

War to the death against CIA's mullah cutthroats!

Battle for Afghanistan

The Red Army withdrawal from Afghanistan is a cold-blooded betrayal of the Afghan and Soviet peoples. The CIA's Islamic warriors, armed for over a decade with billions of dollars of ultramodern military equipment, are poised to carry out the wholesale slaughter of Afghan women, teachers and other intellectuals, leftist activists and peasants. And George Bush has now announced the US will continue to supply the *mujahedin* with arms as long as the left-nationalist Kabul regime is in power.

If this army of mullahs and tribalist cutthroats topples the Najibullah government, Afghanistan will become an imperialist dagger pointed at Soviet Central Asia. In his drive to appease Washington by abandoning Afghanistan, Moscow leader Mikhail Gorbachev is giving US imperialism and its allies a launching pad for counterrevolution in the homeland of the socialist October Revolution. With their backs to the wall, the forces of social progress are facing a war to the death. Smash Washington's "holy warriors"!

The *mujahedin* call it *badal*, the code of revenge of the dominant Pushtun tribes. It means not just death but often torture, dismemberment and mutilation. Over the past several months, as Soviet troops abandoned one outpost after another, the CIA's "freedom fighters" meted out a taste of their barbarism. In November about 70 Afghan soldiers surrendered to the *mujahedin* at Tor-kham, on the Afghan side of the Khyber Pass. When government forces retook the outpost several days later, they found their comrades' bodies — mutilated and chopped into pieces — in wooden crates.

The US and its NATO allies are doing everything they can to set up a bloodbath. Richard Murphy, a top State Department official under Reagan, predicts the fall of Kabul within a few months, and goes on, "there are very deep passions" that "will be turned against those who have been central to the regime". Last month the State Department sent a formal note to its embassies around the world instructing them to deny visas to any-



Ready for battle in Kabul: a woman member of party militia with Soviet-made AK-47 automatic rifle.

one associated with the Afghan regime. Anticipating the *mujahedin* terrorists' laying waste to Kabul, and in order to sow panic, Washington and its European allies have closed their embassies.

The *Wall Street Journal* (12 January) gloats that "what the Afghans don't know about revenge isn't worth knowing". The victims of the *mujahedin*'s bloodlust will by no means be limited to supporters of the left-nationalist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). Even peasants whose only "crime" was not emigrating to Pakistan after 1979 are infidels in the eyes of these Islamic "holy warriors". The fall of Kabul and other Afghan cities would be followed by a massacre of the entire educated population, especially tens of thousands of women who escaped from *purdah* (seclusion) and cast off the *chadori* (the head-to-foot veil).

Even Western bourgeois journal-

ists, particularly if they're women, are anxious about the hideous fate now threatening liberated Afghan women. Mary Williams Walsh reports in the *Wall Street Journal* (19 January):

"The plight of Kabul's women is a poignant reminder that the West's vicarious victory over communist expansion here isn't without its ambiguities. In a backward country where the female peasantry still toils like medieval serfs, Kabuli women have managed to hold on to many 20th-century freedoms.... Instead of staying at home behind *purdah* walls, they emerge each day and work in offices, hospitals and schools."

Walsh contrasts this to the horrible conditions of Afghan women in the refugee camps in Pakistan, reporting that "foreign doctors working among the refugee women tell gruesome tales of husbands leaving them to

die, rather than permitting diagnosis by a male obstetrician!"

But the battle for Kabul does not look like it is going to be a walkover. The Afghan army is well supplied with Soviet MIG fighter-bombers and medium-range missiles. The government has distributed arms to the population, including young women, creating a 30,000-strong civilian militia. The PDPA regime, in the past given to murderous factional and cliquish infighting, appears committed to a united stand. "We must all fight now", declared Najibullah. Throughout the world every class-conscious worker, socialist and believer in human decency and the rights of man must materially aid the Afghan government against the CIA's Islamic cutthroats.

At stake in the battle for Afghanistan is far more than the fate of this hideously backward land. The armed Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 provided America's pretext for Cold War II. We proclaimed at the time "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!" while most self-styled leftists around the world joined the imperialist campaign for Soviet troops out. Well, now the Soviet troops have been pulled out to appease US imperialism. If the *mujahedin* succeed in butchering every leftist, teacher and unveiled woman in Afghanistan, their blood will be on the hands not only of the Bushes, Thatchers and Kohls, but also on their "left" camp followers.

ORIGINS AND NATURE OF THE AFGHAN WAR

For decades Afghanistan's small number of modernising intellectuals have generally been pro-Soviet. When they looked across their northern border into Soviet Central Asia, they saw children who could read, women liberated from the veil, and a level of social and economic well-being centuries in advance of Afghanistan. As a result of Soviet central planning, living standards in Tashkent are as high as in Moscow.

In 1965 Afghan leftist circles
continued on page 6

Gorbachev's pullout is a betrayal

On AIDS ...

Dear Editor:

I just read the February *Workers Hammer* (which I thought looked pretty good) and noticed a formulation in the AIDS article which I don't like. The third sentence of the article is "Under capitalism, it [the AIDS epidemic] is a profound insoluble social catastrophe." My objections are as follows:

1. Such an epidemic disease is a profound insoluble social tragedy within any social system.
2. Many epidemic diseases have been resolved within the framework of a capitalist system.
3. AIDS is a viral disease. Medical science throughout the world has been unable to cope with viral infections in general.
4. After 100 years of research, scientists are still arguing about what even causes cancer and whether it

has a single causative mechanism.

Hence it is correct to say that a socialist society would respond more forcefully, rationally and humanely to this new deadly disease. But that is very different from suggesting that socialism could "solve AIDS" and capitalism can't.

Communist greetings,
Elizabeth Kendall

SWP anti-fascist betrayals ...

Toronto, Canada
October 16, 1988

Dear Comrades:

While the political thrust of the article entitled "SWP Pushes ANL Pop Front" (*Workers Hammer* no 100) is correct,...the following paragraph I find incorrect. "It is scarcely credible today, but in the 1970s young militants did join the SWP because of its

reputation for fighting fascists in the street. SWPer and ANL activist Blair Peach, murdered by the police during an anti-fascist protest in Southall in 1979, is rightly honoured by thousands of anti-fascists as a hero and martyr. Often the SWP's tactics involved substitutionist physical confrontations with the NF and the thousands of cops assembled to defend them."

While the first and last sentence in the paragraph stand, I believe the example of Southall is wrong. What happened in Southall on April 23, 1979 was something quite different.

"In Southall, thousands of local Asian residents shut their shops or walked out of the factories in the early afternoon in response to the fascists' declared intention to hold a meeting in the heart of the area that evening. Five thousand - mainly Asian workers, joined by ANL supporters and others - gathered for a protest demonstration, only to be met by an equal number of truncheon-wielding cops who wasted no time setting about their bloody work..." (*Spartacist Britain* no 12, June 1979)

So, I don't think you can identify the SWP's earlier strategy of substitutionism with the Southall events. What ensued was a cop riot against 5000 plus trade union militants, community members, youth and aged who had come out to protest against the fascists' presence in this Asian community.

Comradely,
Anna Ullman

fold by the SWP and its popular frontist Anti-Nazi League diversions. For a fuller discussion on Southall, we refer our readers to the article "Blair Peach: anti-fascist martyr" (*Workers Hammer* no 98, May/June 1988).

On war criminals ...

Glasgow,

Dear editor,

I can confirm that "the Croatian Ustashe carried out the grisly task of genocide with indescribable brutality", to quote your fine report which deals mainly with the harbouring of Hitler's war criminals in Britain by the post-war Labour govt. [see "Britain harbours Hitler's war criminals", *Workers Hammer*, no 104, February 1989]

In the independent state of Croatia - set up on April 10, 1941 - more than three-quarters of a million Orthodox Christians were slaughtered and 50,000 of these innocent (unarmed) people were slaughtered in Hungary.

I wrote a play about it and not only could I not sell it in the U.K., even Yugoslavia wasn't interested (maybe it didn't meet the party line). Finally I changed it into a film script. If it comes off I'll let you know.

What maddens me is that the Vatican was responsible because it sent a Legate and Pius XII (the Nazi Pope) kept silent about it (as he did vis a vis the Jews). But nobody talks about this aspect of it. Frankly, when a Jewish scholar talks of above being a "Christian problem" he is evading the issue and most Marxists are weak on the subject....

I am no longer a journalist but I still have my investigative skills. So if you have information that Nazis or Croatian rats are in my native city please let me know. And I shall check.

Best books on Croatia are *The Silence of Pius XII* by Carlo Falconi; *The Vatican against Europe* by Edmond Paris, and *The Spy in the Vatican* by Brankou Bokuu. All translated into English.

Paris deals, also, with the role of the Vatican during...1914-18 and it caused me to modify my marxist approach, to some extent.

Best wishes.
Yours sincerely,
P. Kearney

NB: Marxists ignore at their peril the power of organised religion. In my script Tito - one of the few heroes - makes the point about how powerful is the Vatican.■



TROTSKY

The internationalist role of the Red Army

In 1929 when Chiang Kai-Shek sought to seize the Soviet-controlled Chinese Eastern Railroad, Trotsky argued that the railroad should be kept in the hands of the Soviets for the security of the Russian Revolution and also for the development of the Chinese Revolution. In the ensuing debate, Trotsky expanded on

the role the Red Army can play outside the borders of the Soviet Union.

Departing from the class standpoint for the sake of an abstract-nationalist position, the ultralefts necessarily slide away from a revolutionary position into a purely pacifist one. Louzon relates how the Soviet troops captured in their day the Siberian railroad and how later "the Red Army, in conformity with Lenin's anti-imperialist policy, carefully came to a halt at the frontiers of China. There was no attempt to recapture the territories of the Chinese Eastern Railroad" (*Revolution proletarienne*, p. 228). The highest duty of the proletarian revolution, it appears, is to carefully dip its banners before national frontiers. Herein, according to Louzon, is the gist of Lenin's anti-imperialist policy! One blushes with shame to read this philosophy of "revolution in one country." The Red Army halted at the frontier of China because it was not strong enough to cross this frontier and meet the inescapable onslaught of Japanese imperialism. If the Red Army were strong enough to assume such an offensive, it would have been *duty-bound* to launch it. A renunciation by the Red Army of a revolutionary offensive against the forces of imperialism and in the interest of Chinese workers and peasants and of the world proletarian revolution would not have meant the fulfilment of Lenin's policy but a base betrayal of the ABC of Marxism. Wherein lies the misfortune of Louzon and others like him? In this, that he has substituted a national-pacifist policy for the international-revolutionary policy. This has absolutely nothing in common with Lenin....

Against revolutionary "intervention" Louzon quite inappropriately advances the old and uncontested principle: "The emancipation of the working class can be achieved only by the workers themselves." On a national scale? Only within the framework of a single country? Is it permissible for workers in one country to aid the strikers of another? Can they send arms to insurgents? Can they send their army, if they have one? Can they send it either to help the uprising or in order to prepare an uprising, just as strikers send squads to pull out workers in factories that have remained behind?

