

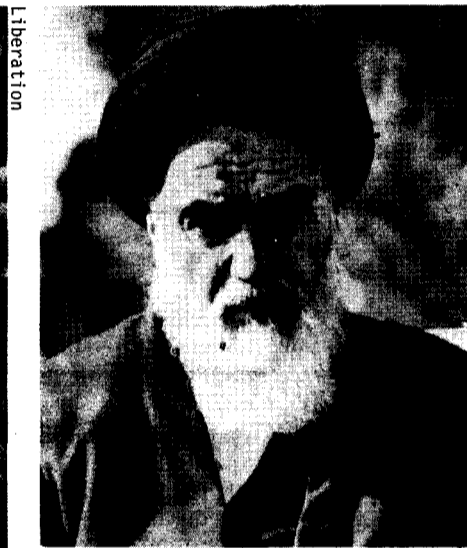
In defence of "blasphemy"

Bloody Inquisition stalks Salman Rushdie

Salman Rushdie wrote *The Satanic Verses* for the Asian population of Britain. It is a scathing indictment of that experience in Mrs Torture's nasty, racist society. It does not alibi, either, the hideous oppression in those societies from which the Asian immigrants came – products of British colonial rule and the Zias, Gandhis and the rest who then took over. A work of secular humanism, *The Satanic Verses* is not only anti-racist but also anti-sexist, unsparing in its criticism of the barbaric treatment of women under orthodox Hinduism and fundamentalist Islam. Rushdie is irreligious in a profound way, and thus has earned denunciation from all the forces of bourgeois/clerical reaction – not only the imams, but the Archbishop of Canterbury, the pope, the French cardinal Decourtray have denounced this "blasphemy". Meanwhile, the race-hating fascistic scum moved in on the backlash afforded by the Muslim fundamentalist book burners to step up attacks on Asians: National Front graffiti daubed on shops and homes now add an obscenely incongruous slogan for these race-hate terrorists: "Leave Rushdie in peace".

What has transpired since the publication of *The Satanic Verses* throws the social reality of not only Britain, but the entire decaying imperialist world into harsh relief. Recent events sometimes seem as if they come out of the "magic realism" of Rushdie's fiction. On 14 January 1500 Muslim fanatics in Bradford, West Yorkshire ceremonially torched a copy of *The Satanic Verses*, uttering death threats to Rushdie. On 14 February Ayatollah Khomeini – the butcher of untold thousands of young men and boys sent to death "for Allah" in a senseless bloody war with Iraq, of imprisoned leftist opponents in the recent post-war massacres – seized the *The Satanic Verses* issue as a new diversion from their oppression at home into another "holy war" abroad. He offered heaven and up to \$5.2 million to anyone who would kill Rushdie and "all those involved in its publication who were aware of its contents".

The "democratic" bourgeoisie has equivocated even on the simple defence of Rushdie. While leaving their vital trade links intact, the British government made a show of withdrawing their diplomats from Teheran, expelled the Iranian charge d'affaires and his crew from London and started carrying out their threat



(Above) Mass murderer Khomeini. (Left) Bradford Islamic fanatics protest *The Satanic Verses*.

to deport 30 other "known supporters of Khomeini". The US "CIA president" of Iran/Contragate fame, George Bush, lectured Khomeini on the "norms of civilised behaviour". Almost exactly a month after the 20 February decision by assorted EEC members to pull out their diplomats, several (Greece, Ireland and Italy) sent theirs back to Teheran. Earlier the Vatican mouthpiece *L'Osservatore Romano* condemned Rushdie's novel as blasphemous. The Bishop of St Albans called on the publishers Viking Penguin to withdraw the book "because of the social harm that has been caused to the people of Britain".

Coming from the imperialists who wilfully turned a blind eye to Khomeini's mass executions while trying to cash in on the ravaged Iranian economy after the war with Iraq, such "equivocation" should not be surprising. And they have their own axe to grind at home. Thus, Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe pontificated: "It goes without saying that we are not in sympathy with the book, or in support of it. The book is extremely critical and rude about us and compares Britain to Hitler's Germany" (*Guardian*, 3 March). Margaret Thatcher intones "We have known in our own religion people doing things which are deeply offensive to some of us ... and we felt it very much. And that is what has happened in Islam" (*Independent*, 4 March). It was reported that Rushdie has expressed, for obvious reasons, his concern "about the con-

sistency of commitment of the British Government to supporting him" (*Independent*, 4 March).

On the evening of 29 March in Brussels' main mosque, two of Belgium's most prominent Muslims lay dead, shot in the head at point-blank range with a 7.65 mm pistol. Thirty-five-year-old Abdel was the Saudi Arabian imam and director of the Islamic Centre, a declared "moderate" in the *jihad* against Rushdie. His fellow victim was a Tunisian. Imam Abdel had 24 hours earlier received a death threat apparently for opposing a Belgian ban on the novel and pointedly refused to back Khomeini's sentence. As a huge crowd gathered, one member simply observed: "Here we have two people dead because of the death sentence passed on Salman Rushdie" (*Independent*, 30 March).

Soon after Khomeini's deadly edict, the headquarters of the Bradford Council of Mosques was broken into and vandalised; a firebomb was thrown at London's Regent's Park Mosque, the headquarters of the Islamic Cultural Centre for Britain's million-and-a-half Muslims. In mid-March racist thugs rampaged through the heavily Asian Darnell area of Sheffield, attacking a mosque and homes and smashing windows. "They also sprayed racist slogans and abuse. Some slogans read 'Pakis die!'" (*Asian Times*, 31 March). A new word of intended racist abuse has entered the vocabulary: "Muslim". Ian McEwan summed it up: "Muslims who have

spoken out against book burning or book banning or author murdering, even while deploring the book's contents, have been threatened by those of more straightforward convictions. Muslims of all shades of opinion have been threatened by white racists. Violence is in the air" (*New Statesman & Society*, 3 March).

The Islamic book burners are indeed playing with fire in Thatcher's Britain. In an 18 March statement Anti-Fascist Action pointed to the "growth of neo-nazism in Britain, the 70,000 racist attacks that occur each year" (*Asian Times*, 31 March). The black and Asian working masses have been subjected to virulently racist immigration laws – pushed by Labour and Tory governments alike, police and fascist terror on the streets, the general fabric of the decaying seat of former Empire which lorded it over the dark-skinned peoples of the world for decades. From the racist Labour Party, which presided over the British-engineered partition blood-bath in India, introduced virginity tests for Asian women seeking immigration, unleashed the police against the people of Southall, sent the troops into Northern Ireland – the oppressed will find no champions of their cause. Even over the Rushdie affair, the Labour Party has shown its bankruptcy. While Kinnock & Co restrict themselves to a few "hear, hears" to Thatcher's hypocritical lectures on "freedom of expression", other Labourites like

continued on page 3

World War II and the "Proletarian Military Policy"

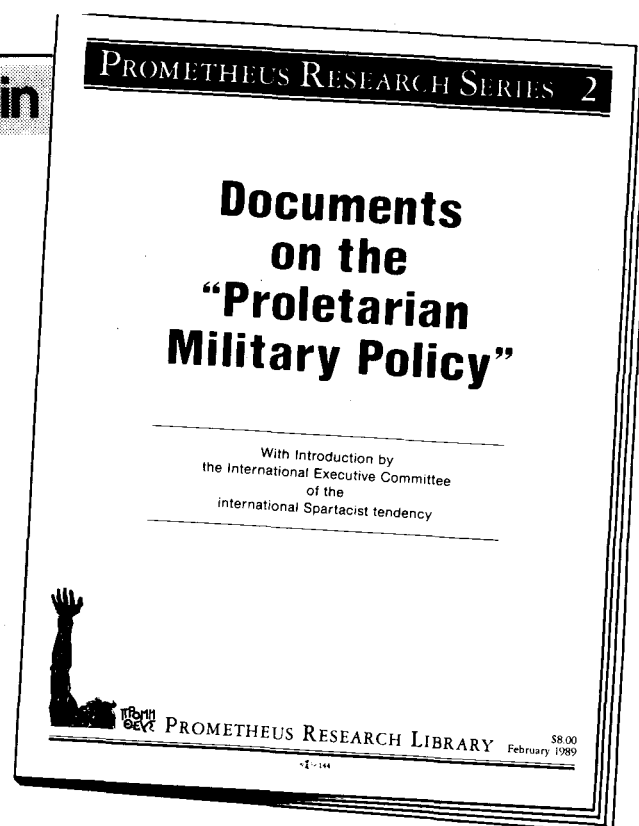
The Prometheus Research Library, archive and library of the Central Committee of the Spartacist League/US, published in February the second in its *Prometheus Research Series*, "Documents on the 'Proletarian Military Policy' ". This 101-page bulletin includes documentary material from World War II Trotskyist groups in the United States, Britain and France, as well as an introduction which is a major programmatic statement of the International Executive Committee (IEC) of the international Spartacist tendency, "Trotskyist Policies on the Second Imperialist War - Then and In Hindsight".

The "Proletarian Military Policy" (PMP), a series of demands centring on the call for trade-union control of military training, was first raised by Leon Trotsky early in 1940 and adopted by the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in a September 1940 resolution. The Spartacist tendency has long seen the "Proletarian Military Policy" as a major factor disorienting

the Trotskyist movement in the early years of WW II. In "Genesis of Pabloism" (*Spartacist* no 21, Fall 1972) and in more detail in a pedagogical article written around the same time in the youth press of the Spartacist League, "Proletarian Military Policy" (*Revolutionary Communist Youth Newsletter* no 13, August-September 1972, reprinted in the new bulletin), we have argued that the demand for trade-union "control" of military training for the bourgeois army is at best utopian - and in the midst of an escalating inter-imperialist war it necessarily carries a social-patriotic thrust.

The PMP was in large part a mis-directed attempt to take advantage of the anti-fascist sentiments of the proletarian masses in the Allied imperialist countries faced with invasion and occupation by Hitler's army. As such it carried a not-so-implicit Anglo-American bias (no-one ever raised the demand for trade-union control of military training for

A selection of documents from World War II Trotskyist groups in the US, Britain and France.



Hitler's Wehrmacht) and it entailed a wilful blindness to the racist inter-imperialist war in the Pacific. For the most part the PMP was shelved in practice by those sections of the Trotskyist movement that had adopted it (not coincidentally the British and American) when it became clear that Hitler's military power was waning in 1943. Since that point, the PMP has largely been a historical question for those claiming the mantle of Trotskyism, but the Spartacist tendency has always sought to draw a balance sheet on the question in order that the theoretical unclarity which lay behind the adoption of the PMP by the revolutionary SWP of the 1940s not provide an opening for future programmatic departures.

An article by Pierre Broue in *Cahiers Leon Trotsky* no 23 (September 1985), "Trotsky and the Trotskyists Confront World War Two", was the catalyst for the comrades of the IEC to review the question of the PMP. An IEC meeting in Paris in the autumn of 1985 provided the occasion for a discussion on the subject of the Trotskyists during WW II. An account of that discussion by comrade Pierre Vert was published in *Spartacist* (English edition) no 38-39, Summer 1986 (Vert's article is also included in the new bulletin). The IEC voted at its 1985 meeting to endorse Trotsky's 1934 manifesto, "War and the Fourth International".

