thus it wouldn't be at all surprising for the Minority leadership, having abandoned the 'ayatollah that failed', to openly embrace his disciple Bani-Sadr.

However the Fedayeen aren't the only ones thrown into turmoil by the current events. Smaller Iranian groups like the Organisation of Communist Unity (OCU) also denounce the Mujahedeen alliance with Bani-Sadr -- only to campaign for the 'unity' of the left, including those who openly stand with Rajavi and the ex-president. And the fake-Trotskyist 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International' (USec) is now split down the middle between those who want to tail Bani-Sadr/Rajavi and others who scandalously continue to grovel before Khomeini, notably the American SWP and Iranian HKE and HVK (see 'US SWP still hails Khomeini butchery', *Spartacist Britain* no 36, October).

Having for years branded any attempt at an honest evaluation of the situation in Iran as 'capitulation to imperialist/racist propaganda', the USec's British International Marxist Group (IMG) has finally decided that 'discussion' on Iran is 'long overdue' (*Socialist Challenge*, 1 October). The IMG leadership's contribution to this 'discussion' is to call for a bloc with the Mujahedeen against a supposed IRP threat to the 'gains of the revolution'. These, they assert, notably include that 'the Shah's government apparatus -- the army high command, the SAVAK secret police and the state bureaucracy -- was crushed' following the February 1979 insurrection. In reality, the Shah's generals are for the most part alive and well and fighting in Kurdistan, up to 80 per cent of former SAVAK agents are working for the renamed Islamic torturers and spies of SAVAMI, and the only 'crushing' of the state bureaucracy has been the driving out of its senior women employees and forcing those remaining to wear the *chador*!

But the most cynical part of the IMG's new line is its explanation of how the 'revolutionary activity of millions' led to the installation of a savagely repressive and reactionary regime:

'But the lack of a powerful labour movement, and the absence of a high level of class consciousness among the Iranian masses acted as an obstacle to the working class achieving political independence from bourgeois and "Islamic" politicians.' (*Socialist Challenge*, 8 October, emphasis in original)

This is the most stomach-turning hypocrisy, coming from a group whose contribution to the class consciousness of the Iranian proletariat was to whitewash Khomeini's programme, to claim that Islamic ideology was the form that democratic, anti-imperialist and class consciousness took in Iran, and which therefore quite literally chanted 'Allah Akhbar' ('God is Great') as enthusiastically as the most backward bazaari in Tehran.

### Tailing the Mujahedeen

As for the third (!) of the USec's Iranian affiliates, the HKS, a spokesman interviewed by *Socialist Challenge* notes that today there is 'repression worse than the Shah's', but continues to retrospectively justify support to Khomeini by claiming that 'the overthrow of the Shah's regime through the mass upsurge of the people allowed three years of open activity for the workers' and left wing organisations'. Having learned nothing, the HKS now argues for a 'fight alongside the Mujahedin to overthrow the regime' because:

'... we say that if they come to power by overthrowing Khomeini this would open up big opportunities for open activity by the workers and left wing organisations, the nationalities and so on.'

The HKS's excuse for tailing the Mujahedeen is word for word the same as for tailing Khomeini



Rural Solidarność: for God and private property

-- and the results will be just as disastrous. Though in the current context it is necessary to defend the Mujahedeen against Khomeini's terror, these Islamic-populists are not a 'progressive' political alternative and indeed could be the shock troops for a military coup. One Islamic Revolution is more than enough!

The USec's craven line on Iran has prompted opposition from some elements in the organisation, notably veteran IMGer Charlie Van Gelderen, who in a letter to *Socialist Challenge* (15 October) savages the myth of the 'gains' of the revolution and states that from the very morning of the February insurrection Iran was saddled with a 'counterrevolutionary regime'. But even Van Gelderen's letter, the most left-wing stance on Iran presently visible within the USec, makes no attempt to counterpose a revolutionary-proletarian strategy against the mullahs before they came to power.

The common denominator uniting the fake-lefts who still support Khomeini (Tudeh, Fedayeen Majority, HKE/HVK) and those who now denounce the mullahs (Fedayeen Minority, OCU, Peykar) is their slavish adherence to the Menshevik/Stalinist 'two-stage' dogma. These groups look to the colonial bourgeoisie as the liberator from imperialism, to which it owes its existence as a class. Of those who have given up on the clerical reactionary Khomeini, most have linked themselves to Bani-Sadr -- who was the transitional figure for the consolidation of the theocratic dictatorship, and who could play a similar role for a pro-imperialist coup. And Peykar, which is the most vociferously opposed to its own ruling class over the Iran/Iraq war, is also the most intransigent exponent of Mao's (and Khomeini's) ultra-reactionary line on 'Soviet imperialism'.