- "Defense of the Soviet Republic and the Opposition", *Writings of Leon Trotsky* 1929



LENIN

WH replies: Comrade Anna is right that the Southall anti-fascist mobilisation, brutally attacked by the police, was not an example of the SWP's former adventurist forays before it renounced anti-fascist struggle, advocating that socialists "ignore" the fascists. Our point in the article was that the posture of militancy once assumed by the SWP attracted genuine opponents of racism and fascism, including the martyred anti-fascist fighter Blair Peach. Militants saw the SWP as some alternative to Labourite treachery; indeed, it was the Labour government which unleashed the cops against the Southall community. The SWP's earlier militancy did not entail the necessary fight to mobilise the power of the organised workers movement in alliance with the oppressed. Nonetheless, thousands of young anti-fascist fighters were deceived by its activism at the time, only to be delivered into the legalist Labourite

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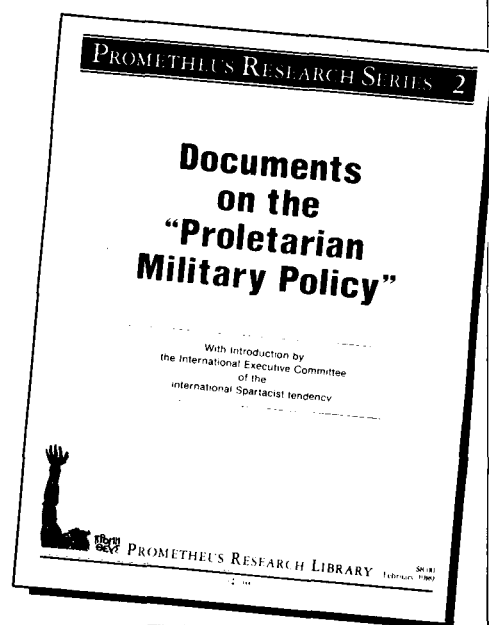
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Afghanistan: Soviet withdrawal and the fake left

"For revolutionary socialists, there is nothing ambiguous about the war in Afghanistan. The Soviet army and its left-nationalist allies are fighting an imperialist-backed counter-revolutionary melange of landlords, money lenders, mullahs, tribal chiefs and bandits committed to serfdom, usury, the bride price, the veil and mass illiteracy. In the face of U.S. imperialism's exploitation of Afghanistan as a pretext for a renewed Cold War offensive (e.g., a massive arms buildup), there is nothing ambiguous either about what is demanded of Trotskyists, who understand that the Soviet state rests on the historic social gains of the October Revolution in spite of the subsequent Stalinist bureaucratic degeneration. The Trotskyist program of unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union was placed squarely on the agenda. Thus, the international Spartacist tendency raised the slogan, 'Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!'"

(Spartacist no 31-32; Summer 1981)

Gorbachev has now completed the treacherous withdrawal of the Soviet Red Army from Afghanistan, creating the potential for a massive blood-bath of Afghan women and leftists. The international Spartacist tendency's forthright support for the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, which opened the possibility of liberation from feudal barbarism to the Afghan peoples and liberation from the veil and bride price to Afghan women, was in stark contrast to the shameful capitulation of the reformist and centrist left to the Western imperialists' anti-Soviet hysterics at the time. Joining the imperialist chorus, most of the fake-Trotskyists demanded the withdrawal of the Soviet troops. The Stalinist Communist Parties split throughout Western Europe into "Eurocommunist" and "tankie" wings under the impact of the Soviet bureaucracy's aberrant act in intervening militarily on the side of social progress and in its own defence in Afghanistan.

Bourgeois public opinion, whipped up especially by the Carter White House, was a major factor in the abasement of the reformists and centrists. "Poor little Afghanistan" under the "Russian jackboot" was the *cause celebre* of this unholiest of alliances from Langley, Virginia to the so-called "United Secretariat of the Fourth International". Now even the bourgeois press has gagged a bit over the spectre of its once-lauded "freedom fighters" slaughtering and mutilating their way into Kabul. The *Times* (4 January) carried the story "Afghan women fear Islamic rule" noting that "In Kabul, under a regime which in the West is regarded as totalitarian and illegitimate, women are flourishing" and quoting a woman who "says she would rather die than be forced back into *purdah*".

What do the fake-lefts say now? To start with the crude Russia-hating third campists of Tony Cliff's Socialist Workers Party (SWP), they parrot the imperialist lie that Afghanistan is "Russia's Vietnam", incredibly refer to the Islamic state that the CIA-backed *mujahedin* seek to create as "staunchly anti-imperialist"(!) and

cheer the victory of those they admit are "somewhere to the right of Khomeini's Iran": "The Mojahedin victory will encourage the opponents of Russian rule everywhere in the USSR and Eastern Europe" (SW, 4 February). In short, the SWP is unashamedly somewhere to the right of Margaret Thatcher. (The SWP's Paul Foot, in his *Daily Mirror* column, is notorious for his article nine years ago "Are we putting beef into Russia's invasion?" which did out-Thatcher Thatcher by whining that inexpensive EEC meat exported to the USSR was finding its way to the Red Army in Afghanistan.)

The SWP's line on Afghanistan is consistent with its support to the Khomeini regime in the bloody Iran-Iraq war; *Socialist Worker* has managed to keep a silence far more deafening than that of the bourgeois press over Khomeini's slaughter of imprisoned leftists in the aftermath of the Gulf cease-fire. The SWP tried to paint Khomeini's war effort as some kind of anti-US imperialist venture —

of the US" they write. It is common knowledge that the imperialist embassies pulled out to sow panic in anticipation of the blood-bath they are so eager to see. They too want to see leftist reformers and "Soviet surrogates" pay the price.

In a crystalline clear example of anti-Sovietism, *Socialist Organiser* (22 February) writes: "Now that the Russians have gone, the question is posed differently. The question now is what attitude we take to a civil war in Afghanistan..." But that has always been the question. SO now says it has a side. It certainly has a conclusion, ie, that the victory of Islamic reaction is certain and "There is little or nothing that socialists in the West can do about it — except understand the unfolding tragedy, and tell ourselves the truth about the why and how of it." While SO is talking to itself, it might ponder what kind of "socialist" refuses to demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the British army from Northern

Soviet war mongering by the NATO imperialists over Afghanistan and its echo among the social democratic and pro-capitalist misleaders of the workers movement internationally.

The USec doesn't deny that the pull-out of the Soviet troops may lead to the victory of imperialist-backed Islamic reactionaries. Indeed, its statement concludes with the following profundity: "If, however, the government proves incapable of surviving the Soviet withdrawal, its fall would anyway be a lesser evil than the Soviet Union getting bogged down indefinitely in Afghanistan. In any event, in the long run, the withdrawal will benefit the development of a mass revolutionary movement in Afghanistan and in its neighboring countries." What unspeakable cynicism! For Mandel & Co the slaughter of Afghan leftists and women, the creation of a hostile, imperialist-backed Islamic state on the southern border of the Soviet Union is a "lesser evil" than combating the Cold War ravings of the imperialists and their labour lieutenants "at home".

What of the "tankies", such as the CPB/*Morning Star* group which resisted the Eurocommunists' enlistment in the anti-Soviet chorus over Afghanistan? Today, they support Gorbachev's withdrawal one hundred and one per cent. In a sickly sweet article by Kate Clark entitled "Home from Afghanistan" the *Morning Star* (15 February) explains that "The situation in Afghanistan in the wake of the Soviet troop withdrawal remains complex." Not really — the situation remains that the forces of social progress in Afghanistan desperately need Soviet military assistance to mop up the mullahs and that it is in the direct interest of the Soviet workers state to provide it. Gorbachev, pursuing "peaceful co-existence" with US imperialism has sacrificed both the Afghan peoples and defence of the USSR. And, following every twist and turn by Gorbachev (as it did with Brezhnev, Khrushchev, and Stalin), the *Morning Star* has hailed this betrayal.

Our slogan "Hail Red Army", raised at the time of the intervention, did then and now continues to provoke opponents of all hues. When Mandel's bloc partners in the American SWP changed their line to calling for the withdrawal of Soviet troops, SWP honcho Jack Barnes singled out the Spartacist slogan which "did make me think about the devastating political logic that could be drawn" by... standing for the extension of the gains of October to backward, mullah-ridden Afghanistan. Our simple statement of fact — that in Afghanistan Marshal Tikhachevsky's tactics apply, ie the "export" of revolution through the military intervention of the Soviet workers state — has been greeted with shrieks of horror from defenders of Afghan "national sovereignty" and the mythical indigenous "Afghan revolution" alike.

The centrists of Workers Power ritually denounce "Hail Red Army!" as if to ward off evil Spartacist spirits. Our line has the virtue of Marxist consistency. This cannot be said of

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Workers Hammer



SL hailed entry of Red Army into Afghanistan, while fake lefts bowed to anti-Sovietism.

despite all the available evidence to the contrary. Khomeini is a living example of the SWP's cry "Neither Washington Nor Moscow". But when the battle lines are actually drawn against US imperialism — ie, in Afghanistan — the SWP is squarely on Washington's side against Moscow.

Much the same line was taken by *Socialist Organiser*, which admits that "Socialists do not welcome the coming to power of Islamic reaction in Kabul." These upholders of the right to self-determination for the marauding mullah reactionaries against the Red Army provide cold comfort for the Afghan peoples, whom *Socialist Organiser* has decided "will pay the price" (SO, 2 February). SO also absurdly tries to deny the links between the *mujahedin* and the Western imperialists on the grounds that the American embassy pulled out! "So much for the theory of some on the left that the Mojahedin are puppets

Ireland — lest there be a blood-bath — while supporting "those fighting the Russian occupation [who] were always backward-looking and reactionary".

It's not surprising that social democrats and "third campists" would rally to imperialist anti-Sovietism. For Trotskyists, however, support to the Soviet army in Afghanistan should have been an elementary political reflex. But vociferous in demanding the withdrawal of the Red Army from Afghanistan was the misnamed United Secretariat (USec), the fake-Trotskyist rotten bloc. In its 21 March 1988 statement, the USec supports withdrawal and denounces the Soviet intervention — not least because "US imperialism and its European allies have gained considerable political advantage from the vast revulsion of world public opinion, including in the workers' movement, against the Soviet war in Afghanistan." "World public opinion" here refers to the anti-

What row over "Kristallnacht" speech shows

Dangerous rise of German nationalism

The following article is translated from Spartakist no 60, February/March 1989, newspaper of the *Trotzistische Liga Deutschlands*.

On the eve of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the West German state, its imperialist rulers want to throw their weight around. The German bourgeoisie is far from satisfied with the enormous wealth it is raking in through trade with West Europe and the gradual economic penetration of the East. Using the strong D-mark to put the arm on Washington over economic policy, Bonn also seeks to get its hands on nuclear weapons in the process of modernising NATO's short-range nuclear missiles (while setting up a Franco/German brigade outside the NATO command). But if West German imperialism is no longer an "economic giant and political dwarf" (as Willy Brandt once said), its full emergence as a world power is blocked by a whole series of barriers.

In recent years, West Germany under Christian Democratic (CDU) chancellor Helmut Kohl has tried hard to gain international stature, yet repeatedly these attempts have backfired. Kohl got a slap in the face when he tried to crash the 40th anniversary celebration of the Western Allies' victory over Nazi Germany in World War II, held at the site of the Normandy invasion. To



Der Spiegel

Former speaker of West German parliament, Philipp Jenninger.

compensate for this rebuff, Kohl twisted Reagan's arm to visit the cemetery at Bitburg in 1985, where in the service of the anti-Soviet Cold War they saluted the SS Division "Das Reich". The obscene Bitburg visit was internationally condemned as a boot in the face of Jewish survivors of the Holocaust and a mockery of the memory of millions of Jews murdered in Nazi death camps.