Vert's *Spartacist* article noted that the *Cahiers Leon Trotsky*, published by the Institut Leon Trotsky - a group of intellectuals associated with Pierre Lambert's Parti Communiste Internationaliste (PCI, formerly the OCI) - is "probably the most provocative publication in the world today for archival and historical research on the Trotskyist movement". Broue is in the process of editing a multi-volume French-language edition of Trotsky's *Oeuvres* (Works). A significant increase in the available documentary record of the Trotskyist movement resulted from the opening of the formerly closed section of the Trotsky archives at Harvard University in 1980, as well as the discovery in 1987 of substantial new Trotsky papers in the archives of Boris I Nicolaevsky at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. This material, much of it not in Pathfinder's English-language *Writings of Leon Trotsky* series, has enriched not only the more recent volumes of the *Oeuvres*, but also the *Cahiers*, and provided a documentary basis for Broue's just-published (in

France) biography of Trotsky.

Trotsky's essential writings on World War II and the PMP have, however, long been available in the Pathfinder series. In addition, the relevant articles and speeches by SWP leader James P Cannon are also available (a bibliography of directly relevant works by Cannon and Trotsky is included in the bulletin). "Documents on the 'Proletarian Military Policy' " adds to the currently in-print documentary record by reprinting not only the SWP's September 1940 Resolution, but also the sharp polemics of the (then) left-centrist Max Shachtman against it. The inexorable political logic of Shachtman's defection from the Fourth International at the war's outset, precipitated by his capitulation to petty-bourgeois anti-Communism in the wake of the Hitler-Stalin pact, took 18 years to fully play itself out. By 1951 Shachtman was advocating his own anti-Soviet version of the "Proletarian Military Policy" - the transformation of the Korean War into a "democratic" war against Stalinism! But in 1940 and 1941, Shachtman could still write an effective polemic against the revisionism on the nature of the state which was inherent in the PMP.

THE WARTIME TROTSKYIST MOVEMENT

The Fourth International was founded in 1938 in the shadow of the Munich crisis and in the midst of a Stalinist campaign of assassination which devastated the cadres of the Trotskyist administrative centre in Europe. With the onset of the world war, international coordination and communication among the Trotskyist movement internationally became spotty to nonexistent. An emergency conference was held in New York in May 1940. It adopted a Manifesto on the war, written by Trotsky, which included the demand for trade-union control of military training. This section of the Manifesto provoked much controversy where it was received in Europe, and the Belgian section refused to include it when they published the Manifesto. The SWP's September Resolution was even more controversial, especially in Britain. "Documents on the 'Proletarian Military Policy' " reprints three counterposed resolutions on the PMP from the fusion conference of British Trotskyists in March 1944, which resulted in the formation of the Revolutionary

continued on page 11

Marxism and Religion



TROTSKY

In 1905 Lenin spelled out essential aspects of the Marxist attitude to religion.

Religion must be declared a private affair. In these words socialists usually express their attitude towards religion. But the meaning of these words should be accurately defined to prevent any misunderstanding. We demand that religion



LENIN

be held a private affair so far as the state is concerned. But by no means can we consider religion a private affair so far as our Party is concerned. Religion must be of no concern to the state, and religious societies must have no connection with governmental authority. Everyone must be absolutely free to profess any religion he pleases, or no religion whatever, i.e., to be an atheist, which every socialist is, as a rule. Discrimination among citizens on account of their religious convictions is wholly intolerable. Even the bare mention of a citizen's religion in official documents should unquestionably be eliminated. No subsidies should be granted to the established church nor state allowances made to ecclesiastical and religious societies. These should become absolutely free associations of like-minded citizens, associations independent of the state. Only the complete fulfilment of these demands can put an end to the shameful and accursed past when the church lived in feudal dependence on the state, and Russian citizens lived in feudal dependence on the established church, when medieval, inquisitorial laws (to this day remaining in our criminal codes and on our statute-books) were in existence and were applied, persecuting men for their belief or disbelief, violating men's consciences, and linking cosy government jobs and government-derived incomes with the dispensation of this or that dope by the established church. Complete separation of Church and State is what the socialist proletariat demands of the modern state and the modern church.

- VI Lenin, "Socialism and Religion", 1905. *Collected Works*, volume 10.

WORKERS HAMMER

Monthly newspaper of the Spartacist League, British section of the international Spartacist tendency.

EDITORIAL BOARD: Bonnie Bradley (editor), Jon Branche, Alec Gilchrist, Len Michelson, Ellen Rawlings, Michael Riaz, David Strachan.

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Michael Riaz

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Ralf Eades

Published nine times a year by Spartacist Publications, PO Box 1041, London NW5 3EU.

Subscription: £2 for 9 issues, overseas airmail £5.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

Printed by Slough Newspapers Ltd (TU). ISSN 0267-8721

Rushdie ...

(Continued from page 1)

Keith Vaz and Max Madden have hopped on the Islamic fundamentalist bandwagon. Vaz joined a Muslim demonstration against the book in Leicester and demanded it be withdrawn from publication.

The hostility of the Labour Party to social struggle, its backstabbing and impotent "community" organising has helped drive sections of the Asian population into the waiting clutches of the mullahs and the mosques. Recently in Spitalfields, east London, some 1000 Bengali youths have joined the fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islam (Bangladesh)-backed Young Muslim Organisation. But religious obscurantism of every kind is a death-trap for the workers and oppressed. Ideologically preaching submission on earth in return for paradise after death, organised religion is materially linked to the very exploiters, despots and demagogues who live off the misery of the toilers. The priests, the mullahs, the ministers, the reverends of the Anglican church: these serve capitalist masters on earth.

FOR THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

The bourgeoisie, in its mission to maintain the rule of a system that long-since ceased to be historically progressive, has greatly retrogressed from its own revolutionary period. Against the absolute monarchy, the "divine right of kings" and against the religious obscurantism which was its ideological pillar, the revolutionary bourgeoisies of Europe and North America in the 17th and 18th centuries established and defended the freedom of religious conscience. The Enlightenment thinkers fought for the abolition of censorship and the medieval laws punishing "blasphemy", "apostasy" and "heresy". Today, from the Moral Majority bigots in the US to the French Catholic fundamentalists, the bourgeoisie openly invites clerical reaction as a social prop to its rule. That Reagan, while top imperialist cop, sincerely believed in Armageddon is an index of how far along this road they've gone. As Mexican poet Octavio Paz put it in his defence of Rushdie: "We are seeing a disappearance of the modern values that came with the Enlightenment.... We are facing a historical contradiction in our century" (*New Statesman & Society*, 31 March). The fact is that only those dedicated to the destruction of the bourgeois order, revolutionary Marxists, consistently defend even the separation of church and state today.

England's incomplete bourgeois revolution did not do away with the established Church, that institution which has been called the Tory Party at prayer. Now, under the "Education Reform Act", school worship must be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character", religious education must "reflect the fact that the religious traditions of Britain are mainly Christian" (*Guardian*, 13 December 1988). And seizing on "parental choice", the Dewsbury racists organised to prevent their children from attending a mostly Asian school; this same argument will be used not only to enforce racist and religious segregation but increase class-bias in the already horribly class-biased educational system. In other words, it is particularly bad news for workers and the oppressed.

Various bourgeois mouthpieces have deployed the existing interference of



Camera Press

Grunwick strike 1977: Asian women in forefront of battle for union rights.

religion into education to back segregationists of all sorts. As the *Independent* (10 September, 1987) editorialised: "a nation which accepts Anglican, Roman Catholic and Jewish schools would be hard pressed to deny Muslims the option". But the answer is not more state-supported religious schools, any more than it is extending the blasphemy laws to include Islam! The Church of England is hardly concerned with the "cultural rights" of the Muslim (or for that matter Hindu) Asians. It is very concerned with maintaining its own state privileges and continued interference in various forms of social life. *Dis-establish the Churches of England and Scotland! For free secular education for all, including the teaching of minority languages such as Bengali and Urdu. Keep the churches and mosques out of the schools!* It will take victorious proletarian revolution on these isles to rid England, Scotland and Wales of the monarchy, the established church, House of Lords and licensing hours.

The multi-racial working class of this country will find the road to emancipation from all forms of oppression and exploitation in joint class struggle against the material conditions which breed poverty, backwardness and despair and give rise to all manner of religious obscurantism, the racist reaction and national chauvinism it serves. The Asian and black workers of Britain will form a vital component of a genuine revolutionary workers party, a tribune of all the oppressed. Such a party will take the best of all the cultures and traditions and battle irreconcilably against all forms of discrimination and privilege, its apologists from the Tories to "her majesty's" church-ridden Labour traitors.

FOR SOCIALIST REVOLUTION TO SWEEP AWAY WORLD FILTH!

Rushdie's books deal with the abrupt and inescapable confrontation which occurs when people from backward, peasant societies dominated by religious beliefs are suddenly inserted with no transition into a modern capitalist society. In *The Satanic Verses* he is dealing with immigrants from the Indian subcontinent where religious sectarianism and communalism were fostered by the "divide and rule" policy of British imperialism. The results: Partition, when millions of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs were made homeless and hundreds of thousands butchered while the likes of Lord Mountbatten sipped gin and discussed the twilight of Empire. Every backward institution - the caste system, religious fundamentalism, the degradation of women - was entrenched and exacerbated by colonial rule.

One of the key differences between

those countries which experienced a bourgeois revolution and those stifled under the enforced backwardness of colonial rule and its local henchmen is the condition of women. Look at Afghanistan, where the imperialist-backed mullah cutthroats have waged bloody civil war in defence of the bride price, the veil, the forced seclusion of women. School teachers combatting massive illiteracy among women were among the Afghan mullahs' foremost victims of barbaric slaughter. Khomeini's Iran is another horrible example of the subjugation of women beneath the *chadori*, a society which stones "adulterers" and executes homosexuals. A defender of Rushdie, Muslim writer Fadia Faqir recounted in a letter to the *Independent* (1 March) the story of an 11-year-old Jordanian girl and her mother being "silenced" with an iron bar by the "master of the house", to prevent the daughter from attending school.

Today, the fake-left defend Rushdie - not too taxing given that nominally even the Thatcher government claims to do so. It's even cheaper considering that virtually without exception, these so-called "socialists" shamelessly hailed Khomeini's Islamic Revolution as "anti-imperialist" denying or prettifying the medieval backwardness and vicious repression the mullahs would impose on the Iranian masses. Bowing to the Cold War outcry over the Soviet Union's intervention on the side of social progress in Afghanistan, many of these same "leftists" howled for withdrawal of the Red Army. Revolutionary Marxists do not believe the road to the liberation of the Iranian or Afghan

masses lies in the imposition of the mores of the 7th century AD, any more than that Islamic fanaticism should be hailed when turned against a "heretical" author. This should be elementary, but in fact it is uniquely the international Spartacist tendency which from the beginning demanded "Down with the shah! Down with the mullahs! For workers revolution in Iran!" and said "Hail Red Army in Afghanistan!"

Against both the bourgeois hypocrites and the queasy liberals, Marxists are not "cultural relativists": we oppose female circumcision, the veil, suttee, binding of feet, blasphemy laws of all descriptions, proscriptions against abortion, divorce, pornography, etc. The clerical states not only of Iran, but of the Zionist bunker in Israel or the Republic of Ireland, are hellholes of reaction and oppression. To liberate humankind from all the old crap is the task of the socialist revolution in our epoch. Neither the imperialist bourgeoisie nor the weak bourgeoisies of the backward countries can solve or defend even elementary bourgeois tasks, let alone lay the social basis for genuine freedom.