Iran provides an emphatic demonstration in the negative of the historic lesson of the Russian Revolution of 1917 for the colonial and ex-colonial countries. This is summed up in Trotsky's programme of permanent revolution: achieving democracy and breaking the shackles of imperialist domination is only possible through the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all its peasant masses. Only a Trotskyist party -- fighting for the political independence of the working class, for defence of the social gains of the Russian October and their extension, as in neighbouring Afghanistan -- can liberate the oppressed Iranian masses. ■

## Barricades...

(continued from page 7)

when these are clerical fascists.

And in Poland the historic stakes are far

higher even than in Iran. The Warsaw bureaucrats with their corruption and mismanagement, their lies and suppression of democratic rights, have driven a majority of the Polish working class into the arms of the Vatican, the IMF and NATO social democracy. That is the Stalinists' great crime in Poland. But an even greater crime would be tailing the workers behind a counterrevolutionary mobilisation.

To paint us as 'cheerleaders for the Kremlin', WP absurdly claims that we 'recommend Soviet tanks' because (even more absurdly) the Polish working class is an 'historical agent of counterrevolution' unless held down by Stalinist bayonets. We are not braintrusters for the Kremlin bureaucracy and thus do not call on them to stop a mess they have themselves created. But whereas WP offers themselves up for a united front with counterrevolution, we offer a united front against it. As we wrote last month, a Trotskyist leadership 'would seek to mobilise those sections of the Polish working class which stand on the historic social gains of liberation of Poland from Nazi enslavement and capitalist exploitation, who hate the bureaucracy for undermining those gains, and who would fight together with the Soviet Army to defend the material foundations of a socialist future'.

We are not about to passively acquiesce in the creation of a neo-Pilsudskite Poland subservient to Reagan/Haig on the western border of the USSR -- something which would bring much closer the dreadful prospect of anti-Soviet nuclear holocaust. The task of communists must be to defend at all costs the programme and gains of the dictatorship of the proletariat, even in the face of mass opposition. Workers Power rejects that task and comes down on the side of reaction. But we Trotskyists know where we stand. Solidarity's counterrevolution must be stopped! ■

# Spartacist basic marxism classes

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To be held at 7.00pm in Room 1, Student Union Building, Warwick University. Sponsored by Warwick University Spartacist Society.

Friday, 6 November Thursday, 19 November  
Sponsored by Warwick University Spartacist Society; for readings visit bookstalls in the Market Place Fridays or telephone (021) 459 9748.

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## Sheffield

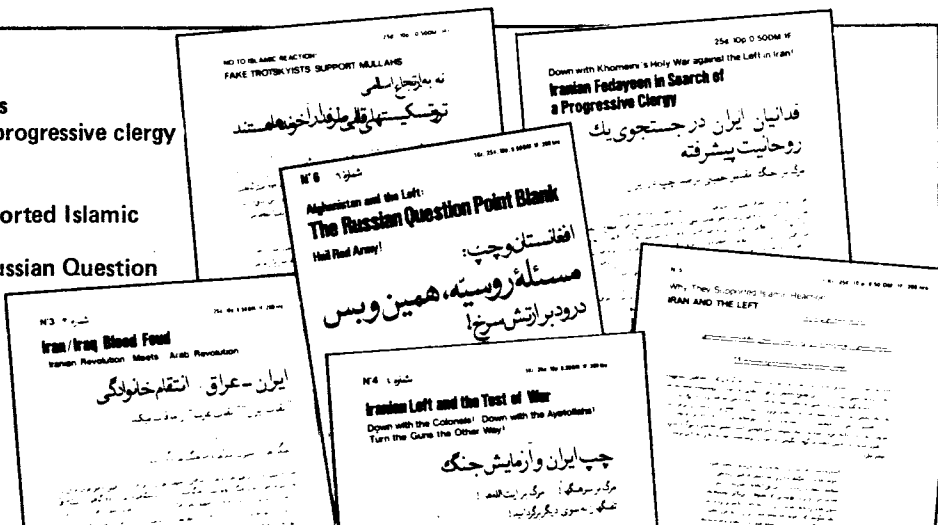
To be held on Wednesdays at 7.30pm in Hospitality Room, Student Union Building, Sheffield University.

### TRANSLATIONS IN FARSI

- Fake Trotskyists support mullahs
- Iranian Fedayeen in search of a progressive clergy
- Iran/Iraq blood feud
- Iranian left and the test of war
- Iran and the left: Why they supported Islamic reaction
- Afghanistan and the left: The Russian Question point blank. Hail Red Army!