So last November, the Kohl regime sought to recoup after the Bitburg fiasco by holding a commemoration of the 50th anniversary of *Reichspogromnacht* – the night in 1938 when the Nazis unleashed a pogrom against

the Jewish population throughout the Reich, burning synagogues and Jewish homes and businesses to the ground and subsequently deporting 30,000 Jews to the deadly concentration camps. But the speech by the CDU chairman of the West German parliament, Philipp Jenninger, produced an uproar across the political spectrum, from the Greens and Social Democrats (SPD) to Free Democrats (FDP) and Christian Democrats. Jenninger was reproached for "tastelessness", accused of being an anti-Semite and of "marching through history with mental jackboots".

Yet this was not a crypto-Nazi speech, and the protests as much as the speech are an expression of a re-nascent but frustrated German nationalism. They railed at Jenninger's graphic account of Nazi crimes and Hitler's popularity at the time. But his real crime in their eyes was to say publicly what the Thyssens and Krupps say privately, expressing fascination with the "victories" of the Third Reich. For Jenninger it is necessary to talk openly about Auschwitz in order to smooth the way for the German bourgeoisie's great-power ambitions, promising a German imperialism without genocide. Jenninger declares, "Next time, it's Mr Nice Guy". But in the rest of the world, many expect the opposite.

West Germany today is too strong to be simply the loyal junior partner of American imperialism in Europe. But it is not strong enough to impose its will on Europe, West or East. For the rest of the world, especially Germany's most immediate neighbours, the memory of the tens of millions slaughtered in Hitler's onslaught is vividly alive to this day. Even the Reaganists evoked the Auschwitz gas chambers to force Kohl to eat crow over an alleged chemical weapons plant built for Qaddafi. In order to present a "new face" to all

those who remember the last time German imperialism ravished Europe, West Germany's rulers must indeed attempt to "master" the Nazi chapter of German history. But once again they failed, as the Jenninger fiasco no less than Bitburg reflects the dilemma of the German ruling class facing its past.

The question of the past is also the question of the future, as racism and frustrated revanchism feed upon each other, providing fertile soil for fascism. The CDU is being outflanked on its right, its electoral base eroded by fascist organisations like the Republikaner, led by former Waffen SS officer Schonhuber, with a dramatic showing in the Cold War "frontline city" of West Berlin under the slogan "Germany first". The neo-Nazi Deutsche Volksunion, financed by the Oetker trust, has sent out 28 million Bundespost-subsidised "Drecksachen" (printed filth), to every household in the country, with the slogan "First Germany, then Europe". The sinister growth of the Nazis and the appearance of violent skinhead gangs have

produced a polarisation in West German society, posing ever more sharply the need to mobilise the power of the industrial working class, including its strategic immigrant component, to crush these scum.

GREEN, RED & BLACK UPROAR IN THE BUNDESTAG

After the obscene spectacle of Bitburg, West German imperialism faces increasing tension between the drive to "morally rearm" its population for aggressive big-power politics and imperialist adventures and its diplomatic need to peddle the myth of a "new", "peace-loving" Reich (complete with its own nationalist "peace" movement). Chancellor Kohl has advertised himself as the first leader of the post-war generation, speaking of the "blessing of being born late": he and his peers feel they have been compelled to stand in the corner long enough for the crimes of their fathers. But the Bonn politicians' attempt to dissipate the shadow of the Nazi past cast by Bitburg with a commemor-

Peter Thomann

West German Bundeswehr reintroduces Prussian tradition of public swearing-in of soldiers on 25th anniversary of NATO.



Nazi "Kristallnacht" pogrom, 1938: Baden-Baden synagogue set aflame by stormtroopers.

Der Spiegel

ation on the anniversary of the "Kristallnacht" pogroms showed that the German bourgeoisie is still encumbered with its history at every step.

From the outset, Kohl was dogged by failure. Thus the majority of the governing body of the Frankfurt Jewish community voted against the appearance of the federal chancellor in the West End synagogue on 9 November. When Kohl spoke anyway, he was interrupted by heckling of "Bitburg!" and "You're lying!" and many walked out. Outside the Frankfurt Opera house where Kohl attended a memorial meeting that same day, there was a protest joined by supporters of the *Trotzkistische Liga Deutschlands*, German section of the international Spartacist tendency, carrying signs with the slogans "Workers Revolution Will Avenge Victims of the Holocaust!" and "Bitburg: Kohl in the Footsteps of the SS".

The following day, at a "commemorative hour" in the Bundestag, Speaker Jenninger wanted to deliver a major address. But by the time he finished, over 50 delegates from the Greens, SPD, FDP and some CDUers — over one-third of those present — had walked out of the room in protest. Jutta Oesterle-Schwerin, a Green Bundestag member of Israeli origin, accused Jenninger of making Hitler into a great politician and demonstrating "that anti-Semitism is present in the hearts of many members of this house". Former Social Democratic chancellor Willy Brandt said it was a "dark day in German postwar history". SPD chairman Vogel complained about "stunning lack of sensitivity", and FDP deputy Luder called the speech "unbearable". That night the CDU/CSU had Jenninger resign.

Fearing embarrassment abroad, the governing Christian Democrat/Free Democrat coalition was full of consternation. Even big-time swindler Count Otto von Lambsdorf (convicted in the Flick scandal and now back as FDP chief) said he had "the im-



Left: Bitburg, 1985 — Kohl and Reagan in obscene salute to Nazi SS war dead. Right: German Trotskyists on anniversary of 1938 pogrom say "Workers revolution will avenge victims of Holocaust".

ferring to "Jewish fellow citizens". But from the start Jenninger slipped into the racist distinction between "the Jews" and "us Germans". Federal president Weizsacker, in his celebrated 1985 speech demolished the "vital lie of postwar Germany" (*Der Spiegel*) that Germans "didn't know" about the Holocaust. But for him as well as Kohl and Jenninger, *German Jews* simply don't and didn't exist, an especially noxious conception in light of the over half a million who had lived in Germany before Hitler's "final solution".

But Jenninger's speech could hardly be misunderstood as an apology for fascism. At the beginning of his talk he stated clearly that in the 1938 pogroms "the state made itself the organiser of the crime". The objections really came after he set out to explain why "the population was largely passive" which "corresponded to the attitude towards anti-Jewish actions and measures in previous years". It became pandemonium when he asked, speaking in the voice of "very many Germans" who thought, "And as far as the Jews were concerned: had they not in the past presumed to a role, as it was said then, to which they had no right? Must

procession" during the early years in power. He listed: "Reincorporating the Saar, reintroducing general conscription, massive rearmament, concluding the German-British fleet agreement, occupation of the Rhineland, the Olympic Summer Games in Berlin, the 'Anschluss' [annexation] of Austria and the 'Greater German Empire' and finally, only a few weeks before the November pogroms, the Munich Agreement, the breaking up of Czechoslovakia — the Versailles treaty was really now only a piece of paper and the German Reich had suddenly become the hegemonic power of the old Continent."

Jenninger's statement, "With the attack on the Soviet Union the possibility arose of combining the two: conquest of 'Lebensraum' in the East and the 'destruction of the Jewish race in Europe'," was the policy not only of "madman Hitler". General-Oberst von Fritsch, fired by Hitler as army chief of staff in 1938, had the same programme. And the *Drang nach Osten* (drive to the East) was not born with the writing of *Mein Kampf*: it is shared by all the representatives of German imperialism today, from the Ruhr industrialists to the social-patriotic SPD. And when Jenninger remarked, "The years from 1933 to 1938 are, even looking back from a distance and knowing what came next, still today an object of fascination...almost without parallel in history", he was expressing real admiration. So does much of his audience — in private.

Jenninger quoted at length Hitler's infamous speech in 1943 which extolled participation in the extermination of the Jews as vital to building Nazi character. But as the Reichsführer SS said of these hideous crimes in his speech, "still we will never speak about that in public". Was Jenninger's crime to have said it at all? Historian Gordon Craig concluded, in a recent essay titled "Facing Up to the Nazis", that "It is quite possible that the reaction to Jenninger's speech was a sign that some at least of the parliamentarians are becoming fed up with being lectured about their country's past" (*New York Review of Books*, 2 February).

WHOSE "COLLECTIVE GUILT"?

Jenninger's speech, like the *Historikerdebatte* (historians debate) of the last couple years, "is really about the future", as the *Guardian* put it. He "did not minimise Auschwitz, he did not explain genocide with Bolshevism, but named German reasons", noted *Die Zeit*. It pointed out that both Jenninger and Kohl in their "Pogromnacht" speeches "turned away" from the "revisionist" historians and apologists for fascism like West Berlin professor Ernst Nolte, for whom the Nazis' genocide of the Jews only imitated the "Asiatic deed" of the Bolsheviks. While the bulk of

the German bourgeoisie would prefer silence, and Nolte & Co attempt to deny or "relativise" Nazi crimes, Jenninger called this "senseless.... Our past will not rest, nor will it disappear".

Jenninger's recipe for absolution: "to keep memory alive and to accept the past as part of our identity as Germans — this alone promises to us the elders as well as to the young deliverance from the burden of history." In a later speech, certainly not for international consumption, delivered to the clerical-reactionary "Catholic Student Union Arminia", he declared, "Some want the Germans to stand for all time in the position of the accused. But we must emerge from this condition" (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 17-18 December 1988). Jenninger's line is that while all Germans share responsibility for history, "everyone must answer...the question of guilt himself": ie, collective "responsibility" without guilt.

Nazi rule in Germany was supported by a large part of the population, and that was different from fascist Italy or imperial Japan. The Italian masses were passively, then actively hostile to Mussolini's regime. Mussolini was killed by Italian partisans and his corpse publicly exposed and desecrated in Milan. In Germany the defeat of the proletariat by the Nazis was not merely an episode, but a world-historic defeat. As Claudio Magnani of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat summarises aptly: "... from the point of view of the revolutionary class consciousness of the German proletariat, it has not yet recovered from this defeat, 55 years after the moment in which Hitler took power" ("The Historical Balance Sheet of the Fourth International", *Bulletin in Defense of Marxism*, December 1988).

As a bourgeois nationalist, Jenninger, to paraphrase Kaiser Wilhelm on the outbreak of World War I, sees "no parties" or classes, "only Germans"...and only Germans who supported Hitler and the Holocaust. What the bourgeoisie does not say is that the German working class had to be beheaded and smashed as a precondition for the Nazi "final solution". In 1918-19, it used Social Democracy to drown the revolution in blood, assassinating Liebknecht and Luxembourg. What was lacking then was a formed Communist party. In 1923, the KPD let the most significant revolutionary opportunity that offered itself to German Communism pass by for lack of a determined party leadership.

The petty bourgeoisie, driven mad by economic crisis, shifted their hopes for salvation from the powerful but indecisively led proletariat to the "party of white-hot reaction", in Trotsky's vivid phrase. The Krupps and Flicks threw their millions be-

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Dietz Verlag Berlin

1919 Spartacus uprising (above) crushed by Social Democrats in service of capitalist reaction.

pression of a justification or partial justification of the worst events in modern German history". As in a low-grade comedy, suddenly the CDU and FDP appear in the clothes of committed anti-fascists. As for the Social Democrats, didn't they work willingly with old Nazis like Kiesinger, Carstens and Lubke during the time of "Grand Coalition" which first brought the SPD into office? The Greens, who used to count in their parliamentary fraction WW II Eastern Front general Bastian, called for Jenninger's resignation to restore the image of the successor state to the Third Reich.