In sweeping away the tsars, landlords and capitalists, the October Revolution of 1917 also broke the stranglehold of the Russian Orthodox church, a bulwark of the old regime. The church's huge landholdings were expropriated and distributed to the peasantry; religious teaching was eliminated from the schools; strict separation of church and state was rigorously enforced. Revolutionary measures to liberate women from feudal oppression in Soviet Central Asia created powerful allies against Islamic reaction. The programme of the Russian Communist Party noted that religious prejudice - fundamentally born of poverty, oppression and despair - would only be completely eliminated when the material basis for it was destroyed: "The Russian Communist Party is guided by the conviction that nothing but the realisation of purposiveness and full awareness in all the social and economic activities of the masses can lead to the complete disappearance of religious prejudices" (Bukharin and Preobrazhensky, *The ABC of Communism*). Thus, the struggle to put an end to religious obscurantism and superstition is firmly interlinked with the struggle to establish a genuine world socialist order, in which man truly becomes the master of his own fate. ■

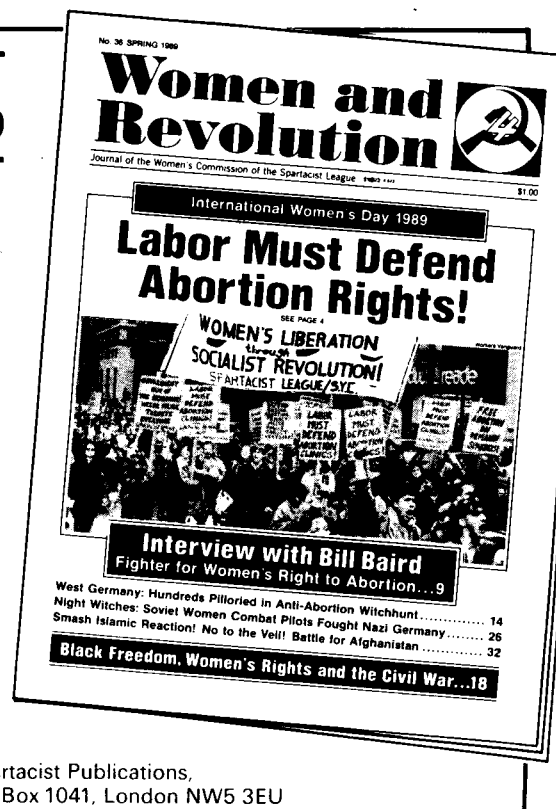
International Women's Day 1989

Women and Revolution

Spring 1989, No. 36
\$1.00 (32 pages)

- Labor Must Defend Abortion Rights!
- Interview with Bill Baird
- West Germany: Anti-Abortion Witchhunt
- Soviet Women Combat Pilots Fought Nazi Germany
- Battle for Afghanistan
- Black Freedom, Women's Rights and the Civil War

Order from/make payable to: Spartacist Publications,
PO Box 1041, London NW5 3EU



Afghanistan: the Russian Question point-blank

Workers Power-Leninist debate ducks defence of USSR

Workers Hammer reprints below the Spartacist leaflet entitled "Afghanistan: the Russian Question point blank" distributed on 20 March to a public debate between Workers Power and the Leninist organisation. In the event, the Spartacist League was also given ten minutes time to present our views on Afghanistan and the key question of defence of the Soviet Union that it has posed to revolutionists.

Incredibly, in a "debate" on Afghanistan the question of the Soviet Union was at best a footnote, except for our own contribution. The arguments between those who sought a "third road" in Afghanistan between imperialism and the Soviet intervention – either in a non-existent indigenous proletarian revolution (*Leninist*) or non-existent "independent" "third force" of revolutionaries (Workers Power) – was, as the Spartacist spokesman noted, "a somewhat sterile debate, because the two sides do not currently have fundamentally counterposed positions on the Russian question".

Eight years ago, when counterrevolutionary Polish Solidarnosc threatened capitalist restoration in Poland, Workers Power and *Leninist* found themselves on opposite sides of the barricades – with WP tailing Walesa's "mass movement" for capitalist restoration and *Leninist* supporting Jaruzelski's counter-coup. But at the debate it was left to the Spartacist League to attack Workers Power for its betrayal. Similarly, the *Leninist* kept quiet about Workers Power's refusal in practice to defend against Khomeini's terror the Stalinist Tudeh Party and others (including the Rahe Kargar group, with whom *Leninist* has friendly relations). An organisation in transition, *Leninist* has recently adopted positions which put a question mark over its continued defence of the Soviet Union against imperialism (see article on our recent debate with *Leninist*).

The Spartacist spokesman explained, against both the Stalinophobic centrists of WP and the eclectic "critical" Stalinists of *Leninist*, that: "Trotskyism basically analyses the Soviet bureaucracy as having a dual character. On the one hand, it is a transmission belt for imperialism. On the other hand, because it rests upon certain collectivised property forms, it is sometimes compelled to defend those property forms and therefore carry out a progressive role. I will submit that what the Soviet bureaucracy did in Afghanistan confirms our view of that bureaucracy – so it was a good thing that they went in '79 and it is a betrayal that they came out today." As our comrade concluded: "In Afghanistan I believe that our position is vindicated: we gave military support to the Soviet Union when it invaded Afghanistan while warning that there was no basis for political support. Both of you equivocate on the central question of are you for the military support to the Soviet Union at this particular period.



Kabuli women's militia prepared for life-and-death struggle against CIA's mullah cutthroats.

So the line is the Russian question here and who are the defencists of the Soviet Union against capitalism and imperialism."

During the course of the discussion, Workers Power declined the invitation to defend its line on either Poland or Iran. Nor did it go after the *Leninist* for its defence of the "rights" of the Russian fascists of Pamyat. That watershed position was criticised only by the SL; during the discussion period one of the *Leninist* supporters went so far as to argue that those who defended Salman Rushdie should see that there is no difference in defending...Pamyat. Many in the audience collapsed in laughter and appalled gasps. But this "unfortunate" remark is indicative of the Kautskyite bulge on classless "democracy" which reeks from *Leninist* today. As we explain in the article on Pamyat in this issue (see page 6): "Under a healthy dictatorship of the proletariat, like the Bolshevik power under Lenin and Trotsky, the social conditions which generate the likes of Pamyat would not exist, and any fascist scum that did emerge would be immediately suppressed. But the Stalinist bureaucracy fears independent action by the proletariat far more than it does Pamyat." The crushing of Pamyat by the independent mobilisation of Soviet workers as a necessary measure of self-defence by the Soviet peoples will be a step on the road to proletarian political revolution.

Workers Power demonstrated its own obsession with classless "democracy". Defending its absurd characterisation of every anti-capitalist transformation on the planet after October 1917, (as well as the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan) as "counterrevolutionary", WP's chief spokesman at the debate, Mark Hoskisson, reiterated that these were carried out by "bureaucratic diktat" and aimed at "the prevention of any manifestation of independent working class organs of power". From the floor, a Spartacist comrade noted

that the only "counterrevolutionary" overthrow of capitalism we could imagine was a return to feudalism. For the left apologists in Workers Power for the likes of Neil Kinnock, the class divide separating those societies where capitalism has been smashed is not decisive. This anti-Trotskyist position reflects the baggage of "Neither Washington nor Moscow" state capitalism, from which WP has only partially broken. However, it was refreshing to see WP reverse its standard gutless policy of excluding the authentic Trotskyism of the Spartacist League: in this case its oft-proclaimed commitment to "workers democracy" was carried out in practice; Workers Power ran a democratic public meeting.

The 1979 intervention of the Soviet Red Army on the side of human progress in the Afghan civil war posed the defence of the USSR point blank. Afghanistan was the opening shot of the imperialists' renewed anti-Soviet war drive. Their hue and cry against the Soviet intervention was picked up by their labour lackeys and the majority of the fake-left fell into line,

howling for the withdrawal of the Red Army. From Reagan to Thatcher, from the Pakistani rulers to Khomeini in Iran, the cutthroat mujahedin have been armed and backed to the hilt. The reason is obvious: in Afghanistan they wanted to see Russian blood flow as part of their drive to "roll back communism", to ultimately smash the gains of the October Revolution and reconquer what was ripped from the clutches of the capitalist system in 1917.

We in the international Spartacist tendency said "Hail Red Army!" at the time of the Soviet intervention. It was, for communists, an unambiguous war pitting the Soviet army and its left-nationalist allies against an imperialist-backed counterrevolutionary melange of landlords, money lenders, mullahs, tribal chiefs and bandits committed to serfdom, usury, the bride price and mass illiteracy. Against the imperialist blather about "Afghan self-determination" and "national sovereignty" we forthrightly stated that the Soviet entry opened the road to the liberation of the Afghan toiling masses and freedom for Afghan women from barbarism. Afghanistan is not a nation but in fact a feudal-derived society composed of a mosaic of different peoples, lacking the social basis to support even the modest democratic reforms the PDPA sought to implement. In any event, 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. We demanded: "extend the social gains of October to Afghanistan!" Gorbachev's pullout is a betrayal.

Our "Hail Red Army" line was met with vilification from the fake-left camp followers of the imperialists. Both the Stalinophobic centrists of Workers Power and the eclectic not-so-"left" Stalinists of the *Leninist* grouping have felt compelled to denounce it as well. While neither group joined the full-blown capitulation to anti-Sovietism over Afghanistan,

continued on page 9

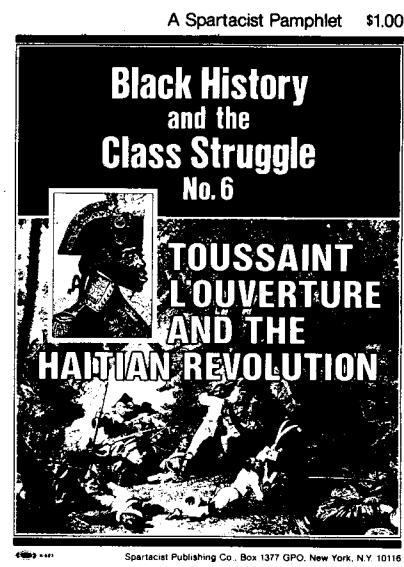
Order yours now!

No 6 75p (32 pages)

Contents:

- * Toussaint L'Ouverture and the Haitian Revolution
- * Mobilize Labor/Black Power to Stop the KKK
- * Mumia Abu-Jamal Speaks from Death Row
- * Battle of Christiana - A blow Against Slavery
- * Malcolm X on Klan Terror
- * Genocide U.S.A.

Order from/make payable to Spartacist Publications, P O Box 1041, London NW5 3EU.



Spartacist League debates Leninist:

The USSR today and the tasks of revolutionaries



SL spokesman addresses 27 February debate.

On 27 February a debate on "The USSR today and the tasks of revolutionaries" took place in London's Conway Hall between the Spartacist League and the *Leninist* organisation. The *Leninist* grouping has spent most of its short political life dedicated to "reforging" the wretched CPGB and has been heavily influenced by the Turkish TKP (formerly the TKP [Leninist]). Presently, their orientation to the CPGB is a shambles. Their isolation and confusion with the advent of Gorbachev in the Soviet Union is manifest.

The spokesman for *Leninist* at the debate, Jack Conrad, stated in his opening remarks that "One of the forces at the head of capitalism today and it cannot be denied exists in the form of the Gorbachevite leadership of the Soviet Communist Party." And Stalin, according to Conrad, "was a great revolutionary. Stalin was the personification of one of Lenin's committeemen Precisely what Gorbachev is is a pygmy.... The Spartacist League obviously considers that Gorbachev is either something greater than Stalin or something equivalent to Stalin."