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# SPARTACIST

## BRITAIN

### Tailing Bani-Sadr - another road to disaster

# Mullahs' blood frenzy

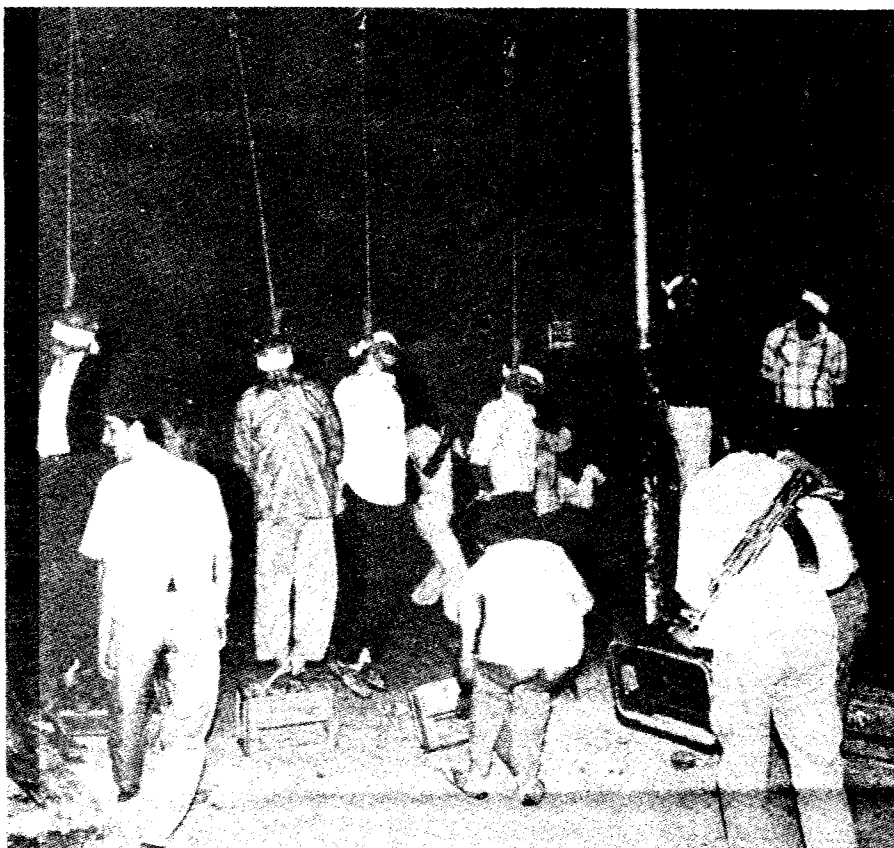
After two and a half years of the 'Islamic revolution' in Iran, the reactionary Khomeini regime is coming apart. The stalemated war with Iraq, which has dragged on since September 1980, and fighting by Kurdish rebels, who control large parts of a couple of provinces, are not even the most serious of the mullahs' problems. The ruling clerical Islamic Republican Party (IRP) has been decapitated by deadly accurate bombings, state administration is in chaos, the economy in shambles, and there are reports of unrest in the military. Now Khomeini's Pasdaran (militiamen) are having frequent shoot-outs with Islamic guerrillas who have turned against their 'imam' of yesterday. Besieged on all sides, Khomeini's clerics are staking their survival on mass killings.

Since June over 1800 have been executed -- more executions in Iran in four months than were reported in the entire world during 1980.

The mullahs' *jihad* is aimed primarily at the Muslim-populist Mujahedeen-e-Khalq (People's Crusaders), closely allied with former president Bani-Sadr in exile. Significantly, the mullahs' victims are tortured and mutilated by the very same SAVAK sadists who butchered for the shah (80 per cent of SAVAKs have reportedly been 'rehabilitated'). If the Bastille was torn down in the French bourgeois revolution, Tehran's looming Evin Prison -- whose dungeons once swallowed up the shah's political prisoners -- has come to symbolise the ayatollahs' 'Islamic revolution'.

So now many of those who had hailed Khomeini as some kind of 'progressive' cry 'Betrayal!' It must not be forgotten that the Islamic Mujahedeen, along with petty-bourgeois leftists like the Fedayeen, helped put Khomeini in power. They tailed the clerics as Kurdish villages were bombed to rubble, 'immodest' women stoned to death, striking workers terrorised at gunpoint, leftists reviled, beaten and killed. It was the international Spartacist tendency that warned, even before Khomeini came to power, that the 'Islamic revolution' promised by the mullahs would be just as reactionary as the hated police state of the US-backed shah. But we were alone in raising what for Marxists should have been an obvious slogan: 'Down with the shah -- Down with the mullahs! For workers revolution in Iran!' The Mujahedeen and anti-Khomeini left in Iran are now paying a terrible price for bloody repression that in part is of their own making.