Both Jenninger and Kohl in his West End synagogue speech were minding their manners, carefully using the term "Reichspogromnacht" instead of the Nazis' "Kristallnacht", and re-

they not finally, for once, accept restrictions? Had they perhaps even deserved being put in their place?"

This description of the prevailing anti-Semitism in Hitler's Germany was taken as the corpus delicti proving Jenninger to be an anti-Semite. But whatever his problems in delivery and whatever his "real views", he did not give a crypto-Nazi speech. No Nazi would have quoted, as he did, the simultaneously moving and horrifying eyewitness account of an SS Einsatzgruppe carrying out a mass execution.

But then the Bundestag Speaker went way beyond the accepted ritual of official anti-Nazism. What the SPD described as Jenninger's "stunning lack of sensitivity" was when he spoke of "Hitler's political victory

Afghanistan...

(Continued from page 1)

formed the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. The PDPA was a unique phenomenon in Afghanistan: a secular party not based on any tribal or ethnic group. It claimed adherence to Marxism-Leninism, and its structure was modelled after Stalin's bureaucratized Communist Party. However, its programme was limited to moderate reforms to be carried out by a government of "workers, farmers, enlightened and progressive intellectuals, craftsmen, the petit bourgeoisie and national capitalists" (cited in Raja Anwar, *The Tragedy of Afghanistan* [1988]).

Labelled "Communist" by their opponents, the PDPA cadre were in fact modernising petty-bourgeois nationalists more akin to Kemal Ataturk's Young Turks than to Lenin's Bolsheviks. The PDPA established three bases of support: the country's small urban intelligentsia (eg school-teachers), students, and military officers (many of whom were trained in the Soviet Union). Almost immediately the party split into two factions, the Khalq (Masses) and Parcham (Banner). When Daud Khan ousted the king in 1973, Parcham leaders served as his advisers, while Khalq suggested "a government composed of a 'United Front' including the PDPA".

In April 1978 the Daud regime, prodded by the Western powers and the shah of Iran, moved to suppress the PDPA, arresting its principal leaders on charges of treason. But the party's supporters in the military effectively fought back and toppled Daud. The so-called "Saur Revolution" was in fact a left-wing military coup with considerable support among the urbanised population.

The PDPA found itself ruling a population of 15 million people, overwhelmingly rural and scattered in isolated river valleys. On the local level tribal chiefs shared power and land with some 300,000 Islamic mullahs, who made up a privileged land-owning caste. Taking the country as a whole, there was about one industrial worker for every eight mullahs!



Smolan/Contact

Kabul parade greets Soviet troops arriving to aid left-nationalist PDPA regime, 1980.

The peasants were totally in thrall to the khans, who controlled the sources of credit, seed, fertiliser and, in this arid land, even water. Forget proletarian revolution – Afghanistan could not even sustain the kind of widespread peasant revolt experienced in medieval France, Russia and China.

Thus when the PDPA government attempted to institute a programme of minimal democratic measures – land reform, elimination of the bride price for women, universal education for both sexes – it instantly outpaced the social forces to sustain them. The khans and mullahs, driven into a frenzy by such measures as teaching young girls to read, launched a reactionary *jihād* and began slaughtering teachers and PDPA activists.

The growing revolt received immediate support from the Pakistani regime of military dictator Zia ul-Haq, acting as quartermaster for the United States. Zia was continuing the policy of his predecessor, Zulfi-

kar Ali Bhutto, who had started arming the ultra-fundamentalist Islamic Party of Gulbaddin Hekmatyar in the early 1970s. The aim of the Pakistani ruling class (led now by Bhutto's daughter, after Zia's death last August) is the creation of a weak Islamic client state to its north.

At the same time, the PDPA

PDC: for internationalist military support to Afghan government!

We reprint below a letter from the Partisan Defense Committee (PDC – a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal defence organisation in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League/US) to the government of Afghanistan, offering concrete support in the struggle against the murderous reactionary mujahedin. The letter proposes organisation of an international brigade to assist in defending the Afghan peoples against the CIA's feudalistic terrorists. When we spoke with representatives of the Afghan government about the letter, they thanked us for this initiative while indicating that they believe such a measure is not necessary to defend the country at this time.

7 February 1989

To: Ambassador of the Republic of Afghanistan

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

With the withdrawal of the Soviet Army now completed, we join with

you in fearing that elementary social progress is in grave danger in Afghanistan. The right of women to read, freedom from the veil, freedom from the tyranny of the mullahs and the landlords, the introduction of medical care and the right of all to an education – we are compelled to offer our aid before all this is drowned in blood. The Partisan Defense Committee hereby makes the urgent offer to organize an international brigade to fight to the death in defense of these rights in Afghanistan. Volunteers would of course operate under your control and direction.

The Partisan Defense Committee is a class-struggle defense organization supported by militant Marxists world-wide, many associated with the international Spartacist tendency.

In making this offer, we pledge to handle all aspects of agitation, propaganda and recruitment necessary to amass forces and publicize the effort. These forces would be recruited internationally from

among disaffected progressive youth, leftist militants, liberation fighters, and decent people who wish to prevent the destruction of any vestige of human progress achieved through struggle. We further pledge to provide transport to an appropriate transit point. International fighters would be expected to acquire equipment when in place.

From the Afghan government we would need air fare from a transit point to Kabul and, in the field, food and military direction.

Capitalist governments which hypocritically condemned the presence of the Red Army in Afghanistan are fleeing Kabul, aghast at the prospect of a full-scale civil war reaching that city. They abandon their embassies now in the hopes of returning after the victory of the feudalist mujahedin. This must not happen!

We hope most fervently that you will accept this offer of assistance proffered with a keen sense of internationalist duty. Please respond as soon as possible.

regime was ripping itself apart through murderous factionalism and cliquism. Khalq leader Noor Mohammed Taraki was killed by his former protege Habibullah Amin. Amin, in turn, was assassinated in the course of the Soviet intervention in December 1979 which installed Babrak Karmal, leader of the Parcham faction. Only five of the party leaders in April 1978 escaped being killed, imprisoned or exiled by their "comrades" over the next few years. An ever smaller group of modernising intellectuals was being pitted against a mass reactionary revolt.

It was only the Soviet military intervention of December 1979 which opened the road to the liberation of the Afghan toiling masses. Although conducted half-heartedly, sending troops into Afghanistan was the one unambiguously decent and progressive act of the corrupt and conservative Brezhnev regime, going against the grain of the reactionary Stalinist dogma of "socialism in one country".

We wrote at the time:

"There can be no question that for revolutionaries our side in this conflict is with the Red Army. In fact, although uncalled for militarily, a natural response on the part of the world's young leftists would be an enthusiastic desire to join an international brigade to fight the reactionary CIA-connected rebels."

– "Hail Red Army!" *Spartacist* no 27-28, Winter 1979-80

We further raised the demand to extend the social gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples.

The Western press hoped and speculated that the Soviet troops, especially those from the traditionally Islamic regions of Central Asia, would become infected with the "liberating" message of the *mujahedin*. But Soviet soldiers sent into battle were told they were fulfilling their duty towards their Afghan brothers, and their experiences in the country convinced them of it. Most were appalled at the backwardness, poverty

and hideous oppression they witnessed in a country so close to home. One Soviet Tadzhi soldier told a Western reporter in the early days of the war that "most of them were glad to go to help – it's a very backward country and we are neighbors, after all" (*New York Times*, 11 April 1980).

While Soviet soldiers in Afghanistan were generally proud to do their internationalist duty, the Kremlin bureaucracy did not send them there out of internationalist commitment. As we wrote a few months later:

"Of course, the conservative bureaucrats in the Kremlin did not send 100,000 troops into Afghanistan to effect a social revolution, but simply to make secure an unstable, strategically placed client state.... It is possible the Kremlin could do a deal with the imperialists to withdraw, for example, in return for NATO's reversing its decision to deploy hundreds of new nuclear missiles in West Europe. That would be a real counterrevolutionary crime against the Afghan peoples."

– "Afghanistan and the Left: The Russian Question Point Blank", *Spartacist* no 29, Summer 1980

IMPERIALIST HUE AND CRY OVER AFGHAN "SELF-DETERMINATION"

For almost a decade the demand for Soviet troops out of Afghanistan has united the far right, liberals, social democrats and most self-styled radicals. The Democratic Carter administration used the Soviet intervention to officially declare Cold War II. Under Reagan, Congressional Democrats seized upon the issue of Afghanistan to demonstrate their anti-Communist credentials. Chary of Reagan's bellicose posture in Central America, where the US risked being drawn into another losing military adventure like Vietnam, liberal Democrats were more than willing to pour money into Afghanistan, where US proxies were



Sobolev/TASS



Planeta Publishers

Liberation from the veil and literacy for women are at stake in Afghan war. Left: young girls on their way to school. Right: at Kabul University over half the students are women.

killing Russians without risking a single American life. In 1985 the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives tripled Reagan's request for aid to the Afghan contras.

Just as support for the Afghan "freedom fighters" has united liberal Democrats with Reaganites, so it has united most of the American and West European left — social democrats, Eurocommunists, ex-New Left Maoists, "Third Campists" — with their imperialist rulers. Afghanistan and Polish Solidarnosc, the only "union" Ronald Reagan loved, have been two central issues defining which side you're on in Cold War II. Thus the hard pro-Moscow factions in the Eurocommunist parties were variously dubbed *afganos* (Spain), *kabulisti* (Italy) and "tankies" (Britain).

An Iranian woman leftist, Val Moghadam, drawing on the bitter experience of Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution", expresses consternation that:

"Left-wing support for the Mujahedeen has been especially strong in Europe, where activists from London to Stockholm have defended the putative national liberation struggle. One of the surprising features of this support has been the total neglect of the meaning of national liberation under an Islamic rubric for Afghan women. Since the Saur revolution (April 1978), and to some degree even prior to it, women have made incremental but important gains in education, employment and political participation. Indeed, it was precisely the reform programs launched by the PDPA government that provoked reaction....

"By all accounts and indications a Mujahedeen-ruled Afghanistan would be more intolerant and repressive than the Islamic Republic of Iran and would work fervently to undo the measures taken toward women's equality."

— *Against the Current*,
November/December 1988

Moghadam asks how it is possible for leftists, including self-styled radical feminists, to support such a reactionary and barbaric movement. Her answer: "It can only be a misguided Third Worldism and fascination with any and all guerrilla warfare that prevents leftists from discerning reactionary movements." This explanation is wide of the mark. Practically no Western leftists support the guerrillas of the Nicaraguan contras or Jonas Savimbi's UNITA in Angola. Moreover, some leftists (eg, Tariq Ali) who joined the imperialist chorus for Soviet troops out initially supported the PDPA against the *mujahedin* revolt before the Soviet intervention.

Western leftist support for Washington's Afghan cutthroats (and also for Polish Solidarnosc) expresses

anti-Soviet prejudices and the elevation of national independence as the highest political principle. Since 1917 when the Russian Revolution toppled capitalism in one-sixth of the globe, the imperialists' central aim has been to reverse the gains of October and restore capitalist exploitation in this bastion of workers power. That is why the entire apparatus of political indoctrination in the United States and West Europe is geared to producing hatred and fear of the Soviet Union, a bureaucratically degenerated workers state.

The standard line of Western imperialism and its left camp followers is that "Russia violated Afghan national self-determination". This charge doesn't even hold up on its own terms. Afghanistan is not a nation but a feudal-derived state composed of a mosaic of nationalities, ethnic and tribal groupings. Most of the rural population has never lived under the effective control of any central state power, but identifies exclusively with particular ethnic, tribal or linguistic groupings. In Afghanistan the term "Afghan" refers only to the Pushtuns, not to the Hazaras, Tadjiks and other peoples.