We consider Gorbachev an heir of Stalin, like Brezhnev and Khrushchev before him. The policies of appeasement of world imperialism are the same. When the Spartacist spokesman David Strachan took up the *Leninist*'s claim that Stalin was a great war leader and how his pursuit of "peaceful coexistence" paved the way for the Nazi victories of 1941-42 and millions of Soviet casualties, neither Conrad nor other *Leninist* supporters had any reply. Furthermore, *Leninist* claims the Soviet working class "never ruled in a direct way" and the October Revolution was ... bourgeois! Comrade Strachan replied to this: "Lenin, all the Bolsheviks, thought it was a proletarian revolution, that it established the dictatorship of the proletariat. But they [*Leninist*] say it's a bourgeois revolution ... you remove the question of the state from having anything to do with materialist reality, ie that it's armed bodies of men that protect particular property forms. But this is the conclusion you're forced to draw by all the vague talk about this revolution and that one, one of them may be proletarian, the other may be not, they grow over into each other, backwards and forward, depends on this and that.

It's not a class and materialist analysis." Confirming their inability to establish a class line, Conrad maintained "we have to call a revolution a revolution", and made explicit that according to *Leninist*, the bourgeoisie can be revolutionary today.

While warning of the imminent dangers of capitalist restoration they believe Gorbachev represents, *Leninist*, in its press and again during the debate, consider defending the "rights" to organise of the dyed-in-the-wool Russian fascists of Pamyat to be a possible way to "fight Pamyat". Earlier they advocated seeking Pamyat members out for discussion; during the course of the debate one of their members openly appealed to classless "pluralism" within the workers state. *Leninist*'s blather about "struggle of ideas" and "pluralism" when applied to Pamyat is counterposed to mobilising the Soviet workers to crush this counterrevolutionary threat in de-

policies of "socialism in one country" and "market-oriented reform" tend to undermine the workers state in the face of imperialist encirclement, and thereby contribute to the growth of capitalist restorationist forces; on the other it is forced from time to time to take measures in defence of the workers property forms from which it derives its privileges. But it also contains within it the most reactionary elements, conciliators of Pamyat in the USSR, of the Vatican and Pilsudskiite anti-Semites in Poland, helping to spawn the counterrevolutionary Solidarnosc. Capitalist restoration itself, however, requires a social counterrevolution just as the smashing of capitalism requires so-

at, while it supports the suppression of the Hungarian workers: why does the *Leninist* say political revolution now? Conrad replied: "Because the bureaucracy has come to represent an absolute fetter on the development of the productive forces." What is the bureaucracy - a class then? Does this make Stalin's crimes and betrayals an excusable "relative fetter"? This shoddy contrivance flows from the political methodology and programme that *Leninist* has inherited from Stalinism.

Leninist certainly "do not have any coherent, revolutionary strategy for the world" as comrade Strachan pointed out. The same anti-Marxist idealist claptrap which characterises their current thinking on the Soviet bureaucracy turns up on every question. Thus, among their "hot spots" of revolutionary ferment today, *Leninist* lists Iran, Turkey and Ireland. Most sane people would be surprised to hear that in Northern Ireland there is a "revolutionary situation" today, let alone in Khomeini's Iran where tragically leftist opponents of the regime have been massacred in the thousands.

Most of the floor contributions by *Leninist* members centred on Ireland; obviously the comrades preferred to take refuge in the typical vicarious enthusing of the British "left" over green nationalism rather than defend their politics on the USSR today. In a lively exchange SL supporters and others took *Leninist* to task for the genocidal implications of their uncritical support to petty-bourgeois nationalism. But behind this *Leninist* is simply spouting the Menshevik-Stalinist two-stage theory: first the "national liberation" struggle, entailing support to the nationalists, then the future socialist struggle. As the Spartacist spokesman explained: their programme "is for a unitary Ireland, self-determination which must mean that you say that the island can be unified under bourgeois rule and you'll support the forcible unification of Ireland, therefore the reversal of the terms of oppression in North

continued on page 11



Basil Blackwell Inc

Left Oppositionists in Siberian exile demonstrate on anniversary of Bolshevik Revolution, 1928. Centre banner (with pictures of Lenin and Trotsky) proclaims "Long live the Dictatorship of the Proletariat".

fence of their class rule. They echo, in fact, that section of the bureaucracy opening the door to the Russian fascists in the name of "glasnost".

Leninist does not recognise the dual character of the Soviet bureaucracy, from Stalin to Gorbachev, which is based not on good or bad ideas but on the material reality of the degenerated workers state atop which the Stalinist bureaucratic caste rests. On the one hand, this bureaucracy is a transmission belt for imperialism; its

cial revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The parasitic caste can be shattered during proletarian political upheaval - as happened in Hungary in 1956, when 80 per cent of the CP went over to the side of the workers. The Hungarian workers uprising crushed by Khrushchev was an incipient political revolution, and SL supporters challenged the *Leninist* to explain why it calls for political revolution in Russia now, and for debating Pam-

Soviet workers must act - crush Pamyat!

Fascist cancer in Gorbachev's Russia

When the nativist Russian fascists of Pamyat staged openly anti-Semitic demonstrations in the heart of Lenin-grad last summer, it sent shock waves throughout Soviet society (see "Soviet workers must crush Pamyat" *Workers Hammer* no 101, October 1988). Unchallenged by active mass opposition and protected by a section of the Soviet bureaucracy, Pamyat has grown ever bolder. It seized on the campaigning for the 26 March elections to the newly created Congress of People's Deputies as a springboard to flaunt its terror tactics and spew its violent anti-Semitism and Great Russian chauvinism. Intended as a showcase of "democratisation" under Gorbachev's *glasnost* (openness), the election campaign has been marked by public nominating meetings which in many districts have turned into mass free-for-all debates lasting into the night. But not where Pamyat appeared.

Pamyat targeted Moscow's Sverdlovsk precinct, one of the most publicised campaigns in the country, where the nomination was being contested by Vitaly Korotich, editor of *Ogonyok*, a flagship of Gorbachev's programme of political and economic "restructuring" (*perestroika*). Pamyat succeeded in forcing Korotich off the ballot, and on 19 February in Moscow, hundreds turned out to a demonstration called by "informal patriotic organisations" to celebrate Pamyat's victory. One speaker wore a sweat-shirt reading, "Down with the occupation by Jewish nationalists", and led the crowd in chants of "Hang Korotich! Hang Korotich!" "You can see the work of our hand", boasted a Pamyat member, ominously adding, "and you will see it more".

The residents of Sverdlovsk got a direct and frightening look at the work of Pamyat's hand. As some 700 people crowded into a Moscow auditorium on the night of 9 January, they were confronted with a well-organised squad of more than 50 Pamyat thugs. People entering the meeting were told, "go back - we know your address", and threatened that if they voted for Korotich "they'd be in a bad way" (*Ogonyok*, 14 January). Inside the hall, Pamyat started screaming "Long live the Russian people" and "There's no room for the friends of Jews on Russian soil". Brandishing yellow Stars of David blackened over by crosses and a banner reading, "No trust in the leader of the yellow (Jewish) press", they yelled at the podium: "Korotich, you Jew, give back your silver coins."

Ogonyok quoted a horrified eyewitness: "Looking at the activity of the well-organised hooligans from the 'Pamyat' society, at how they shouted, whistled, stamped their feet, threw out foul words, offensive slogans, I automatically thought: what does this remind me of?" She answered herself by pointing to

Hitler's 1923 Munich Beer Hall Putsch: "That's how the thugs from the Munich beer halls got started." Korotich, who is not Jewish, later recalled: "I grew up in the Ukraine and I've seen Nazis in my life, and this was not much better."

That's what the "Russian National-Patriotic Front Pamyat" is: Russian Nazis! They agitate for an anti-Semitic Final Solution; they strut around in black shirts and black jackboots;

Russian soil, a spearhead of fascist counterrevolution within the Soviet degenerated workers state. Recently, war memorials in Murmansk have been defaced with swastikas, and Russian youth have been seen wearing swastikas. Pamyat fuhrer Dmitri Vasiliev claims to have 20,000 members in Moscow and support in 30 other Russian cities. And they have been growing ominously.

However, the potential forces for

tural, economic and political life (like Moshe Milshtein, a leader of Soviet army intelligence). There is a high rate of intermarriage between Jews and ethnic Russians, between Russians and non-Russian nationalities. Former Soviet leader and head of the KGB Yuri Andropov, for example, had a Jewish grandmother.

It is not insignificant that one of the best-selling books in the Soviet Union today is *Children of the Arbat*,



Signs say "Pamyat will win", "Yes to nationalism and patriotism" and "No to rootless cosmopolitanism" (above). Pamyat fascists disrupt Moscow election meetings in January (right).

Ogonyok Photos

Victims of 1903 Kishinev massacre (below left) - Pamyat seeks to carry forward anti-Semitic terror of tsarist Black Hundreds. Another of Pamyat's forebears: Russian fascist general Vlasov collaborated with Nazi invaders (below right).



David Mowshowitch



World Publishing

they hark back to the prerevolutionary Black Hundreds, pogromist gangs organised by the tsarist secret police to terrorise the Jewish ghettos. But their direct inspiration is more recent and even more murderous than that. These rabidly anti-Semitic Great Russian chauvinists may be ambivalent about Hitler, because while they think Hitler did a good thing for Germany - by exterminating all the Jews - they hate the Germans as well. But they are nativist Hitlerites on

crushing Pamyat are far greater. Despite decades of Stalinist nationalism, a deep reservoir of internationalism was inherent in the foundation of the Soviet state. Pamyat is a threat to all the non-Russian nationalities and to the very survival of the Soviet Union as a multinational state. Moscow and other major urban centres are deeply integrated; Jews today are not confined to the Pale of Settlement as they were under the tsars, but are an integral part of Soviet cul-

a powerful novel attacking the Stalin era, written by the Jewish writer Anatoli Rybakov (though Rybakov's book is still outsold by several works by Russian nationalists). One of the principal motivations for the founding of the Federation of Socialist Clubs two years ago was, in fact, opposition to Pamyat. But Pamyat is not going to be stopped by an opposition confined simply to literary denunciations. In *Ogonyok's* account of the 9 January Pamyat attack, one

V Chernov expresses dismay that a small handful of *organised* fascists was permitted to break up and terrorise a meeting of *unorganised* hundreds.

The main force for crushing Pamyat does not lie with the Soviet intelligentsia, which has rallied in its bulk behind Gorbachev's market-oriented "reforms". Just as it was the Marxist-led workers who successfully defended the Jewish ghettos and workers' districts against the tsarist Black Hundreds prior to the Bolshevik Revolution, so today it is the multinational Soviet working people who have both the power and the vital interest to sweep away the Pamyat fascists. In particular, many of the tens of thousands of returned Soviet veterans who fought against reactionary cutthroats in Afghanistan believe they were carrying out their "internationalist duty" there, and can and must be mobilised against the Great Russian chauvinists of Pamyat.

Amid the explosive rise of nationalist movements among the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union, the most dangerous nationalism of all remains that of the dominant Russian people. In its repudiation of the Bolshevik programme of international socialist revolution, the Stalinist bureaucracy opened the door to all the old crap of the tsarist prison house of peoples, glorifying social backwardness and Great Russian chauvinism. If the working people of Russia take it upon themselves to wipe out the Russian Nazis it will send a message that would be heard from the Caucasus to the Baltic. *Soviet workers must act! Crush Pamyat!*

THE "MEMORY" OF TSARIST POGROMISM

Yet these Nazis find protection under the wing of a section of the bureaucracy opposed to Gorbachev's "reforms", while the Gorbachevites tolerate and amnesty Pamyat by denying it is fascist. When Pamyat marched through Moscow's Red Square two years ago and demanded a meeting with Korotich's ideological soulmate, then Moscow party head Boris Yeltsin, Yeltsin invited them in for a two-hour discussion and praised their "patriotism for our motherland". Today Yeltsin says: "Pamyat began as something interesting and then turned evil." Pamyat began by thinly covering its rabid anti-Semitic Great Russian chauvinism with a veneer of "patriotic" concern with the preservation of old monuments and churches.