But the mullahs are getting badly mauled too. A wave of spectacular assassinations has decimated the upper levels of the IRP. The mullah regime's fate hasn't yet been decided. Obviously, the key factor is the military, and where the armed forces would fall if the regime went under isn't clear yet. Among the officer corps are many unreconstructed monarchists. Whoever was responsible for the bombings of the IRP headquarters and the prime minister's office was able to pull off an inside job. Bani-Sadr, who took the position of commander in chief to prosecute the war with Iraq, reactionary and chauvinist on both sides, claims to have the allegiance of the military. The Mujahedeen, meanwhile,



Leftists cheered Khomeini to power, 1979. Now, more executions in Iran than in entire world last year.



are reported to have considerable support among the younger officers.

#### IRP versus Bani-Sadr/Rajavi

Bani-Sadr and Mujahedeen leader Masoud Rajavi are busy giving interviews predicting Khomeini's downfall in a month and presenting themselves as the sole alternative. Rajavi, as head of the National Council of Resistance, is taking pains to disabuse the media of the notion that the Mujahedeen are leftists in any sense: 'We are not Marxists, we are true Muslims.' In fact the Mujahedeen are not part of the left. They are a petty-bourgeois populist movement whose founding cadres were drawn from Islamic theological seminaries. The Mujahedeen already had their reckoning with would-be 'Marxists' in the mid-1970s when they drove out the tendency that went on to form the eclectic-Stalinist Peykar (Struggle) group. They are the consummate political expression of a stratum of Iran's educated petty bourgeoisie and might be characterised as modernising nationalists, but certainly not socialists or even radical democrats like Sun Yat-sen or even Ataturk. Their ideology is imbued with religious obscurantism as strong as Khomeini's.

Practically every educated Iranian youth was hostile to the shah's rule, not because the workers and peasants were exploited, but because he turned the upper echelons of society -- the directors of the nationalised oil company, the diplomatic corps, officer corps etc -- into his personal clique, whose members rose and fell at the Pahlavis' whim. In most countries of the region petty-bourgeois opposition to a nouveau riche monarchy like the shah's would have found expression in a nationalist-republican military coup, such as that which overthrew Egypt's King Farouk in 1952 and Iraq's Hashemite monarchy in 1958. But through vicious police surveillance and frequent purges the shah managed to prevent successful conspiracy in the military. Thus the petty-bourgeois opposition to the shah's rule -- both modernist and traditionalist -- had to go outside the governmental apparatus and mobilise the masses, where the Shi'ite clergy achieved hegemony.

Once the shah fell, the conflict of interest between the modernist and traditionalist sectors of the petty bourgeoisie was bound to come to a head. In mobilising their forces behind Bani-Sadr the Mujahedeen are not opportunistically betraying their principles. They see in Bani-Sadr the means of achieving an Iran open to men of their talent -- that is, a strong, modernising, capitalist state, the kind the shah tried, but failed, to build.

This point has not been lost on perceptive bourgeois policy makers, such as former American Undersecretary of State George Ball. In an article in the *Washington Post* (19 August) Ball chides the 'sloppy' press description of the Mujahedeen as leftists, pointing out that their intention is to 'replace the current backward Islamic regime with a modernized Shiite Islam'. The military, he adds, 'might at almost any time turn against their Islamic masters either to support the Mujahedin or to launch a right-wing coup'. Considering the former more likely, Ball argues that 'It would be a diplomatic mistake to assume that Moscow could effectively manipulate the group....'

#### Fedayeen for Bani-Sadr

Of those Iranian pseudo-leftists who supported Khomeini in the beginning, the Fedayeen have been the most dramatically shaken by the course of the 'Islamic revolution'. Split in two, the so-called Fedayeen Majority today joins the pro-Moscow Tudeh party in lining up with the murderous mullahs against the Mujahedeen. The Fedayeen Minority, on the other hand, chants 'Death to the Islamic Republic' and denounces Bani-Sadr as 'no better than the Islamic Republican Party' (Kar no 63). But without directly confronting the lessons of its opportunist support to the Khomeinist movement, it is fated to repeat the same betrayal. The Minority today complains that, 'As soon as rising to power, the present regime began trampling on the people's gains from the revolution' ('The recent events in Iran and our position', July-August 1981) and elsewhere cynically charges Khomeini with renegeing

*continued on page 10*