Should the *mujahedin* topple the Kabul nationalist government, the two-sided civil war could well become a war of all against all. Already, Shi'ite groups are refusing to accept Sunni domination, and the rival *mujahedin* groups are threatening to kill one another. We can only hope they do so quickly and massively. Yet even if the country were a homogeneous nation, communists would

support the Soviet Union's armed intervention. All talk of Afghan "national sovereignty" is but a cover to defend the class and caste privileges of the khans, mullahs, landlords and moneylenders. For Marxists, the furthering of social revolution, including the defence of the USSR against capitalist imperialism, stands higher than the bourgeois-democratic right of national self-determination.

RUSSIA'S VIETNAM?

Ever since the 1979 Soviet intervention, the Western media has labelled Afghanistan "Russia's Vietnam", an insidious lie now taken up for its own reasons by the Gorbachev regime. In Vietnam the US fought a genocidal war to stop a social revolution, and was defeated on the battlefield. The Soviet army fought to stop counterrevolution which would turn back the clock by centuries, but never fought to win. From the outset the Kremlin tops kept open the option of withdrawal as a bargaining chip in dealing with Western imperialism. The US sent 500,000 troops halfway around the world to Vietnam. The Soviet leaders sent just 100,000 troops across the border into Afghanistan.

Nonetheless, by 1984 the Soviet and PDPA forces had practically won the war. The CIA's "holy warriors" were shattered and demoralised. And the government's modest social reforms, although scaled back from even the moderate programme first offered by the PDPA, were winning

support in the countryside. One rebel leader stated: "The war has been deadlocked up until now, but we are beginning to lose the population.... If this continues, we may eventually lose the war" (*Chicago Tribune*, 16 November 1984).

Seeking to turn the tide, in early 1986 the US began supplying the *mujahedin* with state-of-the-art Stinger missiles. Soon these shoulder-fired rockets were bringing down scores of Soviet and Afghan aircraft, including civilian airplanes. Soviet military aircraft were so crucial to the Afghan war only because the Kremlin was willing to commit but a small fraction of its five-million-strong armed forces. Even so, the Russians could have easily deployed available technology to defeat the "Stinger war", but they did not. And no serious effort was made to interdict the flow of US-supplied weapons from Pakistan.

When Gorbachev came to power in 1985, he faced economic stagnation aggravated by the intensified military pressure from Reagan's America. His domestic programme of market-oriented reforms (*perestroika*) was linked to a foreign policy of global appeasement. Gorbachev's most dramatic foreign policy initiative was to cut and run from Afghanistan.

To help set this up, the Kremlin strong-armed the PDPA regime into calling for "national reconciliation", ie, a coalition government with sections of the *mujahedin*. In 1986 Afghan leader Karmal was dumped, apparently because he resisted the new turn. He was replaced by Najibullah, who at the beginning of 1987 declared a unilateral cease-fire while further scaling back progressive social reforms so as not to affront Islamic tradition. Calling for a coalition of the PDPA and *mujahedin* is somewhat like calling in the 1930s for a coalition of Nazis and Jewish leftists. The *mujahedin* want not only to kill every leftist in Afghanistan but to exterminate the entire educated urban population, whom they regard as infidels.

The Gorbachev regime appears willing to accept such a blood-bath if it is necessary to appease the Western powers. A historical parallel is Stalin's pulling the Red Army out of northern Iran in 1946, abandoning the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan under the Cold War pressure of US imperialism. There followed a massacre of pro-Soviet Iranian leftists at the hands of the shah.

To prepare the Soviet people for the abandonment of Afghanistan, Kremlin officials and the Soviet media are parroting the imperialist lie that the Afghan intervention was wrong, that the lives of the 15,000 Soviet soldiers killed there

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Downing/Newsweek

Bush and Reagan meet with Gorbachev last December. Kremlin leader pulls Soviet troops out of Afghanistan to appease US imperialism.



Nickel/Isberg/Time

British "justice" means frame-ups, "shoot-to-kill"

Free the Guildford Four

It is now fourteen years since Carole Richardson, Patrick Armstrong, Paul Hill and Gerard Conlon were sentenced to life imprisonment, convicted in a vicious, transparent police frame-up for the October 1974 Guildford pub bombings in which six people were killed. On the sole basis of "confessions" beaten out of them in police cells and later retracted in court, three young Irishmen and an English woman have seen their lives irrevocably destroyed by an act of naked, vindictive state repression aimed at stifling all opposition to British imperialism's bloody crimes in Northern Ireland. The conviction of the Guildford Four was followed shortly afterwards by the arrest and imprisonment of Anne Maguire and her entire family on charges of "possessing explosives". The case of the Maguire Seven was a direct outgrowth of the police "investigation" of the Guildford bombings.

Now reflecting the concern of certain circles within the bourgeoisie at the depth of cynicism on both sides of the Irish Sea towards British "justice", Home Secretary Douglas Hurd has announced a re-opening of the Guildford Four case. But as the fate of the Birmingham Six appeal last year demonstrates, the British state

is determined to silence those who would question its "right" to frame and kill. British imperialism's idea of "justice" was exemplified by the cold-blooded murder of three unarmed IRA volunteers in Gibraltar.

In the evening of 5 October 1974, as part of an extensive, indiscriminate bombing campaign in England, an "active service unit" of the Provisional IRA planted bombs in two public houses in Guildford, Surrey. Six people died and 35 were injured when explosions ripped through the Horse and Groom and the Seven Stars pubs - popular drinking haunts of the British military personnel stationed in the town. The terrorist "armed struggle" strategy pursued by the IRA and other Irish Republican groups reflects their petty-bourgeois nationalist programme, and is counterposed to the revolutionary mobilisation of the working class. We defend the victims of imperialist repression and recognise terrorists acts directed against the imperialist armed forces and its spokesmen like Airey Neave or Lord Mountbatten are not crimes from the standpoint of the working class. By contrast, indiscriminate actions such as the La Mon restaurant and Guildford and Birmingham pub bombings are indefensible.

Like the Birmingham Six, the Guildford Four were framed up for a crime of which they are innocent. Free the Guildford Four now!

With anti-Irish hysteria at fever pitch, particularly in the wake of the Birmingham bombings a month later, the Wilson Labour government introduced draconian legislation codified in the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) designed to permit unbridled repression against Republican supporters and terrorise the Irish population in Britain. When Paul Hill was arrested on 28 November and charged with the Guildford bombings and a bombing in Woolwich, the outcome was already a foregone conclusion. Paddy Armstrong, his girlfriend Carole Richardson and Gerry Conlon were arrested shortly afterwards. At that point the familiar story of frame-up began.

Carole Richardson, a nervous 17-year-old addicted to drugs, was held incommunicado and then given an injection of Pethidine, a powerful narcotic used for anaesthesia just 20 minutes before she confessed to placing one bomb under a chair in the Horse and Groom. Five weeks after the bombings a Newcastle man, Frank Johnson walked into a police station to give a statement providing

an ironcast alibi for Carole Richardson. Johnson found himself arrested and charged with murder until he was willing to admit that his alibi was fiction. In court the prosecution alleged that although Richardson had spent the evening of 5 October at a rock concert with her friends Lisa Astin and Frank Johnson, she still had time to travel to Guildford, plant the bombs and return to London to concoct an alibi. Gerry Conlon spent the evening at his London hostel. Five witnesses later came forward to corroborate his story - their evidence was never heard by the court.

Most importantly, members of the IRA unit responsible for the Guildford bombings were captured by police following the siege at Balcombe Street in London in December 1975. They declared at their trial a month later that they had also carried out the Guildford pub bombings and the bombing in Woolwich. They gave information that could be known only to those who had carried out the bombings and declared that the Guildford Four were innocent. The Guildford Four were granted an "appeal" but the appeal judges declared that while the Balcombe Street unit may well have participated in the Guild-

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Afghanistan and the left...

(Continued from page 3)

Workers Power which "suspended" the call for Soviet withdrawal while condemning the Soviet intervention as "counterrevolutionary" and in the same breath supporting "Soviet and Afghan troops against the pro-imperialist rebels". As we suggested earlier: "with this 'line' and their schizophrenic but marked Stalinophobic proclivities, WP might denounce the Soviets for pulling out, after denouncing them for going in" (*Workers Hammer* no 95, February 1988). And that is just what they have done. The epitome of confused, centrist nonsense, Workers Power's contortions over Afghanistan bear the marks of other, less contradictory, anti-Soviet lines indicating the only partial break WP made with Cliffite "third campism".

Over Afghanistan, Workers Power adopted a formal line change on the Soviet Union, ostensibly taking up the orthodox Trotskyist defence of the USSR and refraining from joining the imperialist chorus demanding Soviet withdrawal. But on the other central defining question of Cold War II - Poland - WP was part of the whole swamp in supporting counter-revolutionary Solidarnosc. In Iran, WP similarly joined the fake-left in enthusing over Khomeini's Islamic "revolution", labelling our communist call "Down with the shah! Down with the mullahs! Workers to power!" as sectarian, if not worse. As we reported in our last issue, WP's rotten bloc with mullah-lovers and its own Stalinophobia recently led it to boycott a united-front defence of the pro-Moscow Tudeh party and other Iranian leftists facing wholesale an-

nihilation by the Khomeini regime.

The *Leninist* grouping, which defended the Soviet intervention at the time with qualifications and now opposes the withdrawal, also takes issue with "Hail Red Army!" In its 17 February issue, *Leninist* polemicalises with those "elements who hailed the Soviet intervention", proceeding to single out the Spartacist League and *Leninist's* former comrades, the lickspittle pro-Moscow Stalinists of the New Communist Party (NCP). The NCP, which indeed follows "every turn and twist of Soviet policy" and is now organising "solidarity" events to pressure the imperialists to adhere to the Geneva accords and stop funding the Afghan contras, is obviously far from our Trotskyist programme. *Leninist*, meanwhile, wouldn't "hail the Red Army" because it clings to the myth of an "Afghan revolution" which established a proletarian dictatorship under PDPA leader Hafizullah Amin. Amin was overthrown and killed in the course of the Soviet intervention; now *Leninist* says there is a "treacherous logic" to the removal of Amin and Gorbachev's withdrawal.

Profoundly disoriented by Gorbachev's *glasnost* and his sacrifice of Afghanistan on the altar of "peaceful coexistence", *Leninist* ducks the central question posed by the Red Army's intervention - defence of the Soviet Union against imperialism - and denies that this intervention could have imposed a social transformation on Afghanistan. While seeing in the Red Army's intervention the possibility of extending the gains of October, we also warned at the time that the Kremlin bureaucrats could abandon Afghanistan as part of a deal with imperialism. But the confused left Stalinists of *Leninist* have concluded that Gorbachev represents some qualitative change in the Soviet Union rather than recognising his treachery

in Afghanistan as a typical Stalinist act in the service of "socialism in one country".