The Russian Orthodox church was the organising centre of pogroms and counterrevolution; this is the "memory" (*pamyat* in Russian) these fascists claim, and it is being officially encouraged. The *New York Times* (22 February) reported on a church "concert" in Moscow on 16 February "where more than 3,000 people celebrated God and pre-revolutionary Russia" and the most enthusiastic applause of the evening came when writer Konstantin Kovalev hailed the old anthem, "God Save the Tsar". The *Times* commented: "Under Mr. Gorbachev, the state has set out to win over at least some of the Russian patriots with greater religious freedom and promises to restore neglected Russian monuments...." Last April, Gorbachev met with the Russian Orthodox Holy Synod in Moscow, the first time a Soviet leader had met with the church hierarchy since Stalin in 1943! The government's official celebration in June of the church's 1000th anniversary fuelled Russian nationalist obscurantism.

The last decade has seen the sharp growth of a chauvinist "Russophile" movement shot through with anti-

Semitism. Many writers associated with the "Village Prose" school, which idolises the backwardness of Russian village life, push the traditional Black Hundreds line of "Beat the Yids!" They include prominent and best-selling writers like Valentin Rasputin, Vasily Belov and Viktor Astafyev (who rails against the "seething pus of Jewish super-intellectual arrogance"). A recent Pamyat manifesto claims support for *perestroika*, but "a la Rasputin", not "a la Korotich".

The conflicting currents which have emerged under *glasnost*, and now tear away within the Stalinist bureaucracy and Soviet society generally, were reflected in the two demonstrations which took place in Moscow on the anniversary of Stalin's death on 5 March. While the semi-official Memorial society attracted thousands to a protest honouring the victims of Stalin's terror, Pamyat laid a wreath at Stalin's grave - and then rallied at a monument to the tsarist soldiers who "liberated" Bulgaria from Turkish rule in 1878. While Memorial raises funds to erect a monument to the victims of Stalin's terror, Pamyat raises funds to erect a monument to Tsar Nicholas II. In a street encounter on 5 March, a Pamyat supporter argued: "Russia has been in existence for at least a thousand years. We've never had a democracy before ... we can only be strong if we have a strong leader. Democracy means disorder." A supporter of Memorial could only reply, "But America is strong and it is a democracy" (*Washington Post*, 6 March).

The intellectuals and technocrats who are the base for Gorbachev's *perestroika* seek to appease and emulate Western imperialism. Their op-

ponents capitalise on popular disgust with the prospect of a return to pervasive profiteering and mass unemployment, to hark back to the days of "order" under Stalin and to a "Greater Russia" in which the Jews, Armenians and other non-Russian nationalities who are particularly prominent in Gorbachev's entourage "knew their place". Last November Moscow was the scene of a formerly unthinkable public symposium on Trotsky, where the relatives of Old Bolsheviks like Joffe, Piatnitsky and Antonov-Ovseenko recalled the Stalin terror and the heroism of the Left

is precisely the internationalism of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks, who swept away the dark oppression of the tsarist "fatherland" and its Orthodox church which Pamyat wants to reinstate.

PROTECTORS AT THE TOP

For the moment at least, Pamyat appeals to and serves the interests of those elements of the bureaucracy opposed to Gorbachev's liberalisation and the "new permissiveness". It is an open secret that a section of the Leningrad party leadership promotes Pamyat, which first emerged in 1979



Bolshevik Revolution purged Russia of Black Hundreds reaction. Jewish workers' self-defence unit in Odessa, April 1918.

YIVO Institute



Gorbachev with Russian Orthodox Patriarch Pimen. Kremlin bureaucracy conciliates religious obscurantism for its own nationalist reasons.

Der Spiegel

Opposition. But the symposium itself became the scene of a gruesome display of Jew-baiting by Pamyat supporters who, as *Le Monde* (22 November 1988) reported, "wanted it known that this Trotsky was just one of those Jews who invented the revolution to kill Mother Russia". What is missing on all sides in the debates raging within the Soviet Union today

under the wing of the powerful Ministry of Aviation Industry and, according to the paper *Sobesednik*, numbers an army general among its members (*Washington Post*, 19 February). At the time of last summer's demonstrations in Leningrad "a mob of fascist thugs from the Pamyat society" was seen with a poster reading "Greetings to Nina Andreyeva! Hurrah!" (*Moscow News*, 11 September 1988). The "Nina Andreyeva letter", reputedly masterminded by Gorbachev's chief opponent in the leadership, the now demoted Yegor Ligachev, denounced the "excesses" of *glasnost* and particularly the attacks on Stalin.

Pamyat's vendetta against Korotich coincided with a campaign against him by anti-Gorbachev elements in the literary establishment. Korotich was subjected to vicious attack at a December meeting of the Russian Writers Union, headed by "conservatives" Sergei Mikhailov and Yuri Bondarev. When *Ogonyok* responded with an open letter accusing Bondarev of working against *perestroika*, Korotich's opponents, including Rasputin and film director Sergei Bondarchuk, got a broadside published on the back page of *Pravda* which warned: "History is being unprecedently distorted, social achievements of the people are being revised, continued on page 8



Gorbachev in Estonia, 1987. Market-oriented perestroika intensifies national antagonisms within the Soviet Union.

Der Spiegel

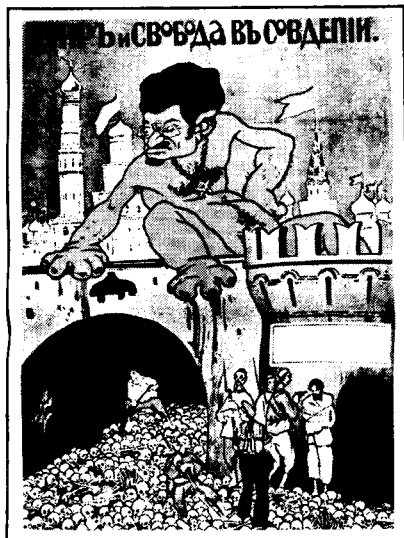
Pamyat...

(Continued from page 7)

and cultural values are being vulgarised..." (Guardian, 19 January).

On 23 January, the magazines *Moskva*, *Molodaya Gvardiya* and *Roman-Gazeta*, which pander to the crudest Russian nationalism, sponsored a meeting in Moscow which was effectively a rally against *Ogonyok*. According to an account in *Moscow News* (12 February) by liberal poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko: "the hall was decorated with the slogan 'The Pamyat Movement Will Win' and a red banner on which the hammer and sickle was replaced with St. George the Victorious ... [who] in the hands of the Black Hundreds was a symbol of pogroms." Another Pamyat banner read "No to Rootless Cosmopolitans" - evoking Stalin's anti-Semitic purges of the late '40s and early '50s. The deputy editor of *Molodaya Gvardiya*, an official *Komsomol* (Communist Youth) publication, inflamed the crowd by reciting statistics on the preponderance of Jews in Soviet literature and education.

"I remembered", wrote Yevtushenko, a "gathering on Hitler's birthday a few years ago in Pushkin Square". In 1982, a handful of Russian Nazis showed up in Moscow's Pushkin Square to "celebrate" Hitler's



Penguin Books

In anti-Semitic poster, White Russian counterrevolutionaries depict Trotsky as ogre of the Kremlin.

birthday; they were immediately pounced on by hundreds of students and young sports fans. Yet while Yevtushenko denounces Pamyat for its anti-Semitism, this "poet of the possible" warns against "breaking up the organisation by force using self-appointed 'limbs of the law'" and tries to compete for the nationalist banner with "those who wish to monopolise Russian patriotism".

SOVIET WORKERS MUST CRUSH PAMYAT!

What to do about Pamyat has become a burning issue. Last summer, *Izvestia* published and gave its support to an appeal by 59 Leningrad academics demanding the arrest of Pamyat's leaders. At the same time, *Moscow News* carried a denunciatory report of Pamyat's Leningrad rallies by writer Valery Voskoboinikov. Voskoboinikov and his family received a number of telephoned death threats, as the "Leningrad Council of the National Patriotic Front" distributed a hit list including his name, while other leaflets signed "Pamyat Fathers" called for the methods of "partisan war" against opponents. In response *Moscow News* (30 October 1988) called on the authorities to prosecute Pamyat for violating Soviet laws which

ban racist agitation. After several months of "investigation", the Leningrad procurator (state prosecutor) exonerated the fascists of advocating violence and extremism. Pamyat's demonstrations had official permission from the highest Leningrad authorities in the first place and took place under the gaze of the police, who harassed or arrested only anti-Pamyat protesters.

Having experienced a taste of relatively open public debate in the last few years, many Soviet citizens are undoubtedly fearful that any action by the bureaucracy against Pamyat will be turned against them. A letter to *Moscow News* (13 November 1988) by Leningrad journalist Anna Osipova recognised that "if today Pamyat representatives are put away, tomorrow I may be put away". But Osipova took issue with editor Yegor Yakovlev, a leading Gorbachevite, for justifying official tolerance of Pamyat as part of *glasnost* and insisted, "Non-resistance to evil is the most fertile soil for it".

Under a healthy dictatorship of the proletariat, like the Bolshevik power under Lenin and Trotsky, the social conditions which generate the likes of Pamyat would not exist, and any fascist scum that did emerge would be immediately suppressed. But the Stalinist bureaucracy fears independent action by the proletariat far more than it does Pamyat. The nationalist bureaucracy cannot be entrusted with suppressing Pamyat, but massive and determined demonstrations by the Soviet working people can and must eliminate this nativist Hitlerite menace, presenting the authorities with an accomplished fact. At the time of the Pamyat provocations in Leningrad last summer, we wrote:

"For every one of these Pamyat fascists, there are tens and hundreds of fascist-hating workers, students, veterans and youth in military service who would eagerly come out to the Rumyantsevsky Garden on a Thursday to teach the Russian Nazis a lesson. Who can doubt that a single militant demonstration of 50,000 outraged Leningraders, suitably prepared to defend themselves, coming out to burn Nazi swastika flags in Pamyat's face, ready to chase these Nazis to the nearby Neva River or drive them into the canals, would put an end to Pamyat?..."

"What is necessary now is an aggressive mobilisation organised as widely as possible - from below, independently of the authorities - in Leningrad, to ensure the greatest preponderance in the relationship of forces against the dangerous Pamyat fascist fanatics. People from many different political persuasions can join together in action to smash Pamyat."

When the American fascist Ku Klux Klan tried to stage a race-hate provocation in Philadelphia last 5 November, TASS (6 November 1988) correctly reported that a "massive anti-racist demonstration took place on the site of the planned" fascist demonstration, but it falsely claimed that the demonstration "demanded the passage of federal legislation making the KKK illegal". It is a reformist notion pursued by the American Communist Party, whose idea of communism is to pressure the capitalist Democratic Party, that the racist American ruling class can be persuaded to "ban the Klan". It was the Marxist Partisan Defense Committee, a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal defence organisation in accordance with the political views of the Trotskyist Spartacist League, which initiated this successful united-front action - centred on the power of the



LY Leonidov

Lenin and Trotsky's Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was formed on the basis of proletarian internationalism.

working class - to stop the Klan, and revolutionaries were key to building it. The CP wanted nothing to do with it (though it subsequently participated in the PDC-initiated action against Klansman David Duke in Chicago).