As revolutionary Trotskyists, we understand the *contradictory* character of the Stalinist bureaucracy. It is a parasitic caste which rests atop the gains of the October Revolution, dependent for its existence on the workers state, but seeking to maintain its privileges through "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. Thus the same corrupt Brezhnev bureaucracy that drank toasts to "détente" with Nixon as US imperialism saturation-bombed North Vietnam, a few years later sent its troops into Afghanistan. The entry of the Soviet troops, though hardly motivated by proletarian internationalism, nonetheless opened the road to social revolution in Afghanistan. We hailed the *military* intervention of the Red Army in spite of our fundamental *political* differences with both the Stalinist bureaucracy and the petty-bourgeois nationalist PDPA. Among

other things, *Leninist* confuses political and military support. Correctly seeing that Gorbachev is politically betraying in Afghanistan, *Leninist* is flirting with the false and dangerous perspective that Gorbachev is "restoring capitalism" to the USSR.

We continue to fight for the military victory of the PDPA against the mullah cutthroats. The Partisan Defense Committee's offer to the Afghan government to organise an international brigade to fight (see page 6) was made in this internationalist spirit. A victory against the mullahs in Afghanistan would inspire the working masses of the region - in Iran, in Pakistan and not least within the Soviet Union itself. For unconditional military defence of the deformed and degenerated workers states through socialist revolution in the capitalist countries and political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracies! For the reforging of the Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution! ■

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Salman Rushdie must not be silenced!

We print below the statement of the Spartacist League/US and Partisan Defense Committee, distributed to the New York City National Writers' Union demonstration and PEN conference called in support of Salman Rushdie.

Ayatollah Khomeini promises heaven and \$5.2 million to the assassins of noted author Salman Rushdie as punishment for writing *The Satanic Verses*. Demonstrations of Islamic fanatics against the book in Pakistan and India killed eight. In New York Cardinal O'Connor chose Sunday morning mass to denounce *The Satanic Verses*. Three major U.S. bookstore chains controlling 2,400 outlets ordered the book off their shelves. Racist South Africa joined the Islamic world in banning the book altogether while French and West German publishers suspended their translations. "Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature," wrote Milton in his eloquent 17th Century de-

fense of freedom of conscience and press, *Areopagitica*, "but he who destroys a good book kills reason itself."

Using the jihad against Rushdie, Iran's rulers manipulate passions in order to divert concern for the millions who died in the pointless war with Iraq, and from a shattered economy and endless repression. The Shi'ite theocracy launched its holy war against *The Satanic Verses* after executing thousands of leftists and other dissidents, seeking to drown every manifestation of social discontent in rivers of blood. The so-called "community of civilized nations" watched the mounting wall of corpses in total silence, while the *New York Times* applauded the "liberalization" of Iranian society. Khomeini's Iran is a foretaste of what a mujahedeen victory would mean in Afghanistan, where the CIA-backed "freedom fighters" skin alive school teachers for teaching girls and women to read. Pursuing its policy of concil-

iation with the mullahs, the Afghan government just banned the book also!

But the exploitation of religious bigotry in the service of political tyranny is by no means the monopoly of the Islamic world. In the name of "National Security" Nixon tried to suppress the *Pentagon Papers*; Thatcher attempted the same with *Spycatcher*. Crying "blasphemy," Christian fundamentalists together with assorted fascist scum have launched a crusade against Martin Scorsese's film "The Last Temptation of Christ." Book-burners in white sheets and black robes have tried to ban Darwin and even *Goldilocks* from public and school libraries. Following Ed Meese's Porn Commission, the government uses RICO to prosecute the sale of books and videos with sexual content as "racketeering."

The German Jewish radical poet Heinrich Heine's apt warning is now poignantly displayed at the memorial to the victims of Hitler's Dachau

concentration camp: "Once they burn books, they will end up burning people." To preserve a social system which had outlived its progressive mission even before the dawn of this century, the capitalist ruling classes are compelled to revive religious obscurantism, superstition and terror; the pogrom is industrialized, the inquisition goes high tech, and Armageddon is nuclear. The defense of the social, scientific and cultural achievements of the Renaissance, the great bourgeois-democratic revolutions including the American Civil War, and the conquests of the proletarian October Revolution in Russia – from freedom of conscience to freedom from exploitation – is inseparable. In defense of the fundamental democratic rights and elemental human decency we demand: Let *The Satanic Verses* be Read!

Partisan Defense Committee
Spartacist League/U.S.
22 February 1989

Rushdie...

(Continued from page 12)

were aimed at breaking the stranglehold of theocratic censorship over society and asserting the separation of church and state.

LIBERALISM AND CHAUVINISM

Now that Khomeini has extended his writ to London and New York, dictating who is to read what, people around the world are shocked by the medieval brutality of his "Islamic republic". But when the mullahs first took power in 1979, their Islamic "revolution" was supported by most of the Western left, who hailed Khomeini's theocracy as "anti-imperialist" and denounced our slogan: "Down with the shah! Down with the mullahs! Workers to power!" Internationally, most of the fake-left and pro-imperialist liberals fell into step behind US imperialism's "human rights" outcry against the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, where a gang of CIA-backed cutthroat *mujahedin* were carrying out Khomeini's programme of torture and terror against Afghan women and leftists.

At the PEN reading from Rushdie's book in New York, Professor Edward Said, a member of the Palestine National Council who has himself in the past been targeted for assassination by ultra-Zionists, hailed *Satanic Verses* as "a deliberately transgressive work of nose-thumbing daring". Said also recalled that "Israel bans hundreds of books in occupied Palestinian territories, and Palestinian writers are jailed without trial; where are the protesting voices of Western writers and intellectuals?" As the Iranian regime executed thousands of women, national minorities and leftist political prisoners in a massive blood purge, much of the bourgeois press maintained a stony silence and most of the Western left refused to lift a finger. In contrast, the Partisan Defense Committee and international Spartacist tendency organised an emergency worldwide campaign of protest demonstrations to demand: Stop the Executions!

Now that popular outrage against Khomeini has been unleashed over the *Satanic Verses*, our early warning that right-wing forces are preparing the way for a racist backlash has already begun to prove all too true. From the pubs of Bradford to the editorial offices of the *Sunday Telegraph*, the race question in this viciously racist society has been brought to the fore. As one Peregrine Worsthorne swinishly fulminated: "it is becoming disturbingly clear that immigrants, anyhow from Islamic countries, are going to constitute the biggest concentration of religious fanaticism and sexual and social reaction that this country has experienced for many centuries". After a demonstration in Paris of hundreds chanting "Death to Rushdie! Down with the infidels! Khomeini is right!" took place on 26 February, fascist French National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen swiftly moved in to spew his racist filth: "What Khomeini, with revolting cynicism, has succeeded in doing is precisely what I fear for France and for Europe – that is to say an invasion of Europe by Moslem immigrants" (*The Scotsman*, 1 March). And when Muslim counterdemonstrators at the UN protest waved signs reading "*Satanic Verses* Is Satanic", one of the "civil libertarian" types carrying a placard that said "Let Freedom Roar" shouted back: "Deport them – Deport those who call for murder!"

More righteous-than-thou Western "liberals" would do well to recall that there is nothing unique about Islamic intolerance. As we put it in the PDC and Spartacist League/US statement to the writers' protest in New York (reprinted on this page): "the capitalist ruling classes are compelled to revive religious obscurantism, superstition and terror; the pogrom is industrialized, the inquisition goes high tech, and Armageddon is nuclear." Islam hasn't cornered the market historically – the Old Testament book of *Leviticus* decrees, "Whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall be put to the death". The first code of law in the colony of Virginia in 1611 prescribed death for blaspheming Christianity and the Trinity. The original settlements were theocratic

to the core – anyone who didn't agree with the supreme *faqui* of Plymouth colony had to leave, or else. Remember the Salem witch trials?

A short report in the *Economist* (25 February) entitled "God's law, not Allah's" notes that "England gave up threatening its citizens with death for insulting the state religion towards the end of the seventeenth century. But it has never quite been persuaded to excuse them completely. The last recorded burning of a heretic was in 1612." And the blasphemy law remains on the books, invoked as recently as 1978 against *Gay News* for the poem about Christ "The Love that Dares to Speak its Name". Furthermore, it's hard to imagine a more revolting spectacle than Margaret Thatcher of Zircon, *Spycatcher* and Sinn Fein ban fame, extolling the virtues of "freedom of expression".

The initial tepid reaction of the Western imperialist "democracies" to Khomeini's death edict against Rushdie was of a piece with their unperturbed silence over the recent blood-bath of political prisoners in Iran. US president Bush only declared that the order to kill the author was "deeply offensive"; State Department sources explained that anything more would serve the interests of those "who are using the book affair as a way of bringing a halt to the trend in recent months of Iran improving relations with the West" (*New York Times*, 22 February). The Common Market countries finally pulled their diplomats out of Iran only after Khomeini made it clear that no "apology" would do. They were finding out what Washington had learned in the Iran/Contra fiasco, that it was "neither possible nor sensible" to have a "normal relationship" with the ayatollahs.

AFGHANISTAN: DEFEAT ISLAMIC REACTION!

The growth of Islamic fundamentalism in recent years is in no small measure a by-product of the billions of dollars lavished on the fanatically reactionary and anti-Communist Afghan "freedom fighters" and the billions more funnelled to maintain Zia/ Bhutto's Islamic regime in Pakistan

as a staging area for the anti-Soviet insurgency in Afghanistan. A small taste of what Afghan women have in store should the *mujahedin* win in the face of the Gorbachev regime's criminal withdrawal was provided by a recent example in Teheran. When a woman interviewed on Teheran Radio had the audacity to say that the prophet Mohammed's daughter Fatima was not relevant as a role model because she lived 14 centuries ago, Khomeini decreed that she – and the programme's producers – be shot.

When the Soviet Union broke its silence on Rushdie, it was to criminally apologise for Khomeini. A TASS statement on 1 March said that "perhaps" the Imam "had no choice proceeding from Koran teaching other than denouncing a man who had insulted Islam", dishonestly asserting that "The Iranian government has not condemned Rushdie to death" (*Independent*, 2 March). "The threat of the Rushdie problem complicating the settlement of some regional disputes is becoming very real indeed", the statement continued. Consistent with its treacherous pullout from Afghanistan, the Gorbachev regime hopes the murderous Khomeini regime – fresh from executing thousands of Communist and other leftist prisoners – will play a role in a "peaceful" settlement there.

Meanwhile, the Kabul regime, which is now facing a fight to the death – while the life of every leftist and unveiled woman in the country is at stake – has actually banned *Satanic Verses* in its continuing suicidal attempt to appease the mullah cutthroats. As Rushdie said: there are "taboos against which 'The Satanic Verses' has transgressed...I also tried to write about the place of women in Islamic society". The battle line for elementary freedoms and social progress against Islamic fundamentalism is today drawn in beleaguered Afghanistan. Those who backed the feudalistic *mujahedin* "freedom fighters" would do well to remember that the next time they feel like reading a "heretical" novel, not to mention looking at *Playboy*. Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 472, 3 March 1989

Germany...

(Continued from page 5)

hind Hitler, and after 1933 they more than recouped their investment. As we wrote last fall: "Nazism was the German bourgeoisie's last desperate recourse to rescue its own class rule before the revolutionary onslaught of the proletariat.... The German bourgeoisie as a whole had united around exploiting anti-Semitism to revive Germany from its defeat in World War I" (see "Kristallnacht: reign of Nazi terror", *Workers Hammer* no 102, November 1988).

To the terror of the Third Reich which atomised the workers movement must be added the terror and counterrevolutionary effects of the Western Allied invasion and occupation. American and British imperialists feared that the class-conscious German proletariat would rise from the ashes of the defeat of Hitler's Reich as it had from the Kaiser's. Massive Allied bombing raids targeted the working-class districts of the big cities. An armed uprising at Buchenwald against the Nazi jailers was ~~disarmed and the left-wing prisoners interned for many more months by their American "liberators"~~. And the doctrine of "collective guilt" was minted to justify heavy-handed military occupation.