FOR LENINIST INTERNATIONALISM!

With its embrace of the hoary traditions of Russian nationalism under the guise of building "socialism in one country" and its repudiation of Leninist internationalism, the Stalinist bureaucracy at best politically disarms the Soviet masses in the face of nativist fascist reaction and at times dangerously overlaps with outright Great Russian reactionaries. In his murderous campaign to smash the Bolshevik-Leninist Opposition led by Leon Trotsky, Stalin regurgitated the anti-Semitic appeals of the counter-revolutionary White Guards, who painted Trotsky as the personification of "Jew-Bolshevism". Years later, in the aftermath of World War II, Stalin instigated several purges aimed at Jews under the guise of fighting "Zionism" and "cosmopolitanism". The last of these was the so-called "Doctors' Plot" purge, which was cut short by the tyrant's death in 1953.

Today Stalin-lovers and tsar-lovers find common cause in amnestying the Georgian-born "Great Russifier" by blaming all his crimes on one of Stalin's Jewish henchmen, Lazar Kaganovich. Similarly Pamyat steers clear of attacking the Russian Lenin (though Russian nationalist circles are apparently buzzing over whether Lenin was one-eighth Jewish), focusing on the "corrupt" Jews like Trotsky and Kamenev who surrounded him. Indeed, the CIA-funded journal *Glasnost* criticises Pamyat for allowing its virulent anti-Semitism to stand in the way of more consistent anti-Communism. But Pamyat is

hardly crypto-Stalinist; to it, Marxism at its root is a Jewish plot.

Stalin's glorification of counter-revolutionary chauvinism was carried to its logical conclusion by a minor Soviet diplomat named Butenko, who defected to Mussolini's fascist Italy in 1938, and subsequently by General Andrei Vlasov, a Soviet officer captured by the Germans who then organised an army of Russian "volunteers" to serve Hitler on the Eastern Front. But around the same time that Butenko broke from the bureaucracy in the direction of fascism, Ignace Reiss, a heroic Soviet military intelligence officer, broke in the direction of Bolshevism, publicly declaring himself for the Fourth International. Reiss was shortly thereafter abducted and murdered by Stalin's assassins. Trotsky pointed to the "faction of Butenko" and the "faction of Reiss" as graphic evidence of the dual character of the nationalist bureaucratic caste which usurped political power from the Soviet workers through a political counterrevolution in 1924 and has since rested parasitically atop the collectivist foundations of the workers state created by the October Revolution.

While a Reiss faction has yet to emerge in the Soviet Union, the outlines of a counterrevolutionary Butenko faction are beginning to take shape. Alongside of the rise of the latter-day Vlasovites of Pamyat, Gorbachev's *perestroika* has brought to the surface the worst anti-social scum. The proliferation of privately owned "cooperative" stores and restaurants has led to a sharp rise (or at least a more public emergence) of financial speculation and organised criminal activity, including shakedown rackets. The paper *Moskovsky Komsomlets* recently ran an expose on the spread of organised crime among young people, reporting how "In every high

SUBSCRIBE NOW!

Marxist Newspaper of the Spartacist League

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Telephone _____

9 issues of *Workers Hammer* for £2
(Overseas Subscriptions: Airmail £5.00)

9 issues of *Workers Hammer* PLUS 24 issues of *Workers Vanguard*, Marxist fortnightly of the Spartacist League/U.S. for £7
(All above subs include *Spartacist*, organ of the international Spartacist tendency)

3 issues of *Women & Revolution* for £1.50

Make cheques payable/post to: Spartacist Publications, P O Box 1041, London NW5 3EU

school ... there are teen-aged mobsters selling pornography, radios, video recorders, cassette tapes, clothes and cosmetics" (*Washington Post*, 12 February).

Gorbachev's encouragement of market competition and a dog-eat-dog mentality has also fuelled nationalist movements among the more economically advanced nationalities like Armenia and the Baltic republics who see in *perestroika* an opportunity to break free from the centralised economy and better their lot at the expense of their poorer neighbours, like the Azerbaijanis and even the Russians. Indeed, if Soviet Russia were the "evil empire" that Reagan and the CIA's "Captive Nations" crowd paints it to be, simply exploiting and lord-ing it over the non-Russian nationalities, there would be no room for a mass Russian nationalist movement. In his own brutal, bureaucratic way, Stalin was actually a leveller of the conditions of the different Soviet nationalities. Today, Lithuanians and Estonians march in the tens of thousands under the flag of the interwar bourgeois republics, which were bastions of White Guard pogromism and anti-Communism, while Armenia and Azerbaijan are rent by murderous fratricide, and demonstrators in Azerbaijan carry placards of Khomeini. Now nationalist agitation has flared up elsewhere, including the Ukraine, the largest non-Russian republic in the Soviet Union.

But the social force which has yet to assert itself in Gorbachev's Russia is the proletariat, the driving force of the October Revolution. The Soviet working people have nothing to gain from *perestroika*, and many have made their dissatisfaction clear to Gorbachev. A number of strikes have taken place in the past year, and as the store shelves grow emptier discontent increases. Moreover, while the government has churned out reams and reams of defeatist propaganda to justify the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, there are many Soviet citizens who refuse to accept the lie that their sons, brothers and husbands gave their lives for "Russia's Vietnam". The *afghantsi*, returned Red Army vets who saw with their own eyes the centuries of social progress that separate the land of the October Revolution from neighbouring Afghanistan, are among the best organised and fastest growing of the "informal groups", and to them "internationalist duty" has a living meaning.

The multinational Soviet working class must reassert its independent interests, which lie neither in the Western-oriented "market reforms" of Gorbachev nor in a return to the benighted Great Russian chauvinism of the dark past but in the struggle for international socialist revolution. The October Revolution opened the portals of emancipation for the workers and peasants of Russia, for the Jews and non-Russian nationalities of the tsarist prison house of peoples. What is urgently called for is a return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky, necessitating a proletarian political revolution which will shatter the bureaucracy and restore the red banner of revolutionary internationalism to the Kremlin. The crushing of Pamyat as a necessary measure of self-defence by the Soviet peoples will be a step on that road. We are writing in English, from abroad. It is urgent that there be a corresponding organisational force within the Soviet Union, not least to fight Pamyat.

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* no 473, 17 March 1989

Workers Power...

(Continued from page 4)

both flinched on the central question of defence of the Soviet Union. Both have denied that the Red Army could be the motor force for social liberation in Afghanistan. From different angles, both groups sought a "third way" and adapted to the non-existent question of "national self-determination".

While formally breaking with state capitalism at the time of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, Workers Power's ostensible Soviet defensism is more often "honoured" in the breach. Poland, along with Afghanistan, was a central defining question for communists in the recent Cold War II period. Workers Power took its side with the CIA/Vatican/Western Bankers' beloved "union", counterrevolutionary Solidarnosc, against defence of the Polish deformed workers state. Its "Theses" concluded that despite the counterrevolutionary nature of the programme and leadership of Solidarnosc, "the existence of a mass base" dictated support to the capitalist restorationist movement (*Workers Power* no 28, January 1982). The same grossly unprincipled methodology held in Iran, where Workers Power joined the rest of the fake-left in tailing Khomeini, prettifying the mullahs and denying the fact that the Islamic "republic" would mean reactionary terror for the working masses.

Ten years on, this combination of tailism and Stalinophobia has led Workers Power to boycott united-front defence of the pro-Moscow Tudeh Party and all Iranian leftists in order to maintain its rotten bloc with the so-called "Committee Against Repression in Iran" (CARI). Workers Power's paper opposition to CARI's policy of excluding Tudeh only makes its commitment to "building CARI as a labour movement based solidarity campaign" (*Workers Power*, March 1989) all the more revolting. Khomeini's regime has been massacring Tudeh and other leftists in the prisons by the thousands. When faced with a Spartacist-initiated protest which defended Tudeh and all the left and the CARI "action" which refused to defend the bulk of those leftists being slaughtered, Workers Power took its side with the latter.

Small wonder that Workers Power's "line" on Afghanistan is a hopeless muddle. It denounced the Soviet intervention and now denounces the Soviet withdrawal. It labelled the Red Army intervention "counterrevolutionary" and called for a mythical third "force" to "overthrow the Karmal regime and the Soviet occupying forces" (*Workers Power*, March 1989). Meanwhile, it "suspended the call for the withdrawal of Soviet troops until that moment when the Afghan workers and peasants could both effect that withdrawal and defend themselves against reaction". So the Red Army should stick around until such time as the forces they were protecting organised to drive them out?

Leninist for its part would not "hail" the Red Army intervention, either, although it defended it in its own fashion. They claimed that a mythical "Afghan proletarian revolution" was beheaded when the Soviets went in and Hafizullah Amin of the PDPA Khalq was killed. The fact is that not only was there no "proletarian revolution", there is virtually no proletariat in Afghanistan. *Leninist's* comrades in the TKP "explain" this problem as follows: "Just as in Iran the revolution found its

subjective factor in the mullahs, it may also find it among revolutionary officers in the army" (*The Revolution in Afghanistan*). Aside from not being able to tell the difference between an out-and-out counterrevolutionary like Khomeini and left-nationalists like the PDPA, this line is a full frontal Kautskyst attack on the basic Marxist tenet that the bourgeois state must be smashed.



The Roman chief druid calls for counterrevolution in Poland. Centrist Workers Power Group recognised all wings of Solidarnosc as counterrevolutionary but supported it anyway.

When the Soviets did pull out, as so fervently desired by the imperialists and the fake-left, the Partisan Defense Committee (a class-struggle, non-sectarian legal defence organisation in accordance with the political views of the Spartacist League/US) offered to the Afghan government the organising of an international brigade "to fight to the death in defence" of Afghan women and leftists. *Leninist* apparently believes the "tasks of revolutionaries" consist of cynical sniping against our call for an international brigade, denouncing our proposal as "posturing" and an attempt "to gain some 'militant' credibility". In fact, *Leninist* has imbibed the line pushed by the Western imperialists that defeat of the PDPA is a foregone conclusion. They may have broken from the Gorbachev bureaucracy, but not with its reactionary ideology of "socialism in one country". They share with Gorbachev the crassly defeatist and anti-internationalist line: only Afghan people should fight and die in the civil war in Afghanistan. Our proposal for an international brigade aimed at acting as a catalyst and inspiration for the thousands who wish to see the mujahedin scum mopped up. Much easier, after all, for *Leninist* to sit in its London offices pronouncing the "death throes" of the PDPA.

Gorbachev's withdrawal represents a betrayal not only of Afghan women and leftists but of defence of the Soviet Union. We warned in 1979 against the possibility of such treachery on the altar of appeasing the rapacious imperialists. Sending the Red Army 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". Withdrawal is consistent with the normal functioning of the Soviet bureaucracy.

The Soviet intervention and subsequent withdrawal confirms the

Trotskyist understanding of the contradictory, dual character of the nationalist bureaucratic caste which usurped political power from the Soviet workers through a political counterrevolution in 1924 and has since rested parasitically atop the collectivist foundations of the workers state created by the October Revolution. The defence of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution is integrally linked with the need for a proletarian political revolution to oust the bureaucracy. Workers Power takes the logic of the stupidly one-sided formulation that "Stalinism is counterrevolutionary through and through" to absurdity, claiming that all the social transformations since 1917 have been "counterrevolutionary". *Leninist* flips and flops over its "god that failed" in the Kremlin.

After over 50 years of bureaucratic degeneration, after the betrayal of world revolution on the altar of "peaceful coexistence" and the popular front for decades, now with Gorbachev the Soviet Union needs "political revolution" according to the *Leninist*. To this day, the *Leninist* still supports Khrushchev's crushing of the nascent political revolution in Hungary in 1956. They do not, and indeed cannot explain this in any way other than the absurd position that Gorbachev represents a qualitative change from his Stalinist predecessors. *Leninist* displays the same methodology as the Maoists who repudiated the defence of the Soviet Union when they "discovered" that Khrushchev was a "capitalist roader". To honestly confront the "qualitative" change which occurred when Stalin & Co usurped political power, purged and exterminated the old Bolshevik cadres, liquidated the Third International, wiped out the cream of the Red Army officer corps prior to the German invasion of the USSR - would require coming to grips with the historic battle waged by Leon Trotsky and the Left Opposition and the Fourth International.

The sort of "political revolution" *Leninist* envisions has more in common with Kautsky than Lenin or Trotsky. *Leninist* insists that the anti-Semitic, Great Russian chauvinist fascists of Pamyat be allowed to organise on the grounds of "the fullest democracy under socialism" (*Leninist*, 23 May 1988). Going from bad to worse, in its 3 September 1988 issue *Leninist* argued: "...in the main we would seek out Pamyat members in order to argue with them. Many people who voted for the National Front in Britain did not understand its true nature, they were fooled. The same will be true of those who have joined Pamyat." In 1981, to their credit, *Leninist* supported the crushing of counterrevolutionary Solidarnosc; now in flat contradiction they uphold the "rights" of Russian fascists.

The Russian question is the question of revolution. The political graveyards of would-be revolutionists are filled with those who retreated on the key question of defence of October. Revolutionary internationalism demands the defence of the Soviet degenerated workers state and the fight for proletarian political revolution. The alternative for subjective revolutionaries in *Leninist* or Workers Power is the Spartacist League which said "Hail Red Army!" in Afghanistan and unequivocally demanded the crushing of Solidarnosc counterrevolution. Our struggle for the reformatting of the Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution, is the road forward. ■

Blair Peach...

(Continued from page 12)

This has nothing in common with "anti-racist" carnivals where bishops, lords and Labour traitors spout platitudes while militants are diverted from actually interdicting the fascists militarily, as with the diversionary strategy of the SWP's Anti Nazi League in the late 1970s, nor with begging the capitalist state to "ban" its fascist dogs of war. It is also flatly counterposed to the present gutless policy of the SWP to "ignore" the fascists or dimwitted liberal appeals to "win over" through debate and discussion the racist terrorists. Fascist outfits recruit through action, bloody attacks on leftists, blacks, Asians, Jews, homosexuals, workers. They "debate" with the fire-bomb and the truncheon.

Our comrades in the United States have successfully stopped planned Ku Klux Klan and Nazi "demonstrations" through the initiation of trade union-centred united front mobilisations supported by broad layers of the black population. In Philadelphia last November, over 1000 determined anti-fascist protesters occupied the site at which the Ku Klux Klan and Nazi skinheads had threatened to stage a "white pride" provocation. This obscenity did not take place in Philadelphia, where in 1985 the Reagan White House bombed the black MOVE commune, incinerating eleven black people and turning a black neighbourhood to ashes. The successful mobilisation showed that the working people are ready to fight to defend the interests of their class, if given the chance. As we wrote in the special *Workers Vanguard* supplement on the anti-Klan victory:

"The key is revolutionary leadership, a Leninist party with the program and determination to lead the coming class battles and champion the defense of all the oppressed. "The Greensboro Massacre by a KKK/Nazi death squad in November 1979 gave the go-ahead to racist terrorists in America. But from Detroit to San Francisco to Chicago and Washington, D.C., labor/black mobilizations initiated by the Spartacist League successfully interdicted the Klan in the Northern cities of America in the first years of Reagan reaction. The SL, although a relatively small communist organization, provided the leadership, and our revolutionary program expressed the felt desire of thousands who came out to *stop the Klan*. In each case, the mass mobilizations were built against the Democratic Party mayors and the so-called leftists who tailed after them. In each case, it was *black and red* together, getting a taste of the social power that the struggle for socialist revolution will unleash." (*WV Special Supplement*, 18 November 1988)

In Thatcher's Britain the race terrorists have also felt the wind in their sails. Asian and black people, Jewish synagogues, gays, leftists and trade unions have been targeted for attack. As we detailed in our article "Skinheads: psycho killers on the loose" (*Workers Hammer* no 101,

October 1988), the violent white racist skinhead thugs, spawned in the squalor of crisis-ridden British society, are the raw material for the shock troops of fascism. "It is only in the absence of a class-struggle leadership of the labour movement that the barbaric skinhead scum can fester and grow. Yet while the British population at large rightly loathes and fears these killers, much of the left denies any identification of the skinheads and fascism, and even invites them into its midst." As an example, we cited the Russia-hating SWP's appeals to the skinheads (ie, "Skins hate authority and the Nazis represent authority", *Socialist Worker*, 1 July 1978) and its sponsorship of the rock group called Redskins, whose album was entitled "Neither Washington Nor Moscow". Not least because this human garbage was not

number of racist attacks", including an attack where "siege-heiling" thugs put a city-centre restaurant "under virtual siege, with bottles, bricks and an iron bar being thrown through the window, hitting members of staff and customers inside" and one worker was hit on the head with a brick and then "beaten unconscious with a baseball bat" (*Searchlight*, March 1989).

When they are not confronted and defeated, the fascists grow and grow bolder. In recent memory, the failure to stop the NF in Brick Lane on 24 September 1978 was a major betrayal of the fight against fascism in this country. The NF announced a national mobilisation to march through the heavily-immigrant East End. On that same day some 100,000 anti-fascist activists were kept at the other end of town, in Brixton, at the ANL Carnival 2. Only a handful

vertisement was therefore an act of political fraud. It also asked for money." So far, the SWP has not seen fit to reply to, let alone rebut this account.

The sporadically more militant Anti-Fascist Action/*Searchlight*, at least do not "ignore" fascists on principle as does the wretched SWP. Many around AFA were formerly in the ANL - and blame the SWP for the destruction of that popular frontist obstacle to the fight to smash the fascists. Between these two wings of the old ANL there is not a fundamental programmatic political dividing line. The necessary mass, militant mobilisations of workers and their allies against the fascists requires a political fight against the parliamentary cretinism and criminal passivity of the Labour Party leaders, right and "left". It was Labour in

Philadelphia, USA, 5 November 1988. Over 1000 join integrated labour-centred rally against Ku Klux Klan and their skinhead allies.



stopped here, the skinhead phenomenon has spread to France, Germany, the United States and elsewhere.

When fascist skinhead scum began menacing the Sheffield city centre in 1987, the Spartacist League fought for a united front to drive them out. This was militantly resisted, particularly by the SWP whose own members were among the first victims of the skinhead thugs. SWPers faithfully stuck to the instructions contained in their internal discussion bulletin on how to react to fascists: "If they attack a SW sale, make a tactical retreat and start again the following week" (*Discussion Bulletin*, August 1984). We were repeatedly told by SWPers and others that these skinheads were just misunderstood youth, not really fascists - regardless of the fact that they sported fascist insignia and pushed fascist rags. Despite the SWP's wrecking antics and the general level of "toleration" for the racist skinheads, the SL was able to mobilise a modest united-front protest including members of the Black Workers Group of NALGO, the Sheffield Defence Campaign, individual unionists from the post office and the NUM, students from Sheffield University and the Workers Power group. The SWP fell over its collective feet running away from the scene.

However, in general over a period of months the left repeatedly refused to join the SL in our attempts to stop the fascists in the city centre, through mobilising the power of the organised working class. As a result there has been a growth of brutal racist attacks by the same skinheads in Sheffield. *Searchlight* reported in June 1988 that two of them got prison sentences for vicious racist assaults. Last month, a demonstration in Sheffield was called against "the growing

of ANL supporters joined leftists including the Spartacist League and local immigrants in the Brick Lane area - grossly outnumbered, these had no chance of getting near, let alone stopping, the NF's provocation. The SWP and other ANL organisers ensured that the thousands "rocking against racism" were kept away from Brick Lane. The sheer numerical weight of the forces at the Carnival would have been sufficient to stop the NF marching with impunity. Instead, with drums beating and Union Jacks waving, and with the ever-present police accompaniment the fascists marched unscathed to their rallying place. The NF "celebrated" that night as a gang of 50-60 rampaged through a predominantly Asian estate off Brick Lane, smashing shop windows and threatening local residents.

The tenth anniversary of the death of Blair Peach should be the occasion for addressing the absence of effective anti-fascist mobilisations in Britain. However, the planned memorial march has instead become the subject of sordid factional bickering between the SWP and the Blair Peach 10th Anniversary Committee which includes his widow Celia Stubbs and the Friends of Blair Peach. The dispute centres on allegations against the SWP of falsifying endorsements and "wrecking tactics", ie, the SWP's announcement of their own march at the same time and place as the other group's event. In an editorial *Searchlight* (March 1989) writes: "On 21st February an advertisement appeared in the *Guardian*, claiming signatures on behalf of a couple of dozen groups, sponsoring the SWP's activity. Investigations revealed that many of the groups had not consented to their names appearing and were in fact supporting Celia Stubbs' call. The ad-

power which unleashed the killer cops against the people of Southall. Blair Peach's blood is on the hands of the Labour Party tops. A Leninist combat party capable of leading the organised workers movement in alliance with the oppressed must be built in irreconcilable struggle against the Labour misleaders and all forms of class-collaboration.

Revolutionary Marxists recognise that the mobilisation of the power of the organised working class against the fascist bands is part and parcel of the struggle for proletarian power - ie, workers revolution. The same Labour traitors who knifed the heroic miners strike - paving the way for Thatcher's jihad against the trade unions, for further misery and unemployment - helped create the very conditions which breed filth like the NF and racist skinheads. Only the smashing of the rotting capitalist system once and for all will put an end to the fascist menace, the race-terrorists kept in reserve by a dying ruling class. To truly avenge the death of Blair Peach it is necessary, as comrade Trotsky put it:

"...to set in motion millions, tens and hundreds of millions of the oppressed throughout the whole world and lead them in the assault upon the strongholds of the old society. Only the overthrow of all forms of slavery, only the complete destruction of fascism, only the people sitting in merciless judgment over the contemporary bandits and gangsters can provide real satisfaction to the indignation of the people. This is precisely the task that the Fourth International has set itself." - ("For Grynspan: Against the Fascist Pogrom Gangs and Stalinist Scoundrels", 1939).■

Contact the Spartacist League

London P O Box 1041
London NW5 3EU
(01) 485 1396

Glasgow P O Box 150
Glasgow G3 7TN
(041) 339 0993

Spartacists debate Leninist...

(Continued from page 5)

Ireland. And a situation of inter-penetrated people like Ireland is a graphic illustration of the need for a proletarian answer." Taking it outside the framework of Ireland, the comrade pointed to the example of EOKA in Cyprus, led by the fascistic Grivas: "We could defend that organisation when it fought British imperialism. They also went out and massacred Turkish villagers - it just happened to be that the Turks were on top at the time and they were called agents of British imperialism. Do you defend that? You know, for or against EOKA ... to coin the phrase you used about the IRA in Enniskillen."