Meanwhile, for Stalin "collective guilt" was a programme for stamping out any possibility of proletarian revolution in post-war Germany, in order to preserve his bureaucratic rule. The imperialist Allies, also fearing the spectre of workers revolution, for a brief period used this doctrine to justify their "de-Nazification" campaign, then used it for exonerating former Nazi officials to deploy them in the anti-Soviet Cold War and to build up West Germany as a NATO bulwark against the East. Marxists reject the concept of collective guilt as applied to the entire German nation because it covers over the class nature of fascism. It's the German *bourgeoisie* that is collectively guilty.

"LEFT" NATIONALISM AND REVANCHISM

Repudiation of collective guilt can also be associated with reactionary, nationalist resentment against the victors of WW II, the Soviet Union as well as the US. One of the prominent spokesmen from the extreme right wing of the CDU is Alfred Dregger who stated in 1986, "the guilt is behind us", and called on "all Germans" to "step out from behind the shadow of Hitler". For him the scandal of Bitburg was an opportunity to stress his pride as a fighter on the Eastern Front in WW II. Dregger and his Stahlhelm (steel helmet) faction opposed holding the *Pogromnacht* commemoration at all. He wants to return to the old "glory days" by founding a new German Reich now. Ominously, after Jenninger's forced resignation, the first candidate Kohl came up with for his successor was precisely revanchist hardliner Dregger.

But German nationalism is not at all restricted to the right wing. Kurt Schumacher, the fiercely nationalistic leader of the SPD in the early post-war years, argued that the German people were just as much victims of Nazism (he himself was, being a former concentration camp inmate) as, say, the Poles or Czechs. Therefore, he stated, the Russians and Americans had no right to divide Germany. Schumacher, from his own, different, standpoint was no less

complicit in building up a Fourth German Reich with the cadres of the Third; he even envisaged rehabilitation of the Waffen SS decades before Bitburg. And it's no accident that the SPD originated Bonn's *Ostpolitik* (Eastern policy): historically a national party with much of its social base located east of the Elbe, ie, the present-day DDR, it was best-placed to spearhead the revanchist appetites of German imperialism toward what it still calls *Mitteldeutschland*...and beyond.

As for the Greens, in addition to clean air they want a "clean" German imperialism; bringing back all the *Dreck* from the Hitler era is only going to dirty it. The almost pathological reaction of the Greens to the Jenninger speech — they also didn't protest at Bitburg — is an expression of their often virulent nationalism. In the aftermath of the Jenninger affair, some West German newspapers wished the Bundestag had listened to the Greens beforehand when they wanted to invite the chairman of the central council of Jews in Germany, Heinz Galinsky, to speak on the *Pogromnacht* with the usual platitudes. For here these graduates of the New Left were speaking for important sectors of the West German ruling class.

Hermann Gremliza in *konkret* magazine (December 1988) was one of the few who tried to probe the reasons for the Greens' reaction to Jenninger: "What was rebelling on the left side of the house was the yearning not for truth and enlightenment...but for quasi-religious forms and rituals which free a reconciliation with 'this our state'...from the pain of a guilty conscience." Along with the Social Democrats and Liberals, the Greens have in the past preferred the lofty rhetoric of a von Weizsacker (who praised the recent release of two SS mass murderers by the Netherlands government as an act of "conciliation").

Meanwhile, as "left" German nationalism overlaps with expressions of revanchism, a lot of disgusting crap is surfacing that shades over into outright fascism. Thus while Hitler-loving skinheads beat up and murder Turkish immigrants, "Red-skin" gangs in West Berlin spew out anti-Soviet garbage and chant "Trotskyists out". One of the more repulsive examples came from the editorial offices of the pro-Green *Tageszeitung*, which "jokingly" described a crowded West Berlin disco as "*gaskammervoll*" (full as a gas chamber). A new "no-guilt" generation has arisen in West Germany — according to a survey by *Stern* after the Jenninger affair, those under 20 felt the least concerned about Germany's past.

THE GERMAN QUESTION AND EUROPEAN REVOLUTION

As a would-be ideologue for resurgent German imperialism, Jenninger declared: "We Germans wish to attain a clear understanding of our history and clear lessons on how to shape our present and future politically." Concerned about a lack of moral confidence on the part of German youth to act as a full-fledged imperialist power if the Hitler period is left in the closet, Jenninger says at the end of his speech:

"On the foundations of our state and history it is necessary to found a new moral tradition which must prove itself in the human and moral sensitivity of our society. "In foreign policy this means the duty of collective responsibility for peace, for actively making the world peaceful." What was later presented as "am-

biguousness" and "clumsiness" on Jenninger's part reflects the fundamental problems of German imperialism. The Bundestag Speaker's "fascination" with Hitler's imperialist "victories" of the '30s comes as no surprise. The Federal Republic declares itself the successor state to the Third Reich, constitutionally sworn to "restoring the Reich to the borders of 1937", which go far beyond the Oder-Neisse line to include parts of present-day Poland and the USSR. And more fundamentally, the revanchist German bourgeoisie has a major structural problem: the partition of the country into a capitalist West and a state in which capitalism has been expropriated in the East.

"Our history can't be divided into good and bad, and responsibility for the past can't be distributed according to the geographical arbitrariness of the postwar order", said Jenninger.



Yevgeni Khaldei
Hammer and sickle flies over the Reichstag as Soviet Red Army liberates Berlin from Nazi terror regime, 30 April 1945.

Chancellor Kohl considers it "absurd" to construe a contradiction between the goals of German reunification and the European unification" (*Frankfurter Rundschau*, 19 January). The SPD, as well, wants to reserve the unconditional right for an imperialist reunification of Germany after the supposed "complete integration" of the European Common Market in 1992. But uniting Germany under capitalist rule would mean bloody counter-revolution to smash the DDR. And it would directly pose the spectre of world war; even its Western imperialist allies fear the domination of Europe by a Fourth Reich.

Meanwhile, the German bourgeoisie sees tremendous opportunities for economic penetration and social counterrevolution in Gorbachev's *perestroika* reforms for "market socialism" in the Soviet Union and East Europe, which fuel deep-going popular dissatisfaction and explosive nationalist strife. The Frankfurt bankers and Bonn politicians would like to use their "Swing" credits [for trade with East Germany] and D-mark loans to squeeze dry the bureaucratically deformed workers states of East Europe like banana republics. But the socialised property forms of these states represent a barrier to capitalist penetration, a barrier that can only be smashed, to use Bismarck's phrase, with "blood and iron". And that brings the German bourgeoisie up against the enormous power of the Soviet degenerated workers state. It is this power that stays the hand of the imperialists.

By itself, without its NATO-allies, West Germany is not now capable of a military foray eastward. This would require, to begin with, substantial expansion of its conventional capacities as well as acquiring strategic nuclear weapons (a venture already being tackled in its development of nuclear arms technology in South Africa). The Western imperialist allies acknowledged West Germany's growing military/economic power by naming former "defence" minister Werner NATO general secretary. But NATO strategy calls, in the first instance, for fighting a "limited war" against Warsaw Pact forces on *German soil*. Even the most extreme West German Cold Warriors like Dregger don't look forward to this prospect. And large sections of the German population, who remember only too well the destruction of the last world war, are rightly afraid of

nuclear annihilation.

That is why Jenninger speaks of "actively making the world peaceful". German capitalists today want to exploit the Slavs, not exterminate them. And the bourgeoisie's labour lieutenants of the SPD, the "fatherland defenders" of 1914, know their duty as the political organisers of counter-revolution in East Germany. The programme of a neutral, reunified (capitalist) Germany is the main basis for attracting significant numbers of workers, petty-bourgeois intellectuals and elements of the bureaucracy in the DDR behind a "democratic" counterrevolution.

Proletarian internationalism is the only answer to the revanchism and nationalism that twice in this century have mobilised the masses for imperialist war, and the resulting devastation of Europe: this is the lesson of history. Gordon Craig recalled in his essay that the same Bundestag which walked out on Jenninger:

"...gave a distinctly chilly reception to Professor Fritz Stern of Columbia University when he was invited to address it last year on

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Afghanistan...

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were simply wasted, that Afghanistan is Russia's Vietnam. In a flippant "we wash our hands of the whole business" tone, the Communist Youth paper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* reported what will happen when the Soviet commander Lt Gen Boris Gromov, leaves Afghanistan:

"He will cross without looking back. Then he will stop and make a speech, but only to himself. It will last one minute and seven seconds. It will not be written down or listened to."

Soviet veterans of the Afghan war are being treated like pariahs instead of heroes. In their fight for official recognition, these veterans (the *afghantsy*) deeply resent the comparison of their internationalist combat duty to Washington's drive to transform Southeast Asia into a moonscape. One veteran activist told the West German magazine *Der Spiegel* (7 March 1988): "Our sacrifices were not for nothing. We have after all brought there the achievements of the civilized world." Honour Soviet veterans of the war in Afghanistan!

DEFEAT IMPERIALISM THROUGH COMMUNIST INTERNATIONALISM!

During the 19th century Afghanistan was a chessboard on which the "Great Game" between tsarist Russia and Great Britain was played out.



Mujahedin hack up the body of man sentenced to death by mullahs. Mingam/Gamma

But in 1917 the Bolshevik Revolution changed the rules of this "game". Imperialist machinations in the region now had as their ultimate goal the destruction of the Soviet workers state and the opening up of its vast territory for capitalist plunder.

After World War II Pakistan became the US' main client in the region, but Washington never lost sight of Afghanistan's potential military value in a counterrevolutionary assault on the USSR. In the early 1960s the US offered to build an airport at Kandahar for the Afghan king Zahir Shah. The Pentagon secretly planned to use it as a "recovery base" where bombers could land after attacking Soviet targets in Siberia or Central Asia" (Henry Bradsher, *Afghanistan*

and the Soviet Union [1983]).

US imperialism wants to turn Afghanistan into not only a military forward point but also a conduit for anti-Communist agitation among the Turkic peoples of Soviet Central Asia. A few years ago the most rabid of the *mujahedin* leaders, Gulbaddin Hekmatyar, declared: "If the Mujahideen continue to fight persistently, the day is not far when the occupied areas of Soviet Central Asia will also be liberated." It is ludicrous to think that the Central Asian population - freed from religious obscurantism and grinding oppression, and enjoying modern medical care, universal education and an incomparably higher standard of living - would want to link up with a reactionary Islamic

Guildford Four...

(Continued from page 8)

ford bombings, that did not absolve the people arrested for the killings. No evidence was ever presented to link the Balcombe Street unit with the Guildford Four.

The case of the Guildford Four, like that of the Birmingham Six and the Broadwater Farm Three, demonstrates the determination of the British state to bludgeon into submission Irish, blacks and anyone who defends themselves against racist, imperialist terror. Phony "confessions" are often the only "evidence" used to convict. There is a wide-

spread recognition among the population at large that "justice" is a sham and the government has repeatedly attempted, through its attacks on programmes like "Death on the Rock" and its ban on Sinn Fein, to muzzle the press. Indeed, the recent sweeping attacks on civil liberties and strengthening of the government's privilege of "secrecy" is carried out largely under the pretext of "anti-terrorism" and inextricably linked to the British state's "shoot-to-kill" criminality in Northern Ireland.