We also pointed out that *Leninist* suffers from a contradictory position over the official pro-Moscow parties in Iran and Turkey. In the former instance, to their credit, *Leninist* defends the Tudeh Party against the murderous repression of the Islamic state. But in Turkey, *Leninist's* comrades in the TKP revile the SL and anyone else who defend against the brutal Ozal regime the imprisoned official leaders Kutlu and Sargin. At the debate, *Leninist* ducked this question. What a fine example of internationalist party building: the *Lenin-*



no credit

Stalin's "honorary member" of the Communist International, Chiang Kai-shek smashed revolution and slaughtered Chinese Communists and workers in 1927. (Right) JV Stalin, liquidator of the Comintern.



AP

ist claims to defend "all Turkey's political prisoners" while cravenly ignoring their much-vaunted exemplaire comrades of the TKP's "campaign" against defence of Kutlu and Sargin.

The dangers of the TKP's criminal refusal to defend leftists because of political differences are more than putting themselves in an objective bloc with capitalist repression. As our spokesmen said: "So I wondered - your comrades don't want to defend Kutlu and Sargin ... whether you want to defend the Soviet Union because you've got big criticisms of Gorbachev, he's got really bad ideas so there's nothing to defend in the Soviet Union." This was the methodology that led the Maoists to label the Soviet Union "social-imperialist" and to defend China's criminal alliance with US imperialism against the "Soviet revisionists".

Stalin liquidated the Third International in form and essence. When *Leninist* refers to the "world communist movement" they don't mean a revolutionary democratic-centralist international of the type Lenin and Trotsky fought to build. At best, it's a mish-mash of "fraternal" Stalinist

parties here, "left" petty-bourgeois nationalists there, often with differing or even counterposed programmes. As our comrade concluded: "The tasks of revolutionaries today are the militant defence of the Soviet Union against the imperialist war drive, the struggle for political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and restore Soviet democracy and an internationalist leadership, and the struggle for an international, for world revolution, in an international party of revolutionaries. And in a nutshell that's called the return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky." ■

PMP...

(Continued from page 2)

Communist Party. In addition, the bulletin publishes English translations of two documents opposing the PMP from an April 1941 internal bulletin of the French Committees for the Fourth International.

Our bulletin introduction, "Trotskyist Policies on the Second World War - Then and In Hindsight", makes use of some of the wealth of documentary and memoir material from the wartime Trotskyist movement which has been published in the last decade in the *Cahiers Leon Trotsky* and elsewhere. While the introduction to *Cahiers* no 23 invited further contributions toward a continuing discussion on the subject of the Trotskyists in World War II, *Cahiers* no 28 (December 1986) carried a statement by Broue which haughtily refused to reply to Pierre Vert's *Spartacist* article. (Broue objected to our observation that his central thesis - that the European Trotskyists failed by refusing to enter a "mass movement based on national and social resistance", ie, the Stalinist- and bourgeois-led Resistance - bears some relationship to the present-day reformist and liquidationist policies of the Lambert group.)

Recently the discussion on the Trotskyists in WW II has been continued in the pages of *Revolutionary History*, a collaborative multi-tendency archival journal published by Socialist Platform in Britain. *Revolutionary History* devoted its third issue (dated Autumn 1988) to the wartime Trotskyists, publishing an article by Sam Levy, entitled "The Proletarian Military Policy Revisited", as well as two valuable articles previously available only in French, one of them initially published in *Cahiers Leon Trotsky*. The current issue of *Revolutionary History* (no 4) includes even more material, some of it never published before in any language. In particular the issue contains an article on the Dutch Committee of Revolutionary Marxists (Wim Bot,

"Generals Without Troops: Dutch Trotskyism During the Occupation") which our IEC found particularly useful in reviewing the work and perspectives of the small Trotskyist nuclei which functioned in Europe during the war. Our bulletin, "Documents on the 'Proletarian Military Policy'", is dedicated to the memory of the wartime leader of the Dutch Trotskyists, Piet van't Hart, and to those who fought alongside him during the German occupation of Holland.

WAR AND REVOLUTION

In its introduction, the IEC critically analyses the fragmentary writings of Trotsky on the PMP, pointing out that Trotsky's use of the post-February 1917 Russian Bolshevik experience in elaborating the PMP was quite misleading. Proletarian "control" of any aspect of the bourgeois army is only possible as a brief episode in a revolutionary situation (eg, Russia after the overthrow of the tsar). A situation of dual power did not exist in any imperialist country in 1940. When seen in the light of the earlier positions and work of the Trotskyist movement, in particular the seminal 1934 document "War and the Fourth International", the PMP represented a real, if ephemeral, programmatic departure. Unfortunately, the dispute was not resolved at the end of the war.

The IEC's introduction also points out that Trotsky was right to foresee that the war would bring in its wake a tremendous revolutionary wave, especially in the colonies, posing the possibility of proletarian seizures of power in a whole series of countries. If the Trotskyists were unable to put themselves at the head of the discontented and war-weary masses, this was due to the extreme weakness of their forces, and to the effectiveness of the imperialist countermeasures. At war's end, a combination of Stalinist betrayal and often savage bourgeois repression effectively strangled the possibility of proletarian revolutions in most of Europe, though Tito's partisans did succeed in overthrowing

capitalism in Yugoslavia, while the Soviet Red Army's occupation of the rest of Eastern Europe eventually resulted in the destruction from the top down of capitalist property relations there. Tito's victory, which resulted in a workers state deformed from inception by a bureaucratic caste, was the first in a series of post-war social overturns led by peasant-based guerrilla formations. The disorientation of the post-war Fourth International in the face of these developments precipitated the creation of the liquidationist current led by Michel Pablo and the destruction of the Fourth International in 1951-53.

"Trotskyist Policies on the Second Imperialist War - Then and In Hindsight" goes beyond historical questions to a consideration of the spectre of World War III which now haunts humanity, bringing with it the threat of nuclear annihilation. The post-WW II world has been dominated by the overriding hostility of imperialism to the continued existence of the collectivised and planned economies of the deformed and degenerated workers

states, although with the economic decline of the United States and the growing economic power of German and Japanese imperialism there are increasing indications of renewed inter-imperialist antagonisms. The current Gorbachev policy of explicit capitulation before imperialist military pressure in every area of the world will, however, only strengthen the revanchist imperialist appetites. The IEC introduction discusses a possible Soviet nuclear defence posture and reaffirms that revolutionary defeatism toward the imperialist powers and military defence of the Soviet Union remains the policy of the international proletarian vanguard faced with the threat of World War III.

"Documents on the 'Proletarian Military Policy'" can be ordered by mail from all sections of the international Spartacist tendency. To order in Britain, send a cheque or money order for £5.00 to Spartacist Publications, Box 1041, London NW5 3EU.

Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* no 473, 17 March 1989

£2.50/\$5

Volume 1, No 4, Winter 1988-89

REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY

AGAINST ALL ODDS

Dutch, French and Indian Trotskyism during the Second World War

THOSE WHO DO NOT LEARN FROM HISTORY ARE DOOMED TO REPEAT IT

Volume 1, No 4 £2.50
(Winter 1988-89) 50 pages

Includes:

- * Wim Bot on: "Generals without troops"
- * Charles Wesley Ervin on: "Trotskyism in India"
- * Ian Birchall on: "With the Masses, Against the Stream"
- * The Walter Held File.

(Back issues Nos 1, 2 and 3 also available)

Order from:
Socialist Platform Ltd,
BCM 7646, London WC1N 3XX

For trade union/minority mobilisations to smash fascist terror!

The working class will avenge Blair Peach!

Anti-fascist activist Blair Peach was murdered by the British state on 23 April 1979. On that day 10 years ago, the race-hating swine of the National Front staged a provocative rally in the heart of London's Southall, an area populated predominantly by Asian workers and their families. Blair Peach, a member of the Socialist Workers Party and the Anti Nazi League, was one of the many who turned out to protest this provocation alongside the thousands of local residents who walked out of the factories or closed their shops in angry protest against the NF presence. Such was the sentiment in the community for militant action to drive the fascists out of Southall that the motley gang of NF supporters who dared to show their faces should justly have been given a swift lesson in proletarian power. Instead what ensued was an orgy of bloodletting by the thousands of cops deployed by the Callaghan Labour government to defend the NF scum.

By the end of the evening hundreds of anti-fascist protesters had been arrested, dozens were injured. Blair Peach was dead, his skull fractured by a vicious blow from the infamous thugs of the Special Patrol Group who had spearheaded the bloody assault. Found in the lockers of the SPG cops who rioted in Southall were an array of illegal offensive weapons, including metal truncheons, a pickaxe handle, a sledge hammer, a Rhino whip, crow-



John Sturrock (Report)



no credit

(Above) Blair Peach: anti-racist martyr. (Left) April 1979, Southall. 10,000 honour memory of Blair Peach and Gurdid Singh Chaggarr.

bars and knives. The large number of head injuries sustained by participants in the anti-NF mobilisation also attested to the murderous intent of the police that day. The criminals who struck down Blair Peach are still at liberty, exonerated by an internal police "inquiry" as well as the Hammersmith Coroner. But the working people of this country will not forget, nor forgive.

The police riot in Southall was no aberration. In the late 1970s the fascist National Front, led by dyed-in-the-wool Nazis like John Tyndall,

was making significant advances at the polls and translating its genocidal programme into action on the streets. The Asian community of Southall became a symbol of resistance to these attacks. The racist murder of Gurdid Singh Chaggarr in 1976 called forth a militant youth revolt which took up the Sikh battle cry "We shall fight like lions". The militancy of trade union struggle in the area was also well-known - strikes and organising drives at Woolf's, Perivale Gutterman, Heathrow airport and Wyuna Corset Co were largely supported by the local population. When the cops took to the streets on 23 April 1979 they were looking for blood and they got it.

Five days after Blair Peach was murdered, some 10,000 marched in defiant tribute to this courageous fighter against race terror, raising clenched fists as they passed the spot where he was killed. His body lay in state at the Dominion Cinema and more than 8000 came to pay their respects. Blair Peach was remembered by many as a dedicated teacher as well as a committed fighter against racism. He had participated in numerous mobilisations against the National Front, including in Brick Lane in East London. The New Zealand-born activist was 33-years-old when he died. As we wrote in our article last year commemorating his death: "This is the truth about Blair Peach: a young man who hated the NF fascist filth and everyday racist brutality of this society was mur-

dered by the armed fist of the capitalist state" (*Workers Hammer* no 98, May/June 1988).

FASCISM: WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO FIGHT IT

Today, on the tenth anniversary of Blair Peach's death, there is an ominous worldwide growth of fascist movements - from Le Pen's Front National in France to the NF, BNP and their skinhead allies in Britain, Nazi and Ku Klux Klan race terrorists in the United States and various West German fascist groups. The domestic reflection of the imperialists' anti-Soviet war drive abroad, these race-hate scum breed on social reaction, economic crisis and despair. A fitting memorial to the memory of Blair Peach would be the successful mobilisation of the workers movement organised in sharp class struggle against the fascist menace, on the road to the revolutionary overthrow of the rotting capitalist system which spawns them. As the tendency which uniquely fights for such a perspective, we in the Spartacist League honour the memory of Blair Peach. The struggle against fascism to which he gave his life is a critical task facing the international working class.

Against the rise of fascism in Germany in the 1930s, the great Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky advocated a workers united front, a class mobilisation in alliance with the oppressed to smash it in the egg.

continued on page 10



John Sturrock (Report)

Southall Anti-NF demo, 1979. Cops at their dirty racist work. Labour government directed murderous police riots and racist immigration policies.