This has inevitably placed strains on the Anglo-Irish accord which represents the attempt of the British bourgeoisie to enlist the Irish capitalists into a greater participation in

NATO's anti-Soviet war drive. Several bourgeois luminaries, including the Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Hume; the Archbishop of Canterbury; law lords Devlin and Scarman and two former Labour home secretaries, Roy Jenkins and Merlyn Rees, have expressed their preference for a re-trial of the Guildford Four on the grounds that the obvious frame-up "puts the integrity of the legal system at risk" (*Independent*, 30 November 1988).

Judicial frame-ups are endemic to this rotting capitalist system. Like the murderous imperialist oppression and nationalist/communist blood-letting in Northern Ireland, they will only end when the working class seizes state power through victorious so-

Republic of Afghanistan.
Nonetheless, Gorbachev's *perestroika* has fuelled reactionary nationalist currents in the Caucasus and Baltic republics. And Central Asia is certainly not immune. Moscow's increasing reliance on market forces will tend to favour the more developed regions of European Russia, the Ukraine and Baltic republics. Under these conditions pan-Turkic nationalism in Islamic colouration could make headway in the Central Asian republics.
The Soviet Union is confronting a deepening political and economic crisis. The bureaucratic centralism of the Brezhnev era led to stagnation. Gorbachev's *perestroika* will generate unemployment, increasing inequalities and intensifying national animosities. Internationally, his policy of appeasement will only embolden the imperialist drive to roll back Soviet power and influence.

Afghanistan's modernising intellectuals have viewed Soviet Central Asia, despite the enormous deformations of Stalinism, as representing social progress. Under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, Bolshevik Russia was viewed as beacon of the socialist future by workers and radical intellectuals around the world, including in the imperialist centres of North America and Europe. The Soviet Union can and must be restored to its rightful place as a bastion of international communism through proletarian political revolution against the treacherous Kremlin bureaucracy.

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 471, 17 February 1989

cialist revolution. The nationalists (and their fake-left cheerleaders) with their attempts to "pressure" imperialism and call for a "united Ireland" invite only ongoing capitalist exploitation and a reversal of the terms of oppression or new partitions and communal blood-baths. The situation in Ireland cries out for a proletarian solution. Not Green against Orange - but class against class! For workers revolution! For the immediate withdrawal of the British Army from Ireland! Smash the PTA! Trade unions should black all military shipments to Northern Ireland! No to forced reunification - for an Irish workers republic as part of the socialist federation of the British Isles! Free the Guildford Four! ■

the occasion of a commemoration of the East German uprising of June 17, 1953, and told his audience that the revolt had not been a demonstration in favor of reunification, as West German politicians were fond of saying, but rather a courageous demand for freedom and reform, and reminded them that 'undivided Germany brought unspeakable misfortune to other peoples and to itself,' a fact that no German could afford to forget."

The 17 June rising was not pro-capitalist, as the German revanchists who have usurped it for their own reactionary purposes claim (and neither was it for Western-style "democracy" as Stern implies). On the contrary, East German workers initiated the struggle for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and erect genuine soviet democracy. June 17th showed the way to the only progressive solution to the German national question - through proletarian-internationalist revolutionary struggle. With the slogan, "Now clear out your crap in Bonn, we're cleaning house in Pan-kow", they called on their class

brothers in the West to rip state power from the capitalists.

It was the Soviet Red Army which smashed Hitler fascism in 1945. For the workers of the world it was a victory when the red flag with the hammer and sickle was placed atop the Reichstag. And to get rid of the legacy of Nazism forever, it is necessary to sweep away the capitalist order which continues to breed nationalist and racist reaction. The leadership of a Trotskyist world party of socialist revolution is ever more urgently needed, a party which fights for socialist revolution in the capitalist West and proletarian political revolution in the East, which would, as with the Communist International of Lenin and Trotsky, weld together the Russian and German revolutions.

As we wrote in *Spartakist* (no 57) in May 1988, addressing militants of the Stalinist DKP and SEW:

"Because they can only conceive of a capitalist reunification of Germany, they hand the national question over to the fascists. But the struggle for proletarian power poses the question of *revolutionary leadership*. And restoring the unity

of the proletariat poses in this country the question of the *revolutionary reunification of Germany* as part of a Socialist United States of Europe. That is the program of the Trotskistische Liga Deutsch-

lands which stands for unconditional defence of the USSR and DDR against imperialist attacks and internal counterrevolution." Proletarian revolution will avenge the victims of Nazi terror! ■

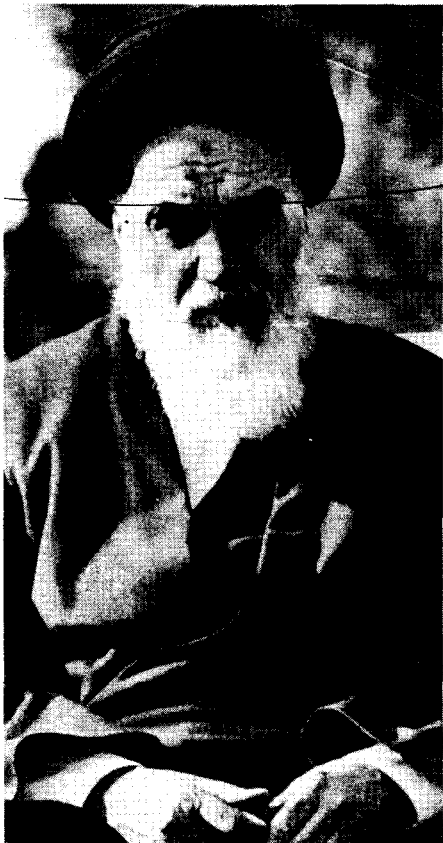
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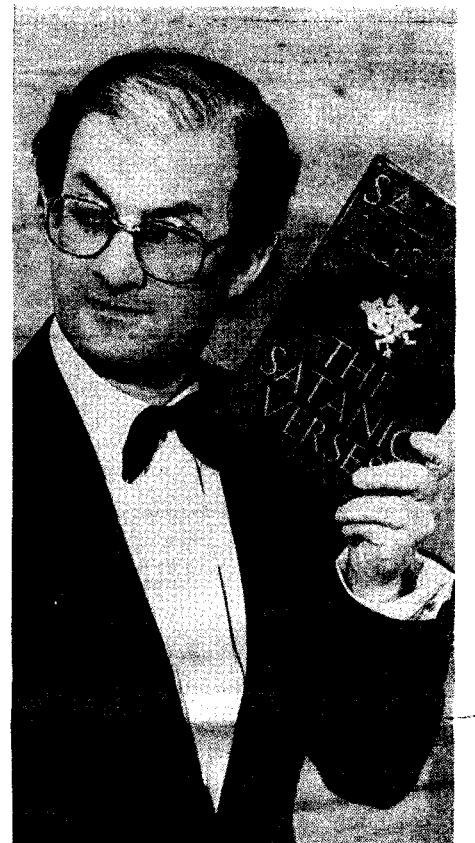
Khomeini's blood terror targets Salman Rushdie



Observer



Guardian



Graham Turner

When Ayatollah Khomeini issued his decree of death against novelist Salman Rushdie and the Viking/Penguin publishers of his *Satanic Verses*, a shudder spread around the world. Here was the ultimate statement of theocratic totalitarianism: not only must the book be banned, but its author executed for the "crime" of having written it. It was a throwback to the days when heretics were burned at the stake and witches boiled in oil. Suddenly the dark past of the Inquisition was no further than the local shopping centre. There it was, the benighted superstition of the Middle Ages in the middle of the Computer Age.

From the moment it was published last September, Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* drove Islamic fundamentalists around the world into a frenzy, leading to its banning by one government after another. Here in Rushdie's own country, protests and book-burnings swept through British Muslim communities as recounted in our article "Let *Satanic Verses* be read!" in the last issue of *Workers Hammer*. Then, on 12 February, the furore became deadly as six people were killed in Islamabad, Pakistan when police fired into a crowd of thousands protesting publication of the book. Fifteen more have since died in protests in Kashmir and Bombay in India.

On 14 February, the Shi'ite theocracy's *wali faqih* (Supreme Leader or *Fuhrer*) issued his *diktat* to the world over Iranian radio, that Rushdie and

Censorship by assassination

"all those involved in its publication who were aware of its contents, are sentenced to death". Khomeini called on "all Muslims to execute them quickly wherever they are found so that no others dare to do such a thing". As though to underscore the seriousness of the threat, the regime executed 70 people that day for "drug smuggling". Assuring any assassin killed in the attempt that he would "be regarded as a martyr and will go directly to heaven", the ayatollah added a more earthly reward of \$3 million for Rushdie's head (\$1 million if the killer happened to be an infidel), which was then raised to \$5.2 million.

Rushdie and his wife, the novelist Marianne Wiggins, immediately went into hiding. When Iranian president Khomeini offered to lift the death threat if Rushdie apologised, the writer issued a cautious statement expressing regret over distress the book had caused. The Iranian regime first accepted Rushdie's statement, then repudiated it later the same day. Even if Rushdie had become "the most pious man of time", the Imam declared, "it is incumbent on every Muslim...to send him to hell". Khomeini immediately fell into line, declaring: "an arrow has been shot toward its target". The Imam in Qum acted as if to confirm Rushdie's portrayal of the imam in *Satanic*

Verses who declared history to be the work of the devil, and unleashed his fury against "the greatest of the lies—progress, science, rights".

The initial reaction in the imperialist West, whose governments habitually rant against "terrorism" whenever they want to terrorise some defenceless people, was breathtaking in its silence. Rushdie's friend and fellow writer Christopher Hitchens observed caustically: "the normally vociferous 'anti-terrorist' lobby is unusually cautious in its choice of terms, and...the spokesmen for the godly are uncharacteristically silent". Hitchens also noted that the American Jewish talk show host "Alan Berg was murdered in cold blood in Colorado by Nazi Christians for failing to shut up, and in this very decade in America there are book burners ready to muster" (*New York Times*, 17 February).

In Britain, Thatcher and the "opposition" leader Kinnoch kept their mouths firmly shut for more than a week. The *New Statesman* (24 February) went to the heart of the matter for the British bourgeoisie, quoting a Tory MP who explained the profitable possibilities for British exporters in the aftermath of the Gulf war and the fact that "Britain has a strong interest—as we have had for 100 years—in preventing the

Iranians from lurching into the arms of the Russians". Labour MP Max Madden's contribution to the debate was amending a Tory motion seeking to extend the blasphemy laws. The Archbishop of Canterbury, head of the established church in England, had the same idea—so that the next time a Rushdie comes along he can be nailed with the more "refined" methods of English jurisprudence.

Rushdie's American tour was cancelled. The country's largest book distributor, Waldenbooks, pulled *Satanic Verses* off the shelves, followed by the second largest, B Dalton. Canada banned imports of the book with the line that it might be "hate material". The Spanish, French and West German publishers with translation rights decided to suspend publication. On 22 February in New York, some 1000 people, mostly writers, demonstrated outside the Iranian mission to the United Nations behind a banner of the National Writers Union quoting George Bernard Shaw: "Assassination is the Extreme Form of Censorship". Speaking to an overflow crowd at a reading from Rushdie's book sponsored by PEN later that day, Leon Wieseltier, an editor at the *New Republic* said: "Europe, too, was once a theocratic society that burned books and people. We know all about the debt that democracy owes to heresy....it was blasphemy that made us free. Two cheers today for blasphemy." Indeed the great bourgeois revolutions of the 17th-18th centuries

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